

FOUNDATIONS OLD TESTAMENT

A 260-DAY BIBLE READING PLAN FOR BUSY BELIEVERS



ROBBY & KANDI GALLATY

Hamilton Barber
Writer

Joel Polk
Editorial Team Leader

Susan Hill
Content Editor

Brian Daniel
Manager, Short-Term Discipleship

Jon Rodda
Art Director

Brandon Hiltibidal
Director, Groups Ministry

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



ROBBY GALLATY is the senior pastor of Long Hollow Baptist Church in Hendersonville, Tennessee. He was radically saved from a life of drug and alcohol addiction on November 12, 2002. In 2008 he founded Replicate Ministries to educate, equip, and empower men and women to be disciples who make disciple makers (replicate.org). He's the author of *Growing Up: How to Be a Disciple Who Makes Disciples* (B&H, 2013), *The Forgotten Jesus: How Western Christians Should Follow an Eastern Rabbi* (Zondervan, 2017), *Rediscovering Discipleship: Making Jesus' Final Words Our First Work* (Zondervan, 2015), and *Here and Now: Thriving in the Kingdom of Heaven Today* (B&H, 2019). He's the coauthor with his wife, Kandi, of *Foundations: A 260-Day Bible Reading Plan for Busy Believers* (Lifeway, 2015).



KANDI GALLATY has been investing in the lives of women for over a decade. She believes there are three major sources to draw from when investing in the lives of others: God's Word, God's work in one's life, and God's Spirit. She's passionate about cultivating a biblical worldview from the truths of Scripture and about teaching women how to steward the life experiences and lessons God has allowed in their lives. Together Kandi and Robby lead Replicate Ministries. Kandi loves being a pastor's wife and serving alongside her husband at Long Hollow Baptist Church. Kandi and Robby are the proud, thankful parents of two boys, Rig and Ryder. Kandi is the author of *Disciple Her: Using the Word, Work, and Wonder of God to Invest in Women* (B&H, 2019) and the coauthor with Robby of *Foundations: A 260-Day Bible Reading Plan for Busy Believers* (LifeWay, 2015).



HAMILTON BARBER Hamilton is a writer and editor from Hendersonville, TN who serves as the Content Specialist at Long Hollow. He has written several book-length studies, authored articles, and collaborated on projects with authors like Robby Gallaty, Ben Trueblood, Brent Crowe, and Brock Gill. He has found that listening for God's voice most often starts in silence--and in the reading of God's Word. An avid indoorsman, when he isn't working, you can usually find him picking up a new skill he will never have to use.

INTRODUCTION

When I (Robby) was a new believer, I used the OPRA technique for reading the Bible: I randomly *opened* the Bible, *pointed* to a passage, *read* the verse, and tried to figure out a way to *apply* it to my life. Thankfully, I didn't land on the Scripture that says, "He [Judas Iscariot] went and hanged himself" (Matt 27:5). Reading random Scriptures won't provide solid biblical growth any more than eating random foods from your pantry will provide solid physical growth. An effective reading plan is required.

My wife, Kandi, and I, along with the help of Tim LaFleur and Gus Hernandez, have developed a reading plan called the Foundations 260 Old Testament. The F-260 OT is a 260-day reading plan that covers one chapter a day. In addition, the plan suggests an additional chapter to read if you choose. After using the original Foundations reading plan, we wanted to create an alternative plan that would help provide variety and be more easily digested by new believers.

The plan expects believers to read one chapter a day for five days each week, with an allowance for weekends off. The two off days a week are built in so that you can catch up on days when you're unable to read. With a traditional reading plan of four to five chapters a day, unread chapters can begin to pile up, forcing you to skip entire sections to get back on schedule. It reduces Bible reading to a system of box checking instead of a time to hear from God. The required reading also makes it difficult to sit and reflect on what you've read for that day.

The F-260 OT encourages believers to digest more of the Word by reading less and by keeping a HEAR journal.

HOW DO I LOG A HEAR JOURNAL ENTRY?

The HEAR journaling method promotes reading the Bible with a life-transforming purpose. No longer will you focus on checking off the boxes on your daily reading schedule; instead, your purpose will be to understand and respond to God's Word.

The acronym HEAR stands for *highlight*, *explain*, *apply*, and *respond*. Each of these four steps helps create an atmosphere to hear God speak. After establishing a place and a time to study God's Word each day, you'll be ready to hear from God.

For an illustration let's assume that you begin your quiet time in the Book of 2 Timothy and that today's reading is chapter 1 of the book. Before reading the text, pause to sincerely ask God to speak to you. It may seem trite, but it's absolutely imperative that we seek God's guidance in order to understand His Word (see 1 Cor. 2:12-14). Every time we open our Bibles, we should pray the simple prayer that David prayed:

*Open my eyes so that I may contemplate
wondrous things from your instruction [Word] (Ps. 119:18).*

After praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance, you'll be ready to record your notes. At the end of each day's entry, we have provided a place for you to write your HEAR journal. This exercise will remind you to read with a purpose. In the course of your reading, one or two verses will usually stand out and speak to you. After reading the passage of Scripture, *highlight* each verse that speaks to you by copying it under the letter H. Record the following.

- The name of the book
- The passage of Scripture
- The chapter and verse numbers that especially speak to you
- A title to describe the passage

This practice will make it easier to find the passage when you want to revisit it in the future.

After you've highlighted the passage, you'll move to the letter E. At this stage you'll *explain* what the text means. By asking some simple questions, with the help of God's Spirit, you can understand the meaning of a passage or verse. Here are a few questions to get you started.

- Why was this text written?
- To whom was it originally written?
- How does this text fit with the verses before and after it?
- Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book?
- What does the Holy Spirit intend to communicate through this text?

At this point you're beginning the process of discovering the specific, personal word God has for you from His Word. What's important is that you're engaging with the text and wrestling with its meaning.

After writing a short summary of what you think the text means, you're ready to move on to the letter A which examines what it means to apply the text. This application is the heart of the process. Everything you've done so far culminates under this heading. As you've done before, answer a series of questions to uncover the significance of these verses to you personally, questions like:

- What does this text teach me about God?
- What does this passage mean today?
- What would the application of this passage look like in my life?
- Does the text identify an action or attitude to avoid or embrace?
- What is God saying to me?

These questions bridge the gap between the ancient world and your world today. They provide a way for God to speak to you from the specific passage or verse. Answer these questions under the A. Challenge yourself to write between two and five sentences about how the text applies to your life.

Finally, below the first three entries, you'll see the letter R for *respond*. Your response to the passage may take on many forms. You may write a call to action. You may describe how you'll be different because of what God has said to you through His Word. You may indicate what you're going to do because of what you've learned. You may respond by writing a prayer to God. For example, you may ask God to help you be more loving or to give you a desire to give more generously. Keep in mind that this is your response to what you've just read.

Notice that all of the words in the HEAR formula are action words: *highlight*, *explain*, *apply*, and *respond*. God doesn't want us to sit back and wait for Him to drop truth into our laps. Instead of waiting passively, God wants us to actively pursue Him. Jesus said:

Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you (Matt. 7:7).

Think of the miracle of the Bible. Over centuries of time, God supernaturally moved in a number of men in an unusual way, leading them to write the exact words of God. He led His people to recognize these divine writings and to distinguish them from everything else that had ever been written. Next God's people brought these

sixty-six books together. The preservation and survival of the Bible are as miraculous as its writing. Then God gave men, beginning with Gutenberg's printing press, technological knowledge to copy and transmit the Bible so that all people could have it. All because God has something to say to you.

MEMORIZING THE WORD

Each week the F-260 OT provides an option for Scripture memory. While many plans for memorizing Scripture are effective, a simple system has been effective for me. All you need is a pack of index cards and a committed desire to memorize God's Word. It's easy. Write the reference of the verse on one side of the card and the text of the verse on the other. Focus on five verses at a time and carry your pack of Scripture cards with you.

Whenever you have a few minutes throughout the day, pull out your pack of Scripture cards and review them. Read the reference first, followed by the verse. Continue to recite the verse until you get a feel for the flow of the passage. When you're comfortable with the text, look only at the reference side of the card to test your recall.

It's important to recite the reference first, then the verse, finishing with the reference again. This will prevent you from becoming a concordance cripple. As a new believer, I was forced to look up every verse in the concordance at the back of my Bible. Sometimes when I quoted a Scripture while witnessing, the person asked me, "Where did you get that?" I could only respond, "Somewhere in the Bible." As you can imagine, that answer isn't effective when sharing with others! By memorizing the references, you'll speak with authority and gain the respect of your hearers when you quote Scripture.

After you master five verses, begin studying five more. Review all of the verses you've learned at least once a week. As your pack grows, you'll be encouraged to keep memorizing Scripture, and you'll experience its powerful effects in your life. For a sample HEAR entry, refer to page 270. For disciple-making resources, check out our website, replicate.org.

1//GENESIS 1

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 1:1-2

OPTIONAL READING

Psalm 1

Genesis, the first book in both Christian and Jewish Scripture, starts at the most logical place imaginable: the beginning. In the first chapter, we are going to see some of the most foundational truths about who God is: He is Creator, He is eternal, and He is sovereign over every aspect of creation. More than that, He created mankind with a special privilege: to know, delight in, and walk with Him.

When you think about creation, what are some things that it tells you about God's character?

H I G H L I G H T

E X P L A I N

A P P L Y

R E S P O N D

MEMORY VERSE**Psalm 1:1-2****OPTIONAL READING****Psalm 2**

2//GENESIS 2

The first chapter showed us an overview of God’s creative process. Now, in chapter 2, we are shown a closer look at one of the more personal aspects of creation for everyone reading it: the creation of mankind in His image. Chapter 2 will show us how we were created for community both with each other and with our Creator—a revelation that leaves Adam rejoicing in song!

What do you think it means to be made in the image of God? What responsibilities come with that?

H I G H L I G H T

E X P L A I N

A P P L Y

R E S P O N D

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 1:1-2

OPTIONAL READING

Psalm 3

3//GENESIS 3

When God finished creation, He called it very good. But in chapter 3, we are going to see an act of rebellion that caused very good to quickly turn bad. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command, they ushered in a series of consequences that the rest of human history has been dealing with ever since. But even when God explained the consequences of their sin, He still spoke whispers of hope about a day when those consequences would be conquered forever.

Where do you see the tendency to disobey God in your own heart? Take some time to pray and ask God to forgive you and teach you how to obey Him.

H I G H L I G H T

E X P L A I N

A P P L Y

R E S P O N D

MEMORY VERSE**Psalm 1:1-2****OPTIONAL READING****Psalm 4**

4//GENESIS 4

When God made Adam and Eve, He gave them a command to “be fruitful, multiply” (Gen. 1:28). Chapter 4 shows us how they followed that command—and how the consequences of their sin began to unfold in their own family. But even in the shadow of deep sadness, this chapter shows us God’s faithfulness and mercy.

When is a time you’ve been shown mercy? Who is someone you need to show mercy to?

H I G H L I G H T

E X P L A I N

A P P L Y

R E S P O N D

MEMORY VERSE**Psalm 1:1-2****OPTIONAL READING****Psalm 5**

5//GENESIS 6

Genesis 6 begins with an aspect of God that we have seen before: His justice. When mankind wreaked havoc on God's perfect creation and actively rebelled against Him, He responded justly. But at the same time, we see an intimate portrait of His mercy—particularly in the way that He spared Noah's family. These two aspects of God are crucial, because they have been present from the beginning, and continue to this day.

How have you seen the perfect balance of God's justice and mercy at work in your own life?

H I G H L I G H T

E X P L A I N

A P P L Y

R E S P O N D