



Hebrews



Reading the Bible Together

JUNE 2015

What is 'In Sync' Bible Reading?

'In Sync' encourages us to read together through the Bible, and then reflect together on what we have read from God's Word. We consider the main message and the key themes of a whole book (or books) of the Bible, and then we can share with others what we have learnt through our Bible reading.

'I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.' (Psalm 119:16)

Questions to consider

Reading the Bible does not have to be an intellectual study. Anyone can read the Bible and by God's grace understand it. The main thing is that we pray for God's help as we read.

Here are some questions to help you think through what you are reading:

1. What have I learnt about God and about Jesus?
2. What does this teach me about humanity and myself?
3. What has most encouraged me from this book?
4. How does this teach me to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul and mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
5. How does this teach me to love my neighbour as myself? (Matt 22:37-40)
6. Is there anything else I should learn here to be 'equipped for every good work' (2 Tim 3:17)

Hebrews : What can we expect?

The author of Hebrews is not named. Some people think that Paul wrote the letter; others argue for Apollos or Luke or Barnabas. We don't know who wrote the book but the author was very familiar with the Greek translation of the Old Testament and with Jewish worship practice.

Hebrews was written to scattered and persecuted Jews who have become Christians. The letter is essentially a sermon (a word of exhortation) to encourage these Hebrew Christians to continue to trust in Christ alone for salvation and not to return to the outward forms of Jewish ritual. Maybe the temptation to return to Judaism was to alleviate the threat of persecution.

A key word throughout the letter is 'better' and the author explains that Jesus is far better than Moses, or the angels, or the Aaronic priesthood. Jesus offers a better salvation through a better covenant which is inaugurated by the better blood of his better sacrifice which gives better hope and provides a better rest. Hebrews argues for the supremacy of Jesus Christ who is the fulfilment of much of the worship practices instituted under the Old Covenant.

The beginning of the book acknowledges that in the past God spoke through the prophets in many and various ways but now, in these last days, God has spoken to us by his Son and we must pay close attention to the message of salvation that comes through God's Son, Jesus.

There are some well-known chapters in the book of Hebrews, for example Chapter 7 (Jesus like Melchizedek), Chapter 8 (The New Covenant) and Chapter 11 (The roll-call of faith). There are a number of warning passages and a strong call to persevere in faith.

Hebrews has 13 chapters, so the book can be completed within a month by reading 3 chapters a week.

In-Sync for July 2015 : Numbers