

Read Through the Old Testament

Daily Bible Reading Guide with Devotional Thoughts-and Prayer Starters © Pastor Frank Eckert

GET INTO IT ANYWAY YOU CAN!

MAY, YEAR A

(Recommended: READ summary BEFORE reading the Bible verses!)

☐ **May 1** **Numbers 32: 1-6; 16-27** **Psalm 119: 105-112**

Reflect: Moses feared the desertion of the common cause by two tribes would have a disheartening effect on the people. He persuaded them to participate in the campaign necessary to acquire the inheritance of all tribes.

Prayer: Lord God, help us to remember that we have a common enemy, the Devil, and a common triumph in Jesus our Great Deliverer. Amen.

☐ **May 2** **Numbers 33:1-4; 38-39; 50-56** **Psalm 119: 113-120**

Reflect: Each place they camped at reminded them of some act of God's goodness and mercy. How about some specific memories of places connected with us?

Prayer: O Father, when we think of certain places in our lives, we recall with gratitude your special help and blessings. Amen.

☐ **May 3** **Numbers 34: 1-18** **Psalm 119: 121-128**

Reflect: Leaders were chosen to carry out God's directives for dividing the land as allocated by lot to each tribe.

Prayer: O God, even as You reminded the tribes their land was not by right but by gift, so remind us that the Promised Land for us is an outright gift of Your pure grace. Amen.

☐ **May 4** **Numbers 35: 1-12; 24-25** **Psalm 119: 129-136**

Reflect: Special cities were allotted to Levites who were not entitled to tribal inheritance. Also, some cities of refuge were set aside to restrain the tribal law of blood revenge.

Prayer: Father Almighty, we pray that there would be among us a greater respect for justice and the sanctity of life, and that the rule of love to the neighbour would prevail. Amen.

☐ **May 5** **Numbers 36: 1-13** **Psalm 119: 137-144**

Reflect: A woman who is allowed to inherit property must marry within her tribe and not outside. The Book of Numbers ends with a summary of the laws given in Moab.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, enable us ever to hold on in faith to our eternal inheritance. Amen.

☐ **May 6** **Deuteronomy 1: 1-45** **Psalm 119: 145-152**

Reflect: Deuteronomy is an inspiring account of Israel's preparation to enter the Promised Land. The Book sums up forty years of wilderness wandering and God's faithfulness.

Prayer: O God, like You guided Your people in the wilderness, guide us day by day. Amen.

☐ **May 7** **Deuteronomy 2: 1-37** **Psalm 119: 153- 160**

Reflect: Deuteronomy is essentially Moses' farewell address to his people. Moses recounts the story of their wanderings, reviewing the covenant history and its lessons.

Prayer: O Father, You kept Your promises to the Israelites. You will keep them to us. Amen.

☐ **May 8** **Deuteronomy 3: 1-29** **Psalm 119: 161-168**

Reflect: The Lord demonstrates His mighty power by fighting for His people. Faith is the response to His active leadership.

Prayer: O God, we extol You that You are the controller of all history, our Lord. Amen.

☐ **May 9** **Deuteronomy 4: 1-40** **Psalm 119: 169- 176**

Reflect: The recital of what the Lord had done for His people is the basis of Moses' appeal for faithful obedience. Moses warns against worship of false gods.

Prayer: Father, You are a great God. Teach us to call on You at any moment. Amen.

☐ **May 10** **Deuteronomy 5: 1-33** **Psalm 121: 1-8**

Reflect: Most of the generation who were alive at the giving of the Law on Mt Sinai had now died. It was necessary to repeat the Holy Commandments which are relevant for all time.

Prayer: Lord God, move us to obey You because of all Your loving-kindness to us. Amen.

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- ☐ **May 11** **Deuteronomy 6: 1-25** **Psalm 122: 1-9**
Reflect: Children are to be taught God's redeeming love. Only as we remember our debt of gratitude to God will we be stirred to love God. He blesses obedience, the fruit of faith.
Prayer: Forgive us, dear God, when we have worshipped Your gifts rather than You the Giver. Make us passionately concerned to worship You above all things. Amen.
- ☐ **May 12** **Deuteronomy 7: 1-26** **Psalm 123: 1-4**
Reflect: Because of their wickedness, God chose to destroy the pagan tribes of Canaan, fighting a holy war for them through Israel. Intermarriage was forbidden, lest Israel be led to worship false gods. Israel was not to fear the enemy. God would defend them.
Prayer: Lord, You are awesome. We trust in You to fight for us against the Evil One. Amen.
- ☐ **May 13** **Deuteronomy 8: 1-20** **Psalm 124: 1-8**
Reflect: The wilderness experience disciplined Israel to keep God's laws in the new land. Moses warned Israel of God's curse if they forget the Lord and His saving acts.
Prayer: O God, in the midst of all the blessings You pour out upon us, let us remember You with humble thankfulness and guard us against a spirit of arrogance. Amen
- ☐ **May 14** **Deuteronomy 9:1-24** **Psalm 125: 1-5**
Reflect: God gave many victories to Israel. Are we, like Israel, sometimes tempted to think we deserve God's blessings? Are we, like them, sometimes stubborn toward God?
Prayer: O Father, forgive us our stubbornness.. Give us a spirit of humble obedience. Amen.
- ☐ **May 15** **Deuteronomy 10: 1-22** **Psalm 126: 1-6**
Reflect: God re-affirmed His commandments on the mountain, by writing them again on two tablets of stone which were placed in the Ark of the Covenant
Prayer: Dear God, move us to honour and worship and praise You above all else. Amen.
- ☐ **May 16** **Deuteronomy 11: 1-25** **Psalm 127:1-5**
Reflect: Three reasons are given to obey God: His past discipline; the richness of the land and God's promise of extensive conquest of the land.
Prayer: Empower us, Father daily to choose the path of faith and obedience. Amen.
- ☐ **May 17** **Deuteronomy 12: 1-32** **Psalm 128: 1-6**
Reflect: In the land of Jehovah, every trace of idolatry must be destroyed lest Israel be tempted to worship false gods. For the same reason Israel was to centralise all sacrifices. *Prayer: God our Father, help us not to be seduced by anti-Christian groups. Amen.*
- ☐ **May 18** **Deuteronomy 13: 1-18** **Psalm 130: 1-8**
Reflect: Note the warning of Moses: Do not be enticed by other gods. Temptation could come from various people through curiosity and a desire to imitate pagan religions.
Prayer: Lord God, give us wisdom to beware of false prophets and other seducers who could lead us away from You. Amen.
- ☐ **May 19** **Deuteronomy 14: 1-29** **Psalm 132: 1-9**
Reflect: Israel's purity system categorised people, objects, and foods. Those who ate ritually unclean food became ritually unclean. They were excluded from social contact and the worship assembly until their impurity was removed. Sacrificial gifts were to be made.
Prayer: Almighty Father, all that we are and have is Yours. Teach us to be good and grateful stewards, allocating Your gifts wisely, especially to the less fortunate. Amen.
- ☐ **May 20** **Deuteronomy 15: 1-23** **Psalm 133:1-3**
Reflect: Every seventh year all debts were to be remitted. This was to prevent the creation of a permanent debtor class in the community.
Prayer: Loving Father, because the permanent reality of poverty gives us great opportunity to be generous, give us the compassion to help those in need. Amen.
- ☐ **May 21** **Deuteronomy 16: 1-21** **Psalm 134: 1-3**
Reflect: People forget so easily. So the Lord again reminds His people to observe three main pilgrimage festivals in the year: the Passover, festival of weeks, festival of booths (shelters).
Prayer: O Lord of the Church, thank You for the reminders that our Christian Church Year gives us of Your great acts for our salvation. Amen.

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- ☐ **May 22** **Deuteronomy 17:1-20** **Psalm 135: 1-12**
Reflect: A centralised system of justice was to be established with a court staffed by priestly judges. If the people were to elect a king, he was to be subject to “constitutional monarchy”.
Prayer: O King of kings, we pray for our leaders in church and state, that they will administer justice in line with Your Word. Amen.
- ☐ **May 23** **Deuteronomy 18: 1-22** **Psalm 136: 1-9**
Reflect: Levites were to be given the first fruits of the products of the land. The people were not to follow pagan superstitions and magic. God will speak to them through His prophets.
Prayer: Father: help us to heed the Prophet, the Christ You have raised up for us: Amen.
- ☐ **May 24** **Deuteronomy 19: 1-21** **Psalm 136: 10-15**
Reflect: The cities of refuge were set up to protect innocent persons from revenge. The law prohibiting removal of boundary stones was to be honoured. Difficult cases were to go before the supreme tribunal. Judges were to determine a penalty appropriate to the crime.
Prayer: God Almighty, we praise You that in Your Son we have a place of refuge. Amen.
- ☐ **May 25** **Deuteronomy 20: 1-20** **Psalm 137: 1-6**
Reflect: God commanded His people to fight a holy war and destroy the pagan nations of Palestine. He would lead them. They would win. They were to take no booty.
Prayer: Battling against evil, Father, we go forward with You. We shall overcome. Amen.
- ☐ **May 26** **Deuteronomy 21: 1-23** **Psalm 138: 1-8**
Reflect: Guilt for an unsolved murder is to be eliminated by a symbolic ritual of hand washing. Moses gave specific directives to protect community stability that had its roots in orderly matrimonial and family life. Criminals were to be hanged on a tree
Prayer: Holy Father, we praise You that Your sinless Son was hanged on a tree to redeem us from the curse for our sins. Amen.
- ☐ **May 27** **Deuteronomy 22: 1-30** **Psalm 139: 1-12**
Reflect: God widens the circle of neighbourly responsibility. Respect must be shown to parental relationships. He gives directives about sex and marriage.
Prayer: Heavenly Father, we pray for a greater respect for the sanctity of sex and marriage in our world today. Amen
- ☐ **May 28** **Deuteronomy 23: 3-25** **Psalm 139: 13-18**
Reflect: The assembly of the Lord must exclude anyone who is ritually unclean. Israel viewed the Moabites and the Ammonites as unclean because they derived from incestuous relationships. Prostitution was abhorrent to God. The wealthy are to assist the poor.
Prayer: O God, deliver us from all kinds of impurity. Cover us with Christ’s holiness. Amen.
- ☐ **May 29** **Deuteronomy 24: 1-22** **Psalm 141: 1-4**
Reflect: God gave laws protecting social harmony. Though divorce was not in accordance with His plan, He permitted it as a concession to their hardness of heart. Because of Israel’s deliverance from slavery, they were to exercise compassion toward impoverished groups.
Prayer: Dear Father, because of the release you’ve given us from Satan’s chains, move us to be generous to those who are chained in poverty. Amen.
- ☐ **May 30** **Deuteronomy 25: 1-16** **Psalm 142: 1-7**
Reflect: God asks that the dignity of the offender be preserved by proper supervision of punishment. An ancient Hebrew practice (Levirate marriage) required the brother of any man who died before fathering a child, to marry the widow and to father a child to carry on the dead man’s name. The woman in this chapter who perpetrates an injury on the man is severely punished, presumably because she has compromised the man’s fertility. Commercial dishonesty undermines Israel’s relationship with God.
Prayer: Lord God, we praise You for providing laws for the protection of the underprivileged, the family and the community, and we pray for justice in our present days. Amen.

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May 31

Deuteronomy 26: 1-19

Psalm 143: 1-6

Reflect: The covenant community was never to forget that the source of their subsistence, the soil of Canaan, was an outright gift of God. The people were regularly to offer tokens of gratitude: some of the first fruits. This was to go to the Levites and the underprivileged.

Prayer: O Lord, because You are our God, and we are Your people, move us by Your grace to respond to Your call, willingly and joyfully, to obey Your commandments. Amen.