

THE BIBLE

H O P E

FOR ALL



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bible society of south africa



DEAR FRIEND

For millennia, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have been a source of hope for millions in every part of the world, under all circumstances recorded in history. Through the Bible, God's living Word continues to inspire the eternal gifts of faith, hope and love above and beyond any border or restriction that man might impose. For the past 200 years here in South Africa, and 215 years worldwide, Bible Society has been privileged to play a role in making the Bible available, accessible and affordable to all people, everywhere and in all circumstances. The Bible truly does represent *Hope for all* and it is our joy to share this booklet with you in the hope that it may help you to experience the living message of the Bible in a deeper way. Just as was the case with the two on the road to Emmaus (and back to Jerusalem), your personal journey with God's Word is the key!



Dirk Gevers

Chief Executive Officer

January 2020

THE BIBLE
HOPE
FOR ALL



bible society
of south africa

The Bible: Hope for all

First digital edition 2020

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Published by the Bible Society of South Africa
PO Box 5500, Tyger Valley 7536, Bellville

www.biblesociety.co.za

ISBN 978-0-7982-2381-2 (pdf)

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WHY DOES THE BIBLE HAVE AUTHORITY AS THE WORD OF GOD?

Through the centuries, Christians have professed that the Bible is the Word of God. It is the Word of God because it proclaims the good news of God's salvation, and according to the Bible, this message of the good news comes from God himself (Galatians 1:11-12; 1 John 1:5; Revelation 1:1-3). God introduces himself to humanity through the Bible.

- The Bible has authority because it clearly shows God's will as to how we can be saved. The Bible helps us to understand how salvation can be obtained as well as how to live redeemed lives. The full revelation of God the Father is only found through Jesus Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. Nobody comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). The crux of the Bible is the message of the salvation that Jesus Christ brings.
- The Bible has authority because the Holy Spirit cultivates it in the hearts of believers. The Bible's authority cannot be proven. One can only testify to it. The Holy Spirit cultivates faith in believers' hearts and convicts them of the truth of the Scriptures. The Bible's authority becomes apparent when the reader is convicted about the Living God.
- The Bible has authority because the Bible itself testifies to its intention and authority. The content of the Scriptures convicts the reader of the Bible's authority. The evidence of the Scriptures is used by the Holy Spirit to convict the reader of its authority.
- The Bible has authority because it is God's Word in a human language. God has given us a precious gift by putting the Word in writing. In the Scriptures, we read that the entire body of Scripture has been God-breathed and that the authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit

(2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21). The Holy Spirit used ordinary people to record the Bible in writing. It is the reason why people say that the Bible has been inspired by God. Inspired does not mean that the various books of the Bible came from heaven already ready for print. The various books were rather the product of processes in which the human authors played a significant role. God used human authors in their distinctive cultures and history, to proclaim the message of salvation in a collection of books, through the centuries. It is thus God who speaks through human words in the Bible. Most important is that the Holy Spirit ensured that the Bible came into being as the Word of God over hundreds of years.

Christians believe that the message of the Bible comes from God. Jesus comes to us through the Bible.



WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE BIBLE?

- **It brings the good news:** The Bible brings the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It narrates the faith story of how Jesus, as the only Son of God, brings new hope to a broken world.
- **It reveals the truth:** Christ is the truth (John 14:6). The Bible is about Jesus. In the words of 2 Timothy 3:16-17,

the Scriptures have tremendous value to guide believers towards truth and away from falsehood. What 2 Timothy proclaims about the Old Testament very soon came to be proclaimed for the whole Bible by the early Christians.

- **It shows us how mankind can be saved:** In Romans 10:8-10, Paul says “But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”
- **It shows us how we should live before God every day:** The Bible is filled with guidelines of how we should live our lives every day. The Ten Commandments, and Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, for example, are distinctive guidelines of how each believer should live before God in gratitude.
- **It informs us about faith and hope:** The Bible reveals that there is life after death and that we must fix our hope on Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead. It tells us that we already have a share of this hope. The Bible provides hope in a confused world.

HOW DO YOU GET TO KNOW JESUS FROM THE WORD?

It is evident that the entire New Testament is about Jesus in that all of its 27 books refer to Jesus by name. The four Gospels introduce Jesus through the narration of some of his words and deeds. For the Gospel writers, Jesus’ words and deeds cannot be understood apart from each other and both are equally as important in getting to know Jesus.

The other books of the New Testament make Jesus known to their readers by focusing on the meaning of his death and resurrection. Thus Paul rarely mention Jesus' earthly life, but rather focuses on the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection for the sake of the reader. The New Testament does not only want to portray Jesus as a historical figure. It aims to reveal him as one who restores our relationship with God.

Where Jesus and the meaning of his life, death and resurrection are directly addressed in the New Testament, in retrospect it shows that He came to fulfil the story of hope that the Old Testament proclaimed. While books in the New Testament have a clear purpose to awaken faith in Jesus (John 20:30-31) or to strengthen it (Luke 1:1-4; 1 John 5:13), the Old Testament presents the essential framework that is needed in order to understand Jesus' life. Prior to the writings, which would later be known as the books of the New Testament, the early Christians had a collection of 39 books that they inherited from the Jewish faith. The "Scriptures" as these books were known by both Jews and Christians in the time of Jesus were read by the early Christians, in a distinctive manner to make sense of Jesus' life and death. They understood the Jewish Scriptures, what is now known as the Old Testament in the Bible, as applicable to Jesus in a special way. To them, the story of Jesus, as told in the four Gospels was not new, but rather a continuation and fulfilment of the narrative of the Old Testament. Not only were the Gospels like Matthew and Luke tied to the Old Testament through Jesus' genealogy, but there are also hundreds of quotations (Matthew 2:18) and references (Matthew 11:3) of the Old Testament interwoven in the New Testament.

In summary, we can say that the Old Testament reveals God's covenant with Israel and that the apex and outcome of that covenant was his provision of a Saviour from Israel for the whole world, which the New Testament elucidates.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CONSIST OF?

The word “Bible” has been derived from the Greek word *biblion* that refers to a collection of books. The collection of 66 separate books is divided into two “testaments” that are equally important to Christians. The word “testament” here refers to an agreement or covenant between God and believers that are represented by the two collections. The old or first covenant, of which we read in the 39 books of the Old Testament, tells us about the agreement that God had with Israel before the coming of Jesus Christ. The second or new covenant, known as the New Testament, comprises 27 books and testifies to God’s agreement with believers from all nations after the coming of Christ.

In addition to these 66 books, some churches hold as authoritative a collection of books that originated during the time between the two testaments. These are termed the Deuterocanon (with the 66 books being the Protocanon).



Different types of literature in one book: In order to read any book, we have to consider the type of prose or literature to which it belongs, its composition and the relationship between this book and other books. In reading the various books of the Bible, it is important to take into account that the books are comprised of a number of different types or genres of literature. Each genre has specific rules governing its understanding. For example, we do not read a newspaper in the same manner that we do a storybook.

The following literary genres are the most important of those that appear in the Bible:

Historical books. These books have the purpose of recording historical events in order to help believers to see God's hand in history, and in so doing, to better understand their present-day situations. The historical books in the Old Testament are: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. In the New Testament, the book of Acts is also a historical book. Although of a different genre, the Gospels also contain historical content.

Questions that can help us to understand the historical books are: What happened here? Where and to whom did it happen? and Why was the story told? Furthermore, it is also important to read the biblical narratives, as with any other story, from beginning to end. The various maps in the Bible are useful to locate where events took place.

The Law. The first five books of the Old Testament are known as the Law in Judaism. The books of the Law are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These books contain a variety of narratives and guidelines to organise the nation of Israel in accordance with God's will and purpose. In reading the laws, one must keep in mind that Jesus interpreted various laws in a specific way (read Matthew 5:17-48). Broadly

speaking, there are three categories of law: ceremonial, social and moral. Some applied to the situation of Israel at that time and in that context, and others have a more universal application (for example the Ten Commandments).

Songs and poems. The Bible contains a variety of poetic texts. These texts contain poetic imagery and the wording is often more figurative in meaning than is the case in the prose texts. Books of the Bible containing poetic texts are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.

Prophetic books. The prophetic books revealed God's will to his people at a specific time – usually to get them to repent, most often of idolatry and its consequences, and return to God. They, therefore, do not only foretell future events. It is important to know something about the historical setting in which a prophecy was proclaimed so as to understand what the original meaning of the prophecy was. The introductory paragraph that is found in some translations of the Bible, written at the beginning of a book of the Bible, often provides valuable information. As the New Testament demonstrates, many prophetic passages have a forward-looking level of meaning as well, one that foretells, with hope, the coming of the Christ (the Messiah). The prophetic books are: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Gospels. The four Gospels give an account of the words and deeds of Jesus against the historical backdrop of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The person, words and deeds of Jesus are understood to be the fulfilment of the messianic longing and hope of the Old Testament books. It is very interesting to compare the different Gospels with each other. The Gospels are: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.



Letters. The most important characteristic of a letter as a type of literature is that it represents one part of a two-way conversation between the writer and the letter's readers. Considering that we are only able to read one side of the conversation (by reading the letter), it is sometimes difficult to know exactly what the conversation entailed. Yet, most of the letters of the New Testament contain valuable information about who the writer and the readers were. Unlike

today, the name of the writer of a letter in the New Testament times did not sign his/her name at the end of the letter, but mentioned it at the beginning. It was also practice that the writer provided a brief summary of himself and thereafter identified the readers and blessed them. It is interesting to note whether a specific letter was addressed to an individual (Titus 1:1 and Philemon 1-2), congregation (Philippians 1:1) or region (Galatians 1:2, 1 Peter 1:1, Revelation 1:4). The letters in the New Testament are: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude.

Apocalyptic literature. The book, Revelation, is an example of the apocalyptic (Greek for Revelation) genre of literature in that it seeks to provide comfort to Christians in difficult times. And to convey the hope that God, through Christ will finally consummate all history into his eternal reign of love, truth, justice and peace. It is characterised by the rich symbolism contained therein, most of which derives from the Old Testament. Other examples of apocalyptic literature in the Bible include portions from the books of Daniel and Zechariah 9-14.

HOW

SHOULD I READ MY BIBLE? THE BIG PICTURE

When we read any written text like a book or a letter in our everyday lives, we automatically take into account a number of factors that contribute to our understanding thereof. For example, when we retrieve post from our post box, we subconsciously ask ourselves who sent it, what type of postal item it is, and what we intend to do with it. The latter depends on our personal circumstances and how we feel about the various types of postal items. It can thus happen that accounts remain unopened when we are without an income, junk mail is directly thrown into the bin and love letters are read over and over again.

Reading the Bible in a responsible way is not materially different to how we read our postal items. The questions that we ask about when we are reading largely remain the same. Who wrote it and for whom? What type of writing is it (for example a letter or a poem)? and How should I respond? The most important difference is that where the questions with regard to our everyday reading play a subconscious role, they are more evident when reading the Bible. The Bible is indeed a book that originated more than 2 000 years ago in a strange country with other cultural norms. The historical and cultural distance between us and the original setting of the Bible necessitates that we read it with more care. Even more so, considering that we believe that we meet God in a special way when reading the Bible.

Each of the different books of the Bible is thus a document written by a writer (or writers) to a specific audience for a specific reason at a given time. In order to understand its message, much information about the writer and readers, and reason for the writing must be discovered accordingly.

The writer and his readers: For nearly two millennia, God used ordinary believers to write the various books of the Bible. Some of them were learned (like Paul) and influential (from the Psalms associated with King David) while others were people with everyday jobs like farmers (Amos). The divergent backgrounds of the writers had evidently left a mark on their respective writings. In reading the Bible, it helps to know who the writer of a book was and to whom he addressed the book.

The writers of the Bible sometimes give important clues with regard to their original audiences, through what they explain (or leave out) to their readers. If a writer, for example, explains Jewish customs in his writings, it can be concluded that the readers in all probability were not Jewish. Thus Matthew, who probably wrote for Jewish Christians, did not explain typical Jewish words or customs (Matthew 23:4-8). Luke, who wrote for a Greek-Christian audience, who were not acquainted with the geography of Israel, repeatedly explains where the various places were situated (Luke 1:26; 4:31 and 8:26). As a result, one can assume that his readers probably did not live in Israel. John 4:9 explains the political situation between Jews and Samaritans – something every Jew and Samaritan would have been aware of since childhood. For this reason, it can be concluded that the Gospel of John was not written in Israel but elsewhere and for a wider audience.

We should always bear in mind that the Bible originated in times and cultures other than ours, and we should read and interpret it accordingly.

Why was a specific book of the Bible written? The original reason why a book of the Bible was written is an important guide in understanding it today. Some of the writers of the Bible (for example, Luke 1:1-4, 1 John 5:13) provide clear indications as to why they have been written and even how to use the

book. Another way to find out the reason why a book was written, is to carefully read the introduction provided with each book of the Bible.

When was the book written? Although, some books and portions of the Bible contain indications about the time in which they had been written, it is very difficult to determine the exact dates the books were written solely using the Bible. The introductions to the various books of the Bible, however, provide approximate times of origin when this is known. The books of the Bible have also not necessarily been arranged in the order in which they were written. Paul's letters, for example, have not been ordered chronologically in the New Testament but rather collected into two groups. First, we find the collection of letters to congregations and then the collection written to individuals. Both collections are further ordered from the longest to the shortest.



The composition of a book. It is important to take into account that books of the Bible, like any other book, are written with the

intention that they be read from the beginning to the end.

Indeed, the book as a whole determines the meaning of the various parts thereof.

For that reason, it is better to read an entire chapter or section consecutively

than it is to select individual verses.

In most translations of the Bible, a brief outline of the specific

book's composition can be found, the main parts of which

are outlined. The divisions can be

used meaningfully to plan the reading of a specific book.

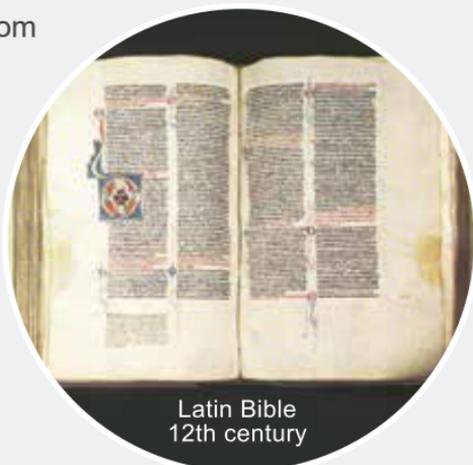
Although the chapter and verse divisions of the Bible are

valuable reading aids, it is necessary to note that the original

writers did not include these divisions. The chapter divisions

were first done by Stephen Langton in the thirteenth century

and the verse allocations by Robert Stephanus in 1551.



Latin Bible
12th century

In comparing the verses as they are quoted from the New Testament, with their appearance in the Old Testament, we must take into account that the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic, while New Testament writers mostly quoted from the Greek translation of the Old Testament. The Greek translation of the Old Testament is known as the Septuagint. When the New Testament quotes the Greek Septuagint, rather than the Hebrew Old Testament, certain translations indicate this with a LXX in the footnotes for the quoted verse (for example Matthew 1:23). In these instances, we can thus expect that the New Testament quotations of the Old Testament will not be identical, word for word, with the original Hebrew formulation.

HOW SHOULD I READ MY BIBLE? THE PERSONAL PICTURE

As we have seen, the Holy Spirit inspired the writing of the Bible. It follows that the Holy Spirit would also inspire the reading of the Bible. Inspired in its writing, inspired in its reading and hearing, the Bible thus brings to us, and every generation, the abiding, living and fresh Word of God. The hope that the Bible brings to all is a living and transforming hope!

In order to cultivate a personal journey with God's Word, it is helpful to use a reading plan and background material that help to provide an accurate understanding of the text. With these in hand, the following guide to the actual act of daily Bible reading may be helpful. Firstly, look up. Ask God to speak to you through the passage you will read. Secondly, look down. Read the text carefully, several times if necessary and understand it in its contexts. Thirdly, look in. Ask the question, what in this passages applies to me and how? Fourthly, look out. How does this apply to my context and environment, my relationships and interaction with others and with God's world? Finally, look forward. Allow the insights you have gained from the Bible to guide your thoughts, attitudes and actions, to shape your life.

HOW WAS THE BIBLE EVENTUALLY PUT TOGETHER?

Over the course of the centuries, many writers contributed towards the establishment of the Bible. There are a number of reasons that led the early Church to formally constitute the Bible.

- The existence of the Bible is not determined by the judgement of people or the decisions of the Church, but

through the personhood of Jesus Christ, the Lord. The New Testament is authoritative because Jesus is authoritative. The New Testament testifies to the person and life of Jesus Christ.

- The Old Testament books are authoritative because they bear witness to Jesus and he himself acknowledges them as authoritative (see Luke 24:44-47). The greatest parts of the Old Testament books were already authoritative in Jesus' life.
- The testimony of the first Apostles and prophets who lived in the time of Jesus, is authoritative because they knew Jesus personally.



FROM WHICH SOURCE TEXTS WAS THE BIBLE TRANSLATED?

The translation of the Bible is at the heart of the Bible Society's work. Worldwide, reliable Bible translations are undertaken because the Bible for everyone is the vision of 150 Bible Societies in 220 countries and territories.

- The Bible is currently translated directly from the original source texts by all the Bible Societies. The Old Testament is translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic, and the New

Testament from the Hellenistic Greek.

- Bible Societies across the world use the oldest, most trustworthy sources available. Sadly, the original documents, as written for example by Paul or John, are all, lost. Translations are based on copies that have been made of the original documents over the centuries. The original document of a book of the Bible is known as an autograph. Biblical scholars compare different copies of the various books of the Bible with each other to create a Greek or Hebrew text that, according to their research, would agree with the original text. This process has been proven to be very reliable as earlier manuscripts and fragments are continually discovered.
- As the years progressed, translation science developed and the discovery of older manuscripts and fragments also took place. These days, the text used for the Old Testament is called the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. This version of the Hebrew, and part of the Aramaic source text is based on the oldest complete retained manuscript, the *Codex Leningradensis* (1008 AD). Information from older manuscripts and fragments was added to the text.
- The Greek source text published by the United Bible Societies is used for the New Testament. It is entitled: *The Greek New Testament*.
- There are some instances where verses that are in older translations have been left out in newer translations. The reason for this is that the evidence provided by earlier manuscripts, discovered after the older translations were done, points to the probability that these verses were added by scribes later in the transmission of the biblical text and were not part of the original documents. Often these omitted verses are referenced in the footnotes. The addition of the chapter and verse divisions, which were not part of the original manuscripts, may also be relevant in this regard.

INTO WHICH SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGES HAS THE BIBLE ALREADY BEEN TRANSLATED?

● SETSWANA

Setswana was the first South African language to receive a complete Bible. Robert Moffat was the pioneer translator of the Bible into Setswana. He began the task soon after his arrival in Kuruman in 1817. In 1830, the Gospel of Luke was published into Setswana for the first time followed by the New Testament in 1840.



As each section of the Bible was translated by Moffat, it was printed on a missionary press in Kuruman. The complete Bible was available in 1857 and published in one volume in 1872. In 1908, a revision of the Bible, mainly done by Alfred Wookey, appeared. The most recent translation done by the Bible Society of South Africa appeared in 1970.

● ISIXHOSA

The earliest Bible translations in isiXhosa were mainly the work of missionaries like William Shaw and William Boyce of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

They first translated the Gospel of Luke, which appeared in 1833. Thanks to the co-operation between missionaries from the Wesleyan, Glasgow and Berlin Mission Societies, the New Testament was published in 1846. The first complete Bible that was translated into isiXhosa was printed in parts at Mount Coke between 1857 and 1859.

The first Bible that was published in one volume, was a revision of the 1859 translation and appeared in 1864. The revision was mainly done by Rev JW Appleyard. Various revisions followed with the last comprehensive one in 1975.

A complete new Bible translation in isiXhosa was published by the Bible Society of South Africa (BSSA) in 1996.

● SESOTHO

Eugène Casalis and Samuel Rolland, two missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, started translating the Bible into Sesotho as early as 1836 and the first Scriptures, the Gospels according to Mark and John, were published in 1839.

The translation of the complete Bible was finished in 1878 and printed in parts on the missionary presses at Morija and Masitisi in Lesotho. The first Bible to be published in one volume was printed in England in 1881, however, due to the Basotho wars the Bibles only reached the Basotho in 1883. The most recent translation of the Sesotho Bible was published by the BSSA in 1989.

● ISIZULU

Missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) arrived in Port Natal in 1835. This group distinguished itself as the first translators of the isiZulu Bible. The first complete book of the Bible to be translated into isiZulu was The Gospel according to Matthew translated by George Champion and revised by Newton Adams.

The first complete isiZulu Bible which incorporated the translation work of the ABCFM missionaries was published by the American Bible Society in 1883.

In 1959, a further translation of the isiZulu Bible appeared and this Bible currently enjoys the preference of isiZulu-speaking

people. A new translation will be published by the BSSA in 2020. It will be known as *IBhayibheli Elingcwele* (2020 translation).

● **SEPEDI**

The first Bible portion to be published was the New Testament that was translated by JFC Knothe of the Berlin Missionary Society in 1890. This was followed by a first complete Bible in 1904.

In 1951, a revised edition of this Bible in a new orthography appeared and a new Sepedi Bible translation was published by the BSSA in 2000.

● **XITSONGA**

The pioneer translators of the Bible into Xitsonga were Paul Berthoud, his brother Henri, and Ernest Creux; missionaries of the Swiss-French Mission.

In 1892, the first two books of the Bible – The Gospel according to Luke and the book of Acts – were translated into Xitsonga. The first New Testament appeared in 1894 and the first complete Bible – printed in two volumes – in 1907. This translation was revised in 1929, and in 2012, it was published in a new orthography. A new translation in Xitsonga was published by the BSSA in 1989.

● **AFRIKAANS**

In 1878, CP Hoogenhout and some friends translated The Gospel according to Mark. This translation was never published, but was preserved as a manuscript. It was the first real translation of a book of the Bible into Afrikaans.

The first Afrikaans Bible was translated by Dr JD du Toit, Prof EE van Rooyen, Prof JD Kestell, Dr HCM Fourie and Prof BB Keet in 1933. Twenty years later, the revised version of the Bible in Afrikaans appeared in 1953. In 1983, a new translation

of the Bible in Afrikaans was published. In 2007, a special translation for the Deaf, *Die Bybel vir Dowes*, was published. The latest translation of the Bible in Afrikaans, a source-text orientated translation, translated according to the direct translation method, will be published in 2020 and be known as *Die Bybel: 2020-vertaling*.

● TSHIVENDA

The pioneer translator of the Bible in Tshivenda was missionary and linguist, Dr PE Schwelnus of the Berlin Missionary Society. By 1920, the four Gospels and Acts were already translated and distributed. The New Testament followed three years later. The first complete Tshivenda Bible was published in 1936 and the latest translation was published by the Bible Society of South Africa (BSSA) in 1998.

● SISWATI

The task of translating the Bible into Siswati began when a young man, Thomas Mamba – who was desperate to read the Bible in his own language – translated three chapters of John and sent it to the Bible Society.

The first Bible portion in this language, The Gospel according to Mark, was published by the Bible Society of South Africa in 1976. The translators were Mr AEFM Simelane, Mrs T Zwane and Miss H Eschen. In 1981, the first New Testament appeared and, thereafter, the first complete Bible in 1996.

● ISINDEBELE

The first book of the Bible to be published in isiNdebele, The Gospel according to Mark, was published in 1977. The New Testament and a selection of Psalms appeared in 1986.

Thereafter, work came to a standstill and only began 12 years later. In 2000, the translation of the Old Testament and thorough

revision of the New Testament began. Three translators, Pastor DS Mahlangu, Pastor MD Mabena and Prof APB Breytenbach worked on this project full-time and a complete Bible was published by the BSSA in 2012.



● ENGLISH

Because of the prevalent availability of English translations, English is the one language in South Africa in which the Bible Society of South Africa did not play an active translation role until recently. In 2019, the Bible Society of South Africa published a special translation for English-speaking deaf people, *The Bible for the Deaf*.

The first translation of the complete Bible in English is associated with the name, John Wycliffe. Wycliffe

gathered a number of ‘poor priests’ together to live a simple life so that the message of Christ could be conveyed to people in a way that they could understand. He quickly realised that they needed a Bible in English. How much of the original translation can be attributed to him is unknown, but with the help of Nicholas de Hereford and others, an English Bible was completed in 1383.

The first English Bible appeared in print in 1535. The first edition of the Authorised King James Version appeared in 1611. Other more recent English translations published by the Bible Society of South Africa include the Good News Bible (GNT), Contemporary English Version (CEV), New International Version (NIV) and English Standard Version (ESV) and the New King James Version (NKJV).

THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Bible Society of South Africa (BSSA) is a missional movement with a simple and focused vision: a Bible for everyone! The mission of the BSSA is to provide affordable Bibles for everyone in their own language and in suitable formats so that all may experience the life-giving message of the Word. This is achieved by translating the Bible into all needed languages, publishing the Bible in various formats, and distributing Bibles to the corners of South Africa.

The Bible Society is a part of a network of 150 Bible Societies that together comprises the United Bible Societies. The BSSA exists to equip the churches of South Africa to share God's Word. It functions within a framework of five regions in the country and is dependent on voluntary contributions to fulfil its Christian mission.

Notable highlights for thanksgiving over the 200 years of the existence of the Bible Society of South Africa (1820-2020):

1820

On 23 August 1820, the founding meeting to establish the South African Bible Society took place in Government House [currently Tuynhuys] with Sir Rufane Donkin, the Acting Governor of the Cape, as Chairman. It was the official start of Bible Society work in South Africa.



1833-
1871

For a long while, the British and Foreign Bible Society was only represented through an auxiliary in Cape Town. From 1833-1871, a number of auxiliary organisations were established in the Eastern Cape, Natal, Free State and Transvaal. Bible Society work was now established in the country's interior.

1857

The first complete Bible in Setswana appeared. The Setswana Bible was the first complete Bible to be published in a South African language and the third in an African language.

1859

The earliest Bible translations in isiXhosa were mainly the work of missionaries like William Shaw and William Boyce of the Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS). The first complete Bible that was translated into isiXhosa was printed in parts at Mount Coke between 1857 and 1859.

1881

The first Sesotho Bible was published, but due to the Basotho Wars, the Bibles only arrived in Lesotho in 1883.

1883

On 28 April 1883, the first complete Bible in isiZulu was published by the American Bible Society in New York.

1892-
1896

Bible distribution is one of the cornerstones of the Bible Society. Over the years, especially before modern modes of transport were freely available, Bible colporteurs travelled to the interior of the country to distribute Bibles. Brothers, Fred and Jack Turner, undertook a number of such trips to Johannesburg and Namaqualand between the years 1892 to 1896. In Fred's own words, "into the homes of farmers and different places where it was difficult for them to obtain a Bible for the love or money!"

1902

Only after the signing of the Peace of Vereeniging on 31 May 1902, and the conclusion of the Anglo Boer War, work to rebuild the war-torn areas could begin. The Bible Society had already established a new agency in the Transvaal with Rev George Lowe as Secretary that year. On 24 December 1902, Bible work could continue full steam ahead again in this region. A depot was opened and on Christmas Eve, a consignment of Bibles and Testaments arrived via the Cape Railways. The Setswana Bibles were sold out on the day of arrival. In the first year of the new agency's existence, 24 430 Bibles and Portions were distributed in 13 languages.

1904

The first complete Sepedi Bible was published.

1907

Xitsonga speakers received a Bible in their own language for the first time.

1933

On 29 May 1933, the Carnarvon Castle sailed into Table Bay with the first consignment of 10 000 copies of the Afrikaans Bible on board. This first complete Afrikaans Bible was launched countrywide on 27 August 1933.

1935

The Bible in Afrikaans was distributed far and wide, even to the top of Kilimanjaro. In the 1920s, the Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society for Central Africa, WJW Roome, climbed Kilimanjaro and placed an English Bible in a trunk there. In the annual report of 1935, it was mentioned that one Rev GH Steyn, a missionary from Calvinia, placed an Afrikaans Bible in this trunk on 11 February 1935.

1936

The first complete Tshivenda Bible was published in 1936.

1939

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the German passenger ship, the Watussi, was en route from Port Said in Egypt to Cape Town, with 1 000 Afrikaans Bibles with olive-wood covers on board. On 2 December 1939, about 100 nautical miles southeast of Cape Point, the ship was noticed by the South African Air Force that was responsible for the protection of the coastline. To prevent the Watussi from falling into the hands of the Allies, the crew scuttled the ship. The Bible Society not only suffered the loss of Bibles, but also considerable financial losses due to the peacetime assurances being rendered worthless.

1941

The complete Braille Bible in Afrikaans appeared, only the fourth Bible in braille in the world.

1948

From 1 January 1948, Bible Society work in South Africa functions together as a unit for the first time. The British and Foreign Bible Society (Union of South Africa) with a head office in Cape Town and Rev HPM Steyn as General Secretary came into being. The country was divided into three regions:

- The South Western Agency with a Bible House in Cape Town
- The South Eastern Agency with a Bible House in Durban
- The Northern Agency with a Bible House in Johannesburg.

1951

In 1922, the Bible Society purchased a building off Green Market Square in Cape Town to serve as a Bible House, but the work of the Society expanded to such an extent that more accommodation was necessary. A decision was made to demolish the Bible House and for the first time, to erect a Bible House of their own.

On 2 June 1951, a cherished ideal was realised when the Bible House was officially inaugurated.

1957

The first edition of *The Sower*, the official newsletter of the Bible Society of South Africa (BSSA) appeared on 1 April 1957.

1961

The Sesotho Bible was printed on a missionary press in Bloemfontein, the Bible Society's first complete Bible to be printed in South Africa.

1965

On 1 November 1965, the BSSA started to function as an autonomous body and, 145 years after the work began in South Africa, became a fully-fledged Bible Society.

1968

On 20 March 1968, Mrs Venter of the Blind Worker's Association, handed the braille edition of the Gospel according to Luke in isiXhosa to the Bible Society. This publication was (following the Afrikaans) the first braille Bible Portion in an indigenous language in South Africa.

1970

On 23 February 1970, the Act of the Bible Society of South Africa (Act 15 of 1970) was unanimously adopted by parliament. The Bible Society also commemorated the 150th anniversary of its existence in 1970. The year was known as *Biblia 70*.

1977

On 19 November 1977, *Die Burger* reported that a gilt-edged Bible with a leather cover and complete thumb index was prepared in South Africa for the first time. National Book Printers had executed the specialised order that had previously only been done overseas. It was a Kwanyama Bible.

1984

A new highlight in Bible Distribution was reached in this year. For the first time in the history of the Bible Society, more than one million complete Bibles were distributed. This was largely thanks to the unforeseen demand of the new translation of the Afrikaans Bible that was published in 1983.

1987

Three postage stamps were issued in 1987 to draw attention to the Bible and BSSA. A world record was established when the words *Die Bybel* appeared on the 16c stamp 75 times in various African languages. It was the most languages printed on a postage stamp ever. The two other stamps featured copies of Rembrandt paintings: Belshazzar's Feast and St Matthew and the Angel.

1988

The millionth copy of the South Africa edition of the Good News Bible was handed to Dr Alan Paton by Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi on 19 February 1988. This edition, which appeared in 1977, was the first complete English Bible that was printed on the mainland of Africa.

1991

On Ascension Day on 9 May 1991, something happened that had never taken place in South Africa or had been experienced anywhere in the rest of the world. It was Bibliathon '91 day. On this day, the Bible Society of South Africa in association with the SABC presented



a telethon on television in order to raise R8 million so that 1 million extra Bibles could be printed. The Bible Society of South Africa's (BSSA) wildest expectations were exceeded. The sum of R8 535 478 was raised to place a Bible in the hands of the people of South Africa.

Three years later, on Ascension Day, 12 May 1994, the event was repeated – Bibliathon '94! Once again, the Giver of all gifts provided and the results exceeded all expectations. On 2 September 2000, it was Bibliathon day again. This four-hour-long telethon that was broadcast on SABC 2, was the highlight of the year-long Bibliathon 2000 project.

1995

The 175th anniversary of the BSSA was commemorated.

1996

Siswati speakers received a Bible in their language for the first time.

2000

The BSSA was the host of the World Assembly of the United Bible Societies, which took place in South Africa for the first time.

2006

The BSSA becomes, as far as we are aware, the first Bible Society to make available a complete Bible for cellphones.

2007

A consignment of 36 000 isiXhosa Bibles never reached their destination. These Bibles were in two containers on board the MSC Napoli, which was shipwrecked in stormy weather along the southern coast of England.

2008

An Afrikaans Bible, specially translated for the Deaf, *Die Bybel vir Dowes*, was launched. For the second time in the 188 years of the existence of the Bible

Society of South Africa, more than one million Bibles were distributed in one year.

2009

The Bible Society Act was repealed and since 1 April 2009, the Bible Society functions as a non-profit company.

2011

Eight of the Bible Society's Bible translations were made available in e-format for the first time.

2012

On 24 November, the isiNdebele Bible was launched. All 11 official languages of our country now had a complete Bible.

2015

The *Run for Bibles* project celebrates its 25th anniversary. From the time the first athletes ran the Comrades Marathon for Bibles in 1991, more than R9 million was raised for Bible work.

2016

The first South African audio recording of a complete English Bible, the Good News Bible, was launched.

2018

Literacy material (*My first Bible Do and Learn Book* and *My 2nd Bible Do and Learn Book*) is made available in all 11 official languages of South Africa.

2019

The translation in English, *The Bible for the Deaf*, was launched.



WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE WORK OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY?

- **Internet**

Visit the Bible Society's website at www.biblesociety.co.za. Join our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter or Instagram if you haven't already.



- **The quarterly publication** of the Bible Society of South Africa is *The Sower*. It is available in print or online on the website in e-format.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED WITH BIBLE SOCIETY WORK?



PRAY WITH US

The Sower contains a quarterly prayer guide with prayer requests for Bible work around the world.

PROJECT SUPPORT

The Bible Society of South Africa provides Bibles to the Correctional Services, poor people who are unable to afford a Bible of their own, Grade 7 learners in impoverished communities, a Bible-based literacy

programme and various new Bible translations for those who don't yet have the Bible in their own language. All the projects can be viewed on the Bible Society's website. In addition to specific project support, more general financial contributions help to keep Bible prices as affordable as possible.



YOUR LEGACY

Christians give to make a difference. Thanks to the legacy of Christians of past generations, millions of lives have been changed by the biblical message. Your help is of critical importance. Of course your will and testament is, in the first place, an opportunity to make provision for those whom you love and care about, so ensure that you have a valid will and testament. In addition to this many have left a gift in their will to the Bible Society, because any gift, large or small, can help to change someone's life through the Bible.

ACTIVE FOR BIBLES

Do you enjoy being active? Are you a runner, cyclist, golfer, swimmer or trampolinist? No matter what your sport of choice, you can use it to help raise funds for Bible Distribution. Simply sign up as an *Active for Bibles* participant and then ask your family, friends, church, club members or anyone else to sponsor you during events. Share your *Active for Bibles* campaign on social media and help others to support you and to also become involved with the Bible cause.

BIBLE SALES

Download our catalogue and price list. E-commerce sales can be done via the website. E-Bibles are available at the following online shops: Amazon (Kindle format), Kobo (ePub format) and Takealot (ePub format).

HOW DOES THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA HELP YOU TO READ THE BIBLE MORE REGULARLY AND UNDERSTAND IT BETTER?

The BibleSA application (smartphone application) and website. The Bible Society has its very own Bible app called “BibleSA”, where all the Bible Society’s translations can be read or listened (Audio Bible) to. You can also log in via the Internet on www.biblesa.co.za. In co-operation with other Bible Societies, Bible reading programmes and Bible study material will also systematically be made available. This comprehensive website has something for everyone. You can open a free personal account to activate various reading plans. Various translations can be compared, personal notes and bookmarks can be done on the application. It also serves as a concordance.

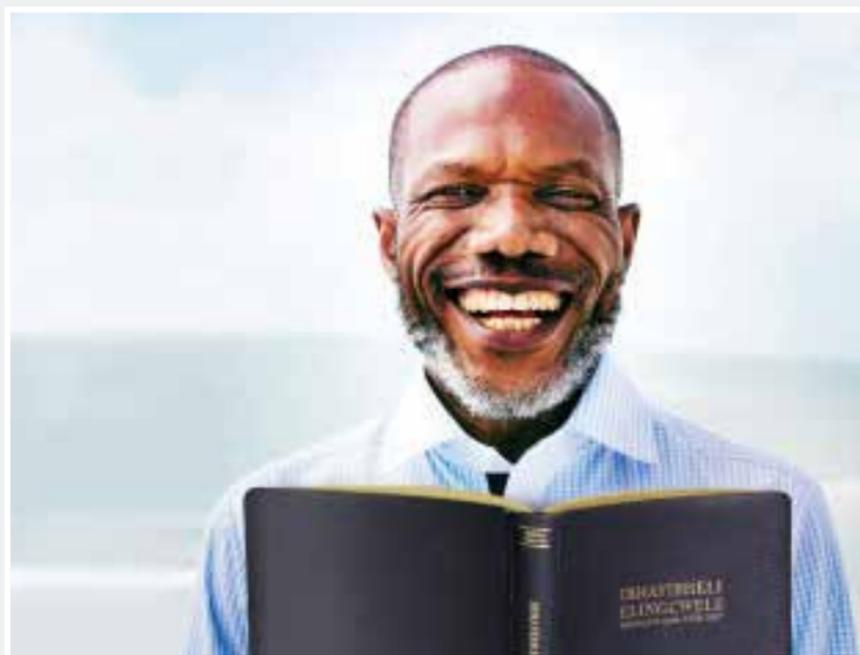
Cellphone Bibles are available in all of our country’s official languages free of charge on m.bibles.co.za or can be downloaded from www.youversion.com. Other digital formats include e-Bibles for e-readers. Passages of Scripture are also shared regularly on Facebook and Twitter pages, as well as e-mail via Verse-a-day and seemingly meets a huge need. A wide variety of free Bible resources that promote engagement with the Bible, are available and can be downloaded at www.biblesociety.co.za.

The Alive Resource Bible (AR Bible). The Bible Society of South Africa in collaboration with other Bible Societies, has developed the Alive Resource Bible application. With this AR Bible and using your smartphone, you can study background material in the app on your phone that relates to the printed text you are reading. A QR code is used to connect the printed page to the app.

Bible reading aids. Simple and helpful Bible reading-aid pamphlets, such as *Where to find it in the Bible* and *Help! How should I read my Bible?* are available from your nearest Bible house or downloadable from www.biblesociety.co.za.

Special focus selections. A variety of Scripture selection pamphlets and booklets that focus on special circumstances and needs are available from your nearest Bible House or downloadable from www.biblesociety.co.za.

The Bible reading plan. The Bible Society has a variety of reading plans, for example E-100. In this booklet we included a reading plan, to help you read through the entire Bible in one year. Why not begin now, or make it a New Year's resolution?



BIBLE READING PLAN

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
1	Genesis 1:1-4:16	
2	Genesis 4:17-9:17	
3	Genesis 9:18-13:18	
4	Genesis 14:1-17:27	
5	Genesis 18:1-20:18	
6	Genesis 21:1-23:20	
7	Genesis 24:1-25:34	
8	Genesis 26:1-29:30	
9	Genesis 29:31-31:55	
10	Genesis 32:1-35:15	
11	Genesis 35:16-38:30	
12	Genesis 39:1-41:57	
13	Genesis 42:1-43:34	
14	Genesis 44:1-47:12	
15	Genesis 47:13-50:26	
16	Exodus 1:1-4:31	
17	Exodus 5:1-8:19	
18	Exodus 8:20-11:10	
19	Exodus 12:1-14:31	
20	Exodus 15:1-17:16	
21	Exodus 18:1-21:36	
22	Exodus 22:1-24:18	
23	Exodus 25:1-27:21	
24	Exodus 28:1-30:16	
25	Exodus 30:17-33:23	
26	Exodus 34:1-37:16	
27	Exodus 37:17-40:38	
28	Leviticus 1:1-4:35	
29	Leviticus 5:1-7:38	
30	Leviticus 8:1-10:20	
31	Leviticus 11:1-13:59	

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
32	Leviticus 14:1-15:33	
33	Leviticus 16:1-19:37	
34	Leviticus 20:1-22:33	
35	Leviticus 23:1-25:55	
36	Leviticus 26:1-27:34	
37	Numbers 1:1-3:51	
38	Numbers 4:1-6:27	
39	Numbers 7:1-10:10	
40	Numbers 10:11-13:33	
41	Numbers 14:1-16:35	
42	Numbers 16:36-19:22	
43	Numbers 20:1-22:21	
44	Numbers 22:22-25:18	
45	Numbers 26:1-29:11	
46	Numbers 29:12-32:42	
47	Numbers 33:1-36:13	
48	Deuteronomy 1:1-2:37	
49	Deuteronomy 3:1-5:22	
50	Deuteronomy 5:23-8:20	
51	Deuteronomy 9:1-11:32	
52	Deuteronomy 12:1-15:23	
53	Deuteronomy 16:1-19:21	
54	Deuteronomy 20:1-23:25	
55	Deuteronomy 24:1-27:26	
56	Deuteronomy 28:1-29:29	
57	Deuteronomy 30:1-32:47	
58	Deuteronomy 32:48-34:12	
59	Joshua 1:1-5:1	
60	Joshua 5:2-7:26	

BIBLE READING PLAN

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
61	Joshua 8:1-10:27	
62	Joshua 10:28-13:33	
63	Joshua 14:1-17:18	
64	Joshua 18:1-21:45	
65	Joshua 22:1-24:33	
66	Judges 1:1-3:31	
67	Judges 4:1-5:31	
68	Judges 6:1-8:35	
69	Judges 9:1-11:21	
70	Judges 11:22-14:20	
71	Judges 15:1-17:13	
72	Judges 18:1-19:30	
73	Judges 20:1-21:25	
74	Ruth 1:1-4:22	
75	1 Chronicles 1:1-3:24	
76	1 Chronicles 4:1-6:47	
77	1 Chronicles 6:48-8:40	
78	1 Samuel 1:1-3:18	
79	1 Samuel 3:19-7:17	
80	1 Samuel 8:1-11:15	
81	1 Samuel 12:1-14:52	
82	1 Samuel 15:1-17:30	
83	1 Samuel 17:31-19:24	
84	1 Samuel 20:1-22:23	
85	1 Samuel 23:1-25:44	
86	1 Samuel 26:1-29:11	
87	1 Samuel 30:1-31:13 1 Chronicles 10:1-14	
88	2 Samuel 1:1-3:21	
89	2 Samuel 3:22-6:23	
90	2 Samuel 7:1-11:27	
91	2 Samuel 12:1-14:24	

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
92	2 Samuel 14:25-17:29	
93	2 Samuel 18:1-20:3	
94	2 Samuel 20:4-22:51	
95	2 Samuel 23:1-24:25	
96	1 Chronicles 11:1-13:14	
97	1 Chronicles 14:1-17:27	
98	1 Chronicles 18:1-22:1	
99	1 Chronicles 22:2-26:19	
100	1 Chronicles 26:20-29:30	
101	Psalms 1:1-8:9	
102	Psalms 9:1-17:15	
103	Psalms 18:1-21:13	
104	Psalms 22:1-28:9	
105	Psalms 29:1-34:22	
106	Psalms 35:1-38:22	
107	Psalms 39:1-44:26	
108	Psalms 45:1-50:23	
109	Psalms 51:1-57:11	
110	Psalms 58:1-65:13	
111	Psalms 66:1-69:36	
112	Psalms 70:1-74:23	
113	Psalms 75:1-78:72	
114	Psalms 79:1-85:13	
115	Psalms 86:1-89:52	
116	Psalms 90:1-96:13	
117	Psalms 97:1-104:35	
118	Psalms 105:1-106:48	
119	Psalms 107:1-111:10	
120	Psalms 112:1-119:32	
121	Psalms 119:33-119:176	

BIBLE READING PLAN

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
122	Psalms 120:1-132:18	
123	Psalms 133:1-140:13	
124	Psalms 141:1-150:6	
125	1 Kings 1:1-2:27	
126	1 Kings 2:28-4:34	
127	1 Kings 5:1-7:51	
128	1 Kings 8:1-9:9	
129	1 Kings 9:10-11:43	
130	2 Chronicles 1:1-5:1	
131	2 Chronicles 5:2-6:42	
132	2 Chronicles 7:1-9:31	
133	Proverbs 1:1-3:35	
134	Proverbs 4:1-7:27	
135	Proverbs 8:1-10:32	
136	Proverbs 11:1-13:25	
137	Proverbs 14:1-16:33	
138	Proverbs 17:1-19:29	
139	Proverbs 20:1-22:29	
140	Proverbs 23:1-25:28	
141	Proverbs 26:1-28:28	
142	Proverbs 29:1-31:31	
143	Ecclesiastes 1:1-4:16	
144	Ecclesiastes 5:1-8:17	
145	Ecclesiastes 9:1-12:14	
146	Song of Songs 1:1-4:16	
147	Song of Songs 5:1-8:14	
148	1 Kings 12:1-33 2 Chronicles 10:1-12:16	
149	1 Kings 13:1-15:32	
150	2 Chronicles 13:1-16:14	
151	1 Kings 15:33-18:46	
152	1 Kings 19:1-20:43	

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
153	1 Kings 21:1-22:53	
154	2 Chronicles 17:1-19:11	
155	2 Chronicles 20:1-21:1 2 Kings 1:1-2:25	
156	2 Kings 3:1-4:44	
157	2 Kings 5:1-6:23	
158	2 Kings 6:24-8:29	
159	2 Chronicles 21:2-22:12 2 Kings 9:1-37	
160	2 Kings 10:1-12:3	
161	2 Chronicles 23:1-24:27 2 Kings 12:4-21	
162	2 Kings 13:1-14:29	
163	2 Chronicles 25:1-28	
164	Jonah 1:1-4:11	
165	Amos 1:1-3:15	
166	Amos 4:1-6:14	
167	Amos 7:1-9:15	
168	2 Kings 15:1-38 2 Chronicles 26:1-27:9	
169	Hosea 1:1-4:19	
170	Hosea 5:1-9:9	
171	Hosea 9:10-14:9	
172	2 Kings 16:1-17:41 2 Chronicles 28:1-27	
173	2 Kings 18:1-20:21	
174	2 Chronicles 29:1-31:1	
175	2 Chronicles 31:2-32:33	
176	Isaiah 1:1-4:1	
177	Isaiah 4:2-6:13	
178	Isaiah 7:1-10:19	
179	Isaiah 10:20-14:23	
180	Isaiah 14:24-18:7	
181	Isaiah 19:1-22:25	
182	Isaiah 23:1-26:21	

BIBLE READING PLAN

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
183	Isaiah 27:1-29:24	
184	Isaiah 30:1-32:20	
185	Isaiah 33:1-36:22	
186	Isaiah 37:1-39:8	
187	Micah 1:1-5:1	
188	Micah 5:2-7:20	
189	Nahum 1:1-3:19	
190	2 Kings 21:1-26 2 Chronicles 33:1-34:13	
191	2 Chronicles 34:14-35:27	
192	2 Kings 22:1-23:34	
193	Zephaniah 1:1-3:20	
194	2 Kings 23:35-25:30 2 Chronicles 36:1-23	
195	Jeremiah 1:1-2:37	
196	Jeremiah 3:1-4:31	
197	Jeremiah 5:1-6:30	
198	Jeremiah 7:1-9:26	
199	Jeremiah 10:1-12:17	
200	Jeremiah 13:1-15:21	
201	Jeremiah 16:1-18:23	
202	Jeremiah 19:1-22:30	
203	Jeremiah 23:1-25:14	
204	Jeremiah 25:15-27:22	
205	Jeremiah 28:1-30:24	
206	Jeremiah 31:1-32:44	
207	Jeremiah 33:1-35:19	
208	Jeremiah 36:1-38:28	
209	Jeremiah 39:1-42:22	
210	Jeremiah 43:1-46:28	
211	Jeremiah 47:1-49:22	
212	Jeremiah 49:23-50:46	
213	Jeremiah 51:1-64	

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
214	Jeremiah 52:1-34 Habakkuk 1:1-3:19	
215	Lamentations 1:1-2:22	
216	Lamentations 3:1-5:22	
217	Ezekiel 1:1-5:17	
218	Ezekiel 6:1-9:11	
219	Ezekiel 10:1-13:23	
220	Ezekiel 14:1-16:63	
221	Ezekiel 17:1-19:14	
222	Ezekiel 20:1-21:32	
223	Ezekiel 22:1-24:27	
224	Ezekiel 25:1-27:36	
225	Ezekiel 28:1-31:18	
226	Ezekiel 32:1-33:33	
227	Ezekiel 34:1-36:38	
228	Ezekiel 37:1-39:29	
229	Ezekiel 40:1-42:20	
230	Ezekiel 43:1-45:17	
231	Ezekiel 45:18-48:35	
232	Obadiah 1:1-21 Isaiah 40:1-41:29	
233	Isaiah 42:1-43:28	
234	Isaiah 44:1-45:25	
235	Isaiah 46:1-49:7	
236	Isaiah 49:8-51:23	
237	Isaiah 52:1-56:12	
238	Isaiah 57:1-59:21	
239	Isaiah 60:1-64:12	
240	Isaiah 65:1-66:24	
241	Daniel 1:1-2:49	
242	Daniel 3:1-4:37	
243	Daniel 5:1-7:28	
244	Daniel 8:1-10:21	

BIBLE READING PLAN

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
245	Daniel 11:1-12:13	
246	Ezra 1:1-4:23	
247	Haggai 1:1-2:23 Zechariah 1:1-3:10	
248	Zechariah 4:1-9:17	
249	Zechariah 10:1-14:21	
250	Joel 1:1-3:21	
251	1 Chronicles 9:1-44 Ezra 4:24-6:12	
252	Ezra 6:13-8:20	
253	Ezra 8:21-10:44	
254	Nehemiah 1:1-4:23	
255	Nehemiah 5:1-8:18	
256	Nehemiah 9:1-10:39	
257	Nehemiah 11:1-13:31	
258	Esther 1:1-3:15	
259	Esther 4:1-7:10	
260	Esther 8:1-10:3	
261	Malachi 1:1-4:6	
262	Job 1:1-5:7	
263	Job 5:8-9:24	
264	Job 9:25-13:28	
265	Job 14:1-17:16	
266	Job 18:1-21:34	
267	Job 22:1-26:14	
268	Job 27:1-30:31	
269	Job 31:1-33:33	
270	Job 34:1-36:33	
271	Job 37:1-40:5	
272	Job 40:6-42:17	
273	Matthew 1:1-4:25	
274	Matthew 5:1-6:34	

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
275	Matthew 7:1-9:17	
276	Matthew 9:18-11:30	
277	Matthew 12:1-13:30	
278	Matthew 13:31-15:28	
279	Matthew 15:29-18:14	
280	Matthew 18:15-20:34	
281	Matthew 21:1-22:46	
282	Matthew 23:1-24:51	
283	Matthew 25:1-26:56	
284	Matthew 26:57-28:20	
285	James 1:1-3:12	
286	James 3:13-5:20	
287	Luke 1:1-2:20	
288	Luke 2:21-3:38	
289	Luke 4:1-5:39	
290	Luke 6:1-7:35	
291	Luke 7:36-8:56	
292	Luke 9:1-10:24	
293	Luke 10:25-11:54	
294	Luke 12:1-13:35	
295	Luke 14:1-16:31	
296	Luke 17:1-18:43	
297	Luke 19:1-20:47	
298	Luke 21:1-22:71	
299	Luke 23:1-24:53	
300	Acts 1:1-5:16	
301	Acts 5:17-7:60	
302	Acts 8:1-9:43	
303	Acts 10:1-11:30	
304	Acts 12:1-13:52	
305	Acts 14:1-15:41	

BIBLE READING PLAN

DAY	PORTIONS	✓
306	Acts 16:1-18:23	
307	Galatians 1:1-3:29	
308	Galatians 4:1-6:18	
309	1 Thessalonians 1:1-5:28	
310	2 Thessalonians 1:1-3:18	
311	Acts 18:24-20:38	
312	Romans 1:1-3:31	
313	Romans 4:1-7:25	
314	Romans 8:1-9:33	
315	Romans 10:1-12:21	
316	Romans 13:1-16:27	
317	1 Corinthians 1:1-4:21	
318	1 Corinthians 5:1-8:13	
319	1 Corinthians 9:1-11:34	
320	1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40	
321	1 Corinthians 15:1-16:24	
322	2 Corinthians 1:1-4:18	
323	2 Corinthians 5:1-8:24	
324	2 Corinthians 9:1-13:13	
325	Jude 1:1-25	
326	Acts 21:1-23:35	
327	Acts 24:1-26:32	
328	Ephesians 1:1-4:16	
329	Ephesians 4:17-6:24	
330	Colossians 1:1-4:18	
331	Philemon 1-25 Acts 27:1-28:31	
332	Philippians 1:1-4:23	
333	Titus 1:1-3:15	
334	1 Timothy 1:1-6:21	
335	2 Timothy 1:1-4:22	

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336	Mark 1:1-3:35	
337	Mark 4:1-5:43	
338	Mark 6:1-7:37	
339	Mark 8:1-9:50	
340	Mark 10:1-11:33	
341	Mark 12:1-13:37	
342	Mark 14:1-72	
343	Mark 15:1-16:20	
344	Hebrews 1:1-4:16	
345	Hebrews 5:1-8:13	
346	Hebrews 9:1-10:39	
347	Hebrews 11:1-13:25	
348	1 Peter 1:1-4:19	
349	1 Peter 5:1-14 2 Peter 1:1-3:18	
350	John 1:1-3:36	
351	John 4:1-5:47	
352	John 6:1-7:31	
353	John 7:32-8:59	
354	John 9:1-11:44	
355	John 11:45-13:20	
356	John 13:21-16:33	
357	John 17:1-19:27	
358	John 19:28-21:25	
359	1 John 1:1-4:21	
360	1 John 5:1-21 2 John and 3 John	
361	Revelation 1:1-3:22	
362	Revelation 4:1-8:13	
363	Revelation 9:1-12:18	
364	Revelation 13:1-16:21	
365	Revelation 17:1-19:21	
366	Revelation 20:1-22:21	

* For the most part this reading plan follows the history of the Bible in chronological order.

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