

# Read Through the Old Testament

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

## **GET INTO IT ANYWAY YOU CAN!**

**AUGUST, YEAR A**

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

### ☐ **August 1**

**1 Samuel 15: 1-35**

**Proverbs 22: 7-11**

Reflect: Saul fails to obey the command God gave through the prophet Samuel. He spares their king and won't slaughter the best of the herds of sheep and oxen. He said he wanted to sacrifice these to God. Because he disobeys, Saul guarantees eventual forfeit of the throne.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to worship You in spirit and in truth and not to substitute mere outward motions of religiousness, for faith and obedience. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 2**

**1 Samuel 16: 1-23**

**Proverbs 22: 12-17**

Reflect: The Lord is on David's side and he succeeds. Saul is tormented by an evil spirit. A great irony occurs: Saul takes David his future rival and successor, as his servant. David's skilful harp playing soothes the king's troubled spirit.

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for leading us in Your mysterious but marvellous ways. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 3**

**1 Samuel 17: 1-58**

**Proverbs 22: 18-22**

Reflect: David, the inexperienced under-dog, readily challenges the veteran Goliath. But he relies on more than his youthful agility to combat the giant's armour and experience. He demonstrates: courage, military skill, and most important of all----faith in the Lord.

*Prayer: Lord God Almighty, grant us courage that flows out of total trust in You, that with the humble sling and the smooth stone of Your Word, we may conquer Satan, our enemy. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 4**

**1 Samuel 18: 1-30**

**Proverbs 22: 23-29**

Reflect: Jonathan's gesture of giving David his mantle can be seen as a symbolic gesture of giving David the right of succession. What David touches turns into a golden opportunity. Saul's jealousy becomes a cancer driving him even to an attempt on David's life. *Prayer: O God, help us to overcome the green-eyed monster of jealousy by rejoicing over the successes You give to others according to Your wisdom and love. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 5**

**1 Samuel 19: 1-24**

**Proverbs 23: 4-12**

Reflect: Jonathan disobeys his father's request to kill David. Instead, he does all in his power to protect David from his father's wrath. Saul's schemes to kill David fail. David's wife Michal, Saul's daughter, helped David escape. Saul pursues him to Ramah.

*Prayer: Dear God, we praise You that You hold even the hearts of Your enemies in Your power, so that even against their will, they can serve the interests of Your Kingdom. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 6**

**1 Samuel 20: 1-42**

**Proverbs 23: 13-22**

Reflect: David wanted to make one more effort to see whether Saul really wanted to kill him. David and Jonathan agreed on a scheme. In a covenant of friendship they pledged to one another not to let the outcome of the experiment to affect their own relationship. Going out into the field, Jonathan used the pre-arranged signals to let David know to flee for his life. After embracing each other, they then parted company.

*Prayer: Gracious Father, give us that deep sense of loyal love to our friends that moves us to warn them against danger or harm. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 7**

**1 Samuel 21: 1-15**

**Proverbs 23: 23-28**

Reflect: David flees with his men to where the tabernacle had been relocated. He lies to the priests in order to get food for himself and his men. By acting like a madman, David narrowly escapes being captured by the king of Gath. To be mad in those days was seen as being "divinely touched". Hence, the Philistines fearing divine wrath, leave David alone.

*Prayer: O God, give us the presence of mind and the wisdom to find ways of protecting ourselves if we are in circumstances of danger or difficulty. Amen.*

### ☐ **August 8**

**1 Samuel 22: 1-23**

**Proverbs 23: 29-35**

Reflect: David's first hiding place was a cave south west of Bethlehem. By this time, David had attracted a band of some 400 men Travelling eastwards, David brought his parents for protection into Moab, the homeland of his great grandmother Ruth. When Saul discovered what the priests had done he was mad with anger and had them massacred. Saul had now hardened his heart against God to a point of no return.

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*Prayer: Thank You, loving Father, that in the midst of a world of opposition, we have protection and consolation in Your Word of truth. Amen.*

☐ **August 9** **1 Samuel 23: 1-29** **Proverbs 24: 1-6**

Reflect: This episode illustrates the importance to David of Abiathar the High Priest. Abiathar, with the aid of his ephod was able to find out from God what course of action David should take. The people of Keilah were willing to betray David to Saul. David was forewarned by the ephod and escaped from Saul.

*Prayer: O God our Mighty Fortress, even as You protected David, help us in all our troubles, as we daily commit our way to You. Amen.*

☐ **August 10** **1 Samuel 24: 1-22** **Proverbs 24: 7-14**

Reflect: David spares Saul's life while Saul is relieving himself in a cave in the wilderness of Engedi. Saul responds by acknowledging David's merciful action. Saul extracts a promise from David not to kill Saul's descendants when David is made king.

*Prayer: O Eternal God, Fountain of all good, help us to be like David in respecting those over us in authority and to repay evil with good. Amen.*

☐ **August 11** **1 Samuel 25: 1-44** **Proverbs 24: 15-23**

Reflect: Nabal whose shepherds David had protected owed David a required sum for services rendered but refused to pay. David plans to kill him---but changes his mind when Nabal's wife, Abigail, pleads with David to have mercy on her foolish husband. When Abigail tells David what she has done, Nabal conveniently dies soon afterwards. David sends for Abigail and she became his wife. David's wife Michal, had been taken by her father, Saul, and given to another man!

*Prayer: O Sovereign Lord, open our hearts to listen to the restraining voice of those You use to warn us against some wrong we may have intended. Amen.*

☐ **August 12** **1 Samuel 26: 1-25** **Proverbs 24: 24-34**

Reflect: David is in a position where he could have killed Saul, but refrained because Saul is the Lord's Anointed One. David begs Saul not to compel him to live in territory beyond Judah where he would be forced to serve other gods.

*Prayer: Dear Forgiving Father, even if we have opportunity to retaliate against someone who has harmed us, give us the strength to refrain and rather to repay evil with good. Amen.*

☐ **August 13** **1 Samuel 27: 1-12** **Proverbs 25: 1-7**

Reflect: Though David tells the Philistines he is attacking Judah to the east, he is actually attacking the Amalekites to the south, making every effort to annihilate them. David has not really thrown in his lot with the Philistines, but is really destroying his own people's enemies, the Amalekites. So, while receiving evil at the hand of Saul, David rewards the people of Israel with a victory over their enemies.

*Prayer: Lord God, make Your love powerful in our hearts so we repay evil with good. Amen.*

☐ **August 14** **1 Samuel 28: 1-25** **Proverbs 25: 8-15**

Reflect: When he receives no answers from God to his questions on how to handle a Philistine invasion, Saul panics and seeks out a sorceress to help him to consult the ghost of Samuel. Samuel appears but offers no comfort, but instead reminds Saul that God has rejected him as king. He and his sons will lose both the upcoming battle as well as their lives.

*Prayer: O God, help those involved with witchcraft rather to trust in You. Amen.*

☐ **August 15** **1 Samuel 29 and 30**

Reflect: When David re-appears, we find him in a serious predicament: he has sworn loyalty to the Philistine King, Achish. Now that the king wants to send David into battle against David's own people, what will David do? As usual, his behaviour is beyond reproach. David betrays neither side. The Philistine generals force him to leave. So David does battle against another of Israel's chief enemies, the Amalekites and distinguishes himself in every way.

*Prayer: Thank You, gracious Father, for Your mercy in turning aside the bad results of our unwise decisions. Help us to share Your blessings with others. Amen.*

☐ **August 16** **1 Samuel 31: 1-13** **Proverbs 25: 16-22**

Reflect: Saul has lost the battle and rather than die at the hands of the Philistines, like his two sons, Saul takes his own life. As testimony to his former greatness, his soldiers march all night to retrieve and bury Saul's body. Although rejected by God, Saul had been king of Israel right up until his death.

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*Prayer: Lord God, our King, even if we cannot agree with some actions of our leaders, help us to honour those in authority for the sake of their God-given office. Amen.*

## ☐ August 17-21

Reflect: For these five days, read again and ponder some favourite psalms (one per day), such as : Psalms 19, 23, 27, 32, 46.

## ☐ August 22

### 2 Samuel 1: 1-27

### Proverbs 25: 23-28

Reflect: The start of 2 Samuel presents a different version of Saul's death. An Amalekite youth, telling a lie in the hope of winning David's favour, claiming that he killed Saul at the king's own request. The boy wins nothing from David but a death sentence, for destroying the Lord's Anointed One. David's grief over his former persecutor is no less sincere than his pain in losing also his "brother Jonathan", both "loved and lovely".

*Prayer: O God of comfort, when we lose loved ones in death, teach us how to handle our sorrow, and to grieve for them aright, praising You for their noble and good qualities. Amen.*

## ☐ August 23

### 2 Samuel: 2:1-32

### Proverbs 26: 1-10

Reflect: After consulting the Lord, David travels to Hebron, where he is anointed king of Judah. But the northern territory is under Saul's son, Ishbosheth who has been put on the throne. It is Saul's general, Abner, who has placed him there, because he is the man with the real power in Israel. This prolongs the division within the Kingdom.

*Prayer: Make us glad to suffer for Christ's sake, O David's Son, that with the Spirit's weapons, we may battle zealously for the spread of His kingdom. Amen.*

## ☐ August 24

### 2 Samuel 3: 1-39

### Proverbs 26: 11-19

Reflect: Abner decides to desert Saul's son and to promote David's cause. Abner secured for David the support of the northern tribes and then conferred with him in Hebron. But Joab, Saul's general, had Abner murdered and David felt shattered and powerless. He left it to God to avenge this terrible deed.

*Prayer: O God, let us not take vengeance into our own hands but leave it to You. Amen.*

## ☐ August 25

### 2 Samuel 4:1 12; 5: 1-5

### Proverbs 26: 20-28

Reflect: The death of Abner, kingmaker in Saul's house, left the northern tribes without strong leadership. Ishbosheth, Saul's son and his legitimate successor, was incapable of firm action. Mephibosheth, Jonathon's son, Saul's other successor was an invalid, and was assassinated. David gained control of the northern realm.

*Prayer: Lord God, even as David subdued all enemies and became king, so Christ our King will conquer all the forces of evil and obtain for us the eternal victory. Amen.*

## ☐ August 26

### 2 Samuel 5: 6-25

### Proverbs 27: 1-7

Reflect: David becomes king of all Israel and Judah. He captures all Jerusalem and makes it his capital. The Philistines now realise that David was no longer an ally but an enemy. Formerly, the Philistines had captured the sacred Ark of the Israelites. Now the tables were turned. David defeated the Philistines; they lost their idols., showing that Israel's God was superior. David's conquest of Jerusalem gave him a neutral capital in his efforts to unite Israel and Judah.

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, our Shepherd King, we pray: bless, strengthen and protect your Kingdom in its struggle here on earth. Amen.*

## ☐ August 27

### 2 Samuel 6: 1-23

### Proverbs 27: 8-12

Reflect: David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. During its transport a man touched the Ark to stop it from falling, but was struck dead. The Ark represented God's special presence and could be touched only by those who were consecrated. David rejoices that the Ark is now in Jerusalem.

*Prayer: O Holy Father, like David and the children of Israel, we rejoice in Your presence through Your Word. We sing Your praises for the victories You give us. Amen.*

## ☐ August 28

### 2 Samuel 7: 1-29

### Proverbs 27: 13-19

Reflect: This is an enormously significant chapter. God's promise to David of an eternal dynasty becomes the basis for Israel's renewed expectation of a Messiah.. This was especially important after David's dynasty later came to an abrupt end.

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*Prayer: O Christ, Anointed Son of David, we praise You, for You are the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Messiah, our Saviour. Amen.*



**August 29**

**2 Samuel 8:1-9: 13**

**Proverbs 27: 20-27**

Reflect: David wins battles and rules justly over all. He is the ideal king who shows mercy even to the family of his enemies. Usually then, a new king routinely killed all the relatives of the former ruler to eliminate any potential rival to the throne. But because his love for Saul's family never wanes, David keeps his promise to Jonathan not to harm his relatives.

*Prayer: Merciful Father, even as Your Son Jesus showed loving kindness to those who were oppressed, help us to do likewise to the poor and heavy laden. Amen.*



**August 30**

**2 Samuel 10: 1-19**

**Proverbs 28: 1-6**

Reflect: David greatly expanded his kingdom by brutalising neighbouring nations, incorporating them into his realm. The Ammonites provoked, but the Israelites and their allies, the Syrians, defeated them. Those who begin a war without cause, in the end, suffer misfortune. Jehovah crowns the Israelites with victory because of their trust in Him.

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, help us not to provoke enmity among others, but rather to be peacemakers, instruments of Your peace. Amen.*



**August 31**

**2 Samuel 11: 1-27**

**Proverbs 28: 7:13**

Reflect: One day, David sees Bathsheba bathing and immediately decides he wants to have her. After his lust conceives a child, David conceives a cover-up. He calls Uriah, her husband, home from battle in the hope that he will have sexual relations with his wife and then think the child she carries is his. David's plot turns drastic. Uriah's murder was carried out by Joab. David marries Bathsheba and hides his double sin from all, but not from God.

*Prayer: Holy Father, let us take to heart a warning from David's sin that Satan is very powerful and we must put on the armour of God and conquer the Evil One. Amen*