

Vacationing With GOD



A group or individual Bible study designed for the busy and not so busy person who wants to study the Bible through in less than a year.

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INTRODUCTION

Many people love to take vacations. John 11:54 *Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead, he withdrew to a region near the [desert], to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.* The reason for this is to get away from what is bothering them or to take a break from the life they are in. This is one of the reasons for calling this study "Taking a Vacation With God." We need to take a break from the world every day. The only way to do this is by entering a time where God is over everything. The Bible, if studied regularly, is the one place we can go and come back with answers and rest to and from the world and all it does to us.

Many times, we don't realize how much of a hold the world has until we can separate from it. At these times the only place that people can turn to is God and His Word. Through Christ this is the only place Christians can find refuge from the never-ending times of the world.

Questions are asked after each session for further study. Always remember that there are no dumb questions, just unanswered ones. When it comes to the Bible, we will find that each of us is on a different level. Very rarely are two people on the same level of spiritual maturity.

Now I can ask how many books are in the Bible, and you will tell me _____. I can ask who Moses was. You might say he was _____. I might even ask what prophet was told he would never marry _____. Questions, that will sooner or later ask about your relationship with Christ. What is your understanding of the Christian's commitment to Christ as Lord, and where is your relationship in retrospect to this question?

This study will begin with the beginning of the way the Old Testament starts and the beginning in the New Testament. When read in balance, I believe that the Bible fills a person's life so full.

The O.T.(Old Testament) is so full of the presence of God and Christ, but it takes the N.T. (New Testament) to help us see and understand it all. And needless to say, it works the other way too. Do not feel bad when something is brought up you have trouble understanding; again, feel

great when you do understand. It will take many times of reading the Bible to begin to read it for the first time.

Now where does this vacation come into play? There are always things to do before going on a trip. Get the car ready and packed. One area we need to stop and check often is the oil in the car. In the Bible the Holy Spirit is symbolized as the oil and I by no means speak that the Holy Spirit is like what we put in our cars. The oil keeps it going and the Holy Spirit is what keeps the Christian going. So every now and then we may need to stop and check the level of the Holy Spirit in our lives or we may be found sitting beside the road during this study.

Isaiah 51:1 *"Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn";* Let's first travel to Pilgrim Rock (Genesis) where the Mayflower landed. That is the beginning for much of our religious background and thought. Then we travel to Washington where we receive many of our laws (Leviticus). By now you get the picture and by the time we reach the end of our trips we will be able to associate our spiritual trip across the land and retain it better.

The study will ask that you stay true to your covenant to read all the way through with the group. What covenant? The one I now introduce to you.

Agreement

I _____ here-by commit to reading through the Bible, and to the best of my ability study as well and will keep up with my daily time with God. I also want to study with this group and share with them as well as with me. I know I can do it.

WEEK ONE

Check Point Per Day:

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| _ DAY 1 GENESIS 1 - 3 | MATTHEW 1 |
| _ DAY 2 Genesis 4 - 6 | Matthew 2 |
| _ DAY 3 Genesis 7 - 9 | Matthew 3 |
| _ DAY 4 Genesis 10 - 13 | |
| _ DAY 5 Genesis 14 - 16 | Matthew 4 |
| _ DAY 6 Genesis 17 - 19 | Matthew 5 |
| _ DAY 7 Genesis 20 - 22 | Matthew 6 |

Reflections

May the Lord bless you and enrich your life powerfully as you begin this study. I write this paragraph after the fact. Our first group has just finished their first time through this study. It has been an enriching time for those who stuck with it. Many have told me that it was the easiest time they have had reading through the Bible. Many were surprised that it only took forty-two weeks to do so.

It was not just a time to read the Bible, but it turned into a time when many felt very free to ask questions about some things they had not seen before in the Bible. Yet others used our time together to reflect upon things that came alive to them. Just keep remembering throughout the whole time that you will go the distance and that this will indeed be a vacation away from the things in the world that keeps pulling you away. Even a few minutes a day with God gives us a break we need so often.

As each of you begins this week, remember that God's word promises that His word will never return void.



QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 1:24-28 What separates man from beasts?

2. Genesis 3:22-24 Give your reason why it was good that God drove them out of the Garden of Eden.

3. Matthew 1:1-17 Name the four women who are named. _____,
_____, _____, and _____.

4. Begin to keep a record of the dreams that speak to different people. Then, ask yourself, from the verses studied, one or more questions you come up with while reading these chapters, both O.T. & N.T.

Use the remaining space for your questions for the study time.

WEEK TWO

Check Point Per Day:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| _ Day 1 Genesis 23 - 25 | Matthew 7 |
| _ Day 2 Genesis 26 - 28 | Matthew 8 |
| _ Day 3 Genesis 29 - 32 | |
| _ Day 4 Genesis 33 - 35 | Matthew 9 |
| _ Day 5 Genesis 36 - 38 | Matthew 10 |
| _ Day 6 Genesis 39 - 41 | Matthew 11 |
| _ Day 7 Genesis 42 - 44 | Matthew 12 |

REFLECTIONS

Reading through the scripture gives us a fuller picture of how God has worked and works with people. Reading scripture takes the guesswork out of our lives and replaces it with faith. Abraham's faith was that God kept coming for Abraham's righteousness (Rom. 4:19-22). While Abraham didn't have the written word, he did have communion with God daily. At these times, God would reveal more of Himself to Abraham, for the terms were already upon Abraham's heart.

Abraham would pass his faith onto Isaac through Isaac's belief in God and then to Jacob similarly. While reading Matthew, Jesus shows an arriving of a fuller understanding of what had been passed down from generation to generation from God. Yet "without faith, it is impossible to please God."

Faith is handed down from one to another when we share the gospel. For it is with truth and spirit that we worship (John 4:22-54). These are the same factors that the patriarchs also used to worship God. Nevertheless, notice, for the most part, that each came to a place in their lives where they would stand still and acknowledge God as the one to lead their life.

Joseph becomes a significant factor in the life of the Israelites. Genesis 42-44 tells us of the beginning of the reunion of a father and twelve brothers. Again, God is using a bad situation and making everything just right. Joseph was innocent, but without casting blame became a factor of life for many.

His faith and patience brought him blessings and a right relationship with God.

QUESTIONS

1. How do you feel about Abraham sending his servant back to his ethnic group for a wife for Isaac?
2. Did Abraham ever marry again? If so, to whom?
3. Is Laban the brother of _____ and the uncle of _____?
4. Isaac and Rebekah had two sons. One was hairy and the other smooth. Their names were _____ and _____. Esau is the father of Edom, which means _____.
5. Genesis 26, Isaac follows his father's example with Abimelech. What example is that?
6. How many years did Jacob work for all he acquired?
7. How often are dreams a factor to this point in changing the lives we have read about?
8. With whom did Jacob wrestle in Genesis 32:24-32?
9. Who's the dreamer of Jacob's family?
10. As you read Matthew 7, what words or groups of words stand out to you?
11. What are "idle words?" Matthew 12:36.
- 12.

WEEK THREE

Check Point Per Day:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| _ Day 1 Genesis 45 - 47 | Matthew 13 |
| _ Day 2 Genesis 48 - 50 | Matthew 14 |
| _ Day 3 EXODUS 1 - 3 | Matthew 15 |
| _ Day 4 Exodus 4 - 7 | |
| _ Day 5 Exodus 8 - 10 | Matthew 16 |
| _ Day 6 Exodus 11 - 13 | Matthew 17 |
| _ Day 7 Exodus 14 - 16 | Matthew 18 |

REFLECTIONS

After the many questions asked in the last session and many that were not asked for lack of time, we may need more time for questions. It was exciting to me to hear all the questions asked and later to find that some didn't get the chance to ask their questions. That is what will make this Bible study special and keep it interesting. So many people will ask questions. The reader will answer them and still not have their questions asked or answered.

Giving time for each session for each person is essential for the chance to interject questions and thoughts that will need more study for the next session. That's O.K. No one knows all the answers, and that is an excellent time to grow oneself in scripture and truth. We have to study scripture to understand more about what it says. The points of fact also come when we continue our studies further. Studying more gives the reader a great time of growth if they accept such agreements with patience.

This week our study will take us deep into Exodus. But, before we get there, we need to find out what happened to Joseph and His family. First, Joseph makes himself known to his brothers, and then are they ever more scared than before? They know that he will have revenge on them at this time, but Joseph is in the will of God and begins to live God's word in his life.

Isa 35:4 say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with [vengeance]; with divine retribution, he will come to save you."

Rom 12:19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

*Rom 12:14-17 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
{15} Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.*

{16} Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

{17} Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.

While his brothers knew Joseph would be angry and get even Joseph's mind was thinking, *"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Rom 8:28)."* Even after his father's death they were still afraid (Gen.50:15-18).

By reading this section of scripture, we can see what peace forgiveness brings to those who forgive. Conversely, not forgiving brings grief. Even when it is yourself, you can't forgive. Is there something or someone in your life that keeps the great peace away? If so, now is the time to confess before God and let the Master Healer help restore peace to your soul. STOP AND PRAY NOW.

Exodus is one book that will show that God never forgets His people. Therefore, as you begin to read Exodus, watch for the mighty hand of God in His people's lives.

QUESTIONS

1. What were the names of Joseph's sons? They were _____ and _____.
2. What four excuses did Moses give? (Ex.3:1-4:17)
3. In the death of the firstborn, what saved the Israelite's firstborn?
4. If you wish to write all the plagues down, do so now.
5. After seeing all, it took to change Egypt's heart, recognize now what would or has changed yours.

WEEK FOUR

Check Point Per Day:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| _ Day 1 Exodus 17 - 19 | Matthew 19 |
| _ Day 2 Exodus 20 - 22 | Matthew 20 |
| _ Day 3 Exodus 23 - 25 | Matthew 21 |
| _ Day 4 Exodus 26 - 29 | |
| _ Day 5 Exodus 30 - 32 | Matthew 22 |
| _ Day 6 Exodus 33 - 35 | Matthew 23 |
| _ Day 7 Exodus 36 - 37 | Matthew 24 - 25 |

REFLECTIONS

It's time to check the fullness of the Holy Spirit. If the excitement of Bible study is not what it once was, then add a prayer for a filling of the Holy Spirit; Ephesians 5:18b *"be filled with the Spirit"*(NIV). If the excitement is still there, Praise the Lord and thank Him for your life and His in you. The vacation is to be enjoyable. Take a few spiritual pictures that will help you remember the Bible.

Sometimes our lives get so busy we cannot find time to trust God. When this happens, we find ourselves being too busy. When this happened to the Israelites, Moses said, *"Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord"* (Ex.14:14). The Israelites were so busy doing what God said they forgot to listen to Him and trust in Him. If we follow The Lord with all our hearts, He will always provide a way for us. He doesn't want us to go back. He wants us to keep moving forward. So, it pays to be still sometimes so God can show us His might and who He is.

When we travel with God, there will always be times that look hopeless, but at these times, God can shine in our lives if we let Him. He will not always give us our wants, but He will always supply our needs. For example, while reading the flight of the Israelites, notice that God always provided them with their basic needs (food and water).

God wants all His people to help do the work. It is never found where He would choose only one person to do all the work except for Christ and our salvation. He would like that they all follow Him and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Find where Moses is instructed by his father-in-law to get help. At this place Moses would begin to teach people how they too were to carry the load. Always remember "**no one can be an island and survive.**" If we follow God, He will come out shining. This will make our lives much happier.

As our study takes us into the laws, we need to keep in mind that these were to protect them. The tabernacle was to be a visual site to keep reminding them of His presence among them. No one knows what these articles look like, but many have tried to come up with

drawings to match the written description. God placed with certain people the ability to mold and make these articles (Ex.35:30-35).

People would still sin even after seeing all that God was doing among them. It was only by God's grace that He didn't destroy them.

Notice that while doing the reading in Exodus, that the life of Jesus shows the fulfilling of what Moses was trying to teach the people. All the gospels will continue to fill the gaps, if there are any in the Old Testament, by teaching us the life of Jesus. Jesus brought the Bible to life in his day by his work and love. He did this many times by using stories and languages of the day. God still wants all of his followers to be an active part in the priesthood of his believers.

QUESTIONS

1. According to Matthew 19:27-30 name some things or people's lives that Jesus has blessed you with since you gave Him your life.
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____
e. _____ f. _____ g. _____ h. _____
2. In Matthew 24 and 25, in your opinion, do you see any of the things spoken of coming true today? ____ If so which ones?
3. In chapter 19 of Exodus God told Moses to have the people do something for three days, what was it?
4. Spend a few moments reviewing the commandments in Exodus 20. Which one would be the hardest to follow for you?
5. The Bible speaks of waiting on God. In Exodus 24 which verse shows Moses waiting on God? _____ Now which verse in chapter 32 shows the people not waiting? What was the result of each?