

OT over 2 Years - helps

As we read the Bible, it can help to have questions in our minds as we read each chapter. These questions are designed to help those who would like to do this.

Questions to consider as you read Ezra & Nehemiah:

Ezra and Nehemiah tell of the return to Jerusalem of God's people following the exile. Ezra begins with God's people away from God's Promised Land and under foreign rule. God amazingly brought His people back to this land – but He needed also to get them back to living His way.

*How does each chapter show God working and how does this lead us to praise Him?
How does each chapter challenge us as Christians to respond in living His way?*

Questions to consider as you read Esther:

Even after God's people returned to Jerusalem following the exile, many remained scattered across the Persian Empire. Esther was one of them. In this book we see how God works, His greatness and His purposes (even when those things can't be immediately 'seen').

*How does each chapter help us to see how God works?
How does each chapter lead us to praise God and trust Him more?*

Questions to consider as you read Job:

The story of Job is in the first two and the last chapters. Much of the book outlines discussions between Job & his (often ill-informed) friends as to why suffering occurs. *In each chapter assess what we are taught of God or assess incorrect ideas that are suggested about Him and the way He works.*

How does each chapter lead us to look to God and to trust our Redeemer?

Questions to consider as you read Proverbs:

The book of Proverbs seeks to help us to be God-wise (living as God wants us to live).

*In each chapter, ask what will it mean to take God's teaching seriously?
How does each chapter urge us to respond to God's wisdom?*

Questions to consider as you read Ecclesiastes:

The end of the book tells us the conclusion of the 'Teacher' – 12:13 'Fear God and keep His commandments'. The book reminds us what life is like when we take God 'out of the equation'.

In each chapter, ask how life is 'meaningless' without the Lord?

How will we "fear God" by living in the light of His teaching and His ways?

Questions to consider as you read Song of Songs:

This is a poetic teaching about a woman (the 'beloved') and a shepherd (the 'lover') and the woman's friends.

What in each chapter is a symbol of God's love for His people?

Consider how you are reminded of the perfect love of Jesus for His people.

Questions to consider as you read Isaiah:

Isaiah is passing on a vision from God about Jerusalem and Judah (i.e. God's people) being transformed.

Consider how each chapter expands your view of God.

Think about how God's plans for His people are realised ultimately in Jesus

Questions to consider as you read Jeremiah:

Through Jeremiah, the Lord passes on His warning that judgement must come if the people persist in rebelling against Him. Jeremiah called the people back to God and His covenant.

Reflect how each section challenges us not to move from the Lord.

Remember how God's covenant is finally fulfilled in Jesus

Questions to consider as you read Lamentations:

This is a book of mourning over God's people who had received God's just judgement.

What does each lament tell us about the character of God?

How will each lament lead us to pray?

Questions to consider as you read Ezekiel:

Ezekiel reveals a big view of God through visions, drama, poetry and parables. The book reveals God's judgement on His people and those nations around Israel. The final chapters, however, reveal a future for God's people as God stood by His promises and acted in line with His perfect character.

What does each chapter remind us about God?

How are we reminded of God's hope through Christ?

Questions to consider as you read Daniel:

Daniel was in exile in Babylon. As we read this book we are reminded how to live wisely in God's eyes: acknowledging God's rule even when things look out of control

What are taught about the way God rules His world?

How are we urged to live wisely for God?

Questions to consider as you read Hosea:

Hosea addresses both Israel & Judah about the effects and consequences of when people turn their backs on God. Hosea also speaks about God's love and passion for His people.

Consider what reminders we have of God's love for His people.

How are we encouraged to live for His glory?

Questions to consider as you read Joel:

Joel spoke to Judah after a terrible locust attack which was God's punishment urging them to turn back to Him. God calls the people to be ready for the "Day of the Lord".

In what ways are God's people encouraged to turn back to Him?

What is promised for those who turn back to the Lord?

Questions to consider as you read Amos:

The people of Amos' day exploited the poor, had corrupt leaders and had become like the nations around them.

How was what the people doing offensive to God?

What challenges is the Lord bringing to us today?

Questions to consider as you read Obadiah:

The Edomites lived in a mountainous area, were descended from Esau and were the enemies of the Israelites.

How does this book remind us about God's coming judgement?

How are we reminded of God's rescue?

Questions to consider as you read Jonah:

Jonah was sent to tell God's message to a people who were the enemies of Israel.

What are we told about God's mission to His world?

How will Jonah's actions and attitudes cause us to pray?

Questions to consider as you read Micah:

Micah passed on God's message that the people had become very much like the nations around them. Micah's big message was that God is a God of justice and He expected His people to reflect that and live in the light of it.

What did God want His people to wake up about?

What reminders do we have about the future God will bring in?

Questions to consider as you read Nahum:

Nahum tells of God's just judgment against Nineveh (the capital of the Assyrians who were known for their cruel oppression of others). This book reminds us that the Lord will bring the guilty to account.

How are we encouraged that God's righteous judgement will one day come?

How are we reminded of the security that we have in and through Christ?

Questions to consider as you read Habakkuk:

Habakkuk was waiting for the Lord to deal with the evil in the world and tells the Lord how he feels about the violence and injustice he saw around him. God will deal with such things and the book concludes with a statement of the prophet's trust in God.

What do we learn about how to trust the Lord in a messed-up world?

How might this book help us to encourage others who find suffering hard to take?

Questions to consider as you read Zephaniah:

The people of Zephaniah's day were behaving as if God didn't exist and that they could live as they wanted and get away with it.

*How does this book bring a balance between right judgement and God's mercy?
How are we helped to live as Christians in the light of "the Day" that is to come?*

Questions to consider as you read Haggai:

At this point, many of God's people had returned to their land from exile, but although they had begun rebuilding the Temple they had lost enthusiasm and a desire to put the Lord first.

*How are we encouraged to have the Lord's priorities as our priorities?
What challenges is the Lord bringing to us through this book?*

Questions to consider as you read Zechariah:

Zechariah was also written after people had returned from exile when the people were urged to repair the city and restore the Temple (the symbol of God's presence). Zechariah brought the message that God would restore the people – but in a more far-reaching way than they could imagine.

*How do the promises in this book point us to Jesus?
How does this book renew and encourage us in looking to Christ?*

Questions to consider as you read Malachi:

This book follows some time after Haggai & Zechariah, when the leaders & so the people had once again drifted from the Lord. The final chapter looks to a time when all injustice would be dealt with and those who are loyal to the Lord would be restored.

*In what ways are we warned against drifting from the things of the Lord?
How are we stirred with excitement at the thought of Jesus coming?*