



# 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:** 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. Daniel was written by Daniel from ~605-536 BC, while he was among the first exiles from Judea to Babylon.

### Law & Gospel Themes:

In Ez. 47, water from the temple depicts the life-giving blessings of God's grace that still flow to us in Christ. Daniel rises to "rule" over Babylon and Persia with great wisdom after interpreting, by God's power, the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar (tall man figure in Ch 2 & tree in Ch 4) and the writing seen by Darius in Ch 5. He is blessed

by God for his faithful commitment to the Word, bringing comfort to the exiles & us. His 3 friends are delivered from the fiery furnace (Ch 3) and he is delivered from the lions' den (Ch 6). He foretells the eternal kingdom of Jesus (2:44 etc.). Daniel calls Nebuchadnezzar...and ALL people...to confession that absolute might be received for Jesus' sake (4:27).

### Life Application Starters:

Is it okay for Christians to be honored and respected in worldly terms? What good can you do in this broken world? How does our citizenship in Jesus'

kingdom give us hope? Where alone is true wisdom to be found? How are you being called to courageously stand up and speak the truth of God in this dying world? How will you be able to do it? Are we to be interpreting dreams today?

**Prayer Starters:** That we would go wherever God leads us to serve, even in earthly government. To be a witness to the LORD no matter where we serve. That Jesus will be seen through us as Lord of all. For sincere repentance and faith in us and all to whom we witness. For trust in Jesus' eternal reign.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Ezekiel 47:1-48:35

Tuesday: Daniel 1:1-21

Wednesday: Daniel 2:1-49

Thursday: Daniel 3:1-4:37

Friday: Daniel 5:1-31

Saturday: Daniel 6:1-28

## April's Memory Verses:

*Daniel 2:44, "...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed."*

*Daniel 12:2, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."*

*Hosea 2:16a, "And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me My Husband..."*

*Hosea 6:2, "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up..."*

*Joel 2:32, "And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."*

*Amos 5:24, "...let justice roll down like waters, & righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."*

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

**Author of Daniel:** Prophet Daniel **Date:** 605-536 BC, while Daniel and others of Judah are exiles in Babylon

*New Insights:*

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**Historical Context:** Daniel was written by Daniel from ~605-536 BC, while he was among the first exiles from Judea to Babylon. Hosea was written by the prophet Hosea ~740-715 BC during the time that the Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered and taken into exile by Assyria.

**Law & Gospel Themes:** Daniel ends with his dreams and visions of what is to come for Judah and the Christian church. Babylon will fall and great powers, such as Alexander the Great of Greece, will arise. Still, Jesus will come to conquer Satan and will return to deliver His church at the end of time. These comforting promises

are the main theme of Daniel that bring us hope and comfort even as we see the church under attack. Hosea is filled with rich marriage imagery to show God's "Husband" love to us (2:16), but our constant rejection of him as we act more as a prostitute (1:2, 3:1) than a faithful wife. Hosea also has many clearly Messianic prophecies (SEE 3:5, 6:2).

**Life Application Starters:** We should not try to interpret the dreams and visions of Daniel too specifically, or try to determine the date of the end of the world. Still, how do our days fit the

description of evil and persecution described in Daniel? What CLEAR words from Daniel give us hope and comfort (for instance, SEE 7:13-14, 7:26-27 and 12:1-3)? How are adulterous marriages a picture of the relationship between God and man? What does this say about the "Christian witness" power of a godly marriage?

**Prayer Starters:** That we not fear the warfare, destruction & persecution in our day, but trust in Jesus as the ultimate victor. To live in faithful godly marriages that show Jesus to all, esp. our children.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Daniel 7:1-8:27

Tuesday: Daniel 9:1-27

Wednesday: Daniel 10:1-12:13

Thursday: Hosea 1:1-2:23

Friday: Hosea 3:1-4:19

Saturday: Hosea 5:1-6:11

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**Author of Daniel:** Prophet Daniel **Date:** 605-536 BC, while Daniel and others of Judah are exiles in Babylon

**Author of Hosea:** Prophet Hosea **Date:** ~740-715 BC, as Israel is being conquered and taken into exile by Assyria

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**Historical Context:** Hosea was written by the prophet Hosea ~740-715 BC during the time that Israel was conquered and taken into exile by Assyria. Joel was written by the prophet Joel, likely ~848-800 BC, after the reign of pious king Jehoshaphat in Judah.

**Law & Gospel Themes:** Hosea continues to warn Israel that her trust in men and idols will lead to her destruction. He recalls God's loving deliverance of Israel from Egypt in 1446 BC as he foretells deliverance from sin through Jesus, who would be called out of Egypt (11:1). Joel is likely one of the earliest prophets, warning all

Israel of their destruction and exile. His talk of a locust attack may be an allegory (Assyria/Babylon) or literal. He doesn't rage, but laments and pleads. He foretells hope in the outpouring of the LORD's Spirit (2:28) and the gift of salvation given to all who call on the name of the LORD (2:32), as cited and fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2. Joel ends in Ch 3 with a warning and promise concerning Judgment Day.

**Life Application Starters:** How do you fear, love and trust in idols rather than God? Where is our only hope for deliverance from

our slavery to such sin? How do we see the Spirit of the LORD being poured out on people from all nations today? The Spirit leads us to humble penitence that calls on the name of the LORD for salvation. How is this visible in our worship practice regularly? Why is it necessary each week for our whole life?

**Prayer Starters:** That we never trust in men or the idols they create. That we humbly receive the Spirit in Word and Sacrament and freely confess our sin. To be ready for our death and/or Judgment Day with a penitent, faithful heart.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Hosea 7:1-8:14

Tuesday: Hosea 9:1-10:15

Wednesday: Hosea 11:1-12:14

Thursday: Hosea 13:1-16

Friday: Hosea 14:1-9

Saturday: Joel 1:1-20

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**Author of Hosea:** Prophet Hosea **Date:** ~740-715 BC, as Israel is being conquered and taken into exile by Assyria

**Author of Joel:** Prophet Joel **Date:** Likely ~848-800 BC, after the reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah

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**Historical Context:** Joel was written by the prophet Joel, likely ~848-800 BC, after the reign of pious king Jehoshaphat in Judah. Amos was likely written ~792-740 BC in the time when Israel was conquered and exiled by Assyria.

**Law & Gospel Themes:** Amos, whose name means "a burden," lives up to his name as he speaks a burdensome message of judgment from God, the roaring lion (1:2), esp. on the northern kingdom of Israel, even though he grew up as a shepherd in Tekoa in Judah. He uses the phrase often in Chs 1&2, "for three transgressions and for four,"

to show their "complete" corruption. Almost all of his words are condemning, pointing out their trust in wealth and human power along with injustice and despising the needy (5:24). Ch 8 speaks a terrible word of threat from God as He warns of sending a famine on the land, a famine "of hearing the words of the LORD." (8:11) Only in the final verses of Amos (9:11-15) do we hear clear Messianic hope of future restoration for Israel.

**Life Application Starters:** Do people today (even us) ever act without fear of God's judgment on sin because our wealth and

success lure us into thinking God approves of us? How would life be for us if we could never again hear the Word of God? How could you better appreciate the gift of God's Word? Do you/your church boldly uphold justice and righteousness?

**Prayer Starters:** To take seriously God's anger over sin and listen to the warnings of Amos and other prophets. That we would never become secure in our earthly wealth and safety. To cherish God's Word and never take it for granted. That we would always promote and live by what is just and right.

### Daily Readings and notes:

Monday: Joel 2:1-32

Tuesday: Joel 3:1-21

Wednesday: Amos 1:1-2:16

Thursday: Amos 3:1-15

Friday: Amos 4:1-5:27

Saturday: Amos 6:1-14

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<p><i>New Insights:</i></p>	<p><i>Questions to Pursue Further:</i></p>
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