

# Understand the Bible in 14 Days



## **Understand the Bible in 14 Days**

**Understand the Bible in 14 Days** is a simple to use program that with a commitment of 10 - 30 minutes a day will give you

- an overall knowledge of the themes that run through the books of the bible
- a knowledge of the chronological events of the bible

The program will work for adults or children. It may be easier to comprehend **Understand The Bible in 14 Days** if you have completed **Know The Bible Books in 14 Days**.

**Understand the Bible in 14 Days** will allow you to understand the bible as a whole plus its various parts, combining to give a great overall understanding of both the whole bible, the books of the bible and the wider context of a scripture and where it relates to time in the bible.

**Understand the Bible in 14 Days** will save you from the frustration of having no understanding of the context of a scripture or hearing a bible book and having no knowledge of its content.

How to Use **Understand the Bible in 14 Days**.

Each day will have How To instructions for the day. The program is based on two learning principles

- the learning of a simple but broad piece of information, then the learning of a more specific piece of information related to the previous information,
- placing new knowledge within the context of information that is already known, leading to greater memory retention.

To consolidate your knowledge, regularly recall the themes that you learn. This increase in context will not only empower you in your knowledge of the bible but will increase your interest in the bible.

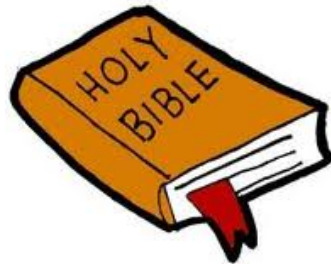
# DAY 1

## UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

### How To

Read and absorb the information.

### The Bible



One book with one overall theme of God's plan for His creation and the bringing about of a creation that is in relationship with Him, that honours his place as sovereign ruler and receive his divine goodness as He reveals his sovereignty, creativity and intimacy of relationships.

# DAY 2

## UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

### How To

Familiarise yourself with these themes. Allow them to become part of your general knowledge.

## The Bible - Themes New and Old Covenants

- the bible has 2 **Sub Themes**
  - the first is covered in **The Old Testament**
    - all that is made is perfect
    - the choice of sin makes man and creation imperfect
    - no act of man can return man to his perfect state and restore his place with God.

- the second is covered in **The New Testament**
  - man is sinful with no remedy for sin
  - a remedy for sin is provided by the goodness of God
  - perfection has been made possible
  - all that has been made will be made perfect

Throughout both runs the ongoing theme of reconciliation

- God's plan to reconcile sinful man and cursed creation to himself
- man is constantly attempted to reconcile himself to God through his own works and justification
- God is constantly showing man that the barrier is sin and sinful man can never bridge the gap of his own sin

# DAY 3

## UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

Be familiar with the following. Its relevance will become apparent and will prove invaluable in tying together the understanding of both the books of the bible, the history of Israel and history in general.

### THE BIBLE GROUPS

It is extremely helpful to have an understanding of a dream given to the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by the prophet Daniel. It reveals the nations that would be relevant to Israel in the days to come. It is found in Daniel 2:1-45. These kingdoms are shown in more detail in another dream in Daniel chapter 7 & 8 with the interpretation of the dream given by the archangel Gabriel. The details are so specific the names of some of the kingdoms are given.



### Nations to Effect Israel

#### Pre dream

- a. Egypt (in slavery to)
- b. Assyria (North kingdom taken captive by)

#### Dream - occurred

- 1 Babylon (South kingdom taken captive by)
- 2 Persia (released from captivity by)
- 3 Greece (culturally/social oppressed by)
- 4 Rome (oppressed by)

#### Dream - to come

- 5a Renewed Roman (tribulation first half)
- 5b Renewed Roman (tribulation second half)
- 6 Rock (God's everlasting Kingdom)

**26**The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was **Belteshazzar**, **Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation of it?.....**

**31**You, O king, **saw a great image**. This **great image**, whose brightness was excellent, stood before you; and the form of it was terrible. **32**This image's **head** was of fine **gold**, his **breast and his arms** of **silver**, his **belly** and his **thighs of brass**, **33**His **legs** of **iron**, his **feet** part of **iron and part of clay**. **34**You saw it until a **stone** was **cut out without hands**, which **hit the image** on his feet that were of iron and clay, and **broke them** to pieces. **35**Then was the **iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together**, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that **no place was found for them**: and the **stone** that smote the image became a **great mountain, and filled the whole earth**.

**36**This is the dream; and I will tell the interpretation of it to the king. **37**You, O king, are a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. **38**And where ever the children of men live, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven has he given to your hand, and has made you ruler over them all. **You are this head of gold**.

**39**And **after you** shall rise **another kingdom inferior to you**, and another **third kingdom of brass**, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

**40**And the **fourth kingdom** shall be **strong as iron**: for in that iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things: and as iron breaks all these, it shall break in pieces and bruise. **41**And where you saw the **feet and toes**, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the **kingdom shall be divided**; but there shall be in it **the strength of the iron**, as you saw the iron mixed with miry clay. **42**And as the toes of the **feet were part iron, and part clay**, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. **43**And as you saw **iron mixed with miry clay**, they shall **mingle themselves** with the seed of men:

but **they shall not cleave one to another**, even as **iron is not mixed with clay**.

[44](#)And in the days of these kings shall the **God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed**: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and **consume all these kingdoms**, and it **shall stand for ever**. [45](#)As you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

**It is also worth reading Daniel chapter 7 & 8 for the second dream which discusses the kingdoms more specifically. If you are familiar with history you will see the world dominant kingdoms of Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar, Medo-Persia under Darius and Cypress, Greece under Alexander the Great, and Rome prophesied in detail long before they came to pass.**

There are a number of theories as to whom these kingdoms actually represent as there have been numerous kingdoms rise up in the days since Nebuchadnezzar. It is revealed in Scripture that gold was Babylon, silver was the Medo-Persians, and bronze was Greece, so these are not disputed. When establishing who the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> kingdom represent it must be remembered that all these nations relate to God using these kingdoms as a chastising tool against Israel in his ultimate plans for her. Therefore these kingdoms cannot occur between 70 and 1948 when Israel was no longer a nation. In Revelation 17:10 John mentions the first five kingdoms are past and that the sixth 'is' and two more are to come. The ninth kingdom will be God's eternal kingdom as represented by the stone in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. John was in the midst of the Roman Empire's kingdom when he wrote that the 6<sup>th</sup> kingdom 'is'. It therefore relates to being the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

The 5<sup>th</sup> empire even though it relates to Rome as it is partially made of the same material as the Roman Empire does not automatically equate to it being the Roman Catholic religion. Rome the empire did not follow the Orthodox Christian religion. According to scripture the Roman Empire was to be an empire that was different to those empires before it. It was known as the empire of iron. Iron is hard and known for breaking that which it comes against. The Roman Empire was known for its harshness and cruelty which will be reflected in the 5<sup>th</sup> empire which is also partly iron.

# DAY 4

## UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

### How To

Read through the theme of these books in the various forms. See how each event roles onto the next one. Allow the flow of the story to be formed in you.

## The Books of Moses



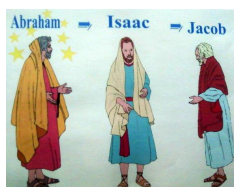
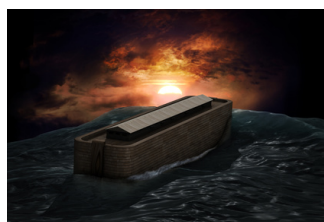
**Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy**

**Creation through to the  
death of Moses**

### In these books;

- **creation** is revealed.
- the **social order** is established through **Noah's flood** with 70 nations, the **Tower of Babel** and the splitting of the land mass into continents in the days of Peleg is recorded.

- **Abram** is chosen and 71<sup>st</sup> nation is established through him. He is separated, protected, delivered, given land, brought into intimate relationship with and tested in God's plan for him.
- Abram's name, meaning 'Father' is changed to **Abraham**, meaning 'Father of many nations'.
- Abraham father's **Isaac**.
- Isaac father's **Jacob**.
- Jacob father's 12 sons. His name is changed to **Israel**. The descendents of his 12 sons form the **12 tribes of Israel**, each named after the sons.
- One son, Joseph, is sold into slavery by the others but through this, becomes the Prime Minister of Egypt, saving it and the Israelites from a great drought.
- The Israelites live in **Egypt** for a time, eventually becoming slaves to a cruel Pharaoh.
- They are delivered through **Moses**.
- Having only known slavery and the laws of Egypt, God gives them their own **laws** and a Land he has Promised to them.
- Because they do not believe God's promises for them they **wander in the desert** for 40 years.
- They are prepared for the **Promised Land**.
- **Moses** dies.



With Adam and Eve it all began  
But soon God wanted to start again  
At the coming of Noah, man's sinfulness reigned  
God judges through flood with 40 days of rain

God started again with Noah's offspring  
But nothing had changed in man, not a thing  
Back to his sin and resistance of God  
This time deciding he was his own lord

They built up a tower in the city of Babel  
Believing with them anything was able  
God said 'that's enough', man needs his place  
And confused each man's language sending each to their space

Then a covenant God made with the man Abram  
Then through his son Isaac, then Jacob's whole clan  
From Jacob to Israel, the man was renamed  
The change was in character as well as in name

One of Israel's son, Joseph  
Was by his brothers betrayed  
Rose highly in Egypt  
And Prime Minister was made

His position saved Israel  
From the greatest of droughts  
But in generations coming  
Brought their slavery about

God raised up Moses  
To set Israel free  
But their sin overcame them  
When they refused to believe

So they wandered the desert  
For the next 40 years  
Until those who had doubted  
By death disappeared

In the books **Genesis**, **Exodus** and **Numbers**, man is created and the **social order** eventually established. God raises up the **Israelites** to represent him in the earth. While living in **Egypt** they become slaves to the Egyptians. God delivers them through Moses, but through their own unbelief are forbidden from entering the promised land until the unbelievers have all died.



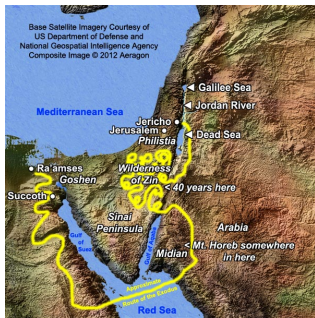
The creation of Adam and Eve heralds the start of the human race. Their disobedience sees sin enter mankind and the earth.



The order of the human race is eventually established following the Flood of Noah, the Tower of Babel, the calling of Abraham, who father's Isaac, who father's Jacob, whose descendents are the Israelites, Hebrews or Jews.



Living in Egypt, the Israelites become slaves and face oppression from another nation. This is the first of seven times they would face it. Through Moses they are released and head for the land promised to them.



When they are given the opportunity by faith to enter the land, they fail and instead accuse God of failing them. As a result they are forbidden to enter the land until the unbelievers have died.

As slaves, all those who left Egypt had only known life as a slave, and had only known the laws of Egypt. As is well documented from the slave trade in American and Europe it is difficult for slaves to flick a internal switch and live as a free man or woman and make decisions after a life of answering commands. God, in **Leviticus** and **Deuteronomy** gave them the law which served numerous purposes. It gave them the boundaries that ex-slaves needed to manage their freedom, it provided the regulations to show them that no adherence to those regulations can bridge the gap that sin caused, and it provided a stand alone nation whose ways and traditions were different from all other people groups, not only in the day but in all days to come.

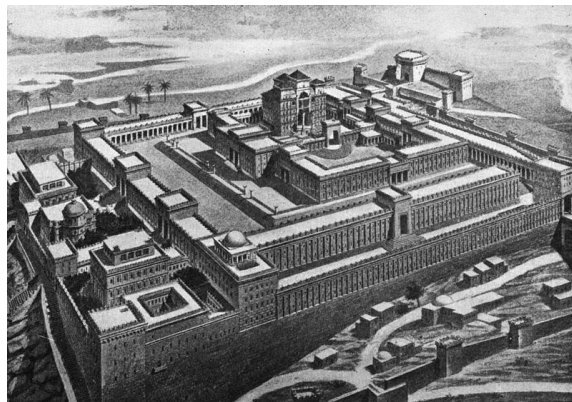
# DAY 5

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### How To

Read through the theme of these books in the various forms. See how each event roles onto the next one. Allow the flow of the story to be formed in you.

### The Books of History

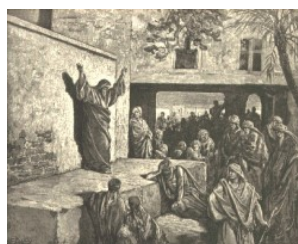
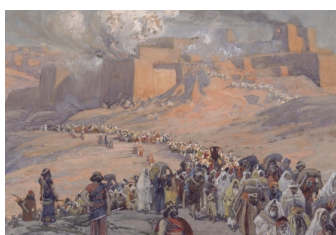
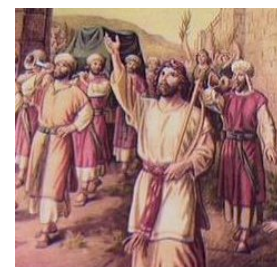
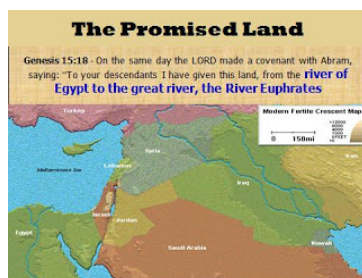


**Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuels, Kings,  
Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther**

**The history of Israel from their first captivity in  
Egypt to their third captivity in  
Babylon - the chest of gold**

## In these books;

- after the death of Moses they are led by Joshua.
- they go into and are established in the **promised land**, a large area in the middle east.
- they refuse to completely obey God in removing all the inhabitants from their land, instead making covenants with some and intermarrying.
- after the death of Joshua they are led by elders and then **judges** before demanding to have **kings** to rule them, the first is Saul, then David then his son Solomon.
- a judgement of God divides the tribes of Judah and Benjamin from the other 10 tribes.
- the 10 tribes in the north are called Israel and represent Solomon's unrighteous reign while the 2 tribes in the south called Judah representing David's righteous reign that will be seen to continue into eternity
- the northern kingdom is wicked and are overtaken by and exiled into **Assyria**, Israel's second oppression. They don't return.
- later, with the south now unfaithful to God, he allows them to be taken captive by **Babylon** to chastise them. This is their third oppression.
- God uses **prophets** to speak to the kingdoms prior to, during and after these years. This is recorded in the books of the **prophets**.
- when the Persian Empire defeats Babylon, Judah who is now also called Israel, are released in stages to return to **Jerusalem** to rebuild their city and lives.



When Moses days were ended  
Joshua took his place  
To lead them to the Promised Land  
To experience God's grace

After him the hand of Judges  
Until Israel demanded Kings  
God gave them prophets to help rulers rule  
The books of history record these things

To defeat the land's inhabitants  
Was to be the way  
God had already laid the plan  
But Israel again disobeyed

They refused to do as he'd stated  
Mingling with the foes in the land  
Disobedience caused them grief yet again  
Having trouble throughout the land

Over centuries God kept on warning  
Their lives were contrary to him  
Every prophet's message unheeded  
Without change their future was dim

Finally God said 'Enough time, no more'  
Assyria then Babylon strike  
Jerusalem in ruins, the nation destroyed  
For Judah 70 years ends their plight

Til Cyrus the Persia defeated his foe  
Taking the Babylon kingdom with glee  
He let the Israelites go back to their land  
To rebuild their lives and city

## Chronological History Books and their corresponding events

**Joshua → Judges → Samuel → Kings → Ezra → Nehemiah**  
Into the land → the judges → the kings → Babylon → return to Jerusalem

## Other Books

Ruth, Esther - women of great characters

Chronicles - lines of genealogy

# DAY 6

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### How To

The major and minor prophets are looked at together for the next 3 days, firstly in biblical order, then in chronological order. The chronological order helps to bring a clearer perspective. Today, look to get an overall understanding of the prophets and their purpose. Day 8 will be spent on their chronology and then Day 9 seals the understanding.

Read through today's information to get an understanding. Memorising is not required.

### The Prophets



**Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel,  
Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah,  
Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah,  
Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

**The prophets tell the story of the rebellion of Israel in the years leading up to, during and after Israel's second and third exile into Assyria and then Babylon. The prophets are also used to bring about a compelling theme of sin, rebellion, consequence and restoration.**

Once in the promised land the Israelites spent much of their time in rebellion to God. Some leaders sought after God while others rebelled against him. The prophets were used of God to call the people and their leaders to turn back to him and to herald the events that would occur if they did not. Major or minor refers to book size not significance of the message. Most of the events written by the prophets were based on the exile into Babylon, the third major oppression and slavery of Israel after Egypt and Assyria. Judah-Israel was fully conquered, captured and exiled to Babylon in 586BC, as prophesied for 70 years. However their oppression by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had started 21 years earlier. It was during this time of oppression they could have heeded the prophets' warnings and repented from their sin and turned back to God. Unrepentant rebellion against God will always have consequences and will bypass God's plan and blessing.

**Isaiah** - a type of mini bible having 2 section, the first of 39 chapters dealing with judgement of Israel for rebellion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> with 27 chapters showing eternal restoration under the Messiah. Written by Isaiah.

**Jeremiah** - wrote two books. He warns Israel to turn back to God from sin. Unheeded, the captivity into Babylon was the result. Written by Jeremiah.

**Lamentations** means 'to express grief' - five poems expressing Jeremiah's grief over the captivity of Israel and destruction of Jerusalem. Written by Jeremiah.

**Ezekiel** - written during the exile in Babylon, it is a call during their captivity for ungodly Jews to return to God and avoid further judgement and for Godly Jews to continue faithfully. Written by Ezekiel.

**Daniel** - written during the exile in Babylon, it includes the prophecies of the worldly kingdoms to come and their oppression of Israel, and God's eternal kingdom to come. Written by Daniel.

**Hosea** - the story of God commanding the prophet Hosea to marry and remain faithful to, an unfaithful woman. Written over 100 years before

Babylon it records and predicts Israel's ongoing rebellion. Just as Hosea was, so God is faithful to the end. Written by Hosea.

**Joel** - written before Babylon, it is a reminder that Israel's rebellion will bring judgement but repentance will restore her blessings. She will be eternally restored under the Messiah. Written by Joel.

**Amos** - judgement will come upon all who sin, Jew or Gentile. Israel will not escape judgement because of her position as having been chosen by God for a purpose. Written by Amos.

**Obadiah** - a reminder of the covenant God has with Israel to bless those who bless her and curse those who curse her. Written by Obadiah.

**Jonah** - the story of Jonah and the whale, showing God's heart for the lost as he sends Jonah to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. Written by Jonah.

**Micah** - a reminder that God has an end purpose in mind, to bring all of creation back under his hand and command. Written by Micah.

**Nahum** - the follow on from Johan. The city spared by Jonah's preaching will be destroyed for returning to sin. Nahum shows that grace has boundaries. Written by Nahum.

**Habakkuk** - written just decades before exile into Babylon, it again predicts and shows God will deal with sin. God seemed slow to act but his plan to deal with sin while upholding the righteous has its time, using the Babylonians as his chastising tool. Written by Habakkuk.

**Zephaniah** - the Israelites both in their personal lives and corporate worship, had turn from God and embraced evil. Zephaniah implores them to return to God. It was written by Zephaniah decades before the oppression of Israel.

**Haggai** - having returned from exile in Babylon back to Jerusalem, Haggai compels the Israelites to now return to their God. Their future was bright if they would allow God to be their God. Written by Haggai.

**Zechariah** - speaks to the people that although they had been exiled God had not forgotten his promises to them. They would be fulfilled through the temple and their future Messiah. He provided prophetic snapshots spanning their days and the days of the generations to come. Now back in their land they would still be held accountable for sin but God would ultimately overcome. Written by Zachariah.

**Malachi** - having returned from exile and rebuilt the temple, there was a spiritual lack lustre over Israel. Having expected God to visit them mightily on their return, they were still failing to see the flip side of their responsibility to God. Written by Malachi.

## Memory Tags

**Isaiah** wrote the mini bible.

**Jeremiah** wrote his warning just before the Babylon exile, and after escaping the exile grieved the destruction of Jerusalem in **Lamentations**.

**Ezekiel and Daniel** were written from inside the captivity in Babylon.

**Hosea** was a faithful man to an unfaithful wife.

**Jonah** and the whale, which was followed on by **Nahum**.

**Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi** were written after the release from exile and return to Jerusalem

## The Woven Themes of the Prophets

- ISAIAH - God judges rebellion but offers abundant grace
- JEREMIAH - Choose God over sin.
- LAMENTATIONS - Rebellion brings destruction.
- EZEKIAL - The sinful should turn to God, the faithful should be diligent to remain faithful.
- DANIEL - God has plans and counter plans. No one will outdo him.
- HOSEA - Choose to be faithful as God has chosen to be faithful.
- JOEL - There is restoration in repentance, but destruction in rebellion.
- AMOS - Sin is not permitted. No one is exempt.
- OBADIAH - God will look after his own.
- JONAH - God will seek the lost.
- MICAH - God has eternal plans and purposes which he will fulfil.
- NAHUM - The grace of God has boundaries.
- HABAKKUK - God's judgement has timing.
- ZEPHANIAH - God does not accept token worship.
- HAGGAI - God restores - with expectation.
- ZECHARIAH - God chastises with love and keeps promises.
- MALACHI - God expects our faithfulness and worship regardless of what we see in return.

# DAY 7

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### How To Use

The prophets provide a chronological view of the rebellion of Israel resulting in the northern kingdoms exile into Assyria, then the southern kingdoms oppression by, and then exile into, Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar. The story is not presented chronologically in the books of the bible. Whilst a complete knowledge of the books of the prophets chronologically is not necessary, an understanding of them is a great asset. Review the chronological order presented in the many formats provided to obtain a basic overview and understanding.

## The Prophets - Chronologically



**Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah,  
Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah,  
Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel,  
Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

The dating of all the writings of the prophets is not exactly known. The following is one view from the variety of the evidence available. Other writers may provide alternative arrangements of some of the books.

The warnings to Israel by their prophets came centuries before their exiles. Prior to the Babylonian exile they were oppressed by King Nebuchadnezzar for 21 years before going fully into exile in Babylon. They were in exile for 70 years in Babylon then released by King Cyrus whose Kingdom of Persia had conquered Babylon. It is represented as the chest of silver in Daniel's vision of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Exile to Assyria                      Beginning of Babylonian exile 607BC  
722BC                                      Full exile 586BC  
Return to Jerusalem 537BC

Obad 845 Joel 810 Jonah 775 Amos 750 Hosea 730 Micah 725 Isaiah 690 Nahum 650 Zeph 630 Habak 610 Jeremiah 590 Lam 586 Ezek 570 Daniel 533 Haggai 520 Zech 475 Malachi 430  
Dates are not exact. Some are circa (around about), some are the mid-point of the time period they were written in, some are merely speculated.

Bible Order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Chron. Order	7	11	12	13	14	5	2	4	1	3	6	8	10	9	15	16	17

- \*\* - biblically first but chronologically middle
- \*\* - biblically early but chronologically late
- \*\* - biblically middle but chronologically early
- \*\* - biblically late but chronologically middle
- \*\* - biblically last and chronologically last

Bible Order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Chron. Order															15	16	17

Chron. Order	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Bible Order	9	7	10	8	6	11	1	12	14	13	2	3	4	5	15	16	17

- \*\* - chronologically first but biblically middle
- \*\* - chronologically early middle but biblically first
- \*\* - chronologically middle but biblically late
- \*\* - chronologically late but biblically early
- \*\* - chronologically last and biblically last

### Chronological Memory Tags

- **Obadiah** is chronologically perhaps the first written book of the prophets
- **Malachi** is biblically last and written last
- the last three bible books **Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi** were written after the exile. They have both the same bible and chronological order of 15, 16 and 17.
- **Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel** were written during the time of the captivity, so chronologically are towards the end, but biblically they appear early at 3, 4 and 5.
- Jeremiah spoke both a warning before the exile in the book **Jeremiah** and then grieved following the exile in **Lamentations**.
- **Nahum** is the follow on from **Johan**, famous for the whale story calling the people of Ninevah to repentance. While initially repentant, their repentance does not last and their judgement is recorded in Nahum.
- **Isaiah**, the first major prophet, is biblically first but comes chronologically in the middle.
- The other major prophets are chronologically towards the end.
- The first six minor prophets are the first 6 books chronologically but not in that order.
- The three books prior to the final three, are chronologically in the middle.
- **Jeremiah** and **Ezekiel** were peers. Jeremiah escaped the exile while Ezekiel was captured.

## Books Written Prior to Oppression and Exile

Obadiah Joel Amos Hosea Micah Zephaniah Habakkuk Jeremiah Isaiah



Joel's moss-coloured shirt  
being hosed



2<sup>nd</sup>  
quarter



1<sup>st</sup>  
half



last  
quarter



1<sup>st</sup> half  
REVERSED

## Written During the Exile

Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel (Lam Illegally Dancing)



last 3/5

## Written After the Exile

Haggai Zechariah Malachi (Haggling Zech and I Malling)



2<sup>nd</sup>  
half



## Others regarding the city of Nineveh

Jonah, Nahum (Join Ham)



1<sup>st</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup>  
quarters

# DAY 8

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### How To

Having looked at the prophets firstly biblically and then chronologically, today looks at overall understanding.

### The Prophets

- **Isaiah** - MINI BIBLE - mimicking the bible with 2 sections, one of judgement and one of restoration, with identical numbers of chapters to bible books in each section.
- **Hosea** - THE FAITHFUL PROPHET - the walking model of God, Hosea is called to marry an unfaithful wife and remain faithful to her.
- **Joel** - 'DAY OF THE LORD' - introduces in detail the DAY of the LORD or the events that occur at the end of the age.
- **Amos** - PROPHET TO THE NORTH - was sent to the northern kingdom to prophecy their judgement. He wrote 141 verses on the judgement of Israel. Only the last 5 give a hope of the restoration of Israel, but it is not through them, but through David's tribe in the south. The northern tribe was to be scattered throughout the nations.
- **Micah** - THE CHRIST PROPHET - he had the great honour of seeing prophetically both the first and second coming of Christ, firstly to Bethlehem and secondly to his millennial reign.
- **Zephaniah** - THE ROYAL PROPHET - he was a prophet who came from royal lineage, his great grandfather was the King Hezekiah. While Hezekiah's father, the wicked King Ahaz had all but destroyed faith and worship in Israel, Hezekiah as King restored the nation to God. Zephaniah draws the comparison between the

soon coming destruction of Judah and the eventual destruction of the wider world in the Day of the Lord.

- **Jeremiah** - THE EYE WITNESS - he was present for the defeat of the southern tribe Judah by Babylon, after calling for her to repent. He returned to walk the street of Jerusalem seeing its destruction and recording his lamentation in **Lamentations**.
- **Ezekiel** - THE ENCOURAGING PROPHET - having had his warnings ignored and the exile into Babylon resulting with himself being taken captive, he continued while in exile to implore the nation to adhere to their God.
- **Daniel** - THE SERVANT PROPHET - despite having a heart after God and his nation, he faithfully served the Babylonian and then the Mede-Persian rulers. Prophetically he saw much of the event to come especially the nations that would affect Israel.
- **Obadiah** - THE PROPHET OF EDOM - his prophecy of judgement is mainly towards Edom, one of Israel's neighbours for their poor treatment towards her. Consequently their race is no longer. Edom was located below the nation of Israel.
- **Jonah** and **Nahum** - THE PROPHETS OF ASSYRIA - as God continues to judge not only the nation of Israel but also the nations around them. Assyria was located north east of Israel.
- **Habakkuk** - THE FRUSTRATED PROPHET - he dwells on the depth of Israel's sin with seemingly no resultant action from God. His searching earns him a personal dialogue with God.
- **Haggai** - THE FULL PICTURE PROPHET - it seems Haggai saw Jerusalem in its original condition, then its destruction, then returned to see its rebuilding.
- **Zechariah** - THE DATED PROPHET - some of the prophetic messages he gave are dated to the day. A young man both a prophet and a priest he returned to rebuild Jerusalem with prophetic encouragement.
- **Malachi** - THE FINAL PROPHET - now back in Jerusalem with the temple rebuilt Israel, and in particular its leaders, have returned to their sinful ways. After Malachi the voice of God is now silent.

The dual sided Mede-Persian Empire of Darius and Cyrus, represented by the arms and torso of Nebuchadnezzar's image, released the Israelites from Babylon. They were later defeated by Greece, led by Alexander the Great - the stomach and thighs of bronze from Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The Kingdom of Greece then

dominated the known world. Historical sources say that Alexander had intended to annihilate the Jewish stronghold in Jerusalem however the high priest of the day decided to meet Alexander outside the city in a hope of placating him. Alexander, who bowed to virtually no man, came down from his horse and bowed to the high priest. When asked later by one of his generals of his actions he revealed that he had had a dream in which he had seen this same man dressed in the same garments. He took this to be a 'good omen' and so instead of annihilating these people, he allowed them to live their lives as they pleased. Later, Greek kings were not so kind to the Jewish people, bringing harsh rules and influences to Israel. The influence of Greece is telling. Greek was one of the languages spoken in the days of the gospel, the New Testament was written in Greek, many new testament figures names were Greek, there are many Greek structures and the Hellenistic society (society of self pleasures) that has come from the Greek culture is historically well known.

It was then the Roman Empire that became the dominant force of the known world and the oppressor of Israel. It was represented in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar by the legs of iron. It was their dominion whose hand played in the death of Christ. Ironically in the years to come it was the Roman Empire who took Christianity as its religion as the Roman Catholic Church. It too became a elitist dominance just as the Roman Empire had been.

During the time of the Roman Empire Israel lost its place on the world stage, being annihilated as a nation but not as a people group in the year 70. In 1948 they again became a nation following their persecution in WW2.

The events of the downfall of Mede-Persia, the rise and fall of Greece and the rise and eventual demise of Rome occurred in the time period between the Prophets and the Gospels, between the Old and New Testament writings.

# DAY 9

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

Use the memory tags to memorise the role of each gospel.

### THE GOSPELS THE GOSPELS



### Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

The gospels are so named as they give a first hand view of the 'good news', who was the person of Jesus Christ. They provide 4 different angles to view Christ and his ministry.

Matthew - reveals him as a KING

Mark - reveals him as a SERVANT

Luke - reveals him as the SON of MAN

John - reveals him as the SON of GOD



**Matthew - the forever KING**  
**Mark - the greatest SERVANT**  
**Luke - the SON of MAN making him human**  
**John - the SON of GOD making him God**

**Memory tag.**  
**The KING of heaven became a SERVANT, becoming the**  
**SON of MAN but revealed as the SON of GOD.**

# DAY 10

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

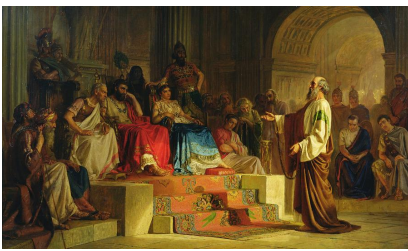
Become familiar with the sequence of the books to tie together the gospels to the letters.

### ACTS



### Acts of the Apostles

The book of Acts charts the final ascension of Jesus to Heaven through to the end of the ministry of Paul the Apostle. In between the Holy Spirit is given to the disciples, the church is commenced, persecuted and dispersed. Christianity as it is known has begun.



- 1 Jesus returns to Heaven
- 2 Holy Spirit is given to the disciples
- 3 Church is commenced
- 4 Church is persecuted
- 5 Church is dispersed
- 6 End of the ministry of Paul the Apostle

The **Acts** resembles a book shelf.

- The book ends are the ending of the earthly ministry of Jesus and the ending of the earthly ministry of the Apostle Paul, the two most significant figures of the Christian Church.
- Between the two are the stories of the establishing of the church.



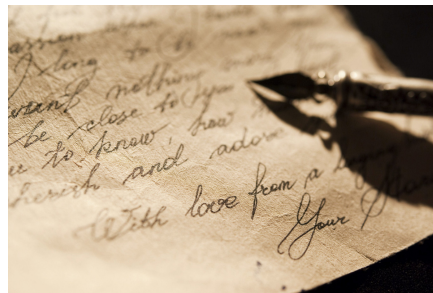
# DAY 11

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

Read and understand the overall role and purpose of the letters of Paul and others.

### The Letters of Paul and Others



**Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians,  
Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy,  
Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, Peter, John,  
Jude**

Everybody needs **encouragement**.  
Everybody needs **critique**.

Without **encouragement** one does not grow.  
Without **critique** one does not grow.

Without **encouragement and critique** no one can grow effectively.

This is true of both individuals and organisations.

The **church** needed **encouragement and critique**.

The **churches** needed **encouragement and critique**.

The **believers** needed **encouragement and critique**.

The **church** needs **encouragement and critique**.

**Churches** need **encouragement and critique**.

**Believers** need **encouragement and critique**.

The **letters** of **Paul** and **Others** provided both to all three and continue to provide both to all three.

It is difficult in our modern, communicative society to imagine life in the day these letters were written. Not only were there no emails and mobile phones, there was no television information, no library resources, no supply stores. Even our snail mail would have been an unimaginable swift luxury in those days. While there was an official postal service, it was restricted to government business. Private letters were sent by the hand of those travelling towards where the letter needed to go. There were no travel agents, flights or buses. To travel overseas one would have to travel, on foot or animal, to the port and seek a ship to board. No one would have any knowledge of the person's voyage until they returned or a letter or message arrived. Should they die, their family may not know for years, or at all. The need to travel was not received joyfully. It was an arduous, hazardous and uncomfortably task. Those who travelled knew they may not return, particularly if their voyage was across water.

Paul and other apostles and disciples took many extensive trips overseas to extend the gospel, plant churches and support established churches and believers. Letters provided the only other external support that could be given to new churches who were at risk of persecution, heretics and poor doctrine and to communicate with those with whom they had laboured in the gospel.

# DAY 12

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

Read the events and make them familiar.

### The Revelation



### Revelation

With all the other disciples and the Apostle Paul having died, only the disciple John remained. His persecutors exile him to the island of Patmos where he has a vision of Jesus Christ and receives the final chapter of the story to come. He faithfully scribes his vision;

- there is still much to occur in the last days
- there will be many signs upon the earth
- Israel will again take a precedence of the attention
- events will occur both on earth and in heaven

- these events will include the kingdoms of iron and clay from Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
- the victory of Christ is declared
- the Millennial reign of Christ on earth is foretold
- the renewing and joining of heaven and earth will occur
- this last and eternal Kingdom, seen as the rock in the dream interpreted by Daniel is established
- the initial plan of God and his creation will be fulfilled

# DAY 13

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

Read the summary of the bible and allow the whole story to become familiar. Do the same on Day 14.

### Summary

In **Genesis** the earth is created, man is created. Man falls into sin and the earth is cursed. Man's sin becomes worse and worse until God regrets creating him. Noah who is righteous petitions God. Wickedness is perforce through man and God judges all through a flood. Noah and his family begin the second chapter of mankind with 70 family nations listed in Genesis 10. Man becomes full of his own importance and builds a tower in defiance of God. God scatters the people and confuses them by enforcing their different languages. The people groups result as the nations. God singles out for himself a man Abram through whom he plans to reveal himself to all men as the 71<sup>st</sup> nation. He makes a covenant with Abram which he then takes up with his son Isaac and with his son Jacob. Jacob has his name changed by God to Israel. Israel has twelve sons, whose descendants are the twelve tribes of Israel. One of the sons is Joseph. Through envy Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery but through the hand of God he becomes the Prime Minister of Egypt. From this he saves his family from a great famine by bringing them to Egypt. Later in **Exodus** they are made the slaves of the Egyptians but God brings them out using a man named Moses. He takes them to the land he has promised since Abraham. But they refuse to believe he will give them victory over the people of the land so God declares that none of the unbelieving generation will enter the land, so they wander in the desert for 40 years, until all the unbelievers have died and then they enter the land. Having only known slavery and the laws of the Egyptians, God gives them their own laws in **Leviticus**. In **Numbers** God takes a census and counts the

people. The law is retold in **Deuteronomy**. When Moses dies **Joshua** is the leader who takes them into the land. However again they are disobedient and do not remove all the inhabitants of the land which causes trouble for all the years to come. After the death of Joshua, **Judges** lead them in military campaigns. The story of **Ruth** interjects in the chronological story to tell of a young woman called Ruth who faithfully follows her widowed mother-in-law and is rewarded with a husband and a son. **Samuel** continues the story as Israel calls for a king like the nations around them. God gives them the first of their **Kings**, Saul and then David, who as a young man had bravely killed a giant named Goliath. David's son Solomon takes many foreign wives and as a result **Isaiah** is divided into a northern and southern kingdom. Many kings followed, both wicked and righteous. Continued disobedience sees the northern kingdom exiled into Assyria not returning to the land. The southern kingdom is overtaken by Babylon and taken into exile. They return to Israel 70 years later and the rebuilding of Jerusalem is recorded in **Ezra** and **Nehemiah**. **Esther** records a young girl's bravery to save the nation of Israel by risking her own life. The details of the warning about, and events around, the exile into Assyria and then Babylon are recorded through the words of the prophets in **Isaiah** through to **Malachi** after their release and return to Jerusalem.

**Matthew** to **John** records the life of Jesus. In **Acts** the church is born and empowered by the Holy Spirit. A man named Paul initially persecutes the church but encounters Jesus and becomes an apostle of Christianity. He travels and teaches for decades to come. In **Romans** through to **Jude** he and others plant churches, write letters to critique and encourage churches and individuals and visit believers. In **Revelation** the final living disciple of Jesus, John, on an island called Patmos receives a vision of Jesus and the events that will transpire in the times to come before the ushering in of the next age.

# DAY 14

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

### HOW TO

Read the summary of the bible again and allow the whole story to become familiar.

### Summary

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## What's Next - Day 15+

Any bible book can now be read with contextual understanding. The book of Daniel is a great place to start because each chapter records a stand alone historical event in the days of Daniel, like the reading of any history book. Daniel though comes with heavenly commentary.