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# A Guided Bible Reading Plan

*Reading Scripture in Conversation with Itself*

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87 reading sections

Starts at Genesis 2:4b — the Yahwist creation story

Passages ordered by scholarly / source-critical logic

Cross-references, contradictions, and scholarly notes accompany each section.

This plan reads the Bible in an order that lets the text speak to itself. Cross-references throughout invite you to compare passages directly. Read them — the connections are worth the detour.

**SECTION 1****The Yahwist Creation Story: Eden****Read: Genesis 2:4b–3:24**■ *Gen ch 2 is also covered in section §6***Read alongside:** Gen 1:1–2:3

As you read this account of Eden, notice the intimate way the Creator interacts with the dust of the earth. Compare the order of creation here with what you read in Genesis 1 to see the different emphasis on the timing of humanity and nature.

*Pay attention to the names used for God in this chapter and compare them with the names used in Genesis 1:1–2:3.*

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**SECTION 2****Cain, Abel, and the First Cities****Read: Genesis 4****Read alongside:** Heb 11:4, 1John 3:12, Jude 11

Notice the rapid transition from the first family to the establishment of cities and industry. Consider how the text portrays the growth of human society following the exile from the garden.

*As you read Genesis 4:17, note the mention of a city and consider the population required to build such a place.*

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**SECTION 3****Divine Marriages and the Nephilim****Read: Genesis 6:1–6:8**■ *Gen ch 6 is also covered in section §4***Read alongside:** 1En 6–7, Jude 6, 2Pet 2:4

Pay attention to the mysterious description of the 'sons of God' and the resulting Nephilim. It is worth reading this alongside Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4 to see how later New Testament writers understood these events.

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**SECTION 4****The Flood: Two Stories Stitched Together****Read: Genesis 6:9–9**■ *Gen ch 6 is also covered in section §3***Read alongside:** 1Pet 3:20, 2Pet 2:5, Matt 24:37–39

As you read the account of the flood, notice how the narrative weaves together different details about the animals and the timeline. Observe the recurring theme of God's faithfulness to remember His covenant with Noah.

*Note carefully how many animals of each kind board the ark and how many days the rain lasts, writing them down as you go to see the different details provided.*

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**SECTION 5****Tower of Babel****Read: Genesis 11:1–11:9****Read alongside:** Acts 2:1–11

Notice the human ambition to build a tower that reaches the heavens and the divine response of confusing their language. Compare this scene of linguistic division with the reversal of this phenomenon in Acts 2:1–11.

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**SECTION 6****The Priestly Creation Story: 'In the Beginning'****Read: Genesis 1:1–2:3**■ *Gen ch 2 is also covered in section §1***Read alongside:** Gen 2:4b–3:24, John 1:1–3, Col 1:15–17

Observe the majestic, rhythmic structure of this creation account and the deliberate sequence of the seven days. Notice how John 1:1 echoes the opening words of this chapter to introduce the Word of God.

*Compare the timing of the creation of plants and animals in this section with the sequence found in Genesis 2.*

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**SECTION 10****Abraham's Call, Journeys, and the Wife-Sister Incidents****Read: Genesis 12–17****Read alongside:** Heb 11:8–12, Rom 4, Gal 3, Gen 20, Gen 26

As you follow Abraham's journey, notice the recurring patterns of fear and faith in his relationship with foreign kings. Pay attention to the similarities between the events in Genesis 12, 20, and 26.

*Notice how the 'wife-sister' narrative repeats across different generations and characters; list the specific similarities you find.*

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**SECTION 11****Sodom, Lot, Isaac's Birth, and Hagar Expelled****Read: Genesis 18–21****Read alongside:** Ezek 16:49, Jude 7, 2Pet 2:6, Luke 17:28–29

As you read about the judgment of Sodom, consider the various descriptions of the city's wickedness. It is helpful to read Ezekiel 16:49 alongside Genesis 19 to see the full scope of the sins mentioned.

*Compare the description of Sodom's sin in Ezekiel 16:49 with the account in Genesis 19 and notice what differs.*

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**SECTION 12****The Binding of Isaac (Akedah)****Read: Genesis 22****Read alongside:** Heb 11:17–19, Jas 2:21, John 3:16

Notice the profound tension of Abraham's obedience and God's ultimate provision of a substitute. Read Hebrews 11:17–19 to see how the New Testament interprets Abraham's faith during this trial.

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**SECTION 13****Sarah's Death, Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob****Read: Genesis 23–28**■ *Gen ch 28 is also covered in section §14***Read alongside:** Rom 9:10–13, Heb 11:20, Mal 1:2–3

Pay attention to the prophecy regarding Jacob and Esau before they were even born. Consider how Paul uses this specific moment in Romans 9:10–13 to discuss the nature of God's calling.

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**SECTION 14****Jacob's Ladder, Wrestle, and the Twelve Tribes****Read: Genesis 28–36**■ *Gen ch 28 is also covered in section §13***Read alongside:** Hos 12:2–4, John 1:51

Notice the significance of Jacob's name changes and what they reveal about his transformation. Compare the wrestle in Genesis 32 with the interpretation provided in Hosea 12:2–4.

*Note the two different occasions where Jacob's name is changed to Israel and observe the context of each event.*

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**SECTION 15****Joseph in Egypt****Read: Genesis 37–50****Read alongside:** Acts 7:9–16, Ps 105:17–22

As you read the story of Joseph, notice how God uses human betrayal to accomplish a divine purpose of salvation. Pay attention to the different names used for the traders who buy Joseph in Genesis 37.

*Compare Genesis 37:26–27 with Genesis 37:28 and notice the different names given to the men who take Joseph.*

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**SECTION 16****Slavery, Moses, and the Plagues****Read: Exodus 1:1–15:21**■ *Exod ch 15 is also covered in section §17***Read alongside:** Ps 78:12–55, Ps 105:28–38, Acts 7:17–36

As you read through the plagues, notice the power and precision of God's deliverance. It is helpful to read these accounts alongside the songs of praise in the Psalms to see how later generations remembered these events.

*Compare the list of plagues in Exodus 7–12 with those listed in Psalm 78 and Psalm 105, noting any differences in the order or the specific plagues mentioned.*

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**SECTION 17****Wilderness to Sinai: Manna, Water, and the Covenant****Read: Exodus 15:22–24:18**■ *Exod ch 15 is also covered in section §16***Read alongside:** John 6:31–35, 1Cor 10:1–4, Heb 9:18–20

Pay attention to the heart of the Covenant and the Ten Commandments. Notice how the Sabbath is presented as a holy rhythm, reflecting both the creation of the world and the liberation of God's people.

*Read Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 side-by-side and notice how the reasoning for the Sabbath commandment differs between the two passages.*

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**SECTION 19****Golden Calf and Covenant Renewal****Read: Exodus 32–34****Read alongside:** 1Kgs 12:28–29, Acts 7:41, Neh 9:18

Notice the tragedy of the golden calf and the profound mercy found in the renewal of the covenant. Consider how the people's desire for a visible god contrasts with the invisible, sovereign presence of Yahweh.

*Read 1 Kings 12:28–29 and notice how the words used by Jeroboam echo the events of the golden calf in Exodus.*

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**SECTION 23****The Holiness Code****Read: Leviticus 17–26****Read alongside:** Matt 22:39, Rom 13:9, Gal 5:14, Jas 2:8

As you explore the Holiness Code, notice how God's call to be 'holy' extends to every area of life, including social justice and the treatment of the vulnerable. Reflect on the command to love your neighbor as a foundational principle for all believers.

*Notice how the call to love your neighbor in Leviticus 19:18 is expanded in verse 33–34 to include the foreigner.*

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**SECTION 26****Wilderness Rebellions: Manna, Spies, Korah****Read: Numbers 11–21****Read alongside:** 1Cor 10:1–13, Ps 78, Ps 106, Heb 3:7–19

Pay attention to the recurring theme of trust versus unbelief in the wilderness. Notice how the failures of the leaders and the people serve as a warning to us today about the importance of obedience.

*Compare the account of Moses striking the rock in Exodus 17 with the account in Numbers 20 and the explanation given in Deuteronomy 3:26.*

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**SECTION 27****Balaam the Non-Israelite Prophet****Read: Numbers 22–24**

Read alongside: 2Pet 2:15, Rev 2:14, Jude 11

Notice the unusual role of Balaam, a non-Israelite prophet, in God's plan to protect His people. Consider how God can use unexpected sources to speak truth and bring blessing.

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**SECTION 29****Moses' Farewell: History Retold and the Shema****Read: Deuteronomy 1–11**

Read alongside: 2Kgs 22:8–13, Mark 12:29–30, Matt 4:4–10

As you read Moses' farewell, notice the shift in tone as he retells the history of Israel to a new generation. Pay close attention to the 'Shema,' the call to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and strength.

*Compare the account of the spies in Deuteronomy 1:22 with the account in Numbers 13:1–2 and notice who initiates the request.*

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**SECTION 31****Blessings, Curses, and Moses' Death****Read: Deuteronomy 27–34**

Read alongside: Matt 17:3, Jude 9, Rev 11:3–12

Reflect on the transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua and the mystery surrounding Moses' final resting place. Notice how the legacy of a faithful servant continues even after their earthly life ends.

*Read Deuteronomy 34:5–6 and then read Jude 9 to see how later tradition viewed the passing of Moses.*

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**SECTION 32****The Conquest of Canaan: Joshua's Version****Read: Joshua 1–24**

Read alongside: Judg 1:1–2:5, Acts 7:45, Heb 4:8

Notice the sweeping narrative of victory as Joshua leads the people into the Promised Land. Consider the tension between the ideal of total conquest and the reality of the challenges that remained.

*Compare the summary of the conquest in Joshua 21:43–45 with the description of the remaining Canaanites in Judges 1:1–2:5.*

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**SECTION 33****Judges: Failed Conquest and the Apostasy Cycle****Read: Judges 1–21****Read alongside:** Acts 13:20, Heb 11:32–34

As you read the book of Judges, notice the recurring cycle of rebellion and rescue. Be mindful of the deep spiritual decay present in these stories and how they highlight the desperate need for a righteous King.

*As you read the accounts of Jephthah and the Levite's concubine, notice the absence of divine condemnation within the narrative itself.*

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**SECTION 34****Ruth: Loyalty Across Ethnic Lines, and David's Moabite Ancestry****Read: Ruth 1–4****Read alongside:** Ezra 9–10, Neh 13:23–27, Deut 23:3, Matt 1:5

Notice the beautiful theme of loyalty and redemption in the story of Ruth. Consider how her inclusion in the lineage of David demonstrates God's grace extending beyond national boundaries.

*Compare the welcome of Ruth the Moabite with the restrictions on Moabites found in Deuteronomy 23:3.*

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**SECTION 35****Samuel: From Judges to Monarchy (Two Voices)****Read: 1 Samuel 1–31****Read alongside:** Acts 13:21, Heb 11:32

Pay attention to the different perspectives on kingship as Israel transitions from judges to a monarchy. Notice how the story of David's rise is told through different lenses of divine providence.

*Compare the introduction of David to Saul in 1 Samuel 16:14–23 with his introduction in 1 Samuel 17.*

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**SECTION 36****David: Triumph, Sin, and Civil War****Read: 2 Samuel 1–24****Read alongside:** Ps 51, Acts 2:29–36, Matt 22:41–45

As you follow David's journey from victory to deep struggle, notice how the narrative portrays his relationship with God. Read Psalm 51 alongside these accounts to see David's own heart in repentance.

*Read 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21:1, and notice how each author describes the agent behind the census.*

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**SECTION 37****Solomon's Wisdom, Temple, and the Kingdom Split****Read: 1 Kings 1–22****Read alongside:** Matt 6:29, Matt 12:42, 2Chr 1–9, Acts 7:47–50

Pay attention to the contrast between Solomon's God-given wisdom and the choices he makes in his later years. Consider how the building of the Temple reflects both God's glory and the complexities of human leadership.

*As you read 1 Kings 11, notice the tension between Solomon's legendary wisdom and his spiritual drift.*

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**SECTION 38****Kings of Israel and Judah Through the Assyrian Conquest****Read: 2 Kings 1–17****Read alongside:** Hos 1–3, Amos 1–2, Mic 1

Notice the recurring patterns of faithfulness and rebellion as the kingdom fractures. It is worth reading the prophets Hosea and Amos alongside these accounts to hear God's heart for His people during this time.

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**SECTION 39****Hezekiah, Josiah's Reform, and the Fall of Jerusalem****Read: 2 Kings 18–25****Read alongside:** Isa 36–39, Deut 12, Jer 36, 2Chr 34–36

Notice how the discovery of the Law in 2 Kings 22 sparks a spiritual awakening under Josiah. Compare the account of Hezekiah's crisis in 2 Kings with the parallel narrative in Isaiah 36–39.

*Read 2 Kings 18:13–20:19 and Isaiah 36–39 side-by-side and notice the similarities in their wording.*

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**SECTION 41****Chronicles' Idealized David: What Was Edited Out****Read: 1 Chronicles 10–29****Read alongside:** 2Sam 11–12, 2Sam 15–19, 2Sam 24:1

As you read 1 Chronicles, notice how the author focuses on the spiritual preparation and the hope of the Davidic line. Compare these accounts with 2 Samuel to see which details the author emphasizes and which he omits.

*Compare the account of David's life in 1 Chronicles with the narratives in 2 Samuel 11–19 and note the differences in focus.*

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**SECTION 43****The Return: Ezra and the Exclusionary Reconstitution****Read: Ezra 1–10****Read alongside:** Ruth 1–4, Neh 8, Neh 13

Notice the intensity with which Ezra seeks to preserve the holiness of the community after the exile. Compare the instructions regarding foreign marriages in Ezra 9–10 with the story of Ruth, a Moabite woman in David's lineage.

*As you read the lists of returnees in Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7, note the differences in the numbers provided.*

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**SECTION 44****Nehemiah: Rebuilding the Wall and Enforcing Separation****Read: Nehemiah 1–13****Read alongside:** Ezra 10, Deut 23:3

Pay attention to Nehemiah's prayerful leadership and his commitment to both the physical walls and the spiritual walls of Jerusalem. Notice how he balances administrative skill with a deep dependence on God.

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**SECTION 45****Esther: Hebrew Version (God Never Mentioned)****Read: Esther 1–10**

Read alongside: AddEsth

Notice how God's providence works behind the scenes in the story of Esther, even when His name is not explicitly mentioned. Consider how the silence of the narrator invites you to look for God's hand in your own 'hidden' moments.

*Read through the Hebrew text of Esther and note how many times God is explicitly named.*

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**SECTION 46****Additions to Esther: The Greek Theological Supplements****Read: Additions to Esther 1–16**

Read alongside: Esth 1–10

Compare these additions with the Hebrew version of Esther to see how different traditions highlighted the prayer life and divine intervention of the characters. Notice how these supplements emphasize the spiritual dimensions of the story.

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**SECTION 47****Job: Innocent Suffering and the Failure of Retributive Theology****Read: Job 1–42**

Read alongside: Ezek 14:14, Jas 5:11, Lam 3

Notice the shift in tone between Job's initial patience and his honest, agonizing questions to God. Pay attention to how God responds—not with an explanation for suffering, but with a revelation of His own majesty.

*Compare Job's character in the opening and closing chapters with his words in the poetic dialogues of chapters 3–31.*

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**SECTION 49****Psalms: Key Selection for Curated Reading**

**Read: Psalms 1**

**Read: Psalms 2**

**Read: Psalms 8**

**Read: Psalms 19**

**Read: Psalms 22**

**Read: Psalms 23**

**Read: Psalms 46**

**Read: Psalms 51**

**Read: Psalms 73**

**Read: Psalms 90**

**Read: Psalms 91**

**Read: Psalms 103**

**Read: Psalms 104**

**Read: Psalms 110**

**Read: Psalms 137**

**Read: Psalms 139**

**Read: Psalms 150**

**Read alongside:** Matt 27:46, Acts 2:25–36, Heb 1:5–13, Matt 22:41–45

As you move through these selected Psalms, notice the wide range of human emotion, from deep lament to exuberant praise. Compare the promises in Psalm 110 with how they are applied in the New Testament.

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**SECTION 50****Proverbs: Practical Wisdom and Two Voices on Women**

**Read: Proverbs 1–31**

**Read alongside:** Wis 7–9, Sir 24, John 1:1–3

Notice how Wisdom is personified as a woman in Proverbs 8, and consider how this reflects the beauty and value of God's design. Pay attention to the contrast between the 'strange woman' and the 'capable wife' as markers of spiritual direction.

*Read Proverbs 8:22–31 and then read John 1:1–3, noticing the similarities in how Wisdom and the Word are described.*

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**SECTION 51****Ecclesiastes: The Preacher's Skepticism**

**Read: Ecclesiastes 1–12**

**Read alongside:** Job 3, Prov 1:7

As you read, notice the Preacher's honest struggle with the meaning of life and the apparent unfairness of death. Compare these reflections with the wisdom in Proverbs 1:7 and consider how the final conclusion in chapter 12 anchors the book.

*Pay close attention to the Preacher's descriptions of the afterlife in 3:19–21 and 9:5, and note how they contrast with the final exhortation in 12:13–14.*

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**SECTION 52****Song of Solomon: Erotic Love Poetry****Read: Song of Solomon 1–8**

Read alongside: Eph 5:25–33

Notice the vivid, earthly passion in this poetry and how it celebrates the beauty of human love. It is worth reading this alongside Ephesians 5:25–33 to see how the New Testament draws on the theme of sacrificial, devoted love.

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**SECTION 53****Amos: The Earliest Writing Prophet (~760 BCE)****Read: Amos 1–9**

Read alongside: Acts 7:42–43, Acts 15:16–17

Pay attention to Amos's strong language regarding the heart of worship versus outward rituals. Read Amos 9:11–15 and then read Acts 15:16–17 to see how the early church understood this promise in light of the Gentiles.

*As you read Amos 5:25–27, note what the prophet says about Israel's sacrifices during their forty years in the wilderness.*

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**SECTION 54****Hosea: God as Spurned Husband (~750–720 BCE)****Read: Hosea 1–14**

Read alongside: Matt 2:15, Rom 9:25–26

Notice the powerful metaphor of marriage used to describe God's relationship with His people. When you reach Hosea 11:1, read Matthew 2:15 and consider how the Gospel writer sees the patterns of Israel's history repeating in the life of Jesus.

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**SECTION 55****Micah: Justice Prophet with an Isaiah Parallel****Read: Micah 1–7**

Read alongside: Isa 2:2–4, Matt 2:6, John 7:42

As you read, notice the striking similarities between Micah 4:1–3 and Isaiah 2:2–4. Pay attention to the specific imagery of 'swords into plowshares' and how it defines the peace of God's kingdom.

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**SECTION 56****Isaiah 1–39: Isaiah of Jerusalem (~740–700 BCE)****Read: Isaiah 1–39**

Read alongside: 2Kgs 18–20, Matt 1:23, Matt 4:15–16, Luke 4:18–19

Notice how Isaiah's messages shift between warnings of judgment and promises of hope. Read Isaiah 7:14 in its immediate context for King Ahaz, then read Matthew 1:23 to see how the New Testament applies this sign to the birth of Christ.

*Read Isaiah 36–39 alongside 2 Kings 18–20 and notice the similarities in how the story of Hezekiah is told.*

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**SECTION 57****Zephaniah: The Day of the LORD (~630 BCE)****Read: Zephaniah 1–3**

Read alongside: Rev 6:17, Joel 2

Pay attention to the urgency in Zephaniah's call to repentance. Compare his descriptions of the 'Day of the LORD' with the visions in Joel 2 and Revelation 6:17.

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**SECTION 58****Nahum: Celebrating the Fall of Nineveh (~612 BCE)****Read: Nahum 1–3**

Read alongside: Jonah 3–4

Notice the intense emotion in Nahum's declaration of judgment on Nineveh. Compare this perspective with the account in Jonah 3–4 and consider the different ways the Bible portrays God's justice and mercy toward enemies.

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**SECTION 59****Habakkuk: Why Does God Allow Evil?****Read: Habakkuk 1–3**

Read alongside: Rom 1:17, Gal 3:11, Heb 10:38

As you read, notice Habakkuk's raw honesty in questioning God about the presence of evil. Read Habakkuk 2:4 and then explore Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11 to see how Paul applies this call to faithfulness.

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**SECTION 60****Jeremiah: The Weeping Prophet (~627–587 BCE)****Read: Jeremiah 1–52**

Read alongside: Matt 2:18, Heb 8:8–12, Rom 11:27

Pay attention to the deep sorrow in Jeremiah's heart for his people. Read the 'new covenant' passage in Jeremiah 31:31–34 and then read Hebrews 8:8–12 to see how the author of Hebrews explains its fulfillment in Christ.

*As you read, notice the imagery of Rachel weeping in 31:15 and compare it with the event described in Matthew 2:18.*

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**SECTION 61****Lamentations: Mourning Jerusalem's Fall****Read: Lamentations 1–5**

Read alongside: Jer 39–52, Ps 137

Notice the movement from deep grief to a glimmer of hope in these poems. It is worth reading these alongside Psalm 137 to feel the weight of the exile and the longing for restoration.

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**SECTION 62****Ezekiel: Visions, Dry Bones, and the Template for Apocalyptic****Read: Ezekiel 1–48**

**Read alongside:** Rev 4, Rev 20–22, Dan 7, Ezek 16:49

Pay attention to the vivid, symbolic nature of Ezekiel's visions. Compare the chariot-throne in Ezekiel 1 and 10 with the heavenly throne room in Revelation 4.

*As you read the vision of the restored temple in Ezekiel 40–48, note the specific details and compare them with the layout of Solomon's temple.*

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**SECTION 63****Deutero-Isaiah: Comfort for Exiles and the Servant Songs****Read: Isaiah 40–55**

**Read alongside:** Acts 8:32–35, John 1:23, Luke 4:18–19, Rom 10:15

As you read these chapters, notice the shift in tone toward profound comfort and the introduction of the 'Servant.' Pay attention to the specific descriptions of the Servant's suffering and compare them with the accounts of Jesus in the Gospels.

*Notice how the divine name and the specific historical circumstances, such as the mention of Cyrus in 44:28, differ from the earlier chapters of Isaiah.*

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**SECTION 64****Trito-Isaiah: Post-Exilic Community****Read: Isaiah 56–66**

**Read alongside:** Luke 4:18–19, Acts 7:49–50, Rev 21:1

Notice the expansive vision of God's house and who is invited into the community in chapter 56. Compare these inclusive promises with the strict boundaries seen in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

*Pay close attention to the description of God's dwelling place in 66:1-2 and consider how Stephen uses this in Acts 7:49-50.*

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**SECTION 65****1 Enoch: Book of the Watchers (Quoted in Jude and 2 Peter)****Read: 1 Enoch 1–36**

**Read alongside:** Jude 14–15, 2Pet 2:4, Gen 6:1–4, Rev 4

As you read this text, notice the vivid imagery of the heavenly realms and the fallen angels. It is worth reading alongside Jude 14-15 to see how the New Testament authors engaged with these traditions.

*Compare the account of the 'sons of God' in Genesis 6:1-4 with the descriptions of the Watchers in this text.*

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**SECTION 66****1 Enoch: Similitudes — The Son of Man****Read: 1 Enoch 37–71**

Read alongside: Dan 7:13–14, Matt 25:31, Mark 14:62, Rev 5

Pay attention to the figure of the 'Son of Man' and his role as a pre-existent judge. Compare this depiction with the way Jesus refers to himself as the 'Son of Man' in the Gospels and the vision in Daniel 7:13-14.

*Note the specific attributes given to the Son of Man in 1 Enoch 46-48 and 62, and look for similar themes in Revelation 5.*

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**SECTION 68****Daniel: Court Tales and Apocalyptic Visions (~165 BCE)****Read: Daniel 1–12**

Read alongside: Matt 24:15, Rev 13, Rev 20, 1En 14, Ezek 1

Notice the interplay between courtly stories of faithfulness and sweeping apocalyptic visions. Pay special attention to Daniel 12:2 and consider how it shapes the biblical hope of a bodily resurrection.

*As you read the detailed visions in chapter 11, notice how the descriptions align with the historical events of the Maccabean era.*

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**SECTION 69****Haggai: Temple Rebuilding (~520 BCE)****Read: Haggai 1–2**

Read alongside: Ezra 5, Heb 12:26

Notice the prophet's urgent call to prioritize the house of God over personal comfort. Read this alongside Ezra 5 to see the historical context of the temple's rebuilding.

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**SECTION 70****Zechariah: Visions and Messianic Hopes****Read: Zechariah 1–14**

Read alongside: Matt 21:5, John 12:15, John 19:37, Matt 27:9–10, Rev 1:7

As you read, notice the recurring messianic symbols, such as the rider on a donkey and the pierced one. Compare Zechariah 12:10 with John 19:37 to see how the New Testament applies these images to Christ.

*Read Zechariah 11:12-13 and then read Matthew 27:9-10, noting how the Gospel writer identifies the source of the prophecy.*

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**SECTION 71****Malachi: Covenant Faithfulness and the Coming Elijah****Read: Malachi 1–4**

Read alongside: Matt 11:14, Mark 1:2–3, Luke 1:17

Pay attention to the dialogue between God and Israel regarding faithfulness and the promise of a coming messenger. Compare the prediction of Elijah's return in Malachi 4:5 with the identity of John the Baptist in the Gospels.

*Notice the promise of the messenger in Malachi 3:1 and compare it with the attribution given in Mark 1:2.*

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**SECTION 72****Obadiah: Judgment on Edom (Shortest OT Book)****Read: Obadiah 1**

Read alongside: Jer 49:7–22

Notice the intensity of the judgment pronounced upon Edom. It is worth reading this alongside Jeremiah 49:7–22 to observe the striking similarities in their language and themes.

*Compare the specific warnings given to Edom in Obadiah 1–9 with those found in Jeremiah 49:7–22.*

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**SECTION 73****Joel: Locusts, the Spirit Poured Out, and the Day of the LORD****Read: Joel 1–3**

Read alongside: Acts 2:17–21, Rev 6:12, Rom 10:13

Notice the vivid imagery of the locusts and the subsequent promise of the Spirit being poured out on all people. Compare Joel 2:28–32 with Peter's sermon in Acts 2 to see how the early church understood this prophecy.

*Pay attention to the phrase 'Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD' in Joel 2:32 and see how Paul applies it in Romans 10:13.*

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**SECTION 74****Jonah: The Prophet Who Didn't Want Gentiles Saved****Read: Jonah 1–4**

Read alongside: Matt 12:39–41, Nah 1–3

Notice the tension between Jonah's desire for exclusivity and God's desire for the salvation of all nations. Compare the fate of Nineveh in this book with the prophecy in Nahum.

*Note the duration of Jonah's time in the fish and consider how Jesus refers to this 'sign' in Matthew 12:40.*

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**SECTION 75****Tobit: Diaspora Piety and Angels****Read: Tobit 1–14**

Read alongside: Heb 13:2

As you read, notice the themes of piety, prayer, and the guidance of angels in the life of the believer. Consider how the themes of hospitality and angels here relate to the exhortation in Hebrews 13:2.

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**SECTION 76****Judith: The Jewish Heroine Who Beheads an Enemy General****Read: Judith 1–16**

Read alongside: Judg 4–5

As you read this account of courage and faith, notice the qualities Judith possesses that allow her to save her people. Compare her leadership and decisive action with the story of Deborah in Judges 4–5.

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**SECTION 77****Wisdom of Solomon: Personified Wisdom and Afterlife****Read: Wisdom of Solomon 1–19**

Read alongside: Prov 8:22–31, John 1:1–3, Col 1:15–17, Heb 1:3

Pay attention to the description of Wisdom in chapters 7–9 and consider how this personification of divine wisdom prepares the way for the New Testament. Read this alongside John 1:1–3 and Colossians 1:15–17 to see how the Word (Logos) reflects these themes.

*As you read Wisdom 2:12–20, notice the parallels between the suffering of the righteous man and the Passion narratives in the Gospels.*

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**SECTION 78****Sirach (Ecclesiasticus): Practical Wisdom****Read: Sirach 1–51**

Read alongside: Matt 11:28–30, Jas 1:19

Notice the practical, everyday application of faith in these writings. Compare the invitation to the weary in Sirach 51:23–27 with the words of Jesus in Matthew 11:28–30.

*Read Sirach 24 and notice how the voice of Wisdom echoes the descriptions of wisdom found in Proverbs 8.*

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**SECTION 79****Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah****Read: Baruch 1–5****Read: Letter of Jeremiah 1**

Read alongside: Jer 10:1–16

As you read these texts, notice the deep longing for restoration and the call to repentance. Compare the warnings against idolatry here with the language used in Jeremiah 10:1–16.

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**SECTION 80****Daniel Additions: Prayer of Azariah, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon****Read: Prayer of Azariah 1****Read: Susanna 1****Read: Bel and the Dragon 1**

Read alongside: Dan 3

Read the Prayer of Azariah alongside Daniel 3 and notice how the hymn expands upon the experience of the three men in the furnace. Pay attention to the themes of justice and deliverance in the stories of Susanna and Bel.

*As you read Daniel 3 and the Prayer of Azariah, note the difference in the presence of a formal prayer during the trial by fire.*

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**SECTION 81****1 Maccabees: The Maccabean Revolt (Historical Account)****Read: 1 Maccabees 1–16**

Read alongside: Dan 11:21–35, 2Macc 1–15, John 10:22

Notice the historical details of the Maccabean revolt and how these events shaped the Jewish world. Read John 10:22 to see how the Feast of Dedication mentioned there relates to the victory described in 1 Maccabees 4.

*Compare the descriptions of the crisis in 1 Maccabees with the veiled language used in Daniel 11:21–35.*

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**SECTION 82****2 Maccabees: Theological Interpretation and Bodily Resurrection****Read: 2 Maccabees 1–15**

Read alongside: Dan 12:2, Matt 22:23–33

Pay close attention to the hope of bodily resurrection in 2 Maccabees 7 and compare it with the views expressed in Daniel 12:2. Notice the prayer for the dead in chapter 12 and consider how this belief was debated in the time of Jesus, as seen in Acts 23:8.

*As you read 2 Maccabees 7, note the specific expectations the seven brothers have regarding their deaths and their future.*

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**SECTION 84****Jubilees: The Rewritten Torah (~160 BCE)****Read: Jubilees 1–50**

Read alongside: Gen 1–Exod 19, 1En 1–36

Notice how this text retells the stories of Genesis and Exodus with additional details and a specific chronological structure. Compare these accounts with the original narratives in the Torah to see what has been emphasized or added.

*As you read, notice where the author provides names or details for figures who remain unnamed in the book of Genesis.*

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**SECTION 85****Mark: The Earliest Gospel (~70 CE)****Read: Mark 1–16**

Read alongside: Matt 1–28, Luke 1–24, Isa 40:3, Mal 3:1

As you read the earliest Gospel, notice the urgency and directness of Mark's style. Compare the opening verses of Mark 1 with Malachi 3:1 and Matthew 3:3 to see how the authors identify the 'messenger' preparing the way.

*Read Mark 16:1–8 and then 16:9–20, noting the shift in tone and the different ways the Gospel concludes.*

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**SECTION 86****Matthew: The Gospel of OT Fulfillment (~85 CE)****Read: Matthew 1–28**

**Read alongside:** Isa 7:14, Hos 11:1, Jer 31:15, Mic 5:2, Zech 9:9, Zech 11:12–13

Notice how Matthew emphasizes the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. When you encounter a quote, such as Isaiah 7:14 in Matthew 1:23, read the original passage in Isaiah to consider its meaning for the original audience.

*As you read the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke, write down the different details regarding the genealogies, the visitors, and the family's travels.*

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**SECTION 87****Luke: Gospel for Gentiles (~90 CE)****Read: Luke 1–24**

**Read alongside:** Matt 1–2, Isa 61:1–2, Joel 2:28–32

Pay attention to Luke's focus on the marginalized and the Gentiles. Compare Luke's genealogy in 3:23–38, which reaches back to Adam, with Matthew's genealogy that begins with Abraham.

*Compare the itinerary of Jesus' family after his birth in Luke with the account of the flight to Egypt in Matthew.*

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**SECTION 88****Acts: Luke's Sequel — The Early Church****Read: Acts 1–28**

**Read alongside:** Gal 1–2, 2Cor 11, Joel 2:28–32, Amos 9:11–12

Notice the expansion of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Read Paul's personal account of his early ministry in Galatians 1–2 alongside the narrative in Acts to see how the two accounts describe his visits to Jerusalem.

*As you read Acts, note the 'we' passages (such as 16:10–17) and consider what they suggest about the author's perspective.*

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**SECTION 89****John: The Logos Gospel (~95–100 CE)****Read: John 1–21**

**Read alongside:** Gen 1:1, Wis 7–9, Prov 8:22–31, Zech 12:10

As you read, notice how the opening words of John 1 echo the beginning of Genesis 1. Pay attention to the unique way John presents the timing of the Last Supper and the crucifixion compared to the other Gospels.

*Read John 13 and 19 alongside Matthew 26 and Mark 14, noting carefully the relationship between the timing of the meal and the slaughter of the Passover lambs.*

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**SECTION 90****1 Thessalonians: Paul's Earliest Letter (~50 CE)****Read: 1 Thessalonians 1–5**

Read alongside: Matt 24:30–31, 1Cor 15:51–52

Notice Paul's deep sense of urgency and expectation regarding the return of Christ. Compare his descriptions of the 'catching up' of believers with the imagery in Matthew 24.

*As you read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, note Paul's expectations for those who are still alive when the Lord returns.*

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**SECTION 91****Galatians: Faith vs. Works of the Law (~55 CE)****Read: Galatians 1–6**

Read alongside: Acts 15, Gen 15:6, Gen 17, Hab 2:4

Pay attention to Paul's passionate defense of the gospel of grace. It is worth reading Galatians 2 alongside James 2 to consider how both authors emphasize different aspects of a living faith.

*Compare Paul's account of his visits to Jerusalem in Galatians 1-2 with the narrative found in Acts 15.*

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**SECTION 92****1 Corinthians: Church Problems and the Resurrection (~55 CE)****Read: 1 Corinthians 1–16**

Read alongside: Gen 2:7, Gen 3:22, Exod 16, Num 20, Deut 25:4

Notice how Paul addresses specific cultural and congregational challenges in Corinth. Pay attention to the different instructions regarding women's roles in chapter 11 versus chapter 14.

*Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 and notice which specific details of the resurrection are emphasized in this early creedal list.*

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**SECTION 93****2 Corinthians: Paul's Defense of His Ministry****Read: 2 Corinthians 1–13**

Read alongside: Acts 18, 2Cor 11:24–27

As you read, notice the vulnerability and transparency Paul shares about his own sufferings. Compare his list of hardships in 2 Corinthians 11 with the journeys recorded in Acts 18.

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**SECTION 94****Romans: Paul's Theological Masterwork (~57 CE)****Read: Romans 1–16**

Read alongside: Gen 15:6, Hab 2:4, Deut 30:12–14, Joel 2:32, Ps 44:22

Notice how Paul weaves together Old Testament promises and New Testament revelation to explain God's plan for all people. Compare the discussion of faith and works here with the perspective offered in the book of James.

*Read Romans 9-11 and note how Paul describes the future of Israel in relation to the promises made to Abraham.*

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**SECTION 95****Philippians and Philemon: Letters from Prison****Read: Philippians 1–4****Read: Philemon 1**

Read alongside: Acts 16:12–40

Pay close attention to the 'Christ hymn' in Philippians 2, noticing the movement from pre-existence to humility and then to exaltation. In Philemon, observe the delicate way Paul appeals to a master on behalf of a servant.

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**SECTION 96****2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians: Disputed Pauline Letters****Read: 2 Thessalonians 1–3****Read: Colossians 1–4****Read: Ephesians 1–6**

Read alongside: 1Thess 4–5, Phil 2:6–11

Compare the timing of the end times in 2 Thessalonians with the expectations in 1 Thessalonians. Notice how the household codes in Ephesians and Colossians seek to bring order to the early church's social structures.

*Compare the instructions for wives and husbands in Ephesians 5:22-33 with the statement in Galatians 3:28.*

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**SECTION 97****Pastoral Epistles: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus (Deutero-Pauline)****Read: 1 Timothy 1–6****Read: 2 Timothy 1–4****Read: Titus 1–3**

Read alongside: Gal 3:28, 1Cor 11:5, 1Cor 14:34

Notice the shift toward more formal church structures and offices in these letters. Compare the instructions regarding teaching and authority in 1 Timothy 2 with the women Paul commends as co-workers in Romans 16.

*As you read 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, list the qualifications for elders and deacons and compare them to the charismatic leadership described in 1 Corinthians.*

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**SECTION 98****Hebrews: Christ as Eternal High Priest****Read: Hebrews 1–13**

Read alongside: Lev 16, Ps 110:4, Jer 31:31–34, Gen 14:17–20

Notice how the author uses the figure of Melchizedek to explain Christ's eternal priesthood. Pay attention to the argument that the earthly Tabernacle was a shadow of a heavenly reality.

*Read Hebrews 1:5 and then read Psalm 2:7 to see how the author applies the Old Testament text to the resurrection.*

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**SECTION 99****James: Works and Wisdom****Read: James 1–5**

**Read alongside:** Gal 2:16, Rom 3:28, Lev 19:18, Matt 5–7

Notice how James emphasizes the necessity of faith being expressed through action. Compare his use of Abraham's life in James 2 with Paul's use of Abraham in Romans 4.

*Read James 2:14-26 and Romans 3:21-31, noting how each author defines the relationship between faith and works.*

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**SECTION 100****1 Peter and Jude****Read: 1 Peter 1–5****Read: Jude 1**

**Read alongside:** 1En 1:9, 1En 6–7, Gen 6:1–4, 2Pet 2

As you read Jude, notice how the author draws on a wide range of traditions to warn against false teachers. Pay attention to the references to angels and ancient figures.

*Notice the phrasing in Jude 14-15 and consider how the author incorporates external traditions to support his exhortation.*

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**SECTION 101****2 Peter: The Last NT Letter Written (~125 CE?)****Read: 2 Peter 1–3**

**Read alongside:** Jude 4–16, 1Pet 1

As you read, notice the strong emphasis on growth in grace and the warnings against false teaching. Compare the descriptions of judgment in 2 Peter 2 with those in Jude 4–16 and consider why these themes were so vital for the early church.

*Pay close attention to how the author refers to Paul's letters in 2 Peter 3:15–16 and what that suggests about how the early church viewed those writings.*

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**SECTION 102****1, 2, 3 John: The Johannine Epistles****Read: 1 John 1–5****Read: 2 John 1****Read: 3 John 1**

**Read alongside:** John 1:1, John 3:16

Notice the recurring themes of love, light, and truth that weave through these three letters. Read these alongside the Gospel of John to see how the author applies the theology of the Word to the daily life of the believer.

*As you read 1 John 5:7–8, notice how different translations handle the phrasing of the witnesses and consider how this highlights the importance of the Father, Word, and Spirit.*

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**SECTION 103****Revelation: The Apocalypse (~95 CE)****Read: Revelation 1–22**

**Read alongside:** Dan 7, Dan 12, Ezek 1, Ezek 38–39, 1En 14, Zech 12:10, Joel 2

Revelation is rich with symbolic imagery; as you read, notice how often the author points back to the Old Testament. It is worth reading alongside Daniel 7 and Ezekiel 1 to see how the visions of the throne and the beasts build upon previous prophetic revelations.

*As you encounter the 'thousand years' in Revelation 20:4–6, note the specific details of the reign and reflect on the various ways believers have understood this promise throughout history.*

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## Appendix: Sections Skipped in This Plan

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*The following sections are included in the complete reading plan but omitted here to keep the curated plan focused. They contain largely repetitive law codes, verbatim duplicates, or lengthy genealogies. A brief summary of each is provided so the reader understands what they are skipping.*

### §7 — Genealogy: Adam to Noah

P source — enormous ages (Methuselah: 969 years)

Covers: Genesis 5

These genealogies serve as a chronological framework intended to synchronize biblical history with ancient Near Eastern longevity patterns. Watch for the exaggerated lifespans as a marker of the P source's formal style.

#### Key verses not to miss:

**Gen 5:24** — Introduces Enoch, who uniquely 'walked with God' and disappeared without dying.

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### §8 — Table of Nations

J + P — how all nations descended from Noah's sons

Covers: Genesis 10

The Table of Nations functions as a political map of the known world from a Judean perspective. Note how it attempts to integrate all ethnic groups into a single ancestral lineage.

#### Key verses not to miss:

**Gen 10:25** — Introduces Nimrod, the first 'mighty warrior' and founder of the great cities of Mesopotamia.

**Gen 10:31-32** — Establishes the geographical and ethnic scope of the post-flood world.

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### §9 — Genealogy: Shem to Abram

P source

Covers: Genesis 11:10–11:32

This sequence narrows the focus from global history to the specific lineage of the covenant. Watch for the transition from the general 'nations' to the specific line leading to Abram.

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### §18 — Tabernacle Instructions

P source — detailed blueprint for the portable sanctuary

Covers: Exodus 25–31

The shift to the P source introduces a highly formalized, bureaucratic style focused on sacred space. Observe the meticulous detail, which scholars often associate with a later priestly class establishing legitimacy.

#### Key verses not to miss:

**Exod 25:8** — The theological core of the Tabernacle: God's desire to dwell among His people.

**Exod 25:10-22** — Describes the Ark of the Covenant, the most sacred object in Israelite worship.

**Exod 25:31-37** — The Menorah represents the eternal light and divine presence.

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## §20 — Tabernacle Construction (near-verbatim repeat of Exod 25–31)

P source

Covers: Exodus 35–40

The near-verbatim repetition of instructions is a hallmark of the P source's 'blueprint and execution' structure. This redundancy emphasizes the absolute obedience of the builders to the divine plan.

### Key verses not to miss:

**Exod 40:34-38** — The climax of the Exodus narrative where the Glory of the Lord fills the completed Tabernacle.

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## §21 — Sacrifice Laws and Priestly Ordination

P source

Covers: Leviticus 1–10

These laws establish the boundary between the sacred and the profane. Note the ambiguity surrounding the 'strange fire' of Nadab and Abihu, which serves as a cautionary tale about unauthorized ritual innovation.

### Key verses not to miss:

**Lev 1:1-4** — Establishes the basic principle of the burnt offering as a voluntary act of devotion.

**Lev 8:1-13** — The formal consecration of Aaron and his sons as the first official priesthood.

**Lev 10:1-3** — The death of Nadab and Abihu warns against 'strange fire' and disobedience to ritual protocol.

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## §22 — Clean and Unclean: Dietary Laws and Purity

P source

Covers: Leviticus 11–16

The purity laws reflect a specific socio-religious identity based on dietary distinction. Watch for the tension in the New Testament (Mark 7, Acts 10) as these boundaries are systematically dismantled.

### Key verses not to miss:

**Lev 11:1-47** — Defines the dietary laws (Kashrut) that became a primary cultural marker of Jewish identity.

**Lev 16:15-34** — The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) ritual for the purging of national sin.

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## §24 — Leviticus Appendix: Votive Offerings

P source

Covers: Leviticus 27

This appendix functions as a technical supplement to the priestly system. It reflects the P source's commitment to comprehensive legal categorization.

### Key verses not to miss:

**Lev 27:30-33** — Establishes the principle that the tithe belongs to the Lord.

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## §25 — Census, Camp Organization, and Levite Duties

P source — bureaucratic organization of Israel

Covers: Numbers 1–10

The census data reflects the P source's preoccupation with order, hierarchy, and administrative precision. This section transforms a loose collection of tribes into a structured military and religious entity.

### Key verses not to miss:

**Num 10:11-36** — Describes the cloud of glory leading the camp, symbolizing divine guidance.

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### §28 — Final Laws and Second Census

P source — nearly identical to the Num 1 census

Covers: Numbers 25–36

The repetition of the census and the formulaic offerings in Numbers 7 are characteristic of the P source's literary style. These patterns emphasize the equality and inclusion of all twelve tribes.

**Key verses not to miss:**

**Num 27:1-11** — The transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua.

**Num 35:9-15** — The establishment of 'Cities of Refuge' to prevent blood feuds.

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### §30 — The Deuteronomic Law Code

D source

Covers: Deuteronomy 12–26

The Deuteronomic code centralizes worship and establishes the prototype for the 'prophet like Moses.' Note how this specific legal framework provides the basis for later New Testament debates on divorce.

**Key verses not to miss:**

**Deut 23:13-14** — Emphasizes the necessity of camp purity as a reflection of God's holiness.

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### §40 — Chronicles Genealogies

Post-exilic Priestly perspective, ~400 BCE

Covers: 1 Chronicles 1–9

The shift to Chronicles represents a move from historical narrative to a priestly, post-exilic reconstruction of identity. Note the focus on genealogy as a means of establishing legitimacy and purity.

**Key verses not to miss:**

**1Chr 1:1** — Re-establishes the cosmic link between the current community and the creation of humanity.

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### §42 — Chronicles of the Kings of Judah

Post-exilic revision — ignores the Northern Kingdom entirely

Covers: 2 Chronicles 1–36

This section demonstrates the ideological narrowing of 'Israel' to mean only the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Note the total erasure of the Northern Kingdom's independent history.

**Key verses not to miss:**

**2Chr 7:14** — A widely quoted theological formula for national repentance and divine healing.

**2Chr 20:12** — A pivotal expression of human dependence on God during a crisis.

**2Chr 36:22-23** — The critical transition marking the end of the exile and the beginning of the return to Jerusalem.

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### §48 — Psalms: Complete (150 Poems)

Various periods — royal, prophetic, exilic, post-exilic

Covers: Psalms 3–7, 9–18, 20–21, 24–45, 47–50, 52–72, 74–89, 92–102, 105–109, 111–136, 138, 140–149

The collection reflects a diverse liturgical history rather than a single author, spanning from royal courts to exilic lament.

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**§67 — 1 Enoch: Astronomical Book, Animal Apocalypse, Epistle**

Various dates, ~300–100 BCE

Covers: 1 Enoch 72–108

These diverse texts illustrate the breadth of Second Temple Jewish mysticism and symbolic history. Watch for the 'Animal Apocalypse,' which serves as a prototype for the symbolic imagery later used in Revelation.

**Key verses not to miss:**

**1En 82:1-3** — Provides an early example of the 'Son of Man' figure as a pre-existent judge.

**1En 91:1-12** — The 'Apocalypse of Weeks' outlines a deterministic timeline of human history.

**1En 104:1-3** — Reflects the intersection of ancient cosmology and the belief in a divine creator.

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**§83 — 3 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, 1–2 Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151**

Deuterocanonical — used by various traditions

Covers: 3 Maccabees 1–7

Covers: 4 Maccabees 1–18

Covers: 1 Esdras 1–9

Covers: 2 Esdras 1–16

Covers: Prayer of Manasseh 1

Covers: Psalm 151 1

These diverse texts show the wide range of piety and liturgical experimentation in the Deuterocanonical corpus. Watch for how these varied traditions were selectively preserved across different faith communities.

**Key verses not to miss:**

**2Esd 3:20-35** — A critical dialogue on theodicy and why the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper.

**2Esd 4:37-38** — Contains a stark reflection on the fragility of human existence and the nature of the soul.

**4Macc 1:1-3** — Establishes the philosophical argument that reason is the primary tool for resisting passion.

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