

# Spiritual HABITS

## BIBLE READING PLAN: Not Straight Through the Bible



Most people get confused when they try to read straight through the Bible. That's because nobody ever told them 1 very important fact: The story of the Bible doesn't begin in Genesis and then continue straight through each of the 66 books all the way to the last page of the book of Revelation. Actually, the main story of the Bible is found in just 22 of the 66 Bible books—the history books. It makes sense that the story would be found in the history books, right? To use a travel idea, think of the 22 history books as the interstate highway through the Bible. Think of the other 44 books as interesting side roads and scenic loops to off-the-beaten-track sites and not-to-be-missed attractions. They add color, beauty, and "wow!" moments to your trip. So, now that you have a better sense of how the different books fit together and where the story of the Bible is found, what exactly is that story? Great question! Like lots of action? Want to quickly get the gist of the great story of God? Here's a reading plan that will keep even a rookie Bible reader turning the pages:

<b>Genesis</b>	Learn about the beginning of humanity, sin, and God’s plan to rescue the world.
<b>Exodus 1–20</b>	Read about how God brings his chosen people out of bondage.
<b>Numbers 10–25</b>	Read the story of the Israelites’ fear and unbelief—and the tragic consequences.
<b>Joshua</b>	Join Moses’ protégé as he finally leads the people into the Promised Land.
<b>Judges</b>	Watch the Israelites repeatedly fall away from God, suffer at the hands of their enemies, turn back to God, and experience deliverance via God-sent leaders.
<b>1 and 2 Samuel</b>	See the rise and fall of King Saul and the rise of David during the lifetime of the prophet Samuel.
<b>1 and 2 Kings</b>	Read about Solomon (David’s son), the split of the nation of Israel, and the tragic demise of the two kingdoms, leading to the Assyrian conquest and Babylonian captivity.
<b>Luke 1–2, Matthew 1-2, Gospel of Mark</b>	You can read all the four Gospels later, but these readings will give you a good snapshot of Christ’s life.
<b>Acts</b>	See the early church come to life and spread the gospel beginning in Jerusalem and, via Paul and others, throughout the Gentile (non-Jewish) world.
<b>Revelation</b>	Though it’s technically prophecy and not history, John’s epic end-times vision peeks into the future and Jesus’ ultimate triumph over evil.

Once we see how the Bible is organized, we get a clearer understanding of the essential story of the Bible. And when we realize the story is still unfolding, we get a new sense of purpose. We are somewhere between the final events detailed in Acts and the future events described in the book of Revelation. This means we are more than readers; we are characters in the great drama of God!