

A Three-Month Survey of the Bible

These are sample passages that show the skeleton of the Bible's key points of history and central concepts.

Read all of the following passages, chapters, or books, and date the reading when you read it. If any reading is too lengthy for a single day, feel free to spread it over two days or more. Conversely, feel free to read a shorter reading in combination with the next one (or two). And, if this list takes six months or a year, so be it! These readings will be great for you, regardless of how long it takes you to read them.

Old Testament

1. Adam & Eve: Genesis 1-3.
2. Noah: Genesis 6:5-19.
3. Noah: Genesis 8:13-9:3.
4. Tower of Babel: Genesis 11:1-9.
5. Abraham ("great-nation" covenant; @2000 B.C.): Genesis 12:1-3.
6. Abraham (land-and-offspring covenant): Genesis 15:1-7.
7. Abraham (covenant of circumcision): Genesis 17:1-19.
8. Ishmael: Genesis 16:15.
9. And his brother, Isaac: Genesis 21:1-5.
10. Isaac's sons, Esau & Jacob: Genesis 25:19-34.
11. Jacob is renamed Israel: Genesis 35:9-12.
12. Joseph, favored son of Israel's 12 sons: Genesis 37:1-4, 23-28, 31-36.
13. Joseph in Egypt: Genesis 39:1-6; 41:1-45.
14. Joseph's "family reunion": Genesis 41:56-42:3; 45:4-5, 16-18.
15. The Israelites in Egypt: Exodus 1:1-16.
16. Moses' birth, rearing with Pharaoh, and fleeing from Egypt: Exodus 2:1-15.

Deliverance from Egypt through Moses

17. Moses' call: Exodus 3:1-12.
18. Moses' first plague: Exodus 7:14-25.
19. Moses' tenth plague (1400 B.C.): Exodus 12:21-32.
20. Moses and the Red Sea: Exodus 14:5-9, 14:21-31.
21. Moses and the people at Mt. Sinai: Exodus 19:1-6.
22. The moral law's summary: the Ten Commandments: Exodus 20:1-21.
23. The heart of the moral law is love for God: Deuteronomy 6:1-15.
24. The moral law and neighbor: Leviticus 19:9-18.
25. A sampling of the civil/judicial law & its penalties: Exodus 21:12-18, 21:33-22:6.
26. A sampling of the ceremonial law: Leviticus 1.
27. Moses' brother, Aaron, and the golden calf: Exodus 32:1-24.
28. 12 land scouts and 40 years of wilderness wandering: Numbers 13:1-3, 13:17-14:4, 14:26-35.
29. The command to have a king in Israel: Deuteronomy 17:14-20.
30. Promises of covenant blessings or curses in the Promised Land: Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15-19, 25, 36.
31. Entering the Promised Land under Joshua: Joshua 3.
32. The first battle: Jericho: Joshua 6:1-25.
33. Joshua's death & Israel's unfaithfulness without a king: Judges 2:6-14; 17:5-6.

United Israel (1050 B.C. - 930 B.C.).

Its three kings:

34. #1: Saul: the people's request for a bad, worldly king "like the nations": 1 Samuel 8:4-5, 8:10-9:2, 9:15-16.
35. #2: David & the "Davidic Covenant": 2 Samuel 7:8-16.
36. #3: Solomon: the first "son of David": 1 Kings 1:28-40.
37. The temple's construction and dedication: 1 Kings 6:1, 7:51-8:11.

Examples of the “poetry” of the united kingdom.

38. The songs: Psalm 134.
39. The wisdom: Proverbs 1.

Divided Israel: “Israel” in the North (10 tribes); “Judah” in the South, with Jerusalem.

40. Solomon’s unfaithfulness is the reason for the split: 1 Kings 11:1-8.
41. The dividing of the kingdom (930 B.C.): 1 Kings 11:26-43.

Israel, the kingdom of the North.

42. Israel’s kings (all wicked): Jeroboam, first king of (divided) Israel, “model” of unfaithfulness for all future kings in the North: 1 Kings 12:25-33.
43. The rise of prophets to correct unfaithfulness in Israel: Joel 2:1-17.
44. The exile of Israel by Assyria (722 B.C.): 2 Kings 17:1-18.

Judah, the kingdom of the South, still ruled by “sons” of David.

45. Judah’s kings (8 of 20 are good): 2 Kings 18:1-8 (Hezekiah—faithful); 2 Kings 24:8-9 (Jehoiachin—unfaithful).
46. The rise of prophets to correct unfaithfulness in Judah: Isaiah 1.
47. The destruction of the temple, and Judah’s exile to Babylon (via Nebuchadnezzar) for unfaithfulness (605 B.C. - 586 B.C.): 2 Kings 24:10-17, 25:1-21.
48. God’s people in exile in Babylonia and Persia (605 B.C. - 539 B.C.): Daniel 1:1-7, 5:30-6:3, 6:28.
49. The return from exile (538 B.C.): Ezra 1:1-2:2.
50. The rebuilding of the temple (520-515 B.C.): Ezra 6:1-18.

New Testament

51. Jesus’ birth: Matthew 1:18-2:23.
52. Jesus’ baptism and temptation in the wilderness: Matthew 3:1-4:11.
53. Jesus’ calling his first disciples: Matthew 4:18-22.
54. The Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5-7.
55. The prodigal son: Luke 15:11-32.
56. The parable of the soils: Mark 4:1-20.
57. Jesus and Nicodemus: John 3:1-21.
58. Jesus’ raising of Lazarus from the dead: John 11:1-48.
59. The sheep and the goats at final judgment, upon Jesus’ return: Matthew 25:31-46.
60. Jesus’ betrayal planned: Matthew 26:1-16.
61. The Last Supper: Matthew 26:17-35.
62. Jesus’ arrest and trial before the Sanhedrin: Matthew 26:47-68.
63. Peter’s denial: Matthew 26:69-75.
64. Judas’s regret & suicide: Matthew 27:1-10.
65. Jesus’ trial before Pilate: Matthew 27:11-31.
66. Jesus’ crucifixion and death: Matthew 27:32-56.
67. Jesus’ burial and resurrection: Matthew 27:57-28:17.
68. The Great Commission: Matthew 28:18-20.
69. Jesus’ Resurrection, the Great Commission, and the Ascension: Acts 1:1-11.
70. Peter’s Pentecost sermon, the start and character of the early Church: Acts 2.
71. The first deacons elected and ordained: Acts 6:1-7.
72. Saul’s conversion: Acts 9:1-22.
73. Peter is taught that the gospel is for the Gentiles, too: Acts 10:1-11:18.
74. Paul’s first missionary journey begins: Acts 13:1-4.
75. The first presbytery meeting (elders & apostles present at the Jerusalem Presbytery): Acts 15:1-35.
76. Qualifications for the church offices of deacon and elder: 1 Timothy 3:1-13 & Titus 1:5-14.
77. Where we see that elders and “bishops” (in modern translations, “bishop” is translated “overseer”) are one-and-the-same: Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5, 7; 1 Peter 5:1-2.
78. Example of a New Testament epistle (written to a church or churches): 1 Thessalonians 1.
79. Example of a “pastoral epistle” (written to a pastor): Titus 1, 3:9-11.
80. Example from a New Testament “apocalyptic” book: Revelation 12.
81. The final judgment (this coincides with the previously read Matthew 25:31-46): Revelation 20:11-15.
82. The New Heaven and New Earth: Revelation 21:1-8.