

Contents

1	The Voice From Heaven— <i>March 31–April 6</i>	5
2	The Final Word— <i>April 7-13</i>	17
3	Bible Prophecy Fulfilled— <i>April 14-20</i>	29
4	The Bible Is Reliable— <i>April 21-27</i>	41
5	When the Rocks Cry Out— <i>April 28–May 4</i>	53
6	The Bible and Science— <i>May 5-11</i>	65
7	The Word in Our Lives— <i>May 12-18</i>	77
8	Revelation of Hope— <i>May 19-25</i>	89
9	The Bible and Health— <i>May 26–June 1</i>	101
10	The Bible and Happiness— <i>June 2-8</i>	113
11	Daily Wisdom— <i>June 9-15</i>	125
12	Growing Through the Word— <i>June 16-22</i>	137
13	The Word of God Endures— <i>June 23-29</i>	149

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The Bible

People all over the world have found in the Bible the answers to their deepest needs.

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians we believe that God reveals Himself to us in this fallen world. Among all the various ways He has done so, the Bible is, we believe, the greatest expression of that revelation available today—the final and ultimate standard of truth for a fallen world.

The Bible does, indeed, make claims about itself that very few books ever do.

Even more so, it comes with a massive amount of evidence to back up those claims. It is self-authenticating; its proof comes built right in.

It's not just the incredible prophecies, however impressive; it's not just its historical accuracy, however authenticating; it's not just the revelation of God as revealed in its pages, however powerful. Though all these have their role in showing that the Bible is the Word of God, perhaps the greatest evidence for the Bible is the influence and impact for good it has had and still continues to have on the lives of those who apply its teaching to themselves. Despite all the evidence of prophecy, history, and so forth, in some ways the most powerful proof is found in the Bible's amazing ability to bring hope, joy, and promise to people thousands of years after it was first written. For many centuries now, people all over the world have found in the Bible the answers to their deepest needs. And why not? After all, it's the greatest revelation of the only One who can meet those needs—our Creator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

With such claims made for the Bible, it's no wonder that people have challenged its authenticity and reliability. Is it truly the Word of God? Does the Creator of the universe really speak

for Today

through its pages? How reliable are the texts? What scientific evidence, if any, backs up its claims? What does archaeology say regarding the Bible? And even if we believed that the Book is inspired, is it applicable to us who live in the twenty-first century? And if it is, how and why?

These, and more, are some of the questions our Bible study guide for this quarter will address. We just as easily could have titled it “Why I Believe in the Bible,” for in it the authors show why they do trust the Bible and have made it the spiritual and moral guide of their lives.

Even more important, during this quarter we seek to show just how relevant the Bible remains for us today—pretty impressive for a book whose latest sections were written about seventeen hundred years before doctors finally discovered that it might be a good idea to wash their hands before surgery. Again, it’s in this, the Bible’s power to change our lives for good, that we find some of the greatest proof of its relevancy and importance.

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How to Use This Teachers Edition

Get Motivated to Explore, Practice, and Apply

We hope that this format of the teachers edition will encourage adult Sabbath School class members to do just that—explore, practice, and apply. Each weekly teachers lesson takes your class through the following learning process, based on the Natural Learning Cycle:

1. Why is this lesson important to me? (Motivate);
2. What do I need to know from God’s Word? (Explore);
3. How can I practice what I’ve learned from God’s Word? (Practice); and
4. What can I do with what I’ve learned from God’s Word? (Apply).

And for teachers who haven’t had time to prepare during the week for class, there is a one-page outline of easy-to-digest material in the “I Have to Teach Tomorrow . . .” section.

Here’s a closer look at the four steps of the Natural Learning Cycle and suggestions for how you, the teacher, can approach each one:

Step 1—Motivate: Link the learners’ experiences to the central concept of the lesson to show why the lesson is relevant to their lives. Help them answer the question, Why is this week’s lesson important to me?

Step 2—Explore: Present learners with the biblical information they need to understand the central concept of the lesson. (Such information could include facts about the people; the setting; cultural, historical, and/or geographical details; the plot or what’s happening; and conflicts or tension of the texts you are studying.) Help learners answer the question, What do I need to know from God’s Word?

Step 3—Practice: Provide learners with opportunities to practice the information given in Step 2. This is a crucial step; information alone is not enough to help a person grow in Christ. Assist the learners in answering the question, How can I apply to my life what I’ve learned?

Step 4—Apply: Finally, encourage learners to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (*James 1:22*). Invite them to make a life response to the lesson. This step provides individuals and groups with opportunities for creative self-expression and exploration. All such activities should help learners answer the question, With God’s help, what can I do with what I’ve learned from this week’s lesson?

When teachers use material from each of these four steps, they will appeal to most every student in their class: those who enjoy talking about what’s happening in their lives, those who want more information about the texts being studied, those who want to know how it all fits in with real life, and those who want to get out and apply what they’ve learned.