

People all over the world read the Bible because it contains answers to our problems, warns us of dangers, gives us hope and opens the door to eternal life. The Bible is God's Word and ranges from the time even before the foundation of the earth through the history of the human race to the present day and goes further, telling us what will happen in the future, even after we die. It is our richest resource to equip us for every challenge even in the face of death. It contains



B-asic
I-information
B-efore
L-eaving
E-arth,

preparing us for the life hereafter. No other book in the world has such a range and scope as this. God reveals himself, his thoughts and purpose for us humans through the Bible. More than 40 authors over the centuries were inspired by God to write down his Word. *"For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit"* (2 Peter 1:21). And for this reason anybody who wants to get to know God the Creator and his purpose for their personal life will read the Bible with reverent attention and eager interest.

The Bible is so important that much effort has been put into its translation or parts of it into more than 2400

languages. Worldwide 200 to 300 million Bibles or Bible parts are distributed yearly. The Bible is the best-seller of all times. It is the book that gives hope and changes lives, pointing towards salvation in Jesus Christ. *"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 3:16).

Zahid was a religious young man in P. In the mid 1980s he combed the streets of his village together with his mates, looking for Christians to ambush. He thought he was doing well when they chased a group of Christians away. As they ran, one of the young Christians dropped his Bible. One of Zahid's group picked it up and wanted to rip out its pages. But Zahid quickly snatched the book from the man, encouraging him to chase after the fleeing Christians instead. Later Zahid read the Bible, looking for contradictions he could use against the Christian faith. He writes: "All of a sudden a great light appeared in my room and I heard a voice call my name, "Zahid, why do you persecute me?" I was scared. I thought I was dreaming. I asked, "Who are you?" I heard, "I am the way, the truth and the life." For the next three nights the light and voice returned. Finally on the fourth night I knelt down and I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour."

From then on Zahid's hatred was suddenly gone. Jesus Christ changed his life. Zahid had found the way, the truth and the life. For this, Zahid was arrested, imprisoned for 2 years and sentenced to death. But to cut a long story short, he was unexpectedly released. It was a miracle. To this day no one knows why Zahid was suddenly allowed to go free. All he wanted to do now was share this life-saving message with everyone he knew. And this amazing story all started with the Bible, the best book to read.

Do all these reasons convince you that the Bible is worth reading? Face the challenge and expose yourself to it. The powerful words of this book can show you how to have a clean and changed heart. Read the Bible and look what it says. Jesus Christ says: *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash"* (Matthew 7:24-27).

Helpful suggestions

Have you ever bought a radio or a mobile phone? Most electronic devices come with an owner's manual that briefly explains the basics of how to get started and operate the equipment. So to get started and to make the most out of your Bible reading, here are some suggestions:

1) Select a time and place. Just as our body is strengthened by regular and healthy meals, so the health of our inner being is dependent on good food through reading the Bible. When things in our life are going smoothly we think we can manage without God's help. But don't wait until you have problems before you read your Bible. Read it daily so you will be fit and healthy for both good and hard times to come. If possible, set aside the same



time and same quiet place every day. Your time spent with God will be more meaningful if you can concentrate and establish a regular practice.

the best book to read

2) Pray. Ask God to speak to you and show you the meaning of his word, so you can benefit from it. Are you longing for someone who really cares for you? God your Creator is concerned with your well-being. He loves you and wants to be involved in your life and guide you in your decisions. Expect him to teach you. The Bible is his personal letter to you and through reading it you will get to know him better.

3) Read the Bible passage thoughtfully. If you are not yet familiar with the Bible, start reading in the New Testament with the gospel of John. Read only a few verses at a time. Continue the next day from where you left off.



4) Study God's Word. Food that is gulped down isn't well digested. Neither does the Bible mean much to us when we hurry through it. Are you living in spiritual poverty? Do you scan the word of God and

never really think about what you're reading? Dig deep. You'll be amazed at the treasures you find. Ask yourself, "What is this passage talking about?" Note the most important statement in this passage. What do you learn about God, about human beings, about your relationship to God? Is there a promise or a piece of advice? You may underline these statements in your Bible.

5) Apply the Word to your life. When food is digested, the whole body is nourished by it. When it comes to Bible reading, digestion means applying God's word to your life. God shows us principles of right living to help us in all our decisions. Ask yourself: "What have I learnt?" Apply this teaching in your life and see what a change it makes. Ask God in prayer to help you obey his word. Thank him for his promise to help you.

6) Go out in faith. *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking*

at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it – he will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:22-25). May God bless you as you study the Bible – the best book to read!

compiled by D. Matzinger

(sources: NIV Bible / "Live the word," Jude Hama / "Our daily bread", RBC ministries / "Today in the word, 1989" / "DC Talk and the voice of the martyrs 1999" / Bible tract, EBC Publications)



Life 4 you

No. 03

The Best Book to Read — the Bible



Best book to read

It is reported that when the famous pioneer Dr. David Livingston started his trek across Africa he carried along 73 books in 3 packs, weighing about 90 kg. After the party had gone a distance, Livingston was obliged to leave some of the books behind because they were too heavy to carry. As he continued his journey, his library grew less and less until he had but one book left, his Bible. It was the living Word of God, which he could not do without. He believed it and found it to be true. It was his most treasured possession.

The best book to read

the Bible