

## AROUND THE WORD IN EIGHTY HOURS

**Around the world in eighty days**, is one of my favorite adventure films. It is based on a classic novel by Jules Verne. It was a film in 1956 with David Niven, later in 1989 as a TV version with Pierce Brosnan and in December 2021 it became an eight part mini-series by Masterpiece on PBS and will be released as a DVD in March 2022.

The adventure begins with a gentleman named Phineas Fogg who wagers his entire fortune on a bet that he can travel around the entire globe in eighty days. But on the day he departs for his amazing journey, the Bank of London is robbed, and he becomes the prime suspect. Pursued by detective Fix, Fogg must race against time to win the bet, save a princess and prove his innocence. The story ends with an interesting twist.

We have an opportunity for another adventure. It is the story of a father who desires to save his people from a wicked tyrant and a corrupt environment. He works through various characters and cultures to prepare the way for his only son to become the ultimate liberator. As an interesting twist, the son inherits the people he saves as a bride for himself which also becomes a grand family for the father to enjoy forever in a beautiful paradise. We can enjoy this amazing true story as we go *Around the Word in Eighty Hours*.

Ever since I was an early teen I desired to read through the whole Bible. I would start my reading journey in Genesis and cruise along fine until I entered the book of Leviticus where I usually took a detour and then moved on to sections of the New Testament. In December of 1977 I determined that I was going to read the whole Bible through the next year. I chose to get a head start by beginning around Christmas. What encouraged me was my discovery that one could go through the Word of God in eighty hours! With that in mind, I figured I could hasten the plan. I chose to do it in the Living Bible, which made the Old Testament journey much more fun and understandable. By the end of March 1978, I had read all of God's Book from Genesis through Revelation. I discovered that when you do it once, a barrier is broken when one sees how easily it can be done. One also gets more out of it each time one reads it through. However, as I have learned, the enemy will try to keep us from reading God's Word, for he knows its power to make us spiritually fit to face life's challenges with faith, hope and love.

In this message I will share some insights I have learned after many years of experience in God's Word. You will find that when you get into the Bible, that the Bible gets into you and changes you. We covered the many qualities of the Word of God in a previous lesson.

David is called a man after God's heart who was an avid worshiper of God. What sweet fellowship he must have had with God as he sat on a hillside overlooking the sheep who were under his watchful care. David was also a man who loved the Word of God. The chapters of Psalms 1, 19 and 119 are evidence of that. One time I went to a friend and told him that I had memorized a chapter of the Bible that morning. He was impressed until I told him that it was Psalm 117, which has only two verses! Psalm 119 would have been more noteworthy, as it has 176 verses, and most of them speak of the benefits of the Word of God. Let's look at some practical insights about how to get more out of your time in God's Word.

## LOOKING FOR JESUS

As you begin to read the Bible, do not get sidetracked by things that focus on silly arguments (2 Timothy 2:23) and foolish controversies (Colossians 2:8) Every Bible book points to the person of Jesus Christ and his various roles and works (Luke 24:44-47, John 5:39-40). The Bible is like a wedding band and Jesus is the precious jewel gleams over it. The more you read the Bible, you will begin to discover the symbolism and allusions to Jesus Christ.

1. **Read the Bible to discover God and his ways** - Jeremiah 9:23,24
2. **Look for Jesus**....his character, his likes and dislikes, how he did things, his attitude in various situations and with different sorts of people. His principles, promises, prophecies, priorities and commands.
3. **Read to feed your soul**, not just to prepare a message for someone else. George Mueller, the man of faith who looked after 1000's of orphans without ever asking for help, read the Bible 200 times. He said that our first priority every day is to get our soul happy in the Lord.
4. **Focus on Scriptures you can obey now** rather than getting hung up on problem passages that you do not understand.
5. **Look for promises to claim, but note the conditions** (7700 promises in the Bible)
6. **Take time to meditate** on a verse that God quickens to your attention
7. **Alternate reading** between the Old and New Testaments for balance and variety.
8. **Learn to mark your Bible wisely**. Do not underline whole verses but just mark the verse number. It is better to just mark certain words in a verse using different colors. Colored pencils work best because they do not bleed through the page. If using pens, use fine tip black or blue ones. Avoid red ink or fountain pens which will bleed through.

### Suggested Color Codes to Use for Various Topics and Subjects

<b>Purple</b>	Kingdom, King, Lordship, Authority, Royalty, Throne, Dominion, Reign etc.
<b>Blue</b>	Holy Spirit, Gifts of the Spirit, Fruit of the Spirit, Faith
<b>Yellow</b>	God, Light, Holiness, Glory, Fear of the Lord
<b>Red</b>	Blood of Jesus, Covenant, Redemption, Salvation
<b>Green</b>	God's Promises, Blessings, Grace and Favor
<b>Pink</b>	God's Love, Mercy, Compassion
<b>Brown</b>	Discipleship, Sacrifice, Commitment, Obedience, the Cross
<b>Black</b>	Sin, Darkness, Disobedience, Danger, Warning, Satan
<b>Orange</b>	Worship, Prayer

**Dangers of Bible Reading** **PRIDE**: God is not looking for fatter heads but bigger hearts and better attitudes. The goal is not how many times you get through the Bible but how much it gets into you for you to be conformed into the image of Jesus.

**May you enjoy your journey through the Bible and come to love God even more.**

- John Beckerink January 2022