

READ THE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS

Weeks 53-65



Luke Powell

Introduction

This is **part 5** of *Bible in 2 years*. You can find the first 4 booklets on [my website](#).

By now you have read my tips a few times! Here are some new tips:

- Re-read the same passages during the day. I can't tell you how much this changed the game for me! I am fascinated by how much more I get out of each reading when I read them both mornings and evenings. Try it!
- Pray deeply before you read, while you read, and after you read. If you aren't praying your way through this plan, it will probably have little to no real impact on you. Remember, it is more about meeting God than amassing knowledge.
- Feel free to [contact me](#) if you have any questions or comments on the readings.

Blessings as you read and pray, may God speak to you in a powerful way as you do.

Week 53:

Back into the New Testament and Psalms we go! It's going to be precious reading these again, only a year after the last time we read them. We continue through 2 Kings too, looking at the history of God's people and learning valuable lessons. Let's read prayerfully, unrushed, and with open hearts.

Week 53 Monday

2 Kings 11: Notice how calm and at peace the people are when the evil among them is removed (v20). Of course, again we know that for us this is a spiritual lesson - we won't go killing evil people, but we will "smash the altars and idols to pieces" (v18) in our spiritual lives.

Psalms 1: A classic Psalm which contrasts the lives of the godly and the ungodly. The key of the godly life is to delight in God's Word (v2).

Luke 1: Luke writes his gospel so that his readers may have faith (v4)! This full chapter introduces us to the blameless Elizabeth and Zechariah, parents of John the Baptist; and to Mary the mother of Jesus. Read this lovely chapter carefully and take note of the deep faith of these people, and the deep love for God that defines them.

Week 53 Tuesday

2 Kings 12-13: Joash reigns successfully in Judah, with the help of the priest Jehoiada - but once the priest dies we see how shallow Joash's faith really was. In Israel we meet King Jehoahaz and his son Jehoash, both of whom were evil. Then we see the end of Elisha - after one last prophecy, he died and was buried. But even beyond the grave his power was still at work... how we have seen shadows of Jesus in the life Elisha!

Psalms 2: How sad that world leaders plot against God, and think that *they* can 'break chains' (v3) when only God can. God's words in this Psalm are sobering to any leader, but let us all take note of v11, and hold onto the truth that "blessed are all who take refuge in him" (v12) today.

Luke 2: The familiar Christmas story! Read it with fresh eyes today and give thanks that God sent His Son to us as a lowly child in a manger. There was no room for Jesus in the inn - is there room for Him in your heart? The shepherds' willingness to spread the good news should inspire us. Perhaps this little [series of Christmas sermons](#) might add to our readings the last two days. This chapter also introduces us to Simeon and Anna - two righteous and devout followers of God; and lastly we see Jesus growing into a young boy who amazed all who heard him speak, and then into a young man full of wisdom and grace.

Week 53 Wednesday

2 Kings 14: Amaziah King of Judah conquers the Edomites, but gets arrogant and ends up defeated by Jehoash and the Israelites. This tension between God's people in Judah and Israel is sad to see.

Psalms 3: David is in a difficult season, but he trusts in God and can sleep peacefully. Let's take v6 to heart today.

Luke 3: What a fascinating character John the Baptist is. Notice how he preaches forgiveness, but also fruit-bearing! And notice how he points away from himself to Jesus. We see Jesus baptized in solidarity with the people - don't miss the Trinity in plain sight here, Jesus, the Spirit as a dove and the voice of the Father. Then Jesus' genealogy proves his connection to David and Abraham's family line.

Week 53 Thursday

2 Kings 15: Various good kings and evil kings come and go in both Israel and Judah. Aren't you glad that we haven't had rulers in charge for 50 years? Take note of the short-lived Assyrian invasion of Israel. Though Menahem's bribe got rid of them, they would be back a short time later to take over Israel for good.

Psalms 4: David longs for God to answer his call (v1), and God does this (v3). Unlike the wicked who tremble in their beds (v4), David can sleep peacefully (v8) since he trusts in God.

Luke 4: Jesus is tempted by the devil, but *filled with the Spirit* he is able to resist. He then explains his understanding of his ministry in the synagogue, but ends up so insulting the people that they try to throw him over a cliff! He escapes and begins teaching, healing and casting out demons.

Week 53 Friday 📖

2 Kings 16: King Ahaz was one of the worst kings of Judah, even sacrificing his own son in a pagan religious ritual. He aligned himself with Assyria, even using treasure from the temple to 'suck up' to their godless king, and then built a pagan altar with the help of the priest Uriah. This happens even today, when the church copies the ways of the world instead of staying firm in their commitment to God.

Psalm 5: Another Psalm of David which contrasts the godly and the godless. V11 is worth holding onto today! You can hear a week of daily devos I recorded on this Psalm by [clicking here](#) and scrolling to 30 January 2023.

Luke 5: A full chapter. Peter's humility when he realises the power of Jesus is admirable (v8). Do we feel such awe at the power of Jesus? Jesus' words in v10 are important for us to remember. Jesus heals a leper, and note his tendency to withdraw and pray (v16). He then heals a paralyzed and pronounces his sins forgiven, much to the chagrin of the Jewish leaders. Everyone stands amazed at Christ (v26) - again, I wonder, do we? Then Jesus calls Levi to follow him and explains his own calling to help sinners, before teaching that the 'new wine' of his message must be put in 'new wineskins'.

It's good to be back in the gospels and Psalms! They are bringing much needed perspective to our slog through Kings. Catch up this weekend if necessary, and may His Word dwell in your heart richly.

Let all who take refuge
in you be glad;
let them ever sing for
joy. Spread your
protection over them,
that those who love
your name may rejoice
in you.
Psalm 5:11

Week 54:

We reach a pivotal point in Israel's history this week, as Assyria sieges the nation and sends God's people into exile. We also read some relatable words in the Psalms and see Jesus in full swing in Luke's gospels.

Pray before you read, as you read, and after you read, and hold to these truths all through the day.

Week 54 Monday

2 Kings 17: Israel's rebellion and sin finally come to a head. Under the evil King Hoshea they are raided by the Assyrians, who seize control of their land and send the people to exile. As you read the sad state of Israel in v7-23, as well as the mixed-up religion that the new residents of Samaria set up in v24-40, don't be too judgemental - it turns out that the church is prone to the same sins. How we need the redemption of Jesus and freedom that comes from His Spirit.

Psalms 6: David's body and soul are in agony (1-3), and so he calls on God. Don't miss the power of v8-10 - David declares God's victory, through faith.

Luke 6: Jesus proves himself to be God, and the Pharisees are furious. Jesus prays all night before calling his disciples. He then teaches them some stern truths: blessings and woes in v20-26, loving enemies in v27-36, not judging others in v37-42, and then he uses pictures of trees and buildings to illustrate the Christian life in v43-49. A full reading, but don't miss the power of Jesus' words!

Week 54 Tuesday

2 Kings 18: The great King Hezekiah reigns in Judah, at the same time as Israel's fall. The Assyrians try to convince the people not to follow Hezekiah - their words in v29-32 sound a lot like words the devil uses today to try and convince us not to follow in God's ways. Let's not believe his lies!

Psalms 7: In the face of false accusations, David maintains his innocence and pleads with God to remove his enemies. V10 is a powerful statement of faith, and V17 shows David's determination to stay positive during a difficult time.

Luke 7: Two amazing miracles start this chapter. What power Jesus has! Are we "filled with awe" (v16) reading these? Jesus then addresses John the Baptist's doubts about him. If *John* could doubt, we are in good company if we struggle. But let us not be 'reeds swayed in the wind' (v24). The chapter ends with a famous story of Jesus forgiving a sinful woman who worships him passionately. Take note of the last verse - by faith we receive forgiveness, and thus peace.

Week 54 Wednesday

2 Kings 19: Hezekiah asks the prophet Isaiah to pray for the Jewish remnant - a very different response to the Assyrian invasion than Hoshea the last king of Israel. Isaiah tells him not to fear the boastful words of the Assyrians, and so when the Assyrian king again tells Israel to disbelieve God's faithfulness, Hezekiah prays a wonderful powerful prayer in v14-19. Perhaps we can echo these words in our prayers today? Isaiah then prophesies Sennacherib's downfall, and his prediction comes true.

Psalms 8: A beautiful Psalm which speaks of the glory of God in creation, and our own responsibility to care for it. Are we humbled by these things (v4)?

Luke 8: We read that Jesus was financially supported by those whom he had healed. Do you support those who bless you spiritually? Then he teaches the parable of the sower (which seed are you?) and uses a picture of a lampstand to show how our Christian lives should shine. We also see Jesus calm a storm miraculously, and then heal a man possessed by demons, as well as a sick woman *and* the daughter of Jairus. What power our Lord possessed!

Week 54 Thursday

2 Kings 20: Close to death, Hezekiah prays a heartfelt prayer, and God heals him and gives him more time. Then Hezekiah is visited by Babylonian royalty, and Isaiah prophesies that Judah will be taken captive by Babylon. As we shall see, he was right.

Psalms 9: A favourite Psalm. V7-11 are particularly meaningful! Will you take them to heart today?

Luke 9: A long chapter with a lot to take in. Jesus' miraculous feeding of the 5000 is always powerful to read. Jesus' question to Peter is one we all have to answer - [this time of worship](#) takes a closer look at the question. Jesus then explains how difficult it is to follow him - think closely on v23-26 today. The Transfiguration is an amazing moment in which Jesus' deity is confirmed, but coming down the mountain he is frustrated at the disciples' lack of spiritual growth. His final words in the chapter challenge to childlike faith and openness to other Christian movements.

Week 54 Friday 

2 Kings 21-22: The most godless king of Judah, Manasseh, was more evil even than the Amorites (v11)! He undid all the good work Hezekiah had done and set Judah up to be exiled. But then came one of the better kings - Josiah, who rediscovered the Law of God. He was so upset at the words he read in the Law, that God saw his genuine repentance and promised to save him from the exile to come.

Psalms 10: The Psalmist sees the evil people prospering, and wonders if God has forgotten his people. But v14 is the turnaround moment, and the last three verses remind us that God is still in control and to be trusted.

Luke 10: Jesus' sends a group of seventy disciples out in pairs to do the work of healing and preaching. We are his hands and feet - he sends us out in much the same way today. The parable of the Good Samaritan is always convicting - are we too busy or too prejudiced to care for our neighbours? Then we see Mary and Martha both serving Jesus in different ways. Have you taken the time to sit at Jesus' feet and listen, lately?

Good king, bad king, good king, bad king! God's people paid the price for their inconsistency. But the Psalms have reminded us that God is worthy, and Luke's gospel had reminded us that the Saviour came and made things right. Blessings as you rest this weekend.

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“My shield is God Most
High, who saves the
upright in heart.”

Psalm 7:10

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Week 55

This week we finish Kings, and begin Chronicles. We are getting quite well versed with Jewish history through these readings! We go through many emotions with David in the Psalms, and marvel at Jesus (who doesn't seem very meek and mild) in Luke's Gospel. Blessings as you read.

Week 55 Monday

2 Kings 23: We see what an effective King Josiah was - cleaning up Judah and reinstating the old Jewish feasts. But then we see how quickly it can change - because after him came another king who would undo his good work.

Psalms 11: David decides to trust in God rather than fleeing from his troubles. A lesson for us today!

Luke 11: Jesus' teaching on prayer is helpful to us. He shows us a great structure for our prayers, and tells us to pray with shameless audacity! Are we asking, seeking, knocking in prayer? Jesus' teaching on light is also powerful. Then we read his 'woes' to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Let's look within and be sure that the things he pointed out to them are not present in us.

Week 55 Tuesday

2 Kings 24: And so Judah is invaded by Babylon, and God's people are exiled. How far both Israel and Judah have fallen.

Psalms 12: This Psalm teaches us to watch our mouths! We must avoid lies, flattery, boasting and more. God's Word, unlike ours, is always trustworthy. My daily devos looked at this Psalm back in 2022, [click here](#) and scroll to Aug 22 to listen.

Luke 12: Jesus teaches us to fear God, but not people. His parable of the rich fool reminds us to use what we have for God's glory, not just our own gratification. How precious to hear Jesus say "do not be afraid, little flock" (v32) and tell us not to worry! Jesus' words about being ready for his coming reminds me of [this haunting song](#), and his final words in this chapter show us that he will always be a divisive figure.

Week 55 Wednesday

2 Kings 25: Our long slog through Kings finishes with the fall of Jerusalem. Try to imagine the trauma that God's people experienced as Jerusalem and the temple burned to the ground. But notice that there is a sliver of hope at the end - Jehoiachin is treated kindly by the new king of Babylon, pointing toward a less harsh exile for God's people.

Psalms 13: My bandmates and I wrote [a rockin' version of this Psalm!](#) David wonders why God seems distant, but notice how he turns around in v5 and begins to praise. What a great way to pray.

Luke 13: Jesus' opening words in this chapter give us perspective on suffering - while such events are not punishment for sin, we can use them as a reminder to repent and turn from our sins anyway. Jesus' parable shows us that we receive second chances from God. Another Sabbath healing infuriates the Jews, and Jesus' words on the kingdom of God foreshadows the great growth the church experienced after its small start. Then more heavy words from Jesus about the narrow way to salvation. Let us examine ourselves humbly and be sure we won't hear the words 'away from me, all you evildoers!' (v27) one day. The chapter closes with Jesus weeping over the lost state of his people.

Week 55 Thursday

1 Chronicles 1: As we begin Chronicles, you might feel frustrated. Why are we going back and revisiting history we have already studied in the books of Samuel and Kings? The truth is, Chronicles has a different feel to the previous books - it looks more closely at the *spiritual* side of Israel's story, rather than simply the historical facts. Let us read these two long books with open hearts, and seek to apply the spiritual truths we learn here in our lives today.

The first chapter is a genealogy which starts with Adam. Ezra (the author) is proving that the Jewish kingdom is traced back to the very beginning.

Psalms 14: David can't imagine how somebody can deny God's existence! But many do. God, however, is in the company of the righteous (5) and brought salvation through Jesus.

Luke 14: Jesus heals on the Sabbath again! He then tells the parable of the banquet to teach us not to exalt ourselves, and to answer his invitation to new life. I preached on this passage in 2023, you can [hear the sermon here](#). Then Jesus gets really serious and tells us to count the cost of being a disciple, for it will not be easy. Lastly he reminds us to be salt - which gives flavour and preserves - in this world.

Week 55 Friday

1 Chronicles 2-3: A long list of names in the family of Judah. Don't miss the little historical snippets like 2:3 and 2:7 which give us little life lessons. Many of these names will be familiar to you from our recent time in 1 and 2 Kings.

Psalms 15: David is clear that only the blameless can enjoy God's presence. This is why we need our sins forgiven and our hearts cleansed by the blood of Jesus! Are our lives holy, in the way David describes here?

Luke 15: Jesus tells three parables of the lost being found to show the Pharisees that God loves the lost. These stories have given life and hope to many people over the centuries. Read them carefully today and consider: *do I need to go back home to the Father? Or, do I need to quit being an older brother type?*

God has blessed us greatly though His Word this week. May His grace give rest to our hearts this weekend, and may we be ready to receive more blessing from His Word next week.

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“Do not be afraid,
little flock, for your
Father has been
pleased to give you
the kingdom.”

Luke 12:32

”

Week 56

Hang in there through the genealogies of Chronicles, they are coming to an end soon! Some beautiful Psalms await us, as well as some more tough stuff from our Saviour himself. Read with an open heart and mind this week.

Week 56 Monday

1 Chronicles 4-5: Look out for the little gems in here - such as the prayer of Jabez in chapter 4, and the words about trusting God in battle in chapter 5.

Psalms 16: Beautiful words from David here! Verses 2, 8-9 are special. His view on death in the last verses was quite unusual for the time - he knew that with his faith in God, his body wouldn't decay but he would enjoy pleasures at God's side for eternity. What a hope we have.

Luke 16: Jesus' parable of the shrewd manager is *not* an encouragement to be dishonest! But Jesus is showing us that worldly people can be shrewd, and so God's people should also be even more wise and thoughtful with the gifts God has given us - be it money, time, or talents. We must not love money like the Pharisees, or like the rich man in the second parable which shows us that much wealth can distract us from the basic faith revealed in God's Word.

Week 56 Tuesday

1 Chronicles 6: Names, names and more names! But don't miss the little sections that talk of the different roles of the Levitical musicians and Aaronite priests. There is also an outline of the towns and settlements which the Levites were given.

Psalms 17: Can we proclaim our innocence along with David in v1-5? How wonderful the love our Father has for us, as seen in v7-8. And the last verse again shows David's mature view of death - he looked forward to seeing God's face and being found in God's likeness on the other side.

Luke 17: More sobering words from Jesus. We must be so careful not to lead others astray (v1-4). We must forgive and have faith, and gladly do our duty for God (v5-10). We must be thankful for the healing Jesus has provided us (v11-19), and we must be ready for the return of Christ, although we must not be fooled by false prophets (v20-37).

Week 56 Wednesday

1 Chronicles 7: More tribal genealogies. The writer makes sure that the lineage of Joshua, an important figure in Jewish history, is captured.

Psalms 18:1-24: Great words of praise from David - I particularly like the first 2 verses, which describe God's strength by giving him various titles. Do they resonate with you today? David goes on to explain how mighty God is, and how he himself has been blameless before God.

Luke 18: Jesus tells a parable to inspire us to persistent prayer. Another parable and Jesus' words about children inspire us to humility. His encounter with the rich young ruler always challenges us to evaluate our priorities. The chapter ends with another miraculous healing, and perhaps Jesus' question to the blind man is his question to us today: "What do you want me to do for you?" (v41)

Week 56 Thursday

1 Chronicles 8: The Chronicler records the family line of King Saul, an important figure in Jewish history.

Psalms 18:25-50: The second half of this Psalm is much like the first - David praising God for saving him from his enemies. It is He who brings light into our dark lives (v28), who helps us overcome (v29), who arms us with strength (v32) and sustains us (v35). Our response? To praise Him (v45, 49).

Luke 19: The Zacchaeus story teaches us much about transformation and salvation! Jesus' parable of the minas should cause us to consider: am I being faithful with what God has entrusted to me? We then read of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, which [we celebrate each year on Palm Sunday](#). Don't miss Jesus' powerful words in v42 - and don't miss Him who can bring you peace. Finally we see Jesus in the temple, driving out those who were ripping people off, and then teaching so powerfully that people would hang on his words.

Week 56 Friday 📖

1 Chronicles 9: Here we read of those who returned to Jerusalem after the exile. The genealogies come to an end with a repeat of Saul's family line - because this will lead us into Saul's story in chapter 10.

Psalms 19: A beautiful Psalm of David! First he remarks on how the skies proclaim God's glory without words (v1-6). Then he talks about the Word of God being his delight and his help (7-11). Lastly he does some self-reflection (12-15). Perhaps we can use this as a pattern for prayer today.

Luke 20: Lots from Jesus again! The Jewish leaders question his authority but he stumps them with a question of his own. He then offends them with a parable which is clearly meant to condemn them. When asked about paying tax, Jesus has a wise answer; when asked about marriage in the afterlife, Jesus shows them up again. A quote from the Psalms shows the Jews that Jesus is both the Son of David and Lord over David, and the chapter ends with Jesus warning of the showy Scribes.

We have taken in a lot of information this week. But - have we worshipped? That is the most important function of the Bible - to lead us to *exalt our God*. I pray that His truth has not just equipped us these past days, but inspired us to praise Him!

“

MAY THESE WORDS OF MY
MOUTH AND THIS MEDITATION
OF MY HEART
BE PLEASING IN YOUR SIGHT,
LORD, MY ROCK AND MY
REDEEMER.

PSALM 19:14

”

Week 57

We're back to earlier Jewish history in the book of Chronicles. We will get very familiar with these stories, having read most of them in Kings already. Some lovely Psalms will bless us this week, and Jesus' death and resurrection are, of course, central to our faith. May it be a blessed week in the Word!

Week 57 Monday

1 Chronicles 10-11: A brief recap of Saul's unfortunate ending reminds us to stay faithful. Then a list of David's great warriors inspires us!

Psalms 20: A lovely blessing prayer. Who might you pray v1-5 over today? Note the simple trust in God that the Psalmist has. May we too trust God completely.

Luke 21: Jesus sees our hearts as we give (v1-4)! Then there is a long section where Jesus talks about future events - including the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem which happened in the year 70A.D., the coming persecution of his followers, and his eventual return. While we wait, we are to "be careful" (v34) and "be always on the watch" (v36).

Week 57 Tuesday

1 Chronicles 12: More information on David's great warriors. Today, we are warriors in the army of Christ. Are we "fully determined to make Him king"? (v38)

Psalms 21: David's words in v1-7 celebrate the blessings he had received from God. Celebrate your blessings with him as you read!

Luke 22: Jesus shares in the Last Supper with his disciples, and then prays earnestly in the garden for another way to complete God's plan. But soon Judas betrays him and Peter denies him, and he is arrested.

Week 57 Wednesday

1 Chronicles 13-14: Instead of enquiring of God regarding the ark, David relied solely on the vote of the people, and Uzzah lost his life as a result. He also took many wives, which was forbidden in the law. But in other areas he *did* listen to God - winning him great victories over the Philistines.

Psalms 22:1-11: A cry of desperation from David which was found on the lips of Jesus on the cross. Look for the word 'trust' in these first 11 verses. You will see how David seeks to trust God even though he feels abandoned.

Luke 23: From Psalm 22 straight to the cross we go. Jesus is sentenced to death, killed, and buried - in spite of Pilate finding no charge against him. Yes, Jesus is the pure, spotless Lamb of God, slain in our place! Jesus' interaction with the thief reminds me of [this song](#). The love he shows on the cross reminds me of [this song](#). Think deeply about this chapter today, let it linger with you - that Jesus went this far, in love for us. *Hallelujah!*

Week 57 Thursday

1 Chronicles 15-16: David makes another attempt to bring the ark back where it belongs. This time he enquires of God and so makes a success of it. Lots of music and singing accompany the ark! David's passionate worship even offends Michal - just as today there are those who get offended by styles of worship they don't like.

Psalms 22:12-31: Spot the prophecies of Calvary here! David's words point us straight to the cross, where our Saviour was crucified.

Luke 24: But Jesus didn't stay on that cross! He rose again and appeared to the disciples. What a great and mighty God we serve. You're welcome to listen to [this sermon series "Christ Appears"](#), based on this chapter today.

With that, we are done with Luke's Gospel for a second time. What a wonderful journey with Jesus it has been.

Week 57 Friday

1 Chronicles 17: God confirms His covenant with David. David's words in v16 teach us humility. Do we respond to God's blessings in such a way?

Psalms 23: Familiar words to us all! I recently released a 21-day devotional book based on this Psalm - it's free to download. Find out more [here](#).

Acts 1: Let's begin the most exciting book in the Bible! Perhaps you'd like to listen to this sermon "[The Hero of Acts](#)" as we begin. It is essentially the acts of the Holy Spirit, as He guides and leads the early church and sees Jesus' small movement turn into something big. Chapter 1 revisits Jesus' ascension, and then the disciples choose someone to replace Judas.

Lots to take in, as always, as we read from 3 different sections of Scripture. May God's truth be etched in your heart this weekend!

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“Give praise to the
LORD, proclaim his
name; make known
among the nations what
he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise
to him; tell of all his
wonderful acts.
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those
who seek the LORD
rejoice.”
1 Chronicles 16:8–10

Week 58

We have seen Jesus live, die, rise and ascend, and we are ready for the story of the early church again in Acts. I pray that the familiar stories in Chronicles will have much to teach us, and that the Psalms continue to capture our emotions before God. Read with joyful prayer!

Week 58 Monday

1 Chronicles 18-19: Some of David's military victories are covered here. Joab's words in 18:13 to "be strong... and fight bravely" might inspire you today as you face your own battles.

Psalms 24: A lovely song of praise, reminding us that the earth is God's, that we are to be blameless in our walk with him, and that He is the "King of Glory". Perhaps we can call this title of God's to mind throughout our day.

Acts 2: A huge moment in history! The Holy Spirit comes in glory and baptizes the believers, and they are forever changed. My sermon "[Your Personal Pentecost](#)" might bring you some perspective on this. May we be anointed with His Spirit and live in His power today.

Week 58 Tuesday

1 Chronicles 20-21: David's team of warriors defeat many enemies. Do you have a team who fight your spiritual battles alongside you? Ch21 shows David's humility – he takes responsibility for his sin and asks God that the consequences affect him only. Oh for leaders who care for the people!

Psalms 25: A full Psalm of David with many powerful verses. David's words about God's love stick with me here.

Acts 3: Peter and John heal a man and then take the opportunity to preach the gospel to those in the area. Are we 'walking and leaping and praising God' today?

Week 58 Wednesday

1 Chronicles 22-23: David gives Solomon some wise advice and words of blessing. Do you need the reminder to "be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged"?

Psalms 26: David's words may sound arrogant at first, but he is claiming to not be guilty of those things he was accused of. Shall we pray verse 2 with David today? May God find that we too have "always been mindful of (his) unfailing love" (v3).

Acts 4: Arrested for preaching Jesus, Peter and John aren't put off. They carry on teaching through the Spirit's power, and they don't leave out the startling message in v12 that "salvation is found in no one else" but Jesus. Their boldness in sharing this good news is inspiring!

Week 58 Thursday

1 Chronicles 24: More lists of names! Today we see divisions of priests and Levites – important roles in Hebrew community.

Psalms 27: A beautiful Psalm reminding us that with God in our lives, we need not fear armies! May we trust in him like David does.

Acts 5: The startling story of Ananias and Sapphira cautions us. Dishonesty and greed are not pleasing to God. The apostles go on healing in Jesus' name, and as a result they are severely persecuted. But they rejoice that "they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name" (v41). What a powerful example of loving Jesus more than your own comfort.

Week 58 Friday

1 Chronicles 25-26: David delegates wisely – assigning various roles to God's people.

Psalms 28: David asks God to hear his cry, and worships God as his shield and strength. His heart leaps for joy – because of his deep trust in his God!

Acts 6: Again we read of God's people being assigned different tasks. Some were called to prayer and preaching, others to spend their time on social ministries. We need different people in the church doing different things!

David and the apostles are indeed great examples for us. Let us strive to live like them with the help of God's gracious Holy Spirit.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”

Acts 3:19

Week 59

A prayer-poem to kick off our reading this week:
*Lord Your Word is sweet like honey, and it fills my spirit so
Giving guidance, help and wisdom to me everywhere I go
And so as I read it now Lord, come and help me, please, to see
All the wonders and the glory shining from Your Word to me*

Week 59 Monday

1 Chronicles 27: Here we read of many leaders in David's kingdom. You may not be the king - but God has probably called you to a leadership role of some capacity. Lead well!

Psalms 29: A Psalm of praise, calling us to worship the God who is powerful! Note the ending - this great God is enthroned over the floods, and gives his people peace and strength.

Acts 7: Stephen's speech shows his knowledge of Jewish history. He calls out the Jewish leaders of the day for turning against God by turning against Jesus - and this results in his own death by stoning. Stephen is the first Christian martyr. Praise God for men and women who stand up for the name of Jesus even in the face of death.

Week 59 Tuesday

1 Chronicles 28: David inspires his people to keep focused on God. He then addresses his son Solomon and pleads with him to stay faithful to God. Perhaps we can hear v8-9 and v20 as addressed to *us* today.

Psalms 30: Verse 5 is a powerful one! David acknowledges God's merciful deliverance and healing in his life, and sings a song of joy in celebration. May his words be your words today.

Acts 8: This passage shows how anti-Christian Saul was in his early days. But the focus of the chapter is Phillip, who proclaims Christ and performs many miracles in His name. We see how he told an Ethiopian eunuch "the good news about Jesus" (v35) and then baptised him, before being miraculously escorted away. We also read here of Simon the Sorcerer, who was interested in the church movement for the wrong reasons. Let us keep a careful watch on our motives as we follow Jesus.

Week 59 Wednesday

1 Chronicles 29; 2 Chronicles 1: 1 Chronicles ends with Solomon on the throne David dying at "a good old age". Then 2 Chronicles begins with God's appearance to Solomon, who asks for wisdom and gets it.

Psalms 31: David is in a bad way here, yet still he writes: "But I trust in you, LORD; I say, "You are my God"" (v14). How deep was his faith!

Acts 9: The Christian-hating Saul is powerfully converted by a meeting with the risen Christ. He begins preaching and touching lives immediately. Then Peter performs miracles in Jesus' name. What a testimony these early Christians had!

Week 59 Thursday

2 Chronicles 2-3: Solomon begins work on the temple, and enlists the help of Hiram of Tyre. The temple is a beautiful spectacle!

Psalms 32: A powerful Psalm reminding us that confessing our sins and receiving God's love brings freedom and peace. Let us "rejoice in the LORD and be glad" (v11) today, because He has loved us so.

Acts 10: An important moment in church history. Peter's vision teaches him not so much about eating, but more about accepting Gentiles who were traditionally seen by the Jews as unclean. Let's also learn from Cornelius and his "devout and God-fearing" (v2) ways!

Week 59 Friday

2 Chronicles 4-5: The beautiful temple is completed, and as the people sing His praise, God's glory fills the temple! What a moment in Jewish history. But let us remember that today God does not dwell in a building, but in the hearts of His people through the Spirit. *We are now the temple.*

Psalms 33: A full Psalm! We learn to sing God’s praise (v1-3), to revere God’s Words (v4-9), to trust God’s plans (v10-11), relying on God’s salvation (v12-20), rejoice in God’s name (v21) and hope in God’s love (v22). **Acts 11:** Peter explains that his vision led him to include the Gentiles, and the church leaders are excited to see God offer salvation to others. Are we still holding onto our prejudices concerning people of other races and traditions? We then meet Barnabas, “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith” (v24). He and Paul begin their great work together. Note v29-30 - the people were glad to support the work of the spreading of the gospel.

How blessed we are, to spend time in God’s Word and receive his help in various ways as we do. Catch up this weekend if needs be, and be ready to go on through 2 Chronicles, Psalms and Acts next week.

“

“Be strong and
courageous, and do the
work. Do not be afraid or
discouraged, for the
LORD God, my God, is
with you.”

1 Chronicles 28:20

”

Week 60

Another week in God's Word = another week of God's blessing! Read with joy and hope each day this week.

Week 60 Monday

2 Chronicles 6: Twice in his address, Solomon mentions that God had fulfilled with his hands what he promised with his mouth. How faithful God is! Solomon then asks God to forgive his people when they seek him in the temple. Today, we don't need to be in the temple to seek God, because the Holy Spirit dwells within us.

Psalms 34: A full Psalm, with much to inspire us. I particularly like v8: "Taste and see that the LORD is good", as well as v18: "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit". What verse from this Psalm will you take with you into the day?

Acts 12: Peter is miraculously delivered by an angel - but notice that James (brother of John) wasn't miraculously delivered (v2). God's ways are not ours, and we can't know why some are delivered and others aren't. V5 always motivates me to pray more earnestly.

Week 60 Tuesday

2 Chronicles 7: The glory of the Lord fills the temple. What a moment! The people worship and sing, and celebrate with feasts, before returning home. God appears to Solomon after this to make him promises - and here we find the famous v14, which many nations have seen as the pathway to revival in their land.

Psalms 35: David is once again struggling with people who've turned against him. He prays for God to stop them, to deliver him from their evil, and promises to praise God through the difficulties (v18, 28). Are you in a battle? Cry out to God like David.

Acts 13: Barnabas and Saul are set apart during a time of prayer, worship and fasting. In Cyprus they pronounce judgement on a false prophet, bringing about faith in a local Roman leader. In Antioch they taught in the synagogue: read v38-39 carefully - Paul sums up the gospel beautifully here! The Jews received them well at first, but then became jealous at their success. Some Gentiles believed, but some didn't - either way, the disciples had great joy at what God was doing.

Week 60 Wednesday

2 Chronicles 8: Solomon was a successful ruler, accomplishing many impressive things in his reign as king. But V11 shows his split loyalties - he was already separating some things for God, and pursuing other things without God.

Psalms 36: David underlines the reality of sin (v1-4), and then describes the attributes of God (v5-6). His people take refuge in Him and feast at His house (v7-8) and find life, light and love there (v9-10), being assured of justice for the evil (11-12).

Acts 14: More people believe the good news through the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, causing them to be persecuted by those who were anti-Christianity. Then in Lystra a man is healed by Paul, and the people begin to treat him and Barnabas like gods. Unlike Herod a few chapters ago, these men of God immediately correct the people's mistake, and point them to the one true God - but still the people wouldn't listen, and soon the Jews got involved and had Paul stoned and left for dead. Paul survives and keeps on preaching, reminding each other that they would "go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God" (v22). Do you need this reminder today?

Week 60 Thursday

2 Chronicles 9-10: The queen of Sheba is blown away by Solomon's wisdom and prosperity. Unlike the writer of Kings, the writer of Chronicles leaves out Solomon's straying from God, choosing to keep his splendour on display. He dies after reigning 40 years, and how quickly things change - his sons clash and suddenly the nation of Israel is split.

Psalms 37:1-22: What a lovely Psalm! The first half has much to say to us: we are to trust in God (v3), take delight in Him (v4), commit to Him (v5), be still before him (v7), and keep from worrying about the ways of the evil people in our land (v1, 7-10).

Acts 15: An important moment in church history. With the Jewish Christians still looking to retain their Jewish identity, the church had to decide what would be required of the Gentiles who were now also included in God's salvation (v11). James speaks up and suggests a few guidelines for the Gentiles who had received God. Remember, these things are not a *condition* for salvation, but a necessary *fruit* for those who have found God's saving grace. The chapter ends with a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas - proving that even holy people of God will not always see eye to eye.

Week 60 Friday

***2 Chronicles 11-12*:** Rehoboam ruled wisely and strengthened Judah at first. But then he departed from God's ways, and he is remembered as one who "did evil because he had not set his heart on seeking the LORD" (12:14). Let us be people who [seek the Lord!](https://lukepowellministries.com/daily-devotions/category/Seeking+God) (<https://lukepowellministries.com/daily-devotions/category/Seeking+God>)

***Psalms 37:23-40*:** The words "turn from evil and do good" (v27) sum up the godly life. Let us remember to "hope in the Lord and keep his way" (v34) today.

***Acts 16*:** Here we meet Timothy, to whom Paul would later write some beautiful letters which we find in our Bibles. Paul and the team head to Macedonia after a vision of Paul's, and in Philippi a lady named Lydia is converted and invites the apostles into her home. Paul and Silas are later flogged and imprisoned, but a mighty miracle from God sets them free and results in the conversion of their jailer. How amazing, the way God works.

We are 60 weeks in! We have more Jewish history, songs of faith, and early church stories to read next week. Keep prayerful and may the truth you have been reading settle deeply into your soul this weekend.



If my people, who are called
by my name, will humble
themselves and pray and
seek my face and turn from
their wicked ways, then I
will hear from heaven, and I
will forgive their sin and
will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14



Week 61

Our journey through 2 Chronicles, Psalms and Acts continues this week. Seek God in His Scriptures here!
He has much to say to us, and I pray we will be open to receive what He is saying.

Week 61 Monday

2 Chronicles 13-14: Abijah and Asa were two wise and good kings. Abijah boldly declares that his people have not forsaken God (13:10). And Asa is immediately identified as one who “did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God” (14:2). Asa’s prayer in 14:11 is certainly worth taking to heart today.

Psalms 38: David is in great physical pain, and he connects this to his sinfulness. He confesses his sin and appeals to God to help him out of his difficult situation.

Acts 17: Paul and his group of missionaries encounter some resistance in Thessalonica. Some of the words in Paul’s letters to the Thessalonians make sense in light of this. They encountered similar resistance in Berea, and in Athens Paul preaches a powerful message and is met with a mixed response: some sneer, some hesitate, some believe!

Week 61 Tuesday

2 Chronicles 15-16: Under King Asa, Judah “sought God eagerly, and he was found by them” (15:15). But while his reign was mostly good, it was marred by a few godless incidents - namely his alliance with Ben-Hadad and his failure to trust God when ill.

Psalms 39: A pensive Psalm which considers the frailty of life. Twice David says that our lives are ‘but a breath’. Let’s live in this knowledge today.

Acts 18: Here we meet Priscilla and Aquila, Titius Justus, Crispus and other good people of God! Paul realises that he is called to preach to the Gentiles, and his work of “strengthening all the disciples” (v23) was no doubt needed. A man named Apollos takes over Paul’s work in Ephesus and does a great job.

Week 61 Wednesday

2 Chronicles 17-18: Jehoshaphat is one of the good kings of Judah, whose “heart was devoted to the ways of the Lord” (17:6). Then he makes an alliance with Ahab king of Israel, and Micaiah the prophet foretells of Ahab’s death in battle.

Psalms 40: Verse 2 reminds me of [this worship song](#). Verse 4 is one to remember! And verse 16 tells us to always declare God’s greatness. Such great words in this Psalm.

Acts 19: Paul finds believers who didn’t know about the Holy Spirit, and so he baptises them in Jesus’ name to correct this. Some Jewish men try evoking Jesus’ name to drive out evil spirits, but since they were not rooted in Christ, the evil spirit overpower them. Then a great riot takes place in Ephesus after the apostles’ work starts impacting a local cult.

Week 61 Thursday

2 Chronicles 19: Jehoshaphat’s wise words to his judges apply to us too. Let us “consider carefully what we do” (v6); “serve faithfully and wholeheartedly in the fear of the Lord” (9); and “act with courage” (v11) today.

Psalms 41: Another prayer of David in a time of illness. Notice the phrase “but you, O Lord” (v10) which marks a change in his perspective. Do you need to say that today, and focus on the good rather than the negative?

Acts 20: Another miracle from Paul comforts the people. Then he bids an emotional farewell to the Ephesians with whom he had lived for some time. His words give us a glimpse into the kind of passion Paul lived with.

Week 61 Friday

2 Chronicles 20: Facing an imminent threat, Jehoshaphat calls Judah to prayer and fasting. His words “We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you” (v12) make for a powerful prayer! Then Jahaziel shares a powerful prophecy: “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you” (v17). Perhaps those words might inspire you in your battles today.

Jehoshaphat's reign comes to an end with him making a bad alliance. Be careful who you partner with in life! I think you'll enjoy [these devotions based on Jehoshaphat's life](#).

Psalms 42: Book 2 in the Psalms kicks off here. This heartfelt Psalm is a favourite for those who are feeling downcast. Join me for [this time of singing and prayer](#) based on this Psalm today.

Acts 21: Paul is warned not to go to Jerusalem, but he insists that he is "ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (v13). What commitment he had! Paul then joins some Jewish men in a Nazirite vow, proving that he had not completely turned from his Jewish roots. But the Jews in Asia incite a riot against him even so, and he is arrested.

We have, again, learned much and grown much as we've spent time with God in His Word this week. May you have a blessed weekend with God's closeness felt deeply.

— “ —————

Why, my soul, are you
downcast? Why so
disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God, for
I will yet praise him, my
Savior and my God.

Psalm 42:5

————— ” —

Week 62

Week 62 Monday

2 Chronicles 21-22: Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat does much evil, and leads the people of Judah away from God. Eventually “he passed away to no one’s regret” (21:20). What a sad legacy. Then his son reigned in much the same way, at the instruction of Jehoram’s evil wife. But hang onto 21:7 - God still stayed faithful to his promise!

Psalms 43: This lovely short Psalm makes me think of [this song by Sandra McCracken](#). Verse 3 is a prayer for us today.

Acts 22: Paul recounts the story of his conversion and sending, but when he mentions being sent to share the good news with Gentiles, the crowd turns on him. Thankfully his Roman citizenship prevents him from a flogging, and he is released and summoned to address the Sanhedrin.

Week 62 Tuesday

2 Chronicles 23-24: With evil Athaliah in charge, the priest Jehoiada hatches a plan and proclaims Joash to be king. Athaliah is killed, and together Jehoiada and Joash smash the idols and altars of Baal and run the kingdom in a godly way. But when the priest dies, Joash falls into ungodliness. Our faithfulness should not depend on our priests/leaders.

Psalms 44: This Psalm opens by recounting how God had been faithful in the past - how important for us to know our history. But then the writer explains what a bad place the people are in; and not because of sin - showing that suffering is not always a result of sin. A plea for God’s help closes the Psalm.

Acts 23: Paul “looked straight at the Sanhedrin” (v1) with confidence - not in himself, but in God! He also humbly apologizes when he realizes he made a mistake (v5). That balance of strength and humility is typical of Paul. Notice God’s standing near to Paul and giving him words of encouragement in v11; He does the same for us often. A plot to kill Paul is foiled by Paul’s nephew, and then Paul is transferred to Caesarea to be tried by Felix.

Week 62 Wednesday

2 Chronicles 25: Joash’s son Amaziah becomes king of Judah, and follows God “but not wholeheartedly” (v2). I wonder how many of us can relate to that. Notice v8 - courage without obedience will get you nowhere. And notice Amaziah’s willingness to lose the money he invested in order to do what was wise and godly. Sadly, he falls from God’s ways after this, and causes much destruction in the land.

Psalms 45: The famous ‘bridegroom’ Psalm, which applied to the kings of Israel at the time of writing, but we can now see as a prophecy of Christ the Bridegroom and his bride the Church.

Acts 24: Paul is not ashamed to be a Christ-follower! He admits it freely (v14). This means that he strives to be holy (v16) - as every Christian should. Felix responds in fear to Paul’s teaching about “righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come” (v25), and puts off deciding Paul’s fate (as well as putting off making a decision for Christ). Sadly Felix leaves Paul in prison when his time in power comes to an end.

Week 62 Thursday

2 Chronicles 26: Much like his father, Uzziah started well but then lost his way. Initially, he “sought God” and was instructed “in the fear of God” (v5), but after a successful career “his pride led to his downfall” (v16). Raging at the priests who tried to correct him, he was afflicted with leprosy and was quarantined until he died.

Psalms 46: A powerful Psalm which declares great trust in God. V1 and v7 will get you through many tough times. V10 will bring you peace. Take this Psalm in and hold onto its words today.

Acts 25: Still the Jews can’t prove their accusations against Paul. But Festus wants to pacify the Jews, and so though Paul is clearly innocent, he is not released. Paul appeals to Caesar, but before sending him to Rome Festus allows Paul to state his case before King Agrippa.

Week 62 Friday 📖

2 Chronicles 27-28: Jotham was one of the good ones who “walked steadfastly before the LORD His God” (27:6), while Ahaz was one of the very worst ones who “became even more unfaithful to the LORD” (28:22) through various ungodly practices.

Psalms 47: A Psalm of praise, calling us to clap our hands, shout and sing praise to God because he “is awesome, the great King over all the earth” (v2). Keep this truth in your heart today.

Acts 26: Paul states his case before Agrippa, and we get to here of his Damascus meeting with Jesus for the third time. Sadly, Agrippa thinks he is a mindless fanatic - but Paul just prays that his testimony will bring others to Christ. All agree that Paul should not be imprisoned, but since he had appealed to Caesar, they begin preparing to transport him to Rome.

“

“Be still, and know
that I am God;
I will be exalted
among the nations,
I will be exalted in
the earth.”

Psalm 46:10

”

Week 63

This week we finish Acts and begin on some of Paul's writings. In the Old Testament we are still in 2 Chronicles and Psalms.

Week 63 Monday

2 Chronicles 29: In spite of his father's evil, King Hezekiah proves to be one of the great kings - cleansing the temple, reinstating worship, and caring for the people much like Jesus would do later. Perhaps you'd like to listen to [this devotion series on Hezekiah](http://tinyurl.com/59fnn73n) to accompany the reading this week (<http://tinyurl.com/59fnn73n>).

Psalms 48: A Psalm proclaiming God's greatness, and the power that was found in his city of Zion. Now we believe that God indwells his people, rather than specific cities or mountains. May v14 give us hope!

Acts 27: Paul is finally sent to Rome by ship. The wind blows the ship of course (v7), but despite Paul's warnings, the sailors keep going. Before long a hurricane force wind batters their ship, and the sailors give up all hope of survival. But Paul encourages them and shares of God's appearing to him in a dream and promising their safety. Do you need to hear the words "I urge you to keep up your courage" (v23), or "Do not be afraid" (v24) today? Do you need to say "I have faith in God" (v25) and trust today?

Week 63 Tuesday

2 Chronicles 30: Hezekiah reinstates the Passover, and invites the people to submit to God again for He is loving and compassionate. Notice his love for people – he asks God to cleanse those who are ceremonially unclean so that they can also participate (v18-20).

Psalms 49: A Psalm reminding us that wealth is temporary. We must not trust in our wealth, which cannot save us – only God can save, and so our faith must be in Him, not wealth.

Acts 28: Paul arrives in Malta, survives a snake bite and then heals the father of an official. Arriving in Roma at last, Paul is allowed to live in a private home under the watch of a guard. As is usual for him, he preaches the good news to whoever will listen, and "some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe" (v24). Paul stayed in Rome for two years and probably wrote some of his New Testament letters in this time. Acts comes to an end there, with Paul preaching "with all boldness and without hindrance" (v31), and most historians believe he was acquitted by Nero and went on to do more missionary work, before being arrested again and imprisoned and eventually killed.

What a read Acts has been! May we have the boldness and power that characterised the early Christians as we spread the good news of Jesus around our world.

Week 63 Wednesday

2 Chronicles 31: Having celebrated Passover, the Israelites are led to smash their idols. Worship has this effect on us! Hezekiah is lauded for seeking God and working with all his heart – the reason for his success.

Psalms 50: God's might and power are declared as this Psalm begins. Then we hear God's words to the people – he doesn't want their ritual animal offerings, he wants thanks offering from their heart!

Galatians 1: Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia is a powerful read, in which he attempts to save Christianity from the legalistic Jews who were forcing the law of Moses on Christians. Written around 50 A.D., the theology in this letter is foundational for all Christians of all time.

Chapter 1 begins with Paul's usual loving greeting and worshipful words. He then confronts the Galatians on their willingness to believe false teaching that contradicts the true original gospel of Jesus. To prove that he is genuine, Paul then recounts his conversion story. We must ask ourselves: are we falling for the false gospels of our day, or sticking to the truth?

Week 63 Thursday

2 Chronicles 32: With an attack from Sennacherib imminent, Hezekiah encourages his people (v6-8). What great words for us to hold onto! Despite Sennacherib's attempts to scare God's people, God prevails. Hezekiah momentarily becomes prideful, but repents and finds forgiveness. He died as one of the great kings.

Psalms 51: David's famous Psalm of confession. David knows his sin (v2-5) and cries out to God for mercy and for joy to be restored in his life. Read this carefully and pray it along with David today.

Galatians 2: Paul explains to the Galatians that the apostles accepted him, and that while Peter was called to preach to the Jews, he was called to preach to the Gentiles. Paul then explains his confronting Peter for expecting Gentiles to follow Jewish customs. V15-16 in a wonderful explanation of God's saving grace; v17-18 reminds us that grace does not mean we can sin all the more; and v19-21 reminds us that being born again means we can live with Christ in us and not follow our old sinful ways. What a great passage!

Week 63 Friday 📖

2 Chronicles 33: Manasseh is one of the very worst, but when he sincerely turns to God, there is grace for him. God can redeem anyone!

Psalms 52: David knows that those who are evil and get strong by hurting others will be swept away by God, but those who trust in God will flourish.

Galatians 3: Paul spends this chapter showing the Galatians that observing the Old Testament law can't make you right with God – only *faith* can. A wonderful end to the chapter shows us that for those who are clothed in Christ, there is no distinction in God's eyes but we are all equal.

What inspiring and delightful words we are filling our hearts and minds with! Praise God for His Word! Catch up this weekend if you need and let's finish 2 Chronicles and Galatians next week.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him, for there is a greater power with us than with him.”

2 Chronicles 32:7

Week 64

2 Chronicles comes to an end this week! We also finish Galatians and move onto Ephesians. How God will bless us as we read these passages with open hearts and minds.

Week 64 Monday

2 Chronicles 34: Josiah is another good king, tearing down the pagan religious symbols and leading Judah back to God. Notice how seriously he takes the Law when it is read to him. The Word of God has always had a convicting effect on those who receive it sincerely, and God sees and honours our repentant hearts (v27). Perhaps today is your day to renew your covenant with God like Josiah and the people did here.

Psalms 53: A slightly revised version of Psalm 14. It is foolish to deny God's existence – turning from God and his ways leads to corruption and evil.

Galatians 4: Paul says that the Old Testament law was like a guardian to us when we were not yet ready for freedom. But when Christ came, we were redeemed and set free! He then asks how we as Christians can return to our godless ways after being freed (v8-9). The confusing section about Hagar and Sarah is a metaphor – those born under the Old Covenant were under law, represented by Hagar, with whom Abraham had an illegitimate child; but those who have been saved are under the New Covenant in Christ, represented by Sarah, whose son was a miracle from God.

Week 64 Tuesday

2 Chronicles 35: Josiah leads a memorable Passover, and puts the ark back in the temple. Then we read the strange case of Josiah attacking Pharaoh Necho, who – though a pagan – was being used by God. Josiah dies in battle, and songs of lament are written about him.

Psalms 54: When we are accused or attacked, God is our help and He sustains us (v4). Let us praise His good name (v6) because of this!

Galatians 5: Paul repeats his thoughts on freedom – that going back to the rituals of the Law to try and get right with God is slavery and not freedom! But that in Christ, we have freedom – not freedom to indulge in sin, but freedom *from* sin (which we have crucified to the cross). Now we can live in step with the spirit, avoiding sin, and producing great fruit for God.

Week 64 Wednesday

2 Chronicles 36: Josiah's son Jehoahaz reigns only three months, before being carried to Egypt by Pharaoh. His brother took over for 11 years, but was captured by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. His son Jehoiachin has a short reign, before also being captured by Nebuchadnezzar, and the final king of Judah is Zedekiah – another evil man who hardened his heart and led the people into detestable ways. A terrible siege overwhelms Judah and the Babylonians (Chaldeans) destroy the temple and take the people away into exile. But the book ends with a note of hope – 70 years after the exile began, King Cyrus of Persia overthrows Babylon and permits the Jews to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. We will read about this rebuilding later in our journey.

With that ends our long walk through the pre-exile history of Israel and Judah. How sad that it had to come to this! But God's faithfulness had not changed. Even though their sin led them into captivity, God's Covenant would still stand firm through it all.

Psalms 55: David is not just being attacked by enemies – his close companion has also turned against him. Yet he believes in God's faithfulness! Verses 16 and 22 are precious for us today.

Galatians 6: Paul reminds the people in the church to be there for each other (1-6). He is clear that you reap what you sow – and we should take the words of v7-10 very seriously. He closes off with another reminder to not place value on circumcision or keeping of the old ceremonial laws, before saying his usual heartfelt goodbye. This has been a special read. How have you been blessed by Paul's letter to the Galatians?

Week 64 Thursday

Obadiah 1: During the time of the kings of Israel and Judah, many prophets were used by God to try and bring the people back to God's ways. One such prophet was Obadiah, whose book is the shortest of the Old

Testament. It may have been written shortly after Judah went into Exile, or much earlier during the time of Elisha, which would make it the earliest written prophetic work.

Obadiah's calls out the Edomites (descendants of Esau) who were enemies of God's people. He prophesies their destruction because of their anti-Israel stance – their indifference to Israel's suffering (v11) and their gloating when Israel was in trouble (v12). His prediction came true shortly after Christ ascended.

Psalms 56: Seized by the Philistines, David writes this great Psalm in which he finds hope in God despite his difficulty. He knows that God is for Him (9) and trusts through his fears (3-4).

Ephesians 1: One commentator says that this book "is the quintessential Pauline document". He wrote it while in prison in Rome, to be circulated to many early churches including those in Ephesus. Unlike Paul's other letters, this doesn't address specific issues, but describes the essence of Christianity in a powerful way. Chapter 1 has Paul's graceful greeting, and then launches straight into a passionate thanksgiving for "every spiritual blessing in Christ" (v3) which Christians enjoy, such as God's choosing us, predestining us, adopting, redeeming and forgiving us with lavish grace (v4-9). Paul thanks God for these things and then prays for the readers of his letter – hear his words in v16-20 as Paul praying over *you* today.

Week 64 Friday

***Joel 1-3*:** A long reading as we go through all three chapters of the prophet Joel. The message of Joel is clear: because of their unfaithfulness, the Lord would send punishment on his people in the form of swarms of locusts. But he would restore the years that the locusts ate away if they would 'rend their hearts' in true repentance. There is also a prophecy of Pentecost (2:28-32) which was fulfilled in Acts 2, and an intense prophecy in chapter 3 of God's punishment of the nations.

***Psalms 57*:** Fleeing from Saul, David "take refuge in the shadow of God's wings until the disaster has passed" (v1) – a wise thing to do in tough times. V7-11 show his worshipful heart even in this tricky situation.

***Ephesians 2*:** Paul's wonderful words in the first 10 verses are worth reading over and over, as he explains that God has saved us by His grace! The rest of the chapter sees Paul explain that the Gentiles are now included in this great salvation. Praise God as you read what he has done for us in these verses.

We have read a lot this week, but we have encountered God in each reading. How precious this journey has been!



"I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten... You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you."

Joel 2:25-26



Week 65

This week we read from the prophets Jonah and Amos, and finishing with Paul's letter to the Ephesians we dive back into the gospels to spend time remembering Jesus' earthly visit. There is much gold to find in these words, if we read carefully and prayerfully.

Week 65 Monday

Jonah 1-2: The classic story of Jonah running away from God and being swallowed by a whale is familiar to many of us! His disobedience didn't stop God from pursuing him. Notice Jonah's deep prayer from the belly of the great fish. Can we pray similar words when we are in a dark place?

Psalms 58: A powerful Psalm asking God to end the evil deeds of the wicked. Notice that when David asks God to break the teeth of the wicked, it is not to hurt them per se, but to cripple their ability to do evil.

Ephesians 3: Spot the word "mystery" in the first 12 verses – Paul claims that his message of unity in Christ was given to him by special revelation from God, which is why we can trust his words. He then prays a powerful prayer over the Ephesians, which I encourage you to receive for yourself today.

Week 65 Tuesday

Jonah 3-4: Jonah receives a second chance, and this time he obeys. Nineveh repents spectacularly, and this causes Jonah to get very angry – because these people were Israel's enemies! But God has concern even for the Gentiles, and He uses a picture lesson of a tree/vine to prove this to Jonah.

This little book teaches us that God cares for Jews and Gentiles alike, and offers salvation to all.

Psalms 59: David is surrounded by enemies again, but he calls on God to be his fortress (spot how many times he uses that word!) and his strength.

Ephesians 4: A great practical chapter about living a worthy Christian life. We are to build the church up by using our gifts to equip people in faith; and we are to 'put off' our old sinful selves and 'put on' the ways of holiness and righteousness. Of course, it is only the Spirit that enables us to do this.

Week 65 Wednesday

Amos 1-2: The prophet Amos lived during the reign of Israel's king Jeroboam II, in the 700s BC. His book begins with an announcement of God's judgement on the nations surrounding Israel – but then we learn that Judah and Israel (the southern and northern kingdoms of the Jews) do not get away unscathed, but that God has punishment for them too because of their abuse of power and godless ways. Amos's phrase "for three sins... even for four" is not to be taken as a literal number, but as a figure of fullness – a picture of their sin overflowing.

Psalms 60: David cries out to God when the very earth seems to be shaking underneath him (v2). By the end of the Psalm he has been given assurance that God will deliver and save his people. Pray v5 along with him today, as you look at your situation.

Ephesians 5: Another very practical passage from Paul, imploring us to "follow God's example" (v1) and "live as children of light" (v8). Take careful note of the things that Christians are to avoid, and the things that we ought to do instead. From v21 Paul begins to talk about Christian households, and we see how the marriage relationship is one of mutual love and respect "out of reverence for Christ" (v21).

Week 65 Thursday

Amos 3-4: Amos defends his harsh words by proclaiming that he couldn't disobey God's call on his life (3:7-8). He then foresees the Assyrian invasion of Israel, which happened as a punishment for Israel's disobedience. In chapter 4 Amos speaks out against those who seem religious but hurt others and go on sinning – and God laments that no matter he did to them, they refused to return to him. Oh, let us not make the mistakes the Israelites did!

Psalms 61: David realises that he needs a rock that is higher (v2) and more powerful than himself. He has faith in the God who is full of love and faithfulness!

Ephesians 6: Paul addresses the *slaves and masters*, and his words seem to apply to the *employees and bosses* of today. Then we read Paul's famous words about spiritual warfare. Let us remember the fight we

are in, and stand firm in prayer and with our armour on! Ephesians comes to an end with Paul's lovely greeting. How has God spoken to you in this letter?

Week 65 Friday 

Amos 5-6: Amos calls the people of Israel to repentance, and we hear God's voice saying "seek me and live" a few times (5:4, 6, 13). In a startling passage, God rejects the Israelites' worship festivals because of their sin (5:22-24). Does God feel the same way about our church services? Perhaps if we feel complacent in our faith (6:1) this can be a warning to us today.

Psalms 62: David realised that only in God does his soul truly find rest. Let's ask ourselves: are we resting in Him?

Matthew 1: We're back into the gospels! Matthew begins his account of the life of Jesus with a genealogy that traces Jesus back through the southern kingdom to Abraham. We then see Joseph grappling with Mary's unexpected pregnancy, until a visit by an angel convinced him that she conceived through the Holy Spirit, and that the son she would bear would be the Saviour.

With that, we are finished another quarter of our reading plan. Praise God for His sacred Word! Let's go onto the next 13 weeks with open hearts, expecting to meet Him each time we open our Bibles.

“
Follow God's example,
therefore, as dearly
loved children and walk
in the way of love, just
as Christ loved us and
gave himself up for us
as a fragrant offering
and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

”

Afterword

You are now five-eighths of the way through this plan! Perhaps like me you have found that the longer you have read the Bible in this way, the more you have enjoyed it. I pray that the next thirteen weeks will be a time of deep, worshipful connection with God for you as you meet Him in His Word.

You can find the PDF for the next 13 weeks [on my website here](#).

Did you find these notes helpful? Please consider [donating towards my online ministry here](#).

I'm looking forward to continuing the journey with you.