



“Reading the Bible Together”

Issue 1.

Book of Genesis: A whole series of new beginnings.

February 2009.

Initial general notes about Reading the Bible Together:

This scheme of Reading the Bible Together is devised with the intention it should take no longer than 5-10 minutes each day, avoiding Sundays. Many people are put off reading the Bible for two reasons, one because there seems so many words and so many pages and they think it will take too long. And secondly, because the way it is written sometimes can be difficult to get into and understand.

However, for those willing to put in a little time and effort, and also to sometimes just keep going, there is so much to discover that rarely is revealed in any other way. For ultimately this is time spent with God, immersed in His character and in the relationship that He wants to share with all His creation. By spending time with how He reveals Himself to the world in and through history we discover more how He is doing exactly the same today both for the world and for you and me.

So settle down and enjoy immersing yourself in this greatest love story ever to be told.

Your Journal:

Next to your Bible this is probably the only other implement you will need, besides a pen or pencil. Take time to write in your Journal each day even if there is little or nothing you feel you would wish to write. Over time it becomes a rich personal inner journey of faith sometimes a love letter to God, at other times a love letter of God to each one of us. So try to keep our Journal writing open, avoiding words of judgement.

The Reading the Bible Together Gatherings:

These are intended to provide an opportunity for sharing thoughts, questions and reflections together. In the same way as most of our gardening often takes place on our own many still enjoy the opportunity to come together and share ideas and each other's joys in the form of the Hort Soc or of a Gardening Club. This is the intension of the Reading the Bible Together Gatherings. They will take place in Church on:

- the first Wednesday morning of the month @ 9.00 till 10.00 over a cup of Coffee
- a Wednesday evening in the middle of the month @ 7.45 till 9.00. Next meeting Wed 18th

Background to the Book of Genesis:

Genesis looks to be the gathering together of two distinct traditions, that of the Priestly tradition and that of the Yahwist, traditionally by Moses himself. We can see evidence of these two traditions in their different styles in the way they each recount the beginnings of Creation. Genesis 1:1-2:3 is a wonderful piece of liturgy full of hope and faith in the face of adversity, which spoke powerfully to those in Exile. The Yahwist, by contrast is a wonderful storyteller who shares with us deep truths about our human nature and condition in the story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:4 – Ch 3) Ultimately, both the Creation stories say the same thing, God, Israel's God, is the Creator of this world, and He does so because He wants to be in relationship with all that He has made.

But as the story unfolds, through to Chapter 11, things don't work out that way. With freedom comes choice, and though God freely chooses to remain faithful, human beings do not. Indeed, in the story of the tower of Babel they want to be God. Enter the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the nation of Israel called by God to model covenant relationship, to be agents of God's salvation, and a blessing to the world.

A few suggestions on how to Read the Bible Together each day:

- Try to get into a routine. Set aside a regular time each day. Often the beginning or end of the day is best.
- Read the passage set for the day.
- Ask our Lord to reveal to you anything that He wishes to in the moment:
 - It may be something about the text, a comment, a question, an immediate response etc.
 - It may be that a particular word or phrase stands out for you and you spend a few moments savouring it.
 - It may be that the passage speaks into your own situation or something that is relevant to today, for example discovering the depth of love God has for Adam and Eve speaks into that lost love today.
 - You may find some days far more fruitful than others, maybe because of the text, maybe because of where you are that day. Either way try to keep going, try to be immediate, try not to make judgements of yourself, and try to trust the process that God will use this time, even if we can't immediately see how.
- Write any thoughts, reflections, or questions in your Journal. Sometimes you find other thoughts or reflections come as you write. Try not to hear too many words of judgement, "have I got this right?" Hear rather that inner voice of wonder, exploration and awe.
- Thank God for the time that you've had together sharing in His word.
- Then, throughout the day, or until you come to the next reading, just be open to any further conscious or unconscious connections, ruminations or reflections that bubble to the surface. Jot these down in your Journal.
- Finally, some people may wish to do some further study on certain passages, or even on whole books. Some study notes often appear at the beginning of each Book of the Bible, maps etc can often be found at the end. Broad themes for each book are discussed as part of this Reading Sheet (see over) and there are websites etc especially www.biblegateway.com

Scheme of Reading:

| <u>Date:</u> | <u>Reference:</u> | <u>Date:</u> | <u>Reference:</u> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sun 1 st Feb | ----- | Thurs 26 th Feb | Gen 30:25 - 31:55 |
| Mon 2 nd Feb | Gen 1:1 - 2:3 | Fri 27 th Feb | Gen 32:1 - 32:32 |
| Tues 3 rd Feb | Gen 2:4 - 3:24 | Sat 28 th Feb | Gen 33:1 - 34:31 |
| Wed 4 th Feb | Gen 4:1 - 5:32 | Sun 1 st Mar | ----- |
| Thurs 5 th Feb | Gen 6:1 - 7:10 | Mon 2 nd Mar | Gen 35:1 - 36:43 |
| Fri 6 th Feb | Gen 7:11 - 8:19 | Tues 3 rd Mar | Gen 37:1 - 37:36 |
| Sat 7 th Feb | Gen 8:20 - 9:29 | Wed 4 th Mar | Gen 38:1 - 38:30 |
| Sun 8 th Feb | ----- | Thurs 5 th Mar | Gen 39:1 - 39:23 |
| Mon 9 th Feb | Gen 10:1 - 11:26 | Fri 6 th Mar | Gen 40:1 - 40:23 |
| Tues 10 th Feb | Gen 11:27 - 12:20 | Sat 7 th Mar | Gen 41:1 - 41:57 |
| Wed 11 th Feb | Gen 13:1 - 14:24 | Sun 8 th Mar | ----- |
| Thurs 12 th Feb | Gen 15:1 - 15:21 | Mon 9 th Mar | Gen 42:1 - 43:34 |
| Fri 13 th Feb | Gen 16:1 - 16:16 | Tues 10 th Mar | Gen 44:1 - 45:28 |
| Sat 14 th Feb | Gen 17:1 - 17:27 | Wed 11 th Mar | Gen 46:1 - 47:31 |
| Sun 15 th Feb | ----- | Thurs 12 th Mar | Gen 48:1 - 48:22 |
| Mon 16 th Feb | Gen 18:1 - 19:38 | Fri 13 th Mar | Gen 49:1 - 49:33 |
| Tues 17 th Feb | Gen 20:1 - 21:34 | Sat 14 th Mar | Gen 50:1 - 50:26 |
| Wed 18th Feb | Gen 22:1 - 22:19 | Sun 15 th Mar | ----- |
| | (Next Bible Together Meeting) | Mon 16 th Mar | Exod 1:1 - 2:25 |
| Thurs 19 th Feb | Gen 22:20 - 23:20 | Tues 17 th Mar | Exod 3:1 - 4:17 |
| Fri 20 th Feb | Gen 24:1 - 24:67 | Wed 18th Mar | Exod 4:18 - 5:21 |
| Sat 21 st Feb | Gen 25:1 - 25:34 | | (Next Bible Together Meeting) |
| Sun 22 nd Feb | ----- | Thurs 19 th Mar | Exod 5:22 - 7:7 |
| Mon 23 rd Feb | Gen 26:1 - 26:35 | Fri 20 th Mar | Exod 7:8 - 8:32 |
| Tues 24 th Feb | Gen 27:1 - 28:9 | Sat 21 st Mar | Exod 9:1 - 11:10 |
| Wed 25 th Feb | Gen 28:10 - 30:24 | | |