

The Gospel Storyline Bible Reading Plan

Why another Bible reading plan? I can justify it with at least five reasons.

1. Most people have a hard time reading the Bible in one year.
2. Most plans have four readings from separate books a day, which makes it difficult to see how a single book develops an argument.
3. Most plans do not consider the Old Testament's canonical ordering.
4. Most people that do read the Bible have a hard time getting a grasp on the important contribution each book makes to the larger canon of Scripture.
5. Most plans place artificial chapter breaks even though it breaks in the middle of the author's argument.

In the hope of meeting the above goals, this plan is a two-year plan, there are also 25 readings a month, which gives flexibility. Each book of the Bible is given a 3-paragraph summary of the Bible's developing storyline and an outline of the book. The outline will serve as the guide to make sure you are not stopping your reading in the middle of a major section. There is also priority given to reading through a book of the Bible as a whole rather than four chapters from four different books. The Old Testament canonical ordering is also more appropriate to "build the storyline" the Old Testament authors intended.

Because certain books of the Bible are "less interesting," there is a Psalm a day to help keep your reading rich. For longer main readings, the Psalm reading is forfeited. In the end, you will read through the Psalms four times.

To comment briefly on the ordering of the books, the Old Testament is divided into three major sections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Prophets and the Writings are often broken up into two sections. It seems that the New Testament follows a similar pattern. See chart¹ below:

	Origins of the Covenant	Enforcement of the Covenant		Hope of the Covenant	
OT	The Law	Former Prophets	Latter Prophets	Former Writings	Latter Writings
NT	The Gospels	Acts	Pauline Epistles and Hebrews	General Epistles	Revelation
	Narrative	Narrative	Commentary	Commentary	Narrative

¹ This chart comes from Jason DeRouchie, *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament*, p. 357.

Here² are the books of the Bible that correspond to what is listed above:

Law	Former Prophets	Latter Prophets	Former Writings	Latter Writings
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings	Jeremiah Ezekiel Isaiah The Twelve (Hos.-Mal.)	Ruth Psalms Job Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs Lamentations	Daniel Esther Ezra-Nehemiah 1-2 Chronicles
Narrative	Narrative	Commentary	Commentary	Narrative

Gospels	Acts	Pauline Epistles and Hebrews	General Epistles	Revelation
Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts	Romans 1-2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1-2 Thessalonians 1-2 Timothy Titus Philemon Hebrews	James 1-2 Peter 1-3 John Jude	Revelation
Narrative	Narrative	Commentary	Commentary	Narrative

The reason I share this is to show the logic behind the Bible reading plan. We will begin with the Law (Genesis-Deuteronomy) then jump to the Gospels (Matthew-John) and continue going back and forth through the rest of the Bible. This helps alternate between the two testaments throughout the year, but it also does so at a logical break in the canonical ordering of the books.

Lastly, I hope this plan serves our church well and gets everyone reading their Bibles.

Christian Cunningham

² These charts are loosely based on Jason DeRouchie's on p. 25 of *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament*.

Genesis

Introduction:

Genesis begins the story of the Bible. It begins with a story of God building His cosmic temple with the centerpiece in the Garden of Eden. As we look at the temple and tabernacle in Exodus and 1 Kings, we see important connections between it and the Garden of Eden. Moses intended that we see these connections and draw this conclusion: God created the world as His Garden-temple palace to live, dwell, and rest with His Creation. In Ancient Near Eastern temples, the other nations would put an image of their god in the center, and God did the same with His temple: the image of God was in the middle.

Adam was to be a king-priest that commanded to “have dominion over” and “work and keep” the Garden. These words and phrases are tied to kings and priests later in the Biblical story. Adam failed to have dominion over and work and keep God’s Garden-Temple, and he allowed the serpent to tempt his wife while also succumbing to it himself.

After this story, the rest of Genesis (and the whole Bible) is a question: how will God’s people re-enter the Garden of Eden? The plan of God lies in the seed of the woman who will crush the head of the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). Moses focuses on the family of Abraham as the one through whom the promised seed will come. Abraham’s three promises in Genesis 12:1-3 correspond to the three curses that Adam and Eve faced. In other words, the Abrahamic Covenant will function as God’s plan to reverse the curse. Genesis unpacks this reversal and shows us a pattern of what the Messiah and redeemer would look like one day: Joseph.

Outline:

Here is the outline of Genesis³:

- I. Introduction: Creation (1:1-2:3)
- II. The Generations of Heaven and Earth (2:4-4:26)
- III. The Generations of Adam (5:1-6:8)
- IV. The Generations of Noah (6:9-9:29)
 - A. The Generations of Noah’s Descendants (10:1-11:9)
- V. The Generations of Shem (11:10-26)
 - A. The Generations of Terah (11:27-25:11)
 - B. The Generations of Ishmael (25:12-18)
 - C. The Generations of Isaac (25:19-35:29)
 - D. The Generations of Esau (36:1-8, 36:9-37:1)
- VI. The Generations of Jacob (37:2-50:26)

Jim Hamilton in his book *Typology*⁴ convincingly lays out a beautiful chiasmic structure of Genesis as well. Toledot is Hebrew for “these are the generations of...”

³ This literary analysis comes from DeRouchie, *How to Understand & Apply the Old Testament*, p. 108

⁴ James Hamilton, *Typology*, p. 338-339

Creation (1:1-2:3)

- Toledot of Heaven and Earth (2:4-4:26)

- Toledot of Adam (5:1-6:8)

- Toledot of Noah (6:9-9:29)

- Toledot of the Sons of Noah (10:1-11:9)

- Toledot of Shem (11:10-26)

- Genealogy of Terah (11:27-32)

- Blessing of Abraham (12:1-9)

- Sister Fib (12:10-20)

- Lot (13-14)

- Eliezer, Faith Covenant (15)

- Hagar, Ishmael (16)

- Circumcision, Covenant (17)

- Lot (18-19)

- Sister Fib (20:1-18)

- Birth and Offering of Isaac (21:1-22:19)

- Genealogy of Nahor (22:20-24)

- Sarah's Death (23)

- A Wife for Isaac (24)

- Abraham's Death (25:1-11)

- Ishamel and Isaac Toledots (25:12-19)

- Rebekah's Children (25:20-26:5)

- Isaac Deceives Philistines (26:6-35)

- Stolen Blessings and Flight to Paddan-aram (27:1-28:9)

- Jacob's Dream at Bethel (28:10-22)

- Laban Deceives Jacob (29:1-30)

- Jacob's Seed Born (29:31-30:24)

- Jacob's Flocks Born (30:25-43)

- Jacob Deceives Laban (31)

- Jacob Sees Angels and Wrestles with God (32)

- Jacob Blesses Esau and Returns from Paddan-aram (33)

- Sons of Jacob Deceive and Have Strive with Shechem (34)

- God's Promise to Jacob, Rachel Dies (35)

- Esau Toledot (36)

- Joseph Dreams (37:1-11)

- Jacob Mourns "Death" of Joseph (37:12-36)

- Judah and Tamar (38)

- Joseph Sold to Egypt (39)

- Joseph, Savior of Egypt (40-41)

- Journeys of Brothers to Egypt (42-43)

- Joseph Tests His Brothers (44)

- Joseph Reveals Himself (45)

- Journey of Family to Egypt (46:1-27)

- Joseph, Savior of His Family (46:28-47:12)

- Egypt Sells Itself to Joseph (47:13-31)

- Blessing of Joseph and Judah (48:1-49:27)

- Joseph Mourns Death of Jacob (49:28-50:14)

- Joseph Provides (50:15-26)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
January – 1	Genesis 1-2	Psalm 1
January – 2	Genesis 3-4	Psalm 2
January – 3	Genesis 5:1-6:8	Psalm 3
January – 4	Genesis 6:9-7:24	Psalm 4
January – 5	Genesis 8-9	Psalm 5
January – 6	Genesis 10:1-11:26	Psalm 6
January – 7	Genesis 11:27-12:20	Psalm 7
January – 8	Genesis 13-14	Psalm 8
January – 9	Genesis 15-17	Psalm 9
January – 10	Genesis 18-19	Psalm 10
January – 11	Genesis 20-21	Psalm 11
January – 12	Genesis 22-23	Psalm 12
January – 13	Genesis 24	Psalm 13
January – 14	Genesis 25-26	Psalm 14
January – 15	Genesis 27:1-28:9	Psalm 15
January – 16	Genesis 28:10-29:30	Psalm 16
January – 17	Genesis 29:31-30:43	Psalm 17
January – 18	Genesis 31	Psalm 18
January – 19	Genesis 32-33	Psalm 19
January – 20	Genesis 34-35	Psalm 20
January – 21	Genesis 36-37	
January – 22	Genesis 38-39	Psalm 21
January – 23	Genesis 40:1-41:36	Psalm 22
January – 24	Genesis 41:37-42:38	Psalm 23
January – 25	Genesis 43-44	Psalm 24
February – 1	Genesis 45:1-46:27	Psalm 25
February – 2	Genesis 46:28-48:22	Psalm 26
February – 3	Genesis 49-50	Psalm 27

Exodus

Introduction:

Exodus continues our story by pointing back and pointing forward. Exodus 1:7 begins by saying, “But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.” This statement seems to tie Israel to the Adamic commission to be “fruitful and multiply.” They are fulfilling God’s commands to Adam and receiving the blessing of Abraham as a great nation.

However, there is a problem. The promises of God for a great nation are fulfilled, but the promise of land is not. This is the focus of Exodus. God’s ultimate goal is to make His name great among the nations through what He will do to save Israel and bring them to the Promised Land. That is why Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, and that is why the plagues culminate in the death of the firstborn. Because Pharaoh took Yahweh’s firstborn, Yahweh will take Egypt’s firstborn.

The book of Exodus progresses into a covenant relationship that God initiates with Moses as He begins to command Israel with His holy law. Just as God saved Israel out of slavery to Egypt, then He commands them. God saved us out of slavery to sin, then He commands us. The giving of the commands culminates in building a tabernacle where God will dwell: a portable Garden of Eden.

Outline:

- I. Bondage in Egypt (1:1-12:32)
 - A. Slavery in Egypt (1-2)
 - B. Moses in Midian (3-4)
 - C. Encounter with Pharaoh (5:1-7:13)
 - D. The Nine Plagues + One Threatened (7:14-11:10)
 - E. The Passover – The Tenth Plague (12-13)
- II. The Trip to Sinai (14-18)
 - A. The Crossing of the Red Sea (14)
 - B. The Song of Moses (15)
 - C. Manna from Heaven (16)
 - D. Water from the Rock (17:1-7)
 - E. Israel Defeats Amalek (17:8-15)
 - F. Jethro’s Advice (18)
- III. Israel at Sinai (19-40)
 - A. The Book of the Law (19-24)
 - B. Instructions of the Tabernacle (25-31)
 - C. The Golden Calf and God’s Self-Revelation (32-34)
 - D. Building of the Tabernacle (35-40)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
February – 4	Exodus 1-2	Psalm 28
February – 5	Exodus 3-4	Psalm 29
February – 6	Exodus 5:1-7:13	Psalm 30
February – 7	Exodus 7:14-8:32	Psalm 31
February – 8	Exodus 9-11	
February – 9	Exodus 12-13	Psalm 32
February – 10	Exodus 14-15	Psalm 33
February – 11	Exodus 16	Psalm 34
February – 12	Exodus 17-18	Psalm 35
February – 13	Exodus 19-20	Psalm 36
February – 14	Exodus 21:1-22:15	Psalm 37
February – 15	Exodus 22:16-23:19	Psalm 38
February – 16	Exodus 23:20-24:18	Psalm 39
February – 17	Exodus 25	Psalm 40
February – 18	Exodus 26-27	
February – 19	Exodus 28	Psalm 41
February – 20	Exodus 29	Psalm 42
February – 21	Exodus 30-31	Psalm 43
February – 22	Exodus 32:1-33:11	Psalm 44
February – 23	Exodus 33:12-34:35	Psalm 45
February – 24	Exodus 35-36	
February – 25	Exodus 37-38	Psalm 46
March – 1	Exodus 39-40	Psalm 47

Leviticus

Introduction:

Leviticus is the theological heart of the first five books of Moses (the Law or Torah), and it functions to answer a fundamental question: how can a holy God dwell in the midst of a sinful people? This fundamental question has bearing on how we interpret the whole of the Torah. Remember, the goal is to return to the Garden of Eden, and the tabernacle of Exodus is stylized as a Garden of Eden temple. How can this people dwell with Him?

Furthermore, Michael Morales in his work on Leviticus⁵ convincingly shows that Leviticus is the heart of the Torah, Leviticus 16 is the heart of Leviticus, and Leviticus 16:16-20 is the heart of Leviticus 16, which would make the center of the whole Torah atonement.

Genesis – Garden of Eden, Land/Seed/Blessing

Exodus – Israel’s Desert Journey/Apostasy and Plagues

Leviticus – Sacrifices/Cleansing/Holiness

Numbers – Israel’s Desert Journey/Apostasy and Plagues

Deuteronomy – Return to Garden of Eden through Promised Land

FRAME: And Yahweh said to Moses (16:1)

Aaron should not go into the holy of holies any time he wishes (16:2)

Aaron’s sacrificial animals, special vestment (16:3-4)

Sacrifices provided for people (16:5)

Aaron’s bull and two goats chosen (16:6-10)

Aaron sacrifices bull (16:11-14)

Goat sacrificed (16:15)

Atonement (16:16-20)

Goat sent into wilderness (16:20-22)

Aaron’s closing activities (16:23-25)

Aaron’s bull and two goats (16:26-28)

People rest and humble themselves (16:29-31)

Anointed priest officiates wearing special garments (16:32-33)

Anointed priest makes atonement once a year (16:34)

FRAME: As Yahweh commanded Moses (16:34)

These chiastic structures reveal this theological point: Israel’s only hope to return to the Garden of Eden and dwell in God’s present is by representative atonement. Israel must see and have faith that God is going to continue dwelling with them if they continue to follow these measures to cleanse them of their sin. These acts are an act of faith that God actually dwells in the temple and that atonement is actually necessary.

⁵ The chiastic structure of the Torah comes from A.C. Leder qtd. in L. Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Hill of the Lord*, p. 25. The chiastic structure of Leviticus 16 comes from Morales, p. 33

Outline:

Leviticus is largely accepted as a chiasmic structure⁶:

Offerings and Sacrifices (1-7)

 Priests (8-10)

 Purity Laws (11-15)

 Day of Atonement (16)

 Moral Laws (17-20)

 Priest (21-22)

Feasts and Sacrifices (23-27)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
March – 2	Leviticus 1-3	Psalm 48
March – 3	Leviticus 4:1-6:7	Psalm 49
March – 4	Leviticus 6:8-7:38	Psalm 50
March – 5	Leviticus 8	Psalm 51
March – 6	Leviticus 9-10	Psalm 52
March – 7	Leviticus 11-12	Psalm 53
March – 8	Leviticus 13	Psalm 54
March – 9	Leviticus 14	Psalm 55
March – 10	Leviticus 15	Psalm 56
March – 11	Leviticus 16	Psalm 57
March – 12	Leviticus 17-18	Psalm 58
March – 13	Leviticus 19-20	Psalm 59
March – 14	Leviticus 21-22	Psalm 60
March – 15	Leviticus 23-24	Psalm 61
March – 16	Leviticus 25	Psalm 62
March – 17	Leviticus 26	Psalm 63
March – 18	Leviticus 27	Psalm 64

⁶ Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Hill of the Lord*, p. 29

Numbers

Introduction:

In Exodus, Israel sat down at Mt. Sinai to receive God's law. In Number 10:10, God is on the move to fulfill His promises to Abraham: his offspring will inherit the land. However, Israel's heart is still in Egypt, not in the Promised Land.

Numbers begins with optimism as a census is taken to record the able troops to conquer the Promised Land, but Israel's complaint warrants God's judgment. However, Balaam reiterates God's promises to Abraham to the people of Israel reminding them of God's faithfulness to His promises, but that does not turn the heart of the people. Ultimately, they end up in idolatry. By the end of the book, the old generation passed, and the new generation is ready to take up the mantle and enter the Promised Land.

One last important literary feature of the book is the alternating nature of law and narrative. Moses intentionally places law after a specific narrative episode to remind his readers where the narrative falls short of God's law in Exodus and Leviticus. For example, we see this pattern in Numbers 16-18. It begins with Korah's rebellion, who argued that all people should be able to enter God's presence, not the priests. Aaron's staff budding affirms the priesthood of God. After that, we are reminded of the laws of the priesthood.

Outline:

- I. Israel at Sinai (1:1-10:10)
 - A. Preparations for Entering the Promised Land (1-4)
 - B. Important Laws Reiterated (5:1-10:10)
- II. The First Generation Fails to Enter (10:11-25:18)
 - A. The Glory Cloud Leaves Sinai (10:11-36)
 - B. Israel's First Complaint (11)
 - C. Moses Is Opposed – Miriam and Aaron (12)
 - D. Report of the Spies (13)
 - E. Israel's Second Complaint (14)
 - F. Laws Concerning Israel's Failure (15)
 - G. Moses Is Opposed – Korah (16)
 - H. Aaron's Staff Buds (17)
 - I. Laws Concerning Israel's Priests (18-19)
 - J. Death and Failure (20)
 - K. Israel's Third Complaint (21)
 - L. Balaam's Oracles of Hope (22-24)
 - M. Israel's Final Assessment: Idol Worshipers (25)
- III. The Second Generation Prepares to Enter (26-36)
 - A. The Second Set of Preparations (26-27)
 - B. Important Laws Reiterated (28-30)
 - C. Vengeance on Midian (31)
 - D. Initial Settlement in the Promised Land (32-36)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
March – 19	Numbers 1	Psalm 65
March – 20	Numbers 2	Psalm 66
March – 21	Numbers 3	Psalm 67
March – 22	Numbers 4	Psalm 68
March – 23	Numbers 5-6	Psalm 69
March – 24	Numbers 7:1-41	Psalm 70
March – 25	Numbers 7:42-89	Psalm 71
April – 1	Numbers 8:1-10:10	
April – 2	Numbers 10:11-11:35	Psalm 72
April – 3	Numbers 12-13	Psalm 73
April – 4	Numbers 14	Psalm 74
April – 5	Numbers 15	Psalm 75
April – 6	Numbers 16-17	Psalm 76
April – 7	Numbers 18-19	Psalm 77
April – 8	Numbers 20:1-21:20	Psalm 78:1-39
April – 9	Numbers 21:21-22:41	Psalm 78:40-72
April – 10	Numbers 23-24	Psalm 79
April – 11	Numbers 25:1-26:51	
April – 12	Numbers 26:52-27:23	Psalm 80
April – 13	Numbers 28:1-29:11	Psalm 81
April – 14	Numbers 29:12-30:16	Psalm 82
April – 15	Numbers 31	Psalm 83
April – 16	Numbers 32	Psalm 84
April – 17	Numbers 33	Psalm 85
April – 18	Numbers 34-36	

Deuteronomy

Introduction:

Deuteronomy is a beautiful book. In it, Moses gives four sermons designed to motivate Israel to keep the covenant and to remind Israel of the covenant. He reminds the people of what God has done for them and gives them specific ways to follow God with all their heart.

At this point, Israel is ready to enter the Promised Land, and Moses prepares them by reminding them that they need to keep God's covenant. God will bring the people to the land of Canaan as promised, but they must always be careful to read the book of the Law all the days of their life.

Deuteronomy 28 is one of the most important chapters in the Old Testament because it clearly lays out the blessings and cursing tied to Israel's covenant faithfulness. This shows that their ultimate destination would be exile if they continue in idolatry. At the end of the book, Moses records the transition from him to Joshua. It is in Joshua that we see the promises of God fulfilled: Israel inherits the land.

Outline:

There is also a literary refrain that presents Moses as preaching four sermons. The refrain occurs in Deuteronomy 1:1; 4:44; 29:1; and 33:1 to mark out the beginning of a new sermon. Here⁷ is the outline.

- I. Moses' First Sermon (1:1-4:43)
 - A. Preamble (1:1-5)
 - B. Historical Prologue (1:6-4:43)
- II. Moses' Second Sermon (4:44-28:68)
 - A. General Covenant Stipulation (4:44-11:32)
 - B. Specific Covenant Stipulation (12:1-26:19)
 - C. Document Clause (27:1-10)
 - D. Appeal to Witness (27:11-26)
 - E. Blessings and Curses (28:1-68)
- III. Moses' Third Sermon (29:1-32:52)
 - A. Solemn Oath Ceremony (29:1-30:20)
 - B. Appointment of Joshua as Moses's Successor (31:1-29)
 - C. Song of Moses (31:30-32:52)
- IV. Moses' Fourth Sermon (33:1-34:12)
 - A. Moses' Final Blessings (33:1-29)
 - B. The Death of Moses (34:1-12)

⁷ This outline is indebted to the work of Peter Gentry in *Kingdom through Covenant*. He does not show the outline in one place, but it is scattered throughout pgs. 397-442.

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
April – 19	Deuteronomy 1	Psalm 86
April – 20	Deuteronomy 2-3	Psalm 87
April – 21	Deuteronomy 4:1-43	Psalm 88
April – 22	Deuteronomy 4:44-5:33	Psalm 89:1-37
April – 23	Deuteronomy 6-7	Psalm 89:38-52
April – 24	Deuteronomy 8-9	Psalm 90
April – 25	Deuteronomy 10-11	Psalm 91
May – 1	Deuteronomy 12-13	Psalm 92
May – 2	Deuteronomy 14-15	Psalm 93
May – 3	Deuteronomy 16-17	Psalm 94
May – 4	Deuteronomy 18-19	Psalm 95
May – 5	Deuteronomy 20-21	Psalm 96
May – 6	Deuteronomy 22-23	Psalm 97
May – 7	Deuteronomy 24-25	Psalm 98
May – 8	Deuteronomy 26-27	Psalm 99
May – 9	Deuteronomy 28	
May – 10	Deuteronomy 29-30	Psalm 100
May – 11	Deuteronomy 31	Psalm 101
May – 12	Deuteronomy 32	Psalm 102
May – 13	Deuteronomy 33-34	Psalm 103

Matthew

Introduction:

The book of Matthew opens the New Testament with an explosion of promises fulfilled. If you read the introduction to Ezra-Nehemiah and 1-2 Chronicles, you will see that the Old Testament's expectation of the return from exile and the reality are mismatched. Matthew masterfully picks up on this theme and shows that Christ is the Davidic King that brings His people out of exile into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Old Testament Former Prophets chart Israel's descent from entering into the Promised Land to its exile into Babylon. The Old Testament Latter Prophets answer two questions. First, "why is Israel in exile?" Second, "is there hope for return?" The answer to the first question is the breaking of the Mosaic Covenant. The answer to the second question is the hope of the Davidic Covenant. The Latter Prophets anticipate the Davidic Messiah establishing His throne over the whole world as Israel returns from exile. However, that does not happen.

Jesus comes and fulfills both by reliving the history of Israel (wilderness for 40 days, going to Egypt) without breaking covenant and is the Davidic Messiah who has come to save His people from exile. His teachings are validated by miracles, which reveal an inbreaking of the New Creation into the present age.

Outline:

The outline of Matthew is somewhat difficult to discern. However, Davie Bauer⁸ in his analysis of Matthew notices a literary refrain (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 9:1; 26:1) at the end of five major "discourse" or "teaching" units of Jesus. After each discourse unit, there is a response to the teaching by others or a validation of the teaching by the disciples.

- I. The Incarnation and Preparation of the King (1-4)
 - A. Genealogy (1:1-17)
 - B. Birth Narratives (1:18-2:23)
 - C. Preparation of the King (3-4)
- II. Discourse One: The Sermon on the Mount (5-7)
 - A. Introduction (5:1-16)
 - B. Law (5:17-48)
 - C. Hypocrites vs. Righteousness (6:1-7:11)
 - D. Two Paths (7:12-27)
 - E. Conclusion (7:28-29)
- III. Validation by Miracles (8-9)
- IV. Discourse Two: Sending and Teaching the Disciples (10)
- V. Opposition to Jesus (11-12)
 - A. Jesus, John the Baptist, and Ministry in Galilee (11:1-30)

⁸ David R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* qtd. in James R. Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 362-363

- B. Confrontations with the Pharisees (12:1-45)
- C. Jesus' Disciples are the Family of God (12:46-50)
- VI. Discourse Three: Parables (13)
- VII. Jesus on Mission (14-17)
- VIII. Discourse Four: Jesus Teaches Disciples (18)
- IX. Jesus Enter Jerusalem (19-23)
 - A. Valuing the Kingdom Community (19-20)
 - B. Jesus' Triumphal Entry (21:1-11)
 - C. Various Teachings (21:12-22:46)
 - D. The Seven Woes (23)
- X. Discourse Five: The End Times (24-25)
- XI. Crucifixion, Death, Burial, and Resurrection (26-28)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 14	Matthew 1-2	Psalm 104:1-23
May – 15	Matthew 3-4	Psalm 104:24-35
May – 16	Matthew 5	Psalm 105:1-25
May – 17	Matthew 6-7	Psalm 105:26-45
May – 18	Matthew 8-9	
May – 19	Matthew 10	Psalm 106:1-23
May – 20	Matthew 11	Psalm 106:24-48
May – 21	Matthew 12	Psalm 107:1-22
May – 22	Matthew 13	Psalm 107:23-43
May – 23	Matthew 14:1-15:20	Psalm 108
May – 24	Matthew 15:21-16:28	Psalm 109:1-20
May – 25	Matthew 17-18	Psalm 109:21-31
June – 1	Matthew 19-20	Psalm 110
June – 2	Matthew 21	Psalm 111
June – 3	Matthew 22	Psalm 112
June – 4	Matthew 23	Psalm 113
June – 5	Matthew 24	Psalm 114
June – 6	Matthew 25	Psalm 115
June – 7	Matthew 26	Psalm 116
June – 8	Matthew 27-28	

Mark

Introduction:

The Gospel of Mark is marked by the word “immediately.” Most commentators note that it is a fast paced and focused book, dedicated to the miracles and actions of Jesus. One commentator⁹ notes, “Of the four Gospels, Mark is most overtly a ‘docudrama,’ consisting of noteworthy ‘clips’ as well as speeches or dialogues; and commentary by a narrator.”

Why did God inspire Mark to record this Gospel? Mark primarily focuses on Jesus as the divine sufferer who pays the penalty of our sin. He is the one who suffers as the Son of Man, a theme that is more accented in the Gospel of Mark.

Outline:

The literary structure of Mark is quite simple to follow because it primarily focuses on locations. Jim Hamilton’s analysis and others is the source of this outline¹⁰.

- I. John the Baptist and Jesus (1:1-13)
- II. Public Ministry of Jesus in Galilee (1:14-8:30)
 - A. Jesus’ Early Galilean Ministry (1:14-3:12)
 - B. Jesus’ Later Galilean Ministry (3:13-6:6)
 - C. Transition to Beyond Galilee (6:7-8:26)
 - D. Peter’s Confession (8:27-30)
- III. Jesus Moves Toward Jerusalem (8:31-10:52)
- IV. Jesus in Jerusalem (11:1-16:8)
 - A. Entry into Jerusalem and Teachings (11-13)
 - B. Jesus’ Crucifixion, Burial, and Resurrection (14:1-16:9)
- V. Extended Ending (16:9-20)¹¹

⁹ Hans F. Bayer *ESV Study Bible*, p. 1890

¹⁰ James R. Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 380-381. *ESV Study Bible*, p. 1891-1892

¹¹ It is largely accepted by textual critics that Mark 16:9-20 was likely not penned by Mark because of lack of evidence in early manuscripts. It is for this reason that it is not included in this Bible reading plan.

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 9	Mark 1	Psalm 117
June – 10	Mark 2:1-3:12	Psalm 118
June – 11	Mark 3:13-4:41	
June – 12	Mark 5:1-6:6	Psalm 119:1-16
June – 13	Mark 6:7-56	Psalm 119:17-32
June – 14	Mark 7:1-8:30	
June – 15	Mark 8:31-9:50	Psalm 119:33-48
June – 16	Mark 10	Psalm 119:49-64
June – 17	Mark 11	Psalm 119:65-80
June – 18	Mark 12	Psalm 119:81-96
June – 19	Mark 13:1-14:11	Psalm 119:97-112
June – 20	Mark 14:12-72	Psalm 119:113-128
June – 21	Mark 15:1-16:8	Psalm 119:129-144

Luke

Introduction:

Luke's account focuses on Jesus as the Savior of the world, all nations¹². Luke seems to be drawing connections between Jesus' birth and Samuel's birth in 1-2 Samuel¹³. 1 Samuel begins with the priest Eli, Hannah, who was unable to have children, and Samuel, a miracle child. After the child is born, 1 Samuel records the Song of Hannah and dedicated to the temple of God.

In Luke's Gospel, the priest, Zechariah, and his barren wife have a miracle child, but Mary also has her miracle child. There is not one song about this miracle child, but two (Mary and Zechariah). After these things, Jesus is dedicated in the temple (2:22-38).

In short, Luke's Gospel shows that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Messianic Kingship as the Savior of all nations, and he accomplishes this through His fulfillment of Old Testament patterns.

Outline:

There are significant literary refrains in Luke's Gospel. The first is in Luke 9:51 when it records that Jesus "set his face to go to Jerusalem." The second is in Luke 19:28 when it says, "he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem." These form the main literary breaks in Luke's Gospel. Luke's writing of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles broadly form a chiasmic structure¹⁴.

The Birth of Jesus and Roman Rule (Luke 1-4)

Jesus in Galilee (Luke 5:1-9:50)

Jesus in Samaria and Judea (Luke 9:51-19:27)

Jesus in Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-23:56)

Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension (Luke 24:1-Acts 1:11)

Church in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-8:1a)

Church in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1b-11:18)

Church throughout the Gentile World (Acts 11:19-26:32)

The Preaching of the Gospel by Paul as far as Rome (Acts 27-28)

¹² Richard Strauss, *Four Portraits, One Jesus*, p. 260

¹³ While the initial idea came from Jim Hamilton in *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, these connections are my own.

¹⁴ Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*, p. 142-143; Kenneth R. Wolfe, *The Chiasmic Structure of Luke-Acts and Some Implications for Worship*, *Southwestern Journal of Theology*, p. 60-71

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 22	Luke 1:1-56	
June – 23	Luke 1:57-80	Psalm 119:145-160
June – 24	Luke 2	Psalm 119:161-176
June – 25	Luke 3	Psalm 120
July – 1	Luke 4	Psalm 121
July – 2	Luke 5	Psalm 122
July – 3	Luke 6	Psalm 123
July – 4	Luke 7	Psalm 124
July – 5	Luke 8	Psalm 125
July – 6	Luke 9:1-50	Psalm 126
July – 7	Luke 9:51-10:42	
July – 8	Luke 11	Psalm 127
July – 9	Luke 12	Psalm 128
July – 10	Luke 13-14	
July – 11	Luke 15-16	
July – 12	Luke 17:1-18:17	Psalm 129
July – 13	Luke 18:18- 19:27	Psalm 130
July – 14	Luke 19:28-20:47	
July – 15	Luke 21:1-22:23	Psalm 131
July – 16	Luke 22:24-71	Psalm 132
July – 17	Luke 23	Psalm 133
July – 18	Luke 24	Psalm 134

John

Introduction:

The Gospel of John is utterly rich and beautiful. Famous for his double meanings, parallel concepts, and rich Trinitarian flavor, John's Gospel is also quite simple in terms of its words while deep in its message.

John's Gospel primarily focuses on our belief in Jesus for eternal life (John 20:30-31), and he does that through Jesus' fulfillment of Old Testament patterns primarily through the feasts. John records the Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread (2:13), other feasts (5:1), Feast of Booths (7:2), and more. It is in these feasts that we see Jesus fulfill all patterns as our Passover Lamb, etc.

There are several other important literary features in John. First, the "I AM" statements that connect Jesus to Old Testament pictures and depictions of Yahweh. Second, the seven signs of Jesus that validates His ministry and teaching.

Outline:

The outline¹⁵ of John centers around five units. There is a prologue and a conclusion. In the middle, there are seven signs that validate Jesus' messiahship followed by Jesus' Upper Room Discourse, then Passion Narrative.

- I. Prologue (1:1-18)
- II. The Seven Signs (1:19-12:50)
 - A. Initial Ministry (1:19-2:12)
 - B. First Passover (2:13-4:42)
 - C. A Feast in Jerusalem (4:43-5:47)
 - D. Second Passover (6)
 - E. Feast of Booths (7-11)
 - F. Six Days Before Passover (12)
- III. Last Passover: The Upper Room Discourse (13-17)
 - A. Jesus Ministers to Disciples (13-16)
 - B. Jesus Prays for Disciples (17)
- IV. Passion Narrative (18-20)
- V. Conclusion (21)

¹⁵ This analysis comes from Daniel B. Wallace, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Argument, Outline*, https://bible.org/seriespage/4-gospel-john-introduction-argument-outline#_ftnref51

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
July – 19	John 1	Psalm 135
July – 20	John 2-3	Psalm 136
July – 21	John 4:1-42	Psalm 137
July – 22	John 4:43-5:47	Psalm 138
July – 23	John 6	Psalm 139
July – 24	John 7:1-52 ¹⁶	Psalm 140
July – 25	John 8:12-59	Psalm 141
August – 1	John 9	Psalm 142-143
August – 2	John 10	Psalm 144
August – 3	John 11	Psalm 145
August – 4	John 12	Psalm 146
August – 5	John 13-14	Psalm 147
August – 6	John 15-16	Psalm 148
August – 7	John 17-18	
August – 8	John 19	Psalm 149
August – 9	John 20-21	Psalm 150

¹⁶ It is largely accepted by textual critics that John 7:53-8:11 was likely not penned by John because of lack of evidence in early manuscripts. It is for this reason that it is not included in this Bible reading plan.

Joshua

Introduction:

As we saw at the end of Deuteronomy, Moses dies before entering the Promised Land, and Joshua is poised to begin the entrance into the land. The people are ready to see God's promises to Abraham fulfilled as they receive the land. Joshua is stylized as a type of Messianic figure, entering into the Promised Land, having faith in God, crushing God's enemies, and establishing God's Kingdom.

A common criticism of Christianity is that God is a genocidal maniac in the Old Testament, and Joshua clearly portrays God as sending Israel to destroy the nations. There are two good responses to this objection. First, these nations were wicked and evil; these were not innocent people. Second, these nations also had the opportunity to repent. We see that Rahab heard the news of the Exodus, and she put her faith in Yahweh and identified with Israel. If you bless Israel by faith, then the promises of Abraham will apply to you. If you go to war with Yahweh, you will not win.

Joshua also contains a long section of the boundary markers of the Promised Land. While this is boring to us, remember that these boundary markers and clarifications on land allotments are the tangible fulfillments of God's promises to His people. Take courage knowing that all God's promises for us will be fulfilled one day.

Outline:

Stephen Dempster proposes this outline¹⁷ for Joshua based on four Hebrew verbs repeated in these sections. The reason I include the Hebrew verbs is to show the word play. Notice that the matching chiasmic portions have the same consonants (excluding the last consonant of the beginning and ending chiasmic portion).

עבר Israel "passes over" the Jordan (1-5)

לקח Israel "takes" the Promised Land (6-11)

חלק Israel "divides" the Promised Land (12-22)

עבד Israel "serves" in the Promised Land (23-24)

¹⁷ Stephen Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, p. 126-127

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
August – 10	Joshua 1-2	Psalm 1
August – 11	Joshua 3-5	Psalm 2
August – 12	Joshua 6-7	Psalm 3
August – 13	Joshua 8-9	Psalm 4
August – 14	Joshua 10-11	
August – 15	Joshua 12-13	Psalm 5
August – 16	Joshua 14-15	
August – 17	Joshua 16-18	Psalm 6
August – 18	Joshua 19-20	
August – 19	Joshua 21	Psalm 7
August – 20	Joshua 22	Psalm 8
August – 21	Joshua 23-24	Psalm 9

Judges

Introduction:

The book of Joshua ends with the theme of “serving” Yahweh in the land, but that does not last at all. The book of Judges is a cyclical downward spin into sin, depravity, and wickedness. It begins with reminiscing about Joshua, but it quickly turns to Israel’s demise. The main point of the book is this: Israel needs a faithful king like Joshua and ultimately like David. This is evidenced by each judge’s falling further and further away from the ideal. Even the priests of Israel at this time are horrible examples of faithful living to Yahweh. The author of Judges also provides the reason for their problems in Judges 1:27-36. They did not drive the inhabitants out of the land like God commanded them, and the other nations led them into idolatry and sin.

In Deuteronomy, we read that Israel receives curses for unfaithfulness, and Judges is a small-scale study of those curses. The ultimate curse is also revealed in Deuteronomy: exile. We see these “cycles of exile” all throughout Judges when the people of Israel under the oppression of another nation, pray for deliverance, God sends a judge to save, and the people go back to their old ways.

Judges ends by showing just how wicked the people are, and it ends with the refrain in Judges 21:25, “And there was no king, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes,” showing that Israel needs a king.

Outline:

The outline¹⁸ of Judges has an introduction, a conclusion, and a main body with cycles of oppression, repentance, and deliverance.

- I. The Prologue (1:1-3:6)
- II. The Body (3:7-16:31)
 - A. Othniel (3:7-11)
 - B. Ehud (3:12-31)
 - C. Deborah and Barak (4:1-5:31)
 - D. Gideon (6:1-8:32)
 - E. Abimelech (8:33-10:5)
 - F. Jephthah (10:6-12:15)
 - G. Samson (13-16)
- III. The Epilogue (17-21)

¹⁸ Daniel Diffey, *Gideon’s Response and Jotham’s Fable: Two Anti-Monarchial Texts in a Pro-Monarchial Book?*, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, PhD. Diss., p. 113-149

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
August – 22	Judges 1:1-3:6	
August – 23	Judges 3:7-5:31	
August – 24	Judges 6	Psalm 10
August – 25	Judges 7:1-8:32	Psalm 11
September – 1	Judges 8:33-10:5	
September – 2	Judges 10:6-12:15	Psalm 12
September – 3	Judges 13-14	Psalm 13
September – 4	Judges 15-16	Psalm 14
September – 5	Judges 17-18	Psalm 15
September – 6	Judges 19	Psalm 16
September – 7	Judges 20	Psalm 17
September – 8	Judges 21	Psalm 18

1-2 Samuel

Introduction:

1-2 Samuel in our Bibles is one cohesive book in Old Testament thought, and its ties with Judges are intentional. Samuel is depicted as the last judge of Israel seeking to solve its problem with a king. However, the people want a king, “like all the other nations,” so they seek a king by worldly standards. God’s king was a humble shepherd in the backwater town of Bethlehem.

The book of 1-2 Samuel centers around two glorious songs that “book end” this work (1 Sam. 2:1-10; 2 Sam. 2:2-51). Dempster¹⁹ says it this way, “Hannah’s song looks to the future for the overthrow of a tyrannical dominion that will be replaced by a just king, a Messiah, who will bring justice beyond Israel to the ends of the earth. David looks back and sees how God has delivered him from all his enemies. David smote them until they fell under his feet. God gave him the neck of his enemies, and this becomes a pledge of a future in which God will magnify his salvation to his king and extend covenant loyalty to his Messiah, to David and his seed for ever.”

Another significant point is 2 Samuel 7, which is the inauguration of the Davidic Covenant. So far, we have seen God’s covenant with creation, which is the ultimate “Promised Land,” the Garden of Eden. We have seen God’s covenant with Abraham, which promises a redemption back to the Garden of Eden through a Messiah-King. Now, we have our King in David, and it is in his royal lineage that God will save His people and bring them back to rest in the Garden.

However, the book ends with David’s moral failure in his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11-12), his family in disarray (2 Sam. 13-15), and more. It shows that we are still waiting for a faithful King to restore God’s relationship with His people.

Outline:

The outline of 1-2 Samuel centers around three major figures: Samuel, Saul, and David.

- I. Samuel: Hope for a Faithful King-Priest (1 Sam. 1-8)
- II. Saul: Failure and Rejection as a King (1 Sam. 9-15)
- III. David: Rise and Fall (1 Sam. 16-2 Sam. 21)
 - A. David’s Rise (1 Sam. 16-2 Sam. 10)
 - B. David’s Fall (2 Sam. 11-21)
- IV. David: Life and Hope for a Faithful King-Priest (2 Sam. 22-24)

¹⁹ Stephen Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, p. 134

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
September – 9	1 Samuel 1-2	
September – 10	1 Samuel 3-5	Psalm 19
September – 11	1 Samuel 6-8	
September – 12	1 Samuel 9-10	Psalm 20
September – 13	1 Samuel 11-12	Psalm 21
September – 14	1 Samuel 13:1-14:23	
September – 15	1 Samuel 14:24-15:35	Psalm 22
September – 16	1 Samuel 16	Psalm 23
September – 17	1 Samuel 17	Psalm 24
September – 18	1 Samuel 18-19	Psalm 25
September – 19	1 Samuel 20	Psalm 26
September – 20	1 Samuel 21-22	Psalm 27
September – 21	1 Samuel 23-24	Psalm 28
September – 22	1 Samuel 25	Psalm 29
September – 23	1 Samuel 26-27	Psalm 30
September – 24	1 Samuel 28-29	Psalm 31
September – 25	1 Samuel 30-31	Psalm 32
October – 1	2 Samuel 1-2	Psalm 33
October – 2	2 Samuel 3-4	Psalm 34
October – 3	2 Samuel 5-6	Psalm 35
October – 4	2 Samuel 7-8	Psalm 36
October – 5	2 Samuel 9-10	Psalm 37
October – 6	2 Samuel 11-12	Psalm 38
October – 7	2 Samuel 13-14	
October – 8	2 Samuel 15-16	Psalm 39
October – 9	2 Samuel 17-18	
October – 10	2 Samuel 19	Psalm 40
October – 11	2 Samuel 20-21	Psalm 41
October – 12	2 Samuel 22	Psalm 42
October – 13	2 Samuel 23-24	Psalm 43

1-2 Kings

Introduction:

If 1-2 Samuel was the rise and hope of the Davidic Kings, 1-2 Kings reveal the failure of the Davidic Kings. Solomon's rise to power and building of the temple shows that he sees himself as the Messianic, Davidic King. However, he fell to the same fate as his father: adultery. This brings the long spiral down to God's ultimate judgment: exile into Babylon. Just as Adam was cast out of God's Garden of Eden, Israel is cast out of God's Promised Land.

In 1-2 Kings, Israel splits into two nations: Israel and Judah after the reign of Solomon. The southern kingdom of Judah maintains the Davidic Kingship while the northern kingdom of Israel does not. Both have a long list of wicked kings that lead the people into idolatry.

The theological contribution of 1-2 Kings shows that the people of Israel did not follow God's law because they needed a new heart. Deuteronomy brought this up initially, and it will continue to be a theme in the prophets. While the exile to Babylon showed that Israel's people broke covenant, the book ends with hope for return because there is still a Davidic King.

Outline:

The outline for 1-2 Kings forms a chiasitic structure²⁰:

Solomon's Reign, Kingdom United (1 Kings 1-11)

 Jeroboam/Rehoboam, Kingdom Divided (1 Kings 12)

 Kings of Israel and Judah (1 Kings 13-16)

 Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17-2 Kings 7)

 Kings of Israel and Judah (2 Kings 8-16)

 Fall of Northern Kingdom (2 Kings 17)

Judah until Exile (2 Kings 18-25)

²⁰ James Hamilton, *Typology*, p. 124

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 14	1 Kings 1	Psalm 44
October – 15	1 Kings 2	Psalm 45
October – 16	1 Kings 3-4	
October – 17	1 Kings 5-6	Psalm 46
October – 18	1 Kings 7	Psalm 47
October – 19	1 Kings 8	
October – 20	1 Kings 9-10	Psalm 48
October – 21	1 Kings 11	Psalm 49
October – 22	1 Kings 12-13	Psalm 50
October – 23	1 Kings 14:1-15:24	Psalm 51
October – 24	1 Kings 15:25-17:24	
October – 25	1 Kings 18	Psalm 52
November – 1	1 Kings 19	Psalm 53
November – 2	1 Kings 20	Psalm 54
November – 3	1 Kings 21	Psalm 55
November – 4	1 Kings 22	Psalm 56
November – 5	2 Kings 1-2	Psalm 57
November – 6	2 Kings 3-4	
November – 7	2 Kings 5:1-6:23	Psalm 58
November – 8	2 Kings 6:24-8:29	Psalm 59
November – 9	2 Kings 9-10	Psalm 60
November – 10	2 Kings 11-12	Psalm 61
November – 11	2 Kings 13-14	Psalm 62
November – 12	2 Kings 15-16	
November – 13	2 Kings 17	Psalm 63
November – 14	2 Kings 18	Psalm 64
November – 15	2 Kings 19	Psalm 65
November – 16	2 Kings 20-21	Psalm 66
November – 17	2 Kings 22:1-23:35	Psalm 67
November – 18	2 Kings 23:36-25:30	

Acts

Introduction:

The book of Acts is the second work of Luke, and it has large connections with it. Several theologians have argued that its title “The Acts of the Apostles” is somewhat misleading and should be called, “The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus by His Spirit through the Apostles.” Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to his apostles in John 13-17, and that is why it fits well after John.

Acts 2 is the birth of the church when the Holy Spirit descends on the people and empowers them to build Jesus’ church throughout the whole world. In continuation with the Gospel of Luke, he focuses on Jesus as the Savior of all nations.

The book also transitions locations (Judea, Samaria, the ends of the earth) and people (Peter to Paul). This observation reveals that the theological point of the book of Acts is to continue the work of building the Kingdom of God by planting local churches.

Outline:

The outline of Luke-Acts will be repeated here²¹:

The Birth of Jesus and Roman Rule (Luke 1-4)

 Jesus in Galilee (Luke 5:1-9:50)

 Jesus in Samaria and Judea (Luke 9:51-19:27)

 Jesus in Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-23:56)

 Jesus’ Resurrection and Ascension (Luke 24:1-Acts 1:11)

 Church in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-8:1a)

 Church in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1b-11:18)

 Church throughout the Gentile World (Acts 11:19-26:32)

The Preaching of the Gospel by Paul as far as Rome (Acts 27-28)

²¹ See p. 19n14

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
November – 19	Acts 1	Psalm 68
November – 20	Acts 2	Psalm 69
November – 21	Acts 3-4	Psalm 70
November – 22	Acts 5:1-6:7	Psalm 71
November – 23	Acts 6:8-8:1a	Psalm 72
November – 24	Acts 8:1b-40	Psalm 73
November – 25	Acts 9	Psalm 74
December – 1	Acts 10:1-11:18	Psalm 75
December – 2	Acts 11:19-12:25	Psalm 76
December – 3	Acts 13	Psalm 77
December – 4	Acts 14	Psalm 78:1-39
December – 5	Acts 15	Psalm 78:40-72
December – 6	Acts 16	Psalm 79
December – 7	Acts 17-18	Psalm 80
December – 8	Acts 19	Psalm 81
December – 9	Acts 20	Psalm 82
December – 10	Acts 21:1-36	Psalm 83
December – 11	Acts 21:37-22:29	Psalm 84
December – 12	Acts 22:30-24:27	Psalm 85
December – 13	Acts 25-26	Psalm 86
December – 14	Acts 27	Psalm 87
December – 15	Acts 28	Psalm 88

Jeremiah

Introduction:

The reason why Jeremiah comes after 1-2 Kings is because the ministry of Jeremiah corresponds to the very end of 2 Kings. The division of “Former Prophets” and “Latter Prophets,” is massively important. The Former Prophets is a slow descent to exile. The Latter Prophets answers the why of the exile. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve answer why it appears God’s promises have failed. The important thing to note about the Latter Prophets is that they function to provide explanation and commentary on the Former Prophets.

Jeremiah’s contribution to the Biblical story is to reveal the reason why Israel is in exile. God’s acts are not arbitrary, and His promises did not fail. The outline below shows that Israel will suffer judgment and exile, but there is also comfort and hope in the promises of the New Covenant. He tells this story by describing judgment as “de-creation” and salvation as “re-creation.” Furthermore, he shows that the exile will last 70 years, and God will bring them home to the Promise Land.

For all of the Latter Prophets, the relationship between the Mosaic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant is central. The Mosaic Covenant was broken and warrants judgment, but the Davidic Covenant remains the focus for future promises²².

Outline:

Here is the broad outline of Jeremiah²³:

- I. Superscription (1:1-3)
- II. Call of Jeremiah and Visions (1:4-19)
- III. Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (2-25)
 - A. Israel’s Guilt and Punishment (2-6)
 - B. Jeremiah’s Temple Sermon (7-10)
 - C. Warning and Judgment²⁴ (11:1-15:9)
 - D. Confessions, Symbolic Acts, and Preaching (15:10-25:28)
- IV. Jeremiah’s Controversy with False Prophets (26-29)
- V. The Book of Consolation (30-33)
- VI. The Days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah (34-39)
- VII. Jeremiah’s Experiences after the Fall of Jerusalem (40-45)
- VIII. Oracles against the Foreign Nations (46-51)
- IX. Appendix: The Fall of Jerusalem (52)

²² For these concepts more fleshed out, see Peter Gentry, *How to Read & Understand the Biblical Prophets*.

²³ This outline comes from Peter Gentry, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 528

²⁴ In *Kingdom through Covenant*, Gentry’s outline states that this section is 11:11-15:19, which I am assuming is a typo.

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
December – 16	Jeremiah 1:1-3:5	Psalm 89:1-37
December – 17	Jeremiah 3:6-4:31	Psalm 89:38-52
December – 18	Jeremiah 5-6	Psalm 90
December – 19	Jeremiah 7:1-9:1	Psalm 91
December – 20	Jeremiah 9:2-10:25	Psalm 92
December – 21	Jeremiah 11-12	Psalm 93
December – 22	Jeremiah 13:1-15:9	Psalm 94
December – 23	Jeremiah 15:10-17:27	
December – 24	Jeremiah 18-20	Psalm 95
December – 25	Jeremiah 21-22	Psalm 96
January – 1	Jeremiah 23-24	Psalm 97
January – 2	Jeremiah 25-26	
January – 3	Jeremiah 27-29	Psalm 98
January – 4	Jeremiah 30-31	
January – 5	Jeremiah 32	Psalm 99
January – 6	Jeremiah 33	Psalm 100-101
January – 7	Jeremiah 34-35	Psalm 102
January – 8	Jeremiah 36-37	
January – 9	Jeremiah 38-39	Psalm 103
January – 10	Jeremiah 40-42	Psalm 104:1-23
January – 11	Jeremiah 43-45	Psalm 104:24-35
January – 12	Jeremiah 46-47	Psalm 105:1-25
January – 13	Jeremiah 48	Psalm 105:26-45
January – 14	Jeremiah 49	Psalm 106:1-23
January – 15	Jeremiah 50	Psalm 106:24-48
January – 16	Jeremiah 51	Psalm 107:1-22
January – 17	Jeremiah 52	Psalm 107:23-43

Ezekiel

Introduction:

Ezekiel is a tricky book that is full of symbolism and apocalyptic language. In order to be good interpreters, we must see Ezekiel in the grand sweep of the Biblical story. Jeremiah began his story by showing Israel's exile as God's purposeful plan. Ezekiel continues that story by focusing on, "the last part of [the last days of the kingdom of Judah] and beyond, but from the perspective of exile²⁵."

Israel in their wickedness and idolatry profaned the temple, which caused God to get up and leave. However, Ezekiel shows that God's presence will return to bring new life in His New Creation. Ezekiel's focus on this restoration comes in the valley of dry bones where Ezekiel prophesies the return from exile in terms of resurrection.

Ezekiel's book ends with a glorious picture of a future temple but with a twist. There are intimate ties to Garden of Eden language and future hope of a New Garden of Eden. This strikes a massive chord in the Biblical story as we have seen in previous books.

Outline:

The outline²⁶ of Ezekiel is given below:

- I. Opening vision and Call of Ezekiel (1:1-3:15)
- II. Ezekiel's Role and Message (3:16-7:27)
- III. The Departure of the Glory of the Lord from the Temple (8-11)
- IV. The Exile Symbolized (12-24)
- V. Oracles Concerning Foreign Nations (25-32)
- VI. Divine Leadership and Restoration (33-36)
- VII. The Valley of Dry Bones (37-39)
- VIII. The New Temple (40-48)

²⁵ Stephen Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, p. 167

²⁶ This outline comes from Peter Gentry, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 582

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
January – 18	Ezekiel 1:1-3:15	Psalm 108
January – 19	Ezekiel 3:16-5:17	Psalm 109:1-20
January – 20	Ezekiel 6-7	Psalm 109:21-31
January – 21	Ezekiel 8-9	Psalm 110
January – 22	Ezekiel 10-11	Psalm 111
January – 23	Ezekiel 12-13	Psalm 112
January – 24	Ezekiel 14-15	Psalm 113
January – 25	Ezekiel 16	Psalm 114
February – 1	Ezekiel 17-19	
February – 2	Ezekiel 20	Psalm 115
February – 3	Ezekiel 21-22	Psalm 116
February – 4	Ezekiel 23	Psalm 117
February – 5	Ezekiel 24	Psalm 118
February – 6	Ezekiel 25-26	Psalm 119:1-16
February – 7	Ezekiel 27-28	
February – 8	Ezekiel 29-30	Psalm 119:17-32
February – 9	Ezekiel 31-32	Psalm 119:33-48
February – 10	Ezekiel 33-34	Psalm 119:49-64
February – 11	Ezekiel 35-36	Psalm 119:65-80
February – 12	Ezekiel 37-39	
February – 13	Ezekiel 40	Psalm 119:81-96
February – 14	Ezekiel 41-42	Psalm 119:97-112
February – 15	Ezekiel 43-44	Psalm 119:113-128
February – 16	Ezekiel 45-46	Psalm 119:129-160
February – 17	Ezekiel 47-48	Psalm 119:161-176

Isaiah

Introduction:

The book of Isaiah is probably the pinnacle of Old Testament theology in its richness, depth, and progression of the Biblical story. Jeremiah and Ezekiel focused on the exile and beyond while Isaiah sweeps over all of redemptive history by focusing on one particular theme: the Davidic Kingship.

Israel's hope is that God will raise up a true Davidic King, the Messiah, who will save His people from exile and establish God's rule and reign over the whole world. He will establish a greater New Covenant, and He will reign with righteousness and justice. However, they are still in exile. Isaiah's unique contribution is to show that there needs to be two deliverances. First, they need to get the people out of Babylon, which is the first stage. Second, they need to get Babylon out of the people²⁷. In other words, the people of Israel need to be totally faithful to Yahweh and not false gods. It is important to note that Isaiah's prophecies are not wild predictions of the future, but they are rooted in God's promises to David in 2 Samuel 7. If God is faithful to His covenant, then what Isaiah says must be true.

Outline:

The outline for Isaiah has been notoriously difficult for scholars to nail down. In my mind, there are three legitimate proposals, and I am including all three of these proposals because each has strengths and weaknesses. It is important to note that all these outlines have significant overlap.

Alec Motyer²⁸:

- I. The Book of the King (1-37)
 - A. Preface: Judah, Diagnosis and Prognosis (1-5)
 - B. Triumph of Grace (6-12)
 - C. Universal Kingdom (13-27)
 - D. The Lord of History (28-37)
- II. The Book of the Servant (38-55)
 - A. Historical Prologue: Hezekiah's Fatal Choice (38-39)
 - B. The Consolation of the World (40:1-42:17)
 - C. The Redemption of Israel (42:18-44:23)
 - D. The Great Deliverance – Cyrus, Salvation from Babylon (44:24-48:22)
 - E. The Greater Deliverance – Christ, Salvation from Sin (49-55)
- III. The Book of the Anointed Conqueror (56-66)
 - A. The Ideal and the Actual: The Needs and Sins of the People (56:1-59:13)
 - B. The Coming of the Anointed Conqueror (59:14-63:6)
 - C. Prayer and Response: Steps to the New Heaven and Earth (63:7-66:24)

²⁷ I got this language from Peter Gentry in one of his lectures that I am unable to relocate.

²⁸ Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, p. 5-8

Peter Gentry²⁹:

- I. The Judgment and Transformation of Zion, Pt. 1 (1:2-2:4)
- II. The Judgment and Transformation of Zion, Pt. 2 (2:5-4:6)
- III. The Judgment of the Vineyard and the Coming King (5-12)
- IV. The City of Man vs. The City of God (13-27)
- V. Trusting the Nations vs. Trusting the Word of YHWH (28-37)
- VI. Comfort and Redemption for Zion and the World (38-55)
- VII. The Servants of YHWH and the New Creation (56-66)

Barry Webb³⁰:

Part 1: Jerusalem and Assyria (1-12)

Part 2: Jerusalem and Assyria (13-27)

Part 3: Jerusalem and Assyria (28-35)

Part 4: Assyria to Babylon (36-39)

Part 5: New Jerusalem and Babylon (40:1-51:11)

Part 6: New Jerusalem and Babylon (51:12-55:13)

Part 7: New Jerusalem and Babylon (56-66)

²⁹ Peter Gentry, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 490. Peter Gentry, *How to Read & Understand the Biblical Prophets*, p. 52

³⁰ Barry Webb, *The Message of Isaiah*, p. 30-31

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
February – 19	Isaiah 1:1-2:4	Psalm 120
February – 20	Isaiah 2:5-4:6	Psalm 121
February – 21	Isaiah 5-6	Psalm 122
February – 22	Isaiah 7-8	Psalm 123
February – 23	Isaiah 9-10	
February – 24	Isaiah 11-12	Psalm 124-125
February – 25	Isaiah 13-14	Psalm 126
February – 18	Isaiah 15-17	Psalm 127
February – 19	Isaiah 18-20	Psalm 128
February – 20	Isaiah 21-23	Psalm 129
February – 21	Isaiah 24-25	Psalm 130
February – 22	Isaiah 26-27	Psalm 131
February – 23	Isaiah 28-29	
February – 24	Isaiah 30-32	
February – 25	Isaiah 33-35	Psalm 132
March – 1	Isaiah 36-37	
March – 2	Isaiah 38-39	Psalm 133
March – 3	Isaiah 40-41	Psalm 134
March – 4	Isaiah 42-43	Psalm 135
March – 5	Isaiah 44-45	Psalm 136
March – 6	Isaiah 46-48	Psalm 137
March – 7	Isaiah 49:1-51:11	Psalm 138
March – 8	Isaiah 51:12-53:12	Psalm 139
March – 9	Isaiah 54-55	Psalm 140
March – 10	Isaiah 56-58	Psalm 141
March – 11	Isaiah 59-61	Psalm 142
March – 12	Isaiah 62-64	Psalm 143
March – 13	Isaiah 65-66	Psalm 144

The Minor Prophets

Introduction:

The Minor Prophets are designed to be a compositional unit³¹. This means that the Minor Prophets are designed to be read as one theological book. In Dave Berry's thesis, he convincingly shows from manuscript evidence that the Minor Prophets were traditionally kept in one scroll³². This convincingly shows that the Minor Prophets are meant to be taken as one book.

So, what is this "centerpiece" of the Minor Prophets? Jason DeRouchie³³ argues for a coherent flow of thought of each of the major themes that move from **sin** to **punishment** to **restoration**.

Hosea: "Israel, YHWH has a case against you: You have played the harlot and been like an unfaithful wife, departing from faithfulness, steadfast love, and knowledge. Please return to YHWH, your husband!"

Joel: "For the day of YHWH is at hand, and repentance is your only hope! I will be a refuge for my people, but a roaring, devouring lion against all who fail to heed my voice!"

Amos: "... I have disciplined you, yet you have not learned from the discipline. You anticipate my coming, but for you this day will be darkness, not light. Prepare to meet your God, for the fulfillment of my kingdom promises is only for those who truly repent!"

Obadiah: "...Pride and hatred have no place in my coming kingdom...Edom will be destroyed."

Jonah: "Yet be warned, for your own pride and hatred for others resembles that of Edom and stands in direct contrast to the steadfast love YHWH gives...Don't be like Jonah..."

Micah: "YHWH, from his courtroom, has found you and the nations guilty! Yet your final judgment day has not come, and in his mercy, he will still forgive your sins, if you return..."

Nahum: "Know this for certain: YHWH is a stronghold only for those who accept his terms of peace, but he will justly judge all his unrepentant enemies."

Habakkuk: "YHWH is just, and in his time, he will indeed punish all wrongdoers and preserve all who walk by faith, looking to him for help, guidance, and satisfaction."

Zephaniah: "Please be part of the remnant that draws near to YHWH, so that the coming day may be one of rejoicing! Yet for all who fail to heed God's voice, the day of YHWH the warrior will be sure destruction!"

Haggai: "Drawing near to God necessitates that you take seriously the need for his presence among you, that he might bring forth the fulfillment of all he has promised..."

Zechariah: "You need YHWH's presence among you, for his kingdom restoration will be brought not by human effort but by the power of his Spirit working through his slain yet victorious priest-king!"

Malachi: "This restoration is for you, if you will but fear and honor YHWH in all areas of your life, awaiting the day when curse will give rise to full restoration blessing!"

³¹ Dave Berry, *A Door of Hope: Biblical-Theological Reflections on the Kingdom of God in the Book of the Twelve*, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Doctoral Thesis, p. 13-15. Jim Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 229-234. Jason DeRouchie, *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament*, p. 336-338.

³² *Ibid.* p. 42-51

³³ *Ibid.* p. 337-338

Dave Berry³⁴ and Jim Hamilton³⁵ argue for stitch words³⁶,

Ending	Link Words or Thematic Connections	Beginning
Hosea 3:4-5	“The latter days” and promise of the Davidic King	Joel 1:2-3
Hosea 14:7	Inhabitants, wine, vine	Joel 1:2, 5, 7
Joel 3:16	Yahweh roars from Zion The judgment of Joel 3 carried out in Amos 1:3-2:16	Amos 1:2, 1:3-2:16
Amos 9:12	Edom	Obadiah 1:1; 1:29-21
Obadiah 1:1; 1:11; 1:12-14	Messenger to the nations, “Rise” Cast lots Edom positions itself to rejoice over Judah’s destruction, and Jonah positions himself to rejoice over Nineveh’s destruction Obadiah is an expected judgment oracle against Edom; Jonah is an unexpected salvation story of wicked Nineveh.	Jonah 1:2, 6, 7; 4:5
Jonah 4:2	Quotation of Exodus 34:6-7	Micah 7:18-19
Micah 7:18-19	Quotation of Exodus 34:6-7	Nahum 1:2-3
Nahum 1:7	Stronghold in the day of trouble Prophecy of the destruction of Nineveh/Assyria, which destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel, followed by a prophecy of the destruction of Babylon, which will destroy the Southern Kingdom of Judah	Habakkuk 3:16
Nahum 3:7, 18		Habakkuk 1:6
Habakkuk 2:20	Keep silent before Yahweh	Zephaniah 1:7
Habakkuk 3:16	Day of Trouble	Zephaniah 1:14-15
Zephaniah 3:20	Time (brought back, gather)	Haggai 1:2, 4
Haggai 2:20	Dates: 520 B.C. Key figures: Joshua and Zerubbabel	Zechariah 1:1
Haggai 1-2	Temple and High Priest	Zechariah 3:1-10
Zechariah 4:6-7; 14:20-21	Zechariah prophecies that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem, while Malachi announces that Edom will never be rebuilt.	Malachi 1:4
Zechariah 9:1; 12:1	“Oracle of the word of the Lord”	Malachi 1:1

³⁴ Ibid. p. 54-61

³⁵ Ibid. p. 230

³⁶ This chart is formatted like Hamilton’s on p. 230 of *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, but it includes other insights by Dave Berry in *A Door of Hope: Biblical-Theological Reflections on the Kingdom of God in the Book of the Twelve*

Outline:

Here is an outline for each book of the Minor Prophets³⁷:

- I. Hosea
 - A. Hosea's Marriage (1:1-2:1)
 - B. Israel's Unfaithfulness (2:2-23)
 - C. God's Promise of Redemption (3:1-5)
 - D. Judgment on Israel and Call to Repentance (4:1-6:3)
 - E. Judgment on Israel and Promise of Forgiveness (6:4-11:11)
 - F. Judgment on Israel and a Plea to Return (11:12-14:9)
- II. Joel
 - A. The Call for Repentance in Light of the Day of the Lord (1:1-2:17)
 - 1. Call for Sacred Assembly to Lament (1:1-14)
 - 2. Call for Sacred Assembly to Repent (2:1-17)
 - B. The Restoration of Israel and the Final Day of the Lord (2:18-3:21)
 - 1. Promise for the Near Future (2:18-27)
 - 2. Promise for the Distant Future (2:28-3:21)
- III. Amos
 - A. Introduction and Summary (1:1-2)
 - B. Main Body (1:3-9:4)
 - 1. First Judgment Oracle (1:3-2:16)
 - 2. Second Judgment Oracle (3-4)
 - 3. Third Judgment Oracle (5-6)
 - 4. First Vision (7:1-3)
 - 5. Second Vision (7:4-6)
 - 6. Third Vision (7:7-9)
 - 7. Fourth Vision (8:1-3)
 - 8. Fifth Vision (9:1-4)
 - 9. A Hymn (9:5-6)
 - 10. Israel and the Nations (9:7-10)
 - C. Concluding Salvation Oracle (9:11-15)
- IV. Obadiah
 - A. Oracles of Judgment concerning Edom (1:1-14)
 - B. The Day of the Lord concerning All Nations (1:15-21)
- V. Jonah
 - A. Jonah and Pagan Sailors who turn to the Lord (1)
 - B. Jonah and the Lord: Jonah's Song of Thanksgiving (2)
 - C. Jonah and Pagan Ninevites who Turn to the Lord (3)
 - D. Jonah and the Lord: Jonah's Anger over the Lord's Compassion (4)

³⁷ These outlines come from two commentaries on the Minor Prophets. Since both were used in conjunction with each other and sometimes mixed, I will simply cite both books. Richard Alan Fuhr Jr. and Gary E. Yates, *The Message of the Twelve* and Michael B. Shepherd, *A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve*. Each book of the Minor Prophets has their own chapter and outline in these volumes.

- VI. Micah
 - A. Judgment for the Wicked; Restoration for the Righteous (1-2)
 - 1. The Judgment of Samaria and Jerusalem and Their Corrupt Leaders (1:1-2:11)
 - 2. The Promise of the Restoration of the Remnant (2:12-13)
 - B. Judgment for Judah's Leaders; the Promise of a Future Messiah (3-5)
 - 1. The Failure of Judah's Leaders and the Coming Destruction of Jerusalem (3)
 - 2. The Future Kingdom of Peace and Justice under the Rule of Messiah (4-5)
 - C. Judgment for Judah's Covenant Breaking; the Promise of Removal of Sin (6-7)
 - 1. Judah's Failure to Practice Justice and the Disappearance of the Godly (6:1-7:7)
 - 2. The Vindication of Jerusalem and the Godly and the Removal of Israel's Sin (7:8-20)
- VII. Nahum
 - A. Yahweh as the Divine Warrior (1:2-8)
 - B. Words from a Prophet (1:9-14)
 - C. The Prophetic Watchman (1:15-3:17)
 - 1. A Call to Celebrate (1:15)
 - 2. The Prophet's Vision (2:1-10)
 - 3. The Prophet's Taunt (2:11-12)
 - 4. The Declaration of Yahweh (2:13)
 - 5. Woe Oracle (3:1-4)
 - 6. The Declaration of Yahweh (3:5-7)
 - 7. The Prophet's Taunt (3:8-13)
 - 8. The Prophet's Vision (3:14-17)
 - 9. A Call to Celebrate (3:18-19)
- VIII. Habakkuk
 - A. First Complaint and Response (1:1-11)
 - 1. Complaint (1:1-4)
 - 2. Response (1:5-11)
 - B. Second Complaint and Response (1:12-2:20)
 - 1. Complaint (1:12-2:1)
 - 2. Response (2:2-20)
 - C. Psalm of Praise (3)
 - 1. A Vision of Yahweh's Splendor (3:1-15)
 - 2. A Response (3:16-17)
- IX. Zephaniah
 - A. An Oracle of Judgment against Judah—The Great Day of the Lord (1)
 - B. A Call to Repentance (2:1-3)
 - C. An Oracle of Judgment against the Nations (2:4-3:7)
 - D. A Call to Wait (3:8)
 - E. An Oracle of Salvation (3:9-20)

- X. Haggai
 - A. Call to Build the Temple (1)
 - B. The Promise of Future Glory for the Temple (2:1-9)
 - C. The Promise of Future Blessing to Replace Defilement (2:10-19)
 - D. The Restoration of the Davidic Rule (2:20-23)
- XI. Zechariah
 - A. Introduction and Call for Repentance (1:1-6)
 - B. The Night Visions (1:7-6:15)
 - 1. Vision 1 (1:7-17)
 - 2. Vision 2 (1:18-21)
 - 3. Vision 3 (2:1-12)
 - 4. Vision 4 (3)
 - 5. Vision 5 (4)
 - 6. Vision 6 (5:1-4)
 - 7. Vision 7 (5:5-11)
 - 8. Vision 8 (6:1-8)
 - 9. The Crowning of Joshua and Future Promises (6:9-15)
 - C. Questions Concerning Fasting and a Call for Justice (7-8)
 - D. Israel's Future Restoration and the Coming Kingdom of God (9-14)
- XII. Malachi
 - A. God's Love for His Elect Nation (1:2-5)
 - B. God is Worthy of Honor in Sacrifice (1:6-2:9)
 - C. God Hates Covenant Unfaithfulness (2:10-16)
 - D. God's Justice Vindicated (2:17-3:5)
 - E. God's Faithfulness Affirmed (3:6-7)
 - F. God Blesses the Faithful Giver (3:8-12)
 - G. God Remembers the Righteous (3:13-4:3)
 - H. Prophetic Exhortation (4:4-6)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
March – 15	Hosea 1-3	Psalm 145
March – 16	Hosea 4:1-6:3	Psalm 146
March – 17	Hosea 6:4-8:14	Psalm 147
March – 18	Hosea 9:1-11:11	
March – 19	Hosea 11:12-14:9	Psalm 148
March – 20	Joel 1:1-2:17	Psalm 149-150
March – 21	Joel 2:18-3:21	Psalm 1
March – 22	Amos 1-4	Psalm 2
March – 23	Amos 5-7	Psalm 3
March – 24	Amos 8-9	Psalm 4
March – 25	Obadiah	Psalm 5
April – 1	Jonah 1-2	Psalm 6
April – 2	Jonah 3-4	Psalm 7
April – 3	Micah 1-3	Psalm 8
April – 4	Micah 4-7	
April – 5	Nahum 1-3	Psalm 9
April – 6	Habakkuk 1-3	Psalm 10
April – 7	Zephaniah 1-3	Psalm 11
April – 8	Haggai 1-2	Psalm 12
April – 9	Zechariah 1-3	Psalm 13
April – 10	Zechariah 4-6	Psalm 14
April – 11	Zechariah 7-9	Psalm 15
April – 12	Zechariah 10-12	Psalm 16
April – 13	Zechariah 13-14	Psalm 17
April – 14	Malachi 1:1-2:16	Psalm 18
April – 15	Malachi 2:16-4:6	Psalm 19

Romans

Introduction:

It has often been said that Romans is the greatest letter ever written. Its theological depth, Gospel richness, and assurance of salvation has provided much comfort for Christians through the ages. It seems to be every Preacher's goal to preach through Romans at one point in their ministries because of how glorious Romans is.

The storyline of Romans can be summarized by two modes of writing. Paul will often alternate between proclaiming Gospel truths (1:18-32) and defending against Jewish objections (2:1-3:20)³⁸. These two modes of writing are helpful to keep in mind³⁹.

Confirmation of the Gospel	Defense against Jewish Objections
1:18-32	2:1-3:20
3:21-26	3:27-4:25
5:1-11	5:12-21
6:1-23	7:1-25
8:1-39	9:1-11:36
12:1-13:14	14:1-15:7

Romans reveals to us that from the Old Testament into the New, God's plan was to save His people by faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The righteousness of God is saving His people by pouring out His wrath on Christ so that we might receive eternal life by faith in Him.

Outline:

This outline comes from Tom Schreiner⁴⁰:

- I. The Gospel as the Revelation of the Righteousness of God (1:1-17)
 - A. Salutation: The Gospel Concerning God's Son (1:1-7)
 - B. Thanksgiving: Prayer for an Apostolic Visit (1:8-15)
 - C. Theme: The Gospel of the Righteousness of God (1:16-17)
- II. God's Righteousness in His Wrath against Sinners (1:18-3:20)
 - A. The Unrighteousness of the Gentiles (1:18-32)
 - B. The Unrighteousness of the Jews (2:1-3:8)
 - C. The Unrighteousness of All People (3:9-20)
- III. The Saving Righteousness of God (3:21-4:25)
 - A. God's Righteousness in the Death of Jesus (3:21-26)
 - B. Righteousness by Faith for Jews and Gentiles (3:27-31)
 - C. Abraham as the Father of Jews and Gentiles (4:1-25)

³⁸ This insight is indebted to David Peterson, *Romans*, EBTC, p. 11-12.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 12

⁴⁰ Thomas Schreiner, *ESV Study Bible*, p. 2155-2156

- IV. Hope as a Result of Righteousness by Faith (5:1-8:39)
 - A. Assurance of Hope (5:1-11)
 - B. Hope in Christ's Triumph over Adam's Sin (5:12-21)
 - C. The Triumph of Grace over the Power of Sin (6)
 - D. The Triumph of Grace over the Power of the Law (7:1-6)
 - E. The Law and Sin (7:7-25)
 - F. Life in the Spirit (8:1-17)
 - G. Assurance of Hope
- V. God's Righteousness to Israel and to the Gentiles (9-11)
 - A. God's Saving Promises to Israel (9:1-29)
 - B. Israel's Rejection of God's Saving Promises (9:30-11:10)
 - C. God's Righteousness in His Plan for Jews and Gentiles (11:11-32)
 - D. Concluding Doxology (11:33-36)
- VI. God's Righteousness in Everyday Life (12:1-15:13)
 - A. Paradigm for Exhortation: Total Dedication to God (12:1-2)
 - B. Marks of the Christian Community (12:3-13:14)
 - C. A Call for Mutual Acceptance between the Strong and the Weak (14:1-15:13)
- VII. The Extension of God's Righteousness through the Pauline Mission (15:14-16:23)
 - A. The Establishment of Churches Among the Gentiles (15:14-33)
 - B. Appreciation and Greetings to Coworkers in the Gospel (16:1-23)
- VIII. Final Summary of the Righteousness of God (16:25-27)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
April – 16	Romans 1-2	Psalm 20
April – 17	Romans 3-4	Psalm 21
April – 18	Romans 5-6	Psalm 22
April – 19	Romans 7-8	Psalm 23
April – 20	Romans 9-10	Psalm 24
April – 21	Romans 11-12	Psalm 25
April – 22	Romans 13-14	Psalm 26
April – 23	Romans 15-16	Psalm 27

1 Corinthians

Introduction:

The book of 1 Corinthians is difficult to summarize because it deals with such a wide range of issues (see outline below), but it seems to me that Paul's focus is to encourage his audience to embrace the truth of the Gospel more deeply so that the Corinthians might live rightly and believe rightly. Most of the struggles in Corinth have to do with false doctrine (understanding the Lord's Supper, understanding the resurrection, etc.) or false living (tolerating incest, divisions, etc.).

1 Corinthians helpfully comes after Romans because of its high degree of emphasis on the holiness of a local church. The focus of 1 Corinthians is not individual holiness (although that is necessarily implied) but corporate holiness. Paul holds the whole church responsible for their sins, fighting, divisions, and more. What Paul wants the church to understand is that it takes a whole church to make a whole Christian. The church must contribute sanctifying grace to each other.

There are many various controversial parts of 1 Corinthian as well (head coverings, issues of marriage and divorce), and a good study Bible (ESV, Grace and Truth, etc.) will help you navigate those interpretive difficulties.

Outline:

This outline⁴¹ comes from Andy Naselli based on the refrain "now concerning" or "now it has been reported."

- I. Introduction (1:1-9)
- II. Issues to which Paul Responds (1:10-15:58)
 - A. Dividing over Church teachers (1:10-4:21)
 - B. Tolerating Incest (5)
 - C. Bringing Lawsuits against One Another (6:1-13)
 - D. Excusing Sexual Immorality (6:12-20)
 - E. Issues of Marriage and Sex (7)
 - F. Eating Food Offered to Idols (8:1-11:1)
 - G. Head Coverings (11:2-16)
 - H. Abusing the Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
 - I. Desiring and Using Spiritual Gifts (12-14)
 - J. Denying that God Will Resurrect Believers (15)
- III. Conclusion (16)

⁴¹ Andrew Naselli, *The Structure and Theological Message of 1 Corinthians*, Presbyterian, p. 100

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
April – 24	1 Corinthians 1-2	Psalm 28
April – 25	1 Corinthians 3-4	Psalm 29
May – 1	1 Corinthians 5-7	Psalm 30
May – 2	1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1	Psalm 31
May – 3	1 Corinthians 11:2-12:31a	Psalm 32
May – 4	1 Corinthians 12:31b-14:40	Psalm 33
May – 5	1 Corinthians 15-16	Psalm 34

2 Corinthians

Introduction:

If the tone of 1 Corinthians is confrontational, the tone of 2 Corinthians is defensive. Paul seeks to establish his own apostolic authority by virtue of his suffering and weakness that God may get the glory in His work.

The large issues of 2 Corinthians are false teachers, which Paul calls “super-apostles.” We saw Gospel doctrine laid out in Romans, false doctrine attacked in 1 Corinthians, and now we see false teachers attacked in 2 Corinthians. The undergirding truth throughout the book is that God’s power is made perfect in our weakness.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁴² for 2 Corinthians:

- I. Salutation (1:1-11)
- II. Defense of Apostleship: Answering the Critics’ Charges (1:12-7:16)
 - A. The Defense of Paul’s Conduct (1:12-2:13)
 - B. The Nature of a True Apostleship (2:14-7:16)
 1. The Glory of the Ministry (2:14-4:6)
 2. The Frailty of the Ministers (4:7-5:10)
 3. The Message of Reconciliation (5:11-6:10)
 4. Paul’s Appeal to the Corinthians (6:11-7:4)
 5. Meeting Titus in Macedonia (7:5-16)
- III. Exhortation to Give: Collection for Believers in Jerusalem (8:1-9:15)
- IV. Polemics: Affirmation of Apostolic Authority (10:1-13:10)
- V. Final Exhortation and Greetings (13:11-14)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 6	2 Corinthians 1-2	Psalm 35
May – 7	2 Corinthians 3-4	Psalm 36
May – 8	2 Corinthians 5-7	Psalm 37
May – 9	2 Corinthians 7-8	Psalm 38
May – 10	2 Corinthians 9-10	Psalm 39
May – 11	2 Corinthians 11-13	Psalm 40

⁴² This analysis comes from Daniel B. Wallace, *2 Corinthians: Introduction, Argument, Outline*, <https://bible.org/seriespage/8-2-corinthians-introduction-argument-and-outline>

Galatians

Introduction:

Galatians begins a series of shorter books by Paul that all roughly have a similar focus (Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians). Galatians is primarily responding to false teaching regarding issues of law and Gospel. The churches in Galatia were led to believe that circumcision was necessary for salvation. However, Paul shows from the whole Bible that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone.

The structuring of Paul's Letters is quite interesting here. Romans begins with his theological tome of the Gospel. 1 Corinthians shows the necessity for personal holiness in light of the Gospel. 2 Corinthians shows what false teachers look like. Galatians – Philippians are all about false doctrine and false teachings.

The book of Galatians is a helpful reminder to keep our hearts and heads focused on the Gospel and applying it to all of life.

Outline:

This outline⁴³ comes from Tom Schreiner's commentary on Galatians:

- I. Introduction: Desertion from Paul's Gospel Is Desertion from the Gospel (1:1-2:21)
 - A. Greeting: Paul's Apostolic Authority (1:1-5)
 - B. Problem Explain: Desertion from the Gospel (1:6-10)
 - C. Paul's Gospel Derived from God, Not People (1:11-2:21)
- II. Paul's Argument Defended from Experience and Scripture (3:1-4:11)
 - A. Argument from Experience: the Holy Spirit (3:1-5)
 - B. Argument from Scripture: Blessing of Abraham by Faith (3:6-14)
 - C. Arguments from Salvation History: Priority of Abrahamic Covenant (3:15-25)
- III. A Call to Freedom from the Law and Freedom in the Spirit (4:12-6:10)
 - A. Live in Freedom from the Law (4:12-20)
 - B. Stand in Freedom (4:21-5:1)
 - C. Resist the Dangerous Message of Bondage (5:2-12)
 - D. Live Out Freedom in the Spirit (5:13-6:10)
- IV. Final Summary (6:11-18)

Reading Plan

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 12	Galatians 1-2	Psalm 41
May – 13	Galatians 3:1-5:1	Psalm 42
May – 14	Galatians 5:2-6:18	Psalm 43

⁴³ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Galatians*, p. 58-59

Ephesians

Introduction:

The book of Ephesians is in the same grouping as Galatians in that its focus is response to false teaching by primarily focusing on the one true Gospel. While Ephesians expounds on some of the most glorious Gospel truths, it also has clear application for daily life. This shows us that theology can never be divorced from application because true knowledge is in its application.

Ephesians is largely a book about the unity of the Gospel. There is a large section devoted to the unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, which signals an important theological point: our unity is not in our uniformity, our unity is in Christ. All of us can take heed and consider how we contribute to the overall unity of our local church.

Outline:

This outline⁴⁴ come from Ralph Martin:

- I. Introduction and Prayer (1:1-14)
 - A. Introduction (1:1-2)
 - B. Prayer (1:3-14)
- II. The Church's Life in Christ (1:15-3:21)
 - A. Paul's Intercession (1:15-23)
 - B. The Church's History – Past, Present, and Future (2:1-10)
 - C. The Unity of the Church (2:11-22)
 - D. Paul's Apostleship and His Prayer for the Church (3)
- III. The Church's Life in Society (4:1-6:19)
 - A. The Church's Vocation as Christ's Body (4:1-16)
 - B. The Christian's Personal Conduct (4:17-32)
 - C. The Christian's Conduct in the World (5:1-21)
 - D. The Christian's Conduct in the Family (5:22-6:9)
- IV. Conclusion (6:10-24)
 - A. The Christian's Warfare (6:10-20)
 - B. Personal Remarks (6:21-24)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 15	Ephesians 1-2	Psalm 44
May – 16	Ephesians 3-4	Psalm 45
May – 17	Ephesians 5-6	Psalm 46

⁴⁴ Guthrie, Motyer, Sibbs, Wiseman, *The New Bible Commentary*, 3rd ed., p. 1106

Philippians

Introduction:

It is widely accepted that the book of Philippians primarily concerns the joy we have in Christ despite sufferings, difficulties, and challenges in life. We are to be content in these circumstances because of Jesus' work on the cross and because He is our ultimate pleasure and prize.

The response to false teachers in this book appears to be a proper theology of joy and suffering. The Christian life is not one of ease and comfort but of suffering and hardship, which are major themes throughout the book. We are to live holy lives that please Him in all circumstances.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁴⁵ of Philippians:

- I. Introduction and Prayer (1:1-11)
 - A. Introduction (1:1-2)
 - B. Prayer (1:3-11)
- II. The Report of His Circumstances (1:12-26)
- III. The Call to Live (1:27-2:18)
 - A. The Call to Live out the Gospel (1:27-30)
 - B. The Example of Christ (2:1-11)
 - C. The Practical Outworking of Salvation (2:12-18)
- IV. Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30)
- V. Conformed to Christ (3:1-16)
- VI. Imitate Paul (3:17-4:9)
 - A. Set Your Eyes on Examples (3:17-4:1)
 - B. Exhortations (4:2-9)
- VII. Conclusion (4:10-23)
 - A. God's Provision (4:10-20)
 - B. Final Greetings (4:21-22)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 18	Philippians 1-2	Psalm 47
May – 19	Philippians 3-4	Psalm 48

⁴⁵ The base of this outline comes from Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 484-485

Colossians

Introduction:

The book of Colossians is a book that shows Christ as supreme over all things in life. Its high and exalted picture of Jesus informs our understanding of practical daily life. We are to see and savor the Savior. We see Him in truth as we know more of Him, and we savor Him as we enjoy Him more than the pleasures of this world.

The false teaching is embedded throughout the book as it condemns worldly philosophies, legalism, and asceticism. These false teachings have no place in the church because it flies in the face of the Gospel Christ accomplished for us.

Outline:

Here is the outline of Colossians:

- I. Introduction and Prayer (1:1-14)
 - A. Introduction (1:1-2)
 - B. Prayer (1:3-14)
- II. The Church's Life in Christ (1:15-2:23)
 - A. The Supremacy of Christ (1:15-23)
 - B. The Building of the Church (1:24-2:5)
 - C. Standing Firm in the Gospel (2:6-15)
 - D. Worldly Philosophies (2:16-23)
- III. The Church's Life in Society (3:1-4:6)
 - A. Set Your Mind on Christ (3:1-4)
 - B. Put Off (3:5-11)
 - C. Put On (3:12-17)
 - D. The Family (3:18-4:1)
 - E. Exhortations (4:2-6)
- IV. Conclusion (4:7-18)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 20	Colossians 1-2	Psalm 49
May – 21	Colossians 3-4	Psalm 50

1 Thessalonians

Introduction:

After Paul iterates his Gospel doctrine (Romans), fights against false teaching (1 Cor.) and teachers (2 Cor.), and an extended discussion of false teaching by hailing the Gospel (Gal.-Col.), he shifts his focus to the end of time and our eternal hope, which is a fitting shift in Paul's theology and thought. However, we cannot sharply distinguish this from earlier books because 1-2 Thessalonians is a response to false teaching about the end times.

1 Thessalonians is fighting against the notion that Christ has already returned. Paul is also reminding us that Christ's imminent return is motivation for us to live holy lives that please Him. The goal of knowing Christ's return is not to build a bomb shelter but to have hope fuel the Christian life further.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁴⁶ for 1 Thessalonians:

- I. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1-4)
- II. Reminiscences (1:5-2:16)
 - A. Response of the Thessalonians to the Original Preaching (1:5-10)
 - B. The Preaching of the Gospel at Thessalonica (2:1-16)
- III. The Relationship of Paul to the Thessalonians (2:17-3:13)
- IV. Exhortation to Christian Living (4:1-12)
- V. Problems Living with the Second Coming (4:13-5:11)
 - A. Believers Who Die before the Second Coming (4:13-18)
 - B. The Time of the Second Coming (5:1-3)
 - C. Children of the Day (5:4-11)
- VI. Life in the Christian Community (5:12-22)
- VII. Conclusion (5:23-28)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 22	1 Thessalonians 1-3	Psalm 51
May – 23	1 Thessalonians 4-5	Psalm 52

⁴⁶ Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, p. vi-vii

2 Thessalonians

Introduction:

2 Thessalonians continues in the same vein as 1 Thessalonians by focusing on the “end times.” Paul’s instruction in 1 Thessalonians was on the imminence of Christ’s return in the future (rather than in the past) and the coming of the Day of the Lord. 2 Thessalonians gives reasons why Jesus has not returned already and explains the signs that must happen before He comes.

2 Thessalonians is a book that focuses on Christ’s return as our hope but also to remind us that the curse of humanity in Genesis 3 will be reversed and we will enter into the New Heavens and the New Earth.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁴⁷ of 2 Thessalonians:

- I. Introduction and Prayer (1:1-12)
 - A. Introduction (1:1-2)
 - B. Prayer (1:3-12)
- II. The Second Coming (2:1-12)
 - A. The Day of the Lord Not Yet Present (2:1-2)
 - B. The Great Rebellion (2:3-12)
 - C. The False Claim and Refutation (2:1-12)
- III. Thanksgiving and Encouragement (2:13-17)
- IV. The Faithfulness of God (3:1-5)
- V. Godly Discipline (3:6-15)
- VI. Conclusion (3:16-18)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 24	2 Thessalonians 1-3	Psalm 53

⁴⁷ Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, p. vii

1 Timothy

Introduction:

The book of 1 Timothy begins with another transition in Paul's writings in what are called the Pastoral Epistles. After all these books concerning false teaching and false teachers, how can Paul ensure that the health of the church will continue when he is dead and unable to write letters? The answer is faithful local churches. God entrusts the guarding of healthy doctrine to the church who elect faithful elders who faithfully teach and preach the Word. The letters of the New Testament reveal a concern for the purity of the Gospel, and healthy local churches promote more and more unity around the Gospel. The book of 1 Timothy primarily focuses on guarding the faithful deposit of the Gospel. We are to know how we are to behave in the household of God.

Outline:

This outline⁴⁸ comes from Andreas Kostenberger:

- I. Opening (1:1-2)
- II. Personal Charge (1:3-20)
 - A. The Challenge of the False Teachers (1:3-11)
 - B. Paul's Testimony (1:12-17)
 - C. Exhortation to Timothy (1:18-20)
- III. Congregational Matters (2-3)
 - A. On Prayer (2:1-8)
 - B. Regarding Women (2:9-15)
 - C. Church Offices (3:1-13)
 1. Qualifications for Elders (3:1-7)
 2. Qualifications for Deacons and Deaconesses (3:8-13)
 - D. Heart of 1 Timothy: The Church as the Household of God (3:14-16)
- IV. Further Charges (4:1-6:2a)
 - A. Latter-Day Apostasy (4:1-5)
 - B. Being a Good Servant of Jesus Christ (4:6-16)
 - C. Further Congregational Matters: Dealing with Differing Groups (5:1-6:2a)
 1. Ages (5:1-2)
 2. Widows (5:3-16)
 3. Elders (5:17-25)
 4. Slaves (6:1-2a)
- V. Final Exhortation and Conclusion (6:2b-21)
 - A. Extended Exhortation (6:2b-19)
 - B. Closing (6:20-21)

⁴⁸ Andreas Kostenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, EBTC p. 61

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
May – 25	1 Timothy 1-2	Psalm 54
June – 1	1 Timothy 3-4	Psalm 55

2 Timothy

Introduction:

It is largely accepted that 2 Timothy is Paul's last letter (of those included in the NT canon). It is his departing words to Timothy as he passes the mantle. Paul is encouraging his younger pastor to maintain the Gospel entrusted to him so that the church might continue across generations.

2 Timothy is a fitting conclusion to Paul's letters as it focuses on the future of the church after his death. We are to look back at all of Paul's writing and ministry and remind ourselves that our focus must remain on the Gospel.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁴⁹ for 2 Timothy with influence from Andrea Kostenberger:

- I. Introduction (1:1-5)
- II. Body Opening: Personal Exhortations (1:6-18)
 - A. Personal Exhortations to Faithful Guarding (1:6-14)
 - B. Faithful Co-Workers (1:15-18)
- III. Body Middle: Ministry Metaphors (2:1-4:8)
 - A. Three Ministry Metaphors (2:1-7)
 - B. Paul's Gospel and Trustworthy Sayings (2:8-13)
 - C. Three Ministry Roles (2:14-26)
 - D. Unfaithful False Teachers (3:1-9)
 - E. Personal Exhortations for Faithful Preaching (3:10-3:17)
- IV. Body Closing: Preach the Word (4:1-8)
- V. Conclusion (4:9-22)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 2	2 Timothy 1-2	Psalm 56
June – 3	2 Timothy 3-4	Psalm 57

⁴⁹ Andreas Kostenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, EBTC p. 206

Titus

Introduction:

Titus has several similar features to 1-2 Timothy as a Pastoral Epistle, but it is written to another “Senior Pastor” named Titus. Titus is more of a focus on the role of elders in the local church, but it still provides bearing on the Christian life to the whole church.

The roles of Pastor-Elder are to teach and shepherd the flock well through sound doctrine. The character of the Pastor-Elder must be above reproach and be the foremost of qualifications. A gifted elder with bad character is not a category that Paul permits. The health of a church is largely dependent on the health of her elders.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁵⁰ of Titus:

- I. Introduction and Prayer (1:1-4)
- II. Occasion for Writing (1:5-16)
 - A. The Need to Appoint Qualified Elders (1:5-9)
 - B. The Cretan Opposition (1:10-16)
- III. Instructions Concerning Different Groups in the Church (2)
 - A. Introduction (2:1)
 - B. The Household Code (2:2-10)
 - C. The Manifestation of the Grace of God in Christ and the Expectation of Christ’s Return (2:11-14)
 - D. Conclusion (2:15)
- IV. Instructions on Doing What Is Good in the Context of the General Cultures (3:1-11)
 - A. On Keeping the Peace (3:1-2)
 - B. The Manifestation of God’s Kindness and Love in Christ and Regeneration by the Spirit (3:3-8a)
 - C. On Dealing with Divisive Persons (3:8b-11)
- V. Conclusion (3:12-15)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 4	Titus 1-3	Psalm 58

⁵⁰ Andreas Kostenberger, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, EBTC p. 305-306

Philemon

Introduction:

The role of Philemon in the development of Paul's writings is difficult to discern. It is an intimate personal letter of Paul to Philemon concerning his slave, Onesimus. We are reminded that our Christian brothers and sisters should be valued, loved, cherished, and served regardless of their social status⁵¹.

It may be that Philemon shows that local church health (1 Timothy-Titus) shows love to the members of are church who are unlovable and sin against us.

Outline:

- I. Introduction and Thanksgiving (1:1-7)
 - A. Introduction (1:1-3)
 - B. Thanksgiving (1:4-7)
- II. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus (1:8-20)
 - A. Paul's Loving Appeal (1:8-16)
 - B. Paul's Gospel Love: Self-Sacrifice for Lowly (1:17-20)
- III. Conclusion (1:21-22)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 5	Philemon	Psalm 59

⁵¹ I am indebted to Andy Naselli for this insight in *How to Understand & Apply the New Testament*, p. 192

Hebrews

Introduction:

The book of Hebrews is one of the most important books in the New Testament. More than any other book, it carefully shows us the continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments (Old and New Covenants). The author is anonymous and largely unimportant to developing a theology of the book. It is most helpfully thought of as a recorded sermon written as a letter of encouragement.

The Preacher of Hebrews helpfully explains important themes in the Old Testament that find their climax in Christ, but he does not do so devoid of Gospel application. He has two modes of writing: exposition and exhortation. In the exposition sections, he explains what Christ has done for us in the Gospel. In the exhortation sections, he encourages and rebukes his audience to look to Christ and persevere in their faith. A good summary of the book would be this: Jesus is better, therefore strive to the end⁵². The Preacher's goal is to help us remember Christ and pour our lives into knowing more of Him so that we might persevere to the end.

Outline:

The outline of Hebrews⁵³ is best considered as a chiasmic structure:

Introduction (1:1-4)

 Position of the Son, Exaltation then Humiliation (1:5-2:18)

 The Example of the Past – Israel's Wandering (3:1-4:16)

 Warning and Assurance (5:11-6:20)

 Christ, Melchizedekian Priest (5:1-10; 7:1-28)

 High Priest of Heavenly Places (8:1-2)

 Christ, the New Covenant Priest (8:3-10:18)

 Assurance and Warning (10:19-31)

 The Examples of the Past – Faith (10:32-12:2)

 Suffering of Sons, Humiliation to Exaltation (12:3-13:19)

Benediction and Conclusion (13:20-25)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 6	Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Psalm 60
June – 7	Hebrews 4:14-6:20	Psalm 61
June – 8	Hebrews 7-8	Psalm 62
June – 9	Hebrews 9-10	Psalm 63
June – 10	Hebrews 11:1-12:17	Psalm 64
June – 11	Hebrews 12:18-13:25	Psalm 65

⁵² I came to this conclusion on my own but found Andy Naselli had a similar summary in *How to Understand & Apply the New Testament*, p. 192

⁵³ Again, this outline is primarily my own work, but I was largely influenced by Gareth Cockerill, Thomas Schreiner, and George Guthrie in their respective commentaries.

Ruth

Introduction:

To summarize the Old Testament story up until this point, the Torah establishes the covenant of God with Adam/Noah, Abraham, and Israel. These covenants focus on land, seed, and blessing through the lineage of Abraham. The covenant made with Israel had clear stipulations. If Israel broke this covenant, then God will judge by exiling them out of the land. The descent to exile was fast and took up the Former Prophets. The Latter Prophets come with a message of hope for Israel by looking to the Davidic Covenant and the Messiah-King from David's line.

The Former Prophets (beginning with Ruth) pick up on this theme by reorienting Israel to look forward in God's Kingdom purposes to His future Davidic Messiah-King. This is why Ruth is a prelude⁵⁴ to the Former Writings. It helpfully orients us to the Davidic Kingship. How?

Ruth is a love story of God's bitter providences that remind us of God's redeeming work needed to bring His people out of exile. Further, Ruth ends with a genealogy of King David, which is a forward-looking hope of the Messiah King.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁵⁵ of Ruth:

- I. Introduction: Naomi Bereft of Family (1:1-5)
- II. Scene 1: Naomi Returns to Bethlehem with Ruth (1:6-22)
- III. Scene 2: Ruth Gleans in Boaz's Field (2)
- IV. Scene 3: Ruth, at the Threshing Floor, Asks Boaz to Marry Her (3)
- V. Scene 4: Boaz Arranges Redemption at the Gate (4:1-12)
- VI. Conclusion (4:13-22)
 - A. Naomi Blessed with New Family (4:13-17)
 - B. Genealogy: Blessing to the Nations through King David (4:18-22)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 12	Ruth 1-2	Psalm 66
June – 13	Ruth 3-4	Psalm 67

⁵⁴ The word "prelude" helpfully comes from Jason DeRouchie from *How to Understand & Apply the Old Testament*, p. 328

⁵⁵ Ronald Bergey, *ESV Study Bible*, p. 477

Psalms

Introduction:

The book of Psalms is a Messianic hymn book that centers on the Davidic Messiah. The Psalms are carefully crafted to preserve a storyline that largely replicates the history of Israel. There are two dangers that must be avoided when reading the Psalms. First, we must remember to read the Psalms in light of the Davidic Covenant. There are promises that are embedded in the storyline of Scripture that have their fulfillment in Christ, and we must read the Psalms as Christian Scripture. Second, we must not read each Psalm in isolation but in light of its connection to Psalms before and after it.

The arrangement of the book of Psalms is not random but intentional and beautiful. It is helpful to read the Psalms in groups of 3-4 Psalms to help see an impressionistic story that the compiler is bringing. Based on various literary features⁵⁶, Hamilton argues that Books 1 and 2 of the Psalms focus on the life of the historical David. Book 3 begins with Solomon and begins to work its way down to the exile. Book 4 begins with a Prayer of Moses that gives the impression that Moses is interceding of the people of God in exile on behalf of the Davidic Covenant⁵⁷. Book 5 begins God gathering the redeemed from exile and establishing the King of Israel on Zion.

Outline:

Here is a helpful outline⁵⁸ of the book of Psalms

- I. Introduction: The Blessed Davidic King (Ps. 1-2)
- II. Book 1 (Ps. 3-41)
 - A. Absalom's Revolt (3-9)
 - B. The Wicked (10-14)
 - C. The King (15-24)
 - D. God's Word and Glory (25-33)
 - E. Saved through Judgment (34-41)
- III. Book 2 (Ps. 42-72)
 - A. The Sons of Korah (42-49)
 - B. Asaph (50)
 - C. David (51-72)
- IV. Book 3 (Ps. 73-89)
 - A. Asaph (73-83)
 - B. The Sons of Korah (84-89)

⁵⁶ There are many features and evidences for this proposal, but space forbade me to include all of them. See Hamilton, *Psalms: Volume I* in EBTC, p. 7-11

⁵⁷ Obviously, Moses is not literally interceding, but the compiler of the Psalms is attempting to give that impression because Moses is known as the Great Intercessor (Exod. 32:10; Num. 14:12)

⁵⁸ The sources for these words come from Hamilton, *Psalms: Volume I* in EBTC, p. 52-64 and Jason DeRouchie, *Lectures on the Psalms*, <https://jasonderouchie.com/derouchie-lectures-on-the-psalms/>

- V. Book 4 (90-106)
 - A. Mosaic Intercession and Reaffirmation of the Davidic Covenant (90-92)
 - B. Yahweh Reigns: Guaranteeing the Davidic Covenant (93-100)
 - C. Davidic Commitment, Prayer, and Forgiveness (101-103)
 - D. Creation, the Covenant with Abraham, and Israel's Sin (104-106)
- VI. Book 5 (107-145)
 - A. Davidic King (107-112)
 - B. Hallelujah (113-118)
 - C. Torah (119)
 - D. Songs of Ascents (120-137)
 - E. The Davidic King (138-145)
- VII. Conclusion: Hallelujah (Ps. 146-150)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
June – 14	Psalms 1-6	No Psalms readings.
June – 15	Psalms 7-9	
June – 16	Psalms 10-14	
June – 17	Psalms 15-17	
June – 18	Psalm 18	
June – 19	Psalms 19-22	
June – 20	Psalms 23-27	
June – 21	Psalms 28-31	
June – 22	Psalms 32-34	
June – 23	Psalms 35-36	
June – 24	Psalms 37-38	
June – 25	Psalms 39-41	
July – 1	Psalms 42-45	
July – 2	Psalms 46-49	
July – 3	Psalms 50-52	
July – 4	Psalms 53-57	
July – 5	Psalms 58-61	
July – 6	Psalms 62-65	
July – 7	Psalms 66-68	
July – 8	Psalms 69-70	
July – 9	Psalms 71-72	
July – 10	Psalms 73-74	
July – 11	Psalms 75-77	
July – 12	Psalm 78	
July – 13	Psalms 79-83	
July – 14	Psalms 84-88	
July – 15	Psalm 89	
July – 16	Psalms 90-93	
July – 17	Psalms 94-97	

July – 18	Psalms 98-101	
July – 19	Psalms 102-103	
July – 20	Psalms 104-105	
July – 21	Psalm 106	
July – 22	Psalms 107-108	
July – 23	Psalms 109-112	
July – 24	Psalms 113-118	
July – 25	Psalm 119:1-48 ⁵⁹	
August – 1	Psalm 119:49-96	
August – 2	Psalm 119:97-144	
August – 3	Psalm 119:145-176	
August – 4	Psalms 120-127	
August – 5	Psalms 128-134	
August – 6	Psalms 135-137	
August – 7	Psalms 138-140	
August – 8	Psalms 141-145	
August – 9	Psalms 146-150	

⁵⁹ I'd highly encourage attempting to read Psalm 119 in one sitting; it is a wonderful experience.

Job

Introduction:

The role of Job in the development of the canon is difficult to discern. Traditionally the books of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs are considered “Wisdom books.” Wisdom literature was a common mode of writing in the Ancient Near East. It attempts to wrestle with seeming tensions of life. Central to Wisdom literature in the Old Testament is the fear of Yahweh. Proverbs repeatedly says that it is the fear of Yahweh that is the beginning of wisdom. It is in this vein that we seek to understand job: we are to fear God even in the midst of suffering.

Job comes first in this wisdom literature to give this theological point: we are to fear Yahweh because He sovereignly rules the world. Throughout Job’s complaints, we see that Job is angry with God because the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer. However, we are to know that the fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom not a formula for an easy life. Even in our suffering, we are to know that it is God Himself who rules over creation and also rules in your suffering.

Outline:

Here is an outline⁶⁰ for Job:

- I. Yahweh’s Challenges to Satan about Job (1-2)
 - A. First Challenge (1)
 - B. Second Challenge (2)
- II. Job’s Lament (3)
- III. Job and His Counselors (4-25)
 - A. First Cycle (4-14)
 - B. Second Cycle (15-21)
 - C. Third Cycle (22-25)
- IV. Job Extols God’s Majesty (26-31)
- V. Elihu’s Speeches (32-37)
- VI. Yahweh’s Response (38-41)
- VII. Conclusion: Repentance and Restoration (42)

⁶⁰ Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 301-304

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
August – 10	Job 1-3	Psalm 68
August – 11	Job 4-5	Psalm 69
August – 12	Job 6-7	Psalm 70
August – 13	Job 8-10	
August – 14	Job 11-12	Psalm 71
August – 15	Job 13-14	Psalm 72
August – 16	Job 15-17	
August – 17	Job 18-19	Psalm 73
August – 18	Job 20-21	Psalm 74
August – 19	Job 22-24	
August – 20	Job 25-26	Psalm 75
August – 21	Job 27-28	Psalm 76
August – 22	Job 29-30	Psalm 77
August – 23	Job 31	Psalm 78:1-39
August – 24	Job 32-33	Psalm 78:40-72
August – 25	Job 34-35	Psalm 79
September – 1	Job 36-37	Psalm 80
September – 2	Job 38	Psalm 81
September – 3	Job 39:1-40:5	Psalm 82
September – 4	Job 40:6-42:17	Psalm 83

Proverbs

Introduction:

The book of Proverbs is second book in the Wisdom literature and is the first one written by Solomon. Again, Wisdom literature is fear of Yahweh and living as a proper human being. In the beginning of 1 Kings, he is pictured as the ideal Adam who is going to reign as the Messiah. We know that he falls short, but that does not remove the Messianic tune of the book of Proverbs. The Messiah is to be one that ideally portrays the “fear of Yahweh.”

The book of Proverbs is largely a group of short, pithy statements that are easy to remember. We must be careful in interpreting the Proverbs because they are not “black and white commands” but “gray area principles” that help us navigate life. In short, there may be apparent “contradictions” in these Proverbs, but they are not universal truths that apply to all situations. For example, one Proverb states that a fool is considered wise if he holds his tongue. However, there are several examples of times when it would be utterly foolish to hold your tongue (watching a crime take place and do nothing, etc.).

Lastly, the Proverbs are to be read in light of Torah (the first five books of Moses). There are several points of contact that are intended by Solomon since he meditates on God’s law.

Outline:

Here is a helpful outline⁶¹ of Proverbs:

- I. Title, Introduction, and Motto (1:1-7)
- II. A Father’s Praise of Wisdom (1:8-9:18)
 - A. Paternal Appeal (1:8-19)
 - B. Wisdom’s Appeal (1:20-33)
 - C. Wisdom as Treasure and Safeguard (2)
 - D. The Whole-Hearted Disciple (3)
 - E. The Lifelong Pilgrimage (4)
 - F. Wisdom about Marriage (5)
 - G. Pitfalls for the Unwary (6)
 - H. Simpleton and Seductress (7)
 - I. Wisdom’s Defense (8)
 - J. The Rival Feasts (9)
- III. Individual Solomonic Proverbs (10:1-22:16)
- IV. Words of Wise Men (22:17-24:22)
- V. Further Words of Wise Men (24:23-34)
- VI. Further Proverbs of Solomon: Hezekiah’s Collection (25-29)
- VII. Words of Agur (30)
- VIII. Words of King Lemuel (31:1-9)
- IX. An Alphabet of Wifely Excellence (31:10-31)

⁶¹ Derek Kidner, *Proverbs: An Introduction & Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries p. 57

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
September – 5	Proverbs 1-2	Psalm 84
September – 6	Proverbs 3-4	Psalm 85
September – 7	Proverbs 5-6	Psalm 86
September – 8	Proverbs 7-9	
September – 9	Proverbs 10-11	Psalm 87
September – 10	Proverbs 12-13	Psalm 88
September – 11	Proverbs 14-15	Psalm 89:1-37
September – 12	Proverbs 16-17	Psalm 89:38-52
September – 13	Proverbs 18-19	Psalm 90
September – 14	Proverbs 20:1-22:16	
September – 15	Proverbs 22:17-24:34	Psalm 91
September – 16	Proverbs 25-26	Psalm 92
September – 17	Proverbs 27-28	Psalm 93
September – 18	Proverbs 29	Psalm 94
September – 19	Proverbs 30-31	Psalm 95

Ecclesiastes

Introduction:

If Proverbs is about the ideal life and the path to ideal humanity, Ecclesiastes is the hedonistic life of shame and guilt. It has been said that Proverbs is like Genesis 1-2, the ideal Garden-paradise that God initially designed, and Ecclesiastes is like Genesis, the curse of humanity. While these paint with broad strokes, it still is a helpful introduction. We saw that Wisdom Literature lives in light of the fear of Yahweh. This fear of Yahweh even transitions to the seeming “vanity of life” or the “enigmas of life⁶².”

Ecclesiastes pictures the sage, old Solomon at the end of his life, giving advice about the enigmas of life and the meaninglessness of worldly pleasures. The focus of humanity in all of life’s enigmas and mysteries is to love God and follow His commandments.

Outline:

The outline⁶³ of Ecclesiastes is a chiastic structure:

The Messianic Wisdom of the Son of David (1:1)

The Circularity of Life (1:2-11)

Pleasure, Wisdom, and Toil vs. Eat, Drink, and Enjoy (1:12-6:9)

Man is Unable to Understand; Eat, Drink, and Enjoy (6:10-11:6)

Youth and Old Age (11:7-12:8)

The Messianic Wisdom of the One Shepherd (12:9-14)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
September – 20	Ecclesiastes 1-3	
September – 21	Ecclesiastes 4:1-6:9	Psalm 96
September – 22	Ecclesiastes 6:10-8:17	Psalm 97
September – 23	Ecclesiastes 9:1-12:14	

⁶² Translations of the Hebrew word “Hebel” are difficult. Literally, it means wisp of air, breath, or vapor, but the intended “meaning” of Hebel could be “vanity/meaninglessness” or “enigma/frustrating mystery.” I favor the second translation. For an analysis of the evidence, see Jason DeRouchie, *How to Understand & Apply the Old Testament*, p. 286-291.

⁶³ Addison G. Wright, *The Riddle of the Sphinx: The Structure of the Book of Qoheleth*, CBQ 30, p. 313-334. Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 319

Song of Songs

Introduction:

The book of Song of Songs is the last book of the Wisdom Literature and continues on the themes of ideal humanity with a portrayal of the ideal marriage. In Hebrew, a phrase like “Song of Songs” or “Holy of Holies,” is similar to “The Holiest place” or “the Greatest Song.”

The role of this book in the canon is to portray marriage in light of the wisdom of Solomon. However, that is not all that is underneath this Song. There is a long debate among scholars as to the role of the Song and its relationship to Christ and the church. I think Solomon’s authorship and his depiction as the main character shows that he is portraying a future Messiah. In the words of Hamilton⁶⁴, “The Song of Solomon shows the Solomonic king, who is the seed of the woman, seed of Abraham, seed of Judah, seed of David, overcoming the alienation of the fall and renewing the intimacy of Eden.” Dempster⁶⁵ adds that in light of Hosea and the breaking of the marriage covenant between Yahweh and Israel, the contents of this song, “...inspires hope for Israel, since it suggests that God will not abandon his beloved.”

Furthermore, the Song of Songs is a love poem designed to portray the physical beauties of earthly marriage while also pointing forward to the ultimate marriage of God and His people.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁶⁶ for the Song of Songs:

Mutual Love (1:1-2:7)

Coming and Going (2:8-17)

Dream I: Lost and Found (3:1-5)

Praise of Groom I (3:6-11)

Praise of Bride I (4:1-7)

Praise of Bride, II (4:8-15)

Invitation by Bride (4:16)

Acceptance of Invitation by Groom (5:1)

Dream II: Found and Lost (5:2-8)

Praise of Groom II (5:9-6:3)

Praise of Bride, III (6:4-12)

Praise of Bride, IV (6:13-7:9)

Going and Coming (7:10-8:2)

Mutual Love (8:3-14)

⁶⁴ Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 307

⁶⁵ Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, p. 208

⁶⁶ Richard M. Davidson, *The Literary Structure of the Song of Songs Redivivus*, Journal of Adventist Theological Society, p. 50

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
September – 24	Song of Songs 1-4	Psalm 98
September – 25	Song of Songs 5-8	Psalm 99

Lamentations

Introduction:

The book of Lamentations is a helpful close to the Former Writings for several reasons. First, the Latter Writings begins with Daniel and ends with 1-2 Chronicles, which reveals a transition back to Historical Narrative. In other words, we are picking up where we left off in 2 Kings, which ended in exile. Lamentations is the work of Jeremiah weeping over the exile. Also, the Former Writings form an inclusio that begins with Jeremiah's writings and ends with Jeremiah's writings. Lastly, it reminds us that Israel is still suffering in exile even though the hope of the future Davidic King is bound in God's covenant promise.

The book of Lamentations is designed to be a poetic response to the exile of Judah. It begins with the destruction of Jerusalem and continues through much weeping. This poem, despite its rich emotion, is highly structured with five poems with each poem at the chapter break.

The heart of the book is in Lamentations 3:21-26, which proclaims that Yahweh is faithful to His promises, which alludes to His saving Messiah and the Davidic Covenant. The book ends with a prayer for restoration that beautifully sets up the book of Daniel, which shows the future hope of the Davidic King.

Outline:

Here is a helpful outline for Lamentations:

Acrostic 1: Devastation of Lady Zion (1)

Acrostic 2: Yahweh's Overthrow of Lady Zion (2)

Acrostic 3: The Mercy of Yahweh: New Morning Mercies (3)

Acrostic 4: Yahweh's Purpose in Judgment (4)

Acrostic 5: Restoration of Lady Zion (5)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 1	Lamentations 1-2	Psalm 100
October – 2	Lamentations 3	
October – 3	Lamentations 4-5	Psalm 101

James

Introduction:

The books of Paul (Romans-Philemon) and Hebrews focused on the Gospel and proper doctrine. Now, there is a shift in the New Testament to life in the New Covenant. The books of James – Jude all focus on life in light of New Covenant realities. These have traditionally been called the “Catholic epistles” in the sense of “General” not “Roman Catholic Church.”

The order of the Catholic epistles likely comes from Galatians 2:9, where Paul gives the names of some “pillars” of the faith: James, Cephas, and John. However, there is some canonical development on this point as well. In light of Hebrews’ high emphasis on the person and work of Christ, James has a high emphasis on “true religion” and “showing faith by works.” The warnings of apostasy in Hebrews and James’s writing style reveal a similar concern: a type of faith that does not bear fruit.

There is a danger in all of us to be complacent, worldly, and wandering, but Christ is a perfect Savior who does not lose His sheep. However, take heed of the words of James since he is calling us to personal holiness.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁶⁷ of James:

- I. The Opening of the Letter (1:1)
- II. Double Introduction: Living by Righteous Wisdom (1:2-27)
 - A. Introduction Part I: Handling Trials with Righteous Wisdom (1:2-12)
 - B. Introduction Part II: The Perils of Self-Deception (1:13-27)
- III. Living the Law of Liberty (2:1-5:6)
 - A. Violating the Royal Law through Judging the Poor (2:1-11)
 - B. So Speak and So Act as One Being Judged by the Law of Liberty (2:12-13)
 - C. Wrong Actions toward the Poor (2:14-26)
 - D. Righteous vs. Worldly Wisdom (3:13-18)
 - E. Wrong Actions and Speaking toward One Another in Practice (4:1-5)
 - F. A Call to Humility and Repentance (4:6-10)
 - G. Do the Law, Do Not Judge It (4:11-12)
 - H. Twin Calls to the Arrogant Rich (4:13-5:6)
- IV. Conclusion: Enduring in Righteous Living in Community (5:7-20)
 - A. The Need for Patient Endurance (5:7-11)
 - B. The need for Righteous Words in Community (5:12-20)

⁶⁷ George Guthrie, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary Volume: 13*, p. 209

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 4	James 1-2	Psalm 102
October – 5	James 3-5	Psalm 103

1 Peter

Introduction:

1 Peter is a book deeply embedded in Old Testament quotations and worldviews to provide comfort for a persecuted and suffering church. He uses language of “sojourners and aliens,” to help show that just as God comforted Israel in exile through His future promises, God does the same for them. We are in a period of wandering, and it is the Gospel alone that gives us hope.

1 Peter continues to discuss Christian living in the New Covenant by showing the similarities between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant (sojourners and exiles, the rock of Christ/Messiah, etc.) and uses those themes to bolster our hope in the future promises of God.

Outline:

Here is the outline⁶⁸ for 1 Peter:

- I. Letter Opening (1:1-2)
- II. Letter Body (1:3-5:11)
 - A. Theological Opening on Christian Hope (1:3-12)
 - B. Christian Identity as the New Diaspora Community (1:13-2:10)
 - C. Christian Witness as a Diaspora Community (2:11-3:12)
 - D. Christian Suffering Due to Righteous Living (3:13-5:11)
 1. A Christian Perspective on Suffering (3:13-4:6)
 2. Eschatology and Christian Ethics (4:7-19)
 3. Christian Leadership in the New Diaspora Community (5:1-11)
- III. Letter Closing (5:12-14)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 6	1 Peter 1-2	Psalm 104:1-23
October – 7	1 Peter 3-5	Psalm 104:24-35

⁶⁸ J. Daryl Charles, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume: 13*, p. 296

2 Peter

Introduction:

1 Peter focused on giving comfort and hope to a suffering and persecuted community of believers by reminding them of God's covenant promises. 2 Peter continues on that theme but adds that we are to have a holy conduct and piety throughout our lives. This helpfully fits in the broader theme of "life in the New Covenant."

1 Peter and 2 Peter have many connections to them. Both focus on Christ's second coming, they have major themes of judgment, and they iterate personal holiness. 1-2 Peter also helpfully fit after James because of their forward-looking focus on the return of Christ.

Outline:

Here is a helpful outline⁶⁹ to 2 Peter:

- I. The Writer and His Audience (1:1-2)
- II. Purpose for Writing and Authority (1:3-21)
- III. Profile of Apostasy (2)
- IV. Exhortation to the Faithful (3:1-13)
- V. Final Exhortation and Doxology (3:14-18)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 8	2 Peter 1-3	

⁶⁹ J. Daryl Charles, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume: 13*, p. 381

1 John

Introduction:

John's purpose in writing this letter is clear, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). It is in this context that we clearly see 1 John's role in the canon as "life in the New Covenant." In John's mind, our assurance of salvation is first and foremost tied to the perfection of Christ's atoning work. Second, our assurance of salvation is tied to our love for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

John's letter also focuses on false teachers that have come out of the church that reveal they were never truly saved at all. It is during these "last days" that false teaches and "antichrists"⁷⁰ will come into the world. John's concern is to keep us on alert that we might not fall into false teaching as well.

Outline:

To be perfectly frankly, outlines of 1 John are just as numerous as there are commentaries on 1 John. Here is a tentative outline⁷¹ for 1 John:

- I. Prologue: Setting the Boundaries (1:1-4)
- II. Tests to Distinguish True Disciples from the World (1:5-2:17)
 - A. Walking in the Light (1:5-10)
 - B. Keeping His Commandments (2:1-6)
 - C. Loving Your Brother (2:7-11)
 - D. Loving the World (2:12-17)
- III. Tests to Distinguish True Disciples from Antichrists (2:18-5:12)
 - A. The True Confession (2:18-27)
 - B. Living Without Sin (2:28-3:24)
 - C. The True Spirit (4:1-6)
 - D. Perfect Love (4:7-21)
 - E. True Faith (5:1-12)
- IV. Conclusion (5:13-21)
 - A. Purpose and Assurance (5:13-15)
 - B. The Corporate Church Maintaining Purity (5:16-21)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 9	1 John 1-3	Psalm 105:1-25
October – 10	1 John 4-5	Psalm 105:26-45

⁷⁰ John uses this term to refer to false teachers generically. The singular "antichrist" could refer to the singular figure before Christ's return.

⁷¹ Tom Thatcher, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume: 13*, p. 425

2-3 John

Introduction:

Because these books are so short, we are going to take them together. 2 John is a letter to an individual woman and her children. The themes are quite Johannine: walk in love by keeping God's commandments. To abide in Christ is to obey His word.

3 John continues with a letter to an elder Gaius. Most of the contents are historical information, but John's calling to us is that we might imitate good and not evil. Living in the New Covenant community means to watch out for false teachers (2 John 1:7-9) and to work with somewhat difficult people (3 John 1:9-10)

Outline:

Here is the outline⁷² for 2 John:

- I. Greeting (1:1-3)
- II. Message (1:4-11)
 - A. Walking in Truth and Love (1:4-6)
 - B. Those Who Oppose the Truth (1:7-11)
- III. Closing (1:12-13)

Here is the outline⁷³ for 3 John:

- I. Greeting (1:1-4)
- II. Body (1:5-12)
 - A. Commendation for Support of Missionaries (1:5-8)
 - B. Critique of Diotrephes (1:9-10)
 - C. Demetrius and Imitation (1:11-12)
- III. Letter Closing (1:13-15)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 11	2 John-3 John	Psalm 106

⁷² Ray Van Neste, *The ESV Expository Commentary Volume: 12*, p. 477

⁷³ *Ibid.* p. 489

Jude

Introduction:

Jude is an interesting book in the New Testament canon. There are several parallels with 2 Peter, and there is a concern with false teaching. Jude will use the Old Testament as an undergirding worldview to respond to these false teachings, but there is also a mixture of unique stories and narratives that are not explicitly found in the Old Testament.

Jude's drawing on *1 Enoch* and the *Assumption of Moses* in this letter does not mean that he believed these works to be canonical. Non-canonical books can have true historical information in them without needing to be considered part of our preaching and worship.

Furthermore, Jude's primary focus is to encourage his readers to persevere in the Gospel and not live a type of "cheap grace" Christianity.

Outline:

Here is an outline⁷⁴ of Jude:

- I. Introduction and Purpose (1:1-4)
- II. Description and Condemnation of False Teachers (1:5-16)
 - A. False Teachers Are Destined for Condemnation (1:5-10)
 - B. False Teachers Live Ungodly Lives (1:11-13)
 - C. False Teachers Will Be Judged on the Last Day (1:14-16)
- III. Stay True to the Gospel (1:17-23)
 - A. Remember the Apostolic Warnings (1:17-19)
 - B. Keep Yourselves in the Love of God (1:20-21)
 - C. Show Mercy to Those in Trouble 1:22-23)
- IV. Doxology (1:24-25)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 12	Jude	

⁷⁴ Matthew S. Harmon, *The ESV Expository Commentary Volume: 12*, p. 506

Daniel

Introduction:

To summarize where we are, Genesis – 2 Kings are considered to be broadly narrative and telling the story of the Israelite people in light of God’s covenant promises to Abraham of land, seed, and blessing. By the end of 2 Kings, Israel forfeits those promises by breaking covenant. Jeremiah – Lamentations asks the questions of why. The answer was breaking Mosaic Covenant and giving hope through a new Davidic King. Daniel picks up the storyline in exile in Babylon.

Daniel’s specific contribution to the broader Old Testament answers this question: how will God bring His people out of exile? First, we see deliverance of the faithful as a picture of God’s future saving work in His people – Israel. Second, we also see how various Kingdoms will rise and fall before the Kingdom of God comes. However, what is the exact timeline?

Jeremiah said 70 years, and as Daniel begins counting, an angel tells Daniel that it will be 70 weeks of years before they truly return like Isaiah predicted. Scholars debate as to the role of the 70 weeks, but their function in Daniel is tied to the exile. Daniel concludes with a glorious picture of the end of time where God will resurrect His people, and we will shine bright as stars.

Outline:

Here is an outline⁷⁵ from Peter Gentry:

Prologue: Exile (1)

- Four Kingdoms Followed by the Kingdom of God (2)
- Deliverance of the Faithful from the Fiery Furnace (3)
- Humbling of Proud Nebuchadnezzar (4)
- Humbling of Proud Belshazzar (5)
- Deliverance of the Faithful from the Lion’s Den (6)

- Four Kingdoms Followed by the Kingdom of God (7)
- Expansions of Kingdoms 2 and 3 (8)
- Vision Concerning the End of the Exile (9)
- Expansions on Kingdoms 3 and 4 (10-11)

Epilogue: Return from Exile (12)

⁷⁵ Peter Gentry, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 602. He also credits Jim Hamilton and Andrew Steinmann.

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 13	Daniel 1-2	
October – 14	Daniel 3-4	Psalm 107:1-22
October – 15	Daniel 5-6	Psalm 107:23-43
October – 16	Daniel 7-8	Psalm 108
October – 17	Daniel 9-10	Psalm 109:1-20
October – 18	Daniel 11-12	Psalm 109:21-31

Esther

Introduction:

The book of Esther should be considered after Daniel because of the historical development. We saw in Daniel that after the Babylonians comes the Persian empire. Esther's book is set during that time and continues to remind the people of God's faithfulness in suffering outside the land.

We also see that both Daniel and Esther are intentionally portrayed as types of "Joseph." They all are oppressed in foreign nations, rise to second in command, and save others through faith in Yahweh. This points back to Joseph's story and shows that God ultimately brought His people into the Promised Land, but it also points forward to a Messiah figure: the Davidic King. Esther's story is about God's faithfulness to His people and how He always keeps His promises.

Outline:

Here is an outline⁷⁶ of Esther:

- I. Exposition (1-2)
- II. Main Action (3:1-9:19)
- III. Purim Appendix (9:20-32)
- IV. Epilogue (10)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 19	Esther 1-2	Psalm 110
October – 20	Esther 3:1-7:6	Psalm 111
October – 21	Esther 7:7-10:3	Psalm 112

⁷⁶ Barry G. Webb, *Five Festal Garments*, p. 115

Ezra-Nehemiah

Introduction:

Ezra and Nehemiah are designed to be taken as one book in the story. Ezra and Nehemiah develop the return from exile. Jeremiah's 70 years have been complete, and King Cyrus gives the decree as predicted in Isaiah. If we remember these Latter Prophets, we see that the promises of return from exile are tied to the pouring out the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 37; Joel 2), the New Davidic King, and a return to the Garden of Eden. That does not happen.

Ezra-Nehemiah return to the land, but the people are still in sin and idolatry. There is no real "return" that has taken place. The elders of Israel weep over the size of the rebuilt temple. There is good evidence to show that Yahweh does not return to the temple, and more. This utter flop shows that Daniel's 70 weeks and Isaiah's "second stage of return" still need to happen, which it does at the dawning of Matthew.

Ezra-Nehemiah show that God's promises are coming to fruition, but they need to wait until the true Davidic King comes, the Messiah.

Outline:

Here is a helpful outline⁷⁷ of Ezra-Nehemiah.

- I. Rebuilding a Broke Temple in Hope (Ezra 1-10)
 - A. Restoring the Physical Temple in Hope (Ezra 1-6)
 - B. Restoring the Temple's Faithless People in Hope: Ezra's Memoirs (Ezra 7-10)
- II. Rebuilding a Broken City in Hope: Nehemiah's Memoirs (Nehemiah 1-13)
 - A. Rebuilding Jerusalem's Physical Walls in Hope (Nehemiah 1:1-7:73a)
 - B. Rebuilding Jerusalem's Faithless People in Hope (7:73b-13:31)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
October – 22	Ezra 1-2	
October – 23	Ezra 3-5	Psalm 113
October – 24	Ezra 6-7	Psalm 114
October – 25	Ezra 8-9	Psalm 115
November – 1	Ezra 10	Psalm 116
November – 2	Nehemiah 1-3	
November – 3	Nehemiah 4:1-7:4	Psalm 117
November – 4	Nehemiah 7:5-73a	
November – 5	Nehemiah 7:73b-9:38	Psalm 118
November – 6	Nehemiah 10-11	Psalm 119:1-16
November – 7	Nehemiah 12-13	Psalm 119:17-32

⁷⁷ Jason DeRouchie, *Lectures on Ezra-Nehemiah*, <https://jasonderouchie.com/derouchie-lectures-on-ezra-nehemiah/>

1-2 Chronicles

Introduction:

1-2 Chronicles are considered to be one book in the Old Testament, and many Christians struggle with the role of 1-2 Chronicles in the canon. Samuel and Kings already exist, why do we need 1-2 Chronicles? Because the Chronicler has a different goal. As the last book in the canon, it sets up a Messianic figure.

The Chronicler intentionally sets up his history to focus on the Davidic Kingship and the future Messiah. He begins with several genealogies to remind us of the “seed of the woman” promise in Genesis 3:15 that works its way through Abraham to Judah to David. He also focuses on the successes of the Davidic Kings and the nation of Judah after Israel splits into two. He glosses over David’s sins and more to show what the future King will look like.

Scholars have long noticed that the end of 2 Chronicles is almost identical to the beginning of Ezra, which is why they are next to each other in our English Bibles. However, 2 Chronicles ends that way to remind us of a significant problem: Ezra-Nehemiah’s return from exile flopped and did not end up fulfilling all of God’s promises. 2 Chronicles ends this way to remind us that the true return from exile needs to happen when the Messiah comes. That is why the dawning of the New Testament comes with the Davidic King who returns His people from exile in Matthew.

Outline:

Here is an outline⁷⁸ for 1-2 Chronicles:

- I. Genealogies (1 Chronicles 1-9)
- II. Saul (1 Chronicles 10)
- III. David (1 Chronicles 11-29)
 - A. David’s Military Successes (1 Chronicles 11-16)
 - B. The Davidic Covenant (1 Chronicles 17)
 - C. More of David’s Military Successes (1 Chronicles 18:1-21:17)
 - D. David’s Organization for the Temple and Tabernacle (1 Chronicles 22:18-29:30)
- IV. Solomon (2 Chronicles 1-9)
- V. Kings of Judah (2 Chronicles 10-36)

⁷⁸ The basis of this outline comes from Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, p. 339-349

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
November – 8	1 Chronicles 1	Psalm 119:33-48
November – 9	1 Chronicles 2	Psalm 119:49-64
November – 10	1 Chronicles 3:1-4:23	Psalm 119:65-80
November – 11	1 Chronicles 4:23-5:26	Psalm 119:81-96
November – 12	1 Chronicles 6:1-53	Psalm 119:97-112
November – 13	1 Chronicles 6:52-81	Psalm 119:113-128
November – 14	1 Chronicles 7-8	Psalm 119:129-144
November – 15	1 Chronicles 9	Psalm 119:145-160
November – 16	1 Chronicles 10-11	Psalm 119:161-176
November – 17	1 Chronicles 12-13	Psalm 120
November – 18	1 Chronicles 14-15	Psalm 121
November – 19	1 Chronicles 16	Psalm 122
November – 20	1 Chronicles 17-18	Psalm 123
November – 21	1 Chronicles 19-21	Psalm 124
November – 22	1 Chronicles 22-23	Psalm 125
November – 23	1 Chronicles 24-25	Psalm 126
November – 24	1 Chronicles 26-27	Psalm 127
November – 25	1 Chronicles 28-29	Psalm 128
December – 1	2 Chronicles 1-3	Psalm 129
December – 2	2 Chronicles 4-5	Psalm 130
December – 3	2 Chronicles 6	Psalm 131
December – 4	2 Chronicles 7:1-9:12	Psalm 132
December – 5	2 Chronicles 9:13-11:23	
December – 6	2 Chronicles 12-14	Psalm 133
December – 7	2 Chronicles 15-17	
December – 8	2 Chronicles 18-19	Psalm 134
December – 9	2 Chronicles 20-21	
December – 10	2 Chronicles 22-24	Psalm 135
December – 11	2 Chronicles 25-26	Psalm 136
December – 12	2 Chronicles 27-28	Psalm 137
December – 13	2 Chronicles 29-30	Psalm 138
December – 14	2 Chronicles 31-32	Psalm 139
December – 15	2 Chronicles 33-34	Psalm 140
December – 16	2 Chronicles 35-36	Psalm 141

Revelation

Introduction:

The book of Revelation is one of the most debated books in the history of the church. The events are difficult to discern, the imagery is striking, and it is somewhat difficult for us to get our minds around. However, the main goal of Revelation is abundantly clear: God's promises will come to pass. We have future hope.

The book of Revelation does document the end of time, but it also has the letters to the seven churches in the beginning, which remind us that Revelation's purpose is to strengthen the believers and strengthen the church by giving us hope of Christ's return. We can debate on the exact timeline, but we know that Jesus is coming back to finally and fully establish His rule and reign over all creation and to restore us to the Garden of Eden paradise.

The true Davidic King will defeat sin, Satan, and death, and He will accomplish what the whole Bible has sought for: a way back to the Garden of Eden and into the presence of God.

Outline:

Here is an outline⁷⁹ of Revelation, which is more detailed than others to help with other interpretive difficulties:

- I. Introduction (1:1-20)
- II. Letters to the Seven Churches (2-3)
- III. Visions in the Throne Room (4-5)
 - A. God as the Holy Creator (4)
 - B. Lamb as the Redeemer (5)
- IV. The Seven Seals (6:1-8:5)
 - A. The First Six Seals (6)
 - B. Interlude (7)
 - C. The Seventh Seal and the Seven Trumpets (8:1-5)
- V. The Seven Trumpets (8:6-11:9)
 - A. The First Four Trumpets: Cosmic Destruction (8:6-13)
 - B. Fifth Trumpet: Demonic Locus Plague (9:1-12)
 - C. Sixth Trumpet: Demonic Calvary (9:13-21)
 - D. Interlude (10:1-11:14)
 1. Renewed Call to Prophecy (10)
 2. Temple Protected (11:1-2)
 3. Two Witnesses (11:3-14)
 - E. The Seventh Trumpet: Kingdom Come! (11:15-19)
- VI. Signs in Heaven and on Earth (12-14)
- VII. The Seven Bowls from the Sanctuary (15-16)

⁷⁹ Thomas R. Schreiner, *The ESV Expository Commentary Volume: 12*, p. 546-548

- VIII. The Judgment of Babylon and the Wedding of the Bride (17:1-19:10)
 - A. The Harlot Babylon Destroyed (17)
 - B. The Declarations of Two Angels (18:1-8)
 - C. Lamentation over Babylon's Fall (18:9-19)
 - D. Rejoicing over Babylon's Fall (18:20-19:5)
 - E. Rejoicing over the Marriage of the Lamb (19:6-10)
- IX. The Triumph of God in Christ (19:11-20:15)
- X. The New Heavens and the New Earth (21:1-22:5)
- XI. Epilogue (22:6-21)

Reading Plan:

<i>Day:</i>	<i>Main Reading:</i>	<i>Psalm Reading:</i>
December – 17	Revelation 1-2	Psalm 142
December – 18	Revelation 3-5	Psalm 143
December – 19	Revelation 6:1-8:5	Psalm 144
December – 20	Revelation 8:6-10:11	Psalm 145
December – 21	Revelation 11-13	Psalm 146
December – 22	Revelation 14-16	Psalm 147
December – 23	Revelation 17-18	Psalm 148
December – 24	Revelation 19-20	Psalm 149
December – 25	Revelation 21-22	Psalm 150