

**Week 23**

<p><b>Monday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 26</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 27</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 28</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 29</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 30</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Samuel 31</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* As you read about the end of Saul’s reign and the story of David’s reign, contrast these two kings. Both kings committed a sin that brought God’s judgment. Both kings were confronted by a prophet because of their sin. But the end of Saul’s story and the end of David’s story is much different. As you read, notice the different response of these kings to God’s messenger.</li> <li>* Each time Saul was confronted by Samuel, Saul excused his own sin. “You were late, so I had to do the sacrifices myself.” “The people spared the best of the flock.” Saul never admitted his sin or showed true repentance. The result was judgment.</li> <li>? As you read 1 Samuel 28 and 31, remember the bright promise of Saul’s early days. If you had seen him as a humble young king, would you have imagined that Saul would one day commit suicide as a man who had been abandoned by God? As you read Saul’s story, pray that God will give you the grace to remain humble in His eyes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 2</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 3</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* In 1 Kings, we will read about the division of Israel into the northern Kingdom and the southern Kingdom of Judah. The roots of this division are seen forty years earlier in the rivalry between the tribes. After Saul’s death, Judah followed David while the northern tribes followed Saul’s son, Ish-bosheth. In the same way, Judah will later follow Rehoboam while the northern tribes follow Jeroboam.</li> <li>? Imagine that you are David hearing the news that Saul who has been trying to kill you is now dead. How will you respond? Will you rejoice that your enemy is dead? Or will you respond like David in 2 Samuel 1:17-27?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 5</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 6</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 7</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 8</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* These chapters are the brightest time in David’s reign. He has political success, uniting all Israel under his authority (2 Sam 5). He has military success, defeating the Philistines who had plagued Israel for decades (2 Sam 5). He has religious success, bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6). He has spiritual success, as God makes a covenant between Himself and David (2 Sam 7).</li> <li>? Why did God pour out such blessings on David?</li> <li>? Do you see the heart of David in 2 Samuel 9? Instead of killing the descendants of Saul (the typical response of an ancient king), David provides for Mephibosheth and treats him like one of his own family. Do you have that kind of love for your enemy?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 10</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 11</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 12</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 13</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 2 Samuel 10 concludes the story of David’s triumphs with his last great military victory. 2 Samuel 11 begins the story of David’s failures in the last part of his reign. The first phrase of 2 Samuel 11 begins with a phrase that any ancient reader would have recognized as a warning, “In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab.... But David remained at Jerusalem.” It was David’s responsibility as king to lead Israel’s armies into battle. Instead, David enjoyed the luxury of the palace.</li> <li>? Do you see how the narrator of 2 Samuel 11 contrasts the honor of Uriah with the dishonor of David? David failed to do his duty; he “remained at Jerusalem.” Uriah was faithful to his duty, refusing to return to his wife while his comrades were in battle. The contrast between David and Uriah is emphasized by the phrase “Uriah the Hittite.” A Hittite is more faithful than Israel’s king.</li> <li>? Although David sinned severely, 2 Samuel 12 shows why the end of David’s story is different from the end of Saul’s story. Where Saul blamed others for his failures, David said, “I have sinned against the Lord” (2 Sam 12:13). What is your response when God convicts you? Do you repent, or do you excuse your actions? The lives of Saul and David demonstrate why repentance is so essential when God convicts us of something that displeases Him.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Friday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 14</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 15</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 16</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 17</p>	<p>* God's response to David's sin included this judgment: "I will raise up evil against you out of your own house" (2 Sam 12:11). This judgment is fulfilled in today's reading. Absalom, David's favorite son, rebels against his father and divides the nation in a civil war which does not end until Absalom is killed in 2 Samuel 18.</p> <p>? Can you remember a time when you have suffered the lasting results of a past sin? There is far more pain in the results of sin than pleasure in the enjoyment of sin. As you read these chapters, think of the ongoing results of David's sin with Bathsheba. When you face temptation, remember these chapters as a warning against the ongoing result of sin. We must not ignore the law of sowing and reaping (Gal 6:7).</p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 18</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 19</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 20</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 21</p>	<p>? Because of David's love for his son, David failed to take strong action against Absalom's rebellion. David's general Joab led in putting down the rebellion. What do you think of Joab's actions? Was he too harsh, or did he take appropriate action in response to a rebellion that divided the nation?</p> <p>* For the background of the famine in 2 Samuel 21, review Joshua 9 for the story of the covenant between Joshua and the Gibeonites. Hundreds of years later, God judged Israel because Saul broke this covenant. Our momentary decisions can have lasting impact.</p>
<p><b>Weekly Summary</b></p>	<p>Write down one "big lesson" that you have learned from this week's readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

## Week 24

<p><b>Monday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 22</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 23</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Samuel 24</p>	<p>* 2 Samuel 22 is the same as Psalm 18. It is David's song of praise for God's deliverance from his enemies.</p> <p>? 2 Samuel 23:1-7 records David's final testimony. What will your last words be? Will you praise God for His faithfulness? Will your life show the results of a life lived for God's glory?</p> <p>* Throughout David's life, we can see both God's judgment and His mercy. This pattern continues in 2 Samuel 24. David performed this census because he had begun to rely on the size of his army and the strength of his military rather than trusting in God. Because of this, God sent judgment. However, the land that David bought for an offering to stop the plague became the future site of the Temple. The place of judgment became a place of mercy.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chronicles 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 2</p>	<p>* 1 &amp; 2 Chronicles cover the same historical period as 1 &amp; 2 Kings. However, they are much different in their perspective. While 1&amp;2 Kings looks at both the Northern Kingdom and Judah, 1 &amp; 2 Chronicles looks only at Judah. The writer of Kings is most interested in each king's faithfulness (or unfaithfulness) to God's law. The writer of Chronicles pays primary attention to the Temple as a symbol of God's presence in the nation. In Chronicles, the genealogies show that Israel is the people of God and that He will preserve His people despite the judgment of the Exile.</p> <p>I will ask few questions in these chapters of genealogy. You can skim them quickly. However, as you read, keep in mind God's sovereignty in working out His plan in Israel's history. Chronicles was written during the years after Judah returned from exile in Babylon. Although the people were back in the Promised Land, there was little visible cause for hope. Solomon's Temple had been destroyed; Israel had no king; the people were under the political control of Persia.</p> <p>By the time of Chronicles, the Temple had been rebuilt, but it was smaller and much less ornate than Solomon's temple. However, Chronicles reminded Israel that God's presence in the Temple was still a sign that they were the chosen people of God.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 5</p>	<p>* The underlying message of Chronicles is one of hope: "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron 7:14). Even in a time of national despair, God would hear the cry of His people.</p> <p>The name Jabez (4:9-10) sounds like the Hebrew word for "pain." Jabez prayed that God would bring blessing instead of pain into his life. "And God granted what he asked." Even a person whose very name reminded people of pain could touch the heart of God through prayer. This brief story fits with the theme of Chronicles: if Israel calls on God, He will hear her prayer and restore His people.</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 6</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 7</p>	<p>* 1 Chronicles 6 is one of the longest chapters in Chronicles. It gives the genealogy of the tribe of Levi. This genealogy is important because the Temple is so important to Chronicles. The Levites were responsible for caring for the Temple. Their story is integral to the message of Chronicles.</p> <p>* As you read the genealogies, you might say, "So what? These tribes had been scattered by the Assyrians, and no longer existed at the time of Chronicles. Why does their genealogy matter?" One reason is this – the Chronicler wanted to remind Judah that God had not forgotten His people, even though they had suffered destruction because of their sin. If God remembered even the destroyed tribes of the Northern Kingdom, He would certainly remember and preserve the returning exiles of the Southern Kingdom.</p>

<p><b>Friday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 8</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 9</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 10</p>	<p>* At the end of the genealogies, Chronicles gives attention to the duties of the Levites. The chapter begins by pointing to the reason for Judah's captivity; "Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their breach of faith" (9:1). The Levites have the important duty of ensuring that Judah never "breaches the faith." She must remain faithful to God and to the duties of the Temple.</p> <p>? The only part of Saul's story that receives attention in Chronicles is his death. The focus of Chronicles is on David and David's successors. However, notice 10:13-14; why did Saul die? Then go back to 9:1; why was Judah taken into exile? God requires faithfulness from His people. Are you serving Him faithfully? Chronicles shows the terrible results of unfaithfulness.</p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 11</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 12</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 13</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 14</p>	<p>* One of the key phrases in Chronicles is "all Israel." Highlight this phrase every time you see it. It was a reminder of God's message of hope. At the time Chronicles was written, only Judah had survived. The Northern Kingdom was destroyed. But <i>spiritually</i> "all Israel" included everyone who was faithful to Jehovah. God would not forget those who were faithful to the covenant.</p> <p>* Notice the devotion of David's "mighty men." These were "mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions and who were swift as gazelles upon the mountains" (12:8). They were intensely loyal to David. They represent a high point of Israel's military history.</p> <p>* God's judgment on Uzzah may seem severe. However, God knew that if His people were to honor God as a holy God, they must respect His laws about the sanctity of holy things. This story is a reminder that God is a holy God and that His people must treat Him as holy.</p>
<p><b>Weekly Summary</b></p>	<p>Write down one "big lesson" that you have learned from this week's readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

## Week 25

<p><b>Monday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 15</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 16</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 1</p>	<p>* 1 Chronicles 15 shows that David learned an important lesson from the death from Uzzah. He learned that the Ark must be carried according to God’s explicit instructions.</p> <p>* Notice 15:29 – Michal, “the daughter of Saul,” mocked her husband David for his celebration when the Ark of the Covenant was returned to Jerusalem. Consistent with the theme of Chronicles, this story contrasts the spiritual joy of David with the spiritual insensitivity of Saul and his family.</p> <p>? 1 Chronicles 16 is a song of praise combining sections of three Psalms: Ps 105:1-15, Ps 96:1-13, and Ps 106:1, 47-48. As you read this song of praise, make a list of five things for which you can praise God today.</p> <p>* Proverbs 1:2-4 lists the purpose for this great book. As you read, ask God to accomplish this purpose in your life.</p> <p>* To see the importance of wisdom as a theme for Proverbs, use two highlighters as you read. In one color, highlight every occurrence of these words: wisdom, wise, understanding, knowledge. In a contrasting color, highlight every occurrence of these words: foolish, fool, simple, scorners, mocker, scoffer. Proverbs contrasts two paths: the path of the wise and the path of the fool.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 17</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 18</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 19</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 20</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 2</p>	<p>* David’s faithfulness to God is seen in his desire to build a house for God. However, God sent Nathan to tell David that “the Lord will build you a house” (17:10). If David’s descendants were faithful to God, God would preserve their throne forever.</p> <p>? David’s response to Nathan’s message was humble submission. He praised God’s goodness and trusted His purposes. When God does not allow you to fulfill your plans, do you continue to trust and praise Him?</p> <p>? 1 Chronicles 18-20 repeats information from 2 Samuel 8 and 10. The main difference is that Chronicles does not include David’s sin with Bathsheba. Why was this story omitted? (In your answer, remember the Chronicler’s purpose to bring a message of hope after the Exile.)</p> <p>? Proverbs 2:4-5 shows the price of wisdom. How much do you value wisdom? Do you search for wisdom as diligently as you would search for hidden treasure?</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 21</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 22</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 23</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 3</p>	<p>* 2 Samuel 24 tells the story of David’s census late in his life. 1 Chronicles 21 reveals why this sin was so significant. Satan himself tempted David to do this census. In pride, David trusted in the size of his army instead of trusting in God alone.</p> <p>? Notice David’s response to God’s judgment. He immediately repented and prayed for mercy. This reveals the heart of David, a “man after God’s own heart.” Do you have a heart of humble submission to God? Are you quick to repent when God reveals His displeasure?</p> <p>* Don’t skip quickly over 22:1. “Then David said, ‘Here shall be the house of the Lord God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel.’” The place where God’s judgment was stopped became the future site for the Temple. Think how encouraging this verse would have been to the people who read Chronicles. They had just experienced God’s judgment in the Exile. This verse promised that God’s mercy was as real as His judgment. The same God who judges sin shows mercy on those who repent!</p> <p>? Trusting in God leads to wisdom (Prov 3:5-7). Trusting in our own heart leads to folly. Do you trust primarily in God or in your own wisdom?</p>

<p><b>Thursday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 24</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 25</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 26</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 4</p>	<p>* This is another series of chapters describing the organization of the Levites to care for the Temple. Every detail of Temple worship was important. Just as God gave specific instructions for building the Tabernacle in Exodus, God gave specific instructions for the care of the Temple.</p> <p>? Wise people walk in a “straight path” (Prov 4:25-27). They refuse to turn away to evil. Look at your life – your marriage, finances, job, ethics, speech, etc. Do you walk in a “straight path” in each of these areas?</p>
<p><b>Friday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 27</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 28</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Chron 29</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 5</p>	<p>* In his final charge to Israel, David again showed his submission to God’s will. Although he may have been disappointed that he was not allowed to build the Temple, David willingly submitted to God’s plan.</p> <p>? David’s charge to Solomon includes two instructions. He instructs Solomon to “know God” and to “serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind.”</p> <p>Do you know God? Knowing God is more than “knowing about God.” To “know God” is to have experiential knowledge. It means to have a relationship with God. Do you know God?</p> <p>Do you serve God with your whole heart? To serve God with your whole heart is more than forced obedience. It means to willingly and joyfully obey Him in every command. Do you serve God with your whole heart and a willing mind?</p> <p>? Notice Prov 5:22-23. Man’s folly says, “I am free to live for my own desires. That is true freedom.” God’s wisdom says, “The sins of the wicked are a trap.” Are you living in bondage to sin? Are you willing to abandon your sin and allow God’s grace to free you to live in obedience to God?</p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 6</p>	<p>* In His judgment on David’s sin with Bathsheba, God warned, “I will raise up evil against you out of your own house” (2 Samuel 12:11). This judgment continued as David was on his deathbed. His sons Adonijah and Solomon fought for the throne while their father lay dying.</p> <p>? It appears that David failed to discipline his son Adonijah or to hold him accountable for his actions (1:6). Do you discipline your children even when it displeases them? Remember that proper discipline is our God-given responsibility. Discipline is not pleasant, but it is important for raising our children to follow God.</p> <p>? At the end of his life, David charged Solomon to be faithful to God (1 Kings 2:1-4). Every believer is a “first generation” believer. No one becomes a believer by genetics. Have you committed to following God or are you living on your parents’ commitment? You must commit to God for yourself.</p> <p>? Read the seven things God hates (Prov 6:16-19). Are you careful to avoid these areas of sin?</p>
<p><b>Weekly Summary</b></p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

## Week 26

<p><b>Monday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 4</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 7</p>	<p>* Solomon's early reign showed great potential (1 Kings 3-10). God promised to give Solomon wisdom and prosperity. When Solomon was faithful to God, his reign was successful.</p> <p>? If you were given the choice that Solomon was given, what would you ask God to give you? Your answer, like Solomon's, shows the real priorities in your life.</p> <p>? Wisdom is "the ability to discern between two paths" (1 Kings 3:9). Are you learning to make wise decisions? Are you able to see the future consequences of today's decisions?</p> <p>? Proverbs 7-9 shows the blessings of wisdom and the dangers of folly. -Read Prov 7:1-5. List the blessings that come from wisdom. -Read Prov 7:27. What is the result of following folly and sin?</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 6</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 7</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 8</p>	<p>* The high point of Solomon's reign was the building of the Temple in 1 Kings 5-6. The Temple was the sign of God's presence among His people. If Israel remained faithful to God, God would dwell among His people in the Temple.</p> <p>? The key word in 1 Kings 6:12 is "if." God's promises often include an "if." "If you do this, I will ...." Many people forget that we cannot claim God's promises if we refuse to meet His conditions. Think of a biblical promise you claim. Does the promise include an "if"? Are you meeting the condition?</p> <p>? List the blessings in Proverbs 8 that come from wisdom. Note especially verses 18, 21, and 35.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 8</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 9</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 9</p>	<p>? As you read 1 Kings 8:10-11, imagine what it would be like to witness God's presence in this way. Have you ever been in a service in which God's presence was seen in a powerful and transforming way? How did this affect your understanding of worship?</p> <p>? Notice the "if's" in 1 Kings 9. Highlight each "if." Notice the promises for faithfulness (9:4-5) and the warnings against unfaithfulness (9:6-9).</p> <p>? List three characteristics of wisdom in Prov 9:1-12.</p> <p>? List three characteristics of folly in Prov 9:13-18.</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 10</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 Kings 11</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 10</p>	<p>* Solomon was famous throughout the ancient world for his great wisdom and wealth. Sadly, in his prosperity, Solomon wandered from God. Prosperity can be dangerous; we can begin to trust ourselves instead of trusting God.</p> <p>* Proverbs 31:3 warns the king against giving "your strength to women." "Women" is plural and refers to multiple mistresses or wives, not to a healthy monogamous marriage. Sadly, Solomon failed to follow the wisdom of his own proverb. Political marriages led Solomon to the worship of other gods (1 Kings 11:1-8).</p> <p>* Proverbs 10-29 is a collection of "wise sayings" on a variety of topics: marriage, family, the tongue, pride, laziness, money, etc. From each of these chapters, choose one verse that applies to <i>your</i> life. Copy that verse into this reading journal and meditate on it throughout the day.</p> <p>? Copy your "verse for the day" from Proverbs 10.</p>

<p><b>Friday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chronicles 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 2</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 3</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 4</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 5</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 11</li> </ul>	<p>* These chapters repeat the story of Solomon’s reign. As you read, remember Solomon’s great potential. Then remember how Solomon wasted his potential by turning away from Jehovah. Pray that God will keep you faithful to Him alone.</p> <p>? Copy your “verse for the day” from Proverbs 11.</p>
<p><b>Saturday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chronicles 6</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 7</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 8</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Chron 9</li> </ul>	<p>? As you read this section from 2 Chronicles, do you notice something missing? Chronicles does not include the story of Solomon’s apostasy. Why? (Again, remember the Chronicler’s purpose to bring a message of hope to Judah after the Exile.)</p>
<p><b>Weekly Summary</b></p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>