

# BASIC BIBLE GUIDE

## Regardless of Your Beliefs

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### **Basic Bible Guide's (BBG) mission:**

To spread **hope** by helping anyone, regardless of their beliefs,  
understand the Bible in a quick & easy way!

You may support this mission, so we can continue to give hope to students,  
our military, individuals, groups & people globally through  
translating BBG, by giving any amount at our website:

**[BasicBibleGuide.org](http://BasicBibleGuide.org)**

Basic Bible Guide is an IRS approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity.  
100% of proceeds go directly to the Basic Bible Guide ministry!

## **THANK YOU AND MANY BLESSINGS!**

A special thanks to all my family and friends  
who helped inspire, edit, improve, encourage  
and support BBG throughout these 30-plus years.

**Daniel Paul Kennedy, Founder**

(Visit [BasicBibleGuide.org](http://BasicBibleGuide.org) to read the Founder's true-life story.)

We would love to hear from you! (719)522-1588

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# SESSION 1

Basic Bible Guide (BBG) is designed to be so straightforward that anyone can lead a group or participate in one even if they have never opened a Bible. This page instructs how to lead a group. Whether you are leading a group or doing BBG on your own please read the following instructions to learn how easy leading your own group can be! If you are doing a group now, read these instructions out loud to the participants in the group so anyone can see how easy it is to start their own group.

## **Instructions for the “Guide” (Group Leader)**

1. **If available:** Have extra Bibles and pens or pencils.
2. Start and finish each session on time. It is optional for anyone to come early or stay longer. Just make sure the actual session segments are in the allotted time.
3. Follow the brief instructions at the beginning and end of each session.
4. Some of the participants may know more about the Bible than the group’s Guide, and that’s okay. The Guide’s function is to simply stick with the curriculum.
5. BBG is designed with 12 sessions that are 60 minutes each. Allow extra time in the beginning to allow participants to arrive, and extra time at the end for discussion.
6. Pick a set time and day of the week for the group to meet.
7. No discussion is allowed during each session, as conversation will prolong the session indefinitely, and disrupt the flow of this course.

## **Introduction to Basic Bible Guide**

**Guide – Before you start have each group member introduce themselves by saying their name and where they are from. Instruct each participant (including yourself) to take turns reading (out loud) one numbered item each (so the group will stay together). If someone prefers not to read, they say “pass” and the group will skip over them.**

1. Basic Bible Guide (BBG) was designed so anyone who can read, regardless of their beliefs, will be able to not only take this course, but will be able to lead (or guide) this course with others.
2. BBG is a straightforward course with not much flash or “entertainment”, and although it is quick and easy, it is probably different than other formats you may have encountered. BBG is intended to show people what the Bible actually says. BBG is not intended to indoctrinate, teach, offer commentary or biased opinions (there are MANY programs available that will do that).
3. BBG is an overview of the entire Bible; all of its 66 separate writings/“books” are reviewed. For a much fuller understanding, it is recommended that you read the entire Bible as you go through this course (or as soon as you are able) from front to back (the same order the course is designed). If you can read a 120 to 130-page book each week you will be able to read the whole Bible in 12 weeks. However, if you do not, BBG will still deliver a remarkable understanding of the Bible.
4. You will also be able to answer questions, such as:
  - a. What does the Bible really say, and where did it come from?
  - b. Is it relevant in today’s culture?
  - c. Does it answer the tough questions that I have about life?
5. We cover a lot in this course, and you may feel that you will not retain as much as you would like, but as you continue to read the Bible, the more information you will acquire.
6. Please understand if there seems to be something or various facts missing, BBG is only an overview. The majority of the Bible is not read during this course, and that is one of the reasons BBG recommends reading the entire Bible.
7. Also recognize, as a particular passage is read in BBG, there may be other areas of the Bible that cover the same topic. So, do not assume to have a thorough understanding of how the Bible views this topic, or that the Bible, as a whole, agrees or disagrees with what is being read. A more complete study is required to gain accurate knowledge of these topics.
8. As you go through this program/the Bible expect to discover insights, ideas, stories and concepts that will challenge you, be thought provoking, you may not understand, you may not agree with, or may even find offensive.
9. With this in mind, make the commitment right now to find out for yourself what the Bible actually says, and complete this entire course; as other books need to be read to the end in order for the reader to grasp and understand the concept in its entirety, the Bible works the same way. Remember, there are no teachings or opinions; BBG is only a guide to show you what the Bible declares.

**Note:** We begin going through the Bible in Session 2. The next section called “General Bible Facts” goes over important knowledge which is helpful in understanding what the Bible is and how it works. Continue taking turns reading each numbered item.

## General Bible Facts

1. The word "Bible" means "The Book" (in Greek - "*Ta Biblia*") implying the book of books - superior to other books.<sup>18</sup>
2. There are 66 separate writings or "books" that make up the Bible. These "books" were given names to identify them, such as Genesis, John and Revelation.
3. Many books have abbreviations, such as Gen. for Genesis, Ex. for Exodus, Eph. for Ephesians, Jn. For John, and Rev. for Revelation.
4. **Note:** VERY IMPORTANT, there are many names of people and places throughout the Bible that are difficult for almost every reader to pronounce. DO NOT get bogged down on trying to say them precisely, just do your best to sound out the word or name and move on.
5. *At this time, everyone turn to your Bible's contents and read the books of the Bible out loud (together).* The purpose of this is to have a better understanding of where Bible verses are located.
6. Each book is divided into "chapters", marked with the larger number at the beginning of each chapter (unless the book has only 1 chapter: these include Obadiah, Philemon, II John, III John, and Jude).
7. Each chapter is divided into "verses", marked by the smaller number at the beginning of each verse. The book name, chapter, and verse number is known as the Bible reference or "address". One of the most well-known Bible verses/addresses is John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
8. The Bible is divided into two main sections: the first is known as the "Old Testament" and the second is called the "New Testament".
9. These two sections are then divided into "books": 39 books in the Old Testament, and 27 books in the New Testament.
10. Definition of "Testament"  
**Webster's Dictionary:**
  1. either of two main divisions of the Bible, evidence, witness<sup>15</sup>**American Heritage Dictionary:**
  1. something that serves as tangible proof or evidence
  2. a statement of belief; a credo<sup>2</sup>
11. **The Old Testament** is the first main section of the Bible and was originally written in the Hebrew language.<sup>19</sup> It is comprised of 39 books and covers a time line in history from the creation of the World (in Genesis chapters 1 and 2) through a prophesy of God's "judgment of the wicked" and "blessing" to those who "fear" (or revere) God's name (in Malachi, Chapter 4, approximately 500 B.C.).
12. The Old Testament is the Hebrew (or Jewish) Bible (Tanakh in Hebrew).<sup>24</sup>

13. The first five books of the Old Testament in Hebrew are called the Torah (meaning "law").<sup>3</sup> In Greek these first five books are called The Pentateuch, or "*The Book of the Law of the Lord*" given by Moses.<sup>17</sup>
14. The next 12 books of the Old Testament are recognized as "Historical Books" because they tell the history of the Israelites (who are also known as the Hebrews or Jews), from the time of their departure from slavery in Egypt to the reign of King Ahasuerus, who was one of the rulers of Persia (the Persians) and Media (the Medes), which is approximately an 875-year time line.<sup>10</sup>
15. The next five books of the Old Testament are considered "Poetic Books" due to their writing styles.<sup>10</sup> These books include:
- a. Job (is a man's name, pronounced with a long o), which is mainly dialog between Job, his friends and God
  - b. Psalms, which are songs (with no musical notes included on the pages)
  - c. Proverbs, which are statements of wisdom and instruction
  - d. Ecclesiastes, which is mainly the dissertation of a bitter and unfulfilled King
  - e. Song of Solomon (also known as Song of Songs), which is a passionate dialogue between lovers
16. The next 17 books of the Old Testament are "Prophetic Books" which are written by prophets.<sup>10</sup> These books are titled by the name of each of the prophets that wrote them (such as Isaiah, Jonah, Joel and Obadiah). Prophets are people who convey messages to others, as they have been revealed to them by God (usually concerning the future). In these books, you will find prophecies that are later fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament, as can be seen in the cross-references.
17. **The New Testament** is the second main section of the Bible and was originally written in Greek.<sup>19</sup> It is comprised of 27 books that cover the life, ministry and purpose of Jesus Christ, as well as the ministry of Jesus' first believers (also known as followers, disciples or Christians, which means "little Christ" or Christ-like). It includes letters of instruction and exhortation to the growing groups of believers around the world. The New Testament concludes with events and instructions for the end of this world and the beginning of a new world.
18. The first four books of the New Testament are known as the "Gospels", which means "good news".<sup>18</sup> They cover the life of Jesus on Earth and are written (and titled) by four different people (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John).
19. The fifth book of the New Testament is Acts, which refers to the "acts" of the Apostles (the leaders for the ministry of Jesus).
20. The next twenty-one books of the New Testament are letters to groups (or individuals) from the Apostles of Jesus (also known as Epistle's), for the purpose of: instructing, correcting, rebuking, and exhorting them, as well as salutations.
- Note:** An apostle is a follower of Jesus who now is a leader and preacher to fellow believers.
21. The last book of the New Testament is Revelation (which means "unveiling"), covering the end of this world and the beginning of a new one.<sup>22</sup>

22. **Note:** Many of the books and stories in the Bible overlap and/or continue where another left off. For example, Daniel starts where Jeremiah ends; Ezra continues after Daniel, Nehemiah after Ezra, I Kings and II Kings overlap in time with I Chronicles and II Chronicles. Several of the prophetic books also overlap in time. The first four books of the New Testament (The Gospels) cover the same timeline but from different writers' perspectives. Some of the Epistles are written to cities that Paul visited in the book of Acts.
23. There was a period of approximately 400 years not recorded in the Bible between the Old and New Testament known as the Intertestamental Period.<sup>25</sup>
24. The Bible was written by approximately 36 different people, including a tax collector (Matthew), kings (Solomon), a doctor (Luke) and fishermen (Peter and John). It took a period of about 1,500 years to complete writing.<sup>6</sup> Its first author was Moses, after the Egyptians' enslavement of the Hebrews (the book of Genesis, approximately 1475 B. C.). The last author of the Bible was John (Jesus' companion and disciple), approximately 90 A.D. (the book of Revelation).
25. **Note:** The initials B.C. in a date refer to "Before Christ", or before Jesus Christ's birth. The initials A.D. stand for the Latin phrase "Anno Domini", which translate to "the Year of Our Lord," referring to the years after the birth of Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>
26. The Bible was the first book ever printed on a printing press and has been reprinted more than any book in history. It has also been translated into more languages than any other book.<sup>8</sup>
27. The most commonly known English translation of the Bible is the King James Version (KJV) Bible or the "authorized version", authorized by King James of England in 1611 A.D.<sup>18</sup> There are other versions many people find easier to comprehend since the English/American language has changed since then. It is best to study several versions/translations simultaneously for a fuller understanding.
28. Some Bibles are "translations" and others are a "paraphrase". A translation is when a word or term from one language is copied "word-for-word" (as accurately as possible) to another language. A paraphrase gives the meaning of a word or passage "thought for thought". Check your Bible to find out which you have.
29. The Scripture printed in BBG is the English Standard Version (ESV) translation.
30. Depending on the type of Bible you have, you will probably notice headings before passages emphasizing the event(s) that are going to take place in the following verses. Unless there is a verse number before the text these are not part of the Bible but were added for a point of reference for the reader. Many Bibles also have letters and other symbols throughout them to signify a footnote or some other type of textual note that expands upon the Bible's text. Consult your Bible to learn what these mean.
31. **Note:** If you desire answers about or from the Bible, the best source IS the Bible—not people's traditions or philosophies. If someone cannot answer your questions from the Bible, be cautious receiving their answer.
32. There is a group of people mentioned in the Bible that was applauded for searching the

Scriptures and looking up what was being told them, the Bereans.

33. Now everyone read together (out loud): Acts 17:11 “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”

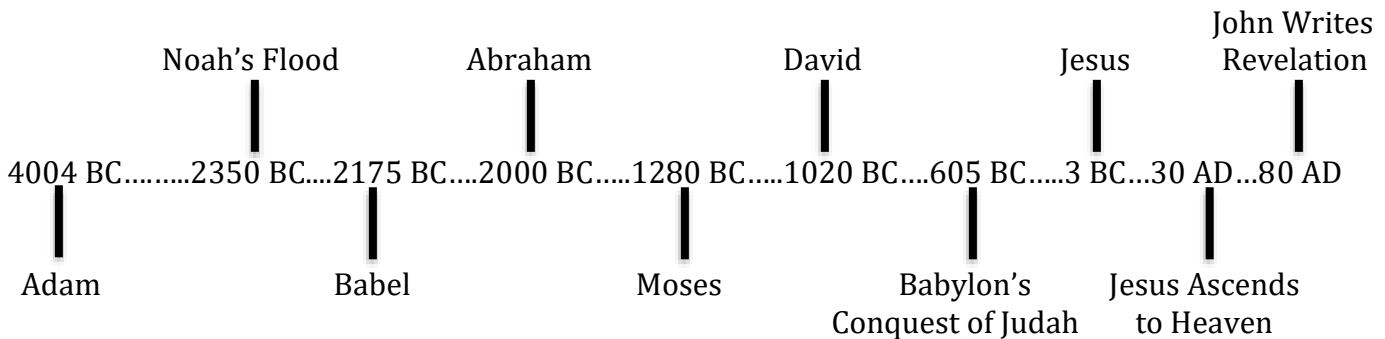
34. **Note:** There are many ways to “read” the Bible:

- a. A small, pocket-sized paper or electronic Bible that you can keep with you and read anytime.
- b. You can use any paper Bible, Bible website or mobile app.
- c. Audio Bibles can be listened to on various devices, while driving, working-out or doing housework. You can listen to the *Book of Revelation* in 1 hour and 7 minutes or the book of Philippians in 12 minutes.

35. **Note:** To assist in studying the Bible, BBG recommends two resources:

- a. A concordance, which is a book that aids you in your study of Biblical words or concepts, with an alphabetical listing of words that locates other passages in the Bible with the same word that you are studying.
- b. A Bible Dictionary to help you understand words you may not know.

36. Below is a generally accepted timeline of major events/people from the beginning of the Bible’s recorded time to the last book of the Bible, for you to use as a reference. <sup>1</sup>





## Instructions for BBG Sessions 2-12

**Note:** While BBG can be completed with a group or individually, the following instructions are mainly designed for a group setting. If BBG is being done individually, continue to read these instructions, as some of them will pertain to you.

**This course can only be completed if a few simple guidelines are followed:**

1. You will need a Bible (preferably ESV but any Bible can be used), a Basic Bible Guide manual and a pen for notetaking.
2. Attend each session and be on time (if possible).
3. Do not ask any questions or have discussion during the actual session time (approximately 60 minutes), or you will not finish on time (or at all).
4. You may write questions or comments on the corresponding page of this manual for your future reference, so you can discuss them during the discussion period, which is typically after each session time.
5. At the beginning and end of each session of BBG your group will turn to the Contents in the front of your Bible and read the books of the Bible out loud together. This will assist in knowing where the books of the Bible are located as well as aiding your overall understanding of the Bible. The books have been named for various reasons and they are covered during this course.
6. During each session do your best to stay with the other readers and don't be tempted to read passages that are not listed, or you may miss the flow of the course or an important passage. You will also want to be up to speed during the discussion period.
7. Throughout BBG you will find "**Reminders:**" and "**Notes:**" that will assist you in understanding the sections and passages of the Bible.
8. At the end of each session (after the instructions for the guide) are "Optional Discussion Questions". These have been included to assist in initiating discussion on some of the Scriptures that were covered in that session and may or may not be used (they are optional).
9. Although BBG's current format was designed to be implemented in a group setting (meeting once a week for 12 weeks, in approximately 60-minute segments), it can also be accomplished individually and within any time constraints. BBG can be stopped and started as your (or your group's) time allows (i.e. 15, 20, or 30-minute segments), but remember not to allow discussion during the allotted session time, while allowing time for discussion before or after. If the BBG manual is being used under a different timeline, do the math to determine how long (how many meetings) BBG will take to be completed.

## **How to Use the Basic Bible Guide (BBG) Manual with a Group:**

1. BBG consists of key scripture passages from every book of the 66 books of the Bible (which you read out loud from your own Bible). Each passage has a brief summary above the scripture reference, such as “God created everything”. Many of these passages are accompanied by scriptures from other places in the Bible (most going back and forth from the Old and New Testaments); these are known as “cross references”.
2. To keep the group together during the sessions, each participant will take turns reading (out loud). If anyone would prefer not to read, just say “pass” and the group will skip over you.

### **Directions:**

3. The first reader will begin with reading, out loud, the boxed-in book overview.
4. The next participant will read, out loud, the brief scripture summary. Everyone will then turn in their Bibles to that bolded scripture reference. The reader will read this passage out loud. If there is a cross-reference it will be under a thinner line in the corresponding color (white or grey), the reader will read this last.
5. **Note: Not all passages have “cross references”. Only the passages that have a thinner line below them are cross references intended to correspond with the passages that are above the thinner line.**
6. The next reader will start with the next color (white or grey) and read the scripture summary, the passage out of the Bible, and then the cross-reference, if there is one and so on.
7. As an example, the next four participants will read the beginning of Genesis on the next page, the first reader beginning with the boxed in book overview.
8. **Note:** The Bible covers thousands of years of history and is an exceptionally large book, so the cross-references are considerably helpful in understanding the entire Bible. They link similar ideas, story lines, and prophetic writings, and show when and where these prophecies are fulfilled. All the cross references are noted where they are in the Bible, to assist in further study. As you read the books of the Bible in its table of contents at the beginning and end of each session, you will begin to know what order the books are in.
9. **Note:** Regarding cross references, the New Testament has these scriptures explaining the importance of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. (Romans 15:4 “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” and I Corinthians 10:11 “Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.”)

## GENESIS OVERVIEW

Title: Genesis is Greek and means “beginning” or “origin”.<sup>5</sup>

Author: Thought to be Moses, although there is no verse in Genesis that states Moses is the author. There are several verses such as Exodus 17:14, Exodus 24:4, and Exodus 34:27 (*read these verses another time*), where Moses is recorded as the author of the law which would cover Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Therefore, most Jewish and Christian scholars agree that the author of Genesis is Moses.

Audience: There is no specific reference of who this book is written to.

Historical setting: The beginning of Earth’s time to Joseph's death in Egypt. (Joseph was one of the 12 sons of Jacob-whose name is changed to Israel). (Approximately Creation- 4004 B.C.)

Number of Chapters: 50

**Reminder:** The first five books of the Old Testament in Hebrew are called the Torah (meaning "law"). In Greek, these first five books are called The Pentateuch, or “The Book of the Law of the Lord” given by Moses.<sup>3</sup>

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God created *everything*  
(*Only read these three verses*)

**Genesis 1:1, 2:1-2**

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Someone helped God create the world.

**Genesis 1:26**

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52 The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’ 53 Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” 54 Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ 55 But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.” 57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”

**John 8:52-58**

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The first sin/disobedience to God

(*only read these 3 verses*)

**Genesis 2:16-17, 3:6**

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**Note:** Sin is an immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law.<sup>6</sup>

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

**1 John 2:15-16**

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