



Study Guide - 1 THE LOST KINGDOM

INTRO

Why should you study the Bible? Millions of people all over the world have discovered that the Bible is not an ordinary book. Two of the world's greatest religions, Judaism and Christianity, base their teachings on the Bible, which they believe to be the inspired message of God to humanity. At least forty different authors wrote the books of the Bible in three languages (Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic) over a span of over 1,600 years.

The Bible has been misunderstood and misused by both its adherents and detractors. The Bible is not a world history book, it is the story of God and His creation on planet Earth. It's not history, it's His story. The Bible is not merely a book of prophecies; like the predictions of Nostradamus and other well-known psychics, it contains God's plan for the human race – His destiny for humankind. The real value of the Bible is not scientific, it's salvific. It declares the salvation message of God to His creatures. The Bible is not really about ethics and philosophy; it's the love letter of God to fallen humanity.

The Bible was not written so you can have religion, but so you can have a relationship with God. So, to study the Bible in a way that will make sense to you, you will have to look for God's story, His plan and destiny for you, His message of salvation, and His love letter to you.

CONNECT

If the group is meeting for the first time, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves and answer the question:

If you could ask God for one favor right now, what would that be?

SNAPSHOT

Do you agree with the following statements? Please circle your answers (Y-Yes, N-No, M-Maybe) and also record on the Survey form.

1. I know my purpose in life. Y N M

- 2. I am more content now with my possessions than last year. Y N M
- 3. I am more satisfied now with my relationships than last year. Y N M
- 4. I am closer now to my goals in life than last year. Y N M
- 5. God has a central role in my life. Y N M

DISCOVER

What is the Bible all about? What does it say about God? What does it say about us? How did God intend for man to live? What is God's plan for us? What about sin? How did sin affect all of us? How does God achieve His original plan in the presence of sin in our world?

QUERY-1: Why should I study the Bible?

READ-1

2 Tim. 3:15-16

DISCOVERY-1: THE BIBLE GIVES ME WISDOM ABOUT _____, MY _____, AND HIS _____ AND _____ FOR ME.

QUERY-2: What does the Bible say about God?

READ-2.01

Gen. 1:1

READ-2.02

Gen.1:26

DISCOVERY-2: GOD _____ EVERYTHING IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AND HE MADE HUMAN BEINGS IN HIS _____.

DISCUSSION: What does "being made in God's image" mean to you?

THINK ABOUT THIS: *Do we look like God physically? No, God is a Spirit and man is flesh and blood. So, we would have to consider His character as the main point of comparison. The most prominent aspect of God's image or character is love and that love is manifested in His relationships.*

QUERY-3: What was the original purpose of God for creating human beings?

READ-3.01

Gen. 1:27-28

DISCUSSION: *What specific instructions did God give human beings?*

THINK ABOUT THIS: *The first human beings were commanded to do the following:*

- (a) *"Be fruitful and multiply"*
- (b) *"Fill the earth and govern it"*
- (c) *"Reign" (over the creatures of the earth)*

READ-3.02

Psalms 8:3-8

DISCUSSION: *What does "made a little lower than God" mean?*

THINK ABOUT THIS: *God made human beings in His image and crowned them with "glory and honor" and gave them authority over everything on earth.*

READ-3.03

Psalms 115:16

DISCOVERY-3: GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN WAS FOR MAN TO HAVE _____ OVER THE EARTH AS GOD'S "IMAGE" OR _____ RULER.

NOTE: *In order to properly represent God's kingdom, man was given the capacity to fulfill the three basic elements of a "godly" relationship:*

- (a) **Power of** _____
- (b) **Capacity for** _____
- (c) _____ **with God**

QUERY-4: What happened to humanity when Adam sinned?

READ-4.01

Rom. 5:12

READ-4.02

Rom. 3:10-12,23

DISCUSSION: *What happened to the human race when Adam sinned?*

THINK ABOUT THIS: *Adam's sin infected the entire human race, making all people sinners. We are not sinners because we have sinned. Every person is born a sinner because of Adam's sin (the "original sin"). We sin because we are sinners. No one is exempt.*

DISCOVERY-4: ADAM'S SIN _____ THE ENTIRE _____ RACE FROM FULFILLING GOD'S ORIGINAL _____ FOR THEIR CREATION.

NOTE: *We have three profound yearnings, the remnant shadow of the image of God.*

- (a) **The Hunger for** _____
- (b) **The Desire for** _____
- (c) **The Longing for** _____ **Relationships**

Behind every human longing, good or bad, is a yearning for what Adam lost – intimacy with God and "dominion" over earth. Our evil desires are degraded counterfeits of man's original perfect desires.

Our good desires are a dim manifestation of our true and deepest longing: to know God again and be restored to His original plan.

QUERY-5: What is God’s plan regarding fallen humanity?

READ-5.01

Eph. 1:4-5

READ-5.02

Rom. 5:18-19

DISCUSSION: *How does God resolve the separation that Adam’s sin caused?*

THINK ABOUT THIS: *It is through Jesus that God restores man to His original plan for him. The entire process of salvation and restoration is only possible in Jesus Christ. It seems unfair for all of us to be condemned for the sin of one man; but God does something that seems unfair too. He sends His own Son to become a man (the “Second Adam”), this time to obey God all of His life and then to die in the sinner’s place. Because of this one Man’s work, people can become righteous.*

READ-5.03

Rev. 11:15

DISCOVERY-5: GOD’S _____ PLAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO _____ THE LOST KINGDOM TO HUMANKIND THROUGH THE _____ OF HIS SON, _____.

QUERY-6: What is the Good News that Jesus preached?

READ-6.01

Luke 12:32

READ-6.02

John 3:16-17

DISCUSSION: *What did Jesus say He came to do?*

THINK ABOUT THIS: *Jesus came to save people, not to condemn them. By believing in Him, sinners gain entry into God’s eternal kingdom. Through Jesus, God restores sinners to His unchanging plan of having an intimate relationship with them and sharing His kingdom with them on earth.*

DISCOVERY-6: BECAUSE OF THE _____ OF JESUS, I AM MADE _____ IN GOD’S SIGHT AND _____ TO GOD’S ETERNAL KINGDOM.

SUMMARY

The Bible is not about religion or philosophy, but about relationship. God created me to live in perfect relationship with Him and to rule His kingdom on earth as His surrogate “image.” God’s earth kingdom was lost to humanity because of Adam’s disobedience, and I became disqualified from fulfilling the destiny that God originally set for me; but I can be restored to God’s eternal kingdom now because of Christ’s perfect obedience.



Key 1

RECOGNIZE ALL MY YEARNINGS AS A HUNGER FOR GOD.

NOTE: *A truthful analysis of every human longing, good or bad, will take me on a journey to a new life where intimacy with God is possible. I need to admit and explore my yearnings because they are part of the remnant shadow of the image of God. I need to realize that these desires are thoroughly human and designed by God to be met only in Jesus Christ.*

