

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE FOR GREATEST PROFIT

by

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CHAPTER TWO

THE STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL BOOKS

The first method of Bible study that we shall consider is the study of the Bible by individual books. This method of study is the most thorough, the most difficult, and the one that yields the largest and most permanent results. We take it up first because in the author's opinion it should occupy the greater portion of our time.

I. The first work to do, is to select the book to study

This is a very important matter. If one makes an unfortunate selection he may become discouraged and give up a method of study that might have been most fruitful.

A few points will be helpful to the beginner:

1 . *For your first book-study, choose a short book.*

The choice of a long book to begin with, will lead to discouragement in any one but a person of rare perseverance. It will be so long before the final results, which far more than pay for all the labor expended, are reached, that the ordinary student will give it up.

2. *Choose a comparatively easy book.*

Some books of the Bible present grave difficulties not to be found in other books. One will wish to meet and overcome these later, but it is not the work for a beginner to set for himself. When his powers have become trained by reason of use, then he can do this successfully and

satisfactorily, but, if he attempts it, as so many rashly do, at the outset, he will soon find himself floundering. The First Epistle of Peter is an exceedingly precious book, but a few of the most difficult passages in the Bible are in it. If it were not for these difficult passages, it would be a good book to recommend to the beginner, but in view of these difficulties it is not wise to undertake to make it a subject of exhaustive study until later.

3. Choose a book that is rich enough in its teaching to illustrate the advantages of this method of study and thus give a keen appetite for further studies of the same kind.

When one has gone through one reasonably large and full book by the method of study about to be described, he will have an eagerness for it, that will make it sure that he will somehow find time for further studies of the same sort.

A book that meets all the conditions stated is the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians. It is quite short, it has no great difficulties of interpretation, meaning or doctrine, and it is exceedingly rich in its teaching. It has the further advantage of being the first in point of time of the Pauline Epistles. The First Epistle of John is not in most respects a difficult book, and it is one of the richest books in the Bible.

II. The second work to do, is to master the general contents of the book

The method of doing this is very simple. It consists in merely reading the book through without stopping and then reading it through again, and then again, say a dozen times in all, at a single sitting. To one who has never tried it, it does not seem as if that would amount to much, but any thoughtful man who has ever tried it will tell you quite differently.

It is simply wonderful how a book takes on new meaning and beauty upon this sort of an acquaintance. It begins to open up. New relations between different parts of the book begin to disclose themselves. Fascinating lines of thought running through the book appear. The book is grasped as a whole, and the relation of the various parts to one another apprehended, and a foundation laid for an intelligent study of those parts in detail. James M. Gray of Boston, a great lover of the Bible and prominent teacher of it, says that for many years of his ministry he had "an inadequate and unsatisfactory knowledge of the English Bible."

The first practical idea which he received in the study of the English Bible was from a layman. The brother possessed an unusual serenity and joy in his Christian experience, which he attributed to his reading of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Mr. Gray asked him how he had read it, and he said he had taken a pocket copy of the Epistle into the woods one Sunday afternoon, and read it through at a single sitting, repeating the process as many as a dozen times before stopping, and when he arose he had gotten possession of the Epistle, or rather its wondrous truths had gotten possession of him. This was the secret, simple as it was, for which Mr. Gray had been waiting and praying.

From this time on Mr. Gray studied his Bible through in this way, and it became to him a new book.

NOTE: James Gray's book, "*Synthetic Bible Studies*" is available in its entirety at

BaptistBibleBelievers.com. It may be read or downloaded free of cost.

III. The third work is to prepare an introduction to the Book

Write down at the top of separate sheets of paper or cards the following questions:

- (1) Who wrote this book?
- (2) To whom did he write?
- (3) Where did he write it?
- (4) When did he write it?
- (5) What was the occasion of his writing?
- (6) What was the purpose for which he wrote?
- (7) What were the circumstances of the author when he wrote?
- (8) What were the circumstances of those to whom he wrote?
- (9) What glimpses does the book give into the life and character of the author?
- (10) What are the leading ideas of the book?
- (11) What is the central truth of the book?
- (12) What are the characteristics of the book?

Having prepared your sheets of paper with these questions at the head, lay them side by side on your study table before you, and go through the book slowly, and, as you come to an answer to any one of these questions, write it down on the appropriate sheet of paper.

It may be necessary to go through the book several times to do the work thoroughly and satisfactorily, but you will be amply repaid.

When you have finished your own work in this line, and not until then, it will be well, if possible, to compare your results with those reached by others. A book that will serve as a good illustration of this introductory work is "*The New Testament and Its Writers*," J. A. McClymont.

The introduction one prepares for himself will be worth many times more to him than any that he can procure from others. The work itself is a rare education of the faculties of perception, comparison and reasoning.

The answers to our questions will sometimes be found in some related book.

For example, if we are studying one of the Pauline Epistles, the answer to our questions may be found in the Acts of the Apostles, or in the Epistle written to the place from which the one studied was written. Of course, all the questions given will not apply to every book in the Bible.

If one is not willing to give the time and labor necessary, this introductory work can be omitted, but only at a great sacrifice.

Single passages in an epistle can never be correctly understood unless we know to whom they were written. Much false interpretation of the Bible arises from taking some direction manifestly intended for local application to be of universal authority. So, also, oftentimes false interpretation arises from applying to the unbeliever what was intended for the saint.

Noting the occasion of writing, will clear up the meaning of a passage that would be otherwise obscure. Bearing in mind the circumstances of the author when he wrote, will frequently give new force to his words.

When we remember that the jubilant epistle to the Philippians, with its oft-repeated "**rejoice in the Lord**" and its "**Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus**" (Philippians 4:4, 6-7) was written by a prisoner awaiting possible sentence of death, how much more meaningful it becomes. Bearing in mind the main purpose for which a book was written, will help to interpret its incidental exhortations in their proper relations. In fact, the answers to all the questions will be valuable in all the work that follows, as well as valuable in themselves.

IV. The fourth work is to divide the book into its proper sections

This work is not indispensable, but still it is valuable. Go through the book and notice the principal divisions in the thought, and mark these. Then go through these divisions and find if there are any natural subdivisions and mark these.

Having discovered the divisions of the book, proceed to give to each section an appropriate caption. Make this caption as precise a statement of the general contents of the section as possible. Make it also as terse and striking as possible, so that it will fix itself in the mind. As far as possible let the captions of the subdivisions connect themselves with the general caption of the division. Do not attempt too elaborate a division at first.

The following division of First Peter, without many marked subdivisions, will serve as a simple illustration of what is meant:

1. Chap, 1:1, 2. Introduction and salutation to the pilgrims and sojourners in Pontus, etc.
2. Chap, 1:3-12. The inheritance reserved in heaven and the salvation ready to be revealed for those pilgrims who in the midst of manifold temptations are kept by the power of GOD through faith.
3. Chap, 1:13-25. The pilgrim's conduct during the days of his pilgrimage.
4. Chap, 2:1-10. The high calling, position and destiny of the pilgrim people.
5. Chap, 2:11, 12. The pilgrim's conduct during the days of his pilgrimage.
6. Chap, 2:13-17. The pilgrim's duty toward the human governments under which he lives.
7. Chap, 2:18:-3:7. The duty of various classes of pilgrims.
 - a. Chap, 2:18-25. The duty of servants toward their masters enforced by an appeal to CHRIST's conduct under injustice and reviling.
 - b. Chap, 3:1-6. The duty of wives toward husbands.
 - c. Chap, 3:7. The duty of husbands toward their wives.
8. Chap, 3:8-12. The conduct of pilgrims toward one another.
9. Chap, 3:13-22. The pilgrim suffering for righteousness' sake.
10. Chap, 4:1-6. The pilgrim's separation from the practices of those among whom he spends the days of his pilgrimage.

11. Chap, 4:7-11. The pilgrim's sojourning drawing to a close and his conduct during the last days.
12. Chap, 4:12-19. The pilgrim suffering for and with CHRIST.
13. Chap, 5:1-4. The duty and reward of elders.
14. Chap, 5:5-11. The pilgrim's walk humble and trustful, watchful and steadfast and a doxology.
15. Chap, 5:12-14. Conclusion and benediction.

V. The fifth work is to take up each verse in order and study it

1. *The first thing to be done in this verse by verse study of the book is to get the exact meaning of the verse.* How is this to be done? There are three steps that lead into the meaning of a verse.

a. *The first step is to get the exact meaning of the words used.*

There will be found two classes of words: those whose meaning is perfectly apparent, those whose meaning is doubtful. It is quite possible to find the precise meaning of these doubtful words. This is not done by consulting a dictionary. That is an easy but dangerous method of finding the scriptural significance of a word. The only safe and sure method is to study the usage of the word in the Bible itself, and especially in that particular Bible-writer, one of whose writings we are studying.

To study the Bible usage of words one must have a Concordance. Altogether, the best Concordance is Strong's "*Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.*" The next best, Young's "*Analytical Concordance.*" Cruden's *Complete Concordance* will do, if one cannot afford a better. But the student should, as soon as possible, procure Strong's "*Exhaustive Concordance.*" All the passages in which the word, whose meaning is being sought, occurs should be found and examined, and in this way the precise meaning of the word will be determined.

Many an important Bible doctrine turns upon the meaning of a word. Thus, for example, two schools of theology divide on the meaning of the word "justify." The critical question is, does the word "justify" mean "*to make righteous,*" or does it mean "*to count or declare righteous*"?

The correct interpretation of many passages of Scripture turns upon the sense which we give to this word. Let one look up all the passages in the Bible in which the word is found, and there will be no doubt as to the Bible usage and meaning of the word.

Deuteronomy 25:1; Exodus 23:7; Isaiah 5:23; Luke 16:15; Romans 2:13; 3:23, 24; Luke 18:14; Romans 4:2-8, will serve to illustrate the Biblical usage. By the use of Strong's Concordance, or Young's, the student will see that the same word may be used in the English version as the translation of several Greek or Hebrew words. Of course, in determining the Biblical usage, we should give especial weight to those passages in which the English word examined is the translation of the same word in Greek or Hebrew. Either of the Concordances just mentioned will enable us to do this, even though we are not at all acquainted with Greek or Hebrew.

It will be much easier to do it with Strong's Concordance than Young's.

It is surprising how many knotty problems in the interpretation of scripture are solved by the simple examination of the Biblical usage of words. For example, one of the burning questions of

to-day is the meaning of I John 1:7. Does this verse teach that "**the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us**" from all the guilt of sin; or does it teach us that "**the blood of Jesus Christ**" cleanseth us from the very presence of sin, so that by the Blood of CHRIST, indwelling sin is itself eradicated?

Many of those who read this question will answer it off-hand at once, one way or the other. But the off-hand way of answering questions of this kind, is a very bad way.

Take your concordance and look up every passage in the Bible in which the word "**cleanse**" is used in connection with blood, and the question will be answered conclusively and forever. Never conclude that you have the right meaning of a verse until you have carefully determined the meaning of all doubtful words in it by an examination of Bible usage. Even when you are pretty sure you know the meaning of the words, it is well not to be too sure until you have looked it up.

b. The second step in ascertaining the meaning of a verse is to carefully notice the context (what goes before and what comes after).

Many verses, if they stood alone, might be capable of several interpretations, but when what goes before and what comes after is considered, all the interpretations but one are seen to be impossible.

Take for example John 14:18, "**I will not leave you comfortless: I come to you.**" To what does JESUS refer when He says "**I come unto you**"?

One commentator says, He refers to His reappearance to His disciples after His resurrection to comfort them. Another says that He refers to His second coming, as it is called. Another says He refers to His coming through the Holy Spirit's work to manifest Himself to His disciples and make His abode with them. Which does He mean? When "doctors disagree," can an ordinary layman decide? Yes, very often.

Surely in this case. If any one will carefully note what JESUS is talking about in the verses immediately preceding (verses 15-17) and in the verses immediately following (verses 19-26), he will have no doubt as to what coming JESUS refers to in this passage. You can see this by trying it for yourself.

A very large proportion of the vexed questions of Biblical interpretation, can be settled by this very simple method of noticing what goes before and what comes after. Many of the sermons one hears, become very absurd when one takes the trouble to notice the setting of the preacher's text and how utterly foreign the thought of the sermon is to the thought of the text, regarded in the light of the context.

c. The third step in ascertaining the correct and precise meaning of a verse, is the examination of parallel passages, i.e., passages that treat the same subject passages, for example, that give another account of the same address or event, or passages that are evidently intended as a commentary on the passage in hand.

Very often, after having carefully studied the words used and the context, we will still be in doubt as to which of two or three possible interpretations of a verse is the one intended by the writer or speaker. In such a case there is always somewhere else in the Bible a passage that will settle this question. Take for example, John 14:3, "**I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**"

A careful consideration of the words used in their relation to one another, will go far in determining the meaning of this passage, but still we find among commentators whose opinion ought to have some weight, these four interpretations: First, the coming here referred to is CHRIST's coming at death to receive the believer unto himself, as in the case of Stephen. Second, the coming again at the resurrection. Third, the coming again through the Holy Spirit. Fourth, the coming again of CHRIST when He returns personally and gloriously at the end of the age.

Which of these four interpretations is the correct one? What has already been said about verse 18 might seem to settle the question, but it does not; for it is not at all clear that the coming in verse 3 is the same as in verse 18, for what is said in connection with the two comings is altogether different. In the one case it is a coming of CHRIST to "**receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also**"; in the other case it is a coming of CHRIST to manifest Himself unto us and make His abode with us. But fortunately there is a verse that settles the question, an inspired commentary on the Words of JESUS.

This is found in I Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This will be seen clearly if we arrange the two passages in parallel columns.

John 14:3

I Thessalonians 4:16

I will come again,

The Lord himself shall descend

and receive you unto myself;

we . . . shall be caught up . . . to meet the Lord

**that where I am, there ye may
be also**

so shall we ever be with the Lord

The two passages manifestly match exactly in the three facts stated, and beyond a doubt refer to the same event. But if any one will look at all closely at I Thessalonians 4:16, 17, there can be no doubt as to what coming of our Lord is referred to there.

"*The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*" will be of great assistance in finding parallel passages. These are the three steps that lead us into the meaning of a verse. They require work, but it is work that any one can do, and when the meaning of a verse is thus settled we arrive at conclusions that are correct and fixed. After taking these steps it is well to consult commentaries, and see how our conclusions agree with those of others. Before we proceed to the next thing to be done with a verse after its meaning has been determined, let it be said, that GOD intended to convey some definite truth in each verse of scripture, and any one of from two to a dozen interpretations of a verse is not as good as another.

With every verse of scripture we should ask, not What can this be made to teach? but What was this intended to teach? and we should not rest satisfied until we have settled that. Of course, it is admitted a verse may have a primary meaning and other more remote meanings. For example, a prophecy may have its primary fulfilment in some personage or event near at hand, e. g. , Solomon, and a more remote and complete fulfilment in CHRIST.

2. *We are not through with a verse when we have determined its meaning.*

The next thing to do is to analyze the verse. This is most interesting and profitable work. It is also a rare education of the various faculties of the intellect. The way to do it is this: Look steadfastly at the verse and ask yourself, What does this verse teach? and then begin to write down: This verse teaches, 1st-; 2d-; 3d-, etc.

At the first glance very likely you will see but one or two things the verse teaches, but, as you look again and again, the teachings will begin to multiply, and you will wonder how one verse could teach so much, and you will have an ever growing sense of the divine authorship of the Book.

It is related of the younger Prof. Agassiz that a young man came to him to study ichthyology. The Professor gave him a fish to study and told him to come back when he had mastered that fish and get another lesson. In time the young man came back and told Prof. A. what he had observed about the fish. When he had finished, to his surprise he was given the same fish again, and told to study it further. He came back again, having observed new facts, and, as he supposed, all the facts about the fish. But again he was given the same fish to study, and so it went on, lesson after lesson, until that student had been taught what his perceptive faculties were for, and also taught to do thorough work.

In the same way ought we to study the Bible. We ought to come back to the same verse of the Bible again and again, until we have gotten, as far as it is possible to us, all that is in the verse. Then the probability is that when we come back to the same verse several months afterward we will find something we did not see before.

It may be, that an illustration of this method of analysis will be helpful. Let us take I Peter 1:1, 2.

(Here we have an instance in which the verse division of our Authorized version is not so clear, so that in our analysis we take the two verses together. This will often be the case).

I Peter 1:1, 2. These verses teach:

- (1) This epistle is by Peter.
- (2) The Peter who wrote this epistle was an apostle of JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) Peter delighted to think and speak of himself as one sent of JESUS CHRIST. (Comp. II Peter 1:1).

(NOTE Apostle is Greek for *Missionary*)

- (4) The name, JESUS CHRIST (used twice in these two verses). Significance:

- a. Saviour.
- b. Anointed One.
- c. Fulfiller of the Messianic predictions of the O. T. "CHRIST" has especially reference to the earthly reign of CHRIST.

(5) This Epistle was written to the elect, especially to the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, i.e., Paul's old field of labor.

(NOTE The question whether speaking of the dispersion implies that the destination of this Epistle was to Jewish Christians will have been taken up and answered in the introduction to the Epistle).

(6) Believers are:

- a. elect or chosen of GOD.
- b. foreknown of GOD.
- c. sanctified of the Spirit.
- d. sprinkled by the blood of JESUS CHRIST.
- e. sojourners or pilgrims on earth.
- f. subjects of multiplied grace.
- g. possessors of multiplied peace.

(7) Election.

- a. Who are the elect? Believers. Comp. vs. 5.
- b. To what are they elect?
 - a. obedience.
 - b. sprinkling of the blood of JESUS.

According to what are they elect? The foreknowledge of GOD. Comp. Romans viii: 29, 30.

In what are they elect? Sanctification of the Spirit.

The test of election: Obedience. Comp. II Peter 1:10.

The work of the three persons of the Trinity in election

- a. The Father foreknows.
- b. JESUS CHRIST cleanses from guilt by His Blood.
- c. The Spirit sanctifies.

(8) GOD is the Father of the elect.

(9) The humanity of CHRIST: seen in the mention of His Blood.

(10) The reality of the body of JESUS CHRIST: seen in the mention of His Blood.

(11) It is by His Blood and not by His example that JESUS CHRIST delivers from sin.

(12) Peter's first and great wish and prayer for those to whom he wrote was that grace and peace might be multiplied.

(13) It is not enough to have grace and peace. One should have multiplied grace and peace.

(14) That men already have grace and peace is no reason to cease praying for them, but rather an

incentive to prayer that they may have more grace and peace.

(15) Grace precedes peace. Comp. all passages where these words are found together.

This is simply an illustration of what is meant by analysing a verse. The whole book should be gone through in this way.

There are three rules to be observed in this analytical work.

- first. Do not put anything into your analysis that is not clearly in the verse. One of the greatest faults in Bible study is reading into passages what GOD never put into them. Some men have their pet doctrines, and see them everywhere, and even where GOD does not see them. No matter how true, precious or scriptural a doctrine is, do not put it into your analysis where it is not in the verse. Considerable experience with classes in this kind of study leads me to emphasize this rule.

- second. Find all that is in the verse. This rule can only be carried out relatively. Much will escape you, the verses of the Bible are such a great deep, but do not rest until you have dug, and dug, and dug, and there seems to be nothing more to find.

- third. State what you do find just as accurately and exactly as possible. Do not be content with putting into your analysis something like what is in the verse, but state in your analysis precisely what is in the verse.

VI. The sixth work in the study of the book is to classify the results obtained by the verse by verse analysis

By your verse by verse analysis you have discovered and recorded a great number of facts. The work now is to get these facts into an orderly shape.

To do this, go carefully through your analysis and note the subjects treated of in the Epistle. Write these subjects down as fast as noted. Having made a complete list of the subjects treated in the book, write these subjects on separate cards or sheets of paper, and then, going through the analysis again, copy each point in the analysis upon its appropriate sheet of paper, e. g., every point regarding GOD the Father upon the card at the top of which this subject is written.

This general classification should be followed by a more thorough and minute subdivision.

Suppose that we are studying the First Epistle of Peter. Having completed our analysis of the Epistle, and gone over it carefully, we will find that the following subjects, at least, are treated in the Epistle:

- (1) GOD.
- (2) JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) The HOLY SPIRIT.
- (4) The Believer.
- (5) Wives and Husbands.
- (6) Servants.
- (7) The New Birth.
- (8) The Word of GOD.
- (9) Old Testament Scripture.
- (10) The Prophets.

- (11) Prayer.
- (12) Angels.
- (13) The Devil.
- (14) Baptism.
- (15) The Gospel.
- (16) Salvation.
- (17) The World.
- (18) Gospel Preachers and Teachers.
- (19) Heaven.
- (20) Humility.
- (21) Love.

These will serve for general headings. But after the material found in the analysis is arranged under these headings, it will be found to subdivide itself naturally into numerous subdivisions.

For example, the material under the head GOD can be subdivided into these subdivisions:

- 1. His names. (The material under this head is quite rich).
- 2. His Attributes. (This should be subdivided again:)

- (1) His Holiness.
- (2) His Power.
- (3) His Foreknowledge.
- (4) His Faithfulness.
- (5) His Long-suffering.
- (6) His Grace. There are twenty-five or more points on GOD's Grace in the Epistle.
- (7) His Mercy.
- (8) His Impartiality.
- (9) His Severity.

- 3. GOD's Judgments.
- 4. GOD's Will.
- 5. What is Acceptable to GOD.
- 6. What is Due to GOD.
- 7. GOD's Dwelling Place.
- 8. GOD's Dominion.
- 9. GOD's Work. What GOD does.
- 10. The Things of GOD, e.g.,

- "The mighty hand of GOD,"
- "the house of GOD,"
- "the gospel of GOD,"
- "the flock of GOD,"
- "the people of GOD,"
- "the bondservants of GOD,"
- "the Word of GOD,"
- "the Oracles of GOD," etc., etc.

An illustration in full of the classified arrangement of the teaching of a book on one doctrine, will probably show better how to do this work than any abstract statement, and it will also illustrate in part how fruitful is this method of study.

We will take I Peter again its teaching regarding the Believer.

WHAT THE EPISTLE TEACHES ABOUT THE BELIEVER

I. His PRIVILEGES.

1. His Election.

- a. He is foreknown of the Father, 1:2.
- b. He is elect or chosen of GOD, 1:1.
- c. He is chosen of GOD, according to His foreknowledge, 1:2.
- d. He is chosen unto obedience, 1:2.
- e. He is chosen unto the sprinkling of the Blood of JESUS, 1:2.
- f. He is chosen in sanctification of the Spirit, 1:2.

2. His Calling.

a. By whom called:

- GOD, 1:15.
- The GOD of all grace, 5:10.

b. To what called:

- the imitation of CHRIST in the patient taking of suffering for well doing, 2:20, 21.
- to render blessings for reviling, 3:9.
- out of darkness into GOD's marvellous light, 2:9.
- to GOD's eternal glory, 5:10.

c. In whom called:

- in CHRIST, 5:10.

d. The purpose of his calling:

- that he may show forth the praises of Him who called, 2:9.
- that he may inherit a blessing, 3:9.

3. His Regeneration.

- He has been begotten again

a. of GOD, 1:3.

- b. unto a living hope, 1:3.
- c. unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, 1:4.
- d. By the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST, 1:3.
- e. Of incorruptible seed by the word of GOD that liveth, etc., 1:23.

4. *His Redemption.*

- He has been redeemed,

- a. not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, 1:18.
- b. with precious Blood, even the Blood of CHRIST, 1:19.
- c. from his vain manner of life, handed down from his fathers, 1:18.
- d. His sins have been borne by CHRIST, in His own body, on the tree, 2:24.

5. *His Sanctification.*

- He is sanctified by the Spirit, 1:2.

6. *His Cleansing.*

- He is cleansed by the Blood, 1:2.

7. *His Security.*

- a. He is guarded by the power of GOD, 1:5.
- b. He is guarded unto a salvation ready, or prepared, to be revealed in the last time, 1:5.
- c. GOD careth for him, 5:7.
- d. He can cast all his anxiety upon GOD, 5:7.
- e. The GOD of all grace will perfect, stablish, strengthen him, after a brief trial of suffering, 5:10.
- f. None can harm him if he is zealous of that which is good, 3:13.
- g. He shall not be put to shame, 2:6.

8. *His Joy.*

a. The character of his joy.

(1) His present joy.

- a great joy, 1:8.
- an unspeakable joy.
- a joy full of glory, 1:8.

(NOTE This present joy cannot be hindered by being put to grief, because of manifold temptations, 1:6).

(2) His future joy: exceeding, 4:13.

b. In what he rejoices:

- (1) In the salvation prepared to be revealed in the last time, 1:6.
- (2) Because of his faith in the unseen JESUS CHRIST, 1:8.
- (3) In fellowship in CHRIST's sufferings, 4:13-

c. In what he shall rejoice.

- (1) In the revelation of CHRIST's glory, 4:13.

NOTE Present joy in fellowship with the sufferings of CHRIST, is the condition of exceeding joy at the revelation of CHRIST's glory, 4:13.

9. *His Hope.*

a. Its character.

- (1) A living hope, 1:3.
- (2) A reasonable hope, 3:15.
- (3) An inward hope, " **in you**," 3:15.

b. In whom is his hope.

- (1) In GOD, 1:21.

c. The foundation of his hope.

- (1) The resurrection of JESUS CHRIST, 1:3-21.

10. *His Salvation.*

a. A past salvation.

- (1) Has been redeemed, 1:18-19.
- (2) Has been healed, 2:24.

NOTE By baptism, after a true likeness, the Believer, as Noah by the flood, has passed out of the old life of nature into the new resurrection life of grace, 3:21.

b. A present salvation.

- (1) He is now receiving the salvation of his soul, 1:9.

c. A growing salvation, through feeding on His word, 2:2.

d. A future salvation: ready or prepared to be revealed in the last time, 1:5.

11. *The Believer's Possessions.*

- a. GOD as his Father, 1:17.
- b. CHRIST as his-

- (1) Sin bearer, 2:24.
- (2) Example, 2:21.
- (3) Fellow sufferer, 4:13.

- c. A living hope, 1:3.
- d. An incorruptible, undefined, unfading inheritance reserved in heaven, 1:4.
- e. Multiplied grace and peace, 1:2.
- f. Spiritual milk without guile for his food, 2:2.
- g. Gifts for service each believer has, or may have, some gift, 4:10.

12. *What Believers Are.*

- a. An elect race, 2:9.
- b. A royal priesthood, 2:9.
- c. A holy priesthood, 2:5.
- d. A holy nation, 2:9.
- e. A people for GOD's own possession, 2:9.
- f. Living stones, 2:5.
- g. The House of GOD, 4:17.
- h. A spiritual House, 2:5.
- i. The flock of GOD, 5:2.
- j. Children of obedience, 1:14.
- k. Partakers of, or partners in, CHRIST's sufferings, 4:13.
- l. Partakers of, or partners in, the glory to be revealed, 5:1.
- m. Sojourners or strangers, 1:1.
- n. Foreigners on earth: he has no civil rights here: his Citizenship is in heaven, 2, 1 1, com. Philippians 3:20.
- o. A sojourner on his way to another country, 2:1
- p. Christian: representative of CHRIST, 4:16.

13. *The Believer's Possibilities.*

- a. He may die unto sin, 2:24.
- b. He may live unto righteousness, 2:24.

NOTE We must die unto sin if we are to live unto righteousness, 2:24.

- c. He may follow in CHRIST's steps, 2:21.
- d. He may cease from sin, 4:1.
- e. He may cease from living to the lusts of men, 4:2.
- f. He may live unto the will of GOD, 4:2.

NOTE: It is through suffering in the flesh that he ceases from sin and living to the lusts of men, and lives to the will of GOD.

14. *What was for the Believer.*

- a. The ministry of the Prophets was in his behalf, 1:12.
- b. The preciousness of JESUS is for him, 2:7.

15. *Unclassified.*

- a. Has the gospel preached to him in the Holy Ghost, 1:12.
- b. Grace is to be brought unto him at the revelation of JESUS CHRIST, 1:3, comp. Ephesians 3:7.
- c. Has tasted that the Lord is gracious, 2:3.

II. THE BELIEVER'S TRIAL AND SUFFERINGS.

- 1. *The fact of the Believer's sufferings and trials, 1:6.*
- 2. *The nature of the Believer's sufferings and trials.*

- a. He endures griefs, suffering wrongfully, 2:19.
- b. He suffers for righteousness' sake, 3:14.
- c. He suffers for well doing, 3:17; 2:20.
- d. He suffers as a Christian, 4:16.
- e. He is subjected to manifold temptations, 1:6.
- f. He is put to grief in manifold temptations, 1:6.
- g. He is spoken against as an evil doer, 2:12.
- h. His good manner of life is reviled, 3:16.
- i. He is spoken evil of because of his separated life, 4:4.
- j. He is reproached for the name of CHRIST, 4, 14.
- k. He is subjected to fiery trials, 4:12.

3. *Encouragements for believers undergoing fiery trials and suffering.*

- a. It is better to suffer for well doing than for evil doing, 3:17.
- b. Judgment must begin at the House of GOD, and the present judgment of believers through trial, is not comparable to the future end of those who obey not the gospel, 4:17.
- c. Blessed is the believer who does suffer for righteousness' sake, 3:14, comp. Matthew 5:10-12.
- d. Blessed is the believer who is reproached for the name of CHRIST, 4:14.
- e. The Spirit of Glory and the Spirit of GOD rests upon the believer who is reproached for the name of CHRIST, 4:14.
- f. The believer's grief is for a little while, 1:6.
- g. The believer's suffering is for a little while, 5:10.
- h. Suffering for a little while will be followed by GOD's glory in CHRIST, which is eternal, 5:10.
- i. The suffering endured for a little while is for the testing of faith, 1:7.
- j. The fiery trial is for a test, 4:12.
- k. The faith thus proved is more precious than gold, 1:7.
- l. Faith proven by manifold temptations will be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the

revelation of JESUS CHRIST, 1:7.

m. It is that his proved faith may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of JESUS CHRIST, that the believer is for a little while subjected to manifold temptations, 1:7.

m. It is pleasing to GOD when a believer, for conscience toward GOD, endures grief, suffering wrongfully, 2:19.

o. It is pleasing to GOD when a believer takes it patiently, when he does well and suffers for it, 2:20.

p. Through suffering in the flesh we cease from sin, 4:i.

q. Those who speak evil of us shall give account to GOD, 4:5.

r. Sufferings are being shared by fellow believers, 5:9.

s. CHRIST suffered for us, 2:21.

t. CHRIST suffered for sins once (or once for all), the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to GOD, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, 3:18.

u. CHRIST left the believer an example that he should follow in His steps, 2:21.

v. In our fiery trials we are made partakers of, or partakers in, CHRIST's sufferings, 4:13.

w. When His glory is revealed we shall be glad also with exceeding joy, 4:13.

4. How the believer should meet his trial and sufferings.

a. The believer should not regard his fiery trial as a strange thing, 4:12.

b. The believer should expect fiery trial, 4:12.

c. When the believer suffers as a Christian let him not be ashamed, 4:16.

d. When the believer suffers as a Christian let him glorify GOD in this name, 4:16.

e. When the believer suffers fiery trials he should rejoice, insomuch as he is made partaker of CHRIST's suffering, 4:13.

f. When the believer suffers, let him not return reviling with reviling, or suffering with threatening; but commit himself to Him that judgeth righteously. 2:23.

g. When the believer suffers, he should in well-doing commit the keeping of his soul unto GOD, as unto a faithful Creator, 4:19.

III. THE BELIEVER'S DANGERS

1. The believer may fall into fleshly lusts that war against the soul, 2:11.

2. The believer may sin, 2:20.

3. The believer may fall into sins of the gravest character, 4:15. (Note in this verse the awful possibilities that lie dormant in the heart of at least a sincere professed believer).

4. The believer's prayers may be hindered, 3:7.

5. The believer is in danger that his high calling and destiny tempt him to despise human laws and authority, 2:13.

6. The believer is in danger that his high calling lead him to lose sight of his lowly obligations to human masters, 2:18.

7. Young believers are in danger of disregarding the will and authority of older believers. 5:15.

IV. THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Each believer has an individual responsibility, 4:10.

2. Each believer's responsibility is for the gift he has received, 4; 10.

V. THE BELIEVER'S DUTIES

1. *What the believer should be.*

a. Be holy in all manner of living.

(1) Because GOD is holy, 1:15.

(2) Because it is written "**Be ye holy; for I am holy**" 1:16.

b. Be like Him who called him, 1:15-16.

c. Be sober, (or of a calm, collected, thoughtful spirit,) 1:13; 4:7; 5:8.

d. Be sober, or of a calm, etc., unto prayer, 4:7.

e. Be of a sound mind:because the end of all things is approaching, 4:7.

f. Be watchful, 5:8.

g. Be steadfast in the faith, 5:9.

h. Be subject to every ordinance of man.

(1) For the Lord's sake, 2:13.

(2) To the King, as supreme, 2:13.

(3) To governors, as sent by the King for the punishment of evil doers, and for praise to them that do well, 2:14.

(4) Because this is GOD's will, 2:15.

i. Be like minded, 3:8.

j. Be sympathetic, 3:8.

k. Be tenderhearted, 3:8.

l. Be humble minded, 3:8.

m. Be ready.

(1) Always.

(2) To give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in him.

(3) With meekness and fear.

(4) In order to put to shame those who revile their good manner of life in CHRIST, 3:16.

n. Should not be troubled, 3:14.

2. *What the Believer should not do.*

a. The believer should not fashion himself according to the lusts of the old life of ignorance, 1:14.

b. The believer should not render evil for evil, 3:9.

c. The believer should not render reviling for reviling, 3:9.

d. The believer should not fear the world's fear, 3:14.

e. The believer should not live his remaining time in the flesh to the lusts of men, 4:2.

3. *What the Believer should do.*

- a. He should live as a child of obedience, 1:14.
- b. Pass the time of his sojourning here in fear, 1:17.
- c. Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul, 2:2.
- d. Observe GOD's will as the absolute law of life, 2:15.
- e. Let his conscience be governed by the thought of GOD and not by the conduct of men, 2:19.
- f. Sanctify CHRIST in his heart as Lord, 3:15. Comp. Isaiah 8:13.
- g. Live his remaining time in the flesh to the will of GOD, 4:2.
- h. Put away

- (1) All malice, 2:1.
- (2) All guile, 2:1.
- (3) Hypocrisies, 2:1.
- (4) Envy, 2:1.
- (5) All evil speaking, 2:1.

- i. Come unto the Lord as unto a living stone, 2:4.
- j. Show forth the excellencies of him who called him out of darkness into His marvellous light, 2:9.
- k. Arm himself with the mind of CHRIST :i.e., to suffer in the flesh, 4:1.
- l. Cast all his care upon GOD because he careth for him, 5:7.
- m. Stand fast in the true grace of GOD, 5:12.
- n. Withstand the devil, 5:9.
- o. Humble himself under the mighty hand of GOD, 5:5.

- (1) Because GOD resisteth the proud and giveth grace unto the humble, 5:5-6.
- (2) That GOD may exalt him in due time, 5:6.

- p. Glorify GOD when he suffers as a Christian, 4:16.
- q. See to it that he does not suffer as a thief or as an evil doer or as a meddler in other men's matters, 4:15.
- r. Rejoice in fiery trial, 4:13.
- s. Toward various persons.

- (1) Toward GOD fear, 2:17.
- (2) Toward the King honor, 2:17.
- (3) Toward Masters be in subjection with all fear (not only to the good and gentle, but to the forward) 2:18.
- (4) Toward the Brotherhood, Love, 2:17; 1:22; 4:8.

- love from the heart, 1:22.
- love fervently intensely, 1:22; 4:8.
- gird themselves with humility as with a slave's apron unto one another, i. e.,

1st, Be one another's slaves.

2nd. Wear humility as a token of their readiness to serve one another, 5:5, com. John 13:4-5.

- minister the gift he has received from GOD among the brethren as a good steward of the manifold grace of GOD, 4:10.
- use hospitality one to another without murmuring, 4:9.
- salute one another with a holy kiss, 5:14.

(5) Toward his revilers.

Render blessing for reviling, 3:9.

(6) Toward the Gentiles.

Have his behavior seemly among the Gentiles, 2:12.

NOTES:

1st. The reason why he should have his behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that the Gentiles might glorify GOD in the day of visitation, 2:12:

2nd. This seemly behavior should consist in good works which the Gentiles could behold, 2:12.

(7) Toward foolish men.

By well doing put to silence their ignorance, 2:15.

(8) Toward all men honor, 2:17.

NOTE The especial duties of believing husbands and wives, toward one another, comes under a special classification.

t. Long for the sincere milk of the word, 2:2.

u. Gird up the loins of his mind, 1:13.

v. Grow, 2:2.

w. Set his hope perfectly on the grace to be brought unto him at the revelation of JESUS CHRIST, 1:13.

VI. THE BELIEVER'S CHARACTERISTICS

1. His faith and hope is in GOD, 1:21.

2. Believes in GOD through JESUS CHRIST, 1:21.

3. Calls on GOD as Father, 1:17.

4. Believes in CHRIST, though he has never seen Him, 1:8.

5. Loves CHRIST though he has never seen Him, 1:8.

6. Is returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul, 2:25.

7. Has purified his soul in obedience to the truth, 1:22.

8. Has unfeigned love for the Brethren, 1:22.

9. Has a good manner of life, 3:16.

10. Does not run with the Gentiles among whom he lives, to the same excess of riot, (lives a separated life), 4:4.

11. Refrains his tongue from evil, 3:10. Refrains his lips that they speak no guile, 3:10.
12. Turns away from evil, 3:11.
13. Does good, 3:11.
14. Seeks peace, 3:11.
15. Pursues peace, 3:11.

NOTE From 11 to 14 would very properly come under duties.

VII. THE BELIEVER'S WARFARE

The believer has a warfare before him, 4:1.

The mind of CHRIST is the proper armament for this warfare, 4:1.

The warfare is with the devil, 5:8-9.

Victory is possible for the believer, 5:9.

Victory is won through steadfastness in the faith, 5:9.

VII. We come now to the seventh and last work. This is simply to meditate upon, and so digest, the results obtained.

At first thought it might seem that when we had completed our classification of results our work was finished, but this is not so.

These results are for use: first, for personal enjoyment and appropriation, and afterward to give out to others. The appropriation of results is effected by meditation upon them. We are no more through with a book when we have carefully and fully classified its contents than we are through with a meal when we have it arranged in an orderly way upon the table. It is there to eat, digest and assimilate. One of the great failures in much of the Bible study of the day is just at this point. There is observation, analysis, classification, but no meditation. There is perhaps nothing so important in Bible study as meditation. (See Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2, 3). Take your classified teachings and go slowly over them, and ponder them, point by point, until these wonderful truths live before you and sink into your soul, and live in you, and become part of your life. Do this again and again. Nothing will go further than meditation to make one great and fresh and original as a thinker and speaker. Very few people in this world think.

The method of study outlined in this chapter can be shortened to suit the time and industry of the student.

For example, one can omit the Fifth work (V.), and proceed at once to go through the Book as a whole and note down its teachings on different doctrines. This will greatly shorten and lighten the work. It will also greatly detract from the richness of the results, it will not be as thorough, as accurate or as scholarly, and will not be nearly so good a mental discipline. But many people are lazy, and everybody is in a hurry. So if you will not follow out the fuller plan the shorter is suggested. But any man can be, if he will, a scholar at least in the most important line that of Biblical study.

A still briefer plan of Book Study and yet very profitable, if one has no time for anything better,

is to do the Second work (**II**), and then go through the Epistle verse by verse looking up all the references given in "*The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*." But we urge every reader to try the full method described in this chapter with at least one short book in the Bible.

~ end of chapter 2 ~

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