

RISE CITY CHURCH

BIBLE READING PLAN

[JANUARY KICKSTARTER]

READING PLAN

JONAH

- Jan 3rd** Jonah 1:1-16
- Jan 4th** Jonah 1:17-2:10
- Jan 5th** Jonah 2:10-3:10
- Jan 6th** Jonah 3:10-4:11

PSALMS

- Jan 7th** Psalm 73 & 139

ROMANS

- Jan 8th** Romans 1
- Jan 9th** Romans 2
- Jan 10th** Romans 3

- Jan 11th** Romans 4
- Jan 12th** Romans 5
- Jan 13th** Romans 6
- Jan 14th** Romans 7
- Jan 15th** Romans 8
- Jan 16th** Romans 9
- Jan 17th** Romans 10
- Jan 18th** Romans 11
- Jan 19th** Romans 12
- Jan 20th** Romans 13
- Jan 21st** Romans 14
- Jan 22nd** Romans 15
- Jan 23rd** Romans 16

JUDE

- Jan 24th** Jude 1:1-25

GENESIS

- Jan 25th** Genesis 1
- Jan 26th** Genesis 2-3
- Jan 27th** Genesis 4
- Jan 28th** Genesis 12

TITUS

- Jan 29th** Titus 1
- Jan 30th** Titus 2
- Jan 31st** Titus 3

HOW DO I STUDY THE BIBLE?

READ

Bible Reading Plan look for today's passage. Begin reading with a heart ready to hear God's voice and receive God's thoughts. Pray for God to open your heart. Feel free to star, underline, and generally mark up your bible. Pay special attention to key verses, words, and ideas.

EXAMINE

Take time to reflect on what you've read. Take notes. What verses stood out to you?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- 01 What is going on in the passage?
- 02 What type of writing is this? (Story, Poetry, Discourse)
- 03 What are the circumstances that the author is addressing?
- 04 What are the key ideas?
- 05 How do you think the author wants his audience to respond?

APPLY

Now that you've examined this passage, consider how to apply it to your own life.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

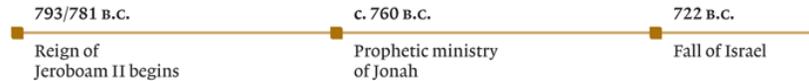
- 01 What is God's word for me from this passage?
- 02 How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?
- 03 What are the things in my life that need to change in light of this truth?

PRAY

Pray through the passage and your application, asking God to change your heart and to change your life, based on the time you've spent in God's Word.

Introduction to Jonah

Timeline



Author and Date

Jonah prophesied during the peaceful and prosperous time of Jeroboam II ([2 Kings 14:23-28](#)), who ruled in Israel (the northern kingdom) from 782 to 753 B.C. This was a time when Assyria was not a threat to Israel.

Overview

The Lord called Jonah to go to the great Assyrian city of Nineveh to pronounce judgment on it. Jonah attempted to escape the Lord's calling by sailing from the seaport of Joppa to Tarshish, which was probably on the shores of the western Mediterranean. Eventually he obeyed the Lord and traveled overland to Nineveh.

Theme

The primary theme in [Jonah](#) is that God's compassion is boundless, not limited just to "us" (Jonah and the Israelites) but also available for "them" (the pagan sailors and the Ninevites).

Key Themes

- I. God is in sovereign control over all events on the earth.
- II. God is determined to get his message to the nations.
- III. People need to repent from sin in general, and from self-centeredness and hypocrisy in particular.
- IV. God promises that he will forgive when people repent.

Outline

The story of Jonah includes seven episodes, with the first three paralleled by the second three. The final episode stands alone as the climax of the story:

- I. A. Jonah's commissioning and flight ([1:1-3](#))
- II. B. Jonah and the pagan sailors ([1:4-16](#))
- III. C. Jonah's grateful prayer ([1:17-2:10](#))
- IV. A'. Jonah's recommissioning and compliance ([3:1-3a](#))

V. B'. Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3b-10)

VI. C'. Jonah's angry prayer (4:1-4)

VII. D. Jonah's lesson about compassion (4:5-11)

The Setting of Jonah

c. 760 B.C.

Jonah prophesied during the prosperous time of King Jeroboam II of Israel (2 Kings 14:23-28). During this time the Assyrians were occupied with matters elsewhere in the empire, allowing Jeroboam II to capture much of Syria for Israel. The Lord called Jonah to go to the great Assyrian city of Nineveh to pronounce judgment upon it. Jonah attempted to escape the Lord's calling by sailing to Tarshish, which was probably in the western Mediterranean. Eventually he obeyed the Lord and went to Nineveh,

at the heart of the Assyrian Empire.



Introduction to The Psalms

Timeline



Author and Date

Individual psalms come from diverse periods of Israel's history, but at every stage they served as the songbook of God's people. David wrote about half of the Psalms. His role as king was more than that of a ruler. He was to represent and even embody the people, and their well-being was tied to his faithfulness. David, then, writes as a representative, and the readers must discern whether the emphasis of a psalm is more on his role as ruler or more on his role as ideal Israelite, in which he is an example for all. The historical occasions mentioned in the psalm titles help the reader see how faith applies to real-life situations.

Key Themes

The Psalter is fundamentally the hymnbook of God's people. It takes the basic themes of OT theology and turns them into song:

- I. Monotheism. The one God, Maker and Ruler of all, will vindicate his goodness and justice in his own time. Everyone must know and love this God, whose purity, power, wisdom, faithfulness, and unceasing love are breathtakingly beautiful.
- II. Creation and fall. Though God made man with dignity and purpose, all people since the fall are beset with sins and weaknesses that only God's grace can heal.
- III. Election and covenant. The one true God chose a people for himself and bound himself to them by his covenant. This covenant expressed God's intention to save his people, and through them to bring light to the world.
- IV. Covenant membership. In his covenant, God offers grace to his people: forgiveness of their sins, the shaping of their lives to reflect his own glory, and a part to play as light to the Gentiles. Each member of God's people is responsible to believe God's promises and to grow in obeying his commands. Those who do this enjoy the full benefits of God's love and find delight in knowing him. The well-being of God's people as a whole affects the well-being of each member. Each one shares the joys and sorrows of the others. When believers suffer, they should not seek revenge but should pray. They can be confident that God will make all things right in his own time.

V. Eschatology. The story of God's people is headed toward a glorious future, in which all kinds of people will come to know the Lord. The personal faithfulness of God's people contributes to his ultimate purpose. The Messiah, the ultimate heir of David, will lead his people in the great task of bringing light to the Gentiles.

Types of Psalms

The Psalms can be identified according to some basic categories:

Laments, which lay a troubled situation before the Lord, asking him for help. There are community (Psalm 12) and individual (Psalm 13) laments. This category is the largest by far, including up to a third of all Psalms.

Hymns of praise, which call God's people to admire his great attributes and deeds. Examples include Psalms 8; 93; and 145.

Hymns of thanksgiving. As with laments, there are community (Psalm 9) and individual (Psalm 30) thanksgiving psalms.

Hymns celebrating God's law (Psalm 119).

Wisdom psalms (Psalms 1; 37), which reflect themes from the Wisdom Books (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon).

Songs of confidence, which enable worshipers to deepen their trust in God amid difficult circumstances (Psalm 23).

Royal psalms, which present the Davidic monarchy as the vehicle of blessing for God's people. Some of these are prayers (Psalm 20), some are thanksgivings (Psalm 21). All relate to the Messiah, the ultimate heir of David, either by setting a pattern (Psalms 20–21) or by portraying the king's reign in such a way that only the Messiah can completely fulfill it (Psalms 2; 72), or by focusing on the future (Psalm 110).

Historical psalms, which take lessons from the history of God's dealings with his people (Psalm 78).

Prophetic hymns, which echo the Prophets, calling people to covenant faithfulness (Psalm 81).

Structure

The standard Hebrew text divides the Psalms into five "books," perhaps in imitation of the five books of the Pentateuch.

Introduction to Romans

Timeline



Author, Recipients, and Date

The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome. He probably did this while he was in Corinth on his third missionary journey, in A.D. 57 (Acts 20:2-3).

Theme

In the cross of Christ, God judges sin and at the same time shows his saving mercy.

Purpose

Paul wrote Romans to unite the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome in the gospel. He also wanted the church in Rome to become the base of operations from which he could proclaim the gospel in Spain (15:22-24). The ultimate goal of preaching the gospel is the glory of God (11:33-36). Paul longs for the Gentiles to become obedient Christians for the sake of Christ's name (1:5).

Key Themes

- I. All people are sinners and need to be saved from their sin (1:18-3:20; 5:12-19).
- II. The Mosaic law is good and holy, but only Christ can remove sin and overcome its power (2:12-29; 3:9-20; 5:20; 7:1-25; 9:30-10:8).
- III. Through the righteousness of God, sin is judged and salvation is provided (3:21-26; 5:12-19; 6:1-10; 7:1-6; 8:1-4).
- IV. With the coming of Jesus Christ, a new age of redemptive history has begun (1:1-7; 3:21-26; 5:1-8:39).
- V. The atoning death of Jesus Christ is central to God's plan of salvation (3:21-26; 4:23-25; 5:6-11, 15-19; 6:1-10; 7:4-6; 8:1-4).
- VI. Justification is by faith alone (1:16-4:25; 9:30-10:21).
- VII. Those who are in Christ Jesus have a sure hope of future glory (5:1-8:39).
- VIII. By the power of the Holy Spirit, those who have died with Christ live a new life (2:25-29; 6:1-7:6; 8:1-39).
- IX. God is sovereign in salvation. He works all things according to his plan (9:1-11:36).
- X. God fulfills his promises to both Jews and Gentiles (1:18-4:25; 9:1-11:36; 14:1-15:13).
- XI. Because of God's grace, Christians should be morally pure, should show love to their neighbors, should be good citizens, and should welcome their fellow believers into fullest fellowship (12:1-15:7).
- XII.

XIII.Outline

- I. The Gospel as the Revelation of God's Righteousness (1:1-17)
- II. God's Righteousness in His Wrath against Sinners (1:18-3:20)
- III. The Saving Righteousness of God (3:21-4:25)
- IV. Hope as a Result of Righteousness by Faith (5:1-8:39)
- V. God's Righteousness to Israel and to the Gentiles (9:1-11:36)
- VI. God's Righteousness in Everyday Life (12:1-15:13)
- VII. The Extension of God's Righteousness through Paul's Mission (15:14-16:23)
- VIII. Final Summary of the Gospel of God's Righteousness (16:25-27)



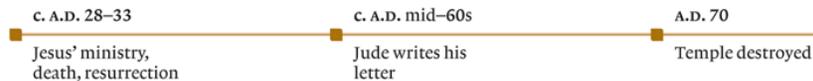
The Setting of Romans

c. A.D. 57

Paul probably wrote Romans from Corinth during his third missionary journey ([Acts 20:2-3](#)). Rome was the epicenter of the powerful Roman Empire, ruling over many of the great ancient centers of Western civilization. Paul had established the church at Corinth during his second missionary journey ([Acts 18:1-11](#)).

Introduction to Jude

Timeline



Author, Date, and Recipients

The book was written by Jude, the brother of James and Jesus (see [Matt. 13:55](#); [Mark 6:3](#), where “Judas” is the same in Greek as “Jude”). Jude was probably written in the mid-60s A.D. Considering the letter’s apparent Jewish perspective, Jude’s audience was probably Jewish Christians, or a mixture of Jewish and Gentile readers where the Gentiles were familiar with Jewish traditions.

Since Jude addresses a situation similar to the one addressed by [2 Peter](#) and exhibits a literary relationship to ch. [2](#) of that letter (Jude may have been a source for [2 Peter](#)), the two letters are commonly dated in fairly close proximity, even though evidence for the date of writing within the book of [Jude](#) is sparse.

Theme

The church must defend the one true faith (v. [3](#)). Believers must be faithful to the end by resisting false teachers and following the truth.

Purpose, Occasion, and Background

Jude warns against following false teachers who have infiltrated the church and are distorting the one true faith. Jude calls the church to defend the truth aggressively against such false teaching.

While the false teachers of Jude were profoundly libertine (morally unrestrained), it would be historically inaccurate to argue that they were Gnostics. This heretical sect (or group of sects) was influential primarily from the second century A.D. onward.

Jude accomplishes his purpose by drawing analogies with OT events, using the same principles of interpretation found in [2 Peter](#) (and elsewhere in the NT). He also draws on Jewish apocalyptic traditions from nonbiblical literature (he refers to *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Moses*) in building his case. Thus, as literature, Jude has a distinctively Jewish flavor.

The format is of a NT epistle (letter), with its loose divisions of salutation, body, and closing. But the central unit of the letter (vv. [5-16](#)) fits the style of a

judgment oracle: it has an object of attack, an attack coming from several directions, a harsh tone, and an implied standard on which the attack is being conducted (“the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints”; v. 3). The description of those who left the faith (vv. 8-16) provides a picture of their character and actions. The use of images and allusions (e.g., to Sodom and Gomorrah and the archangel Michael) lends a poetic quality to the letter.

The writer displays horror over the apostasy and the false teachers who have caused it. The only NT passage that goes beyond Jude in these traits is Jesus’ denunciation of the religious leaders in Matthew 23. But this letter begins with the usual soothing notes of NT epistles, and in the last two verses it becomes one of the most moving benedictions in the NT.

Key Themes

- I. Christians need to defend the doctrines of the faith (v. 3).
- II. False teachers may be identified by their immoral character (vv. 4, 8, 10, 12-13, 16, 18-19).
- III. God will judge false teachers (vv. 4, 5-7, 11, 14-15).
- IV. Saints must endure to be saved (vv. 17-23).

- V. As God grants mercy to those who are called, they must show mercy to others (vv. 2, 21-23).
- VI. God grants the grace to ensure that his people will persevere (vv. 1-2, 24-25).

Outline

- I. Initial Greeting (vv. 1-2)
- II. Jude’s Appeal: Contend for the Faith (vv. 3-4)
- III. The Immoral Character and Resulting Judgment of the False Teachers (vv. 5-16)
- IV. Concluding Exhortations (vv. 17-25)

Introduction to Genesis

Timeline



Author, Date, and Recipients

Traditionally, Moses is considered to have been the author of Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch (see Num. 33:2; Deut. 31:24; John 5:46). Of course, Moses lived much later than the events of Genesis. Presumably, stories were passed down about those earlier events, and Moses brought them all together.

The first audience would have been the Israelites Moses led through the wilderness. For readers today, Genesis is an essential introduction to the rest of the Bible. It is rightly called the book of beginnings.

Theme

The theme of Genesis is creation, sin, and re-creation. God made the world very good, but first cursed it and then destroyed it in the flood because of man's disobedience. The new world after the flood was also

spoiled by human sin (ch. 11). God chose Abraham for a special purpose. Through his family, all nations would be blessed (12:1-3). God's purpose will eventually be fulfilled through Abraham's descendants (ch. 49).

Key Themes

- I. The Lord God commissions human beings to be his representatives on earth. They are to take care of the earth and govern the other creatures (1:1-2:25).
- II. Instead of acting as God's representatives on earth, the first man and woman—Adam and Eve—listen to the serpent and follow his advice. Their disobedience has devastating results for all mankind and for the entire created world (3:1-24; 6:5-6).
- III. God graciously announces that Eve's offspring will free humanity from the serpent's control (3:15). Genesis then begins tracing the history of one family that will become the people of Israel. This family has a special relationship with God and will become a source of blessing to fallen humanity (12:1-3).
- IV. As a result of Adam's disobedience, his unique relationship with the ground degenerates,

resulting in hard work and later in flood and famine. But the special family descending from Adam also brings relief from the difficulties (3:17-19; 5:29; 50:19-21).

- V. While Eve's punishment centers on pain in bearing children (3:16), women play an essential role in continuing the unique family line. With God's help, even barrenness is overcome (11:30; 21:1-7; 25:21; 38:1-30).
- VI. The corruption of human nature causes families to be torn apart (4:1-16; 13:5-8; 25:22-23; 27:41-45; 37:2-35). Although Genesis shows the reality of family conflicts, individual members of the chosen family can also help resolve those conflicts (13:8-11; 33:1-11; 45:1-28; 50:15-21).
- VII. The wicked are exiled from Eden and scattered throughout the earth (3:22-24; 4:12-16; 11:9), but God is kind to his chosen people and promises them a land of their own (12:1-2, 7; 15:7-21; 28:13-14; 50:24).
- VIII. God is prepared to destroy almost the entire human race because of its corruption (6:7, 11-12; 18:17-33), but he still wants his world to be populated by righteous people (1:28; 9:1; 15:1-5; 35:11).

- I. Primeval History (1:1-11:26)
 - A. God's creation and ordering of heaven and earth (1:1-2:3)
 - B. Earth's first people (2:4-4:26)
 - C. Adam's descendants (5:1-6:8)
 - D. Noah's descendants (6:9-9:29)
 - E. The descendants of Noah's sons (10:1-11:9)
 - F. Shem's descendants (11:10-26)
- II. Patriarchal History (11:27-50:26)
 - A. Terah's descendants (11:27-25:18)
 - B. Isaac's descendants (25:19-37:1)
 - C. Jacob's descendants (37:2-50:26)

The Near East at the Time of Genesis

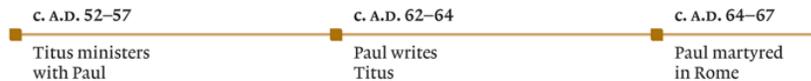
c. 2000 B.C.

The book of Genesis describes events in the ancient Near East from the beginnings of civilization to the relocation of Jacob's (Israel's) family in Egypt. The stories of Genesis are set among some of the oldest nations in the world, including Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and Elam.

Outline

Introduction to Titus

Timeline



Author, Date, and Recipient

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to his coworker Titus. The letter was probably written in the mid-60s A.D. between Paul's first imprisonment (Acts 28) and his second imprisonment, which is not mentioned in Acts.

Theme

The letter's theme is the unbreakable link between faith and practice, belief and behavior. This truth is the basis for Paul's criticism of false teaching, his instruction in Christian living, and standards he sets for church leaders.

Purpose

Paul had recently completed a journey to Crete. He had left Titus there to teach the new church (see Acts 14:21-23).

False teachers were already a problem in the church (Titus 1:10-16), and the letter focuses primarily on that issue. The description of elders (1:5-9) and of proper Christian living (2:1-10; 3:1-3) appear to be worded for intentional contrast with these false teachers. The content of the false teaching is not fully explained (as in 1 Timothy). There appears to be a significant Jewish element to the teaching. The opponents come from "the circumcision party" (Titus 1:10). They are interested in "Jewish myths" (1:14) and perhaps ritual purity (1:15). Paul's primary concern, however, is with the practical effect of the false teaching. They taught ritual purity, but they lived in a way that proved they did not know God (1:16).

This false teaching would have been welcome in Crete, which was known in the ancient world for immorality. But Paul expected the gospel to produce real godliness in everyday life, even in Crete.

In dealing with the false teaching, Paul also provides Titus with a portrait of a healthy church. He describes proper leadership (1:5-9), proper handling of error (1:10-16; 3:9-11), proper Christian living (especially important for new believers in an immoral setting; 2:1-10; 3:1-2), and the gospel as the source of godliness (2:11-14; 3:3-7).

Key Themes

- I. The gospel produces godliness in the lives of believers. There is no legitimate separation between belief and behavior (1:1; 2:1, 11-14; 3:4-7).
- II. One's deeds will either prove or disprove one's claim to know God (1:16).
- III. It is vitally important to have godly men serving as elders/pastors (1:5-9).
- IV. True Christian living will draw others to the gospel (2:5, 8, 10).
- V. Good works have an important place in the lives of believers (2:1-10, 14; 3:1-2, 8, 14).
- VI. It is important to deal clearly and firmly with doctrinal and moral error in the church (1:10-16; 3:9-11).
- VII. The gospel is the basis for Christian ethics (2:11-14; 3:3-7).

Outline

- I. Opening (1:1-4)
- II. The Occasion: The Need for Proper Leadership (1:5-9)
- III. The Problem: False Teachers (1:10-16)
- IV. Christian Living in Contrast to the False Teachers (2:1-3:8)
- V. The Problem Restated: False Teachers (3:9-11)
- VI. Closing Encouragement (3:12-15)

The Setting of Titus

c. A.D. 62-64

Paul likely wrote Titus during a fourth missionary journey not recorded in the book of Acts. Writing from an unknown location, he instructed Titus in how to lead the churches on the island of Crete. The churches there had apparently been founded by

Paul.

