

YOU SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD

Exodus 6:2-8

God carefully selected and edited the contents of the Bible to contain only the things that serve His purposes (*John 20:30-31; 21:25; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:3*). We can see evidence of that editing in places like the Old Testament, where its record of Israel seems to jump around in time (cf. the 400-year gap between Genesis and Exodus or the compacted 300-year period of the judges). What may seem, at first reading, like strange choices in dealing with Israel's timeline actually point us away from Israel to the Bible's real purpose - to reveal God to us through a careful record of His interactions with humanity (cf. *Exodus 6:2-7; 1 Corinthians 2:6-13*). But the fact that God has to reveal Himself to us illustrates a serious problem - despite being made in God's image and being tasked with the responsibility of representing His purposes in the creation (*Genesis 1:26-27*), mankind lost its knowledge of God (*Genesis 11:1-9; Hosea 4:1-2; John 8:39-47; 16:1-3; Romans 1:18-23*). The goal of Bible, however, does not seek to merely build its readers' knowledge about God; it instead focuses on using the things it reveals about Him to motivate its readers to develop a love-driven, personal relationship with Him (*John 17:3; 16:1-3; Hosea 6:3, 6*).

God's self-revelatory purpose in the Bible will drive our Bible reading program for 2021. As we read through our Bible this year, we will focus on developing a greater awareness of what the Bible reveals about God and what those revelations mean for our lives.

May reading schedule

May 1 - 1 Chronicles 3-5	May 16 - 2 Chronicles 21-24
May 2 - 1 Chronicles 6	May 17 - 2 Chronicles 25-27
May 3 - 1 Chronicles 7-8	May 18- 2 Chronicles 28-31
May 4 - 1 Chronicles 9-11	May 19 - 2 Chronicles 32-34
May 5 - 1 Chronicles 12-14	May 20 - 2 Chronicles 35-36
May 6 - 1 Chronicles 15-17	May 21 - Ezra 1-3
May 7- 1 Chronicles 18-21	May 22 - Ezra 4-7
May 8 - 1 Chronicles 22-24	May 23 - Nehemiah 1-3
May 9 - 1 Chronicles 25-27	May 24 - Nehemiah 4-6
May 10 - 1 Chronicles 28 - 2 Chronicles 1	May 25- Nehemiah 7
May 11 - 2 Chronicles 2-5	May 26 - Nehemiah 8-9
May 12 - 2 Chronicles 6-8	May 27 - Nehemiah 10-11
May 13- 2 Chronicles 9-12	May 28 - Nehemiah 12-13
May 14 - 2 Chronicles 13-17	May 29 - Esther 1-5
May 15 - 2 Chronicles 18-20	May 30- Esther 6-10
	May 31 - Job 1-4



Exploration

Consider the following questions as you read through this month's Bible readings.

God devotes considerable time to His record of king David. Given the amount of space He dedicates to his reign (*1, 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles*), we can understand that God intends for the readers of His Bible to take important lessons from his life. What insights do you therefore think David's reign as recorded in books like 1 Chronicles offers us into God's identity as king?

1, 2 Chronicles, which was addressed to the Jews coming out of the Babylonian captivity, repeats much of the same information found in 1, 2 Kings with a few key differences. For example, 1, 2 Chronicles does not include any of the kings of the northern kingdom of Israel except for the occasions they interacted with the southern kingdom of Judah. Also, 1, 2 Chronicles includes more detailed descriptions of the people and rites associated with the Jewish worship of God at His temple in Jerusalem. What can we therefore infer about the purposes of 1, 2 Chronicles based upon those differences and how might those purposes relate to God's larger goal of revealing Himself to humanity?

Ezra and Nehemiah narrate the return of the Jews to Jerusalem after the end of the Babylonian captivity and details their efforts to accomplish their God-given responsibility of rebuilding and repopulating the city. The two books reveal that the returnees faced a broken, desolate land filled with military, political, economic, and religious obstacles. Given God's promises to the nation in places like Genesis 12:1-3, what do the differences between the times of Ezra/Nehemiah and King David reveal about the God and His relationship with His people?



What did you learn about God in this month's readings and how will those things deepen your relationship with Him?

