

DIG DEEP

A BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

CHRISTIAN BIBLE CHURCH
OF THE PHILIPPINES

With the mission to “know God, love people, and make disciples”, we strive to study the Word of God to know Him and follow His ways.

DIG DEEP is the 3-Year Bible Reading program of Christian Bible Church. By following this schedule, you will finish the whole Bible within 3 years.

This is the fifth **DIG DEEP** booklet where we will be studying the books of Psalms to Isaiah over the course of six months. This guide provides insight and context to understand each book and is available in both English and Chinese.

For earlier volumes of **DIG DEEP**, you may ask for free copies from the church office.

PSALMS

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PSALMS

OUTLINE

This book is a valuable collection of poems among God's people. It is written by many people and compiled across a long period of time. It comes after the "Book of Job" and is the second of poetry books in the Bible.

While "Book of Job" brings us into God's school where we learn various lessons and get to know God, **the "Psalms" bring us into the Most Holy Place of God** through prayers, outpourings, meditations, praises, communions, and conversations with God.

BOOK'S NAME

1. The book contains 150 poems, hence the name "Psalms".
 2. The original Hebrew text of this book is *Tehilim* which means to praise. Praise is the central topic of this book.
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AUTHOR

1. This book has several authors.
2. One of them is David—an outstanding poet because God had anointed him as a wonderful musician among the Israelites (2 *Samuel* 23:1). Most of the psalms were written by David, thus some refer to "The Psalms" as "The Treasury of David" or "The Psalms of David".
3. Other authors: There are twelve (12) psalms written by Asaph. One (1) each by Heman, Ethan, and Moses. Ten (10) psalms were written by the Sons of Korah. Solomon had written two (2) of the psalms. And then, there are fifty (50) psalms with unnamed authors.



DATE & TIME WRITTEN

The book covers an extensive time period and it is hard to determine the exact time each psalm was written. The earliest is Moses' poem (*Psalms* 90) which he wrote in the wilderness. The latest may be Psalm 137 which was written after Israel returned from exile.



KEY WORDS & VERSES

Key Words:

- Praise (*Psalms* 35:18)
- Worship (*Psalms* 66:4)

Key Verses:

- "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness." (*Psalms* 29:2)

PSALMS



DIFFERENT SECTIONS IN THE BOOK

First Volume (*Psalms 1–41*)

a. Parallel to the “Book of Genesis”

b. Content:

- How a man is blessed
(*Psalm 1, Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked*)
- Depravity/Fallenness/Failure
(*Psalm 2–15, Fallenness and becoming an enemy of God*)
- Restoration
(*Psalm 16–41, Restored and blessed once more because of God’s salvation*)

Second Volume (*Psalm 42–62*)

a. Parallel to the “Book of Exodus”

b. Content:

- Israel’s (God’s people) experience of persecution and their pleas
(*Psalm 41–49*)
- The Redeemer (*Psalm 50–60*)
- Redemption
(*Psalm 61–72, God took his people from the four poles of the earth for the second time and brought them into the kingdom—just as he took them from Egypt and brought them into Canaan*)

Third Volume (*Psalm 73–89*)

a. Parallel to the “Book of Leviticus”

b. Content:

- God is holy. He has a holy dwelling place and a people who are set apart/holy unto Him.

Fourth Volume (*Psalms 90-106*)

a. Parallel to the “Book of Numbers”

b. Content:

The initial poem is written by Moses in the wilderness, narrating the experiences of the Israelites. As in the Book of Numbers, it tells of how they fell in the wilderness because of their sins.

Numbers is a volume on wandering in the wilderness or a book about ‘the land’. The ‘land’ is its central idea. As the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, they longed for the wonderful ‘land of rest’. The whole volume shows how God will cause his people to find rest in his kingdom.

Fifth Volume (*Psalms 107-150*)

a. Parallel to the “Book of Deuteronomy”

b. Content:

As the Book of Deuteronomy is a reiteration of God’s word, the central idea of this volume is also “God’s Word”. You can find this especially in Psalm 119, which exhorts the reader towards observing God’s laws.

PROVERBS

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PROVERBS



OUTLINE

1. This book is a collection of sayings and popular verses among the people of God. They were and compiled into a collection and was called “Proverbs”.
 2. The Hebrew word for ‘proverbs’ is *Mashal*, which carries the meaning ‘similar’, ‘like’, and ‘comparison’. It is interesting to note that the earliest proverbs were mostly comparisons.
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AUTHOR

1. Like the “Psalms”, this book is a compilation of many so it has more than one author. But of course, Solomon is one of its main authors (*Proverbs* 1:1, 10:1, 25:1); just like David is the main poet in the Psalms. Solomon penned 3,000 proverbs (*1 Kings* 4:32, *Ecclesiastes* 12:9) and in this book are the essence of his works. In addition to his own writings, he also collected other long-standing adages that were popular among the people and included them into the compilation. These are entitled the “Sayings of the Wise” (*Proverbs* 22:27, 24:23). Chapter 30 is a compilation of the “Sayings of Agur” while the “Sayings of King Lemuel” are in Chapter 31.
 2. Initially, Solomon only chose a portion of his 3,000 proverbs to constitute the “Book of Proverbs” at that time. Later on, during the time of Hezekiah, this godly king added the proverbs of his ancestor (*Proverbs* 25-29). Finally, the sayings of Agur and Lemuel were added to make up what we know today as the “Book of Proverbs”.
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APPLICATION OF THE “BOOK OF PROVERBS”

Proverbs or ‘wise sayings’ had been in existence since the ancient times, especially in the East where it was popular. People used it to educate the young. That was a time when books were few, expensive, and not easily

PROVERBS

accessible, while the proverbs were simple yet profound and easy to remember. Often a short, deep, and powerful proverb can be a man's lifelong motto that will influence him substantially.



MAIN THEME

Seek wisdom so that you will live a life that is godly and pleasing to God.



KEY WORDS & VERSES

Key Words:

- Wisdom
- A Foolish Man

Key Verses:

- "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (*Proverbs 9:10*)



CONTENT OUTLINE

Most of the contents of the Book of Proverbs are independent verses. They are not necessarily connected with the verses that come before or after; that is why it is more difficult to subdivide it than the other books. According to the nature of its content, there are five sections:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Introduction | Proverbs 1:1–6 |
| 2. The Importance of Pursuing Wisdom and The Danger of Lacking Wisdom | Proverbs 1:7–9:18 |
| 3. Contrasting Wisdom & Folly; Good & Evil | Proverbs 10–24 |
| 4. Proverbs Compiled During Hezekiah's Time | Proverbs 25–29 |
| 5. Appendix | |
| a. The sayings of Agur | Proverbs 30 |
| b. The sayings of Lemuel | Proverbs 31 |

ECCLESIASTES

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ECCLESIASTES

BOOK'S NAME

In Hebrew, the original name of this book is Koheleth, which means “a caller or convener”. It pertains to someone who calls people together for meetings.

AUTHOR

While the book doesn't clearly say that it was written by Solomon and many readers believe that it is penned by other authors, we consider Solomon to be the author of this book based on its content.

A “DIFFICULT” PORTION OF THE BIBLE

1. Among the books in the Bible, the “Book of Ecclesiastes” is a difficult volume to read; it is not easy to understand. In fact, some even wonder why the Holy Spirit even included it in the Bible because of the various concepts in it such as grievances, weariness over life, despondency, and other contradictions.
2. The Book of Ecclesiastes is truly difficult to understand and can leave the reader with many questions. But with the appropriate keys, it is not difficult to unlock its treasures and solve its questions. Before we read the book, we must know the following things first:
 - a. The central idea of Ecclesiastes is to prove that even if a man acquires all there is in this world – knowledge, gold, silver, wealth, fame, status, pleasure and enjoyment – without God, he will simply find life empty and meaningless.
 - b. The Holy Spirit chose Solomon to write Ecclesiastes because he had a history of failure. God made him king and gave him great wisdom. At first he used wisdom to govern his people. But later, he became proud, indulged his passions, turned away from God, and sought to live extravagantly. He had a lofty status, great wisdom, and abundant financial resources. No one under the sun had as much opportunity

as he had to pursue education, fame, pleasure, entertainment, etc. And so he acquired them all. Yet he still could not find satisfaction. From all his experiences, he could only conclude, “Meaningless! Meaningless! Utterly Meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” (*Ecclesiastes 1:2*)

- c. When Solomon had somewhat recovered from his failings in his old age, God’s Spirit moved him to write the “Book of Ecclesiastes”. He recounted the disappointment and dissatisfaction he experienced when he had sought the world and forsook God. He recalled the pessimism and weariness he suffered. When he had recovered fully, he was moved to write the “Song of Songs”, declaring how true satisfaction can only be found in returning to God.
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MAIN THEME

Life and pursuits outside of God cannot bring true satisfaction to man.



KEY WORDS & VERSES

Key Words:

- Meaningless – appeared a total of 37 times.
- Under the sun – appeared a total of 29 times.

Key Verses:

- “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” (*Ecclesiastes 1:2*)
- “Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.” (*Ecclesiastes 2:11*)

ECCLESIASTES



SECTIONS

According to its content, the book may be divided into 3 major sections:

1. General Supposition (*Ecclesiastes 1:1-3*)

Without God, man cannot find satisfaction, whatever he does and pursues under the sun is meaningless.

2. Experiments (*Ecclesiastes 1:4-12:12*)

The author used various experiments to prove his supposition.

- a. A study of the phenomenon of nature, boredom, weariness, lack of novelty. (*Ecclesiastes 1:4-11*)
- b. Pursuing wisdom and learning is a chasing after the wind. (*Ecclesiastes 1:12-18*)
- c. Pursuing happiness (*Ecclesiastes 2:1-11*) but discovering that it is meaningless
- d. Believing that wisdom is better than ignorance, but both ended similarly in meaninglessness. (*Ecclesiastes 2:12-26*)
- e. Believing that everything had been predetermined and yet still finds no satisfaction (*Ecclesiastes 3:1-15*)
- f. Leaned towards negativity, pessimism, disgust with life, and still unable to find satisfaction. (*Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:16*)
- g. Despite adherence to religious rituals, God still felt faraway. (*Ecclesiastes 5:1-8*)
- h. Pursuing gold, silver, wealth is neither satisfying nor beneficial. (*Ecclesiastes 5:9-6:12*)
- i. The pursuit of more wisdom and loftier morality (*Ecclesiastes 7:1-12:12*) still led to the conclusion that "Meaningless, meaningless! Everything is meaningless!" (*Ecclesiastes 12:8*)

3. Conclusion (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*)

Only in returning to God can true satisfaction be found.

SONG OF SONGS

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SONG OF SONGS

BOOK'S NAME

1. The Chinese Bible names the book 'Ya Ge', which means 'Solomon's Song of Songs', based on Chapter 1:1. The word 'Ya' is not in the original text, so the more accurate name of the book is 'Song of Songs'.
 2. Song of Songs refer to the most beautiful, sweetest song among many songs; no other song can compare to it.
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AUTHOR

Song of Songs was written by Solomon, just like the two books before it (Proverbs and Ecclesiastes). It is also a book that is difficult to understand.

A BOOK THAT HAS BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD

Among the books in the Bible, this book is the most misunderstood. It is not only criticized by unbelievers; even believers have doubts about it. Their estimations seem to have its rationale:

1. From the beginning to the end of the book, there is no reference to anything religious
2. There is no mention of God or the name of God
3. There is no mention of the Law, the Temple, or the sacrifices and the like
4. No passage from this book is quoted in the other books
5. The content of the book is only about love – the love between man and woman. In some parts, the language is graphic and seems out of place in the Bible.



A VALUABLE BOOK

1. Nonetheless, this book is considered valuable, holy, and spiritual by all believers who love and pursue the Lord (whether in the Old Testament or New Testament times). Clearly, it became a standard by which they measure their love for the Lord, and a marker for their life journey.
 2. The Jews placed much importance in this book, and considered it to be the Holy of Holies in the Bible. On the eighth day of the Passover, they sang the poems of love. They sang about the amazing sacrificial love of the Passover Lamb.
 3. In the church, the more profound and mature believers all treasure this book because it is descriptive of the love between them and the Lord.
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MESSAGE

The central message of this book is the necessity, condition, and outcome of the believer's pursuit of a constant loving communication with the Lord.



KEY WORDS & VERSES

Key Words:

- Love

Key Verses:

- Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires. (*Song of Songs 2:7*)
- I belong to my beloved, and his desire is for me. (*Song of Songs 7:10*)
- Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. (*Song of Songs 8:6*)

SONG OF SONGS



SECTIONS

The book can be divided into 6 major sections according to its content:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. The Initial Courtship and Fulfillment | Song of Songs 1:1-2:7 |
| 2. The Call to Leave Oneself | Song of Songs 2:8-3:5 |
| 3. The Call to Ascend to Heaven | Song of Songs 3:6-5:1 |
| 4. The Intense Call of the Cross after the
Resurrection | Song of Songs 5:2-6:13 |
| 5. God's Work | Song of Songs 7 |
| 6. The Longing of the Flesh | Song of Songs 8 |

ISAIAH

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ISAIAH



ABOUT THE PROPHET

Isaiah is the first among the 17 volumes of “The Prophetic Books” in the Bible (Isaiah to Malachi). The prophets in these books are the vessels who God raised up during the time that his people turned from his laws and fell into depravation. He touched them with his Holy Spirit and they spoke in God’s behalf. Some prophecies were about current events then, while some spoke of future events. The prophetic books can be divided into three kinds: (1) Books before the captivity, (2) Books during the captivity, and (3) Books after the captivity.



BOOK’S NAME & AUTHOR

‘Isaiah’ is the name of the book and the author’s name. The rest of the prophetic books are also named after their authors. Isaiah means “the Lord saves”. We see that the prophet’s life work is to testify the meaning of his name.



DATE & TIME WRITTEN

The book covers a period of about sixty-two years, from 760BC to 698BC. The place where the prophet preached his message was Jerusalem.



GENRE

The whole book is written in poetry form except for four chapters (*Isaiah* 36-39) which are in prose. Ancient literary scholars acknowledge that its poetry is majestic, beautiful, concise, and unbound by restrictive poetic rules.



NOTABLE POINTS

The central message of this book is the prophecy regarding the Messiah. Therefore, it is very detailed and thorough about salvation such that some call it the 'Gospel of Isaiah'. There are also interpreters who refer to Isaiah as the 'Prophet of Redemption', or 'The Fifth Gospel Messenger', because during the era of "The Law", no one could write so clearly, accurately, and with such detail about the topic of grace.



MESSAGE

Just like the meaning of the prophet's name, the central message of Isaiah is 'the Lord saves'. The Lord wrought salvation for His people through judgment and grace.



KEY WORDS & VERSES

Key Words:

- Salvation

Key Verses:

- "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." (*Isaiah 7:14*)
- "For to us a child is born to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (*Isaiah 9:6*)

ISAIAH



SECTIONS

The book can be divided into three sections according to its content:

1. Reproof – The Holy One of Israel Rebukes and Judges **Isaiah 1-35**
 - a. Judah and Jerusalem **Isaiah 1-12**
 - b. The Surrounding Nations **Isaiah 13-23**
 - c. The World **Isaiah 24-35**
2. History – The Holy One of Israel Stretches out His Hand and Intervenes **Isaiah 36-39**
 - a. Trouble **Isaiah 36**
 - b. Prayer and Salvation **Isaiah 37**
 - c. Healing from Illness **Isaiah 38**
 - d. Ignorance **Isaiah 39**
3. Comfort - The Holy One of Israel Comforts and Saves **Isaiah 40-66**
 - a. Comfort **Isaiah 44-48**
 - b. Suffering of the Righteous Servant **Isaiah 49-57**
 - c. Glory of the Future **Isaiah 58-66**

