



Mastering the Book of:

Background Notes:

Notes about the author's background, date of writing, the original audience or readers of this writing, the author's purpose for writing, and the main theme of the book. If this book is a historical narrative (e.g. Genesis, Exodus, Matthew, Acts), draw a rough map of the area where most of story takes place.

Outline:

Outlining will help you get a bird's-eye view of the book so that you could see how the parts and paragraphs of the book flow together. If possible, read the entire book (or skim) in one sitting. Don't get bogged down in the details yet. You should be able to divide the book into several logical sections. For example, for the book of Genesis, there might be a section of the story of Abraham, one for Isaac, one for Jacob, and one for Joseph. Label each section with a Roman numeral I, II, III, and so on. Then divide each section into several subsections, labelled A, B, C, etc. Subdivide further with the labels 1, 2, 3, etc, if need be. But don't get too detailed with the outline. Two or three levels of outlining is enough even for the longest books. In this way, you'll see the beauty of the whole forest, before examining each tree.

Summaries and Comments:

Study the book in detail. For each section or “chunk” of the book, usually a couple or several paragraphs containing one complete unit of thought or story, write the following: (1) the chapter and verse numbers, (2) a short title for this section, (3) questions about anything in the passage that’s unclear (e.g. “What’s a Shunammite?”), (4) the answers to those questions that you’ve looked up in a Bible encyclopedia or dictionary, (5) a summary of the passage in your own words, (6) insights about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, etc. (e.g. “Jesus _____”), and (7) considering these insights, complete the sentence, “Therefore I _____.”

Summaries and Comments (cont'd):

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Key Bible Verses:

As you study, write down any verses that capture the main theme of this book.

Difficult Passages:

Note any passages or verses that were particularly difficult to understand or interpret.

Questions for Future Self-Quiz:

After studying this book in detail, go through it again and formulate any Bible knowledge type questions that you could use as a self-quiz a couple years from now. These questions will help refresh your memory about this book. For example, “From where was the queen who was impressed with Solomon?”