

THE WHOLE Story +

The Bible in a Year

Upstate Church, welcome to our journey through the Word of God. Our goal is simple. We want to encourage as many people in our church as possible to read through the entire Bible in a year. We want to encourage people to engage with the Bible because, as a church, we believe that no other Christian discipline has the potential to impact our spiritual walk, like daily Bible reading.

The Reading Plan

This resource is one of the multiple guides that will be available to you throughout the year. Each resource will include weekly sermon introductions for the Sunday morning service at Upstate Church. Between each sermon introduction, there will be a week's worth of daily readings.

The daily readings are dated, include selections from the Old and New Testaments, and are for each weekday. This format will take you through the whole Bible in a year, with readings five days per week and two days open for catching up or getting ahead.

The Format

We not only want to encourage you to read the Bible, we want to teach you how to read the Bible. To help Upstate Church members learn to read the Bible, we use the HEAR Journal method in each of the daily readings. Each day, you will see the HEAR acrostic going down the page. The HEAR journal guides your reading and helps you interact with the text.

H – H stands for HIGHLIGHT. As you read through the text, note or highlight something that stands out to you. Don't just read the Word. Interact with it. Ask questions about it. Highlight what stands out. Highlighting is about determining what the Bible says.

E – E stands for explain. In your own words, seek to explain what you highlighted. It may take some investigation if the passage is a little ambiguous. You may need to look at the notes in your study Bible or consult a good commentary if you need to clarify something. Most of the time, you will know precisely what the highlight means, but explaining it in your own words helps you internalize God's message. Explanation is about determining what the Bible means.

A – A stands for apply. After interacting with the Word and understanding it, you need to determine how it applies to your life. Reading the Bible is about more than gaining information. Reading the Bible is about transformation, which comes from beholding the Lord and hearing from Him. Application is about determining what the Bible means for me.

R – R stands for respond. Encountering God in the Bible does not stop when we determine what the Bible says, what the Bible means, or what the Bible means to me. We have not encountered God through the Word until we respond to God accordingly. We respond to God in prayer according to what He reveals to us in the Word. We respond to God in prayer with praise for who He is, confess where we have failed, and repent as we return to God!

The Challenge

We go to the Bible to hear from God. The challenge before our church this year is to learn to go to the Bible to hear from God again and again. Will you embrace this challenge in 2025? Will you read the Bible with us? Will you go to the Word again and again? Will you do all you can to hear from God this year? We cannot wait to see how God works as we run toward His Word.

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May 18, 2025

Psalm 1

The wisdom literature introduces us to life according to God's plan. Psalm 1 is the gateway to the book of Psalms, setting the foundation for a life lived under God's rule and blessing. It presents a striking contrast between two ways of life: the way of the righteous, who delight in God's law, and the way of the wicked, who reject His guidance. This psalm establishes that God orders our lives and reveals how we should walk in His ways, leading to true blessing and stability.

Psalm 1 begins with a portrait of the blessed man—one who avoids the influence of the wicked, sinners, and scoffers but instead one delights in the law of the Lord. This delight is not mere obligation but a deep, meditative engagement with God's instruction, shaping his heart and mind. The image of a tree planted by streams of water (v.3) illustrates the righteous life: firmly rooted, nourished, and yielding fruit in its season. This reflects the ordered life God desires for His people—one marked by consistency, purpose, and spiritual vitality.

In contrast, the wicked are depicted as chaff (v.4)—dry, weightless, and easily scattered by the wind. Unlike the deeply rooted tree, their lives are unstable and fleeting, lacking the firm foundation that comes from obedience to God's word. Psalm 1 warns that the wicked will not stand in judgment nor belong to the assembly of the righteous (v.5), emphasizing that their path leads to destruction.

At the heart of this psalm is the assurance that God actively watches over and directs the path of the righteous. He does not leave His people to wander aimlessly but orders their steps according to His wisdom. The final verse declares, "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish" (v.6). This highlights God's intimate involvement in the lives of His people, leading them toward life and security, while allowing those who reject Him to face the consequences of their choices.

Psalm 1 is an invitation to embrace God's order, to delight in His instruction, and to walk in the way that leads to true flourishing. It calls us to trust that God, in His wisdom, has shown us how to live. In doing so, He establishes our steps and blesses our journey. There is no better example of the blessed man living according to God's way than Jesus Christ. Psalm 1 ultimately looks forward to Jesus, the way and the life. Jesus is here, even in Psalm 1.

The Way of the Blessed Man

The Way of the Wicked Man

May 19, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 7-8; 1 Chronicles 17; Psalm 132; Acts 25

H

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A

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May 20, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 9-10; 1 Chronicles 18-19; Psalm 89; Acts 26

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May 21, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 11-12; 1 Chronicles 20; Psalm 32, 51; Acts 27

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May 22, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 13-14, Acts 28

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May 23, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 15-17; Psalm 3, 63; Romans 1

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May 25, 2025

Psalm 23

THE WHOLE Story

There is no more familiar passage in all scripture than the 23rd Psalm. This passage is a depiction of God's care, provision, and guidance. As part of the wisdom literature, it reveals how life under God's rule is one of security and peace. This psalm, written by David, presents God as the Shepherd-King who leads His people in righteousness, protects them in danger, and provides for them abundantly. At its heart, Psalm 23 reassures believers that God orders our lives, walking with us through every season and ultimately leading us home to dwell with Him forever.

The psalm opens with a comforting declaration, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (v.1). This sets the tone for the entire psalm, illustrating God's intimate and personal care for His people. Like a shepherd tending his flock, God provides for our every need, ensuring that we lack nothing essential for life and godliness. He leads His people to green pastures and still waters, restoring their souls and guiding them in paths of righteousness (v.2-3). This imagery speaks of both physical provision and the deeper spiritual nourishment found in following God's ways.

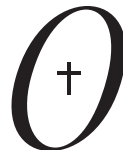
However, life is not without hardship, and Psalm 23 acknowledges this reality. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (v.4). This verse highlights the unshakable confidence of those who trust in the Lord. Though trials and suffering come, God's presence is constant, all the while His rod and staff bring both correction and comfort. His guidance is not just for peaceful pastures but also for dark valleys—He leads through them, not just around them. The psalm moves from the imagery of a shepherd to that of a gracious host. God prepares a table before His people, even in the presence of their enemies, anointing them with oil and filling their cup to overflowing (v.5). This speaks of divine blessing, honor, and abundance—God does not merely sustain; He lavishes His people with goodness and mercy.

Psalm 23 culminates in the ultimate promise: "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (v.6). This is the hope of every believer—not just provision for today but an eternal home in the presence of God. Ultimately, Psalm 23 finds its fullest expression in Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). He is the one who laid down His life for His sheep, who leads us in righteousness, walks with us through suffering, and secures our eternal dwelling with Him. In Christ, we see the fulfillment of this psalm, as He is both the Shepherd who guides us and the Lamb who was slain for us. Jesus is here, even in Psalm 23.

God is Our Provider

God is Our Shepherd

God is Our Victor



May 26, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 18-20; Psalm 34; Romans 2

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May 27, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 21-23; Psalm 18; Romans 3

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May 28, 2025

Read: 2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 21; Romans 4

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May 29, 2025

Read: 1 Chronicles 22-25; Psalm 78; Romans 5

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May 30, 2025
Read: 1 Kings 1; 1 Chronicles 26-28; Romans 6

WEEK 23

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June 1, 2025

Psalm 51

Psalm 51 is one of the most profound expressions of repentance in Scripture, a heartfelt plea for mercy, and a powerful reminder of God's grace. Written by King David after his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, Uriah (cf. 2 Samuel 11), this psalm reflects the deep anguish and remorse that accompany genuine repentance. David's prayer reveals not only the weight of sin but also the overwhelming mercy and forgiveness found in God's heart. It is a model for how we, too, should approach God when we fall short, recognizing both our brokenness and His unfailing grace.

The psalm opens with a desperate cry for mercy: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions" (v.1). David begins by appealing to God's nature—His unfailing love and great compassion—as the basis for forgiveness. He acknowledges his sin and guilt, recognizing that his offense is ultimately against God. The psalm emphasizes that true repentance is not just about external actions or regrets but about a broken and contrite heart. David prays, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (v.10), highlighting the need for inner transformation that only God can bring.

The depth of repentance in Psalm 51 is evident as David recognizes that sin is not merely an outward action but a condition of the heart. He longs for cleansing and renewal, asking God to wash him white as snow and restore the joy of salvation (v.12). David also pleads for God's Spirit to sustain him, knowing that only through God's grace can he be empowered to live in righteousness.

Ultimately, Psalm 51 highlights both the seriousness of sin and the boundless grace of God. It demonstrates that, no matter how great our failure, God is faithful to forgive and restore those who genuinely seek His mercy. In this psalm, David models the heart of true repentance, showing that grace, not guilt, is the final word in the believer's story. This points us to Jesus Christ, the one who gives grace and removes guilt. Jesus is here, even in the 51st Psalm.

What do we need to ask God for when we sin?

Pardon

Purity

June 2, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 2; 1 Chronicles 29; Romans 7

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June 3, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 3; 2 Chronicles 1; Psalm 42; Romans 8

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June 4, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 4; Proverbs 1-2; Psalm 43; Romans 9

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June 5, 2025

Read: Proverbs 3-5; Romans 10

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June 6, 2025

Read: Proverbs 6-7; Psalm 7; Romans 11

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June 8, 2025

Proverbs 1

THE WHOLE Story+

Proverbs 1 serves as the introduction to the entire book of Proverbs, setting the stage for the pursuit of wisdom and the fear of the Lord as the foundation of life. The opening chapter introduces wisdom as a precious and powerful guide for living, offering both instruction and warning. It emphasizes the importance of choosing the path of wisdom and righteousness over folly and sin, urging the reader to listen to wisdom's call and to embrace its life-giving truth.

The chapter begins with a declaration of the purpose of Proverbs: to impart wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, particularly to the young, in order to equip them to live righteous, just, and prudent lives. Wisdom is portrayed not just as knowledge, but as the practical application of God's truth in everyday life. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction" (v.7). This foundational verse highlights that true wisdom begins with reverence for God—acknowledging His sovereignty, seeking His guidance, and aligning one's life with His will.

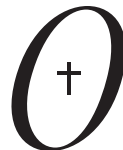
The contrast between wisdom and folly is a central theme in this chapter. Wisdom calls out to all people, offering guidance, protection, and reward. Yet, many reject her voice, choosing the way of folly, which leads to destruction. "Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord, they would not accept my advice" (v.29-30). The rejection of wisdom results in a life marked by poor decisions and ultimately brings calamity, while the one who listens to wisdom is promised safety and peace.

The chapter concludes with wisdom's final warning: "Whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm" (v.33). Proverbs 1 calls us to embrace wisdom, grounded in the fear of the Lord, as the path that leads to true fulfillment, security, and success. It is an invitation to a life rooted in God's understanding, where wisdom becomes the guiding principle for every decision and action. The call of wisdom points us to the only one who is wise, Jesus Christ. Jesus is here, even in Proverbs 1.

Wisdom Starts with the Fear of God

Wisdom Becomes Understanding

Wisdom Leads to Righteous Living



June 9, 2025

Read: Proverbs 8-10; Psalm 144; Romans 12

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June 10, 2025

Read: Proverbs 11-13; Psalm 8; Romans 13

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June 11, 2025

Read: Proverbs 14-15; Romans 14

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June 12, 2025

Read: Proverbs 16-18; Romans 15

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June 13, 2025
Read: Proverbs 19-21; Psalm 40; Romans 16

WEEK 25

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June 15, 2025

Proverbs 3:5-6

Proverbs 3:5-6 offers one of the most well-known and comforting invitations in Scripture, calling believers to trust in the Lord with all their hearts and to lean not on their own understanding. These verses encapsulate the essence of living by faith and relying on God's wisdom, guidance, and providence in every aspect of life.

The opening command, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart" (v.5), emphasizes wholehearted reliance on God, not in part but in full surrender. To trust in the Lord is to acknowledge His sovereignty, wisdom, and goodness, and to depend on Him completely, regardless of the circumstances. This trust is not passive; it is an active, ongoing choice to believe that God's ways are higher than our own and that He is faithful to guide us.

The second half of verse 5, "and lean not on your own understanding" warns against relying on our limited and often flawed perception of the world. Our own understanding is shaped by experience, emotions, and human reasoning, all of which are imperfect. To lean on our understanding means to trust in our own judgment and self-sufficiency instead of seeking God's wisdom. This is a call to humility, acknowledging that we do not have all the answers and that God's wisdom is far greater than ours.

Verse 6 expands on this idea, offering a promise: "In all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." When we acknowledge God in every area of life, submitting to His guidance, He promises to lead us on the right path. The phrase "make your paths straight" implies both direction and ease—God will guide us toward the right decisions, and He will remove obstacles or bring clarity where there is confusion.

Proverbs 3:5-6 teaches us that true wisdom comes from surrendering to God's leadership. It invites us to trust fully in His guidance, recognizing that He is faithful to lead us toward His good and perfect will for our lives. The call to trust in the Lord with all your heart finds a parallel with the call to surrender to Jesus. We fulfill the call of Proverbs 3:5-6 when we trust in Christ and follow him. Jesus is here, even in Proverbs 3.

You Need Clear Direction

God Wants Your Whole Heart

June 16, 2025

Read: Proverbs 22-23; Psalm 117; 1 Thessalonians 1

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June 17, 2025

Read: Proverbs 24-25; Psalm 41; 1 Thessalonians 2

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June 18, 2025

Read: Proverbs 26-28; 1 Thessalonians 3

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June 19, 2025

Read: Proverbs 29-31; 1 Thessalonians 4

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June 20, 2025

Read: Song of Solomon 1-3; Psalm 72; 1 Thessalonians 5

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June 22, 2025

Isaiah 6

THE WHOLE Story

Isaiah 6 is a pivotal chapter in the book of Isaiah, marking the prophet's personal encounter with the holiness of God and his commission to be a messenger to the people of Israel. This chapter reveals profound truths about God's majesty, human sinfulness, and the grace of divine calling. It is a powerful depiction of God's glory, His sovereignty over all creation, and the response He desires from His people.

The chapter begins with Isaiah's vision of God in His throne room, "high and exalted," surrounded by seraphim who worship Him with reverence, crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (v.3). The sheer majesty and holiness of God are overwhelming, causing the foundations of the temple to shake. The holiness of God is the central theme of this vision—He is utterly separate from sin, pure and perfect in every way. The seraphim's repeated declaration emphasizes the infinite holiness of God, highlighting His transcendence and worthiness of all worship.

Isaiah's immediate response to this vision is one of deep conviction and despair: "Woe to me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips" (v.5). Confronted with the holiness of God, Isaiah becomes acutely aware of his own sinfulness and the sinfulness of his people. This moment of self-awareness leads to his confession and a recognition of his need for cleansing and grace.

In response, one of the seraphim takes a live coal from the altar and touches Isaiah's lips, declaring, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for" (v.7). This act of purification symbolizes God's grace, offering forgiveness and restoration to one who is unworthy.

Finally, after Isaiah is cleansed, God issues His call: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?". Isaiah responds, "Here am I. Send me!" (v.8). This marks the moment of Isaiah's commissioning as a prophet. Though God's message to the people will be one of judgment, the chapter closes with the hope that there will be a remnant, a holy seed that will remain.

Isaiah 6 reveals both the terrifying holiness of God and His amazing grace. It shows that when we encounter God's holiness, we are confronted with our sin, but also with His offer of forgiveness and redemption. We encounter this reality in Isaiah, and we will encounter it once again when we are introduced to Jesus. Jesus is here, even in Isaiah 6.

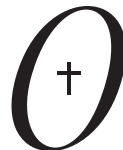
When We Encounter God, We:

Recognize God's Holiness

Acknowledge Our Sinfulness

Experience God's Forgiveness

Join the Mission



June 23, 2025

Read: Song of Solomon 4-6; 2 Thessalonians 1

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June 24, 2025

Read: Song of Solomon 7-8; Psalm 127; 2 Thessalonians 2

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June 25, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 5; 2 Chronicles 2; 2 Thessalonians 3

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June 26, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 6; 2 Chronicles 3; 1 Timothy 1

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June 27, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 7; 2 Chronicles 4; Psalm 44; 1 Timothy 2

WEEK 27

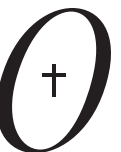
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June 29, 2025

Ezekiel 37

Ezekiel 37 is a powerful and symbolic vision that communicates God's ability to bring life and hope to His people, even in the most hopeless and desolate situations. This chapter, often referred to as the vision of the Valley of Dry Bones, offers a profound message of restoration, revival, and the sovereignty of God over life and death. It reveals God's promise to restore Israel, both spiritually and physically, as a testimony of His power to resurrect what is dead and to bring new life where all seems lost.

The vision begins with Ezekiel being led by God's Spirit to a valley filled with dry bones, a scene that symbolizes the spiritual death and desolation of the people of Israel. God asks Ezekiel, "Son of man, can these bones live?" to which Ezekiel replies, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know" (v.3). This question underscores the hopelessness of the situation, yet Ezekiel's answer reflects his trust in God's power, even when the circumstances seem beyond repair. God instructs Ezekiel to prophesy over the bones, commanding them to hear the word of the Lord (v.4). As he does, the bones begin to come together, sinews and flesh form on them, and they are covered with skin, yet they remain lifeless (v.8).

God then tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the breath (or spirit) to enter the bodies, and as he does, the breath enters them, bringing them to life (v.9). This dramatic transformation symbolizes God's power to bring spiritual renewal and restoration to His people, infusing them with His Spirit. The army of revived people represents Israel's restoration from exile, a symbol of how God will bring His people back to their land and revive their spiritual condition.

The second part of the chapter offers an explanation of the vision. God declares that just as He will bring Israel's dry bones back to life, He will also reunite the divided northern and southern kingdoms and restore them as one people under His rule (v.22-24). He promises to place His Spirit within them, enabling them to live according to His laws and to enjoy His peace and presence forever. God's covenant with His people will be renewed, and they will know that He is the Lord (v.26-28).

Ezekiel 37 is a powerful declaration of God's ability to revive, restore, and renew. It shows that no matter how far gone a situation may seem—whether it be a nation in exile or an individual in spiritual dryness—God can breathe life into it. This vision points to the ultimate hope of resurrection and renewal, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who brings eternal life to those who are spiritually dead. It reminds us that God's power to restore is boundless, and His promises are sure. The promise of Ezekiel 37 finds ultimate fulfillment and power in Jesus the one who gives dry bones and dead souls, life again. Jesus is here, even in Ezekiel 37.

We are Dead Without Hope

Only Jesus Can Give Life

June 30, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 8; Psalm 30; 1 Timothy 3

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July 1, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 5-7; Psalm 121; 1 Timothy 4

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July 2, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 9; 2 Chronicles 8; 1 Timothy 5

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July 3, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 10-11; 2 Chronicles 9; 1 Timothy 6

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July 4, 2025

Read: Ecclesiastes 1-3; Psalm 45; 2 Timothy 1

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The first three chapters of Hosea present a powerful and emotionally charged message about God's love, faithfulness, and judgment, woven together through the prophet Hosea's own troubled marriage to Gomer, an unfaithful wife. These chapters are not only a personal account of Hosea's relationship with his wife but also a profound allegory of Israel's unfaithfulness to God and His unwavering commitment to restore them despite their waywardness. The narrative is both a call to repentance and a declaration of God's redemptive love.

In Hosea 1, God commands Hosea to marry Gomer, a woman who will be unfaithful to him, as a living symbol of Israel's infidelity to God (v.2). This marriage, and the children born from it, serve as prophetic signs to the nation. Hosea's children are given symbolic names: Jezreel (God will scatter), Lo-Ruhamah (not loved), and Lo-Ammi (not my people), which reflect God's judgment upon Israel for their idolatry and rebellion (v.4-9). Yet, even in the midst of judgment, God declares that He will ultimately have mercy on Israel and restore them, using the names of Hosea's children to express the reversal of judgment into grace: Jezreel will become a place of restoration, and Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi will be renamed "loved" and "my people."

In Hosea 2, God's message shifts toward both judgment and hope. Israel's idolatry is likened to adultery, and God will bring judgment upon them, symbolized by stripping Israel of her pleasures and security (v.2-3). However, God's heart for His people remains one of love. He promises to woo Israel back to Himself, as a husband would seek to reclaim his estranged wife. God will lead Israel back into the wilderness, a place of purification and renewal, where He will speak tenderly to her and restore their covenant relationship (v.16-18). The chapter ends with the promise of a renewed and intimate relationship between God and His people, marked by faithfulness and joy (v.21-23).

Hosea 3 marks the final step in this redemptive story, where God commands Hosea to buy back his unfaithful wife, Gomer, who has fallen into slavery. This act of redemption serves as a vivid symbol of God's love for Israel (v.2). Despite their unfaithfulness, God will redeem them at great cost, demonstrating His unconditional love and commitment to them. Hosea's act of redemption points forward to the ultimate act of redemption through Jesus Christ, who paid the price for our unfaithfulness on the cross.

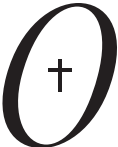
Hosea 1-3 reveals a profound message: despite Israel's repeated unfaithfulness, God's love remains steadfast, and His desire is to restore His people to Himself. It highlights both God's righteous judgment against sin and His mercy, showing that God is always ready to forgive and restore those who turn back to Him. Through the story of Hosea and Gomer, we see a picture of God's unrelenting, redemptive love, a love that pursues, forgives, and ultimately restores. The unrelenting love of God is seen most clearly in Jesus Christ who never leaves or forsakes us. Jesus is here, even in Hosea 1-3.

The Journey of Sin:

Unfaithfulness

Unworthiness

Undeserved Mercy



July 7, 2025

Read: Ecclesiastes 4-6; Psalm 125; 2 Timothy 2

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July 8, 2025

Read: Ecclesiastes 7-9; Psalm 46; 2 Timothy 3

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July 9, 2025

Read: Ecclesiastes 10-12; 2 Timothy 4

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July 10, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 12; 2 Chronicles 10-11; Titus 1

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July 11, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 13-14; 2 Chronicles 12; Psalm 47; Titus 2

WEEK 29

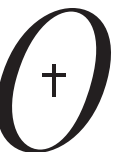
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THE WHOLE
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July 13, 2025

Jonah 1-4

The book of Jonah is a remarkable account of God's mercy, sovereignty, and mission to reach the nations. While often remembered for the dramatic episode of Jonah being swallowed by a great fish, this prophetic book reveals far more than a mere story of disobedience and deliverance. It presents a profound theological narrative about God's heart for sinners and His desire for repentance.

Jonah, a prophet of Israel, is commanded by God to go to the great city of Nineveh and call its people to repentance. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, a brutal enemy of Israel known for violence and wickedness. Instead of obeying, Jonah flees in the opposite direction, boarding a ship to Tarshish in an attempt to escape God's command. His rebellion results in God sending a great storm, and Jonah is eventually cast into the sea, where he is swallowed by a great fish. After three days and three nights in the belly of the fish — a foreshadowing of Christ's death and resurrection (Matthew 12:40) — Jonah is vomited onto dry land.

When Jonah finally preaches to Nineveh, the city's repentance is swift and sincere, causing God to withhold judgment. Surprisingly, Jonah is displeased by God's mercy, revealing his own bitterness and misplaced sense of justice. The book concludes with God gently confronting Jonah, teaching him about His compassion for all people. Theologically, Jonah demonstrates God's universal grace — that His mercy extends not only to Israel but to even the most wicked of nations. It portrays God's sovereignty over creation, as He commands the storm, the fish, and even a plant to fulfill His purposes. Most significantly, Jonah points forward to Jesus, the true and better prophet who fully obeyed God's will, entered the depths of death, and rose again to bring salvation to the nations.

Ultimately, Jonah invites readers to reflect on their own hearts. Are we willing to share God's mercy with those we might deem undeserving? Through this book, God reveals that His compassion knows no boundaries — a truth that continues to challenge and comfort His people today. The ultimate proof of God's compassion is not seen in Jonah's mission to Nineveh. The ultimate proof of God's compassion is seen in Jesus' mission to us. Jesus is here, even in Nineveh.

Selfishness Keeps Us from Obeying God

Selfishness Keeps Us from Sharing God's Word

Selfishness Keeps Our Hearts Hardened

July 14, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 15; 2 Chronicles 13-14; Titus 3

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July 15, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 15-16; 1 Kings 16; Philemon

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July 16, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 17-18; Psalm 119; Jude

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July 17, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 19-21; 2 Chronicles 17; Psalm 129; Matthew 1

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July 18, 2025

Read: 1 Kings 22; 2 Chronicles 18; Matthew 2

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July 20, 2025

Malachi 3

THE WHOLE Story

Malachi 3 is a pivotal chapter in the final book of the Old Testament, addressing both God's justice and His mercy, as well as His desire for genuine devotion from His people. This chapter reveals God's intention to purify and refine His people, prepare the way for the coming Messiah, and address the spiritual complacency and corruption present in Israel at the time. Malachi 3 highlights God's covenant faithfulness and His call for repentance, as well as His promise of blessings to those who honor Him.

The chapter begins with a prophecy about the coming of a messenger who will prepare the way for the Lord. This is a reference to John the Baptist, who would later come to prepare the hearts of the people for the arrival of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The verse reads, "I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple..." (v.1). This announcement points forward to the coming of Christ, the Messiah who will enter the temple and establish God's reign in a new and more profound way.

Malachi 3 also addresses the purification of the people. The Lord speaks of refining His people like gold and silver, cleansing them of their impurities. "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver" (v.3). This process of refinement and purification reflects God's desire to restore His people to righteousness. The sins of Israel, particularly in their worship and their failure to give God the honor He deserves, will be judged. Yet, through this judgment, God will refine His people, making them pure and acceptable before Him.

The chapter also emphasizes the issue of tithing and the people's failure to honor God with their resources. In Malachi 3:8-10, God rebukes the people for withholding their tithes and offerings, stating, "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me... Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." God challenges His people to bring their tithes faithfully, promising that He will bless them abundantly in return, "Test me in this," God says, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." This promise of abundant blessings reflects God's generosity and His desire to bless His people as they walk in faithfulness and obedience.

Finally, Malachi 3 speaks of the future judgment of the wicked and the final distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous. The Lord will return as a judge, separating those who fear Him and serve Him from those who do not. "Then once more you will see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not" (v.18). This future judgment is a reminder of God's holiness and His ultimate justice.

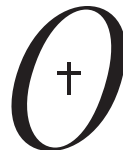
Malachi 3 is a call to repentance, faithfulness, and holiness. It assures God's people that He is not indifferent to sin but will purify, refine, and bless those who turn to Him in obedience. The ultimate proof that God is not indifferent to sin, but will do whatever it takes to purify and refine is seen in Jesus who dies to forgive people and gives them the purity of a new heart. Jesus is here, even as we finish the Old Testament.

When Jesus Judges:

He Purifies

He Punishes

He Saves



July 21, 2025

Read: 2 Chronicles 19-20; 2 Kings 1; Psalm 20; Matthew 3

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July 22, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 2-3; Psalm 48; Matthew 4

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July 23, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 4-6; Matthew 5

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July 24, 2025

Read: 2 Kings 7-8; 2 Chronicles 21; Matthew 6

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July 25, 2025
Read: 2 Kings 9-10; Psalm 49; Matthew 7

July 25, 2025
Read: 2 Kings 9-10; Psalm 49; Matthew 7

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