

# Read Through the Old Testament

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

**GET INTO IT ANYWAY YOU CAN!**

**SEPTEMBER, YEAR A**

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

- ☐ **September 1**                      **2 Samuel 12: 1-31**                      **Proverbs 28: 14-21**  
Reflect: To Nathan's story of abusive power, David pronounces judgement on the perpetrator: "The man merits death!" But Nathan shocks him with the words: "You are the man!" David's true greatness is revealed in his humble repentance. God forgives him. But his sin will have consequences. Violence will never leave David's house.  
*Prayer: Loving Father, if we have sinned grievously, give us the humility and courage to admit it to You and to those we have hurt, and to accept Your grace and forgiveness. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 2**                      **2 Samuel 13: 1-39**                      **Proverbs 28: 22-28**  
Reflect: Now, as if set in motion by David's offence, problems multiply. Amnon, David's eldest son, lusts after his half-sister Tamar and rapes her. Absalom avenges the atrocity. He slays his brother Amnon. Absalom goes into exile. David mourns the loss of both sons.  
*Prayer: Holy Father, in this over-permissive age, put wisdom and strength into the hearts of parents that they may correct their sons and daughters with tactful firmness and love. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 3**                      **2 Samuel 14: 1-33**                      **Proverbs 29: 1-6**  
Reflect: Joab brings about the return of Absalom. Through an ingenious device, Joab achieved a partial reconciliation between David and Absalom. David allowed Absalom to come back home out of exile, but he confined his troublesome son to his own home.  
*Prayer: Gracious Father, let Your love and forgiveness move us to forgive someone who has hurt us, and so where necessary help create a reconciliation. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 4**                      **2 Samuel 15: 1-37**                      **Proverbs 29: 7-14**  
Reflect: Absalom began attacking his father's failure to create an efficient judiciary system for settling legal disputes. Within four years, Absalom had enough supporters to have himself crowned king at Hebron. David was forced to flee from Jerusalem.  
*Prayer: O God, please thwart the evil plans of Your kingdom's enemies. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 5**                      **2 Samuel 16: 1-23**                      **Proverbs 29: 15-21**  
Reflect: Mephibosheth, grandson of Saul, saw David's absence as an opportunity to make a bid for the throne. There was no doubt about Absalom's own personal ambitions. But instead, Absalom took advice from Hushai his other counsellor who happened to be David's spy.  
*Prayer: Lord God our King, protect our nation from the agonies of civil war. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 6**                      **2 Samuel 17: 1-29**                      **Proverbs 29: 22-27**  
Reflect: A verbal tussle between Ahithophel and Hushai ensued. Had Absalom followed the advice of Ahithophel, most likely he would have won the day. But he chose to follow the advice of Hushai, which gave the advantage to David. Absalom's cause would be lost! So Ahithophel hanged himself rather than fall into David's hands.  
*Prayer: Lord God, guard our leaders against evil plots. Give them sound judgement. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 7**                      **2 Samuel 18: 1-33**                      **Proverbs 30: 1-6**  
Reflect: In spite of Absalom's complete disloyalty, David still loved him and wished that his life might be spared. Great numbers of Absalom's raw recruits were drawn into the forest. Absalom was killed by the wily Joab who disregarded the king's orders to spare his life. Self-recrimination haunted David's anguished memory.  
*Prayer: O God, our Father, comfort with your grace those indulgent parents whose hearts are breaking over wayward, rebellious children for whom we also pray. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 8**                      **2 Samuel 19: 1-43**                      **Proverbs 30: 7-14**  
Reflect: David's mourning for Absalom is so intense that Joab felt it necessary to tell the king his grief was overdone. After all, a military victory called for rejoicing. David appealed to Judah to accept him again as king. He strengthened his appeal by replacing Joab as commander in chief of the army, with Amasa who had been Absalom's general.  
*Prayer: O Compassionate Father, even as You used David's losses and troubles to humble him, so help us to see that You use affliction for our good too. Amen.*

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- ☐ **September 9**                      **2 Samuel 20: 1-26**                      **Proverbs 30: 15-20**  
Reflect: Sheba, a Benjaminite, summoned the north to break away from David's rule. David called on Abishai, Joab's brother to take the matter in hand. Joab first murdered Amasa (his cousin), David's general. He then pursued Sheba to the northern city of Abel. There a woman advised the people of Abel to cut off Sheba's head and throw it at Joab which they did. It was better for Sheba to die rather than the whole town.  
*Prayer: Father God, we plead with You that in spite of mistakes made by people in the work of the church, that You would advance Your eternal kingdom. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 10**                      **2 Samuel 21: 1-22**                      **Proverbs 30: 21-32**  
Reflect: Behind this episode are ancient beliefs that national disasters are the result of some major sin. The famine here resulted from Saul's illegal slaughter of the Gibeonites. Such sin must be atoned for in order to restore balance. Seven sons and grandsons of Saul are executed in order to make atonement for his sin. David provides a proper burial for Saul and Jonathan.  
*Prayer: Almighty God, help us to battle against the great forces of evil in our nation. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 11**                      **2 Samuel 22: 1-51**                      **Proverbs 31: 1-7**  
Reflect: David's hymn gives thanks to God for military victories. His song re-asserts God's faithfulness, the need for obedience, and God's promise to David of an everlasting dynasty.  
*Prayer: Lord Christ, may our lives be a psalm of thanksgiving for Your victories. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 12**                      **2 Samuel 23: 1-23**                      **Proverbs 31: 8-9**  
Reflect: David's last prophetic song reviews his career, including the heroes and knights who served him. This psalm acknowledges him as the recipient of an eternal covenant.  
*Prayer: Lord Jesus, may the sunshine of Your grace give us courage to serve You. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 13**                      **2 Samuel 24: 1-25**                      **Proverbs 31: 10-20**  
Reflect: David yielded to the temptation of pride by taking a census of all the fighting men. in spite of the advice of Joab, his commander-in-chief. David fell for the sin of putting his trust in military power, rather than in God. But he confessed his sin to God. Yet, God punished the nation. When David built an altar and offered a sacrifice, the Lord took away the affliction.  
*Prayer: Dear Father, we confess our sins of pride. Please forgive us for Jesus' sake. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 14**                      **1 Kings 1: 1-53**                      **Proverbs 31: 21-31**  
Reflect: David's son, Adonijah, next in line of succession, claims the throne. David's general, Joab and his priest, Abiathar, both support Adonijah. But the prophet Nathan, and his mother, Bathsheba, have different plans. They persuade David to name Solomon instead.  
*Prayer: Lord God, even though we cannot fully understand Your mysterious ways, we praise You that in spite of human conflicts and intrigues, Your will is done. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 15**                      **1 Kings 2: 1-46**  
Reflect: Solomon's brother, Adonijah, who had been unwise enough to ask for Abishag (David's concubine) as his wife, was put to death. exile. Solomon took his brother's place on the throne as co-regent. By the time of David's death, Solomon was successfully established as king of a united kingdom: Israel and Judah, with Jerusalem as capital.  
*Prayer: O Lord of justice, give wisdom to our country's leadership to do what is right. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 16**                      **1 Kings 3: 1-28**  
Reflect: In the Books of Kings, the Spirit of the Lord is associated with prophets, not kings. Kings may wield power, but now prophets represent the will of God and speak God's Word.  
*Prayer: O Jesus, Fount of wisdom, give us wisdom every day to walk in Your will. Amen.*
- ☐ **September 17**                      **1 Kings 4: 1-7; 20-34**  
Reflect: But he also displayed great executive ability. He divided the country into twelve administrative regions. He also exercised rulership over a far-flung empire with a grandiose establishment with the people enjoying peace and tranquillity.  
*Prayer: O Creator God, stir us to use our understanding to serve others. Amen.*

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## ☐ September 18                      1 Kings 5: 1-18

Reflect: Solomon displayed his wisdom also in his building enterprises, particularly the construction of the Temple. Two steps were necessary: negotiations with the Phoenician king Hiram, for cedar and cypress wood; also conscription an army of workmen.

*Prayer: O Jesus, give us Your Spirit to remain stones in heaven's eternal temple. Amen.*

## ☐ September 19                      1 Kings 6: 1-38

Reflect: It was a magnificent Temple built for the glory of God, and for worship of the living God! Rectangular in shape, it had a vestibule, the temple proper, and the Holy of Holies that housed the Ark of the Covenant. There was no magical power impounding God within the walls of the Temple. God would "dwell" in the Temple in order to bless king and people according to His covenant promises.

*Prayer: Lord Christ, the magnificence of our cathedrals points us forward to Your everlasting Temple promised to us in heaven where we shall praise You forever. Amen.*

## ☐ September 20                      1 Kings 7: 1-51

Reflect: Solomon enlisted top-level craftsmanship to carry out the artistic work of the Temple.

*Prayer: Lord of the Church, help us to make sacrifices to build beautiful churches to Your glory, and then use them with fellow-believers to worship You, the living God. Amen.*

## ☐ September 21                      1 Kings 8: 1-66

Reflect: At the Dedication of the Temple, after the Ark of the Covenant is brought in, a dark cloud fills the building, signifying both the Lord's presence, and the Lord's acceptance of the Temple. In Solomon's prayer, the Temple is called the place where God will dwell forever and where the people ask for forgiveness. But then later the Temple was destroyed. However, loss of the Temple would not be loss of the Lord, only loss of the place where God is honoured.

*Prayer: Lord God, we praise You for the gift of our church where through Your Word, You come to us with your grace and forgiveness, re-assuring us of Your presence. Amen.*

## ☐ September 22                      1 Kings 9: 1-28

Reflect: God had promised David that someone from the line of David would always sit on the throne of Israel. But this would be conditional, provided that his descendants were obedient to the Lord. So the Lord appears again to warn Solomon, preparing the way for Solomon's eventual rejection by the Lord. Solomon's reign surpassed all others in wealth, and his wisdom astonished all.

*Prayer: O Gracious King, thank You for the riches of Your grace in Jesus our Saviour. Amen.*

## ☐ September 23                      1 Kings 10: 1-29

Reflect: Even the Queen of Sheba was overwhelmed by the splendour of Solomon's court and his great wisdom. She was breathless with amazement. Solomon gave her generous gifts, and offered her whatever she desired.

*Prayer: O Gracious Giver, we praise You that all the wealth of Solomon is as nothing compared to the eternal glory which Christ will give us in heaven. Amen.*

## ☐ September 24                      1 Kings 11: 1-43

Reflect: The very excesses that brought him fame also brought judgement upon Solomon. Solomon's failure to worship the Lord and Him alone, was his greatest fault and the chief reason why the kingdom split. It seems that near his end, Solomon turned back to the Lord. *Prayer: O God, we praise You for snatching many a brand from the burning, and in Your grace for finally making such people partakers of Your eternal blessings. Amen*

## ☐ September 25                      1 Kings 12: 1-33

Reflect: After Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam went to Shechem, to persuade the northern part of the realm to accept him as king, but they rejected him and made Jeroboam their king.. God had promised them a lasting kingdom if they obeyed Him. But King Jeroboam set up golden calves as objects to worship. . Thereby he brought destruction on Israel.

*Prayer: Lord God, as we see how easily Your people turned and worshiped false gods, guard us daily against worship of our many modern idols. Amen.*

## ☐ September 26                      1 Kings 13: 1-34; 14: 1-20

Reflect. Jeroboam's disguised wife is seeking the prophet from Judah to get a favourable oracle about her sick son. But the prophet was sent to speak an oracle against the altar at Bethel. Both examples serve to show God's irreversible judgement on Jeroboam for his sin.

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*Prayer: Lord God, help us to heed Your warnings against worship of idols of any kind, and by your Spirit, move us to worship and serve You above all else. Amen.*

☐ **September 27** **1 Kings 14: 21-31; 15:1-24**

Reflect: The account now turns to the reign of Solomon's son Rehoboam in Judah and of his two successors: Abijam and Asa. For Rehoboam and the nation's sins God sent his punishment by an invasion from Egypt. Abijam's heart was not true to God whereas Asa is noted for his zeal for true religion.

*Prayer: Lord God, we plead for Your mercy to help us when we have deserved the punishments of reaping from the wrongs we have sown. Amen.*

☐ **September 28** **1 Kings 15: 25-34; 16: 1-28**

Reflect: We now hear the story of five kings of the North (Israel), all of them evil: Nadab---sinned like his father Jeroboam; was murdered by his successor, Baasha, who was evil like Jeroboam, and condemned by the prophet Jehu and while getting drunk, died in a coup as he is attacked by his successor Omri, who did evil beyond any of his predecessors.

*Prayer: Sovereign Lord, help us to heed Your warnings and walk in Your ways. Amen.*

☐ **September 29** **1 Kings 16: 29-34; 17: 1-24**

Reflect: During the ensuing drought, Elijah is cared for by ravens, then by a widow who shared her last meal with him and who is rewarded with an unending supply of food. When the widow's son suddenly dies, Elijah cries to the Lord who restores the boy's life.

*Prayer: Almighty Father, not a pagan god, but You, the all-powerful living God, control the rain. To You and Your power we look for our sustenance and our survival. Amen.*

☐ **September 30** **1 Kings 18: 1-46**

Reflect: In the confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, the big question is: Who's in charge, Baal or the Lord? The people of Israel had added the worship of Baal to their worship of the Lord. But the true God does not tolerate divided loyalties. On Mt Carmel the Lord's control of the rain demonstrates conclusively that no other god answers prayer. Jezebel's prophets are ridiculed and killed for claiming to be what they are not.

*Prayer: Lord God, we praise You with all our heart for this demonstration that You are the true and only God. We want to worship and serve You forever. Amen.*