



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

CHRIST-CENTERED, KINGDOM-FOCUSED HOMES



Bible Reading Plan Journal

May 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 5:19-21**ESV**

19 “ ‘And you shall not steal.

20 “ ‘And you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

21 “ ‘And you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife. And you shall not desire your neighbor’s house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.’

NIV

19 “You shall not steal.

20 “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

21 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbor’s house or land, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

NLT

19 “You must not steal.

20 “You must not testify falsely against your neighbor.

21 “You must not covet your neighbor’s wife. You must not covet your neighbor’s house or land, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.

Explain:

In response to Reuben's and Gad's request, Moses worries that this will be a repeat of Kadesh-barnea (Num. 13-14). From Moses' perspective, how is this situation similar to what happened in the past? How do these two tribes respond?

Why does God command Israel to drive out all the inhabitants of the land (33:50-56)? What will happen if Israel fails to do this?

Day 1 | **Numbers 32-33**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

Although there is some uncertainty today about the exact borders of the land promised to Israel, it would have been quite clear to the ancient Israelites exactly where their land started and ended. Why was the exact specification of Israel's borders important?

Day 2 | Numbers 34

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

Why do the Levites only get 48 towns scattered throughout the other tribes rather than their own tribal allotment?

What function did the cities of refuge serve in Israelite society?

Day 3 | **Numbers 35-36**

Apply:

Respond:

Introduction to the book of Deuteronomy

They've made it! The people of Israel are in Moab, just west of the Jordan River, prepared to enter into the land that God has promised to them. And to prepare them to live before God in this land, Moses reminds them of God's covenant with them, the terms by which they are to live in relationship with them.

But this is also a solemn moment. The book of Deuteronomy is primarily composed of three different speeches of Moses, and these effectively serve as Moses' last words. He is the very last of the generation that will die in the wilderness, who failed to enter the land of Canaan because of their disobedience. Throughout Deuteronomy, Moses reminds the people that the past generation, their very own parents, failed to keep the covenant and failed to obey the God who delivered them from Egypt.

Deuteronomy then is a book of renewal or recommitment. It is a vivid display that God's covenant was not with one generation but with every generation of Israel. And it is each generation's responsibility to acknowledge and submit to God's covenantal terms. In this book, Moses calls this new generation to faithfully serve God once they enter the land. Thus, the bulk of Deuteronomy is concerned with elaborating on the terms of the covenant, which are summarized in the 10 Commandments (chs 12-26). In fact, many scholars suggest that the 10 Commandments form a rough outline for the various laws found in this section of Deuteronomy. Most importantly, God is clear about this: obedience to the covenant will result in life and blessing, while disobedience will lead to cursing and death.

Book Outline: Deuteronomy

- I. Moses' First Speech: Israel's History (1:1-4:43)
- II. Moses' Second Speech (4:44-28:68)
 - A. The 10 Commandments (5:1-33)
 - B. "You shall love the Lord your God" (6:1-11:32)
 - C. "You shall have no other gods before me" (12:1-14:29)
 - D. "Remember the Sabbath" (15:1-16:17)
 - E. "Honor your father and mother" (i.e., authority) (16:18-18:22)
 - F. "You shall not murder" (19:1-22:12)
 - G. "You shall not commit adultery" (22:13-23:14)
 - H. "You shall not steal" (23:15-24:7)
 - I. "You shall not bear false witness" (24:8-25:4)
 - J. "You shall not covet" (25:5-26:15)
 - K. Blessings and Curses of the covenant (27:1-28:68)
- III. Moses' Third Speech & Conclusion (29:1-34:12)
 - A. Covenant renewal: Promise and warning (29:1-30:20)
 - B. The Song of Moses (31:30-32:47)
 - C. Moses' Blessing (33:1-29)
 - D. The Death of Moses (34:1-12)

Deuteronomy: Moses' First Speech

Day 4 | **Deuteronomy 1-2**

Explain:

Moses begins this speech by rehearsing Israel's history from the point of leaving Mt. Sinai ("Horeb") to the present, standing at the edge of the land of Canaan. He summarizes 40 years in just a few chapters. What are the key things addressed or retold in these chapters?

Throughout these chapters, Moses constantly refers to the current generation of Israelites as if they were the ones who were disobedient when technically it was their parents (e.g., "But you were unwilling to go up; you rebelled against the command of the Lord your God" (1:26).) Why does Moses do this?

Day 4 | **Deuteronomy 1-2**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

The defeats of Sihon and Og were meant to serve as a sort of preview of what would happen once Israel entered the actual land promised to them. What effect were these victories supposed to have on the Israelites?

Day 5 | **Deuteronomy 3**

Apply:

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' First Speech

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 4**

Explain:

Obedience to God's commands will show other nations that Israel is wise and understanding (4:6). How would God's law make Israel wise? What is the connection between the law (vv. 6, 8) and God's nearness (v. 7)?

Why is idolatry identified as a particularly bad act of disobedience?

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 4**

Apply:

This passage emphasizes that Israel must “be careful” or “watch yourselves carefully” (v. 9, 15). What does this command teach us about human nature? What are you doing personally to watch yourself carefully?

Respond:

Explain:

The Ten Commandments (5:6-21) are the essence of Israel's covenantal relationship with God. They set the terms by which Israel was to relate to and obey God. Which of these commandments are Christians expected to follow? How do you know?

Describe what it means to love God.

Day 2 | **Deuteronomy 5-6**

Apply:

Do you truly love God? How is that reflected in how often his commands are “on your heart” (v. 6)?

Respond:

Explain:

Based on these chapters, what will threaten Israel's allegiance to Yahweh? What must they do to combat these threats?

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Once again in the biblical narrative, we come across the idea of the complete destruction of conquered people (7:2). This is a difficult concept to understand, so there are at least a few things to keep in mind. First, it's hard to know to what extent this was carried out. Right after the command of complete destruction is a command not to intermarry (7:3). Who is there to marry if they were all destroyed? Second, the command is primarily directed at destroying false religion and protecting Israel from worshipping other gods (7:5). Third, Israel would also be judged if it turned away from God (7:4; 13:12-17). Finally, and most importantly, this is God's sentence of judgment against the evil of those living in Canaan. Just as it is God's prerogative to forgive, it is also his prerogative to judge when and how he chooses. Sometimes he acts directly; other times he acts through human agents (as here). This idea should cause us to take seriously the reality of God's judgment.

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Day 3 | **Deuteronomy 7-8**

Apply:

How do we face similar threats today? What things tempt us to not love God alone and above all? How do you overcome these temptations?

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 4 | **Deuteronomy 9-10**

Explain:

Why does God want the people to never forget their sin and rebelliousness (9:7, 24)?

Day 4 | **Deuteronomy 9-10**

Apply:

What does this passage teach you about human nature and the character of God? How does that inform how live as a Christian today?

Respond:

Explain:

God explicitly connects “blessing” with obedience. Earlier in Deuteronomy, the people are commanded to obey so that “it might go well” for them. What specifically does blessing entail based on the book of Deuteronomy?

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It is easy to miss the theological implications of living in the land of Israel. Deut. 11:10 compares Israel to Egypt. All of Egyptian society was dependent on the Nile, which predictably flooded and was easily irrigated. The Egyptians had a dependable water source, which meant consistency in their agriculture and food. However, Israel “drinks water by the rain from heaven” (11:11). It is a rather dry region that is entirely dependent on rainfall for agriculture. This means that God deliberately placed his people in a land where they would have to trust in him, even for their basic necessities. Thus, God can bless Israel with rain or he can judge them by withholding it (11:13-17).
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Day 5 | **Deuteronomy 11**

Apply:

In what sense is it true for Christians today that obedience leads to blessing? Is it the same or different from Israel's situation?

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 12-13**

Explain:

What is the significance and importance of a single, central place for worship?

Day 1 | Deuteronomy 12-13

Apply:

How are the people to respond to those who might say, “Let us go and serve other gods” (13:2, 6, 13)? In what ways do we hear the same thing today? How do you respond?

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 2 | **Deuteronomy 14-15**

Explain:

What specifically were Israelites commanded to do with the “tithe” (14:22-29)? What was the purpose of this?

Day 2 | **Deuteronomy 14-15**

Apply:

What does this chapter teach us about caring for the poor?

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 3 | **Deuteronomy 16-17**

Explain:

How do these chapters show a concern for justice? Who in particular is responsible for administering justice?

Day 3 | **Deuteronomy 16-17**

Apply:

What is justice? How should Christians be concerned about it today?

Respond:

Explain:

18:9-13 describe how the surrounding nations tried to understand the will of the gods. 18:14-22 explains how God makes himself known through a prophet like Moses. What are the differences between the other nations and Israel? What does this reveal about the character of other gods and Yahweh?

Ch. 19 is meant to ensure justice is carried out when someone is killed. What sort of things must be known about a person in order to determine if they are guilty of murder?

Day 4 | Deuteronomy 18-19

Apply:

How should ch. 19 inform our understanding of what is just in our society today?

Respond:

Explain:

How do Israel's military tactics reflect the fact that God is the one who fights for them?

Why do you think the “guilt of innocent blood” (21:9) must be purged from people who did not commit the unsolved murder?

Day 5 | **Deuteronomy 20-21**

Apply:

What does this passage teach us about how God works and whom he uses?

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 22-23**

Explain:

What does 22:13-30 reflect about the importance of marriage?

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 22-23**

Apply:

Choose a law from 22:1-8 or 23:15-25 and explain what the underlying principle is for the law and how you might translate it into our own cultural context today.

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 2 | **Deuteronomy 24-25**

Explain:

There are a variety of laws in these chapters. How do these laws reflect God's heart and his concerns?

Day 2 | **Deuteronomy 24-25**

Apply:

Choose a command from these chapters and explain what the underlying principle is for the law and how you might translate it into our own cultural context today.

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Second Speech

Day 3 | **Deuteronomy 26-27**

Explain:

Why are the statements in 26:5-10 and 26:13-15 appropriate before giving to the Lord?

What is the significance of the “curses” in ch. 27?

Day 3 | **Deuteronomy 26-27**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

This is one of the most significant chapters in the Old Testament. It clearly shows that, according to the covenant, obedience will result in blessing and disobedience will result in cursing. Describe how Israel would be blessed and cursed.

Day 4 | **Deuteronomy 28**

Apply:

In what way, if any, are these blessings and curses applicable to Christians today?

Respond:

Explain:

If calamity falls on Israel, who will ultimately be responsible for it and what will be its cause?

Day 5 | **Deuteronomy 29**

Apply:

What is the danger in thinking that God will forgive us no matter what we do (v. 19)?

Respond:

Deuteronomy: Moses' Third Speech

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 30-31**

Explain:

In v. 6, God refers to “circumcising the heart” of Israel. What does that mean? When will that happen? Why must that occur?

Based on ch. 31, is it more likely that Israel will be blessed or cursed?

Day 1 | **Deuteronomy 30-31**

Apply:

How do these chapters teach us what it is like to follow God, even today?

Respond:

Explain:

This song is a “witness” (31:19). What does it bear witness to? Why is such a witness needed?

Day 2 | **Deuteronomy 32**

Apply:

This song teaches us about God and about his people. How does it affect
how you live before God?

Respond:

Introduction to the book of Joshua

“So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there... Not one of all the LORD’S good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled” (Josh. 21:43, 45). These verses capture the tone and purpose of the book of Joshua. God has fulfilled his promises to his people Israel. Their enemies are destroyed or subdued, and there is peace in the land. Israel is free to prosper in this land “flowing with milk and honey.”

The book begins with the people entering the land of Canaan. God gives this generation their own “Red Sea” event, except this time God is bringing them into his promise by miraculously stopping up the Jordan River. After several chapters detailing their military victories, the bulk of the book is dedicated to divvying up the land according to the tribes. This meticulous detail is important for two reasons. First, practically it provides boundaries for the tribes. Second, and more importantly, it shows that God has indeed been faithful and provided this land for his people. The book ends on a positive note with the people recommitting themselves to God based on the terms of the covenant.

So the book of Joshua is primarily a joyful book that celebrates God’s faithfulness to his people and the fulfillment of his promises as well as the people’s faithful response to God for all he has done. Israel is finally settled in the land and committed to serving the God who has graciously provided all of this for their blessing and prosperity.

- I. Entering the Land (1:1-5:12)
- II. Stories of the Conquest (5:13-12:24)
 - A. Jericho (5:13-6:27)
 - B. Ai (7:1-8:35)
 - C. Gibeonite Deception (9:1-27)
 - D. Conquest of the South (10:1-43)
 - E. Conquest of the North (11:1-23)
 - F. List of Conquests (12:1-24)
- III. Tribal Allotments of the Land (13:1-21:45)
 - A. Land East of the Jordan (13:8-33)
 - B. Land West of the Jordan (14:1-19:51)
 - C. Cities of Refuge and Levites (20:1-21:45)
- IV. The Covenant is Renewed (22:1-24:33)

Explain:

After the dreary outlook of the song in ch. 32, Moses' last words are words of blessing, first to each of the tribes and finally to Israel as a whole (32:28-29). Throughout chs. 28-34, blessing and curse has been the prominent theme. How do you explain and resolve the tension between blessing and curse for Israel?

God repeatedly tells Joshua to be strong and courageous (cf. also Deut. 31:7; 31:23). Why might Joshua have been afraid? On what basis was he to be strong and courageous?

Day 3 | **Deuteronomy 33-34; Joshua 1**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

What have the inhabitants of the land heard about Israel and its God?

Other than bringing them into the land, what significance does the crossing of the Jordan have for Israel?

Day 4 | **Joshua 2-3**

Apply:

Respond:

Explain:

What similarities do these chapters make between the crossing of the Red Sea and the crossing of the Jordan River?

What are some of the first things that the people do once they are in the land?

Day 5 | **Joshua 4-5**

Apply:

Respond:
