



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

CHRIST-CENTERED, KINGDOM-FOCUSED HOMES



Bible Reading Plan Journal

March 2022

Why we have a church-wide Bible reading plan: God speaks to people through His Word. It is what He uses to transform our lives by revealing truth to us and aligning our heart toward what He loves. The aim of this reading plan is not to merely check a box off a list, but to encourage our church body to spend time hearing from God. Reading the Bible is critical to a Christian's growth. But it is especially powerful to read the Bible with others. This reading plan is the basis for all of our D-Groups, and we hope it fosters deeper spiritual conversations in our families and between our members.

How you can use this booklet: Each day has a passage of Scripture for you to read. There are one to two questions to prompt your study of the passage. We encourage the H.E.A.R. method for reading Scripture, especially if it is a new discipline for you. First, highlight a verse or verses that speak to you from the passage. Then, explain what those verses mean in relation to the broader context and how they support the main idea the author is trying to communicate. Next, apply this verse to your everyday life. What does this passage teach us about God? How does this passage point you to your need for Jesus? How do your thoughts, emotions, or actions need to change in light of this passage? Application should always be done in a spirit of prayer, as you are asking God to reveal to you how it applies. Finally, respond. This may be a specific action God is leading you to do. Very often it will be a prayer, either of thanksgiving, of confession of sin, or of petition asking for God's help.

Each new section in the biblical book is preceded by an introduction to help you focus on some key ideas of that book. There is also a general outline to that section to help you keep the overall context in mind as you read each day. This is important for every book of Scripture, but it is especially important for the larger books in the Bible.

Memory Verse: Because Scripture is God's Word, it is important that a Christian spend regular time memorizing God's Word so that he or she can always find encouragement and guidance from God. This month's memory passage is provided on the next page in the ESV, NIV, and NLT.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15**ESV**

12 “Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. 13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. 15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

NIV

12 “Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. 13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do. 15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

NLT

12 “Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. 13 You have six days each week for your ordinary work, 14 but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your oxen and donkeys and other livestock, and any foreigners living among you. All your male and female servants must rest as you do. 15 Remember that you were once slaves in Egypt, but the LORD your God brought you out with his strong hand and powerful arm. That is why the LORD your God has commanded you to rest on the Sabbath day.

Explain:

Yahweh “proclaims his name” before Moses in vv. 6-7. How would you describe God’s character in your own words based off these verses?

The covenant (as summarized in the Ten Commandments) is reestablished when the covenant is rewritten on two new stone tablets. How does this passage in light of the preceding context reveal God’s grace and mercy?

Day 1 | Exodus 34

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

Where did the Israelites get all the material to donate and all the skill to make the tabernacle?

How does the Spirit of God work in these chapters?

Day 2 | **Exodus 35-36**

Apply:

What do these chapters teach us about worship and about giving to the Lord?

Respond:

Explain:

The construction of the tabernacle begins in 36:2. And it is almost a verbatim repetition of material from chs. 25-28, 30, and 31. What do you think is the point of this repetition? For example, why not just say, “And they built the tabernacle according to the instructions they were given,” or something like that?

Day 3 | Exodus 37-38

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

The phrase “as the Lord had commanded Moses” is repeated 13 times in these two chapters. How does this phrase fit in with the main point of the passage as a whole? What are these chapters trying to teach us?

Day 4 | **Exodus 39-40**

Apply:

The cloud of God's glory moves from Sinai to the tabernacle to be in the midst of the people of Israel. This is the climactic moment of the entire book. What does this teach you about God, and what relevance does that have for your own life?

Respond:

Introduction to the book of Leviticus

Leviticus is one of the most daunting books of the Old Testament. It is filled with strange rituals and concepts. But even if we understand it, it is difficult to see how it has any relevance to our lives as Christians today. Yet the central point is clear: God has made a way to dwell among his people and for them to approach him in worship.

It is important to recognize the narrative context of the book as a whole. It continues the story from Exodus 40:34, where God's glory fills the tabernacle. But no one, not even Moses, is able to enter the tabernacle. The first half of Leviticus seeks provides a solution: Israel can approach God through the priests and the sacrifices. The second half of Leviticus then instructs Israel how to live as the holy people God has created them to be. Once Leviticus is completed, the people are holy and ready to head to Canaan, which is where Numbers picks up.

This context shows that Leviticus summarizes the goal of God's redemption: dwelling once again with his people. Ever since being cast out of Eden, humanity drifted further and further from God. But God's redemptive plan was to restore humanity and bring them back into his presence. He did that by calling Abraham, by redeeming Abraham's descendants from slavery in Egypt, by revealing himself to Israel at Mount Sinai, and finally by dwelling among them in the tabernacle. Leviticus continues and completes that redemptive plan in many ways. This is why the ultimate blessing of the covenant is this: "I will make my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people" (Lev. 26:11-12).

Book Outline: Leviticus

- I. Approaching God — Laws for the Tabernacle (1:1-16:34)
 - A. Laws concerning sacrifices (1:1-7:38)
 - B. Narrative about the priests (8:1-10:20)
 - 1. Ordination of the priests (8:1-36)
 - 2. The priests begin their ministry (9:1-24)
 - 3. The death of Nadab and Abihu (10:1-20)
 - C. Laws concerning ceremonial uncleanness (11:1-15:33)
 - D. Purifying the tabernacle — The Day of Atonement (16:1-34)
- II. God's Holy Community — Laws for the Community (17:1-27:34)
 - A. Maintaining a holy community (17:1-20:27)
 - B. Maintaining a holy priesthood (21:1-22:33)
 - C. Maintaining holy time through sabbath (23:1-25:55)
 - D. Covenantal blessings and curses (26:1-46)
 - E. Laws concerning redemption of people and property (27:1-34)

Explain:

These chapters discuss two types of sacrifices: the burnt offering (1:3) and the grain offering (2:1). For each of these sacrifices, answer the following questions: What can be offered? What portion is burnt on the altar? What portion is eaten and by whom?

Day 5 | **Leviticus 1-2**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

These chapters discuss additional types of sacrifices: the fellowship or peace offering (3:1) and the sin offering (4:1-3). For each of these sacrifices, answer the following questions: What can be offered? What portion is burnt on the altar? What portion is eaten and by whom?

Day 1 | **Leviticus 3-4**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

The final sacrifice that Israel was commanded to offer was the guilt offering (5:14-15). For this offering, what can be offered? What portion is burnt on the altar? What portion is eaten and by whom?

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There were five main sacrifices that Israel offered, and it is important to see that each served a different and theologically significant purpose. First, the sin and guilt offerings dealt with sin. They purified or cleansed an Israelite from impurity or sin. The guilt offering involved making restitution for a wrong committed. Then, a burnt offering was made. This involved burning up the entire sacrifice on the altar, which symbolized complete consecration or dedication to God. Finally, there would be a peace offering. This is the only sacrifice that the offerer could eat, which symbolized restored fellowship with God. Thus, different sacrifices reflect different aspects of our relationship with God: forgiveness (sin & guilt offerings), complete dedication (burnt offering; cf. Rom. 12:1), and communion or fellowship (peace offering).

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Day 2 | **Leviticus 5-6**

Apply:

Hopefully after reading these chapters you can see that different sacrifices served different purposes and illustrate different theological realities of how we can and should relate to God. Even though we do not keep such sacrifices, how might these realities be reflected in your own life?

Respond:

Explain:

6:8-7:38 explain which parts of the sacrifices the priests could eat (in contrast to the offerer). Why can the priests eat more portions than the offerer?

Day 3 | **Leviticus 7**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

These chapters resume the narrative of Exodus 40:34-Leviticus 1:1. Now that instructions for sacrifices have been given, Moses can offer those sacrifices to consecrate the priests, who can then offer sacrifices on behalf of the people. How do the sacrifices open up a new opportunity for Israel's access to God (compare Lev. 9:23 with Exodus 40:35)?

Day 4 | **Leviticus 8-9**

Apply:

This section of Leviticus makes clear one major point: sacrifices are required to approach God. How is that also true for Christians today?

Respond:

Explain:

Why do Nadab and Abihu die? What should we learn from this story in ch. 10?

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One of the most confusing parts of Leviticus is the distinction between being ceremonially clean or unclean. Most people and things are clean, and to be clean means to be fit to enter God's presence (in the tabernacle). The holy and the unclean cannot come into contact with one another (7:20-21). But it is important to recognize that being unclean was not necessarily a moral judgment. An Israelite would become unclean at times simply from living life, so there was not necessarily any shame or judgment associated with being unclean. What was most important was that an unclean Israelite dealt with their uncleanness in the appropriate way, whether this be through sacrifice or washing or other means as prescribed by the law. Scholars debate what exactly this distinction means: it seems to be either associated with an abnormality (e.g., disease) or a loss of life (e.g., touching a corpse or the loss of bodily fluid). It seems that the fundamental theological principle communicated is that a person must be fit to enter God's presence.

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Day 5 | **Leviticus 10-11**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

According to these chapters, what makes a person unclean? When and how can that uncleanness be remedied?

Why do you think the things mentioned in these chapters are situations that make a person unclean?

Day 1 | **Leviticus 12-13**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

How does a person get rid of the uncleanness outlined in ch. 15?

Compare that with the other remedies in chs 11-15. Can you determine which types of uncleanness were most severe based on how they were cleansed?

Consider the time, effort, and cost that went into obeying these laws. What do you think might have been the effect on the Israelites from keeping these sorts of laws?

Day 2 | **Leviticus 14-15**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

This chapter explains the procedures for the annual Day of Atonement. What sacrifices are offered on this day, for whom are they offered, and what is the purpose of these sacrifices?

The Day of Atonement is the pinnacle of the tabernacle sacrificial system. What does this chapter (and more broadly the first half of Leviticus) teach you about approaching God? What does it teach us about the idea of worship?

Day 3 | **Leviticus 16**

Apply:

Why do Christians not do these things or follow these rules (in Lev. 1-16)? (And since we don't, why is it important to still read Leviticus?)

Respond:

Explain:

What is the significance of blood?

Chs. 17-26 are often called the “Holiness Code” because the central command and organizing concept is holiness: “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2). This idea is echoed with the phrase “I am Yahweh (your God),” which occurs dozens of times in this section of Leviticus. Based on ch. 18, why is sexuality so important for Israel to maintain its holiness?

Day 4 | **Leviticus 17-18**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

Of the commands in ch. 19, which of them should Christians to obey?

Day 5 | **Leviticus 19-20**

Apply:

1 Peter 1:15-16 says, “but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.””
Having read Leviticus 19-20, how should you as a Christian obey Peter’s command?

Respond:

Explain:

In what ways were the priests similar to and different from an average Israelite?

Day 1 | **Leviticus 21-22**

Apply:

How might Leviticus 22:31-33 apply to your life?

Respond:

Explain:

This chapter outlines a sort of liturgical calendar for Israel. It includes a series of festivals kept annually that were each an additional sabbath, a day to pause, rest, and worship. What seems to be the importance of these additional sabbath days?

Day 2 | **Leviticus 23**

Apply:

Why is it important to have an annual rhythm for rest, worship, and celebration?

Respond:

Explain:

Imagine living in a society where the sabbath years and the Year of Jubilee are obeyed. What would be some reasons people would refuse to obey these laws? How would this affect everyday life (business, the economy, family life, etc.)?

Day 3 | **Leviticus 24-25**

Apply:

What are some of the principles in this chapter that inform how the Israelites are to act? How might the same ideas be applied today in a different cultural context?

Respond:

Explain:

This is one of the most important chapters in the Old Testament because it clearly outlines the covenantal relationship between God and Israel: If Israel is obedient, God will bless them. If Israel is disobedient, God will curse them. Summarize some of the blessings and curses found in this chapter.

The ultimate blessing of the covenant is found in vv. 11-13. What do these verses reveal about the heart of God?

Day 4 | **Leviticus 26**

Apply:

This chapter makes a strong correlation between obedience and blessing. To what extent is the general principle of this chapter applicable to Christians? Does obedience result in blessing and disobedience in cursing? Why or why not?

Respond:

Explain:

This chapter outlines different ways of handling and donating property.

What are some things that can be “vowed” or freely dedicated to God?

What are some things that already belong to God?

Day 5 | **Leviticus 27**

Apply:

How might this chapter related to the way that you view your own property and God's relation to it?

Respond:
