

About the Bible

If you are fairly new to reading the Bible, here are a few points that may be helpful.

The Bible:

- Is the best-selling book of all time, so you will have lots of opportunity to discuss it with others.
- Is God's love letter to his creation, describing in many ways that relationship struggle over the course of all time and the special role that Jesus has.
- Is a huge work that you can spend your lifetime learning, although you can understand, enjoy and benefit from it as you go.
- Is a book that is comprised of 66 books written by many different authors as they were inspired by God to do so, most authors are known and some are unknown.
- Books within the book are assembled in the general order of time, but there are a number of exceptions and examples where different authors tell of the same event.
- Text is comprised of different literary forms like narrative, poetry, prophetic, apocalyptic and uses many literary techniques like parable, simile, metaphor, and others. You will find some text much easier to understand than other text, this is normal.
- Claims it has the power to change people for the better in ways they can't change themselves, and generations of people have claimed this as true in their own lives.
- Is available in many translations, I recommend using the English Standard Version (ESV) and New Living Translation (NLT) side by side when studying. It's available in many text sizes, and some have help sections like historical or life application commentary written by modern Bible scholars. The Bible is available free online and in audio version.
- Can be read in any manner, but for new readers many agree that starting with one or all of the stories about the life of Jesus is best (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).
- Typically has a brief introduction at the beginning of each book to help you understand the context and sometimes this may help you decide what book to read next.

These comments about the books may also help you in deciding some of your reading order:

- Genesis describes the creation and beginning of all we know
- Psalms and Proverbs provide guidance and have brought comfort to many people
- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are first-hand accounts of the life of Jesus
- Acts is the story of how the early church started
- Revelation is both prophetic and apocalyptic and is the most challenging to interpret

There are many works that can help you understand what is in the Bible, a couple to consider online are <https://overviewbible.com/> and <https://bibleproject.com/>.

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