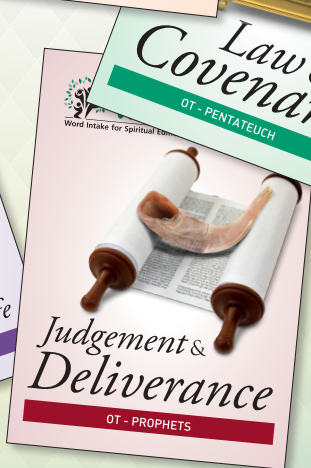
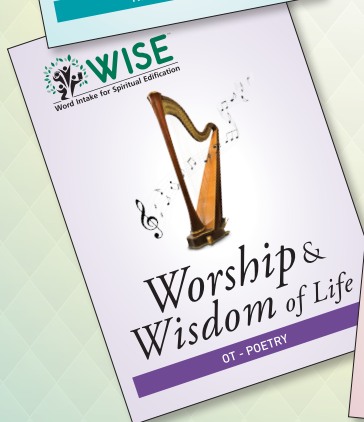
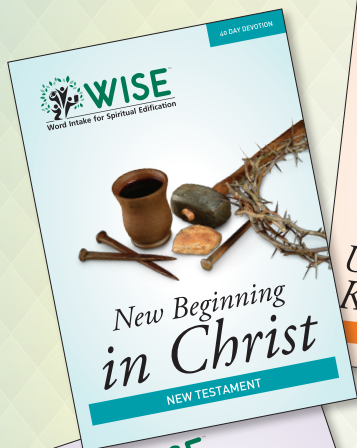




WISE™

Word Intake for Spiritual Edification

SAMPLE



"You have heard that it was said... But I say to you..."

- Mt 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43

The Gospel of Matthew begins with names. Names that can be easily forgotten. But the people so named have become part of God's story. *Like you and me.* Matthew lists three series of fourteen generations from Abraham to Christ (1:17). Many more generations have come and gone since. But God stays the same, continuing His work of naming, calling and saving people. *Like you and me.* Any name on a list is just that, but not if God named you. You are in His story, recorded in the Book of Life, remembered (Rev 3:5). This is the great and good God who knows us.

Jesus knew scriptures. So did the devil. What about you? Jesus knew the authority of God's Word. The devil did as well. He fled. Do you know the authority of God's Word? Should the devil tempt you, will he quote scriptures better than you? Or will he flee as you stand on the Word of God?

The sermon on the mount (5-7) is the most condensed teaching of Jesus apart from the Upper Room Discourse in John 13-16. It teaches from an entirely different paradigm: the Kingdom of God. This is Jesus' teaching for the Christian life. In life, as we grow, we are taught many things, some good, some bad. These eventually form part of our worldview. What strikes you as you listen to Jesus' kingdom of God's perspective? Is there a challenge from God's Word that you need to heed from Jesus today - "You have heard it said, but I say to you..."

Lord God,

*Let this 40 days of hearing the Word produce in me a deep hunger and thirst after You and your Word. **Disciple me in your Word** so that the Word will become the fabric of my life. Amen.*

How to use **WISE**

Every page of the **WISE** Devotional is designed to take you through a daily meditation on God's Word.

1

LISTEN

to the Bible passage, receiving the Word of God to nourish your soul

2

MEDITATE

on the verse of the day, recalling some key thoughts of the Bible passage

3

READ

the accompanying Devotional Reading, allowing God to speak more personally to you through His Word

4

PRAY

the provided prayer, speaking with the God of the Bible

Through these steps, we pray that you will find encouragement, challenge and comfort as you draw close to God each day.



Day 02

Matthew 8–12

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

- Mt 11:15

A leper, a centurion, a mother-in-law, the demon possessed, a paralytic, tax-collectors and sinners, a synagogue ruler, a woman with bleeding disorder, two blind men - from individuals to crowds, from close associates to hostile opponents, Jesus' life is filled with people. Matthew records all these encounters with colour and drama. Jesus is about people. He “saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (9:37). God knows our names. His Son knows our needs. He came. He saw. He touched. We are encountered. We are saved. We are changed.

“He who has ears, let him hear” (11:15) As you listen to the audio reading of God's Word, listen prayerfully. In the days before Guttenberg invented the movable press, the dominant sense to engage God's Word was through hearing. Indeed faith comes by hearing! As you listen in the days to come, the Word of God will come alive. Expect the Lord to speak. *“He who has ears, let him hear.”* Whatever imprints you receive, remember them! Find time later to listen or read the passage again. Begin a journal to jot down thoughts and insights. (Modern technologies like laptop, palmtop or hand phone serve us well here for an instant record of short notes.) It will all add up. By and by, review them. An excellent time to review will be after you have finished listening to one book. You will be surprised what blessings are recorded.

Lord God,

Quieten the noises of my soul and let me hear your Word with a willing spirit that heeds and obeys. Amen.



● Perspective

Jacob lifted Ephraim and Manasseh up one generation, exalting the younger over the elder (Gen 48). His prayer before he died prophesied the future of each of his son's descendants. Reuben, Simeon and Levi lost their seniority for their misdeeds. Judah, who had changed for the better, inherited the leadership. Joseph was blessed with prominence for rising through hardship to save them all (Gen 49). Jacob received a royal burial from the Egyptians. Joseph reassured his fearful brothers that he will not harm them after his father's death. He instructed that his bones be carried out when God brings them out of Egypt (Gen 50).

Exodus begins with a reversal of circumstances for the Israelites in Egypt. Over the years, they were demoted from most honoured guests to exploited slaves (Ex 1). In the midst of their suffering, God brought about the birth of Moses, their future saviour (Ex 2).

● Highlight

Joseph became two tribes instead of one because Jacob promoted his sons. God's great favour on Joseph was shown through his rise to rulership, the royal welcome for his family and the royal burial for Jacob. He was able to forgive his brothers in seeing that God's grace worked through their evil intent. His request to carry out his bones out of Egypt showed his firm faith that God's promises will be fulfilled.

In the midst of slavery, God raised up a saviour for His people by thwarting Pharaoh's command to kill all male babies by Pharaoh's own daughter.

● Pointers

Let us learn from Joseph's life of how God honours a man who is faithful and upright. His rise to be ruler, the deep respect of the Egyptians, the love of his father, and the awed regard of his brothers stands out. In contrast, the young Moses was rash and presumptuous and needed moulding before he could be used by God. His indiscretion in killing an Egyptian led him to run for his life from Egypt to Midian.

● Prayer

Forgive me Lord for my bitterness and lack of faith in You in the face of hardship and injustice. Overcome my bitterness, overturn my faithlessness, correct my presumptuousness. Enable me to forgive those who have wronged me, to stay faithful in trials and be at peace in You. Mould me to act with Your wisdom and trust You for my vindication and recompense. Amen.



Study 3 • Day 8 - 14

The BIG IDEA

How can we comprehend Jesus' death on a Roman cross? "The angels hushed and the heavens paused to witness the finale. God unveils the canvas and the ultimate act of creative compassion is revealed.

God on a cross. The Creator being sacrificed for the creation" (Max Lucado, No Wonder They Call Him the Saviour).

The World Turned Upside Down

Luke 22:47 — 23:56

When did you first hear the story of Jesus' death? How did it affect you?

Only a few hours after Peter swore loyalty to Jesus, he makes a sudden and complete reversal in attitude (vv.57-60). In what kind of situation are you tempted to avoid identification with Jesus and his cause?

Three times Pilate says he finds no valid charge against Jesus, and seeks to release him (23:4, 13-16 and 22). Why then does he ultimately pronounce the death penalty on Jesus?