

Explore all
66 books of
the Bible

BIBLE TRAVEL GUIDE

FOR STUDENTS

BIBLE
TRAVEL GUIDE
FOR STUDENTS



BIBLE TRAVEL GUIDE

FOR STUDENTS



*Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
Carol Stream, Illinois*

Visit Tyndale online at www.tyndale.com.

TYNDALE and Tyndale's quill logo are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Bible Travel Guide for Students

Copyright © 1999, 2016 by The Barton-Veerman Company. All rights reserved.

Previously published in 2008 as *Student's Bible Handbook* by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. under ISBN 978-1-4143-1859-2.

Cover illustration of map copyright © Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.

Designed by Jennifer Phelps

Edited by Stephanie Rische

Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Some of the material used in this book was adapted from these other Tyndale products: the *Life Application Study Bible*, the *Student's Life Application Bible*, and the *Life Application Commentary* series, all produced for Tyndale House by The Livingstone Corporation.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Tyndale House Publishers.

Title: Bible travel guide for students.

Other titles: Student's Bible handbook.

Description: Carol Stream, Illinois : Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2016. |

Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015036647 | ISBN 9781496411808 (sc)

Subjects: LCSH: Bible—Introductions.

Classification: LCC BS475.3 .S77 2016 | DDC 220.6/1—dc23 LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2015036647>

Printed in the United States of America

22 21 20 19 18 17 16
7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

Introduction & User's Guide *vii*

Introducing . . . the Bible *xi*

Genesis 3	Isaiah 130	Romans 245
Exodus 9	Jeremiah 135	1 Corinthians 250
Leviticus 16	Lamentations 141	2 Corinthians 255
Numbers 21	Ezekiel 146	Galatians 260
Deuteronomy 27	Daniel 152	Ephesians 265
Joshua 33	Hosea 157	Philippians 270
Judges 39	Joel 162	Colossians 275
Ruth 46	Amos 166	1 Thessalonians 280
1 Samuel 51	Obadiah 171	2 Thessalonians 284
2 Samuel 57	Jonah 175	1 Timothy 288
1 Kings 62	Micah 180	2 Timothy 293
2 Kings 67	Nahum 184	Titus 298
1 Chronicles 74	Habakkuk 188	Philemon 303
2 Chronicles 79	Zephaniah 192	Hebrews 307
Ezra 85	Haggai 196	James 312
Nehemiah 90	Zechariah 200	1 Peter 317
Esther 96	Malachi 205	2 Peter 322
Job 101	Matthew 213	1 John 326
Psalms 107	Mark 219	2 John 331
Proverbs 113	Luke 225	3 John 335
Ecclesiastes 118	John 231	Jude 339
Song of Songs 124	Acts 237	Revelation 342

Bible Reading Plan 347

“Where to Find It” Index 367

INTRODUCTION & USER'S GUIDE

Welcome to the Bible Travel Guide for Students! This guide will help lead you through the sometimes confusing world of God's Word. It will serve as your atlas to the Bible. But remember, looking at a map can be interesting but not nearly as exciting as visiting the actual place. Checking your route and finding out what you may discover are good ways to prepare for a journey, but they shouldn't replace the journey itself. Opening, reading, and studying your Bible will transport you into the adventure. Take the *Bible Travel Guide for Students* with you as you explore God's Word!

Make the Most of This Guide

You have probably picked up this book for one of two reasons:

1. You would like to be able to read and understand the Bible on your own. Whether your Bible is old and dusty or new and shiny, you want to start owning it. You have decided you don't just want other people's comments about God's Word. You want to check it out for yourself.
2. You are teaching others about the Bible and want a helpful source of basic information.

In either case you will find this guide useful. It will keep the big picture in front of you as you read God's Word.

Packing List

The material in the *Bible Travel Guide for Students* is organized in biblical order. Each book in the Bible has a fascinating individual history. Part of understanding and applying the Bible involves

becoming familiar with that background. You will find the following essential features packed here to guide you through each Bible book.

Snapshot This easy-to-read section will inform you about the impact and importance of each Bible book. Each Snapshot will help you see how the message of a given book is relevant to your own needs and concerns. This feature also gives you the following information about each Bible book:

- “Purpose” answers the question, Why was this book originally written?
- “Author” identifies the human author when possible.
- “To Whom Written” identifies the original audience of the book.
- “Date Written”/“Date of Events” locates the book on the timeline of history.
- “Setting” notes important historical events that impacted the writer and original audience.
- “Key People” highlights the people who stand out most in the book.
- “Key Places” points out where the events recorded in the book occurred or where the audience of the book lived.
- “Special Features” notes unusual facts that will help you get a sense of each book’s uniqueness.

Itinerary This section gives a narrated outline of each Bible book.

Notebook This section describes the major themes in each Bible book and supplies several questions to help you dig into each theme, whether in the context of personal or group study.

Postcard This section concludes each book’s summary by challenging you to personally apply the important lessons from that portion of God’s Word.

Each of these features will facilitate your study whether you are pursuing it alone or with a group. At first you may find that you have a lot of knowledge gaps to fill. Every insight will seem crucial. As you become familiar with the territory, certain features will stand out for you as particularly helpful. When preparing a study

for a group, the questions in the “Notebook” sections will provide a starting point. Both the “Snapshots” and “Itinerary” will give you an overview of the book that you can share with others or simply absorb as you begin to read that part of God’s Word. Consider all the features as part of the baggage you are taking as you explore the world of the Bible. Some of the items you will naturally use more than others.

Traveling Companions

This guide also includes a suggested reading plan and a special index that will act as experienced companions during your Bible explorations. This unique Bible reading plan will give you a guided overview of all of Scripture. You won’t read the entire Bible the first time through, but you will visit all the major events, stories, and lessons in God’s Word. When following the reading plan, use the provocative question included with each reading to help you make a personal application of God’s Word to your life. You will also find the “Where to Find It” Index, which tells you where to locate key stories and events in the Bible and then specifically in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Have an exciting, lifelong adventure in God’s Word. The journey leads to an eternity with your heavenly Father. As for this guide? Don’t leave home without it!

INTRODUCING . . . THE BIBLE

As you probably already know, the Bible is a unique book. It repeatedly calls itself the Word of God. Although the Bible came to us through many authors who wrote over many centuries, it presents and displays the thoughts, plans, and character of one mind—God’s. Working through the talents, styles, and experiences of many people, God’s Spirit made sure that the final product was God’s Word to the world.

The Bible is unusual in another way. Between the covers we actually find a library of sixty-six volumes. They vary in length and style. Although we call them all books, some of the individual volumes in the Bible fit other categories: letters (for example, the letter of Paul to the Romans); anthologies of poetry (Psalms); collections of wise sayings (Proverbs). If you don’t have a church background, one of your first goals ought to be to simply know the names of the books of the Bible.

The Bible books are grouped in two large sections: the Old Testament (thirty-nine books) and the New Testament (twenty-seven books). The Old Testament books were written during the centuries before Jesus Christ. The New Testament books begin with the four biographies of Jesus (the Gospels) and record the first years of the Christian church. The Old Testament and the New Testament can be subdivided further into thematic sections:

- *The Basics* (In the Old Testament, Genesis to Deuteronomy, also known as the Pentateuch because of its five books, frequently referred to as the Law elsewhere in the Bible; in

- the New Testament, Matthew to John, the four biographies of Jesus)
- *History* (Joshua to Esther in the Old Testament; Acts in the New Testament)
 - *Crucial Issues for Thought* (Job to Song of Songs in the Old Testament)
 - *Teaching Letters* (Romans to Jude in the New Testament)
 - *Prophetic Writings* (Isaiah to Malachi in the Old Testament; Revelation in the New Testament)

Don't be surprised if you find parts of the Bible beyond your understanding. Most of it isn't easy reading. God meant it to offer you enough challenge for a lifetime, so you won't grasp everything even after years of study. What you do understand, however, will change your life! The more you persist in exploring God's Word, the more you will find God speaking in your life. James described the adventure this way: "But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it" (James 1:25).

**OLD
TESTAMENT**

GENESIS



Snapshot of Genesis

Have you ever turned on a TV program a few minutes late? Chances are you turned it off before the show was over because you couldn't figure out what was going on. To understand a television program, you have to see the beginning.

Now think of the Bible. If you want to find out what's going on in this big book—to get the whole picture—it helps to start with Genesis. Why? Because Genesis is the book of beginnings. It explains how just about everything got started. If you don't understand how this world began, it will be harder to figure out why and how God is going to end everything.

In Genesis we marvel at the awesome creation of the entire universe by the spoken word of God. And we get our first glimpse into God's character. We see that though everything else has a definite beginning, God is eternal. He always has been and always will be. We notice God's creativeness and power; we see his hatred and judgment of sin; we view his incredible love for his people even when they constantly disobey him.

Genesis is the book of beginnings: the beginning of the universe, of people, of sin, of salvation, and of an understanding of God. Take time to read Genesis. You will be amazed at how fascinating it is. Later, you may be interested to see how often other books in the Bible refer to something first mentioned in Genesis—the book of beginnings.

PURPOSE:

To record God's creation of the world and his desire to have a people set apart to worship him

AUTHOR:

Moses

TO WHOM WRITTEN:

The people of Israel and to all believers everywhere

DATE WRITTEN:

1450–1410 BC

SETTING:

The region presently known as the Middle East

KEY PEOPLE:

Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph

SPECIAL FEATURE:

Genesis contains the record of the origins of the human race.



Itinerary

The Story of Creation (1:1–2:4)

God. That's where Genesis begins. All at once we see God creating the world in a majestic display of power and purpose culminating with a man and woman made like himself. In the first section of this book, God sets the stage for all of history.

The Story of Adam (2:4–5:32)

The second section highlights Adam and Eve and their immediate descendants. Before long, sin enters the world, and Satan is unmasked. Bathed in innocence, creation is shattered by the Fall (the willful disobedience of Adam and Eve). Fellowship with God is broken, and evil begins weaving its destructive web. We read how, in rapid succession, Adam and Eve are expelled from the beautiful Garden, their first son turns murderer, and evil breeds evil.

The Story of Noah (6:1–11:32)

God takes radical action in the third section. Into a world flooded with evil, he sends a watery judgment that destroys everyone on earth except for a small family led by Noah, the only godly person

left. Unfortunately, sin also survives the Flood and immediately continues its destructive work.

The Story of Abraham (12:1–25:18)

In section 4 we meet Abraham, whom God chooses as the first father of the covenant people. God's plan begins to unfold. His ultimate purpose is not to judge people but to save them. Abraham experiences periods of sharp testing, but he remains faithful to God. Through Abraham we learn what it means to live by faith.

The Story of Isaac (25:19–28:9)

Section 5 takes up the story with Abraham's son Isaac. God keeps his promise to Abraham and gives him a son. Isaac does not demand his own way. He does not resist when he is about to be sacrificed, and he gladly accepts a wife chosen for him by others. Like Isaac, we must learn to put God's will ahead of our own.

The Story of Jacob (28:10–36:43)

Isaac's son Jacob is the central figure in section 6. Jacob lives a tenacious life. He faithfully serves Laban fourteen years for a woman he loves. Later, he wrestles with God. Although Jacob makes many mistakes, his persistence teaches us about lifelong service for our Lord.

The Story of Joseph (37:1–50:26)

Genesis closes with a fascinating account of Joseph's life. Joseph overcomes disastrous setbacks—family betrayal, slavery, sexual harassment, prison—by maintaining a calm reliance on God. Through Joseph's life we learn that suffering, no matter how unfair, can develop strong character in us.



Notebook

BEGINNINGS (1:1–2:25)

The name of this book means “beginning.” Genesis introduces God as Creator of all that exists: the universe in general and life in particular. God announces the creation of human beings, with whom God shares his own image.

Genesis also describes the initial fall and persistent descent of human beings into sin. The moral infection passes from parent to

child in each generation. But God also begins to work out the marvelous plan of salvation, which offers hope to the human race.

- What aspects of God's character are revealed in the first three chapters of Genesis?
- How much significance and value did God give humans by making them in his image? In what ways does that fact affect your life?
- What difference does it make when we think about the universe having been created by a personal Creator as opposed to thinking about ourselves as the product of mindless, purposeless, impersonal chance?

SIN AND DISOBEDIENCE (3:1-24; 6:5-22; 18:17-19:26)

Sin is destructive. It destroys the goodness of God's creation, ruining the life God intended. Sin results from human beings choosing to go their own way rather than obeying God. Sin leads to sin. Only God can reverse the consequences of sinful choices and provide an antidote for sin.

No person can escape the effects of sin. Each one is born with a sinful nature! Without God providing salvation, we would all be condemned to death because of sin. But God offers life that is good and glorifying to himself. The person who chooses neither to trust nor obey God misses out on the goodness and glory of God.

- How was the creation affected by Adam and Eve's sin?
- Does a person ever get away with sin? Explain.
- What are some of the common reasons people give for sinning even though they know that they are disobeying God?
- How have you learned to resist temptation?

PROMISES (6:18; 9:8-17; 12:1-3; 17:1-27)

In contrast to human sinfulness, Genesis also reveals the faithful, loving, and promise-keeping nature of God. For example, God promised to protect and provide for his people. God entered into special promises, called "covenants," or binding agreements. Through these covenants, God guaranteed his relationship with people.

One of God's core character traits is truthfulness. He can be trusted to keep his promises. God has not left the world in the dark

about who he is and what his plans are. He has given us a written record. While we may not always know the details of what God will do, we can be confident that he will do what he has promised.

- What promise did God make to Noah following the Flood (see 9:8-17)?
- What were the details of the covenant between God and Abraham (see 12:1-3)?
- How do these promises inform your understanding of God?
- Which of God's promises do you claim in your own life?

OBEDIENCE AND PROSPERITY (45:1-11)

Choosing to obey God results in enjoying his goodness and glory. Everyone who makes the choice to obey will prosper. Appearances and experiences may temporarily seem to indicate differently, but those who honor God will eventually see their lives deeply benefited by God.

If a person wants to choose life, that person must put his or her faith in God. Growing in one's faith means discovering God's directions and obeying them. It also involves trusting that God will provide for all of life's needs. God is not boring, nor is he a spoiler of fun. God created life to be enjoyed and really lived! Wouldn't the Creator know best how we should live?

- In spite of his "failures," how would you defend the idea that Joseph was a truly successful person?
- Joseph had to choose what to do with his hurt and bitterness from being rejected and betrayed by his brothers. Based on 45:1-11, what did he do with those feelings?
- What are the basic guidelines you live by? If you haven't done so, write them down. How do they match the life of someone like Joseph?
- What would it take for you to be able to judge your teenage years a success?



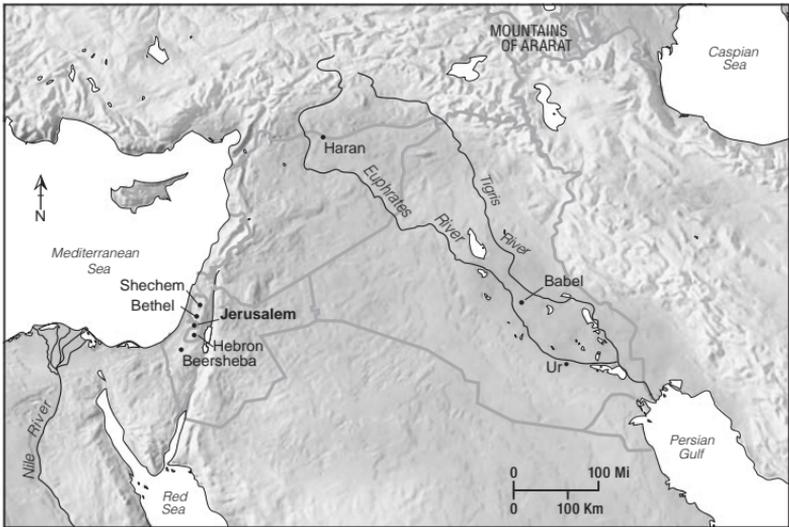
Postcard

In spite of all the years between ourselves and our original parents, we are really not that different from Adam and Eve. The differences that do come to mind are superficial. We can understand a

lot about ourselves by looking at our first parents' lives and the lives of other early people. In what ways are you living for God today?



Tour Map of Genesis



Modern names and boundaries are shown in gray.