

Background

Reading through the Bible is a great opportunity to get to know God's Word. Doing it together provides accountability and support. The important thing is that we begin where we are and keep going. This year I would like to offer an abbreviated, abridged approach in reading the Old Testament. A couple of things need to be kept in mind. Spiritual formation, transformation, and growth come from being in God's Word. The goal is not just to read it, but to allow its truth to penetrate our lives, to change us and mold us. That is what I mean by "Getting into God's Word, so His Word gets into us."

One, all of the Old Testament is God's Word. Every part is important, meaningful and significant. At the same time some of the parts are harder to connect with and therefore can be less interesting. My goal is to keep us going so we make it through. I have taken some liberty to help keep us focused. Yes, it is my opinion, but my goal to help us know the story of God's people and not get bogged down is a lot of detail. We will read through all of the New Testament.

Second, the goal is to read about two chapters a day, about 10-15 minutes. Keeping it short and getting it done is better than long passages and long time and not making it through.

Third, when we read it is good to look for principles God taught His people to live by, expectation, and times of success and failure. What does God want us to learn, understand, realize or apply to our lives are themes we should be looking for.

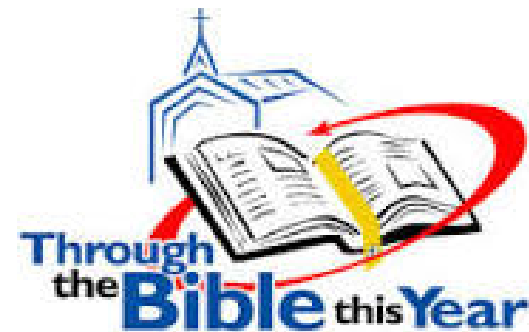
Fourth, my goal is to provide some brief commentary and context at the beginning of each book so we can keep the story in perspective.

Fifth, it is good to have a reading partner to keep us focused, accountable and perhaps to discuss parts we do not understand.

Enjoy your reading and time with God.

Dr. Ralph Gibson, Pastor

April **READING** **PLAN**



“Getting into God’s Word,
so God’s Word gets into us.”

Daily Reading for April

This month we quickly finish Judges and read Ruth. The Hebrew nation has been established and learning to function as a nation. As you read the last verse of Judges (21:25) carefully note its message, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did what was right in their own eyes (as they saw fit. NIV)." This verse indicates an attitude of ignoring God in their lives. It is important and significant as it sets up the reading and story for the nation of Israel that is to follow. (As you read Ruth, you may remember some of the lessons from the February message series.)

In 1 & 2 Samuel continues the story from Judges as we are first introduced to the prophet Samuel of whom the books are named after. A significant chapter is 1 Samuel 8 when Israel asks for a king. It is a significant shift and change for the people of Israel. God grants their request with reluctance. It is also important to notice the number of times the text indicates whether the leaders referred to follow the Lord. This is one of the key phrases in reading through Samuel and later 1 & 2 Kings.

Following the significance of chapter 8, Saul, the first king is introduced and we learn of his experience leading the people. Another change or shift takes place in chapter 16 as David is introduced. This emphasis is continued into 2 Samuel. While these books are called 1 & 2 Samuel, the primary characters are how Samuel dwelt with Saul and David, the first two kings of Israel. Their high points and low points and how it affected the people.

The events of 1 & 2 Samuel take place around 1000 BC.

As we read look for what is God trying to emphasize in this passage? In what ways does this apply to me? What principles do I need to take from this? What is God trying to say to me and my life?

April 1 Judges 19-20

2	21	_____
3	Ruth 1-2	_____
4	3-4	_____
5	1 Samuel 1-2	_____
6	3-4	_____
7	5-6	_____
8	7-8	_____
9	9-10	_____
10	11-12	_____
11	13-14	_____
12	15-16	_____
13	17-18	_____
14	19-20	_____
15	21-22	_____
16	23-24	_____
17	25-26	_____
19	27-28	_____
20	29-30	_____
21	31	_____
22	2 Samuel 1-2	_____
23	3-4	_____
24	5-6	_____
25	7-8	_____
26	9-10	_____
27	11-12	_____
28	13-14	_____
29	15-16	_____
30	17-18	_____

