

“How to Enjoy Your Bible,” No. 7

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by W. S. Sadler

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**Sources for “How to Enjoy Your Bible,” No. 7,
in the order in which they first appear**

- (1) R. A. **Torrey**, *How to Study the Bible for Greatest Profit: The Methods and Fundamental Conditions of the Bible Study That Yields the Largest Results* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1896)
- (2) Rev. James M. **Gray**, D.D., *How to Master the English Bible: An Experience, A Method, A Result, An Illustration* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1904)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the Sadlers pointedly differ from one another.
- (e) **Red** indicates an obvious mistake.

HOW TO ENJOY YOUR BIBLE. No. 7.

BY W. S. SADLER.

Bible Study by Books.

II: THE STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL BOOKS. (Torrey 14)

This method of study is the most thorough, the most difficult, and the one that yields the largest and most permanent results (T 14).

I.—*The first work to do, is to select the book to study* (T 14).

[*Compare:* (10) What are the leading ideas of the book? (11) What is the **central truth** of the book? (T 18)]

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? (T 17)

[*Compare:* (9) What glimpses of the book give into the life and character of the author? (T 18)]

7.1 A MOST interesting and profitable way of studying the Bible is by books.

Take up one book of the Bible,

and study it thoroughly.

Read it through. Learn all you can about it.

Get its **central theme**, etc.,

and in every way possible make yourself familiar with its Gospel and doctrinal teachings.

There are a number of points that should be borne in mind when studying the Bible in this way. We will name a few.

7.2 1. Who wrote the book?

Spend a little time in getting familiar with the character of the author of the book you are about to study.

SOURCE

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Also find out what other portions of the Bible were written by the same author.

(4) When did he write it? (T 17)

7.3 2. When was it written?

Look up the conditions of the world, its governments, etc., at the time when it was written.

(2) To whom did he write? (T 17)

7.4 3. To whom was it written?

Ascertain what especially called forth this part of the Scriptures. If it is addressed to some special church, or nation, gather together the facts in this connection, and it will make the study much more interesting and profitable.

(3) Where did he write it?

7.5 4. Where,

(7) What were the circumstances of the author when he wrote? (8) What were the circumstances of those to whom he wrote? (T 17-18)

and under what circumstances,

was it written?

This is an important feature to look up.

[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 ... was written by a prisoner awaiting possible sentence of death, how much more meaningful it becomes (T 19).]

Was the book written by Paul when in prison?

by John when in exile? etc.

This often helps the student to understand many otherwise difficult sections of the book.

(6) What was the purpose for which he wrote? (T 17)

7.6 5. Was it written for some special purpose,

or to correct some specific condition, or to counteract some definite error?

These are important questions to be considered in the beginning of the study of any book of the Bible. The answer to such a question explains why Paul, when writing to the Romans laid such emphasis on justification by faith; and on the other hand, why James, in his epistle, appears rather to emphasize the importance of works in connection with faith.

7.7 6. Further examine the life work, and the other writings, if any, of the author of the book you are about to study.

7.8 We desire to emphasize the importance of gaining a general, yet clear, knowledge of the purpose, scope, and spirit of the book you are about to study.

[Note: This series, called “Search the Scriptures,” began in Vol. 30, No. 13 (Mar. 30, 1904) and ended in Vol. 33, No. 26 (Jun. 26, 1907).]

We desire to call attention to a series of articles which are appearing in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by Pastor F. D. Starr, treating of each one of the books of the Bible.

We consider this series of articles to be very helpful to students who may be studying the Bible by books. Each book, its author, the time at which it was written, etc., has been very acceptably and concisely handled in this series. As a help to the study of the Bible by books, we would recommend those who are studying the Word in this way, to cut these articles out, and paste them in a scrap-book for reference.

If the book you have under study is not too large,

II.—*The second work to do, is to master the general contents of the book.*¹
The method of doing this is very simple. It consists in merely reading the book through without stopping

it is well to read it through at one time.

SOURCE

and then reading it again and again, and then again, say a dozen times in all, at a single sitting (T 16).

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This is what you would do if you received a letter from your mother or from some dear friend. You would not read the first page one day, the second page the next day, etc., but you would read the whole letter through at one sitting.

III: THE PLAN AT WORK (Gray 41)

The **divisions** [of the book], it should be remembered, are of human origin and not divine, and, while effecting a good purpose in some particulars,

are a hindrance to the mastery of the book in others.

Sometimes a chapter or a verse will cut a truth in half, whose halves state a different fact or teach a different doctrine from that intended by the whole, and necessarily affecting the conception of the outline (G 45-46).

While the **division** of the Bible into chapters is certainly convenient as a means of reference,

it is unfortunate in some respects,

in that it causes people to leave off their Bible study, sometimes right in the middle of the subject, simply because the chapter ends there.

[See 8.4.]

7.9 When you study the Bible by books, pay no attention to chapter divisions. Read the whole book through. If possible, read it at one time, and then you can go back and consider it in smaller sections if you desire.

7.10 For a beginner along this line, the epistle of James, or one of the minor prophets, are excellent books to take up first, and then, later, one can just as easily study the larger books of the Bible in this way.

SOURCE

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1. Torrey credits “Rev. James M. Gray of Boston” (p. 16) for this method. In No. 8 of this series, Sadler gleans from Gray’s book in the further presentation of this method (the “Synthetic Method”).