

12 Days of Christmas: Bible Reading Plan

December 24 and 25: Genesis 1-3, Luke 1

Begin with the beginning. In Genesis 1 and 2, learn how God created the heavens and earth, how He created us in His image. What does it mean to be created in the image of God? In Genesis chapter 3, learn of mankind's fall into sin, and read God's promise that the offspring of the woman will crush the head of the serpent. What does it mean to have a sin nature? Then, in Luke 1, read of that woman, who learns from Gabriel that she will give birth to the Satan-conquering Son of God and the Savior of mankind: Jesus!

December 26: Isaiah 7, Luke 2

Spend a bit more time on the glorious miracle of the virgin birth. Why was it so significant that Jesus was born of a virgin? In Isaiah 7, read about the prophet confronting the King with the promise that God's sign of victory and faithfulness will be the virgin conceiving and bearing a Son. In Luke 2, continue to read the beautiful story of that virgin-born Son entering the world in lowliness, born to be the Savior of the lowly. What does it mean that Jesus set aside His glory to be born in such a humble way, entering into the dark and fallen world? How can you see God's love displayed here?

December 27: 2 Samuel 7, Matthew 1

On the third day of Christmas, read about Christ's royalty. When King David wants to demonstrate his faithfulness to God by offering to build Him a temple, God demonstrates His greater faithfulness by promising that, through a Son from David's line, the throne of the kingdom of God will be established forever. In Matthew 1, trace that royal lineage of David to Jesus. How can you live today, in the world, with a Kingdom of God focus, honoring our righteous and eternal King?

December 28: Isaiah 8-9, Matthew 2

Continuing the focus on Christ's royalty, in Isaiah we read of the proclamation of the holy King who will do what all earthly kings have failed to do... He will bring peace and unity to the Earth. How have you experienced the peace of Christ? In Matthew 2, review who greeted and recognized the kingship of Jesus. What gifts can you bring to the King?

December 29: Exodus 25-26, John 1

While Israel wanders in the wilderness, God gives the people instructions for building the tent where He will be present among them. How can you trace God's presence throughout the Bible? At the beginning of John's Gospel, the evangelist proclaims how the eternal Son of God, through whom all things were created, has come to dwell with mankind. God takes on human flesh and "tabernacles" among us. What does it mean that God is with us? What other verses does this bring to mind? How does the beginning of John's Gospel articulate Jesus at the Beginning of Creation? What do you learn about God and Jesus here?

December 30: Exodus 3-4, John 6-8

When Moses asks God whom he should say has sent him to free the Egyptians from slavery, God responds, "say to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent you.'"

In John 8, after a long and increasingly tense discourse after the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus identifies Himself as the eternal God, the eternal I AM who still reaches into this world of turmoil and cruelty and covers us with the mercy He was born to give us. Jesus is God. Discuss the character of God.

Developed with Ideas from Hans Fiene

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December 31: Exodus 20, Romans 3-5

When God gives us the Ten Commandments, He tells us that eternal life can only be found through perfect obedience to a Law...which we cannot possibly keep. In Romans 3-5, Paul proclaims to us how this law that only brought us death and condemnation has been fulfilled by Jesus, the virgin-born Son of God sent to give His perfect righteousness to all who believe in Him. Christ satisfied the Law. Discuss.

January 1: Genesis 17-18, Galatians 1-6

When God establishes His covenant with Abraham, He chooses circumcision as the sign. A seemingly strange sign on the surface, but one that makes more sense when looked at through the teaching of Galatians. Circumcision represented the cleaning that would come through the arrival of the offspring of Abraham... Jesus Christ. Our Lord was born not to make the law manageable, Paul shows us, but to fulfill it and give us eternal life as a free gift. How have you responded to this free gift? Have you received it? How can you share it with others?

January 2: 1 Samuel 1-2, Matthew 5-7

For many people, loneliness is deeply intertwined with the Christmas season. But the Scriptures speak of hope for those from broken families, those with no families, those who are hurting and weary. In 1 Samuel 1-2, God dries the lonely tears of Hannah through the arrival of a miraculously born son that prefigures the birth of Christ. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus shows us who He was born to be...the Comforter of the lowly, the One who invites you to call God your Father because He came to be your Brother. How can God be your comfort, strength and joy? He cares for you!

January 3: Pick 25 Psalms

The Psalms are full of Christ, His promises, His peace, hope and love. He is the One born to be our Shepherd in the valley of darkness, born to be our Rock and Redeemer. How can you see God in the Psalms? Jesus?

January 4: Zephaniah 1-3

Zephaniah's last chapter prophesies the conversion of the nation, a beautiful thing to contemplate during the Christmas season. Zephaniah's first chapter features imagery of God sweeping away the wickedness of the world. What do you learn about God here? How does this knowledge encourage you? Fit within the whole scope of the Bible?

January 5: Isaiah 11-12, Revelation 21

Perhaps the greatest way to end the Christmas season is to stare directly into this storming world of sorrow and suffering and boast of the promise God makes in Isaiah and Revelation. The shoot from the stump of Jesse, the Son of David, will restore this fallen, dark and sin-filled creation. God will rebuild paradise where the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and where neither death nor sin will ever be known again. The Child born in Bethlehem has become the King who, on the last day, will gather His bride by His side and welcome us into the feast of His eternal victory. He is our hope, peace, joy and love. Discuss.