

Read Through the Old Testament

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

GET INTO IT ANYWAY YOU CAN!

OCTOBER, YEAR B

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

☐ **October 1 Amos 2: 1-16**

Reflect: The people of Israel no doubt took great delight in God's judgement of their enemies. Amos confronted them with their greed and cruelty. Do we realise when we point a judging finger at others we point three fingers back at ourselves?

Prayer: Father, may we use Your Word to fight against greed, cruelty and injustice. Amen.

☐ **October 2 Amos 3: 1-15**

Reflect: Amos is duty-bound to announce God's judgement. The people were defiant. "God, how dare You threaten us, Your chosen people, with doom?" Do we realise that because of God's covenant of love with us, we have a daily responsibility to Him?

Prayer: God, help us to realise that Your bringing us to faith is an act which we do not deserve, but which is due to Your pure grace. Amen.

☐ **October 3 Amos 4: 1-13**

Reflect: Israel is guilty of excess and hypocrisy. The wealthy and greedy women were as guilty as their husbands. Selfishly, they sought only the continuation of their own rotten order of things. Do we hear God's warnings to seek Him in true and daily repentance?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, give us a growing relationship of love and obedience with You. Amen.

☐ **October 4 Amos 5: 1-27**

Reflect: In this lamentation for the fallen nation of Israel, Amos pleads with the people to seek the Lord in heartfelt worship. They were to let justice and righteousness abound in the land. Is our worship only a going through the motions, or is it truly from the heart?

Prayer: Loving Father, seeking You, may we live aware of Your abiding presence. Amen.

☐ **October 5 Amos 6: 1-14**

Reflect: The Israelites complacently lie upon their beds of ivory in luxurious self-indulgence. Because Israel has turned faith into pride and justice into oppression, she will be thoroughly punished. Are we truly keeping God in the centre of our existence?

Prayer: O Lord, may Your love in our hearts move us to serve others in their needs. Amen.

☐ **October 6 Amos 7: 1-17**

Reflect: The visions of Amos now point to imminent judgement--- locusts, fire and a plumb line in the hand of the Lord. Are we testing our lives each day with God's Word and admitting to Him that we are often out of line compared with His plumb line of perfection?

Prayer: Father, we plead for Your grace and Your forgiveness in Jesus' name. Amen.

☐ **October 7 Amos 8: 1-14**

Reflect: The basket of ripe fruit means Israel is ripe for judgement. The merchants are impatient for the holy days to pass quickly so they can get on with their fraudulent business. God punished the people's neglect of His Word, by sending them a famine of hearing His Word. Are we encouraging one another to use God's Word while we still have opportunity?

Prayer: O God, help us daily to have the joy of two-way communication with You.. Amen.

☐ **October 8 Amos 9: 1-15**

Reflect: All the efforts of the godless to escape His wrath are futile. The prophet portrays the peace of the true spiritual Israel, the New Testament Church. Do we gratefully appreciate the fact that we are living in this era of God's blessings and grace right now?

Prayer: Lord God, thank You for giving us a Christian Church with Christ as Head. Amen.

☐ **October 9 Obadiah 1:1-21**

Reflect: This prophet deals with justice and judgement on the Edomites for shameful behaviour against Israel. He also proclaims the day of the Lord's universal sovereignty. Do you agree that God's mills often grind exceedingly slowly, but they grind exceedingly just?

Prayer: Gracious Father, thank You for Your promise to deliver us from our guilt. Amen.

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☐ **October 10 Jonah 1: 1-17**

Reflect: This book features a rebellious prophet. He flees from his mission and sulks when his hearers repent. It speaks of Jonah's conversion of the heathen and the breadth of God's saving love. Are you willing to share God's plan of salvation with others?

Prayer: O God, help us joyously to witness to Your forgiveness in Christ. Amen.

☐ **October 11 Jonah 2:1-10**

Reflect: Jonah is miraculously returned from the belly of the big fish to dry land. He becomes a missionary of God in spite of himself. He thanks God for his deliverance from the darkness of death. How do we handle it when we feel cut off from God's presence?

Prayer: O Lord, help us often to remember Your mighty deeds of Your rescue. Amen.

☐ **October 12 Jonah 3: 1-10**

Reflect: Again, Jonah grudgingly and reluctantly obeys God's call, which results in the wholesale conversion of the heathen city, in spite of himself. Have we sometimes felt unwilling to share the Gospel and yet God surprised us with the joy of some response?

Prayer: O Jesus, give some response to our witness so others may find You. Amen.

☐ **October 13 Jonah 4: 1-11**

Reflect: God exposes the evil root in Jonah, which caused his disobedience. It is self-pity. He asks to die when the gracious discipline of the Lord removes his sunshade. Do we unselfishly rejoice when God moves someone to respond to His call to faith?

Prayer: Father, by Your Spirit, plant faith in those you hear Your call to repent. Amen.

☐ **October 14 Micah 1: 1-16**

Reflect: Micah stands solidly as a champion of pure worship of the Lord. He proclaims judgement, but also grace and hope. He speaks God's judgement on the corruption of their political and religious leaders. The people reap the bitter harvest of their harlotrous idolatry. Are we rightly prepared to meet God in judgement?

Prayer: O Father, keep us in Your grace, ready to face the final Day with joy. Amen.

☐ **October 15 Micah 2: 1-13**

Reflect: Woe to the land-hungry, ruthless rich! The heart that has been emptied of God is filled with greed. Punishment awaits the wicked, but the prophet declares blessings on those who walk with God. Are we listening to God's call to true life and eternal freedom?

Prayer: O Jesus, You are our Shepherd whom we would follow and obey every day. Amen.

☐ **October 16 Micah 3: 1-12**

Reflect: The rulers of Israel are corrupt. They ignore God when they don't need Him and won't find Him when they do. Because the judges are bribed, the priests are hired, the prophets are bought---Jerusalem will be destroyed. How are we promoting justice?

Prayer: Holy Father, enable us to fight injustice and corruption in our nation. Amen.

☐ **October 17 Micah 4: 1-13**

Reflect: Jerusalem, a symbol of heaven, will be exalted by the nations as a centre of worship. In the meantime, Israel must groan in agony because of the exile that will strike them. Do we use God's promises of heaven to comfort and to barrack us onward in hope?

Prayer O God, lead us through travail to triumph, in heaven's glory forever. Amen

☐ **October 18 Micah 5: 1-15**

Reflect: Gradually through the centuries of the Old Testament, the prophecies of the Messiah's coming were more specific. He would come from the Jews, the seed of Abraham. Now His very birthplace is mentioned as little Bethlehem. Do we appreciate how wonderfully and faithfully God unfolds the promise of sending His Son, the Messiah?

Prayer: Father, help us to keep believing that all Your promises will come true. Amen.

☐ **October 19 Micah 6: 1-16**

Reflect: The Lord has kept His covenant to His people. He has carried them in His everlasting arms from bondage to the freedom of the Promised Land. But He attacks the greed, dishonesty and violence of the city. Are we walking in God's ways of justice and kindness, faithfulness and humility?

Prayer: O God, give us the love we need to treat others with fairness and kindness. Amen.

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☐ **October 20 Micah 7: 1-20**

Reflect: Even the most respectable of Jerusalem's inhabitants were corrupt. But God will show His steadfast love to believers. The people praise God for His forgiveness and faithfulness. Where alone is there power to deal with the hopeless tragedy of human sin?

Prayer: Lord our God, in You the Judge, we find also the Deliverer who deals radically with our transgressions. In Your cross alone, can we find pardon and peace. Amen.

☐ **October 21 Nahum : 1: 1-15**

Reflect: The ruthlessness of the Assyrians was a severe test for the faith of God's people. Nahum was empowered to speak God's answer to the dark agony of His people. He speaks God's word of promise to His suffering people. Then comes a hymn of triumph about the impending fall of Nineveh. Do we use with appreciation our great Christian hymns?

Prayer: O God, we praise You for being our protector against the forces of evil. Amen.

☐ **October 22 Nahum 2: 1-13**

Reflect: The enemy is pictured in terrifying magnificence and with exuberant military vigour against Nineveh. They plunder the city's limitless treasures. The result is a scene of desolation, ruin and anguish. This is in stark contrast to their former proud, aggressive strength. Do we see how God's justice is meted out on the city's wickedness?

Prayer: Lord, continue we pray to guard us against the terrible forces of Satan. Amen.

☐ **October 23 Nahum 3: 1-19**

Reflect: Nahum tells how Nineveh's military power and deceitful diplomacy bring down upon itself the hatred of all that became its victims. The cup of God's judgement that Assyria held to the lips of Thebes in Egypt, shall now be drunk by Nineveh itself. Do we realise what a terrible harvest comes upon those who have sown unceasing evil?

Prayer: God, help us to sow seeds of love that the harvest will be to Your glory. Amen.

☐ **October 24 Habakkuk 1: 1-17**

Reflect: Habakkuk protests: Why is the God of justice deaf to his cry about so much violence? But the prophet's cry is a cry of faith, as he recognises God is chastising Judah for their disobedience. He clings to God as his Rock. Are we often puzzled why God allows so much evil to happen?

Prayer: O God, help us ever to cling to You, and to the promise of Your presence. Amen.

☐ **October 25 Habakkuk 2: 1-20**

Reflect: Only faith that catches hold of God's righteousness can give true life. Do we realise that the principle of "the just shall live by faith" (as in verse 4) discovered here by Luther, triggered the Reformation of the Church and is vital for every human being?

Prayer: O God, give us the faith that catches hold of Your righteousness in Christ. Amen.

☐ **October 26 Habakkuk 3: 1-19**

Reflect: Habakkuk's prayer extols the marching forth of the Lord in victory for the salvation of His people. God's people rejoice in the Lord as the saving God. Do we see that faith in this victorious God, is not a meritorious virtue in us but a penitent receiving from God?

Prayer: Father, let faith in You be the basis of our whole relationship with You. Amen.

☐ **October 27 Zephaniah 1: 1-18**

Reflect: Zephaniah's sweeping threat of judgement recalls the Word of the Lord on the eve of the Great Flood. No one can hope to escape, least of all Judah. For Judah is guilty of gross idolatry: worship of Baal and the stars. The prophet's proclamation of the Day of the Lord is a powerful call to repentance. Have we become complacent about some of the modern idolatries that influence us?

Prayer: O God, let the coming of Judgement Day move us to daily repentance. Amen.

☐ **October 28 Zephaniah 2: 1-15**

Reflect: From the Philistines, the prophetic word moves to Moab, Amman, Ethiopia and Assyria. The Lord calls the nations to repentance, for judgement is about to strike them. But there is hope for them too. Can we see the goodness of the Lord that while He promises judgement, He also promises grace and mercy?

Prayer: Great God, we praise You for the promises of Your pardon and peace. Amen.

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☐ October 29 Zephaniah 3: 1-20

Reflect: Jerusalem is corrupt. The leaders are rapacious; the prophets, irresponsible; the priests, irreverent. God's justice is shown by the way that He maintains the covenant with his people. For this, the people break out into unanimous adoration of the Lord. Though God will remove the haughty and the arrogant, He bids His faithful servants to wait for the glad outcome. Do we rejoice sincerely that God is our King, our Judge, our Shepherd who declares us justified and that no one can terrify or accuse us?

Prayer: O Jesus, thank You, that You have accepted us into Your eternal flock. Amen.

☐ October 30 Haggai 1: 1-15

Reflect: Haggai sets straight the priorities of life. The obvious and forgotten fact is that God must come first. The state of our life depends totally on our relationship with Him. If we seek first God's Kingdom, He will add the material things we need. The temple was in ruins and God asked the people to rebuild it. How well are we obeying this basic principle that our Lord has given us?

Prayer: Jesus, our Redeemer, help us to honour You with a radical seriousness, submitting to your Word with complete trust. Amen.

☐ October 31 Haggai 2: 1-23

Reflect: Disillusionment came over the people when they saw the ruined state of the temple. Disillusioned, the people felt the task of rebuilding seemed too big. But the Lord responded saying, Fear not! Take Courage! The Spirit of God's Presence would be with them. In our work of building God's kingdom in the hearts of the people, are we remembering that the power of God's transforming, creative Spirit is upon us?

Prayer: O God, help us to know You will supply what we need to build Your Church. Amen.