



Faith Lutheran Church + Grand Blanc, MI + [www.faihgb.org](http://www.faihgb.org)

# Bible Reading Journey

## Key Study Points by Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

### Each day, using the notes on this page:

- Pray for Spirit-filled insight as you read God's Word.
- Look for Law and Gospel themes that point us to Jesus.
- Apply the readings to your life.
- Pray to Jesus, as the readings inspire you, for yourself, your family, your church and your world.

**Historical Context:** Lamentations was written by Jeremiah just before Judah's fall ~587 BC. Ezekiel was written by Ezekiel in the period just before & after the fall & exile of Judah, from 593-570 BC, while he was already in exile.

**Law & Gospel Themes:** Jeremiah voices the lament of Judah over their siege, pending destruction and exile by Babylon. The "acrostic" pattern prevails, built on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The heart of Ch 3, vss 22-24, is a "triple" Gospel light at the center of this book of lament that will never be snuffed out. The faithful priest Ezekiel, already in exile in Babylon (=Chaldea)

in 593 BC, is called to speak God's Word along with bizarre actions. Chs 1-24 are judgment against Israel. Such harsh law is necessary to turn sinners from their ways before they are condemned (SEE 3:19). God WANTS His people to be saved (6:8+). A symbolic mark on the foreheads of the faithful in 9:4+ would have looked like the Greek X, which is the first letter of Christ, foretelling our marking with the cross in Baptism.

**Life Application Starters:** God's Word and ways may still seem strange, but how does this fit with our true Holy God? How can you

"consume" God's Word into your whole being? How are this week's readings consistent with the rest of Scripture? How are they unique? How do they speak to YOU? How have you been physically "marked for salvation"? Can this be lost?

**Prayer Starters:** That we properly lament over our sin and flee to the LORD in humble faith. That we will "consume" the Word of the LORD and let it guide every part of our life. For the courage and zeal to serve God faithfully, esp. to warn stubborn sinners of judgment, and then guide the penitent to salvation in Jesus alone.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Lamentations 2:1-3:66

Tuesday: Lamentations 4:1-5:22

Wednesday: Ezekiel 1:1-2:10

Thursday: Ezekiel 3:1-5:17

Friday: Ezekiel 6:1-7:27

Saturday: Ezekiel 8:1-9:11

## March's Memory Verses:

*Lamentations 3:22f, "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."*

*Ezekiel 11:19b-20, "I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God."*

*Ezekiel 18:32, "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live."*

*Ezekiel 36:25, 'I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.'*

**Author of Lamentations:** Prophet Jeremiah **Date:** ~587 BC, just before the fall of the kingdom of Judah

**Author of Ezekiel:** Prophet Ezekiel **Date:** 593-570 BC, just before and after the fall of the kingdom of Judah

*New Insights:*

*Questions to Pursue Further:*

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**Historical Context:** Ezekiel was written by Ezekiel in the period just before & after the fall & exile of Judah, from 593 -570 BC, while he was already in exile.

**Law & Gospel Themes:** The overall theme for this week is God's terrible, well-deserved judgment on rebellious Israel. God's glory leaves the earthly temple (Ch 10). Yet, God will reign in the "new hearts" that receive His Spirit (11:19f). God's Word is sure (12:25). Ch 16 uses coarse imagery to convey the utter adultery of the LORD's Bride, Israel, to awaken her to repentance. God's covenant promises endure (16:60). A sprig from a cedar is clearly pointing to

Jesus and hope for ALL people (17:22-24). Every individual is accountable to God for his/her own sin (18:4) and able to receive personal grace (18:32). God's destruction of sinners is a "three-fold" certainty, but His grace in Christ is still our sure hope (21:27). SEE useful insights on *God's Throne* (p. 1323) and *Humor and Comedy in the Bible* (p. 1335).

**Life Application Starters:** How are our hearts of stone replaced with hearts of flesh that are pleasing to God? How is 14:3 echoed in 1 Cor. 1:23 and in our lives? How does the LORD's love for His

adulterous Bride give hope to even the most terrible of sinners? ...to YOU? How is individual accountability for sin both scary and comforting? How does an understanding of "Law and Gospel" help clarify all the imagery in Ezekiel?

**Prayer Starters:** That we would learn from God's judgment against Israel, repent and be spared from the destruction they endured. To cherish the new birth of baptism. To humbly stumble over our idolatry and turn our eyes up to Jesus to lift us. That we will lovingly condemn sinners but eagerly receive every single one who repents and receives Jesus.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Ezekiel 10:1-11:25

Tuesday: Ezekiel 12:1-13:23

Wednesday: Ezekiel 14:1-15:8

Thursday: Ezekiel 16:1-17:24

Friday: Ezekiel 18:1-19:14

Saturday: Ezekiel 20:1-21:32

## March's Memory Verses:

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**Author of Ezekiel:** Prophet Ezekiel **Date:** 593-570 BC, just before and after the fall of the kingdom of Judah

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### Law & Gospel Themes:

In Ch 24 Ezekiel suffers a terrible loss to make a point to Israel. His wife dies and he must NOT mourn over her, showing Israel they have no right to mourn over the loss of the temple. The LORD condemns seven evil nations around Israel (Chs 25-32). Though He used them to punish Israel, He must hold them guilty for sin. STILL, He will grant them mercy if they will turn to Him (29:16). The fall of Egypt at this time

persists to this day. 33:1-9 speaks of Ezekiel as a watchman for Israel, warning them. He must NOT fail to speak God's judgment or he will face his own judgment because God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (33:11). 33:12 makes clear that we are not saved by our own righteous works, but by grace alone. Jesus has become our one true Shepherd in fulfillment of 34:22-24.

### Life Application Starters:

How often do we mourn over losses that come as the result of our own sinfulness? What should cause our greatest

mourning? How are you fulfilling your call to be a watchman to your family, your church and your contacts in the world? Are you moved by vengeance or compassion when you speak God's law? What comfort do you find in Jesus' lack of memory of our sin (33:16) and His care as our Good Shepherd?

**Prayer Starters:** That we not mourn over lost idols, but rejoice in God's gracious gifts, including His free forgiveness and eternal life. To boldly warn sinners of judgment out of love for them, seeking to share the Gospel. In thanks to Jesus, our Shepherd!

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Ezekiel 22:1-23:49

Tuesday: Ezekiel 24:1-27

Wednesday: Ezekiel 25:1-27:36

Thursday: Ezekiel 28:1-26

Friday: Ezekiel 29:1-32:32

Saturday: Ezekiel 33:1-34:31

## March's Memory Verses:

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**Law & Gospel Themes:** Chs 33-37 are a hopeful promise of new life for Israel, as they will return from exile, and for us in the Church, being set free from sin. Ch 36 expresses this hope with strong baptismal imagery that has roots back to the beginning of creation (SEE pg 1369 of TLSB). Ch 37 talks of new life using the imagery of dry bones that are raised to life by the speaking of God's Word and filling with the Spirit. Chs 38 & 39 use the

imagery of Gog (NOT meant to be one literal nation) to describe the wicked era in which we now live that will finally end when Jesus returns in judgment on the Last Day (SEE pg 1375). Chs 40-48 speak of the peace, hope and joy of worshiping the LORD in the new temple. This was partly fulfilled when Israel returned from exile, is more fully complete in US as the Church and will be ultimately fulfilled on Judgment Day when the Prince of Peace returns.

**Life Application Starters:** Trace the acts of God from creation to deliver His

people and bring new life "through water." How does this give greater understanding and value to our Baptism? How does Ezekiel comfort us in the face of evil enemies (cf Gog) and the death of the body (cf dry bones)? What does the detailed description of the new temple teach us about how we use our bodies, the temple of the Spirit, in worship today?

**Prayer Starters:** That we trust in God's control of all of history for our good. To be free from the fear of sin and evil. To eagerly anticipate Jesus' victorious return on Judgement Day.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Ezekiel 35:1-36:38

Tuesday: Ezekiel 37:1-39:29

Wednesday: Ezekiel 40:1-42:20

Thursday: Ezekiel 43:1-27

Friday: Ezekiel 44:1-31

Saturday: Ezekiel 45:1-46:24

## March's Memory Verses:

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