

I have been with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship for the last 27 years, but have had the privilege of working with international students only since 1992. It is particularly for you – my international friends – that I have written this guide. I hope it will help you find the richness and joy I have found in the Bible.

Until I began working with international students I did not realize how much background information is necessary to understand the Bible. I grew up with the Bible and learned the vocabulary, cultural background, religious setting, historical development, etc. one little piece at a time over the years. Therefore, as an adult I just assumed everyone knew these things. My international friends have opened my eyes.

My goal, in this guide, is to give you the basic information you will need to understand and learn from this book of the Bible. I have tried to keep my comments simple and short to not confuse you with too much information – and to not let them become a substitute for reading the Bible itself.

This guide is designed as a workbook to be used as part of your time reading the Bible and talking with God each day. I recommend that you simply walk through the steps as I have arranged them. The background information will prepare you for your reading and then the short summary will help highlight the main points of each chapter.

Since the goal of reading the Bible is to spend time with God – listening to Him and talking with Him, I have included a few questions to help you reflect on what you have read. This will guide you into your conversation with God after your reading. I hope you will take the time to do these last steps. Without them, your time will be shallow and you will miss the real blessing and benefit of the Bible. It is not just a book of information. It is like a letter from God to us which He has written over many years – and through which He continues to speak. It is a doorway into God's presence where you will discover a relationship with Him. If you open your ears, you will hear Him speaking to you – teaching, guiding, comforting, correcting. Enter into a discussion with Him – listen as you read and as you write your thoughts and even as you talk to Him about what is on your mind. And if you hear Him telling you to do something, trust Him enough to obey. His commands are usually simple, but often difficult. However, you will find that following Him will lead you to real life.

May God's grace and blessing be with you as you seek Him.

Warmly,
Len Andyshak

*This guide is based on the ***Good News Translation (GNT)***. I chose this translation of the Bible because it uses vocabulary which is very common to our daily speech and because it phrases ideas in a way which is easy to read. I think you will find it a very understandable and enjoyable translation.