

*THOSE  
WHO  
CAME  
BEFORE  
US*



READING PLAN

# *WELCOME*

Welcome to “Those Who Came Before Us.” The Old Testament provides for Christians a deep well of insight into the faith that shapes our lives. Many have said that the Old Testament is the gospel concealed, while the New Testament is the gospel revealed. The more we grasp the truth of what God has done for us in Christ, the more the stories and truths of the Old Testament come alive and fit together. During this sermon series, we will focus on six important Old Testament characters. As we learn their stories, we will more deeply understand our story. God’s great plan of redemption is made real to us through them, and our faith is deepened as we see how he knit together history for his glory and the good of his people.



# *HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS READING PLAN*

Over the next six weeks, we will be diving into the lives of six Old Testament characters. The Old Testament is more than ancient history—it's a rich, unfolding story that points us to Jesus. Through the lives of ordinary people, we see God's extraordinary faithfulness and grace at work. This reading plan invites you to discover how approachable and relevant the Old Testament truly is, revealing the heart of God in every chapter. Here's some tips to get you started:

- **MAKE SPACE.** This plan is built for daily reading and reflection. That may mean creating room in your schedule by trading some current habits for meaningful spiritual practices.
- **PURPOSEFUL DESIGN.** Each element of the plan is designed to complement and build on the others.
  - Gain Understanding: each week, you'll have access to several short videos designed to help uncover the richness and clarify the mysteries of the Old Testament.
  - Today's Text: each day features a passage that highlights a key moment in the life of the Old Testament character we're focusing on that week.
  - Reflect & Apply: it's been said that true spiritual maturity comes not just from learning truth, but from applying it in everyday life.
- **COMMUNITY.** You don't have to walk through this reading plan alone—grow in faith alongside others. Share your insights in your community group, meet friends for coffee, and talk about how you're applying God's Word in everyday life. Listen to how God is working in their stories too and encourage one another along the way.
- **ENJOY THE JOURNEY.** This journey isn't about perfection—it's about boldly encountering God through His Spirit and the transformative power of His living Word.

**THE BIBLE PROJECT:**  
**OLD TESTAMENT SUMMARY**



# ABRAHAM

## DAY 1

TODAY'S TEXT: Genesis 12 – *The Call of Abram*

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. In today's reading, God calls Abram to leave his home and family. When have you sensed God calling you to leave your comfort zone and follow Him? How did you respond?
2. Re-read verses 1-3. When God calls Abram to leave, He also makes specific promises to Him. In your life right now, what promises from God are you holding fast to?
3. As in the life of Abram, how does obedience to God connect with those promises? What does it look like for you to obey God?

## DAY 2

TODAY'S TEXT: Genesis 15 – *God's Covenant with Abram*

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Reread verse 6. "Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness". How does Abram's response to God's promise highlight the power of faith?
2. God doesn't rebuke Abram for his doubts, instead the Lord brings him outside and tells him to look toward heaven. Can you remember a time God spoke specifically into a situation in your life that required faith?
3. What doubts or fears are you hiding from God right now? Take a few minutes and honestly share those with your Heavenly Father. Ask God to speak directly to those doubts. Journal what you sense God has spoken to you today.

## WEEK ONE: GAIN UNDERSTANDING

[The Bible Project - Genesis 12-50 overview](#)

[The Bible Project - Genesis 12-50, episode 2](#)

[The Bible Project: The Test](#)

[Tim Keller: Discovering the Gospel in Genesis](#)



# DAY 3

TODAY'S TEXT: Genesis 16 – *Sarai and Hagar*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Does Sarai and Abram's choice to have a child through Hagar reflect a current struggle between trusting God and acting impatiently in your own life right now?
2. What does this story teach about trusting God's timing, and how can you apply it to your life right now?
3. Amid injustice and suffering, Hagar experiences 'the God who sees me'. Take a few minutes, close your eyes and quiet your soul. Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal this truth deep in your heart. Wait expectantly. Listen and then journal what you hear.

# DAY 4

TODAY'S TEXT: Genesis 17:15-18:15 – *The Promise of Isaac*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. So much happened in our text for today. What specific event, conversation or response stands out to you? Why is that so?
2. Reread 17:17 and 18:11-15. Why do you think Abraham laughed? Why do you think Sarah laughed? Has God or another follower of Jesus ever spoken a biblical promise over your life that seemed too good to be true? How did you respond?
3. Genesis 18:14a tells us 'Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time...'. What impossible situations are you believing God for? Make a list in your journal. Pray a fresh prayer of faith over each one. Thank God for his faithful timing over each one. Ask God's Spirit to help you trust God.

# DAY 5

TODAY'S TEXT: Genesis 21:1-7 – *The Birth of Isaac*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. In what ways does this chapter demonstrate God's faithfulness and Abraham's faith?
2. Verse six speaks of the laughter associated with Isaac's birth. How does this resonate with your personal experiences of joy, relief, and gratitude when God's promises are fulfilled, or prayers have been answered?
3. *You can trust God's faithfulness. He keeps his word.* How have these statements proved true in your journey of following Jesus? Spend time remembering. Write a prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving to the Lord.

# DAY 6

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Genesis 22 – *The Sacrifice of Isaac*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. What does Abraham's willingness to obey God, even when it seemed illogical, reveal about his faith?
2. Take a few moments and put yourself in Abraham's place. What was he thinking after receiving the command from God to sacrifice Isaac? How might he have wrestled with God in prayer after receiving this command?
3. What would take for you to be able to say "God you are enough. Even if all else fades away, if I have you, I have enough."? Is your faith in God Himself that strong? How can the love of God, demonstrated at the Cross, help you build that kind of faith?

# DAY 7

TODAY'S TEXT: Romans 4

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. What does Romans 4 teach about how we are made right with God—through works or through faith?
2. In what areas of your life are you trying to earn God's favor instead of simply trusting Him?
3. What does it mean to have "hope against hope" (v. 18), and where might God be calling you to that kind of faith?

# MOSES

## DAY 1

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 2 – *Birth of Moses | Moses Flees to Midian*

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. How does God use unlikely people (like Pharaoh's daughter) to accomplish His plans?
2. Why do you think Moses reacted so strongly to the mistreatment of the Hebrew slave?
3. Reread verses 23-25. What does this passage reveal about the relationship between human suffering and divine response? What does it mean for God to 'know' you in your suffering?

## DAY 2

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 3 – *The Burning Bush*

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. What "burning bush" moments have you experienced, that is, times when God got your attention in an unexpected way? How did you respond?
2. How do you recognize when God is speaking to you? What distracts you from this?
3. Moses was being called to something outside his comfort zone, but in verse 12 God assures him that he would be with Moses. What does the promise of God's presence mean in your life?

## WEEK TWO: GAIN UNDERSTANDING

[The Bible Project - Book of Exodus Guide](#)

[The Bible Project - What is Passover?](#)

[The Bible Project - The Larger Story of Exodus](#)

[Tim Keller - Discovering the Gospel in Exodus](#)



# DAY 3

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 4:1-17 – *Moses Given Powerful Signs*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Moses believed that he was not equipped for this task and that he would be rejected. How have you trusted God in times when you feel weak?
2. In verse 10, Moses tells God he is not eloquent and is slow of speech. In your own life, do you focus more on your limitations or on God's strength? Take a few moments to offer God the areas where you feel weak or inadequate—and invite Him to fill those places with His power. Receive His strength with open hands and a trusting heart.
3. What fears stop you from stepping into God's call for your life? Journal your thoughts. Share them with a trusted friend. Pray together.

# DAY 4

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 12:29-50 – *The Passover*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Exodus 12:29–50 describes a historical event, but also points to Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose blood delivers us from death and opens the way to freedom and new life. Reflect on all the ways your life has changed since becoming a follower of Jesus. Make a list. Spend time in worship and thanks for this new life!
2. Think about your life – your choices, affections, habits, relationships etc. In what ways are you living as one who has been redeemed and set free?
3. What are some ways you are living that still need to be surrendered to walk in freedom?
4. Who can you talk to and pray with about these?

# DAY 5

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 14 – *Crossing the Red Sea*

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. What impossible “Red Sea” situation are you facing right now? Bring it to God in prayer. Ask Him for the faith to trust Him fully—even when the way forward seems unclear.
2. Today's passage tells a glorious story of God's power and deliverance. Can you remember a time when God made a way in your life where there seemed to be none? Take a moment to respond with praise and gratitude for His faithfulness.
3. Who in your life needs to experience the power and freedom that comes only through a relationship with God? Take time now to pray and ask God to reveal his love to them.

# DAY 6

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 32 – *The Golden Calf*

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Verse one tells us when the people saw that Moses delayed, they asked Aaron to ‘make us gods who will go before us’. What are some modern-day “golden calves” that you might turn to when feeling anxious or abandoned?
2. Reread verses 7-14. How does God's willingness to relent after Moses intercedes shape your view of His justice and mercy? How does it encourage your prayer life?
3. How did peer pressure influence Aaron's failure to lead courageously? How much are you influenced by the pressure or opinions of others? Why is that so?

# DAY 7

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Exodus 33:12-23 – *Show me Your Glory!*

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Moses tells God, “You have said, ‘I know you by name,’ and you have also found favor in my sight.” What do you think it means to be known by God personally? Have you ever felt truly seen and known by Him? How has that impacted your relationship with Him?
2. Moses asks God to show him His ways so that he can continue to find favor. In your own life, what does it mean to discover and follow God's ways? What habits or practices help you grow in understanding God's heart and will more deeply?
3. God promises Moses, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” How comforting is it to know that God offers His presence and peace? Can you recall a time when you particularly felt His presence during a difficult moment?

# RUTH

## DAY 1

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 1:1-5

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Ruth opens, "In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land" (Ruth 1:1). Knowing this was a chaotic time, how does this help you see the need for faithfulness? How does Jesus' call to "take heart, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33) encourage you in times of uncertainty?
2. Fear can drive decisions, as seen in Elimelech's move to Moab. When you face uncertainty, how do fear and faith compete within you? What does trusting God look like in such tension?
3. In what seasons have you experienced famine—not just of basic physical needs, but of hope, clarity, or connection—and how did God see you through? How does remembering that shape your faith today?

## DAY 2

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 1:6-22

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Naomi suffers the unbearable: the death of her husband and both sons in a foreign land. She interprets her story as cursed. Can you relate to her grief or the way her pain reshapes belief?
2. Ruth's loyalty defies logic and cultural expectation. Where is God calling you to a deeper, sacrificial commitment in relationships, community, or faith?
3. Naomi's pain leads her to openly lament before God and others. The Psalms remind us that God can handle our true feelings. How have you made room for yourself and others to bring real sorrow to Jesus? How do you think this kind of lament can be important for God's healing?

## WEEK THREE: GAIN UNDERSTANDING

[Ruth Bible Study: Session 1 Sandra Richter](#)

[The Book of Ruth with Bianca Juárez](#)

[The Bible Project Ruth overview](#)

[Tim Keller: Discovering the Gospel in Ruth](#)



# DAY 3

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 2

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Boaz welcomes and protects Ruth, a foreigner, with dignity and kindness. How does his treatment of an immigrant reflect Jesus' call to love the outsider, and how might you follow that example?
2. Reread Ruth 2 and write down your observations about Boaz's treatment of Ruth. In what ways does his kindness and generosity reflect the heart of Jesus?
3. Ruth could have ended up in any field, yet she arrived at Boaz's. What does this reveal about God's quiet guidance—and how have you seen him work through small, unexpected moments in your life?

# DAY 4

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 3:1-13

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Ruth defies cultural expectations placed on women and outsiders, stepping forward with courage and faith. Jesus did the same—elevating women, defending their dignity, and including them in his ministry. How might their examples challenge you to pursue justice, dignity, and bold faith in your own context?
2. As Ruth and Naomi's redeemer, Boaz is a picture of hope in their desperate situation. Though he clearly cares for Ruth, he waits for her to take the step toward redemption. How does this interaction reflect Jesus' gracious invitation to restoration and hope?
3. Ruth takes a vulnerable risk by approaching Boaz directly, trusting in God's provision. When have you felt called to step out in faith despite uncertainty, and how can you lean on God's character of faithfulness in those moments?

# DAY 5

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 3: 14-18

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Ruth waits quietly, trusting Boaz to act on her behalf. In what areas of your life do you struggle with waiting? How might God be calling you to trust more fully in his timing and provision?
2. The patience Ruth models points toward the endurance that Jesus teaches, showing us that waiting does not mean inactivity. How can you cultivate a hopeful patience that actively trusts God, even while waiting for answers?
3. Boaz promises to resolve Ruth's situation the very next day. How does his steady commitment echo the faithfulness of Jesus? What promises from God do you need to cling to right now?

# DAY 6

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 4:1-12

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Boaz offers to raise a son in Mahlon's name, surrendering his own legacy for the sake of others. How does this reflect the self-giving love of Jesus, who gave himself to secure our restoration?
2. Boaz's redemption of Ruth secures a future that leads to King David—and ultimately to Jesus, the Messiah. How does this moment remind you of God's long-range faithfulness to fulfill his promises through unexpected people?
3. How might your everyday choices be woven into God's larger story of redemption—sowing seeds of hope that grow beyond your lifetime, just as Ruth and Boaz's legacy did?

# DAY 7

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Ruth 4:13-22

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. From Ruth and Naomi's story, we see that God can bring renewal and joy even after great loss. Can you recall a time when God turned a season of sorrow in your life into a fresh start?
2. The Messiah's ancestry includes Ruth, a foreigner, and Boaz, a man of integrity. What does this say to you about the inclusive and redemptive nature of God's kingdom, and how might it challenge your view of who is part of God's family?
3. How does the way God reaches beyond division and hardship in Ruth's story shape your understanding of his love? In what ways could this transform how you engage with others and trust God?

## WEEK FOUR: GAIN UNDERSTANDING

[The Bible Project - The Book of 1 Samuel](#)

[The Bible Project - The Book of 2 Samuel](#)

[The Bible Project - David the Priestly King](#)

[Tim Keller: Discovering the Gospel in 1 and 2 Samuel](#)

# DAVID

## DAY 1

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 16 – *David Anointed King*

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. God told Samuel not to focus on outward appearances, but to look at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). How do you tend to judge others—by their outward appearance, their success, or something deeper? What would it look like for you to see people through God's eyes instead? What practical steps can you take to begin doing this?
2. God chose David for his heart, not his outward appearance. What are some practical ways you can cultivate a heart after God, like David did? How can you focus on inner character and integrity rather than outward achievements or appearances?
3. David was doing everyday work—watching sheep—when God called him. What are some “ordinary” things you're doing right now that God could be using to prepare you for something greater?

## DAY 2

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 17 – *David and Goliath*

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. David was young and not a trained soldier, but he volunteered to fight Goliath. What's a challenge you're facing right now that feels “too big”? What would it look like to face it with God's help instead of your own strength?
2. In verse 47 David said the battle is the Lord's. What are a few situations you are facing right now that you are trying to control? How can you let go and trust that God is working on your behalf?
3. David's courage and confidence came from his close relationship with God, built through consistent time spent in His presence. What is one practical way you can create more space each day to connect with God through prayer and reading His Word?



# DAY 3

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 19 – *Saul Tries to Kill David*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. In verses 1-5, we see that Jonathan warned David about Saul's plan and even spoke up to defend him. Do you have a friend like Jonathan—someone who supports you and helps you do what's right? How can you be that kind of friend to someone else? Saul allowed jealousy and fear drive his actions, trying to harm David instead of trusting God.
2. Are there any areas where jealousy, fear, or insecurity are affecting your relationships or decisions? What practical steps can you take to invite God into that? Who is that trusted friend you can confide in about this?
3. Both Jonathan and Michal took bold steps to protect David. Who in your life right now needs your support, encouragement, or protection? How can you be used by God to care for them? Reach out to them today.

# DAY 4

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: 2 Samuel 6 – *David, Michal, the Ark*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Worship in this chapter was loud, joyful, and public. Are you comfortable expressing your love for God openly? Why or why not? What would it take for you to worship more freely or with more sincerity?
2. David was excited to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem because it represented God's presence. What does it mean to you that God's presence is with us today through the Holy Spirit? How can you become more aware of His presence in your daily life?
3. In verses 16 and 20, we see Michal, David's wife, looking down on him and criticizing him for dancing before the Lord. Have you ever felt judged for how you express your faith? Have you ever judged someone else for the way they worship or live out their relationship with God? What can you do to cultivate a heart that honors both your own worship and the unique ways others connect with God?

# DAY 5

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: 2 Samuel 7:18-29 – *David's Prayer of Gratitude*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Reflecting on David's prayer of thanksgiving and humility in these verses, take a moment to consider God's promises to you and His faithfulness in your life. Then, write your own prayer of gratitude. Here are a few prompts to help you:
  - a. How has God shown His greatness in your life?
  - b. In what areas of your life do you see God's grace, even when you don't deserve it?
  - c. What promises from God can you thank Him for today?
  - d. What area of your life can you dedicate more fully to God's purpose?

# DAY 6

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: 2 Samuel 11 – *David and Bathsheba*

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. David's failure began when he wasn't where he was supposed to be. Are there areas in your life where you might be neglecting your responsibilities or avoiding something God has called you to?
2. David used his authority to bring Bathsheba to him. Have you ever used your position or influence in unhealthy ways? Instead, how can you use your power and authority to serve others and honor God instead of for selfish gain?
3. David's sin was a result of a deeper issue of his heart. What habits or practices do you use to regularly examine your heart? Who are the people close to you that you can be completely honest with? What practical steps can you take today to protect your heart from sin and stay close to God?

# DAY 7

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Psalm 32

## REFLECT AND APPLY

- Today's devotional time is a bit different. Find an hour – bring your Bible, journal and listen to this podcast. Read the Psalm as the speaker is teaching. Take notes. Respond to what you sense God saying to you through this podcast.
- [Bible Project Podcast Confession Psalm 32](#)

# ESTHER

## DAY 1

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 1

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. What do you notice about the power and pride in King Xerxes' (also known as King Ahasuerus') banquet, and how is it different from the kind of leadership God calls us to?
2. What does Vashti's decision to say no tell us about how women were treated, and how does her story help you think about standing up for respect and dignity today?
3. The book of Esther never mentions God's name, yet the story reveals his hidden hand throughout. How does this challenge you to recognize and trust God's unseen work in your own life, especially when his presence feels silent or invisible?

## DAY 2

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 2–3

### REFLECT AND APPLY

1. How do Esther and Mordecai stay true to who they are while living in a place where their faith is not understood or valued?
2. Haman appears powerful in this chapter, yet his plans are ultimately doomed to fail. How does this remind you that, even when evil seems strong, God is fully aware of what is truly happening and remains sovereign over all?
3. Haman's plan threatened the lives of an entire people, yet God remained in control throughout the story. When you face situations that feel unfair or broken, how can you cultivate a lasting hope rooted in God's sovereignty and faithfulness?

## WEEK FIVE: GAIN UNDERSTANDING

[Esther: Secular or Sacred?](#)

[The Bible Recap Esther 1-5](#)

[The Bible Recap Esther 6-10](#)

[Tim Keller: Discovering the Gospel in Esther](#)



# DAY 3

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 4

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. How does Mordecai's message to Esther—"maybe you were made for such a time as this"—help you think about your own purpose?
2. Before Esther acted, she called for fasting. What does that tell you about the importance of preparing spiritually before making big decisions?
3. Esther said, "If I perish, I perish." What does that kind of courage look like in your life?

# DAY 4

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 5–6

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. How does Esther show wisdom and patience in the way she approaches the king? What can we learn from her example?
2. The story's use of ironic reversal—especially the dramatic switch in fortune between Haman and Mordecai—highlights a deeper truth about God's justice. How does witnessing this unexpected turnaround strengthen your trust that God ultimately sets things right, even when circumstances seem unfair?
3. Esther made careful choices, but God was the one who guided the outcome. How does this story help you understand the way your own actions matter, even while trusting that God is in control?

# DAY 5

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 7

REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Even though the king's edict couldn't be undone, Esther's courage opened the door for a new solution. How does this show that even when things seem fixed or unfair, God can bring hope and change?
2. King Xerxes (Ahasuerus) appeared easily swayed and quick to defend his power and reputation. How did his pride shape the way he made decisions and responded to conflict? Have you ever felt tempted to protect your image rather than seek God's will? Ask God to show you where you might be holding too tightly to control or reputation. How might surrendering your image to God lead to greater freedom and trust in him?
3. Haman's desire for recognition and praise led to anger, revenge, and ultimately his downfall. How did his pride distort his sense of justice and relationships with others? In what ways do you seek worth in being noticed or praised instead of being rooted in God's love for you? Invite God to help you find your identity in him rather than in the approval of others. How might humility open your heart to deeper joy and peace?

# DAY 6

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 8

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. Even though the threat remains in Esther 8, Esther and Mordecai are empowered to act. What does this show about how God works through people, even when he seems silent? Have you seen God at work in quiet or hidden ways? Ask him to help you notice where he might be using you today.
2. Esther kept advocating, even after Haman was gone. Why do you think she did not stop? Is there someone who needs your voice or support? Pray for courage to care beyond your own comfort.
3. Even though the king's first decree could not be undone, Esther and Mordecai found a way to bring hope. What does this teach us about working within broken systems to bring good?

# DAY 7

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Esther 9–10

## REFLECT AND APPLY

1. The Jews established Purim to remember their rescue with joy. Why do you think God's people are often called to celebrate and remember what he has done? Take some time to write God a prayer of thanksgiving, thanking him for rescuing you.
2. Mordecai rose to great power and used his influence for the good of others. What sets his leadership apart from that of Xerxes (Ahasuerus) and Haman? Reflect on the areas of your life where God has given you influence. Pray for discernment to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit already at work in your sphere, and consider how you might join in God's purposes there.
3. The story ends with peace for the Jews—but they still live in a foreign land, under a foreign king. What might this say about living faithfully in an imperfect world? How can you remain faithful to God even when your surroundings are far from ideal?

# NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah is considered a man of prayer because of his consistent and fervent reliance on God throughout his journey in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. His unwavering commitment to prayer makes him a powerful example for us today of how to live a life of dependence on God. This week's devotional time will focus on strengthening our life of prayer.

## WEEK SIX:

### GAIN UNDERSTANDING

[The Bible Project Nehemiah overview](#)

[Tim Keller: Discovering the Gospel in Ezra and Nehemiah](#)

## DAY 1

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 1:4-12

### REFLECT AND APPLY

In Nehemiah 1:4-12, Nehemiah's heartfelt prayer is a powerful example of how to approach God in times of distress, need, and uncertainty. Use these prompts in response to today's text:

1. How do you respond to the brokenness in your life or in the world? Do you allow yourself to grieve, or do you try to fix things on your own?
2. How can you start your prayers with adoration of God's character, especially in times of uncertainty or difficulty?
3. Is there an area of your life or your community that you need to bring before God in repentance?
4. What is one area in your life where you need to ask God for favor and guidance?

## DAY 2

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 2:1-8

### REFLECT AND APPLY

In Nehemiah 2:4, we read that when King Artaxerxes asked Nehemiah what he wanted, Nehemiah responded with a brief but significant prayer: "Then I prayed to the God of heaven." This silent prayer, offered in a moment of great importance and urgency, reveals a powerful lesson about prayer in our own lives.

1. Is your first reaction to a situation or issue prayer? How often do you take a moment to pause and pray before responding to challenges or opportunities in your life?
2. How can you cultivate a habit of short, silent prayers throughout your day, trusting God for wisdom in moments of uncertainty?
3. How does prayer help you remain calm and focused in times of stress?
4. What steps can you take to deepen your relationship with God so that even in brief, spontaneous prayers, you can feel His presence and guidance?



# DAY 3

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 4:1-9

## REFLECT AND APPLY

In Nehemiah 4:1-9, Nehemiah faces fierce opposition as the enemies of Judah mock and threaten the people of God who are rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The chapter highlights two significant prayers of Nehemiah that reveal his response to the external opposition and his trust in God's protection.

1. How do you respond when facing opposition or criticism? Do you tend to react in your own strength, or do you bring your concerns and frustrations to God in prayer?
2. In moments of trouble, do you seek God's intervention first or do you try to resolve challenges on your own? How can you develop a deeper trust in God's power to handle your battles?
3. How can you practice persistence in prayer when facing ongoing challenges?

# DAY 4

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 5

## REFLECT AND APPLY

In this chapter, Nehemiah not only takes a stand against oppression but also prays for God's help in restoring justice and righteousness within the community. He reacts with righteous anger, and then he takes decisive action to correct the situation.

1. How do you respond when people are being treated unfairly? Do you speak up? Like Nehemiah, do you pray before speaking?
2. Do you ever treat others unfairly—maybe without meaning to? Think about how you use your time, money, or influence. Ask God to help you be kind, fair, and generous.
3. Nehemiah prayed, "God, remember me for the good I've done." He didn't need attention from people—he wanted to please God. Who are you trying to please in your life: people, or God?

# DAY 5

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 6

## REFLECT AND APPLY

In Nehemiah 6, Nehemiah's enemies try to stop the work on the wall by lying, threatening, and trying to trick him. But Nehemiah stays strong. He doesn't give in to fear or distraction. Instead, he prays and keeps doing what God called him to do.

1. Have you ever been distracted or discouraged from doing something you know God wants you to do? What keeps you from staying focused on God's work? Ask God for strength and focus like Nehemiah had.
2. In verse 9, Nehemiah prayed, "Now strengthen my hands". What area of your life do you need God's strength right now?
3. Nehemiah didn't let fear stop him. Are you afraid of what others might think when you do what's right? How can you trust God more in those moments?

# DAY 6

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 8

## REFLECT AND APPLY

In Nehemiah 8, the people of Israel come together to listen to God's Word. Ezra the priest reads the Scriptures aloud to them, and the people are moved to tears because they realize they haven't been following God's commands. Nehemiah encourages them to rejoice, because God's Word brings life and joy. The people then celebrate with a feast, recognizing how important God's Word is to them.

1. How can you make reading or listening to the Bible a regular part of your day? Ask God to help you value His Word more deeply.
2. The people in Nehemiah 8 were convicted by hearing the Word of God. Are you open to the Holy Spirit speaking to you through Scripture, even when it's uncomfortable? Pray and ask God to help you have a soft heart that is receptive to His Word.
3. The people were moved to tears by hearing the Word of God. When was the last time God's Word really moved your heart? In a world full of distractions, how can you cultivate a heart of attentiveness to God's voice?

# DAY 7

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Nehemiah 9: 9-38

## REFLECT AND APPLY

In Nehemiah 9:9-38, the people of Israel come together to confess their sins and remember God's faithfulness. They recognize how God has always been good to them, even when they failed. They admit their mistakes, ask for God's forgiveness, and promise to follow Him again. This passage reminds us of God's mercy, His desire for us to repent, and the importance of renewing our commitment to Him.

1. How have you experienced God's faithfulness, even when you've turned away? Are there areas now in your life where you need to ask for God's forgiveness?
2. How does remembering what God has done for you in the past give you hope for the future?  
Take some time and remember the faithfulness you have experienced from God.
3. When life is hard, how easy is it for you to ask God for his mercy? What does it look like for you to actively receive the mercy and grace of God?

