

Preparing the Soil

For week beginning on March 9

Being in relationship with God is more than just a once-a-week event. Just like any relationship, regular communication is needed. I challenge you to create a daily routine to prepare your hearts for God's word. This is something that can be done in less than 20 minutes per day. It just requires a time and place of quiet (before the day begins or after the day has ended or even on the train coming home from work). The readings are designed to coordinate with the sermon theme of the following week. I invite you to follow each step Monday through Saturday.

I. Invocation (Pray this each day):

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

II. Psalm 27 (Read this each day):

III. Daily Scripture Readings

Monday	Philippians 3:1-16
Tuesday	Philippians 3:17 – 4:1
Wednesday	Genesis 15:1-18
Thursday	Luke 13:10-21
Friday	Luke 13:22-30
Saturday	Luke 13:31-35

IV. Prayers

Monday	For those in need of healing from <i>Yellow Pages</i>
Tuesday	For those serving in military and vets
Wednesday	For our shut-ins and caregivers and families in grief
Thursday	For our leaders in government and church
Friday	For family members and neighbors
Saturday	For yourself

V. Reflection

Silent and/or written

VI: Benediction (Spoken each day):

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may glorify God with one voice. (Romans 15:5-6)

The general idea and often the words of the benediction are taken from: *A Guide to Prayer* by Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, (The Upper Room: Nashville, 1983).

Reading through the Bible in two years.

The following readings are designed to lead the reader through the Bible over the course of two years. Each day there is a reading from the Psalms, the Old Testament, and the New Testament. The readings will be given for Monday through Saturday. Sunday will be a day of rest (and catch up if needed).

Mon.	Psalm 35:1-10	1 Chronicles 26	Luke 20:27-40
Tues.	Psalm 35:11-18	1 Chronicles 27	Lk 20:41-21:4
Wed.	Psalm 35:19-28	1 Chronicles 28-29	Luke 21:5-28
Thurs.	Psalm 36	2 Chronicles 1-2	Luke 21:29-38
Fri.	Psalm 37:1-6	2 Chronicles 3:1 - 5:1	Luke 22:1-13
Sat.	Psalm 37:7-15	2 Chronicles 5:2 - 6:23	Luke 22:14-23

For an introduction for Week 63 readings, see SOTH's webpage (shepherdofthehill.com), find the sidebar button entitled "Read Through the Bible Program". The same introduction is also found on the Shepherd of the Hill Facebook page.

If you need some help understanding the Bible texts you are reading, try the Augsburg Fortress *Lutheran Study Bible*. Google "Augsburg Fortress Lutheran Study Bible" to buy through the Augsburg Fortress Publishing.

If you want a narrated version of the Bible, try out the audio Bible version from Bible Gateway (<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>) or download the Bible Audio app from your app store.

A good online resource is called "Enter the Bible" (enterthebible.org). It is produced by Luther Seminary. This website can give you information about each book of the Bible. Take some time and explore.

Another good source of information is a Bible study that I did two years ago entitled "See Through the Scriptures." Each of the lectures were videoed. Go to shepherdofthehill.com, click on the tab "Deepen Your Faith". Look under the heading "Reading and Understanding the Bible" for "See Through the Scriptures." Check out Sessions 11 & 12 as they cover the not only the fall of both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but also the message of the prophets during that time.

Join us as we deepen our knowledge of God's word.