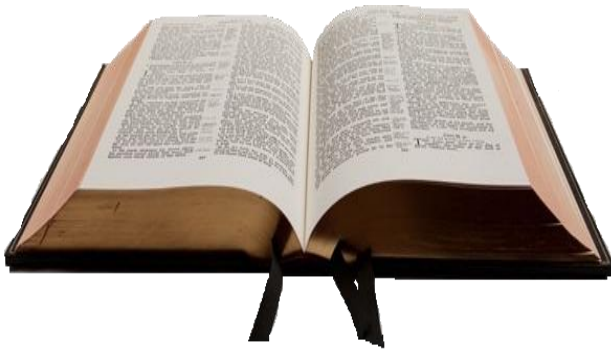


Why Read The Bible?



**How can it apply
to life today?**

Today we find ourselves in a busy world where there is not much time to stop and think. We hear friends and colleagues referring to their lives as “always on the fast track”. Everything we do may feel stress related and many long for the next holiday as a relief from pressure and worry. Often when problems occur, which are out of our control, anxiety and strain set in - and so the downward spiral can begin.

You may ask yourself the question: “I have a very busy lifestyle with hardly any time to fit anything in – So why should I spend further precious time trying to read the Bible?”

If you are already a Christian, you may think: “I already believe in Jesus Christ. I already understand what I think is the Gospel, I don’t need to keep reading the Bible.”

The positive effects of reading the Bible

From a scientific viewpoint, the Bible reveals to its readers that there are merits in the practice of positive thinking, and instructs us in this way: *“Whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy...*

“...think about *these* things”

(Philippians 4:8).

It is also generally recognised that to apply a positive outlook in your life will result in reaping great benefits. The habit of positive thinking is crucial to mental health and recovery:

“In the majority of studies, religious involvement is correlated with well being, happiness and life satisfaction,

hope and optimism, higher self esteem, less loneliness, lower rates of depression, less anxiety, lower rates of suicide, less delinquency and greater marital stability... The advantageous effect of religious belief and spirituality on mental and physical health is one of the best kept secrets in psychiatry and medicine generally."

(Professor Andrew Sims, *Is Faith Delusion? Why Religion is Good for Your Health*, London, Continuum, 2009, p100)

"...In patients diagnosed with clinical depression, belief in a concerned God can improve response to medical treatment. Response to medication, defined as a 50% reduction in symptoms, can vary in psychiatric patients... Studies found that those with strong beliefs in a personal and concerned God were more likely to experience an improvement. Specifically, participants who scored in the top third of the Religious Well-Being Scale were 75% more likely to get better with medical treatment for clinical depression..."

(George Fitchett, PhD, Chaplain at Rush University, Chicago; Director of Religion, Health and Human Values Program at Rush University, *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, February 23, 2010)

"A positive outlook is known to improve recovery from surgery and the immune system's ability to fight off disease as well as aid in cancer recovery, to reduce the fight-or-flight response and hence stress related disease [and can] ... restore our tranquillity and turn our unhappy, anxiety-producing hormones into happy ones"

(Archibald Hart, M.D., *The Anxiety Cure*, 1999, p. 217).

Countless problems we encounter in this life can be prevented, and the Bible - as God's solution to many of mankind's worries - provides helpful and uplifting information to that end.

What can be the immediate benefits of reading the Bible?

The Bible, recognised by Christians as God's Word, is full of useful information, and shares helpful guidance for success in everyday living. It is God's instruction manual for how mankind should function, in order to maintain a more productive and beneficial way of life for all. Not only is there methodical guidance detailed for our learning, but there are also many historic examples and accounts of how faithful men and women have been able to deal with their practical problems using God's counsel for their direction.

Unknown to many, the Bible contains:

- **Helpful advice for job and career success**
(Proverbs 16:3; Ephesians 4:28; Colossians 3:22-24; John 6:27-29)
- **Financial advice and peace of mind**
(Psalm 37:21; 112:5; 1 Timothy 6:8-10)
- **Marital advice, counsel on relationships, and sexual guidance**
(Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:13; ch 7; Ephesians 5:22-25; Hebrews 13:4)
- **The Truth about what happens to us when we die**
(Ecclesiastes 9:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; Hebrews 9:27)
- **How to think positively**
(Proverbs 3:13; 1 Corinthians 2:9&10; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8)
- **Advice on anger and stress management**
(Proverbs 16:32; 22:24&25; 25:28; Matthew 6:34)
- **How to deal with peer pressure and unwise friends**
(Exodus 23:2; Proverbs 1:10-16; Proverbs 22:24&25; James 4:4)
- **Solutions to corrupt government and world problems**
(Psalm 2; Isaiah 9:6&7; Daniel 7:14&27)
- **Explaining the greater meaning and purpose of life**
(Psalm 90:10-12; Proverbs 2:2-6; 3:13-18; Romans 11:33&34)
- **The answer to pain, suffering, violence and disability**
(Isaiah 25:8; 60:18; ch 35; Romans 8:17&18; 1 Peter 1:6&7; Revelation 21:4)

The Bible – Written Communication from a Caring God

Seekers of Truth...

“Is there anyone
out there?”



*“I am the Lord your
God, Creator of
heaven and earth, the
God of the Bible”*



“... Is there anyone
ELSE
out there...?”



“As it is written... There is none who understands. There is none who seeks after God”
(Romans 3:10,11)

A lot of time and money is poured into the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI). Scientists claim that multiple universes must exist as it is so improbable that our planet could have evolved from nothing and still be the only planet so highly compatible with life. Multiple universes would greatly increase the

probability of the existence of other intelligent races like mankind – and so the well funded search for alien life continues.

So can you imagine the media reaction if we were to receive a written contact or recorded history of alien life from an extra terrestrial source? So much study and research would go into that communication! It would soon be broadcast and the whole world would get to learn of its message!

Now apply the same scenario to the Holy Bible and we will soon see why it plays such an important role for true Christians and the whole of mankind. If we seriously consider the claim of the Holy Bible to be the only written communication from the Creator to man himself, then we will see the great importance in reading it. True Christians believe the Holy Bible is literally "God-breathed". In other words, it is God's very words to us: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..."* (2 Timothy 3:16). This is described as Divine Inspiration and true Christians believe that the more an individual exposes themselves to it, the more the ways of the Creator God will influence their mind, to understand His purpose with mankind.

...The History of mankind from beginning to end...

The Holy Bible is the only written communication from God, accomplished through faithful individuals working on His behalf: *"... Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"* (1 Peter 1:21). The Bible's principal theme is the explanation of God's plan and purpose with humanity and the earth. It is the only divinely inspired source which records the history of mankind from beginning to end. One of its main themes is also the saving work of Jesus Christ and His rulership over God's Kingdom, soon to be

established on the earth. The Bible's message has gone to the ends of the earth, having a massive impact on the world. The Good News of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ has been sent and preached to many who have called on His Holy Name. As the prophet Joel stated, "... It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered... and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call" (Joel 2:32). Also the Apostle Peter said, "... It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21).

...No one in their right mind would
want to miss out on a reward they
were offered...

But there are few who are prepared to even consider the message of the Bible and its claims. Even fewer are willing to study and discover its true communication, and there are fewer still who are prepared to put its principles in to practice. Unfortunately the Holy Bible is often dismissed as unfashionable, out of touch, mythical and narrow minded. Yet most of the people who dismiss it have hardly ever read it, or examined its claims in context, and so do not fully understand its contents.

If you were searching for the meaning of life, would it make sense to search in universes that may not even exist, or to look into a communication revealed over thousands of years, that claims to be given by a Creator God? Wouldn't it make more sense to attempt to read and fully understand such a communication before looking elsewhere?

The world takes the time to seriously consider the argument for extra terrestrial life. So why not take the time to seriously consider the argument for an Intelligent Creator who designed life for His

plan and purpose? And why not take the time to at least consider the message of Good News in that communication which has been sent from that Creator - the Holy Bible:

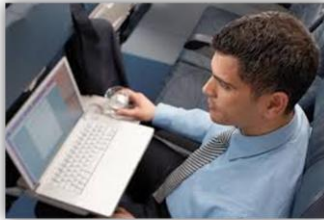
“Thus says God the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it: ‘I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand. I will keep you and give you as a promise to the people... to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house...

... I am the LORD, that is My Name...”

(Isaiah 42:5-8)

To know our Creator well, and understand His message, you must spend time hearing what He has to say. The Bible is His message to you. If you want Him to listen to what you have to say, you must also listen to what He has to say. We naturally find this difficult to do because mankind has a major problem with considering God’s message. The reason for this is that once God’s Word is received, it requires responsibility in the hearer and a change in the heart of the individual.

Even with those who profess to be Christians, if they do not accept God’s Word revealed to them in the Bible to be divinely inspired, then they are at liberty to pick and choose which sections of that message they want to believe. They are also free to dismiss the advice God has given them in that message, in His attempt to prevent them from further pain and suffering.



To most Christians, the Bible is like a software licence. Very few actually read it. They just scroll to the bottom, click “I agree”, and expect God to be pleased with them.

Mankind will naturally shy away from responsibility and commitment to change because they naturally want to do the least, to achieve the greatest. They prefer to do what pleases *them* and makes *them* happy. However, those things do not always make God happy, or allow for a happy world which benefits all. There have been, and still are, many ideas, customs, and social behaviours of particular people or societies in the world which have practices and beliefs that make them happy. Their culture and viewpoint may even have furthered their civilisation and improved their quality of life. But those same values and practices may not have left others happy. They may even have caused great pain, upset and suffering. Mankind is naturally a selfish race; “... *the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?*” (Jeremiah 17:9).

Even Jesus Himself said, “... *From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, sexual immorality, murders, thefts, wrong desires, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man*” (Mark 7:21 -23). The Bible, when applied correctly, gives the solution to these inherent problems.

What are the long term benefits of reading the Bible regularly?

God has a beautiful plan for mankind, to put the world back in order and transform this arrangement of things according to His Will. He has promised a future Kingdom of peace on earth where there will be no pain, evil or suffering; “... They shall not hurt nor destroy in my entire holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

Also He has promised a time when, “... Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders, but you shall call your walls ‘Salvation’, and your gates ‘Praise’...and the days of your mourning shall be ended. Also your people shall all be righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified” (Isaiah 60:18-21).

“The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” (Habbakuk 2:14)

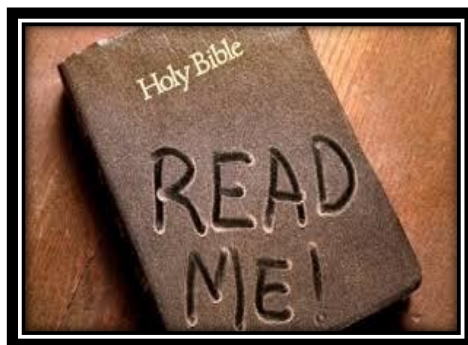
This has been the long awaited anticipation of the Original Christians since the time of Jesus and the Apostles, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures. It has also been the faith and hope of all those who have recognised the importance of drawing close to their Creator God by hearing and reading His Message throughout the Millennia, even since the world began: “It shall be that I will gather all nations and languages; and they shall come and see My glory... For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain” (Isaiah 66:18); And again, “Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst” (Zechariah 2:11).

The long term benefits of reading the Bible regularly and genuinely doing what God requires, will result in a place in this promised Kingdom, in peace and righteousness, for all eternity. Bible readers are told that Jesus will rule over the world and all nations will eventually be pleased to have Him as their righteous King.

What does God have planned for me?

God has given all mankind the offer of Salvation and a place in His glorious Kingdom if they are prepared to acknowledge His Word in this life and put into practice what He requires of them. As the Apostle Peter stated in the first century: **“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord...”** (Acts 3:19) And again: **“...For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”** (Acts 2:28)

God is calling a people out of the world, to complete the next stage in His plan of establishing a new Kingdom free of pain, suffering and violence on the earth very soon. There is still time to be a part of this plan. Why not make His promises yours too, by reading of His wonderful rewards for yourself?



**“Aimed at equipping all who are searching for Truth
with the knowledge necessary for salvation...”**

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