

Read Through the Old Testament

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

GET INTO IT ANYWAY YOU CAN!

JUNE, YEAR B

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

☐ **June 1 Jeremiah 14: 1-22**

Reflect: Jeremiah laments the severe and catastrophic drought. The people confess their sins. But when prosperity returns, they forget God. How can we overcome the problem of turning to God only in our needs but of forgetting Him when times are good?

Prayer: O Father, we humbly pray that You will guard us against complacency. Amen.

☐ **June 2 Jeremiah 15: 1-21**

Reflect: God promises Jeremiah no respite from opposition but assures him of His constant support. He urges him to continue as His mouthpiece. In the midst of opposition, do we keep on feeding our souls on God's words and finding in them our joy and delight?

Prayer: Lord God, keep us trusting in Your promises to deliver us through Jesus. Amen.

☐ **June 3 Jeremiah 16: 1-21**

Reflect: In spite of their faithlessness, Israel will return to their homeland. Their return will be celebrated as the New Exodus. Even when things seem hopeless about a loved one who has forsaken the Lord, are you still praying for that person?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, we pray for the continued spread of Your saving Gospel. Amen.

☐ **June 4 Jeremiah 17: 1-27**

Reflect: Jeremiah felt the need to be healed of the wound he sustained as he did battle in the Lord's cause. Jeremiah demonstrated that sinful greed, rather than heartfelt worship was dominating them. Disobedience would bring upon them the fires of destruction. How can we be faithful ambassadors of God's judgement and grace to a godless society?

Prayer: O God, heal us when our hearts are wounded in spreading Your kingdom. Amen.

☐ **June 5 Jeremiah 18: 1-23**

Reflect: The potter does not always discard the clay which did not become a satisfactory product, but reworks it, so the Heavenly Potter with His people. Those who are stubborn, He will drive into exile. Hostility to God's messenger grew into active plotting to silence him forever. Do we have the courage to denounce some blatant injustices of our day?

Prayer: Lord Christ, give us zeal to spread Your kingdom of grace. Amen.

☐ **June 6 Jeremiah 19: 1-15**

Reflect: God asked Jeremiah to take an earthen flask outside the city wall and smash it so thoroughly that it could never be mended. Jerusalem would be punished for their horrendous crimes. Do we see that our modern idolatries are a form of false worship?

Prayer: O Holy Spirit, help us daily to worship only the true and living God. Amen.

☐ **June 7 Jeremiah 20: 1-18**

Reflect: Though his opponents plot his fall, Jeremiah expresses confidence in God's invincible protection of those who rely on Him. In his lament, we glimpse the inner agony of God's prophet as he confronts the unheeding godlessness of his day. How do you handle the night watches of doubt and self-pity?

Prayer: Lord God, in depressing times, give me a faith that holds to Your promises. Amen.

☐ **June 8 Jeremiah 21: 1-14**

Reflect: Jerusalem was under siege by Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah sent a request to Jeremiah to ask God for a miracle. Instead of coming to the aid of the defenders, God will fight against them with pestilence, sword and famine. The only way to survive was to surrender to the enemy. How do you handle it when God seems against you?

Prayer: O Christ, in our difficulties, You've promised to give us the final victory. Amen.

☐ **June 9 Jeremiah 22: 1-30**

Reflect: The people forsook the covenant of the Lord and served other gods. For punishment, King Jehoahaz was banished to Egypt. King Jehoiakim was censured by Jeremiah for his injustice. The inexorable punishment of King Jehoiachin is symbolised by a signet ring and a broken pot. How can believers promote justice in the nation?

Prayer: O God, guide our nation into ways of justice, mercy and righteousness. Amen.

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☐ **June 10 Jeremiah 23: 1-40**

Reflect: God promises to establish a branch of David's line over a restored Israel. He will rule responsibly before God as a king and not as a puppet. Jeremiah is distraught over the moral delinquency of priests and prophets. They are worse than the prophets of Baal. God's word is as devastating as fire, and as shattering as a hammer in condemning them.

Prayer: O Lord, move Your Church to contend against all false teaching. Amen.

☐ **June 11 Jeremiah 24: 1-10**

Reflect: Unlike the false prophets, Jeremiah was given a vision of the true course of Israel's future. The Lord will regard as good figs the exiles that Nebuchadnezzar had brought to Babylon. The bad figs are those who had remained captives in Jerusalem. How can we avoid becoming wilfully indifferent to God's chastisements?

Prayer: O Gracious God, help us to give You the obedience of faith and action. Amen.

☐ **June 12 Jeremiah 25:1-38**

Reflect: Jeremiah declared that total disaster would overtake them if they did not turn from provoking the Lord by going after other gods. But they wouldn't listen! So the scourge from the north would cause their exile. Has the reality of God's fiery anger been lost in the modern church, so that the sweet relief of the Gospel is not properly appreciated?

Prayer: O Jesus, thank You for drinking the cup of God's fierce wrath for us. Amen.

☐ **June 13 Jeremiah 26: 1-24**

Reflect: In spite of opposition, Jeremiah spoke the words of the Lord boldly that God would destroy the temple and Jerusalem because of their evil doings. The mob demanded he be executed for speaking blasphemy. He said that putting him to death would only add to their guilt. They spared him the death sentence. How ready are we to stand up for what is right even if our life is at stake?

Prayer: Lord God, we believe You can and will protect us in every emergency. Amen.

☐ **June 14 Jeremiah 27: 1-22**

Reflect: Emissaries from five nations came to Jerusalem to enlist Judah's help to throw off Babylonian domination. Jeremiah appeared before the foreign delegates wearing thongs and yoke-bars to symbolise the subjugation of these lands to Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah warned King Zedekiah to serve the king of Babylon. Are we measuring what our pastors preach and teach over against the true Word of God?

Prayer: O God, preserve to us sound teachings that we may not lose the Gospel. Amen.

☐ **June 15 Jeremiah 28: 1-17**

Reflect: Jeremiah prophesied that Hananiah, a false prophet, would not live the two years within which his prediction was to have come true. And so it was. After only two months of this confrontation with Jeremiah, the prophet Hananiah died. Why not let this incident encourage us all the more not to listen to the voice of false prophets?

Prayer: Holy Spirit, guide us to reject all false teachings and trust Your clear Word. Amen.

☐ **June 16 Jeremiah 29: 1-32**

Reflect: Jeremiah addressed a letter to the exiles in Babylon, warning them not to believe the false prophets. Shemaiah, a false prophet, said Jeremiah should be silenced. Why is sound teaching in the church so important?

Prayer: Lord God, guard us and our pastors against false teachings lest we be led away from Christ and His grace. Amen.

☐ **June 17 Jeremiah 30: 1-24**

Reflect: Jeremiah assures the survivors of the exile they would again be accorded the status of God's servant people. From their midst would come a Prince who alone would qualify as an intermediary for a sinful world. In the midst of suffering, are we resolved never to give up on God's promises?

Prayer: O God, Eternal Trinity, we praise You for liberation from Satan's bondage. Amen.

☐ **June 18 Jeremiah 31: 1-40**

Reflect: Only everlasting love and unchanging faithfulness is capable regarding Israel as a virgin after she had played the harlot with many lovers. God's readiness to treat them as a dear son and a darling child in spite of their waywardness is a mystery of love that defies human explanation. How well are we demonstrating a God-like loving-kindness?

Prayer: O Father, we praise You for not remembering our sins against us. Amen.

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☐ **June 19** **Jeremiah 32: 1-44**

Reflect: Jeremiah purchased a plot of land in his home-town. Ludicrous as the transaction seemed, he recognised in it God's call to let his action proclaim louder than his words. Yet, he revealed how faith had to do battle with doubt even in a prophet's heart. Jeremiah's purchase of the land was but a token of the restoration of all the land to its rightful owners. When in great difficulty, are we resolved that with God nothing is impossible?

Prayer: O Jesus, enable us by our actions to prove our unshakeable trust in You. Amen.

☐ **June 20** **Jeremiah 33: 1-26**

Reflect: The city will again be pleasing to God and a reason for praise by the Gentile nations. The sounds of life will again break the silence of death. There will be a succession of Davidic rulers. Are we using God's promises to strengthen us through the tough times?

Prayer: O God, thank You for Your steadfast love which never runs out. Amen.

☐ **June 21** **Jeremiah 34:1-22**

Reflect: Zedekiah the king proclaims the release of all slaves. When the Egyptian army approaches, causing the Babylonians to lift the siege, the release of the slaves was rescinded. Such an action, Jeremiah condemned as a betrayal, deserving God's punishment. Have we been guilty sometimes in a serious matter of going back on our word?

Prayer: Father God, You always keep Your promises. Help me to do likewise. Amen.

☐ **June 22** **Jeremiah 35: 1-19**

Reflect: The Rechabites, a religious order, returned to desert ways, became shepherds and abstained from wine. Jeremiah's association with them does not imply acceptance of their life-style. He commends them on their faithfulness in contrast to Israel's faithlessness. How well are we following the good principles taught by our parents?

Prayer: O Father, enable us to follow the good examples of our parents. Amen

☐ **June 23** **Jeremiah 36: 1-32**

Reflect: Jeremiah instructed Baruch, his secretary, to read some oracles in his stead, especially to a group of royal officials. Deeply impressed, they resolved to inform the king. The king was irritated by what he heard, and burnt the scroll as each piece was read. How well are we showing courage to those who reject the word of the Lord?

Prayer: O God, enemies try to destroy Your Word, but You preserve it for us. Amen.

☐ **June 24** **Jeremiah 37: 1-21**

Reflect: In a secret interview with Jeremiah, King Zedekiah sought reassurance for his ill-advised revolt against Nebuchadnezzar. The king modified his imprisonment of Jeremiah to house arrest, guaranteeing him a food ration. Do we show unwavering firmness in proclaiming the word of the Lord even if we are rejected?

Prayer: O Holy Spirit, give us the courage needed not to deviate from Your Word. Amen

☐ **June 25** **Jeremiah 38: 1-28**

Reflect: Jeremiah's insistence on surrender to Nebuchadnezzar was dangerous for Zedekiah's pro-Egyptian counsellors. Uncertain and fearful, the king again summoned Jeremiah for a private interview. Jeremiah repeated his counsel of "surrender and live".. Do we trust God's Word, even if we cannot fully understand why God tells us what to do?

Prayer: O God, give to our leaders the courage they need to stand firm and act. Amen.

☐ **June 26** **Jeremiah 39: 1-18**

Reflect: Finally, Jerusalem was taken by the Babylonian army. Jeremiah was taken by order of Nebuchadnezzar who entrusted him to Gedaliah, the newly appointed governor. Jeremiah dwelt among the people left in Palestine. Can you think of an instance where God's promises of protection were fulfilled in a special way for you?

Prayer: Lord, our Refuge, if things look hopeless, give us the faith to trust You. Amen.

☐ **June 27** **Jeremiah 40: 1-16**

Reflect: The Babylonian commander-in-chief gave Jeremiah the choice to go on with him to Babylon or return to Gedaliah. He chose the latter. Ishmael, the captain of a guerilla band plotted to kill Gedaliah who refused to be warned. Can you point to an instance when you did the opposite to what you were warned about and this caused you great trouble?

Prayer: O God, give us the wisdom to heed rightful warnings and be saved. Amen.

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☐ June 28 Jeremiah 41: 1-18

Reflect: Refusing to be warned by Johanan, Gedaliah and others were cut down by Ishmael, one of his trusted lieutenants. Next, he massacred 70 defenceless pilgrims who were on their way to present offerings at temple ruins in Jerusalem. Johanan rescued a group of prisoners who were intending to go to Egypt for refuge.

Prayer: O Lord, give us the courage to defend ourselves if we are being accused. Amen.

☐ June 29 Jeremiah 42: 1-22

Reflect: Jeremiah was asked to intercede for the group. Word from the Lord said if they stayed they would receive God's blessing; to flee would only bring suffering on the fugitives. Why should we warn even stubborn unbelievers?

Prayer: Lord God, give us patience to speak Your warnings when appropriate. Amen.

☐ June 30 Jeremiah 43: 1-13

Reflect: Defying God's explicit directive and disparaging His prophet some men took all the remnant of Judah, including Jeremiah and Baruch to Tahpanhes, a border city of Egypt. But here they would perish. Nebuchadnezzar would conquer and hold undisputed dominion over Egypt. When did you disobey the voice of the Lord and your plans did not prosper?

Prayer: Dear God, move us to consult with You and then to obey Your guidance. Amen.