

DAILY BIBLE READING (August)

By following this suggested schedule you will be able to read the entire Bible in one year. If you've missed previous months' installments, you may wish to begin with this one and finish at this time next year. Others in the congregation are reading the same material each day.

ISAIAH

Isaiah is the first of the prophets we'll read. A prophet not only told the future but, primarily, stood before the people with a Word from God. Isaiah's activity was limited to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) after the fall of the North. His name means "Yahweh Saves". He moved in royal circles and is often called the "prophet of holiness" because the phrase "holy one of Israel" is used 23 times in his book. He is quoted 162 times in the New Testament. His prophecy centered about the siege of Jerusalem. The book is especially famous for the "Servant Songs" of chapters 42, 49, 50 & 53.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Aug 1	Is. 1-3	Notice the way Isaiah and all the prophets speak both Law and Gospel, words of judgment and of hope. 1:2 spells out the cause of Judah's predicament. 1:11-17 points to a higher form of worship. But in spite of God's wrath, the promise of 1:18 is central to the book. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 2	Is. 4-6	Isaiah tells of his inaugural vision in chapter 6 (we'll read about the calls to other prophets as well). Note his fear and reluctance. But God consecrates him for the task. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 3	Is. 7-9	The famous "Immanuel prophecy" is recorded in 7. Chapter 9:1-7 is one of the lessons for Christmas. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 4	Is. 10-12	Note that Judah's sin is always described in concrete terms (10:1-2). This whole section is a superb combination of Law and Gospel. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 5	Is. 13-15	Chapters 13-23 are called the "Ten Massas ("Burdens") which the prophet must "unload" on the peoples of various nations. In chapters 13-15 he speaks against Babylon, Philistia and Moab. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 6	Is. 16-18	God wants all to know tht he is the Lord (17:7-8). 17:14b shows that in God's plan the nations he uses against the Jews will suffer similar fates.
Aug 7	Is. 19-21	19:22 depicts the goal of God's chastisement: eventual healing. Prophets were often called upon to do very symbolic things (e.g. chapter 20). Has that tradition continued? <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 8	Is. 22-24	The Massas end with chapter 23. Chapters 24-27 are called "Isaiah's Apocalypse ("uncovering" or "revelation"). Do you think 24:5-6 might have something to say about ecology? <i>Comments & Questions:</i>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Aug 9	Is. 25-27	An absolutely beautiful expression of God's final grace and mercy, even the resurrection (26:19). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 10	Is. 28-30	This section pertains to the impending Assyrian attack on Jerusalem.
Aug 11	Is. 31-33	Again Isaiah counsels against a Judean alliance with Egypt to fight off the Assyrians. If the people trusted in God in the first place, they wouldn't be under attack. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 12	Is. 34-36	After more judgments, an historical narrative (rather than prophecy) begins in chapter 36. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 13	Is. 37-39	Jerusalem is preserved (for the time being) from the Assyrian siege.
Aug 14	Is. 40-42	With chapter 40 an entirely new style, language and perspective begins which lasts until the end of the book. This has led most scholars to believe that it has a different author, and they called it "Second Isaiah." It skips the actual captivity of 586 BC and speaks of the Jews' return and redemption. 40 is particularly beautiful. 42 is the first of the "Servant Songs." Who do you think the servant is? <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 15	Is. 43-45	Sit back and enjoy these fantastic expressions of God's grace! (the Cyrus in 45:1 was the Persian king who conquered Babylonia and let the Jews return to their homeland. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 16	Is. 46-48	Ancient Babylon was famous for its astrology and some of the Jews fell for it. Note God's response in 47:12-25. The fact is it is God who makes certain that his will is accomplished (45:8-11). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 17	Is. 49-51	49 is the second "Servant Song" and 50 is the third. Again, who do you think the servant is? <i>Comments & Questions:</i>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Aug 18	Is. 52-54	Jerusalem and its returned inhabitants enjoy their salvation. 53 is the final and most famous of the “Servant Songs.” The servant can denote several possibilities at the same time or in succession: Isaiah himself, the Jewish people (the remnant), and finally the coming Messiah. Of the Servant Songs, 53 is the most messianic. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 19	Is. 55-57	God and his people have entered into a new covenant era (53:3). But even through the exile is behind them, God’s social admonitions are the same (56:1).
Aug 20	Is. 58-60	Those whose religion is only of “creeds” and not “deeds” need to hear 58:3-8. Good works follow faith as fruit comes from a good tree. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 21	Is. 61-63	Jesus read 61:1-3 in a public service and said that it was fulfilled in his coming. 63:7-11 is a summary of the cause and result of the exile. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 22	Is. 64-66	Again, a final mixture of Law and Gospel. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>

JEREMIAH

Jeremiah (which means “the Lord establishes”) is sometimes called the prophet of individual religion. Although Isaiah’s Servant Songs best describe Christ, Jeremiah himself bears striking similarities to the coming Messiah: he opposed empty ritualism, was rejected in his home town, cleansed the temple, wept over Jerusalem, and spoke of the New Covenant to come. He lived to experience the exile first hand. In a way, he must have seemed like a traitor with his constant prophecies that Jerusalem would be defeated. But during the captivity or exile he spoke just as harshly against the new rulers.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Aug 23	Jer 1-3	Like Isaiah (who lived a century before him), Jeremiah also had a definite “Call” experience (chapter 1), in which God commissioned him (reluctant though Jeremiah was). He too was to speak words of judgment and hope (Law and Gospel) to his people. 2:17-19 shows the cause of God’s anger. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Aug 24	Jer 4-6	In spite of God’s wrath, the promise of mercy and forgiveness is ever present (4:1-2). God’s word, preached or taught, is dynamic and powerful in itself (5:14). False prophets never rock the boat (6:13-14). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>

- Aug 25 Jer 7-9 Empty ritualism is no substitute for true faithfulness (7). God takes his people seriously (9:7). *Comments & Questions:*
- Aug 26 Jer 10-12 Jeremiah is met with personal vengeance and plots against his life because of the word he preaches (11:18 f). *Comments & Questions:*
- Aug 27 Jer 13-15 Note how often it's emphasized that these are God's own words. He too is asked to do something highly symbolic (13). *Comments & Questions:*
- Aug 28 Jer 16-18 17:14 should be the confession/prayer of all people. *Comments & Questions:*
- Aug 29 Jer 19-21 There are many personal glimpses into the agony and suffering of the prophet as a result of his task (20:7-9). In 21 Jeremiah urges surrender. How do you think that went over? *Comments & Questions:*
- Aug 30 Jer 22-24 22:3 again depicts sin in concrete terms. To whom might 23:5-6 refer? 23:35-36 shows the absolute necessity of basing our beliefs firmly on God's clear word.
- Aug 31 Jer 25-27 Jeremiah's words get him in further trouble. *Comments & Questions:*

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