

# Preparing the Soil

## For week beginning on July 21

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):

Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

### II. Psalm 138 (Read this each day):

### III. Daily Scripture Readings

<b>Monday</b>	Matthew 7:1-12
<b>Tuesday</b>	Genesis 22:1-14
<b>Wednesday</b>	Colossians 1:24 – 2:5
<b>Thursday</b>	Colossians 2:6-19
<b>Friday</b>	Luke 11:1-8
<b>Saturday</b>	Luke 11:1-13

### IV. Prayers

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

### V. Reflection

Silent and/or written

### VI: Benediction (Spoken each day):

And now, my God, as I go to my place in the world, go with me. May the peace of your forgiveness and the power of your Holy Spirit work in me and through me to your glory. Amen.

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).

<b>Mon.</b>	Psalm 88:6-12	Ezekiel 44:28 - 45:25	Titus 3:3-15
<b>Tues.</b>	Psalm 88:13-18	Ezekiel 46:1 - 47:12	Philemon 1:1-11
<b>Wed.</b>	Psalm 89:1-8	Ezekiel 47:13 - 48:35	Philemon 1:12-25
<b>Thurs.</b>	Psalm 89:9-18	Obadiah 1	John 1:1-13
<b>Fri.</b>	Psalm 89:19-29	Isaiah 40:1 - 41:7	John 1:14-28
<b>Sat.</b>	Psalm 89:30-37	Isaiah 41:8 - 42:9	John 1:29-42

For an introduction for Week 82 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 13&14 as they cover a little about life in the Babylonian Exile and the second part of the book of the prophet Isaiah.

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