

THE BIBLE

THE VALUE OF BIBLE STUDY

THE Bible is God's great text-book for man. It is His lamp to our feet and light to our path in this world of sin. The value of Bible study cannot therefore be overestimated.

Considered from a literary standpoint alone, the Bible stands preeminent. Its terse, chaste style; its beautiful and impressive imagery; its interesting stories and well-told narratives; its deep wisdom and its sound logic; its dignified language and its elevated themes, all make it worthy of universal reading and careful study.

As an educating power, the Bible has no equal. Nothing so broadens the vision, strengthens the mind, elevates the thoughts, and ennobles the affections as does the study of the sublime and stupendous truths of revelation. A knowledge of its principles is an essential preparation to every calling. To the extent that it is studied and its teachings are received, it gives strength of character, noble ambition, keenness of perception, and sound judgment. Of all the books ever written, none contains lessons so instructive, precepts so pure, or promises so great as the Bible.

There is nothing that so convinces the mind of the inspiration of the Bible as does the reading of the Bible itself, and especially those portions known as the prophecies. After the resurrection of Christ, when everything else seemed to have failed to convince the disciples that He had risen from the dead, He appealed to the inspired Word, and "expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (**Luke 24:25- 27**), and they believed. On another occasion He said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." **Luke 16:31**.

As a guide, the Bible is without a rival. It gives a calm peace in believing, and a firm hope of the future. It solves the great problem of life and destiny, and inspires to a life of purity, patience, and well-doing. It fills the heart with love for God and a desire to do good to others, and thus prepares for usefulness here and for a home in heaven. It teaches the value of the soul, by revealing the price that has been paid to redeem it. It makes known the only antidote for sin, and presents the only perfect code of morals ever given. It tells of the future and the preparation necessary to meet it. It makes us bold for the right, and sustains the soul in adversity and affliction. It lights up

the dark valley of death, and points to a life unending. It leads to God, and to Christ, whom to know is life eternal. In short, it is the one book to live by and die by.

As the king of Israel was instructed to write him a copy of the law, and to read therein “all the days of his life,” that he might “fear the Lord,” keep His word, and thus prolong his days and the days of his children (**Deuteronomy 17:18–20**), so ought men now to study the Bible, and from it learn that fear which is the beginning of wisdom and that knowledge which is unto salvation. As an aid and incentive to this, “Bible Readings for the Home Circle” has been prepared and published.

Bible Readings; Their Value and Use

Briefly stated, a Bible reading consists of questions asked concerning some subject, and answers to them from the Bible. In other words, Bible readings mean a topical study of the Bible by means of questions and answers.

In either receiving or imparting knowledge, there is nothing like the interrogation-point. Nothing so readily quickens thought or awakens interest as a question. Children would learn little if they asked no questions, and he would indeed be a poor teacher who asked and answered none.

Knowing the value of this means of awakening thought, arousing interest, and imparting information, God, in His wisdom, inspired those who wrote the Bible to ask many questions, that He might set us to thinking and studying about the great themes with which it deals. See **Job 38:4, 7; 14:14; Psalm 8:4; Malachi 3:1, 2, 8; Exodus 32:26; 1Chronicles 29:5.**

But God not only asks questions; He answers them. The following may be cited as a few short Bible readings, taken, both questions and answers, directly from the Bible itself:—

“What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?

“Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.” **Psalm 34:12–14.**

“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

“They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.” **Proverbs 23:29, 30.**

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?

“He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.” **Psalm 24:3–5.** See also **Psalm 15** and **Isaiah 33:14–17.**

The Bible itself, therefore, sets the example of giving instruction and of imparting most valuable information by means of asking questions and answering them.

The readings in this book as originally prepared were contributed by a large number of Bible workers, whose experience in giving Bible readings had taught them the most effective methods of presenting the different subjects treated. Over one million two hundred and fifty thousand copies of the book as thus prepared have been sold.

The work has recently been thoroughly revised and rewritten, much enlarged, entirely reillustrated, with the readings classified and carefully arranged according to topics, by a large committee of able critics and Bible students. So extensive has been the revision, and so much and valuable the new matter added, that the present work is practically a new book, although retaining the same name and the same general plan as the former work. Thus prepared, it is once more sent forth on its mission of light and blessing.

As a help in enabling the reader quickly to discover the words which most directly answer the question asked, they are generally printed in italic, unless the entire scripture quoted is required for the purpose.

“Bible Readings” will be found an excellent aid to private, family, and public study of the Word of God.