

DAILY BIBLE READING (May)

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 following the same schedule.

1 CHRONICLES

In Samuel and Kings we read a lot of history. Some of the same material is recorded in 1 & 2 Chronicles, but with a difference. The "Chronicler" is less interested with history than he is with God's involvement. He draws conclusions about God's activity and the people's relationship to him in the events he records. There is also a difference in the scope of Chronicles. He begins with Adam and goes to the end of the exile. He also omits accounts of the Northern Kingdom, Israel.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
May 1	1 Chr 1-3	These chapters are straight genealogy. In skimming, you may wish to refresh your memory about some of the relationships we studied in Genesis & Exodus. <i>Comments:</i>
May 2	1 Chr 4-6	Note that in tracing the families of each tribe, the author tells why they ended up in exile. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 3	1 Chr 7-9	In chapter 9 the author already talks about the first people who returned from exile in 537 BC. <i>Comments:</i>
May 4	1 Chr 10-12	The author has given us a review of history from Adam through the exile. Now he will trace the history of the kings which led up to the exile. 10:13-14 gives the reason for David's ascent to the throne. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 5	1 Chr 13-15	One of David's greatest accomplishments was the establishment of Jerusalem as the center for worship. <i>Comments:</i>
May 6	1 Chr 16-18	Chapter 16 is a combination of two Psalms of praise, Psalms 105 and 96. 17:11-14 refers to Solomon, but is it also an indirect prophecy about Jesus? <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 7	1 Chr 19-21	How many other references do you recall thus far to Satan (21:1)? Do you remember from former reading the cause for God's anger (21:7)? <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 8	1 Chr 22-25	In 23:24-32 we see a difference in the service among the Levites. In the church today, can we all be considered ministers (the "priesthood of all believers")? <i>Comments:</i>
May 9	1 Chr 26-29	If we sometimes think the church is over-organized, just read about David's divisions! In chapters 28 & 29 we see

the purpose for the House of God. *Comments:*

2 CHRONICLES

This is theologically interpreted history. The attention is only on the Southern Kingdom, Judah. The author reviews all which led up to the exile and the destruction of the beautiful city of Jerusalem which David and Solomon spent so much time building.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
May 10	2 Chr 1-3	Solomon picks up where his father, David, left off. Some have accused Christianity of having an “edifice complex” because of all our beautiful churches. But people have always wanted to worship God in the style he deserves.
May 11	2 Chr 4-6	A cubit is approximately 18”, so imagine the size of the altar constructed in 4:11. God’s presence was tangible to the Jews (5:14); how about for us? But the building is useless without Him (6:18-21). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 12	2 Chr 7-9	Imagine a church dedication concluding with 7:1. In chapter 9 Solomon’s wisdom is extolled. And he’s the one who wrote “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 1:7).
May 13	2 Chr 10-12	The split between Rehoboam and Jeroboam is the split between north and south. The nature of their division and its religious implications is given in 11:13-17. <i>Comments:</i>
May 14	2 Chr 13-15	The peace and stability of Solomon’s reign is shattered when his descendents forget the Lord. Their only salvation is to return to the covenant God. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 15	2 Chr 16-18	Israel’s and Judah’s history through the kings revolves around the accusation of 16:7-9. Note that prophets are to speak truthfully for God, not to tell people what they want to hear (chapter 18). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 16	2 Chr 19-21	God’s promises still take precedence over our rebellion (21:7)
May 17	2 Chr 22-24	In spite of people’s intrigues, God has kept his promise to continue David’s house (22:10-12). In 24:19 we have a description of the need for and function of prophets.
<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
May 18	2 Chr 25-27	What do you think of this statement: “all sin is at root idolatry”? God will not tolerate sacrilege (26:16-19).

May 19	2 Chr 28-30	People can sin in their campaign against sin (28:9-11). God's grace always overshadows mere ritualism (30:17-22).
May 20	2 Chr 31-33	Oh that all of us could experience such surprise as 31:10. Chapter 32 recalls the miraculous defense of Jerusalem. Do you recall the sign Hezekiah received in 32:24? (Check 2 Kings 20:1-21 for a refresher). <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 21	2 Chr 34-36	Another account of Josiah's famous reform (34). God uses the Egyptians (35). Jeremiah was a prophet at this time and wrote Lamentations. 36:14-16 summarizes God's reason for Judah's final defeat and exile.

EZRA

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah seem to be cut from the same cloth as Chronicles (note that Ezra begins with a duplication of 2 Chronicles 36:22-23.) Almost 50 years elapse until the Jews first return to Jerusalem under Ezra. More will return later. The defeat and exile seem to have taught the people a lesson: never again will we find idolatry among the Jews! Their renewed faith and trust in the one true God is shown in their desire to rebuild the temple destroyed by the Babylonians. When Cyrus, the Persian, conquered Babylonia, one of his first edicts was permission for the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Note that Cyrus was not a Jew, but acted like a servant of God.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
--------------------	-----------------------	------------------------

May 22	Ezra 1-3	Isaiah 44 & 45 refer to Cyrus as God's "anointed" (one of the first good things we hear about a gentile). If you follow a listing of Persian rulers, you'll find Ezra a chronological nightmare!
May 23	Ezra 4-6	The Jews' troubles have not ended yet (4:4-5). But Darius finally put an end to it (6:12). Chapter 5:1 dates the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, whom we'll read later.
May 24	Ezra 7-10	9:13-15 is a wonderful statement about the grace of God and a prayer for his mercy. In a way, it summarizes all of Old Testament history! <i>Comments & Questions:</i>

NEHEMIAH

While Ezra was a scholar, priest, Levite and scribe, Nehemiah was a practical and political man who went from being the king's cupbearer to governor of Jerusalem. He recalls the problems the Jews faced upon their return from exile and the rebuilding of the city wall.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
May 25	Neh 1-3	Nehemiah is more than a politician or city planner; he is a man of prayer and vision. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 26	Neh 4-6	An old Christian motto is “pray and work.” Note the combination in 4:9. Also note his advice in 5:9. <i>Comments:</i>
May 27	Neh 7-9	The procedure for Christian education in 8:8 is good. Ch 9 is a beautiful summary of Old Testament history and a confession. <i>Comments & Questions:</i>
May 28	Neh 10-13	In chapter 10 the covenant is renewed at a service of rededication. Nehemiah’s reforms are given in chapter 13.

ESTHER

This book has always presented a bit of a problem. When Jewish leaders gathered in 66 AD to determine which books of the Old Testament were canonical (i.e. Word of God), they almost excluded Esther. Why? For one thing, God is never mentioned by name in the book! Nevertheless, it was included as something like a “national novel.” Around the world each year, on the Festival of Purim, the book is read in every synagogue. You’ll soon learn why.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Comments</u>
May 29	Esther 1-3	In chapter 3 Mordecai refuses any semblance of idolatry and the first recorded incident of wholesale anti-Semitism begins (see any parallels to Nazi Germany?). <i>Comments & Questions</i>
May 30	Esther 4-6	The question posed in 4:14 is the central issue in the book. It’s a question all of us should ask ourselves when placed in positions where we can have an influence.
May 31	Esther 7-10	What do you think of the revenge taken by the Jews? Is it necessarily condoned just because it’s recorded in the OT? Is there a difference between historical narrative and moral commentary?