



Wisdom Literature



Reading the Bible Together

OCTOBER 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)

Proverbs

King Solomon was the author of much of the book of Proverbs. Many proverbs are observations from everyday life and simple moral statements that teach fundamental realities about life. The book stresses that upright living flows from a right relationship with God – 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge' (1:7).. Proverbs are divine guidelines and general principles rather than absolute promises. According to Proverbs, generally the wise prosper and experience joy, while the foolish suffer shame. As you read Proverbs, recall that Jesus is the embodiment of true wisdom – he is the one in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).

Ecclesiastes

The author who is called (1:1) the Teacher, son of David, and king in Jerusalem is traditionally thought to be Solomon. The book starts with a short prologue (1:1-11), then a long monologue (1:12-12:8), and concludes with a brief epilogue (12:9-14). The bulk of the book is autobiographical reflection as the Teacher searches for meaning and satisfaction in life (living under the sun). There is a strong note of scepticism in the Teacher's observations, as he reflects on his pursuit of pleasure and wealth and fulfilment through toil. But the conclusion of the matter (12:13) is that we must fear God and keep his commandments.

Song of Songs

King Solomon is identified (1:1) as the book's author, and he appears as the Lover. The other main character in the book is his Beloved, a Shulammitite woman. The book is a love song or a series of love poems, describing intimacy between a husband and his wife. The book has been read as a description of human love and sexuality or as an allegory of the relationship between God and Israel or Christ and the church.

In-Sync for November 2015 : Acts