

NEW TESTAMENT READING PLAN (WITH OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES)

Introduction:

As we start reading the New Testament, we will be reading it in chronological order. Remember that the gospel story was originally told verbally in story form. The first books written were some of Paul's letters. One source indicates that 1 Timothy and Galatians were probably among the first written, about 2 decades after Jesus' death. The last book written is considered to be Revelation, thought to have been written 50 – 60 years after Jesus' death.

When the books that would make up what we call the New Testament were determined, they were not put in chronological order. They are organized by type of literature: the gospels, history (the book of Acts), the epistles (or letters – organized somewhat by length) and finally Revelation.

The authors of the books in the New Testament frequently referred to the Scriptures, which at their time, meant what we call the Old Testament. It was important for at least the Jewish people to draw a connection between what was written in the Old Testament and how that was fulfilled in Jesus. As we read the New Testament over the next 4 months, we will refer to some key passages in the Old Testament, so that we can also connect the Old Testament to the New Testament. After all, the entire Bible, the Old and New Testaments, are one seamless story – God's story. And our goal is to understand how our story is part of God's story.

Week 1 summary:

In the first week of our reading, we will begin by reading a few chapters from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These are the first four books of the New Testament and are referred to as the gospels. The word gospel means "good news." These four books tell the story of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. And the story of Jesus is good news for us!

These early chapters in the gospels recount the story of God's chosen people who at this stage, were the Jews. Jesus is the culmination of the promises God made in the Old Testament to His people. They also tell of John the Baptist, the prophesied forerunner of Jesus, of the birth of Jesus, His early life (of which we know very little), the baptism of Jesus, the temptation of Jesus, and the very beginning of His ministry which started at about the age of 30.

Day 1: [Isaiah 9:4, 7](#) (read verses 4 and 7 of Isaiah), [Luke 1](#) read chapter 1 of Luke; [John 1:1-14](#) (read verses 1-14)

Luke was a doctor and given that, he did thorough investigation as he documented the story of Jesus. After his research he wanted to document the results for Theophilus so that he would have confidence in what he believed. It is generally believed that Luke was writing to the Gentiles – i.e., everyone other than the Jews.

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John was interested in communicating the deity of Jesus (i.e., Jesus being God in the flesh) so you may see his communication style is different than that of Luke.

Day 2: [2 Samuel 7:11b-16](#), [Isaiah 7:14](#), [Matthew 1](#); [Luke 2:1-38](#),

Matthew is thought to have been writing primarily to the Jewish people. As you read the genealogy of Jesus from Matthew, look for the following; 1) Matthew starts his genealogy by stating that Jesus is a descendant of Abraham and David; 2) Matthew ends with Joseph, a male (who was the husband of Mary who is the mother of the Christ); 3) Matthew names 4 females, all who have interesting stories.

Also in this passage, we see the first of many references to prophecies from the Old Testament that are being fulfilled in Jesus.

Day 3: [Micah 5:2](#), [Matthew 2](#); [Luke 2:39-52](#)

There is little that we know of the time between Jesus' birth and when His ministry started at age 30. We read one story of His childhood in today's passage from Luke.

Day 4: [Isaiah 40:1-5](#), [Matthew 3](#); [Mark 1](#); [Luke 3](#)

Today we read various accounts of John the Baptist, the one called to prepare the way for Jesus' coming. There are two interesting points in the accounts of the baptism of Jesus: 1) we see the trinity (God in 3 persons) in this passage; 2) even though Jesus was sinless, He was baptized so that He could identify with the people and their sins (since He would die for the sins of the people).

In the Luke passage we see Luke's version of the genealogy of Jesus. Note that Luke traces Jesus lineage back past Abraham, all the way to Adam, signifying that Jesus is for all nations, not just the Jewish people.

Day 5: [Deuteronomy 8:3, 6:16, 6:13](#), [Matthew 4](#); [Luke 4-5](#); [John 1:15-51](#)

In these passages we see the accounts of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Note that this occurs prior to Jesus starting His ministry. Note also that in countering the attacks of Satan, Jesus quotes Scripture. Satan tries to quote Scripture in tempting Jesus (see Psalm 91:11-12) but Satan didn't take into account the bigger story of Scripture, so Jesus had a quick answer (also from Scripture).

As Jesus officially starts His ministry (as recorded in Luke 4:16-21) in a synagogue in His hometown of Nazareth, He quoted Scripture (see Isaiah 61:1-2). As we start to see the miracles Jesus performed, we see Him casting out demons. Here is an interesting fact: the demons seemed to know that Jesus was the Son of God and yet humans couldn't grasp that, at least not yet.

Day 6: [John 2-4](#) (read chapters 2 – 4 of John)

See John 3:14-17 and read the story from Numbers 21:4-9 (related to the Israelite's 40-year wilderness journey). See a connection?

Day 7: rest