

LORD,
*Teach Me
to Study
the Bible*

IN 28 DAYS

Kay Arthur



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS

EUGENE, OREGON

All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

Cover by Koechel Peterson & Associates, Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota

LORD, TEACH ME TO STUDY THE BIBLE IN 28 DAYS

Copyright © 2006/2008 by Precept Ministries International

Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

www.harvesthousepublishers.com

Arthur, Kay—

Lord, teach me to study the Bible in 28 days / Kay Arthur.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-7369-2383-5 (pbk.)

1. Bible—Study and teaching. I. Title.

BS600.3.A79 2006

220.071—dc22

2006010908

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, digital, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 / ML-MS / 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

Before You Begin	5
Introduction	7
Week One	
<i>Day One</i>	
How Critical Is Knowledge?	13
<i>Day Two</i>	
What Happens When You Don't Know God?	22
<i>Day Three</i>	
The Word of God Lost in the House of God	24
<i>Day Four</i>	
Seeking the Lord.	27
<i>Day Five</i>	
Hearing God's Word.	31
<i>Day Six</i>	
The Impact of Firsthand Knowledge	35
<i>Day Seven</i>	
Responding to God	38
Week Two	
<i>Day Eight</i>	
The Best Way to Study the Bible	45
<i>Day Nine</i>	
The 5 W's and an H	50
<i>Day Ten</i>	
Jonah and You	54
<i>Day Eleven</i>	
Context	58
<i>Day Twelve</i>	
Key Words	61
<i>Day Thirteen</i>	
Listing Your Observations	65

<i>Day Fourteen</i>	
The Best Interpreter of Scripture	69

Week Three

<i>Day Fifteen</i>	
Turning to God	75
<i>Day Sixteen</i>	
What Can I Learn About Prayer?	78
<i>Day Seventeen</i>	
Chapter Themes and At a Glance Charts	82
<i>Day Eighteen</i>	
Hello, Nineveh!	85
<i>Day Nineteen</i>	
When Do You Go Outside the Bible?	88
<i>Day Twenty</i>	
On Your Own	94
<i>Day Twenty-One</i>	
Contrasts and Comparisons	95

Week Four

<i>Day Twenty-Two</i>	
The Author, His Purpose, and the Recipients.	105
<i>Day Twenty-Three</i>	
Getting an Overview	109
<i>Day Twenty-Four</i>	
Know the Meaning of Words.	114
<i>Day Twenty-Five</i>	
The Value of Asking Questions.	120
<i>Day Twenty-Six</i>	
Using Commentaries	129
<i>Day Twenty-Seven</i>	
Application	134
<i>Day Twenty-Eight</i>	
A Biblical Systematic Theology.	140
Observation Worksheets	149
Inductive Bible Study Adventure Questions	161

Day One

How Critical Is Knowledge?

We are going to spend the first few days of our four-week adventure exploring the words of a prophet and the reign of a king. In the process, we'll try out some skills that will teach you how to study your Bible for yourself.

I am convinced God's message through the prophet Hosea is the same as His message to us today: It is absolutely essential for each of us—man or woman, young or old—to understand the importance and value of knowing the truth. In other words, you must know the Word of God, the Bible. And I think you believe it is important also. When you open the pages of the Bible, you know God has much more to teach you from its pages. And that's exactly why He has directed you to this book.

The purpose of *Lord, Teach Me to Study the Bible in 28 Days* is not to give you a lot of information on how we got the Bible, why it is structured the way it is, or how you can know it is truly the Word of God. All that is wonderful and enlightening information, but you can find that in many other great books. Besides, as the title of this book promises, we have only 28 days!

Therefore, my purpose is to teach you how to study the Bible

for yourself so you can discover truth for yourself. To introduce you to some basic study skills that will open the Word of God for you in an incredible, life-changing way. Because we only have 28 days, I won't teach you everything I could, but I promise that by the end of this book you'll be discovering truth for yourself in a way that will transform your life. And if you want to know more, I'll tell you where to go next.

When Jesus prayed for you (the Bible tells you God knew you before you were ever born), He asked the Father to keep you from the evil one by setting you apart through His truth. Then Jesus, who cannot lie because He is the truth, made the statement that God's Word is truth. You'll find Jesus' prayer for you in John 17:15-17.¹ Let me quote it for you so you can read it for yourself.

I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

The Bible explains in many ways throughout the Old and New Testaments that it *is* the very word of God; not that it contains His words, but that it is "My word...which goes forth from My mouth" (Isaiah 55:11)! The words are recorded by men using their own personality and vocabulary, but in God's divine mystery, He superintended over the writers as He moved them by His Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21). God inspired (breathed) the words, as 2 Timothy 3:16 says.

Let's take a few minutes *so you can see for yourself* what God said through His messenger, Hosea, about the state of His

1. We know from John 17:20—"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word"—that this prayer includes all believers. John the apostle was among the "these," and this is what he wrote under the divine moving of the Spirit of God.

chosen people, the Israelites (later referred to as the Jews). In God's message to them, He has a message for us.

Hosea 4:1-3,6 is printed out below. I am going to ask you to read these verses more than once. The first time, simply read them aloud. Do it slowly so that you hear every word. Remember, these are God's words—so listen carefully!

- 1 Listen to the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel,
For the LORD has a case against the inhabitants
of the land,
Because there is no faithfulness or kindness
Or knowledge of God in the land.
- 2 There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing
and adultery.
They employ violence, so that bloodshed follows
bloodshed.
- 3 Therefore the land mourns,
And everyone who lives in it languishes
Along with the beasts of the field and the birds
of the sky,
And also the fish of the sea disappear.
- 6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Because you have rejected knowledge,
I also will reject you from being My priest.
Since you have forgotten the law of your God,
I also will forget your children.

Now read verse 1 aloud again. As you do, look for the answers to the following questions and record them by simply stating what the text tells you. This step is called *observation*. You don't need to use your imagination or make any additions

or suppositions. Just state the facts of the text. In other words, see what the text says and record your observations.

- Who is speaking?
- To whom?
- Why? What is the reason these words are being spoken?

Great start. Now, read Hosea 4:1-3 again. This time, mark the word *knowledge*. If you have colored pencils as we suggested in the “Before You Begin” section, color *knowledge* green. If you don’t have colored pencils, simply put a rectangle around the word until you get your colored pencils. You are marking a *key word*. A key word is an important word that helps you unlock the meaning of the text you are studying.

For the next 28 days you are going to color code important words—key words God uses to make His point. We use the color-coding process (rather than just symbols) because colors are easier to see, and too many markings can keep you from spotting key words easily.

Double underline in green the phrase *the land*. According to the book of Genesis, *the land* is the land God gave to Abraham, Isaac (one of Abraham’s sons), Jacob (one of Isaac’s two sons),

and Jacob's descendants as an everlasting possession. (God changed Jacob's name to Israel, so Jacob's descendants are the 12 tribes of Israel.)

You've marked a few words in the text. It's colorful. But what's the point? Look at verse 2. Write down what you learn about *knowledge* from the setting or context of verses 1-3. Don't read any further until you do this assignment. If you truly want to learn how to study your Bible, you have to do your part. This is interactive—so now is the time to get active!

Now then, since I'm not sitting right there with you (although I would count it a privilege to do so), let me ask you some of the 5 W's and an H (who, what, when, where, why, and how) about *knowledge*. See how many of them you have already answered strictly from your observations of Hosea 4:1-3.

- What's God's concern about Israel's knowledge?
- Knowledge of what or whom?
- Where?

- Who is saying this and to whom? (I know you have answered this once. It's a short answer—do it again so you get the impact.)
- What is happening because there is no faithfulness, kindness, or knowledge? (Answer this from verses 1-3.)

Good. Now read Hosea 4:6 out loud. Mark the other two uses of *knowledge* in verse 6.

Now we are going to use the 5 W's and an H to cross-examine verse 6, or as I often say, to “interrogate” the text. Look at where you marked *knowledge*. As you examine the text, find the answers in verse 6 to these questions.

- What is God's concern about Israel's knowledge?
- Who is saying this?
- Who is being affected?

- What have these people done?
- Once again, who are these people (see verses 1 and 6)?
- What is going to happen to them as a result?
- Who else will be impacted and why?

By the way, *languishes* (verse 3) means “wastes away.” Pretty sad, isn’t it!

Now let’s wrap up today by applying these truths to our lives.

God tells us in Romans 15:4 that what was written in earlier times was written for our instruction so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. In the light of this, let’s take what you have just discovered about *knowledge* in these Old Testament verses spoken to the people of Israel and see what you can learn.

What instruction in these verses in Hosea 4 will help you persevere in doing what God says, encourage you, and give you hope? This, by the way, is *application*. Application is studying God’s Word and then ordering your life and your thinking in accordance with the truth of what you just learned or discovered. Let’s answer a few application questions from these verses

in Hosea. Some of them may overlap a little, but you don't need to write an answer more than once.

- When you studied *knowledge*, did you see anything that parallels our situation today? What was it?
- Do you think people are being destroyed or ruined for a lack of knowledge of God? How?
- Has anything happened in your family, your state, or your country because of a lack of knowledge of God—of His Word? Is anything being ruined? What? (Remember, the Bible is the Word of God, so knowledge of God comes through His Word. His Word is the plumb line, the standard of all we believe.)
- Has anything happened in your life as a direct result of your knowledge of God's Word—or your lack of knowledge of God? How has your knowledge of God helped you in a specific situation? What circumstances might you have handled differently had you known God's Word better? Jot down your answers.

- Do you have children? According to what you saw in Hosea, what might happen to them if you reject knowledge? Have you seen the effects of a lack of the knowledge of God in your country?

- Finally, has God touched your mind and heart in any way as you have observed and applied these four verses from Hosea? How? Write out your answer. Expressing yourself in words is part of the learning process.