

Redemptive-Historical Bible Reading Plan

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Annual Bible reading plans are great. But there are tradeoffs. They can be oppressive for some, and they require a heavy load of reading spread equally across all chapters and books with little time to reflect, pause, connect dots, etc. One may not, at the end of reading the Bible through in a year, emerge with a much better understanding of the 1,189 chapters you just read. The plan provided below takes a different approach meant to complement (not replace) the normal one. It curates the key chapters of the Old Testament that help frame the flow of redemptive history (how God has worked in *history* to bring about his plan of salvation). Most sections of Old Testament readings include New Testament chapters that shed light on fulfillment in Christ. You can go at your own pace and pause however often you want to dig deeper and reflect on what you are reading. At the end, you will have a solid grounding in the entire message of the Bible, which can then help you revisit those 1,189 chapters afresh.

1. Creation

Few things are more foundational to Christianity than the doctrine of the special creation of all things by the triune God, with the Father, Son, and Spirit all at work in the unified act of creation.

- Genesis 1 (“In the beginning, God”)
- Genesis 2 (Adam and Eve)
- Psalm 19 (“Heavens declare . . .”)
- Job 38 (“Where were you when I . . .”)
- *John 1* (“In the beginning, Word”)
- *Colossians 1* (Agency of Christ)
- *2 Corinthians 4* (Light of Christ)
- *Hebrews 1* (Agency of Christ)

2. Fall, Original Sin, and Judgment

What distinguishes the Judeo-Christian worldview is the doctrine of the original fall of Adam into sin. It is the ‘problem’ for which the rest of Scripture provides the ‘solution.’

- Genesis 3 (Eating the fruit . . . “Offspring”)
- Genesis 6–9 (Judgment of the flood)
- Psalm 51 (Sinfulness from birth)
- *Romans 1* (Downward spiral of sin)
- *Romans 5* (Sin / death through Adam)
- *Romans 8* (Unwinding the curse)
- *2 Peter 3* (Reflections on the flood)

3. God’s Covenant Promise to Abraham

The central promise that drives Old Testament history is that of God to Abraham: a nation coming from his offspring, a land in which to dwell, and the blessing of all nations through him—all by *faith*.

- Genesis 12 (Abram’s call)
- Genesis 14 (Abram and Melchizedek)
- Genesis 15 (“Abram believed God . . .”)
- Genesis 17 (Circumcision)
- Genesis 22 (Testing of Abraham)
- *Matthew 1:1–17* (Abraham’s lineage to Christ)
- *Romans 4* (Abraham the heir of the world)
- *Galatians 3* (Justification by faith)
- *James 2* (Reflecting on Abraham’s testing)
- *Hebrews 7* (Jesus, Abraham, Melchizedek)

4. Promise Continued through the Patriarchs

God fulfills his promise to Abraham by giving him twelve descendants from which the tribes of Israel emerge.

- Genesis 26–27 (Promise to Isaac; Jacob-Esau)
- Genesis 32 (Jacob renamed)
- Genesis 49 (Blessings on the twelve sons)
- Psalm 105 (Remembering the patriarchs)
- 1 Chronicles 2 (Genealogy)
- *Acts 7* (Stephen’s ‘Old Testament History’ 101)
- *Romans 9* (“Jacob have I loved, but Esau . . .”)
- *Galatians 4* (“We are like Isaac”)
- *Hebrews 11* (Commending the patriarchs)
- *Matthew 22* (God of Abraham / Isaac / Jacob)

5. Exodus from Egypt

The exodus from captivity in Egypt is *the* central redemptive work in the Old Testament—the thing to which and from which all Old Testament theology flows.

- Exodus 3 (Moses encounters God)
- Exodus 12–14 (Passover and exodus)
- Exodus 15 (Moses’s song of praise)
- Psalm 78 (Remembering the exodus)
- Psalm 136 (Praise for God’s deliverance)
- Hosea 11 (“Out of Egypt I called my son”)
- *Matthew 2 (Jesus’s flight to Egypt)*
- *Matthew 26 (Jesus keeps the Passover)*
- *1 Corinthians 5 (Christ is our Passover)*
- *Jude (Jesus saved the Israelites from Egypt)*

6. God’s Covenant Law Given through Moses

Having redeemed his people, God immediately extends and concretizes the Abrahamic covenant for the new nation of Israel. God gives the law that declares his righteous standards as well as a sacrificial system (based on substitutionary atonement) that provides a means to deal with sin.

- Exodus 19–20 (Decalogue)
- Exodus 24 (Blood of the old covenant)
- Exodus 34 (Moses’s shining face)
- Exodus 40 (God’s glory fills the tabernacle)
- Leviticus 16 (Day of Atonement)
- Deuteronomy 5–6 (Covenant re-confirmed)
- Deuteronomy 28–30 (Blessings and curses)
- Psalm 119 (Goodness of God’s law)
- *Matthew 5 (Fulfilling the law)*
- *Mark 10 (Reflecting on the Decalogue)*
- *Luke 22 (Blood of the new covenant)*
- *Romans 10 (Righteousness and law)*
- *2 Corinthians 3 (Moses’s shining face)*
- *Galatians 5 (Reassessing law)*
- *Hebrews 9 (Christ’s atonement)*

7. Rebellion in the Wilderness

Israel immediately falls into a pattern of sin and hardness against their redeeming God, resulting in their judgment in the wilderness prior to entering the land promised to Abraham.

- Numbers 11 (Manna and quail)
- Numbers 14 (Rebellion)
- Numbers 20 (Water from the rock)
- Numbers 21 (Bronze serpent lifted up)
- Psalm 95 (“Do not harden your hearts”)
- *John 3 (“Son of Man lifted up”)*
- *John 6 (True manna)*
- *1 Corinthians 10 (“Rock was Christ”)*
- *Hebrews 3 (“Do not harden your hearts”)*

8. Conquest of the Land and Early Leadership

Joshua leads the nation into the land promised to Abraham, and the initial period of leadership by the judges is one of ups and downs.

- Deuteronomy 1–3 (Preparing to enter)
- Joshua 1 (Commissioning of Joshua)
- Joshua 6 (Jericho)
- Joshua 24 (Covenant renewal)
- Judges 2 (Summary of the period of judges)
- Judges 13–16 (Account of Samson)
- *Acts 13 (Recap of Israel’s history)*
- *Hebrews 4 (Promise of rest still stands)*

9. Establishing the Monarchy

God installs a king over Israel as his vice-regent to bring security to the nation and build a temple where his manifest presence would be made known.

- 1 Samuel 1–2 (Samuel as interim leader)
- 1 Samuel 8–10 (Saul anointed king)
- 1 Samuel 16 (David is anointed)
- 2 Samuel 5 (David rules a united kingdom)
- 2 Samuel 11–12 (David, Bathsheba, Solomon)
- 1 Chronicles 17 (Covenant with David)
- 2 Chronicles 5 (Solomon completes temple)
- Psalm 2 (God's royal son)
- Psalm 18 (David's song of God's deliverance)
- Psalm 89 (Covenant with David)
- Psalm 110 ("Sit at my right hand")
- *Matthew 12 (Jesus > temple > Solomon)*
- *Luke 1–2 (Jesus, the Davidic King)*
- *Luke 20 (Jesus and Psalm 110)*
- *Romans 1 (Jesus, of David in the flesh)*
- *Philippians 2 (Jesus exalted as king)*
- *Hebrews 12 (Jesus on the throne)*
- *Revelation 7 (Worship the enthroned Lamb)*

10. Religious Life of the Nation

During the early monarchy, Israel's devotional life flourishes in psalms and wisdom writings.

- Psalm 1 (Two ways to live)
- Psalm 22 (David's lament)
- Psalm 51 (Repentance for sin)
- Psalm 72 (Prayer for the king)
- Psalm 118 ("Blessed is he who comes")
- Proverbs 1–2 (Wisdom and fear of the Lord)
- Proverbs 8 (Praise of Wisdom)
- Ecclesiastes 1 ("Vanity of vanities . . .")
- Ecclesiastes 12 (Fear God)
- Song of Songs 1 (Goodness of marital love)

11. Degradation of the Monarchy

After Solomon, the monarchy splits into the Northern Kingdom (10 tribes, "Israel" / "Ephraim," based in Samaria) and the Southern Kingdom (2 tribes, "Judah," based in Jerusalem) and spirals into sin.

- 1 Kings 11–13 (Kingdom divided)
- 1 Kings 17–22 (Example: Elijah and Ahab)
- 2 Chronicles 33 (Example: Evil under Manasseh)
- *Luke 4 (Remembering Elijah's ministry)*

12. Israel and Judah in Exile

Due to repeated cycles of sin, the covenant curse of exile is poured out. Assyria defeats the Northern Kingdom / Israel (722 BC) while Babylonia defeats the Southern Kingdom / Judah (605–586 BC).

- 2 Kings 17 (Fall of Israel to Assyria)
- Isaiah 7 (Assyria assails Judah, Immanuel)
- 2 Kings 24–25 (Fall of Judah to Babylonia)
- Micah 1 (Pronouncing judgment of exile)
- Hosea 1–2 (Warnings to "Not-my-people")
- Zephaniah 1 (Punishment from the Lord)
- Ezekiel 11 (God's glory leaves the temple)
- *Matthew 1:18–25 (Immanuel fulfilled)*
- *1 Peter 2 (Grace to "Not-my-people")*

13. Grief and Consolation during Exile

Judah grieves during exile but is comforted by the prophets, who reiterate God's promise of restoration.

- Lamentations 1 (Mourning over Jerusalem)
- Psalm 44 (Plea for God to rescue them)
- Psalm 69 (Zeal for the temple)
- Jeremiah 25 (Promise of 70-year exile)
- Habakkuk 2 (Faith to endure judgment)
- Daniel 1–2 (Babylon to be judged)
- Daniel 9 (Revisiting Jeremiah's promise)
- *John 2 (Zeal for the temple)*
- *Hebrews 10 (Faith to endure judgment)*

14. (Partial) Restoration from Exile

Though the Northern Kingdom is never fully restored (rather, repopulated with Samaritans), the Southern Kingdom is released under Persian rule to rebuild the temple. But things are never quite the same.

- Ezra 1–6 (Return under Cyrus, rebuilding)
- Nehemiah 8–9 (Covenant renewal)
- Haggai 1 (Encouragement to rebuild)
- *John 4 (Jesus and the Samaritan woman)*

15. Anticipating an Eschatological Deliverer

Throughout the period of the prophets, we get glimpses of an eschatological savior-figure (a "Messiah," though not always using that term) who will bring deliverance to God's people.

- Isaiah 9 ("A child is born")
- Isaiah 11 ("Root of Jesse")
- Isaiah 52:11–53:12 (Suffering servant)
- Jeremiah 23 (Righteous "Branch")
- Ezekiel 1 ("Likeness of the glory of God")
- Ezekiel 34 (Shepherd of Israel)
- Zechariah 9 (King on a donkey)
- Daniel 7 ("One like a son of man")
- *Matthew 21 (Jesus as king on a donkey)*
- *Mark 13 (Returning Son of Man)*
- *Romans 15 ("Root of Jesse")*
- *John 10 (Jesus the good Shepherd)*
- *Acts 8 (Who is the suffering servant?)*
- *Revelation 4 (Throne room glory)*
- *Revelation 5 ("Root of David")*

16. Anticipating the Day of the Lord

In conjunction with the coming of a deliverer, the Old Testament prophets also envision a new covenant, the return of God's presence, the outpouring of the Spirit, the engrafting of the Gentiles (fulfilling the Abrahamic promise), cosmic renewal, and resurrection in the Day of the Lord.

- Jeremiah 33 (New covenant)
- Isaiah 42 (Justice and a light to the nations)
- Isaiah 65–66 (New heavens / new earth)
- Joel 2 (Spirit outpouring)
- Ezekiel 36 (Spirit and a new heart)
- Ezekiel 43 (Return of the Glory of the Lord)
- Malachi 3–4 (Messenger before the Day)
- Daniel 12 (Eschatological resurrection)
- *Mark 1 (John the Baptist as messenger)*
- *Acts 2 (Pentecost and Spirit outpouring)*
- *Romans 11 (Jews and Gentiles)*
- *1 Corinthians 15 (Eschatological resurrection)*
- *Ephesians 2 (Ingrafting of Gentiles)*
- *Hebrews 8 (New covenant)*
- *Revelation 21–22 (New heavens / new earth)*