

WHICH BIBLE?



It's April 2020.

The world is in a Covid19 Crisis;
globally, we are hunkered down.

Seems like now is the ***best*** time to pull
that Bible closer!

When I go online to read the Bible, or to order a Bible, I find a myriad of translations in many languages... which is a good thing, because the Bible can now be read in almost every language in the world.

However, even in English there are so many *versions*...

Which one do I choose?





KJV?

NIV?

NKJV?

ASV?

AMP?

AMPC?

CSB?

NASB?

TLB?

MEV?

NTE?

...and these aren't all of them!



Which one do I choose?

Well, the simple answer is ***Experiment***... try several, online, and see which one you understand best.

...Oh, and there are also ***Audio*** versions!

You have to be able to understand what you are reading/listening to. A very important issue is ***ACCURACY***, especially in these days of Fake information!



You'll no doubt find a version that will become your favorite...

but it's always a good idea to cross-check against a version translated from the original texts (Aramaic/Hebrew for the Old Testament, and Greek for the New Testament), and not just a translation of a translation... where some important details can get lost!

My personal favorite is the **NIV** (New International Version), which has been translated from the original texts, and is in modern English.

...but I still compare the occasional passage with the **KJV** (King James Version), translated from the original texts as commissioned by James VI and I in 1603. Impressively, it was completed and published by 1611. It's old English, so you'll see a lot of "thou" and "thee" and "thine"... but there is a poetic beauty and pleasing sound to "Thy will be done" as opposed to "Your will be done"
... perhaps it's just what you're used to or grew up with.





If you can read the Bible in an additional language or two, you'll find yet more beauty, and surprising little details jump out at you...

For example, **Ezekiel Chapter 37** talks about the Valley of Dry Bones and describes how they come to life. Verse 7 – shortened here – says, in the NIV, “as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.”

In the Spanish Bible (I like the Reina Valera 1960 edition – also translated from the original texts), it says (translated into English) that the bones came together, each bone ***to its own bone***

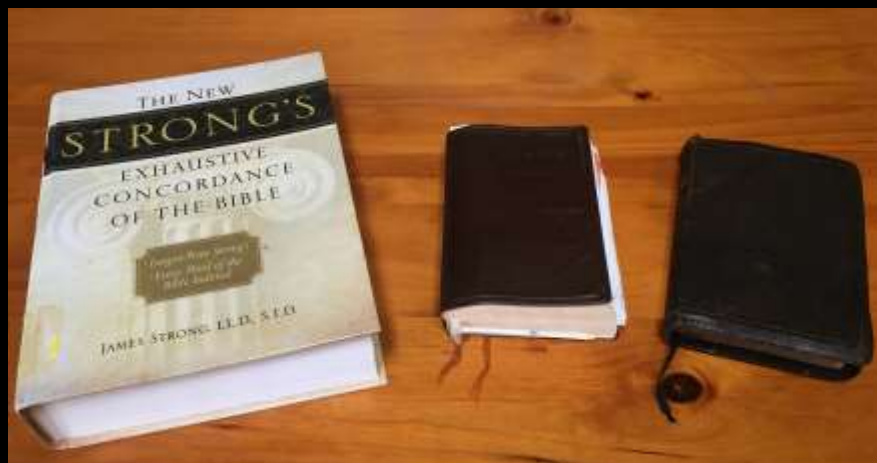
... which – to me – is a beautiful indication of God's love and care. You can imagine that those dry, bleached bones had lain there for a considerable time, and must have been quite scattered. He doesn't take any old hip bone and fix it to some other femur. No, each bone comes together with its own bone!

For years I used an NIV with a Concordance in the back... which is very handy if you know a word or two but can't remember where in the Bible it appears... That's my favorite NIV in the middle... KJV on the right.

The monster on the left is my REAL concordance... "Strong's for the Strong" they used to say!

It has every single word in the Bible (KJV) cross-referenced, so now I can find Anything!

It even has the complete Hebrew and Greek lists (Old Testament and New, remember?), so if I want to delve further into the clear meaning of a word, I can see the original and get clarity on its intent!





So, where do you look online for The Bible?

You can check on Google to find your own source(s), but my two “go-to’s” are:

- ❖ BibleGateway.com, and

- ❖ Biblia.com

The BibleGateway screen looks like this...

You can select a *version* from the drop-down menu

...and you can pick any Book from the list

The screenshot shows the BibleGateway website interface. At the top is a dark navigation bar with links: BIBLE, STUDY, APPS, and STORE. A 'LOG IN' button is on the right. Below this is a red header bar containing the BibleGateway logo, a search input field with the placeholder 'Enter keyword, passage, or topic', a version dropdown menu currently set to 'New International Version (NIV)', and a yellow 'SEARCH' button. An orange arrow points from the text '...and you can pick any Book from the list' to the search input field. Another orange arrow points from the text 'You can select a version from the drop-down menu' to the version dropdown menu. Below the search bar is a 'Bible Book List' link. A yellow banner below the header promotes 'Bible Gateway Plus'. The main content area features a 'Verse of the Day' section with a blue header. The verse text is '[Love Fulfills the Law] Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.' Below the verse is 'Romans 13:8 NIV' and a note: 'Today's passage is from the New International Version. Read by Max McLean. Provided by The Listener's Audio Bible.' On the right side of the verse section are icons for audio playback, a menu, and sharing.

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Verse of the Day

[*Love Fulfills the Law*] Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.

Romans 13:8 NIV

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This is the BIBLIA screen... also with options to choose a version, etc.

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John 1:1  English Standard Version  Share 

The Word Became Flesh


1 ^aIn the beginning was ^bthe Word, and ^cthe Word was with God, and ^dthe Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** ^eAll things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4** ^fIn him was life, ^gand ^hthe life was the light of men. **5** ⁱThe light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

6 There was a man ^jsent from God, whose name was ^kJohn. **7** He came as a ^lwitness, to bear witness about the light, ^mthat all might believe through him. **8** ⁿHe was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

9 ^oThe true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet ^pthe world did not know him. **11** He came to ^qhis own, ^rand ^shis own people ^tdid not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, ^uwho believed in his name, ^vhe gave the right ^wto become ^xchildren of God, ^ywho ^zwere born, ^{aa}not of blood ^{ab}nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And ^{ac}the Word ^{ad}became flesh and ^{ae}dwelt among us, ^{af}and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son ^{ag}from the Father, full of ^{ah}grace and ^{ai}truth.

COVID-19: URGENT NEED


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Sign Up to Use Our Free Bible Study Tools

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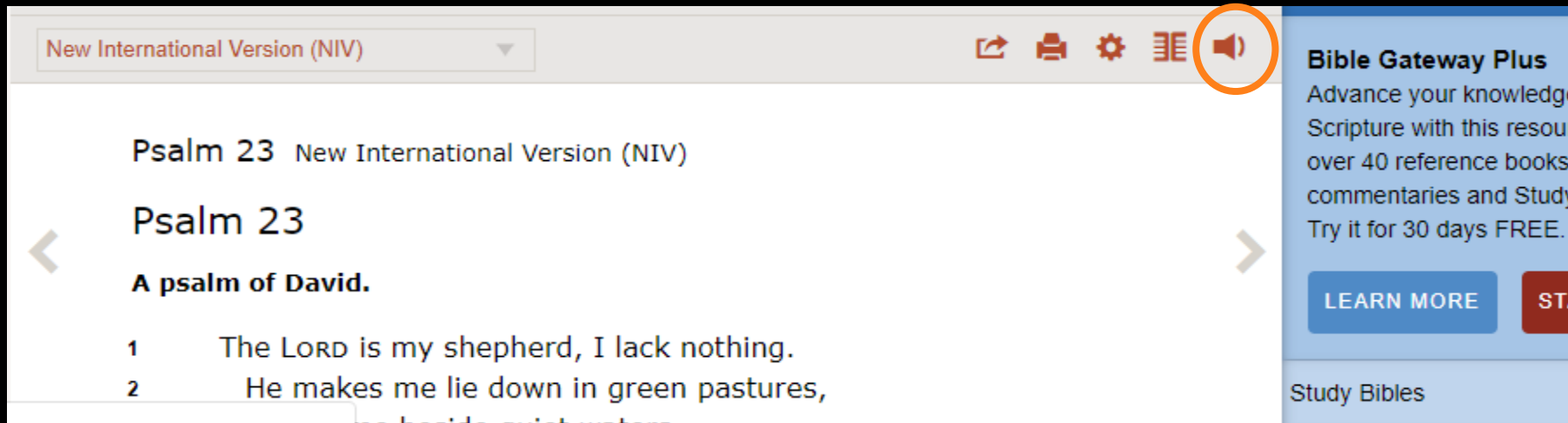
The entire Bible in any version is available free online.


It's handy to have a printed copy, though, to underline or mark passages that are particularly meaningful for you.

...Oh, and I mentioned that there are **Audio** versions as well, right? Check those out on BibleGateway, or elsewhere.

Here's where to look for them on BibleGateway:

Once you've pulled up a Book or passage, click on this icon





So, when you see a Bible quotation, what's with those commas and colons??

John 3:16,17

To find things easily, or share with someone, the Books (John in this case) are arranged in Chapters ("3", in this case) followed by a colon, and each verse is numbered...

So in this case, there are two verses (16 and 17) that are being referred to, in chapter 3.

John 3, New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus

1 Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. **2** He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”


3 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.^[a]”

4 “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

5 Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.

.....
16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

*Here’s an example, with some verses removed for clarity, and **John 3: 16,17** highlighted.*



Why all the “Books”?

The Bible is arranged in two parts:

The **Old Testament**, consisting of 39 books (in Aramaic/Hebrew) was around at the time Jesus walked the Earth, and He referred to it all the time,

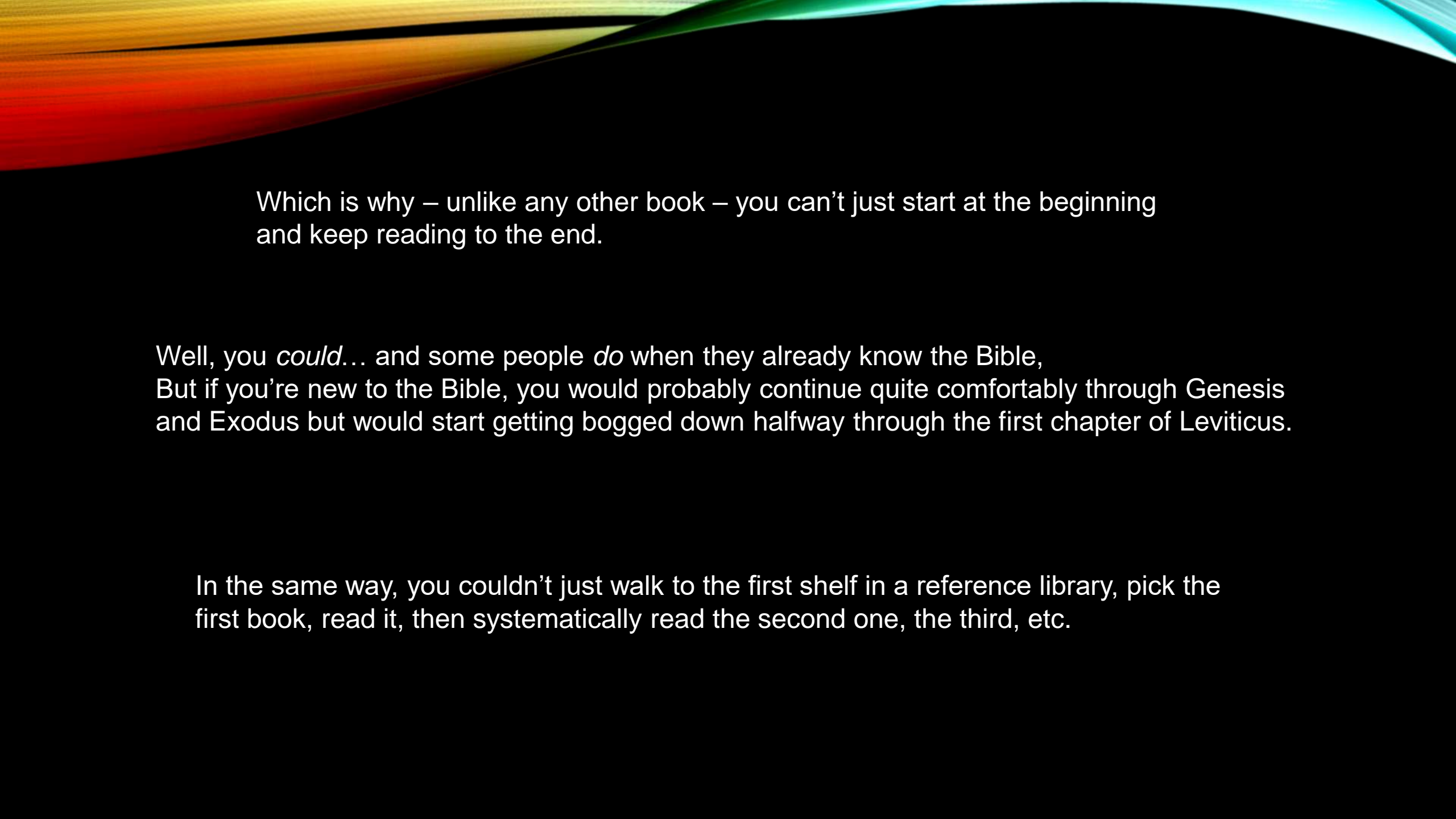
and

The **New Testament**, consisting of 27 books, which were written after Jesus’ death and resurrection (in the written language of the time, Greek).

66 Books in total...

More like a *Reference Library*, really,
than a single Book...





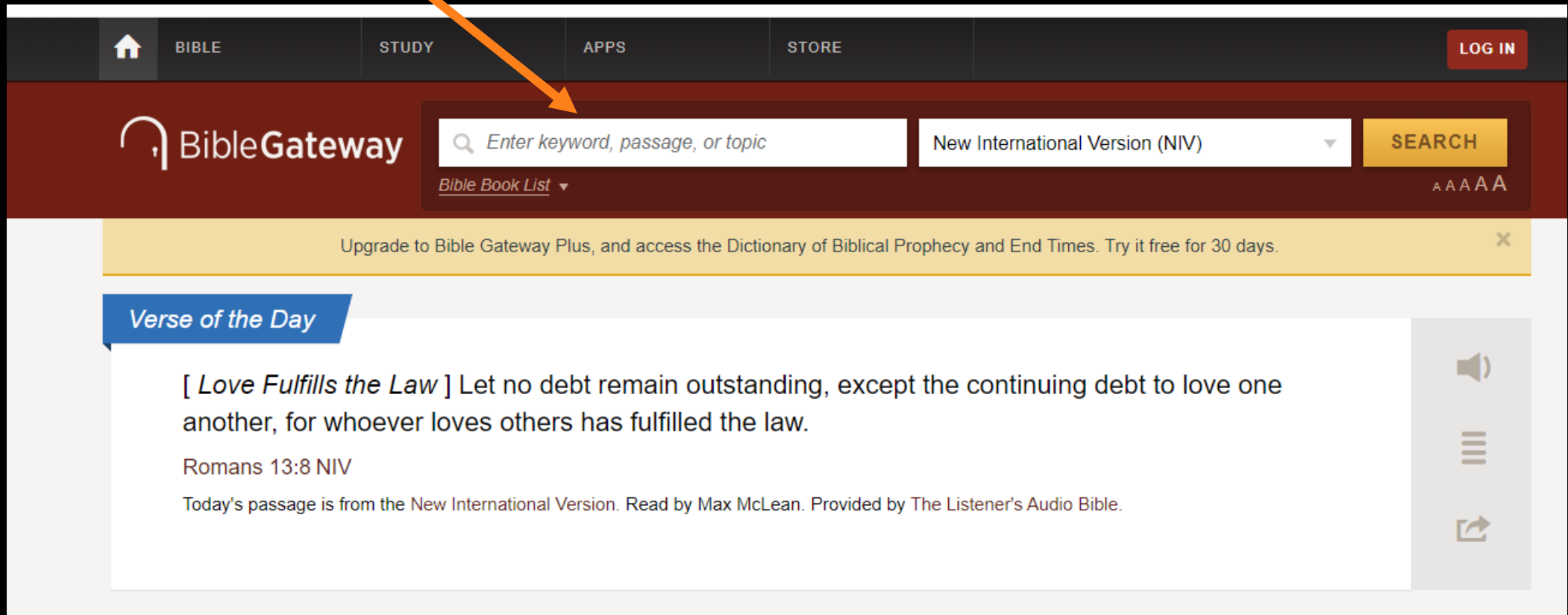
Which is why – unlike any other book – you can't just start at the beginning and keep reading to the end.

Well, you *could*... and some people *do* when they already know the Bible, But if you're new to the Bible, you would probably continue quite comfortably through Genesis and Exodus but would start getting bogged down halfway through the first chapter of Leviticus.

In the same way, you couldn't just walk to the first shelf in a reference library, pick the first book, read it, then systematically read the second one, the third, etc.

So, where do I start?

One approach you will probably enjoy, is to pick a topic and explore what the Bible has to say about it... You could even do it from the BibleGateway window...



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Now, here's a shocker...

Contrary to what some learned folks will tell you, you do NOT need someone to interpret the Bible for you. The Bible interprets *itself*. If you don't understand something, keep reading!

You will find lots of examples in my blogs on this web site that will illustrate that clearly!




Some fun facts about the Bible:

66 books,

written over **1,500 years**

on **three continents** (Asia, Africa, and Europe)

by **more than 40 authors**



The Bible is not like any other book. According to the apostle Peter, the prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a way that the content of their message came from God. They did not invent it themselves.

Rather than being “cunningly devised fables” ([2 Peter 1:16](#)), the prophetic message of the Bible is of divine origin, and thus it is truthful and trustworthy. “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” ([2 Peter 1:21, NKJV](#)).

And now that you know what the punctuation means, you could look up these verses yourself on BibleGateway: [2nd book of Peter, chapter 1, verses 16,21, in the New King James Version \(NKJV\)](#). The more you do it, the better you’ll get at it! If you want to see the whole chapter, type in just [2 Peter 1](#)

(BTW, I don’t get a kickback from BibleGateway... I use their web site often and find it very easy to navigate. There is *no* money to be made on this web site... at all. Did you notice there’s no advertising?

All of Scripture is divinely inspired

“All Scripture is God-breathed,
and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in
righteousness”
2 Timothy 3:16

Paul states that “whatever” was written, was written for
our instruction, so that through “the encouragement of the
Scriptures we might have hope” (*Romans 15:4, NASB*).



Popular Christian narrative in the recent past often had a phrase “What would Jesus do?”

With regard to the Holy Scriptures, what *did* Jesus do?

The following interaction between Jesus and the Tempter (Satan) is an interesting one...



“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’

Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” ’

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down. For it is written:

“He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” ’

Jesus answered him, ‘It is also written: “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” ’

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’

Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: “Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.” ’

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.”

Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus met each of the three temptations with “It is written” and direct references from the Old Testament which was the entire biblical record of that time.

Of course, Satan knew the biblical record too and slyly presented the second temptation with an Old Testament reference (Psalm 91:11,12). Look up the reference yourself to discover a noteworthy point: Satan omits a whole line of the original text, to serve his own ends... Can you discover it yourself?

Which raises an important issue...

Don't just trust texts that people present, no matter how credible the person may be. Check those texts yourself! The Bible is there for each of us to read personally and form our own opinions.

And here's another modern-day attitude/expression that you'll come across...

"The Old Testament is no longer valid."

Correct or Incorrect?

Well, *I* say...




But, again, don't take *my* word – or anyone else's – for it... Look up the evidence *yourself*!

You already have the 3 examples that Jesus himself used in Matthew 4:1-11; there are many, many more. Some copies of the Bible have Jesus' words in red print, so it's easy to look at His words, then notice all the references – usually in a footnote or margin on the same page – to the Old Testament texts.

A search on the internet will turn up more information. Apparently, there are at least 400 references from the Book of Isaiah, 370 from the Psalms, and 220 from the Book of Exodus (amongst others). And these are *direct word-for-word* references and don't even include references to situations/circumstances or themes!

It works the other way round too... Old Testament prophecies that pointed to future things, that came about and were recorded in the New Testament.

Check out the following...

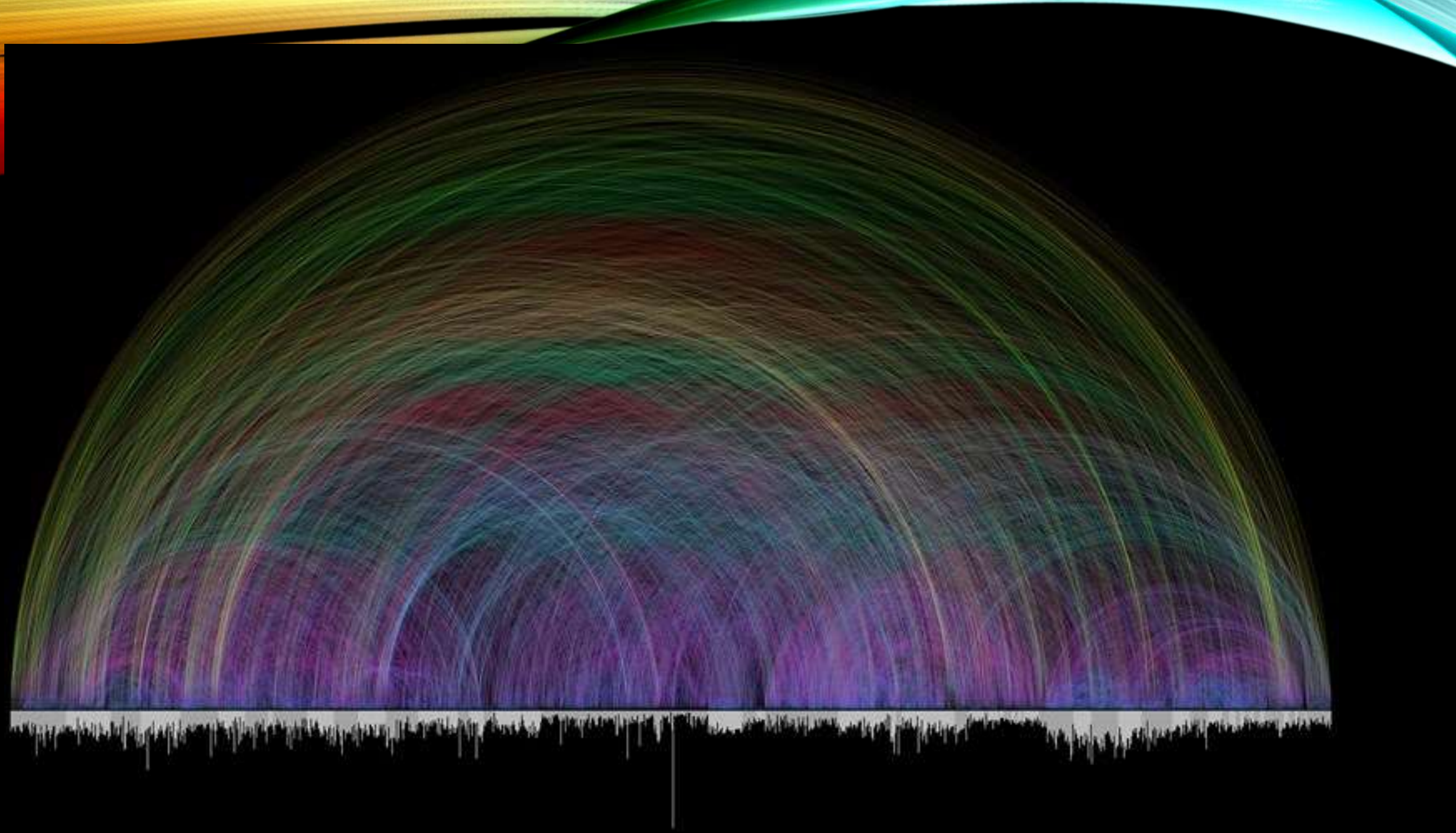


Professor Chris Harrison is a specialist in Human-Computer Interaction at Carnegie Mellon University in the USA. He likes to create novel ways to visualize data.

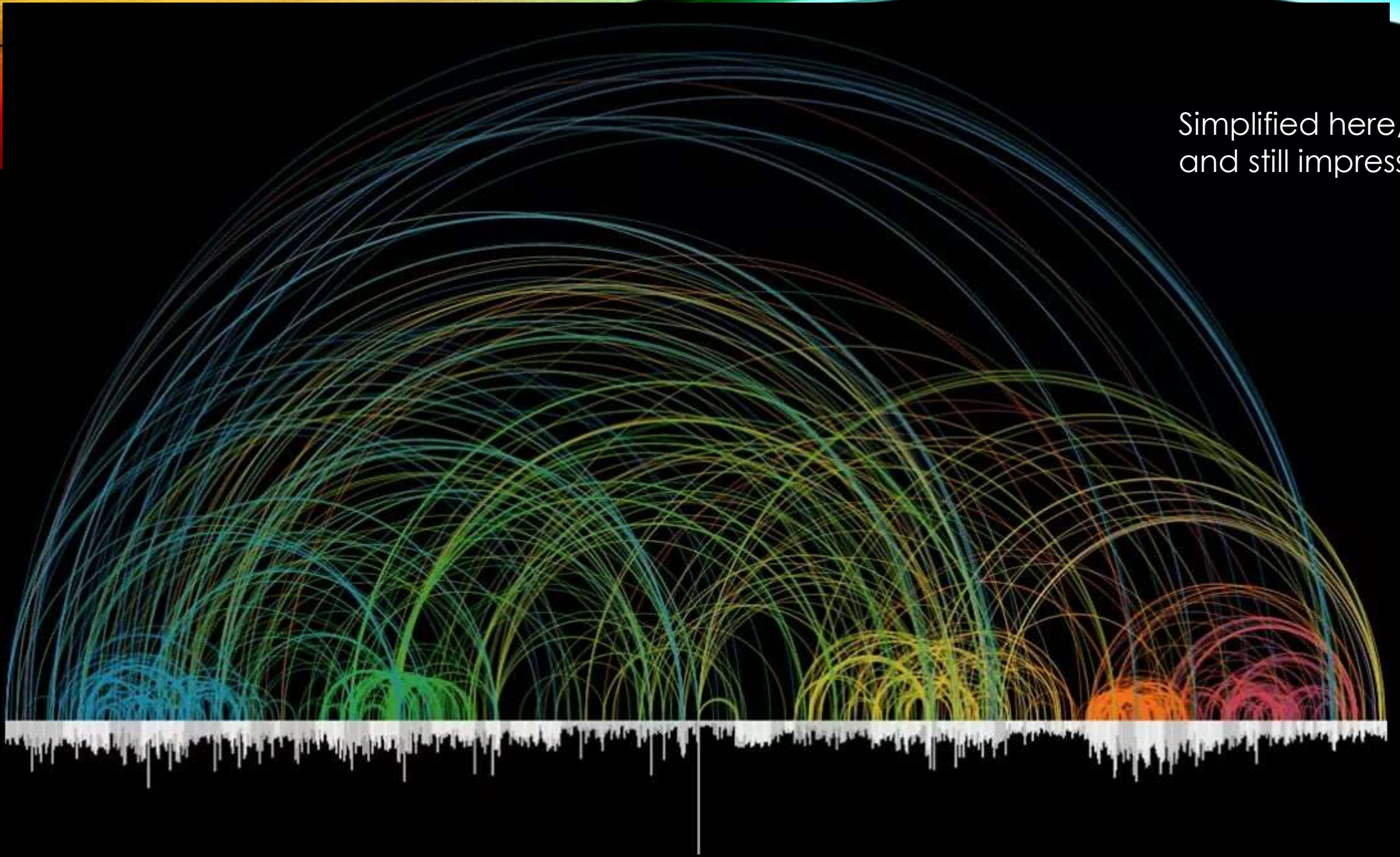
Christoph Römhild, a Lutheran pastor, sent him his biblical cross-references data set with more than 63,000 cross-references, and he created a picture, a visualization depicted below.


(The bar graph that runs along the bottom represents all of the chapters in the Bible.

The length of each bar denotes the number of verses in the chapter. Each of the 63,779 cross references found in the Bible is depicted by a single arc.)



Simplified here,
and still impressive





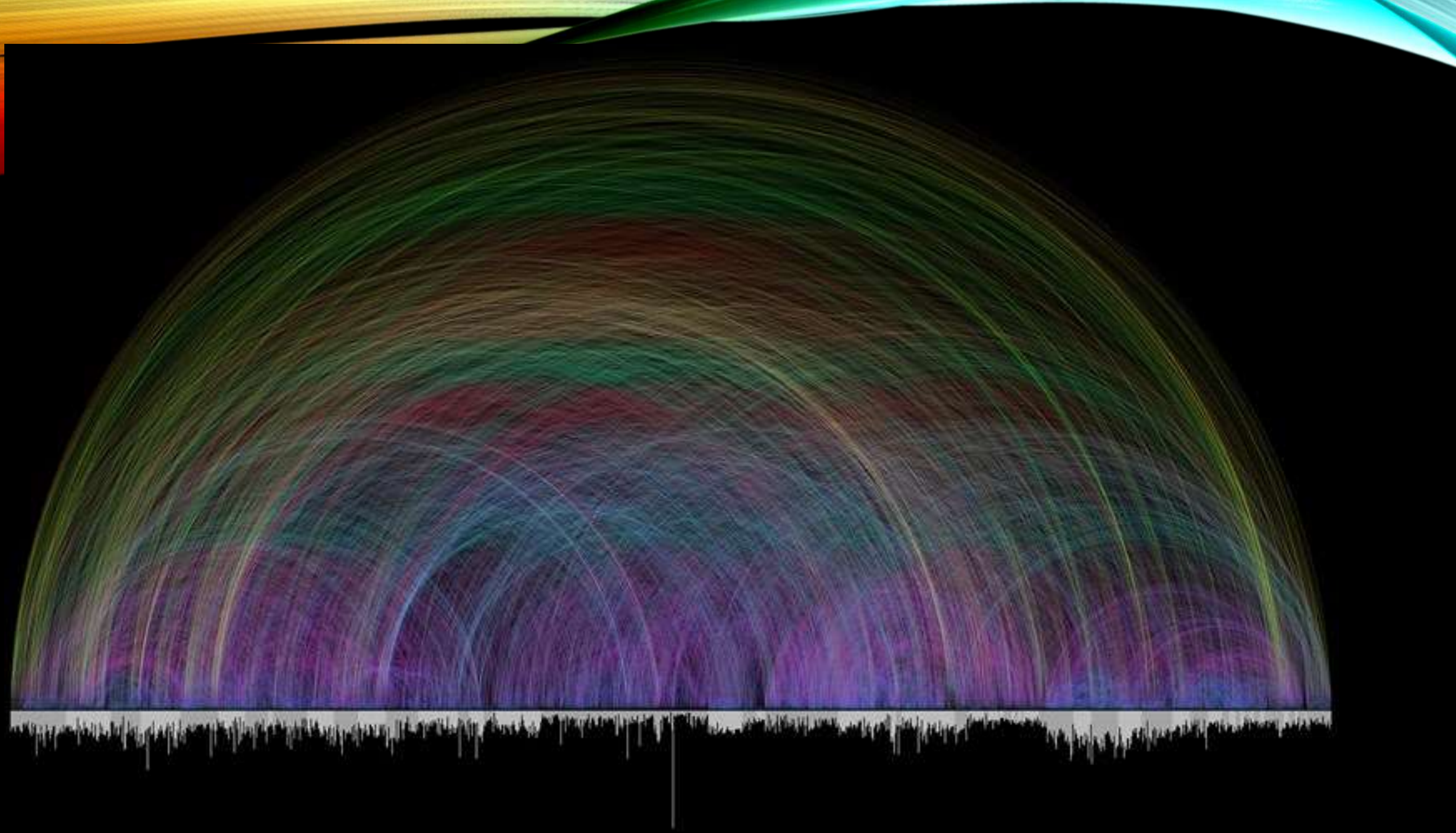
Mark Meynell, a Christian blogger (amongst other things) in the UK, posted the Bible cross-reference picture on his Blog, with these comments:

“As well as being stunningly beautiful as an image (which is what they were aiming for), it wonderfully provides a sense of the Bible’s internal integrity despite its palpable complexity.

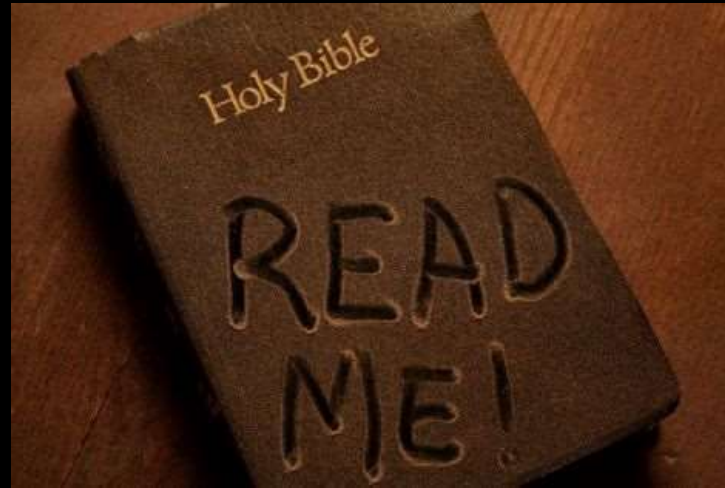
The 176 verses of Psalm 119 stand at the centre point, as if it were a mirror creating a vast symmetry.

What is especially striking is the number of lines that stretch all the way from Genesis to Revelation.”

www.markmeynell.net



So...



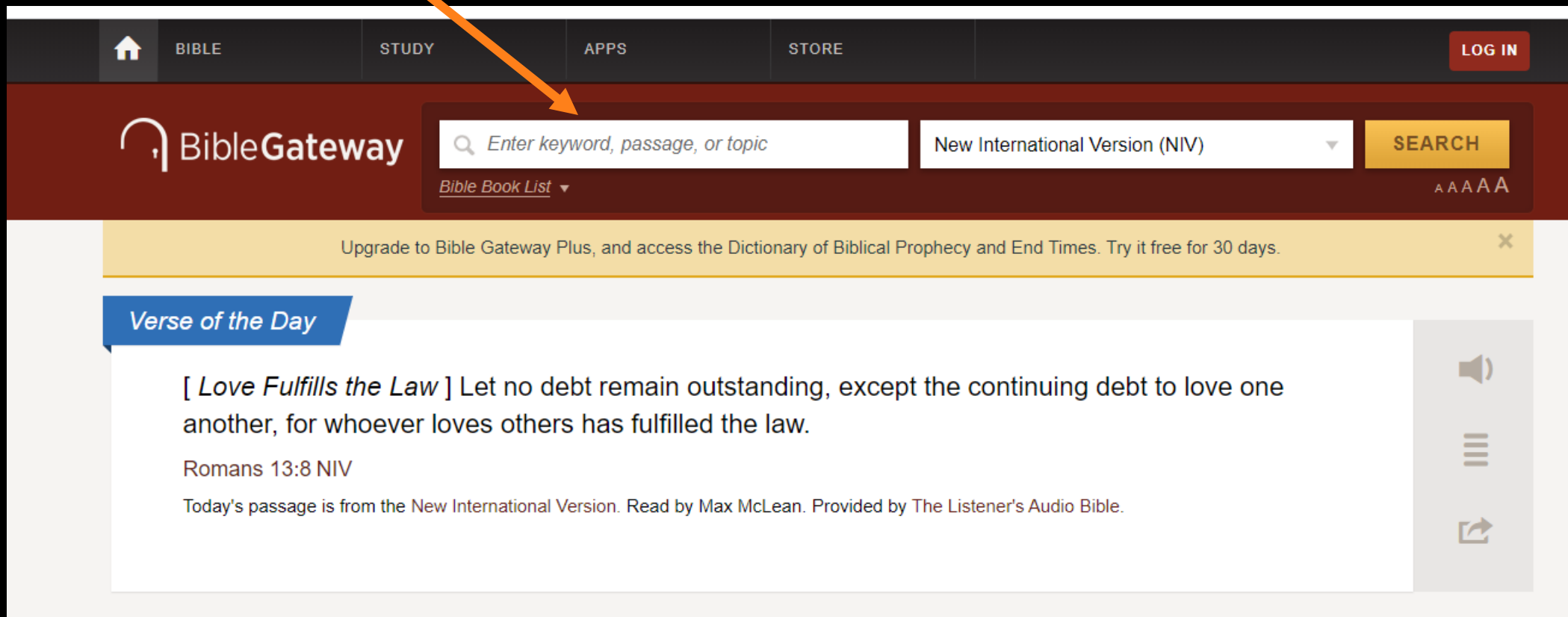
Pay attention to *context* of what “is written”. *Who* was the text addressed to? *Why*? Don’t just read the verse; read the whole passage; read the whole chapter...

If you don’t understand something, keep reading! Compare with other Books in the Bible. Find the answers and truth yourself.

Just as you would do in a research library, look into the same subject in other books in this wonderful ‘research library’ that is the Bible.

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[Bible Gateway](#)

Enter keyword, passage, or topic

New International Version (NIV)

SEARCH

[Bible Book List](#)


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