

With Bible in Hand

Hold the Bible in your hand. Now think about what you have in your hand. This is a book written in very ancient times, by people far removed in culture, geography, language and time. Parts of it were among the first actual words ever written down. It has some of the most quoted and recited passages of all times. It has fascinating histories, glorious poetry and songs, timeless wisdom, and didactic messages. It has been preserved for millenniums, copied over and over, taken to every corner of the earth, translated to almost every language, and printed and made available to

even the poorest of people. More amazing than all of this though, is that the everlasting, all-powerful God is the author. He is the one who inspired it to be written, preserved, and published. In your hands are the very words of God himself. He has given you the opportunity to know him, his plans for you, and what he expects of you. He has written to you the very words of life and salvation.

With a tap of a finger on the keys of a computer or the screen of a mobile device the entire world is instantaneously available: the latest news from

around the world or the latest happenings of your dearest friend. Everything in this world is based on instant gratification. Click a key and buy the book you want, press another key and order your dinner delivered, in an instant Google the answer to any question, or with a few key strokes be directed to your destination. Searching for information in books, spending hours shopping for the perfect gift, or spending time carefully cooking meals is no longer necessary. This is what we have become accustomed to. All this seems in sharp contrast

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A New Learn to Read the Bible Effectively Seminar

The Story of the Bible

God's Plan for the Earth from Genesis to Revelation

January 9th to February 20th (Seven Weeks)

Thursday - 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

At the
Hampton Inn and Suites
(Across Jefferson from Patrick Henry Mall)

Join us for an informative study of The Story of the Bible from the beginning to the end. In addition to taking a brief look at the history involved, this seminar will look closely at the covenants, promises and prophecies that God has made concerning His plans for this earth and your future on it.

Please register to be ensured of a study manual by calling 898-5069 or e-mailing info@dailybiblereader.com.

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to the idea of carefully, day-by-day, reading and studying God's word to learn the things he has written for our instruction. Learning about God and coming to understand his Word is not instantaneous. It requires day by day dedication to reading, searching out and meditating on spiritual concepts and the deep things of God. There is no such thing as "fast spiritual food".

Take the Bible in your hand each day of the New Year. Make the choice, make the decision each and every day to read it, both Old and New Testaments, carefully and with an intense desire to learn from its pages. Learn of God's wisdom, love, and plans for the future. Listen to the words of life. Be introduced to God's perspectives, perceptions, and insights. There is so much beyond today's moment, today's "things" that God wants us to

know: things too wonderful for us to imagine.

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. (Psalm 139:17-8)

This is what the LORD says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD.

"This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word. (Isaiah 66:1-2)

Reading, studying, and meditating on the teachings of the Bible, and then putting the teachings into practice in our

daily lives is a choice that we make each day. Find the time, do the hard stuff, and make the choice to live as God's servant each day. There can be nothing better in this life or the life to come.

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:13-17)

* * * *

The Story of the Bible

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son..." (Hebrews 1:1-2)

From the very beginning God has been speaking to each of

his creation. He has spoken through the words of the prophets, through the examples of the faithful, through the history of his people, and finally through his Son. The Bible tells his story.

Genesis is the beginning. The first words of the Bible intro-

duce us to God: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is God's world. He has made it and everything in it. He made it to be inhabited with people and other creatures. From the beginning he taught his creation how to live on this earth

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that he has made.

Not long after Adam and Eve were created, they decided not to believe God. Instead they believed a lie and did not do what God had told them. The result of that disobedience was a cursed earth and death. They could not keep living in God's world because they would not believe and do as God required.

Starting from the announcement of the consequence of Adam and Eve's rebellion in Genesis 3, the Bible tells the story of God's reaching out to his creation to bring them back to him. Genesis continues with examples of those who were faithful and obeyed such as Noah and Abraham and the blessings they received and will receive. It also tells what happened to those who insisted on rebellion such as that of Cain and the people of Noah's time.

After the time of Noah, God called a man named Abraham to leave his home and family and go to a place he did not know. Because Abraham believed and obeyed God made several promises to him, promises that impact all of us. Blessings would come through him.

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1-3)

From this man Abraham came the nation of Israel, God's people with a special purpose:

See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me,

so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today? (Deut 4:5-8)

After 400 years as slaves in Egypt, Israel was freed and led by God through the work of his servant Moses, through the desert and to the land that was promised to Abraham and

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his family. God gave them other leaders such as Joshua and Samuel and Deborah and King David. The Bible history tells the remarkable stories of the lives of these leaders.

From the nation of Israel came the prophets of old such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel. They were sent by God to give warnings and instructions to the people. Today we see their inspired writings in the Old Testament. To us they also warn, instruct and inspire.

In all this history there were a few that listened to the message from God and were faithful to him. Many more were rebellious. The consequence of their rebellion was defeat at the hands of their enemies and expulsion from the promised land. In his mercy, however, God promised that a time of repentance and restoration would come:

"For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new

spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:24-29)

So God promised more than to just bring his people back to the land. He promised that they will again be a nation with one king, that he will be their God and live with them:

"My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God,

and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever." (Ezekiel 37:24-28)

Although there was a partial fulfillment of these promises when some of the people of Israel, now known as the Jews, returned from their Babylonian captivity to Judah and Jerusalem during the time of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Haggai, the promises were far from completed.

About 2,000 years ago the people of Israel were in expectation of the beginning of the fulfillment of these promises. In preparation for the coming of their deliverer, an angel appeared to the priest Zechariah announcing the birth of his son who was to be called John. He would prepare the way for the coming Messiah. When the child was born, Zechariah praised God with these words:

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.

He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he said through his holy prophets of long

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ago, salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—

To show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

To rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, To give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,

Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

To shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." (Luke 1:67-79)

Of the descendants of this man Abraham, the Messiah was born, Son of God and Son of Man. Jesus came teaching

and preaching repentance and the coming kingdom. Through preaching and teaching, with signs and wonders of healing and wisdom, Jesus showed the way to life eternal for all those who believe and obey him. In his life he always did what pleased his Father showing us the example of love and obedience:

... but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. (John 14:31)

Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:19-21)

Through this Jesus, through his life, his death, his resurrection from the dead, all the promises of God have their fulfillment. It is through Jesus that our hearts are changed; it is through Jesus that we are for-

given and cleansed, and it is through Jesus that we are moved to believe and obey our Father.

The New Testament book of Acts tells the history of the spread of the preaching of the good news concerning Jesus' triumph over sin and death. The news first was preached in Jerusalem to the Jewish people but spread quickly through the rest of the world. Whether Jew or Gentile, it makes no difference. All are commanded to come to God through belief and obedience in Jesus Christ:

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:38-39)

This is the beginning of the complete fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham and to all the faithful but there is more. It is promised that Jesus

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will return to this earth:

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

It is also promised that when he returns, he will raise from the dead those who have followed him:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

There is a word of warning though. When Jesus returns there will be a judgment. Some will be judged worthy to be part of God's plan but others will not.

I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: (2 Timothy 4:1)

In agreement with the prophecies of the Old Testament, the Bible closes with prophecies and promises that when Jesus

returns to the earth he will return as King. He will rule the world in justice and righteousness. The earth will be filled with the glory of God.

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation,

gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem,

and the battle bow will be broken.

He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea

and from the River to the ends of the earth. (Zechariah 9:9-10)

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,

as the waters cover the sea. (Hab. 2:14)

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" (Rev 11:15-16)

The Bible tells the story of God's plan and purpose for his creation. We have never seen God, but through the pages of the Bible God's love and compassion, his mercy and his righteousness, his eternity and his power are made known to us. We have never seen his son Jesus, but we come to know Jesus through the writings of the prophets, the psalmist, and the apostles. Someday, when Jesus does return to this earth, we shall see him. In fact the Bible says that when he returns "every eye shall see him". The Bible tells us how to prepare for that time when God's promises are fulfilled, when Jesus returns as king of the whole earth.

So pick up the Book. Day by day read and mediate over the words of God:

For this is what the LORD says — he who created the heavens,
He is God;

He who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it;

He did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited —

He says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other. (Isaiah 45:18)

* * * *

A New Year, A New Beginning

Another year has come. It's a time for new beginnings and new opportunities. It's a time for remembering that each new day is a day that God has given us to learn of Him, to serve Him, to thank him for each blessing and each lesson. Every new beginning, every new opportunity that God gives us reminds us of his love and mercy. It's a time to check out where we've been and where God wants us to go. So here are some suggestions for resolutions for this New Year:

I RESOLVE to remember that God's compassions never fail, they are new each morning.
(Lamentations 3:21-24)

I RESOLVE to believe in

and follow Jesus each day by loving God and obeying Him. (John 14:23-31)

I RESOLVE to learn of God each day by daily reading a portion of his book, the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:14-16)

I RESOLVE to pray each day in thankfulness, praise, repentance, and petition, knowing that all things come from God. (Ephesians 6:17-20)

I RESOLVE to love my brother, my neighbor, and my enemy because that gives glory to my Heavenly Father. (Matthew 5:43-48)

I RESOLVE to honor God by caring for and sharing with those around me.

(Isaiah 58:6-9, 2 Timothy 1:8-12)

Finally, I RESOLVE to remember that I can accomplish none of these things on my own. It is only by God's strength, wisdom, and mercy that any of these resolutions can possibly become my way of life. (Psalm 51:7-12)

"To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen."
Jude 24-25)

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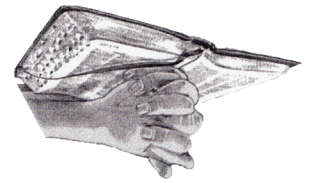
Start the New Year right by reading the Bible every day and joining us every Friday for the Bible Readers' Club

The Bible Readers' Club meets every Friday Morning at 11 am in the meeting room of the Hampton Inn and Suites at 12251 Jefferson Ave in Newport News.

Discussion is based on the DailyBibleReader schedule
Everyone is welcome so please join us each week.

**Why should you read the
Bible Daily?
Find some answers inside.
Also
Notice of New Bible
Seminar (Page 1)**

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Daily Bible Readings for January, February and March

Read the Entire Bible in One Year

Day	JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa	Old Test	New Test/Psa
1	Gen 1,2	Matt 1	Exo 11,12	Matt 28	Lev 23, 24	Acts 24
2	Gen 3,4	Matt 2	Exo 13,14	Psalm 9, 10	Lev 25, 26	Acts 25
3	Gen 5,6	Matt 3	Exo 15,16	Psalm 11,12	Lev 27, Provb 7	Acts 26
4	Gen 7,8	Matt 4	Exo 17,18	Acts 1	Provb 8-10	Acts 27
5	Gen 9,10	Matt 5	Exo 19,20	Acts 2	Num 1,2	Acts 28
6	Gen 11,12	Matt 6	Exo 21,22	Acts 3	Num 3,4	Psalm 19,20
7	Gen 13,14	Matt 7	Exo 23,24	Acts 4	Num 5,6	Romans 1
8	Gen 15, 16	Psalm 1,2	Exo 25,26	Acts 5	Num 7,8	Romans 2
9	Gen 17,18	Matt 8	Exo 27,28	Acts 6	Num 9,10	Romans 3
10	Gen 19,20	Matt 9	Exo 29,30	Acts 7	Num 11,12	Romans 4
11	Gen 21, 22	Matt 10	Exo 31,32	Psalm 13, 14	Num 13,14	Romans 5
12	Gen 23,24	Matt 11	Exo 33,34	Acts 8	Num 15,16	Romans 6
13	Gen 25,26	Matt 12	Exo 35,36	Acts 9	Num 17,18	Romans 7
14	Gen 27,28	Matt 13	Exo 37,38	Acts 10	Num 19,20	Romans 8
15	Gen 29,30	Psalm 3,4	Exo 39,40	Acts 11,12	Num 21,22	Romans 9
16	Gen 31,32	Matt 14	Provb 3,4	Acts 13	Num 23,24	Romans 10
17	Gen 33,34	Matt 15	Provb 5,6	Psalm 15,16	Num 25,26	Romans 11
18	Gen 35,36	Matt 16	Lev 1,2	Acts 14	Num 27,28	Romans 12
19	Gen 37,38	Matt 17	Lev 3,4	Acts 15	Num 29,30	Romans 13
20	Gen 39,40	Matt 18	Lev 5,6	Acts 16	Num 31,32	Romans 14
21	Gen 41, 42	Matt 19	Lev 7,8	Acts 17	Num 33,34	Romans 15,16
22	Gen 43, 44	Psalm 5,6	Lev 9,10	Acts 18	Num 35,36	Psalm 21,22
23	Gen 45, 46	Matt 20	Lev 11,12	Psalm 17,18	Provb 11,12	Psalm 23-25
24	Gen 47, 48	Matt 21	Lev 13,14	Acts 19	Provb 13,14	Psalm 26-28
25	Gen 49, 50	Matt 22	Lev 15,16	Acts 20	Provb 15,16	Psalm 29,30
26	Provb 1,2	Matt 23	Lev 17,18	Acts 21	Deut 1,2	Mark 1
27	Exo 1,2	Matt 24	Lev 19,20	Acts 22	Deut 3,4	Mark 2
28	Exo 3,4	Matt 25	Lev 21,22	Acts 23	Deut 5,6	Mark 3
29	Exo 5,6	Psalm 7, 8			Deut 7,8	Mark 4
30	Exo 7, 8	Matt 26			Deut 9,10	Psalm 31,32
31	Exo 9,10	Matt 27			Deut 11,12	Mark 5

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