

**□ FIRST READING** | **Isaiah 9; 11; Psalm 2**

- From Galilee comes a “great light” (Isaiah 9:1–2), who is more than human (9:6–7): Messiah Jesus. How did the Pharisees miss—or reject—this verse in John 7:52?
- The Branch (Isaiah 11:1), the Root of Jesse (11:10), is none other than Jesus (Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8–9; 6:12–13), who will bring peace everywhere someday (Isaiah 11:6–9).

**□ SECOND READING** | **Isaiah 53; Zechariah 12:10; Psalm 91**

- Isaiah 53 is one of the most amazing chapters in the whole Old Testament, accurately predicting Jesus’ death (verses 4–8), burial (verse 9), resurrection (verses 10–11), and atonement (verses 4–6, 11–12).
- In Zechariah 12:10, God describes himself as “pierced”; when did this happen (compare John 19:33–37)?

**□ THIRD READING** | **Micah 5:1–2; Ezekiel 37; Daniel 7:1–14; Psalm 110**

- Where will the future ruler of Israel come from according to Micah 5:2?
- The future shepherd-king David (Ezekiel 37:27) was Jesus; when will he completely fulfill this promise according to Revelation 21:1–3?
- Who but the human/divine Jesus could fulfill Daniel 7:14?

**THIS WEEK’S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

DAVID: DEVELOPING A HEART FOR GOD: 1 SAMUEL 17; 2 SAMUEL 5–6; 9; 11–15; 18; PSALMS 18; 23; 51

**FIRST READING** 1 Samuel 17; 2 Samuel 5–6; 9; Psalm 18  
**SECOND READING** 2 Samuel 11–13; Psalm 51  
**THIRD READING** 2 Samuel 14–15, 18; Psalm 23

**Look for...**

- Young David defeats Goliath
- David becomes king
- David’s enthusiastic worship
- Mephibosheth included
- David and Bathsheba
- David’s failures as a father

**Activity**

Often we seek God’s presence to comfort us in times of trouble. Yet what about times of relative “success”; how do we tend to respond to him then? This week look for God’s presence in the “highs” as you live day to day. When you are in a positive experience, reflect on God’s involvement with you at that moment. How does being mindful of God make a difference?

**This Week’s Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “God, teach me to enjoy seasons of blessing in ways that bring me closer to you.”

**FIRST READING** | 1 Samuel 17; 2 Samuel 5-6; 9; Psalm 18

- What past victories in your life give you the type of confidence David had in 1 Samuel 17:37?
- How was touching the ark (2 Samuel 6:6-7) a clear violation of Numbers 4:15? What is something "holy"—person or principle—that you need to treat with greater reverence?
- Enthusiastic worshipers: Take heart from David's example (2 Samuel 6:14, 21-22)!
- How is 2 Samuel 9:1 a fulfillment of David's oath in 1 Samuel 20:12-15?

**SECOND READING** | 2 Samuel 11-13; Psalm 51

- Sin produces a "cover-up" (2 Samuel 11:6-13), leading to murder (11:15); but what is a biblically guaranteed outcome of every cover-up (1 Timothy 5:24)?
- Nathan's clever confrontation (2 Samuel 12:1-10) has the desired effect (12:13); though God forgives David's sin (12:13), what consequences remain (12:14)?
- Though explicit teaching in the Old Testament is rare, how does 2 Samuel 12:23 (see also Deuteronomy 32:50 and Job 19:25-27) hint at the idea of an afterlife?
- Lust—when acted on—is never like the fantasy; how does indulged-in sin finally disappoint in 2 Samuel 13:15? What lessons have you learned about the disappointing effects of sin?

**THIRD READING** | 2 Samuel 14-15, 18; Psalm 23

- What is happening to David's self-confidence in 2 Samuel 15:14 and 19? (Note the title he gives Absalom.)
- How strong is parental love—even in the face of rebelliousness (see 2 Samuel 18:33)?
- Read Matthew 23:37. How is David's lament for Absalom an echo of God's anguish for his disobedient sons and daughters?

**THIS WEEK'S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

THE HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS OF PRAYER: PSALMS 33-35; 42; 58; 100; 103; 117; 137

**FIRST READING** Psalms 42; 103; 137

**SECOND READING** Psalms 33-35

**THIRD READING** Psalms 58; 100; 117

**Look for...**

- Psalms of praise (joy)
- Psalms of lament (sadness)
- Parallel phrases that repeat or expand an idea, or sometimes show contrast
- The shortest chapter in the Bible

**Activity**

Often we seek God's presence to comfort us in times of trouble. Yet what about times of relative "success"; how do we tend to respond to him then? This week look for God's presence in the "highs" as you live day to day. When you are in a positive experience, reflect on God's involvement with you at that moment. How does being mindful of God make a difference?

**This Week's Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: "God, teach me to enjoy seasons of blessing in ways that bring me closer to you."

**FIRST READING** | Psalms 42; 103; 137

- What is your reaction to the mood of the psalmist in Psalm 42?
- What are the main problems the psalmist faces in Psalm 42:9–10?
- How do the moods of Psalm 103 and 137 compare?

**SECOND READING** | Psalms 33–35

- Should we take the account of God’s creation in Psalm 33:6–9 as figures of speech or literally? Why do you think God sometimes expresses doctrine poetically not just propositionally?
- How is the image of a lion used differently in Psalm 34:10 and 35:17?
- In Psalm 34:6–7 everything has turned out right for David, yet in Psalm 35:20–25, he is in deep trouble. Are these psalms contradictory?

**THIRD READING** | Psalms 58; 100; 117

- What is the tone of Psalm 58? How could a godly person like David express such anger?
- In Psalm 100, we offer thanks and praise because we are “owned” by God. How does his ownership of you make your heart thankful today?
- Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter of the Bible—but a wonderful burst of praise!

**THIS WEEK’S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

THE GREATEST PRAYERS OF ALL TIMES: PSALMS 30; 69; 74; 83; 94; 96; 119:1–112

**FIRST READING** Psalms 30; 69; 96

**SECOND READING** Psalm 119:1–112

**THIRD READING** Psalms 74; 83; 94

**Look for . . .**

- Psalms that cry out for judgment against wicked people
- Psalms that thank God for intervening
- Psalms that recognize God’s enthronement over all
- The longest chapter in the Bible

**Activity**

Often we seek God’s presence to comfort us in times of trouble. Yet what about times of relative “success”; how do we tend to respond to him then? This week look for God’s presence in the “highs” as you live day to day. When you are in a positive experience, reflect on God’s involvement with you at that moment. How does being mindful of God make a difference?

**This Week’s Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: *“God, teach me to enjoy seasons of blessing in ways that bring me closer to you.”*

**FIRST READING** | Psalms 30; 69; 96

- Psalm 30 is a follow-up to a complaint; as we pour out our concerns to God, it is good to thank him after the fact (see Luke 17:11–18).
- What are some of the figures of speech David uses in Psalm 69 to describe his distress? How well do these relate to your own experience?
- How naturally do the feelings in Psalm 96 come to you? What's the point of describing nonpersonal objects (verses 11–13) as if they can sing to and praise God?

**SECOND READING** | Psalm 119:1–112

- Just as the various psalms have contrasting moods, they have contrasting lengths; this is the longest chapter in the Bible (just as Psalm 117 is the shortest).
- What's the common emphasis in all the verses of Psalm 119? What do you think is the point of this repetition?
- How can you apply verses 9 and 11 to your daily struggles with sin?
- What connection can you make between the limitations of the light shed by the lamp in verse 105 and how much "advance notice" God gives us in life? Is that light still adequate?

**THIRD READING** | Psalms 74; 83; 94

- Why does God allow periods in our life such as are described in Psalm 74:9?
- Rather than just personal revenge, what does the psalmist have in mind as he cries out for justice in Psalm 83:17–18?
- When political realms become corrupt (Psalm 94:20–21), what ultimate comfort can we as believers take (verses 22–23)?

**THIS WEEK'S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

ENTER THE ROMANCE: SONG OF SONGS

**FIRST READING** Song of Songs 1–3; Psalm 45

**SECOND READING** Song of Songs 4–5; Psalm 65

**THIRD READING** Song of Songs 6–8; Psalm 128

**Look for . . .**

- Frank expression of romantic love
- Poetic descriptions of sensuality
- "Lover and friend"
- Don't awaken love before its proper time

**Activity**

Did your family have any "wise sayings" that were often repeated or passed down? What are some of your favorite "quotes to live by" that don't come from the Bible? Over the coming weeks, make a collection of your own "Words of Wisdom" that have shaped your life.

**This Week's Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: *"God, give me wisdom from everyday life as well as enable me to learn truth from your Word."*

**FIRST READING** | Song of Songs 1–3; Psalm 45

- Song of Songs is an unabashed celebration of marital love; how does 1:2 set the tone for what’s to come?
- Song of Songs 2:7 (also 3:5; 8:4) is an admonition about not rushing sexual intimacy; is that a message you need to hear?
- “Solomon” (Song of Songs 3:7–11) may be metaphorical, the groom being “kingly” in the beloved’s sight (in 1:7 he’s a shepherd).

**SECOND READING** | Song of Songs 4–5; Psalm 65

- Why should “sister” (Song of Songs 4:9) be understood as an intimate relationship, not literal sibling (compare with “friend” in 5:16)?
- The descriptions in Song of Songs 4:1–7; 5:10–16; 6:4–9 sound strange to our ears; what do you know about biblical culture that would cause listeners to consider them beautiful?

**THIRD READING** | Song of Songs 6–8; Psalm 128

- What exclusivity is noted in Song of Songs 7:10 that is an important ingredient to successful marriages (see Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6; 1 Corinthians 7:3–5)?
- “Wall” and “door” (Song of Songs 8:9–10) may refer to opposites: guarded purity and moral laxity; what is the writer saying about those two conditions?

**THIS WEEK’S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

SOLOMON’S EXTREME WISDOM: 1 KINGS 1-3; PROVERBS 1; 5-7; 10-11; 24-26

**FIRST READING** 1 Kings 1–3; Psalm 132  
**SECOND READING** Proverbs 1; 5–7; Psalm 127  
**THIRD READING** Proverbs 10–11; 24–26; Psalm 116

**Look for . . .**

- King David’s final days
- Solomon’s prayer for wisdom
- Solomon’s wise resolution of a dispute
- Proverbs that explore and explain practical living

**Activity**

Did your family have any “wise sayings” that were often repeated or passed down? What are some of your favorite “quotes to live by” that don’t come from the Bible? Over the coming weeks, make a collection of your own “Words of Wisdom” that have shaped your life.

**This Week’s Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “God, give me wisdom from everyday life as well as enable me to learn truth from your Word.”

**FIRST READING** | 1 Kings 1-3; Psalm 132

- How would you summarize the last days—and final instructions—of King David?
- How does 1 Kings 3:10-14 illustrate Matthew 6:33?
- What remarkable wisdom does Solomon display in 1 Kings 3:16-28?

**SECOND READING** | Proverbs 1; 5-7; Psalm 127

- How would you explain “fear of the LORD” in light of 1 John 4:18? (See also Psalm 112, especially the contrasting “fears” in verses 1 and 7-8.)
- According to Proverbs 1:20-21, how widely available is “wisdom”?
- In addition to avoiding the act of immorality, what else should we do according to Proverbs 5:8?
- Proverbs 7 is a masterful description of the series of choices you have to take to “fall” into adultery; how many steps can you identify?

**THIRD READING** | Proverbs 10-11; 24-26; Psalm 116

- What does Jesus say about Proverbs 24:29 in Luke 6:27-28?
- How does Jesus use Proverbs 25:7 in Luke 14:7-11?
- Do Proverbs 26:4 and 5 contradict? The key is the word “according,” used with slight differences in each verse (made clear by the second phrase of each verse).
- How does Peter use Proverbs 26:11 in 2 Peter 2:22?

**THIS WEEK’S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

SOLOMON’S EXTREME FOLLY: NUMBERS 33:50-56;  
DEUTERONOMY 16:21-17:20; 1 KINGS 4:20-34; 8-11

**FIRST READING** Numbers 33:50-56;  
Deuteronomy 16:21-17:20; Psalm 115

**SECOND READING** 1 Kings 4:20-34; 8; Psalm 72

**THIRD READING** 1 Kings 9-11; Psalm 49

**Look for . . .**

- Warnings for kings not to abuse power or compromise spiritually
- Solomon’s wealth and wisdom
- Solomon’s prayer dedicating the temple
- Solomon’s wives and wealth lead him astray

**Activity**

Did your family have any “wise sayings” that were often repeated or passed down? What are some of your favorite “quotes to live by” that don’t come from the Bible? Over the coming weeks, make a collection of your own “Words of Wisdom” that have shaped your life.

**This Week’s Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “*God, give me wisdom from everyday life as well as enable me to learn truth from your Word.*”

**FIRST READING** | Numbers 33:50–56; Deuteronomy 16:21–17:20; Psalm 115

- What spiritual principle is taught in Numbers 33:51–52?
- How does Numbers 33:55–56 help explain why such extreme measures were necessary during the conquest of Canaan?
- How is the warning of Deuteronomy 17:16–20 borne out many years later in 1 Kings 11?

**SECOND READING** | 1 Kings 4:20–34; 8; Psalm 72

- How does Solomon’s wisdom extend to nature—God’s creation (1 Kings 4:33)?
- What New Testament insight into “wisdom” does James 3:13–18 give?
- How does the New Testament (Acts 7:47–50) agree with Solomon (1 Kings 8:27)?
- In what way is Solomon’s prayer “evangelistic” (1 Kings 8:41–43; see also Deuteronomy 4:6 and Genesis 12:3)?
- How does Paul agree with 1 Kings 8:46 in Romans 3:10–18?

**THIRD READING** | 1 Kings 9–11; Psalm 49

- Recent archaeological excavations—on the so-called Solomonic gates—confirm Solomon’s renovations in the three cities mentioned at the end of 1 Kings 9:15. How can this reinforce confidence in the accuracy of the Old Testament?
- How does spiritual, not just temporal, power fulfill God’s intentions for Israel and make Solomon renown in 1 Kings 10:1? (Notice Jesus’ allusion to this in Matthew 12:42.)
- Did Solomon’s wisdom fail, or did he fail to follow wisdom in 1 Kings 11:9–10?

**THIS WEEK’S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

JOB: WHERE IS GOD WHEN IT HURTS? JOB 1–4; 6; 8; 11; 19; 23; 38:1–7; 40; 42

**FIRST READING** Job 1–4; Psalm 55  
**SECOND READING** Job 6; 8; 11; 19; Psalm 130  
**THIRD READING** Job 23; 38:1–7; 40; 42; Psalm 31

**Look for . . .**

- Satan accuses Job of a “fair-weather friendship” with God
- God allows—and limits—Satan’s testing of Job
- Job’s friends falsely accuse Job of wrongdoing
- Job maintains his integrity and cries out to be vindicated
- God finally shows up, rebuking all but vindicating Job
- Job’s fortunes are restored

**Activity**

Pay attention to what people do to help those who suffer. What words are used? What actions are taken? What words and actions seem to truly help? What words and actions make the problem worse?

**This Week’s Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “God, show me how to help those who suffer without sounding like Job’s friends.”

**FIRST READING** | Job 1–4; Psalm 55

- Satan’s accusation (Job 1:9–11) echoes through the ages: Do we love God only because of his benefits, or for who he is? How does your life answer that question?
- What do the limits put on Satan (Job 1:12; 2:6) tell you about God’s power—and Satan’s?

- What did Job's friends do right in Job 2:13? Why do you think we often feel the need to talk instead of just "be with" those in pain?
- Here's an important tip for understanding this book: In Job 42:7, God says things spoken by Job's friends are wrong; Job himself admits many of his words were wrong too (42:2-6). Therefore, this book contains lots of theological errors—*correctly recorded!* No statement of Job or especially of his friends should be assumed as good theology without corroboration elsewhere in Scripture (some examples to be "questioned": 5:12; 6:14; 7:7, 15-16).

**□ SECOND READING | Job 6; 8; 11; 19; Psalm 130**

- According to Job 6:14, do real friends leave when a person has a crisis of faith?
- Notice the ironies in Job 8:4-7; Job did offer sacrifices for what his kids might have done wrong (1:4-5), but is that why they died? Job's latter days were prosperous, but for the reason Bildad suggests? Job was pure and upright (8:6), but isn't that precisely why Satan attacked him?
- What will "heal" Job, according to Zophar in Job 11:14-15?
- What is the common theme in Job 19:25-27 and the following passages: Zechariah 14:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7?

**□ THIRD READING | Job 23, 38:1-7; 40; 42; Psalm 31**

- How does Job describe the benefits that trials can bring in Job 23:10? (James and Peter agree in James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-7.)
- In Job's circumstances, his friends presumed his guilt; Job presumed God's anger or injustice. Was either right (Job 38:2)?
- Ultimately, a lover doesn't need answers; a lover needs the beloved (Job 42:5-6). God shows up for Job—and for all of us someday (Revelation 21:3-4).
- What is the connection between God's blessing and praying for others in Job 42:10?

**THIS WEEK'S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

**DIVIDED KINGDOM: WHAT PUTS COMMUNITY AT RISK?**  
1 KINGS 12; 14-16; 2 CHRONICLES 14-16

**FIRST READING** 1 Kings 12; 14; Psalm 120  
**SECOND READING** 1 Kings 15-16; Psalm 122  
**THIRD READING** 2 Chronicles 14-16; Psalm 89

**Look for . . .**

- Golden age of Israel fades into civil war, division
- Rehoboam "powers up" over the nation
- Jeroboam sets up golden calves
- Abijah's halfhearted devotion to God
- Asa starts out well but ends in oppression
- "Eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth. . ."

**Activity**

The kings of Israel and Judah often used their power in corrupt ways. Yet they did not have to. This week, notice settings in which you are powerful—or could be. Guided by the Holy Spirit, use your power to cheer a friend, influence a child, take a stand for integrity, or encourage a coworker. Intentionally live out Proverbs 3:27, "Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act."

**This Week's Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: "God, show me my power, use it for good, and protect me from pride."



□ **FIRST READING** ■ 1 Kings 12, 14; Psalm 120

- After Solomon's death, Israel (north) and Judah (south) become two nations, never again to be a politically united people (but note Ezekiel 37:15–28).
- Age doesn't guarantee wisdom, but why is it folly for Rehoboam to reject his older counselors (1 Kings 12:8; Leviticus 19:32)?
- Compare 1 Kings 12:28 with Exodus 32:4; what political ends cause spiritual compromise (1 Kings 12:27)?
- How is pagan worship (1 Kings 14:23–24) a way of “hedging your bets” in case God doesn't come through? Why might the sexual aspects of such “worship” also hold an appeal?

□ **SECOND READING** ■ 1 Kings 15–16; Psalm 122

- The litany of bad kings climaxes with King Ahab (1 Kings 16:30–33).
- What judgment of God (Joshua 6:26) proved true in the case of Hiel in 1 Kings 16:34?
- Do you think God curses disobedience, or is disobedience its own curse? What have you seen in your own life to support your answer?

□ **THIRD READING** ■ 2 Chronicles 14–16; Psalm 89

- What do 2 Chronicles 15:16; Matthew 10:37; and Psalm 27:10 say about loyalty to God above family?
- What insight does 2 Chronicles 16:7–9 give on the sin behind Asa's treaty in 1 Kings 15:18–19?
- The beginning of 2 Chronicles 16:9 has a timeless principle; how is your heart?

**THIS WEEK'S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

ELIJAH: HOLDING STEADY IN A ROLLER-COASTER WORLD: 1 KINGS 17-19:14

**FIRST READING** 1 Kings 17; Psalm 63

**SECOND READING** 1 Kings 18; Psalm 97

**THIRD READING** 1 Kings 19:1–14; Psalm 139

**Look for . . .**

- Elijah fed by ravens
- Flour and oil miraculously extended
- Boy raised from the dead
- Test on Mount Carmel
- Elijah depressed

**Activity**

The kings of Israel and Judah often used their power in corrupt ways. Yet they did not have to. This week, notice settings in which you are powerful—or could be. Guided by the Holy Spirit, use your power to cheer a friend, influence a child, take a stand for integrity, or encourage a coworker. Intentionally live out Proverbs 3:27, “Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.”

**This Week's Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “God, show me my power, use it for good, and protect me from pride.”

☐ **FIRST READING** | 1 Kings 17; Psalm 63

- What does James 5:17–18 say about 1 Kings 17:1?
- How does God's mercy to a non-Jew in 1 Kings 17:9–16 show his intent to reach out to Gentiles and illustrate his gracious choice of unworthy sinners? (Note also Jesus' comments in Luke 4:25–26.)
- What similarities do you see between 1 Kings 17:21 and Acts 20:9–12?

☐ **SECOND READING** | 1 Kings 18; Psalm 97

- Elijah's sarcasm is biting, but revealing (1 Kings 18:27).
- How does the story in 1 Kings 18:28–29 demonstrate that “sincerity” in religion is not enough? How do Paul's words in Romans 10:2 shed light on what else is needed?
- How is Baal, the god of water, further humiliated by God's power in 1 Kings 18:33–35, 38?

☐ **THIRD READING** | 1 Kings 19:1–14; Psalm 139

- What surprising mood follows Elijah's great ministry triumph in 1 Kings 19:4–5? Have you ever experienced this? (If so, you're in good company!)
- What practical help did God send in 1 Kings 19:5–9?

**THIS WEEK'S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

ELISHA: RECEIVING A SPIRITUAL LEGACY: 1 KINGS 19:15–21; 2 KINGS 2–6

**FIRST READING** 1 Kings 19:15–21; 2 Kings 2; Psalm 84  
**SECOND READING** 2 Kings 3–4; Psalm 145  
**THIRD READING** 2 Kings 5–6; Psalm 144

**Look for...**

- Elijah told by God to appoint his successor
- Elijah taken up to heaven
- Elisha continues doing miracles
- Invisible spiritual armies seen by Elisha and his servant

**Activity**

How many of your friends know their family history? How much of yours do you know? How does knowing—or not knowing—the legacy of your family affect you? What defining moments in your own life would you like future generations to remember?

**This Week's Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “*God, help me take note of and pass on my life's lessons.*”

**FIRST READING | 1 Kings 19:15–21; 2 Kings 2; Psalm 84**

- What important “legacy” assignment does God give Elijah in 1 Kings 19:16?
- What resolve do you see in Elisha’s actions in 1 Kings 19:21?
- What question, similar to Elijah’s in 2 Kings 2:9, should leaders in our day ask of those they lead?
- Elijah’s miraculous end (2 Kings 2:11) foreshadows what miraculous events in the messianic era (Malachi 4:5–6; Luke 9:28–33; possibly Revelation 11:3–12)?

**SECOND READING | 2 Kings 3–4; Psalm 145**

- Is “sincere” idolatry justified (2 Kings 3:27)?
- God’s miracles sometimes conform to humanly imposed limits; how big are the “containers” you’re giving him to fill (2 Kings 4:3–6; John 2:6–11)?
- What parallels do you see in 2 Kings 4:42–44 and John 6:5–14?

**THIRD READING | 2 Kings 5–6; Psalm 144**

- Disease is not a sign of God’s disfavor (2 Kings 5:1), yet God sometimes does heal this side of heaven (2 Kings 5:13–14); in the end, all will be healed (Revelation 22:1–3).
- Naaman associates God with the land of Israel (2 Kings 5:17); what would Jesus say (John 4:19–24)?
- How serious is lying to God (2 Kings 5:23–27; Acts 5:1–11)?
- How are spiritual realities in some ways more real than physical (2 Kings 6:15–17; 2 Corinthians 4:16–18)?

**THIS WEEK’S NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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**Fast Track**

**AMOS: HOW GOD MEASURES A LIFE: THE BOOK OF AMOS**

<b>FIRST READING</b>	Amos 1–3; Psalm 82
<b>SECOND READING</b>	Amos 4–6; Psalm 140
<b>THIRD READING</b>	Amos 7–9; Psalm 146

**Look for . . .**

- Judgment starts with pagan nations but ends up with Israel
- The needy sold “for a pair of sandals”
- God welcomes justice, not religious feasts
- A “plumb line” given by God to measure spiritual uprightness

**Activity**

Generally we prefer encouraging words to corrective ones. But both are necessary. During the coming weeks, notice all the messages around you designed to warn or rebuke: at home, the office, school, newspapers, TV, Internet, and so on. Which ones seem effective? Which don’t get heard? What makes you more receptive—or defensive?

**This Week’s Prayer**

Pray this prayer throughout the week: “God, open me up to correction—whenever needed, from whomever you send.”