

## How to Study the Bible

Use different methods to study. Reading just a few verses a day is good but there is much more.... try the ideas below. If you need any help see Gary or one of the Elder's

### 1) Topical Study

Select a subject and trace it through the Bible. If your Bible has a chain-reference system this is made easier.

### 2) Biographical Study

Study various characters of the Bible. See their highs and lows. Learn their faith and from their mistakes. Why not get a pad and write notes on them.

### 3) Book Study

Select a book and master it! Work out its author, its original readers, circumstance under which it was written, its purpose and its main teachings.

### 4) Verse Study

Memorise the great verses of the Bible. Memorisation is a defensive and offensive weapon.

## Condensed Outline of the Old Testament

### *PENTATEUCH – FIVE BOOKS*

**Genesis** – The book of origins. The origin of the universe, human race etc. Largely a record of Israel's roots and early history.

**Exodus** – The enslavement and deliverance of Israel and their history on the way to Canaan under leadership of Moses.

**Leviticus** – The book of the laws concerning morality, cleanliness, food etc. It teaches access to God through sacrifice.

**Numbers** – The book of the wanderings of Israel. Their forty years in the wilderness.

**Deuteronomy** – A repetition of the laws given shortly before Israel entered Canaan.

### *HISTORICAL BOOKS – 12 BOOKS*

**Joshua** – A record of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua and of the division of the land among the 12 tribes.

**Judges** – The history of the six subjugations of Israel and of various deliverances of the land through the 15 judges.

**Ruth** – The story of the life of Ruth, an ancestor of David and of Jesus Christ.

**1 & 2 Samuel** – The history of Samuel, with the beginning and early years of the monarchical period in Israel under reigns of Saul and David.

**1 & 2 Kings** – The early history of the kingdom of Israel and later of the divided kingdom. The heroic prophets Elijah and Elisha appear.

**1 & 2 Chronicles** – Largely a record of the reigns of David, Solomon and of the kings of Judah up to the time of the captivity.

**Ezra** – A record of the return of the Jews from captivity and of the rebuilding of the temple.

**Nehemiah** – An account of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the re-establishing of the sacred ordinances.

**Esther** – The story of Queen Esther’s deliverance of the Jews from the plot of Haman and of the beginnings of feast of Purim.

**Job** – A book about suffering. The book shows the malice of satan, the patience of Job, the vanity of human philosophy, the wisdom of God, and the final deliverance of the sufferer.

**Psalms** – A collection of 150 spiritual songs, poems and prayers.

**Proverbs** – A collection of moral and religious maxims and discourses.

**Ecclesiastes** - Reflections on the vanity of life and on men’s duties and obligations to God.

**Song of Songs** – A religious poem symbolising the mutual love of Christ and the Church.

### ***MAJOR PROPHETS – FIVE BOOKS***

**Isaiah** – The great prophet of the redemption. A book rich in Messianic prophecies mingled with woes pronounced upon sinful nations.

**Jeremiah** – The weeping prophet. Lived from the time of Josiah to the captivity.

**Lamentations** – A series of dirges by Jeremiah lamenting the afflictions of Israel.

**Ezekiel** – Full of striking metaphors vividly portraying the sad condition of God’s people and the pathway to future glory.

**Daniel** – A book of personal biography and apocalyptic visions concerning events in both secular and sacred history.

### ***MINOR PROPHETS – TWELVE BOOKS***

**Hosea** – Contemporary of Isaiah and Micah. Main theme: The apostasy of Israel.

**Joel** – Prophet of Judah. Main theme: National repentance and its blessings.

**Amos** – The herdsman-prophet was a courageous reformer, denouncing selfishness and sin.

**Obadiah** – Main theme: The doom of Edom and final deliverance of Israel.

**Jonah** – The reluctant missionary who was taught by bitter experience the lesson of obedience and the depth of divine mercy.

**Micah** – This book gives a dark picture of the moral condition of Israel and Judah but foretells the establishment of a Messianic kingdom.

**Nahum** – Main theme: The destruction of Nineveh.

**Habakkuk** – Written in the Babylonian period. Main theme: The mysteries of providence. How can a just God allow a wicked nation to oppress Israel?

**Zephaniah** – This book is sombre in tone, filled with threatenings, but it ends in a vision of the future glory of Israel.

**Haggai** - A colleague of Zechariah. He reproves the people for slackness in building the second temple but promises a return of God’s glory when the building would be completed.

**Zechariah** – Contemporary with Haggai. He helps to arouse the Jews to rebuilding the temple. He has a series of eight visions and sees the ultimate triumph of God’s kingdom.

**Malachi** – Gives a graphic picture of the closing period of Old Testament history. He shows the necessity of reforms before the coming of the Messiah.