

# November 2023

## Memory Verse and Bible Reading Plan

Not only that,  
but we rejoice in our sufferings,  
knowing that suffering produces endurance,  
and endurance produces character,  
and character produces hope,  
and hope does not put us to shame,  
because God's love has been poured  
into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit  
who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3-5



## **Reading Jeremiah**

Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible in terms of number of words. The ministry of Jeremiah extended from about 627 to 585 B.C. He served under the last five kings of Judah—Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. He also ministered at the end of his life to the band of refugees who wound up in Egypt.

The southern kingdom of Judah fell during Jeremiah's prophetic ministry (586 BC), having been threatened for many years by outside powers—first Assyria and Egypt and then by their eventual conquerors, Babylon.

More than any other OT prophet, Jeremiah shares the depth and details of his personal life and struggles.

Jeremiah has a pretty bad reputation: judgment, tears, judgment, tears—and then more judgment. He lashed out against the sins of his countrymen, especially for their idolatry, which sometimes even involved sacrificing their children to foreign gods. Jeremiah teaches us that human beings are rebels against God.

But Jeremiah loved the people of Judah in spite of their sins, and he prayed for them. The covenant was broken. Judgment is imminent. What can be done?

As covenant breakers, they won't go unpunished. But Jeremiah doesn't stop with judgment. He declares that God is not finished with his people, and he has determined to make a new covenant with them. God keeps his promises, and his people will one day enjoy all of the blessings of renewal and restoration.

This covenant won't be like the last one. God will do for his people what they're unable to do for themselves. He'll give them a new heart, and fulfill his promise of regeneration for all within the covenant family, who will have a new heart and a will with the ability and desire to obey God.

The book of Jeremiah also provides us the clearest glimpse of the new covenant God intended to make with His people once Christ came to earth. This new covenant would be the means of restoration for God's people, as He would put His law within them, writing it on hearts of flesh rather than on tablets of stone. Rather than fostering our relationship with God through a fixed location like a temple, He promised through Jeremiah that His people would know Him directly, a knowledge that comes through the person of His Son, Jesus Christ (Jeremiah 31:31–34; see also Hebrews 8:6).

Redemption comes through pain, not through avoiding it. By his words and suffering he points to the sovereign grace of God in his control over world history and his faithfulness to his covenant that will be fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

### ***Outline of Jeremiah:***

- I. Call of the Prophet (ch. 1)
- II. Warnings and Exhortations to Judah (chs. 2 - 35)
- III. Sufferings and Persecutions of the Prophet (chs. 36-38)
- IV. The Fall of Jerusalem and Its Aftermath (chs. 39-45)
- V. Judgment against ten Nations (chs. 46-51)
- VI. Historical Appendix (ch. 52)

## **Reading Ezekiel**

It is almost impossible to do justice to this book in this short of space. It is filled with obscure and strange visions. It is the Revelation of the OT.

The book of Ezekiel is a covenant lawsuit brought by God against the house of Israel. And at the heart of Israel's running violations of the covenant, culminating in her judgment at the hands of the Babylonians, was the fact that Israel needed to be born again. God promises to deal with this problem once and for all. He will bring them out of exile. He will sprinkle clean water upon them. He will cleanse them from all their filthiness. God will then take away their stony heart and give them a new heart, a regenerate heart.

Ezekiel was taken off to Babylon as a young man in the first captivity, which occurred in 597 B.C. The city of Jerusalem did not fall completely until a few years later, in 586 B.C. Thus the first part of Ezekiel's ministry had reference to the pending fall of Jerusalem, even though he was not ministering from within that doomed city, the way Jeremiah was.

The book begins with the vision of God in "the wheels," a vision which symbolizes God's departure from the Temple in Jerusalem and indicates His presence with the exiles in Babylon. The presence of God is highly "mobile," which means God cannot be kept in some temple-box. But the God who can depart because of all the abominations is also a God who can, in His sovereignty, return. And thus, the book concludes with a glorious vision of God's return to His people.

### ***What can we take away from Ezekiel?***

**First**, it's like a mirror in which we can see our own sin more clearly. We are like Israel in our idolatry, pride, and unfaithfulness. We won't take action to address our sin if we don't first see what's wrong with us.

**Second**, we see that God has a much larger redemptive plan that He is working. Don't get lost in the hard to understand details of the visions, keep the big picture in mind. This applies to each of us, it is easy to lose perspective in the midst of life's challenges and trials. Remember God is at work, He has a plan. God is always present even in the midst of judgment and suffering, even in exile in Babylon.

**Third**, see God's continued grace to the most undeserving people in spite of their sin, Israel and us.

You can divide the book into four main sections:

Chapters 1-24, prophesy of the fall of Jerusalem.

Chapters 25-33, prophesy against the surrounding Gentile nations.

Chapters 34-39, prophesy of God's grace, faithfulness and restoration, a new covenant and a new heart. God's discipline is always with a goal to restore.

Chapters 40-48, prophesy of a glorious Temple and how a restored Israel will bless the entire world.

## Bible Reading Plan – November

1	Ezekiel 29:1-16	Job 23
2	Ezekiel 26-27	Job 24
3	Ezekiel 28	Job 25-26
4	Ezekiel 30:20-26	Job 27
5	Ezekiel 31-33	Job 28
6	Ezekiel 34-36	Job 29
7	Ezekiel 37-39	Job 30
8	Ezekiel 40-42	Job 31:1-23
9	Ezekiel 43-45	Job 31:24-40
10	Ezekiel 46-47	Job 32
11	Ezekiel 48	Job 33:1-11
12	Ezekiel 29:17-30:19	Job 33:12-33
13	Jeremiah 45, 25	Job 34:1-20
14	Jeremiah 46-47	Job 34:21-37
15	Jeremiah 48-49	Job 35
16	2 Chronicles. 36:11-21	Job 36:1-15
17	Jeremiah 27	Job 36:16-33
18	Jeremiah 28-29	Job 37
19	Jeremiah 50-51	Job 38:1-21
20	Jeremiah 30-31	Job 38:22-41
21	Jeremiah 32-33	Job 39
22	Jeremiah 21, 34	Job 40
23	Jeremiah 37-38	Job 41:1-11
24	Jeremiah 39, 52	Job 41:12-34
25	Jeremiah 40-42	Job 42