

DAILY BIBLE READING (March)

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 begin with this one and finish at this time next year. Others in the congregation are reading the same material each day.

DEUTERONOMY

The Israelites are still in the wilderness. There Moses speaks the words of Deuteronomy. Most scholars see a four part outline to the book: three sermons by Moses followed by his last words and death. Although Deuteronomy has a great amount of material repeated from Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers (the word "deuteronomy" means "second giving of the Law"), much of it is unique.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Mar 1	Deut. 1-3	Chapters 1-4 seem to be the first sermon of Moses in the book, a sermon which might be called "A Sermon of Recollection and Exhortation." 1:5 leads us to believe that the entire book may be an explanation of the Law given at Sinai. 2:7 is a good summary of the past 40 years. <i>Your Comments & Questions:</i>
Mar 2	Deut. 4-6	Chapter 4 is a transition into the material of chapters 5-28 which make up the second sermon, "A Sermon of Exhortation & Laws". 4:30-40 is one of the most beautiful sections of the Old Testament! Note the list of the Decalogue in chapter 5. In the Jewish list, verse 6 is the First Commandment. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Mar 3	Deut. 7-9	7:7-10 answers the question, "Why did Yahweh choose the Jews?" Much of the warfare in the Old Testament is bothersome to Christians. Check 9:4-5 for God's explanation. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Mar 4	Deut. 10-12	You should really be learning to love Deuteronomy by this point. Those who think that the OT is simply a book of law haven't read these magnificent expressions of God's grace and love.
Mar 5	Deut. 13-15	Idolatry will be the chief temptation of the people (13). But God's people are different (14) and should treat the less fortunate among them differently (15). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Mar 6	Deut. 16-18	The three special feasts are recounted. A warning for the future (unheeded) is given in 17:14-17. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Mar 7	Deut. 19-21	An explanation of the Fifth Commandment? <i>Comments:</i>
Mar 8	Deut 22-24	The distinctiveness of God's people calls for a special ethic.

- Mar 9 Deut. 25-27 26:16-19 serves as a summary of this portion. In old, secular covenant forms a section of “blessings and curses” followed the terms of the covenant (chapters 27 & 28). *Comments:*
- Mar 10 Deut. 28-30 Chapters 29 & 30 form the third sermon, “A Sermon on Entering Into the Promised Land & Keeping the Covenant”. 30:15-20 describes a choice which the Hebrew people will never clearly decide. *Comments & Questions:*
- Mar 11 Deut. 31-34 The rest of the book records Moses’ final words to the Hebrews. The leadership passes to Joshua, God’s chosen. The end of the book is God’s eulogy for the man who spoke so eloquently for him.

JOSHUA

The theme of Deuteronomy and its prophecies is carried forward in the book of Joshua. The book begins with an exhortation: up and be strong, for God is with you. The conquest story is used to demonstrate that it was because God fought for an obedient Israel that Israel won the promised land. The military campaigns resemble liturgical processions. The book closes with an exhortation to recall the mighty acts of God, posing once more the alternatives of obedience or ruin.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Mar 12	Josh 1-3	Chapters 1-12 deal with the conquest of the land, 13-24 its division among the tribes. Immediately note the similarities between Joshua and Moses (sending spies, crossing a dry river, etc) Rahab is named in Matthew’s genealogy as an ancestor of Jesus.
Mar 13	Josh 4-6	The Hebrews first set foot on the Promised Land! Imagine the excitement of 5:11-12. Chapter 6 is a familiar incident.
Mar 14	Josh 7-9	Warfare and the ban on spoils dictate that all obstacles to full dedication to God must be removed. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
Mar 15	Josh 10-12	10:13 mentions the Book of Jashar (a source for the material in Joshua?). Chapter 10 shows the occupation of the south, chapter 11 of the north. 11:20 reminds us of the Lord’s plan.
Mar 16	Josh 13-15	The allotments of the land begin. You may wish to skim this material, although careful gleaning is always rewarding.
Mar 17	Josh 16-18	When some foreign nations are allowed to remain in their presence, it spells trouble for the Hebrews in the future. Before Jerusalem was captured under David, the Tabernacle was set up at Shiloh, its first resting place in the new land (18:1).

Mar 18 Josh 19-21 Note that there are familial differences in the tribe of Levi.
Not all Levites will be priests; some will later have other tasks in the Temple. God is faithful: 21:43-45. *Comments:*

Mar 19 Josh 22-24 Chapters 23 & 24 are a familiar, magnificent form of summary we've come to expect and cherish in the OT.

JUDGES

This book takes its name from those men and women who served as leaders of God's people between the time of Joshua's death and the anointing of Israel's first king. We must remember that the Israelites do not now have the unity they had while traveling together. They are 12 separate tribes, spread throughout the promised land. They are held together only by a common tradition and their shared dedication to Yahweh. The "Judges" were military leaders, deliverers. Their work always entailed deliverance from some sort of oppression, and that oppression also had its cause. The following, alliterative pattern may be seen throughout the book: **Revolt** by Israel against God, **Rejection** of the people by God, **Repentance** of the people, **Renewal & Restoration** through a judge's leadership. How often our spiritual lives follow the same cycle!

Date Reading

Comments

Mar 20 Judg 1-3

2:1-3 sets the stage for what follows. The revolt of the people is always idolatry, apostasy, infidelity to God. 2:211-16 is a sample of the pattern mentioned above. *Comments:*

Mar 21 Judg 4-6

In spite of Moses' and Joshua's warnings, the theme of Judges is obvious: "the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." But when they repent, God delivers them. Gideon (6) is like Moses and the prophets who follow in his hesitancy to speak and act for God (6:15). But God's assurance to him, like the others, is "I will be with you." *Comments:*

Mar 22 Judg 7-9

God's might is sufficient! Note that Gideon doesn't want to be king. He wants a pure "theocracy" in which God is the ruler. Later we'll see that establishing kings in Israel was a sin of the people who wanted to be like the other nations.

Mar 23 Judg 10-12

Other judges in the same pattern. Jephthah makes a foolish vow. Note the origin of the term "shibboleth" (12:6). Does this first sign of intra-warfare spell the beginning of the end?

Mar 24 Judg 13-15

Another familiar pattern: the mother of Samson (like the mothers of so many Hebrew heroes) is originally barren. What does this OT pattern imply? *Comments & Questions:*

Mar 25 Judg 16-18

What does 17:6 say about the nature of unfaithfulness?

Mar 26 Judg 19-21 Chapter 19 is a striking similarity to Genesis 19. The spiritual depravity is well summarized in the untypical, concluding verse of the book.

RUTH

The story of a foreigner (a Moabite) who is converted to the Hebrew religion and becomes the great-grandmother of King David and a direct ancestor of our Lord.

Read the entire book in one sitting on March 27 *Comments & Questions:*

1 SAMUEL

The material of 1 & 2 Samuel deals with the establishment and consequences of a monarchy over the Israelites. 1 Samuel has the following material: a biography of Samuel, a history of the Ark, the establishing of the monarchy, and the rise of David.

Mar 28 1 Sam 1-3 Note that Hannah was also originally barren. Do you recall others in the OT? Notice any similarities between Hannah's song of praise and the "Magnificat" of Mary (Luke 1)?

Mar 29 1 Sam 4-6 The ark is not to be an object of superstition.

Mar 30 1 Sam 7-9 There is a brief return to the Lord and he grants peace throughout Samuel's life. But the people become fearful and ask for a king to be like the other nations. It's an act of weak faith in God. They'll be unhappy with their king.

Mar 31 1 Sam 10-12 The first king is anointed (Saul). 11:8 makes reference both to the "men of Israel" and the "men of Judah." Was this written in final form after the division of the kingdom (after Solomon's reign)? Chapter 12 is another beautiful summary, this time by Samuel. God, for the Hebrews, is always a God of history. Can the same be said of the Christian faith?