



God & ISRAEL

PROPHETS AND KINGS

WEEKS 16-22

SUMMARY OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

WEEK 23

LOVE
THIS
BOOK

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to let us know you're reading along,
pay for your journal, find Bible App instructions,
kids' reading plans and more.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Part 2 of the Love This Book journal.

This year we'll take a journey through the entire story of scripture. This journal is designed to be our companion.

When we think of journaling, we might think of an English class project from years ago, or an empty notebook waiting to be filled with thoughts, dreams or random ponderings. This scripture journal is a bit different.

Each week, we'll focus on a set of scripture passages together. Once we've spent time reading God's Word, we can then reflect on what God is speaking into our lives. Taking the time to write our reflections can help us capture our thoughts and emotions. As these authors put it...

"As we journal [on God's Word] we pray to God, we ask ourselves probing questions, we think through issues, we put on paper the 'stuff' tumbling about in our heads. We become more connected with God, ourselves, and ultimately with others."

- Mindy & Jeff Caliguire, Write for your Soul: The Whys and Hows of Journaling

HOW TO USE THIS Journal

Each week, you'll find four pages that contain the following sections:

Section 1: SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

In the first section, we'll give you an overview of the week's readings and you'll have space to read, reflect and respond to a set of Bible passages. Feel free to use this in any way that helps you connect with God. Perhaps you'll want to read all the passages in one day and reflect on those passages the next day. Or you could read one passage each day, reflecting and responding along the way.

READ: For each week, there are passages listed for each day (5x week). Begin by reading through the passage for that day. As you read, take notes about the words or phrases that stand out to you.

REFLECT: What main theme(s) is highlighted in the passage? What questions come to your mind? What insights do you have into God, His character or your own life as you reflect on this passage?

RESPOND: Thinking back over the passage, where do you sense God drawing your attention? Can you identify action steps to take in response? What can you offer back to God in prayer as a response to this passage? Take time to pray.

Section 2: PSALM

The Psalms are to be used for a time of prayer throughout each week. Sometimes they go along with the other readings, but often they're simply Psalms that speak of God's character and the response of His people to who God is and what He has done. In this section, feel free to doodle, color, highlight or underline. Experiment—and see what helps you to connect with God!

"The Psalms are poetry and the Psalms are prayer... They are not provided to teach us about God, but to train us in responding to Him. We don't learn the Psalms until we are praying them."

—Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*

Section 3: REVIEW

After the Scripture passages and Psalm pages, you'll find a third page with three questions that will prompt you to reflect on the readings for the past week. Take time to respond to these questions. Give yourself time to think over all the passages you've read for the week. What are the main themes God has impressed upon you in His Word?

Section 4: SERMON NOTES

Finally, we included a page for you to wrap up your week with sermon notes as you make your way through the Love This Book journey. Please consider bringing your journal with you to church each week!

We believe that this will be a useful tool to help you engage and grow as you read God's Word and as we commit as a church to Love This Book.

—Craig Gartland
Pastor of Spiritual Formation
Blackhawk Church

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 16

**HABAKKUK 1-3, AMOS 7:10-17; JEREMIAH 1, JEREMIAH 20, EZEKIEL 1-2;
I KINGS 12-16; 1 KINGS 17-22; PSALM 115**

Overview: Our narrative this week picks up after King Solomon's death, with the kingdom splitting into Israel and Judah. As the kings begin to turn away from God, we see a rise of prophets. These prophets serve as the spokespeople for God as His people and those in leadership begin to turn away. But where do prophets come from? Why and how do they get started in their roles? Through the "call narratives" of Habakkuk, Amos, Jeremiah and Ezekiel we will see that being called for the work of God differs than dynastic obligation to an earthly kingship.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 115:14-18

14 May the LORD cause you to flourish,
both you and your children.

15 May you be blessed by the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

16 The highest heavens belong to the LORD,
but the earth he has given to mankind.

17 It is not the dead who praise the LORD,
those who go down to the place of silence;

18 it is we who extol the LORD,
both now and forevermore.

Praise the LORD.[a]

REVIEW *of* WEEK 16:

The prophets in the Old Testament are called by God to bring His word to His rebellious people (Ezekiel 2:3). In reading about Habakkuk, Amos, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, what are the particular challenges these prophets face? What characterizes the rebellion of God's people?

As God calls the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17-22) to confront the corrupt king Ahab, what do you learn about God's character? His compassion and His justice?

The heart of Psalm 115 speaks of trusting the Lord. What in your life works to erode your trust in God? Like the psalmist, take time to recount God's attributes (love, faithfulness, a help and shield), asking the Lord to grow your trust in Him.

MESSAGE *Notes*

ELIJAH VS. AHAB: THE RISE OF THE PROPHETS

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 17

2 KINGS 1-4; 2 KINGS 5-8; ISAIAH 6, 2 KINGS 9-11; 2 KINGS 16-17; PSALM 10

Overview: This week, we continue with the story of Elijah and Elisha. The story follows their battle with a neighboring dynasty into a period of destruction to the end of northern Israel. We will take a closer look at Naaman, a Syrian general who despite becoming a worshipper of Yahweh, leads an army to attack Israel. In Isaiah, the prophetic vocation takes a turn from facilitating repentance to enacting destruction. Through these unexpected events, we see what God has done and will do in judgment of His people.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 10:12-18

12 Arise, LORD! Lift up your hand, O God.
Do not forget the helpless.

13 Why does the wicked man revile God?
Why does he say to himself,
"He won't call me to account"?

14 But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted;
you consider their grief and take it in hand.

The victims commit themselves to you;
you are the helper of the fatherless.

15 Break the arm of the wicked man;
call the evildoer to account for his wickedness
that would not otherwise be found out.

16 The Lord is King for ever and ever;
the nations will perish from his land.

17 You, Lord, hear the desire of the afflicted;
you encourage them, and you listen to their cry,

18 defending the fatherless and the oppressed,
so that mere earthly mortals
will never again strike terror.

REVIEW of WEEK 17:

In 2 Kings, the focus shifts from the prophet Elijah to the prophet Elisha. How do Elisha's faith and faithfulness, and Naaman's turn from pride to faith model what God wants from His people?

Isaiah's call is marked by humility and awe before a holy God. How does the humility we see in Elisha and Isaiah contrast with God's rebellious, hard-hearted people?

Psalm 10 is also a study in contrasts between the arrogant and the helpless, the wicked and the oppressed. What encouragement is it to you that God "hears the desire of the afflicted and defends the fatherless and the oppressed" (vv. 17-18)?

MESSAGE *Notes*

ELISHA AND NAAMAN

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 18

JONAH; ISAIAH 1, ISAIAH 5, LEVITICUS 25; AMOS 1-2; MICAH 3, MICHA 6; PSALM 146

Overview: As we've read from Genesis through 2 Kings, the story has focused on the rebellion of God's people. In the Prophets, society's betrayal of God shows itself through social injustice issues including oppression of the poor, abandonment of the needy and human misconception of ownership. In the story of Jonah, this progresses to ethnocentrism, evident in his failure to bless the nations and act on what was once a call from Abraham for the people of God. These issues have not fallen out of our common discourse today, and while we look back on familiar failures of Christians, we can use these readings to move forward.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 146:6-10

6 He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything in them—
he remains faithful forever.

7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.
The LORD sets prisoners free,

8 the LORD gives sight to the blind,
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down,
the LORD loves the righteous.

9 The LORD watches over the foreigner
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

10 The LORD reigns forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the LORD.

REVIEW *of* WEEK 18:

At the heart of the message God sends to His people through His prophets is a call to justice: “Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow” (Isa. 1:17). In what ways were God’s people not doing this?

Micah 6:8 says, “...And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” It is a summary of the obedience God wants from his people. In what ways is this both encouragement and challenge to you?

The words of Psalm 146 remind us where we are to put our hope (in God, not humans) and the justice that reflects God’s heart. Take time to respond to this Psalm in prayer.

MESSAGE *Notes*

ISAIAH, MICAH, LEVITICUS

FAILURE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 19

2 KINGS 18-20; 2 KINGS 21-23; 2 KINGS 24-25; DEUTERONOMY 29-30; PSALM 42

Overview: In these two chapters of Deuteronomy, Moses forewarns the people of their impending failure in the promised land. However, his promise of exile comes with an eventual promise of return. 2 Kings brings us back to Judah to witness the kingdom's end. This is a week of overwhelming failure and tragedy. And while there is confusion as to what comes next, there is also a small but strong offering of hope.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 42:1-4

1 As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.

2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?

3 My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
"Where is your God?"

4 These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty One
with shouts of joy and praise
among the festive throng.

REVIEW of WEEK 19:

In 2 Kings 18-25, we read of three kings: Hezekiah and Josiah, who trusted in the Lord and Manasseh, who, “did evil in the eyes of the Lord” (20:2). What characterizes their obedience/disobedience as leaders of God’s people?

What do we learn about how God keeps His covenant in this chapter of Israel’s life? What are the connections between Josiah’s covenant renewal and the renewing of the covenant in Deuteronomy 29-30?

The opening words of Psalm 42 paint a powerful picture of a person longing to be with God. What can stifle us from thirsting for God? In what ways does this Psalm model prayer for deepening our longing for God?

MESSAGE *Notes*

MANASSEH AND JOSIAH

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 20

ISAIAH 2:1-5, ISAIAH 40-41; JEREMIAH 31, JOEL 1-3; ISAIAH 59-61;

HEBREWS 8, 2 CORINTHIANS 3; PSALM 89

Overview: How are we supposed to think about the Old Testament when it doesn't have a happy ending? What does this mean for the covenant? Is this whole thing simply dead? Throughout the Old Testament, exile has been endured with hope of a return. However, this eventual return cannot be satisfied if there is not also a transformation that takes place within the people. By way of the Holy Spirit, there will be a new covenant of the heart. Our readings this week discuss this transformation of the heart that proves to be a necessary way for the people of God to move forward in relationship with Him.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 89: 14-18

5 The heavens praise your wonders, LORD,
your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones;
6 For who in the skies above can compare with the LORD?
Who is like the LORD among the heavenly beings?
7 In the council of the holy ones God is greatly feared;
he is more awesome than all who surround him.
8 Who is like you, LORD God Almighty?
You, LORD, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.

REVIEW of WEEK 20:

The period of kings ends without much hope – a second exile. However, the message of God’s prophets is, “Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save” (Is. 59:1). What other words of hope do you find in your reading of the Prophets?

As we turn to the New Testament, we find Isaiah 40 mentioned throughout the Gospels and Jeremiah 31 referenced in Hebrews 8 as witness to a “new” covenant. How does this culmination in Jesus connect to God’s covenant faithfulness?

Psalm 89 is a prayer that mourns the end of the Davidic kings. How can we make this psalm our prayer – proclaiming God’s righteousness and justice, but also crying out, “How long, Lord?” where we still find injustice and brokenness in the world?

MESSAGE *Notes*

GOD AND ISRAEL

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 21

**ISAIAH 42:1-9, ISAIAH 49:1-7, ISAIAH 50:4-9; ISAIAH 52:13-53:12; ISAIAH 7:17-17,
ISAIAH 9:1-7, ISAIAH 11:1-16; GENESIS 14, PSALM 110, HEBREWS 7; PSALM 2**

Overview: This week, we read about the promise of the new King, the Messiah. However, the plot takes an unexpected turn as the character of the Anointed One is revealed. Through the Servant Songs in the Book of Isaiah, we see a suffering servant king, perhaps not what we imagine when we first think of royalty. We will also meet Melchizedek, a priest king who mirrors the coming Messiah. While these passages display the hope of the Hebrew people for an earthly king, the prophecies foreshadow a revolutionary reign to come.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 2:1-3 & 10-12

- 1 Why do the nations conspire[a]
and the peoples plot in vain?
- 2 The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,
- 3 "Let us break their chains
and throw off their shackles."
- 10 Therefore, you kings, be wise;
be warned, you rulers of the earth.
- 11 Serve the LORD with fear
and celebrate his rule with trembling.
- 12 Kiss his son, or he will be angry
and your way will lead to your destruction,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

REVIEW of WEEK 21:

In Isaiah, we read the promise and foreshowing of a new King: both a suffering servant (52-53) and one who will have authority (7, 9, 11). What hope would this have brought God's people? How is this ultimately realized in Christ?

Melchizedek is first mentioned in Genesis 14 and then in Hebrews 7, connected to Christ. In what ways did this king/priest point to Jesus, and in what ways does Jesus supersede him as part of God's promise?

Known as a "royal psalm," Psalm 2 foreshadows God's future redemption through the line of David and is frequently quoted in the New Testament where it is applied to Christ. Spend time thanking God for plan and promise in Christ.

MESSAGE *Notes*

PROMISE OF A NEW KING

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 22

EZRA 1, EZRA 3-6; EZRA 7-10; NEHEMIAH 1-2, NEHEMIAH 4-7:3; MALACHI; PSALM 13

Overview: As we near the end of the Hebrew Bible - our Old Testament - Ezra and Nehemiah make a return from exile. While this marks a new start for the people of Israel, there is only a partial fulfillment of the hope they had in returning to the land. The final Old Testament prophet, Malachi, addresses the resulting loss of confidence in God's provision, offering a new hope as to where we might look when God's movements seem hidden from us.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 13:1-6

1 How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts

and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

3 Look on me and answer, LORD my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,

4 and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"

and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

5 But I trust in your unfailing love;

my heart rejoices in your salvation.

6 I will sing the LORD's praise,

for he has been good to me.

REVIEW of WEEK 22:

Ezra and Nehemiah speak of the return of the exiles and the restoration of the temple and wall. What hope does this bring God's people? In what ways is this restoration still incomplete?

How does Malachi address a loss of confidence and hope during a time when it seems God is silent and inactive? What is his challenge to God's people?

Psalm 13 is a prayer of hope and trust in the midst of waiting and longing. What encouragement does this bring you? Where in your life do you need this reminder?

MESSAGE *Notes*

MALACHI

BIBLE READING:

God & **ISRAEL**

WEEK 23

SUMMARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

HEBREWS 11:1-12:3; GALATIANS 3-4; ROMANS 4-5; ROMANS 9-11; PSALM 20

Overview: This week, our readings provide an overview of our journey through the Old Testament as we lean into New Testament passages. Together, we will see the importance of the context of the Hebrew Bible, the story of the Hebrew people and what God is doing through Israel to bless the world. By having spent the past six months together in the Old Testament, we hope to bring fresh eyes and a deeper understanding as we approach the New Testament.

READ

REFLECT

RESPOND

PSALM *of the WEEK*

PSALM 20:1-2 & 6-8

1 May the LORD answer you when you are in distress;
may the name of the God of Jacob protect you.

2 May he send you help from the sanctuary
and grant you support from Zion.

6 Now this I know:

The LORD gives victory to his anointed.
He answers him from his heavenly sanctuary
with the victorious power of his right hand.

7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

8 They are brought to their knees and fall,
but we rise up and stand firm.

REVIEW of WEEK 23:

As you read through these New Testament passages, what continuation of God's covenant faithfulness do you see? Who now are God's people? What is identified as faith (Hebrews 11)? What encouragement is this to you?

The pattern we have seen in Scripture thus far has been Plan, Resistance, Response, Promise. Where in these passages do we find these themes? How are they the same/different?

In what ways is Psalm 20 a song or prayer of confident faith? How can your prayer life grow to reflect a confident faith in our God?

MESSAGE *Notes* SUMMARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

