

The Bible

READING

Mark

1 Corinthians 2

2 Timothy 3

James 1

Revelation 1

When you read, remember which part of the Bible it came from. Things that apply to Jews don't necessarily apply to Christians, so it's easy to get confused sometimes.

The Bible is actually a collection of 66 books and letters. 39 of them were written for Jews before Yeshua was born. The other 27 were written for Christians after Yeshua died.

Somewhere in the 4th century AD, the Christian leaders of that time gathered all the different writings and letters together.

From those they selected the 66 that we have now as being genuine and bound them together into one collection "The Bible".

The first 39 are called the Old Testament, that means the old covenant, or old contract. They were written by a whole bunch of guys ranging from Moses (around 1400BC) through to King David (1000BC) and on to Malachi (400BC). There is a lot of Jewish history there, some poetry, songs, and some interesting prophecy. It's basically God's story from the time he made the world up until just before Yeshua was born.

The last 27 are called the New Testament, the new covenant, new contract. Yeshua basically wrote a new contract and now God is dealing with people in a different way than he did before.

They were written by another bunch of guys from around Yeshua's time. Most of them would have seen Yeshua walking around Israel. A lot of the New Testament "books" are actually letters that people wrote to churches or individuals throughout that part of Asia (what we now call Turkey).

It's basically the story of Yeshua and the church. There are a lot of letters that explain a few things, and right at the end there is a revelation that one of Yeshua's disciples received about the end of the world. That one can be a bit hard to understand but it's interesting reading. And once you get the bigger picture of what God is doing with Israel and the church, it sort of falls into place.

If you're not sure where to start, then read Mark or Luke. They have the stories of Yeshua's life on Earth and they're fairly interesting places to start.

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Even in the New Testament, the stories from when Yeshua was on Earth are sometimes about him talking with Jews.

Read the Bible as often as you have time. If you can read 4 chapters a day you can read the whole thing in one year.

Paulus said that you can only understand spiritual truth if the Holy Spirit reveals it to you. So if you find that something is confusing or unclear - just wait. One day the Holy Spirit will make it clear to you. But be patient.

The other thing that will help you will be Bible study with other Christians. Probably your church will organise those for you. If not, ask your friends, or people you respect and one of them will find something for you.

This is a good way to get to know the Bible better. After all, it's the only book we have where God reveals to us what he is really like. The Bible is your best way to get to know God.

Your Bible study group will also get to know you pretty well and make friends with you. They will be a great support for you as a young Christian (and for old Christians too!).

The other really great thing to do with the Bible is to memorise it. The Navigators have a really cool "starter kit" called the Topical Memory System. It has scripture cards and a study booklet to help you memorise some of the most common and most useful Bible verses. I really recommend it. Even better, do it with a friend. And you can always make your own with business card paper and a printer.

So, read it, study it, memorise it, talk about it, and most of all - apply it to your life. The Bible is one book that really can change your life.