



# Devotional

June 28 - Oct. 3

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on his counsel and not our own. We should not charge ahead without consulting God, then inevitably turn to him to pick up the pieces. Nor should we stand back waiting for God to pull us along. Instead, we should build our relationships with him and walk with him. Just as he was with the Israelites, God is with us and will help us to follow his Word. We need only ask and listen humbly for his counsel.

Prayer: God, while our world changes, you stay the same. Help me to hear your word and listen quietly for your voice. Show me the opportunities that I may be an agent for justice and mercy in our world, and walk closer with you. Amen.

## **WEEK NINE (AUGUST 23–29)**

### **Day 236: August 23, 2020**

**Full Plan: Zephaniah 1:1–3:20**

**Abbreviated Plan: Zephaniah 3:1–20**

Zephaniah doesn't make many people's lists of favorite Bible books. It promotes faithfulness using fear and anger. Still, with everything wrong in the world today, it's comforting to think that God is as upset by it all as we are, and God refuses to sit still and let it happen.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

### **Day 237: August 24, 2020**

**Full Plan: Haggai 1:1–2:23**

**Abbreviated Plan: Haggai 1:1–7; 2:10–30**

Haggai may be an obscure book, but it packs a timely punch: Get your priorities straight. You may seem to live a great life, but if your spiritual life isn't in order, then it's wasted energy. You are sowing much but harvesting little, eating but not being filled.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

### **Day 238: August 25, 2020**

**Full Plan: Zechariah 1:1–4:14**

**Abbreviated Plan: Zechariah 1:1–6; 11:1–17**

To anyone who feels like they are living in exile, Zechariah promises that God will return with prosperity and comfort (1:16-17) and a forgiveness of sins (3:4-5). This won't happen because of human might or power, but by God's Spirit alone (4:6).

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

**Day 239: August 26, 2020**

**Full Plan: Zechariah 5:1–9:17**

**Abbreviated Plan: Zechariah 12:1–14**

When Matthew and John described the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem, they quoted Zechariah 9:9 (“humble and riding on a donkey”). It’s a reminder that true greatness is not measured by conquests, but by servanthood and humility.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

**Day 240: August 27, 2020**

**Full Plan: Zechariah 10:1–14:21**

**Abbreviated Plan: Malachi 1:1–14**

Zechariah 11 reminds us that we carry two responsibilities: “Favor” and “Unity.” The first is about honoring our commitment to God, the other about our relationships with each other. Unfortunately, the Israelites has broken both. We should not.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

**Day 241: August 28, 2020**

**Full Plan: Malachi 1:1–2:17**

**Abbreviated Plan: Malachi 2:1–17**

Malachi asks, “Have we not all one father? Why then are we faithless to one another?” (2:10a). It is a reminder that faithfulness to God requires treating others with dignity and respect. Doing otherwise is “wearying to the Lord,” (2:17).

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

**Day 242: August 29, 2020**

**Full Plan: Malachi 3:1–4:6**

**Abbreviated Plan: Malachi 3:1–18**

The Old Testament closes with the promise of the Messiah (future) and a reminder of Moses and Elijah (past) (Malachi 4:4-5). The faithful life is based on remembering what God has told you in order to claim what God has promised you. Now, on to the New Testament!

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

## **August 23–29, 2020: Weekly Devotional by Bernie Lieving**

Congratulations! You did it! Regardless of whether you read The Bible Project 2020 Full Plan or the Abbreviated Plan you have worked your way from Genesis through Malachi. This week we completed the journey by reading the last four of the “minor prophets,” as Augustine wrote, “...only because of their length not that they were of minor importance.”

There are things that stand out in these four books. One of them is that God is the primary speaker and there is no question as to where God stands on what is happening in the prophets’ world. The prophetic writers do not hesitate to say what God’s response will be to the Judean people who violate the covenant relationship with God and who do not make just and faithful decisions, and show kindness and compassion to each other.

Neither are the prophets reluctant to tell of God’s blessings on God’s people when they are faithful to the covenant, seek the Lord, call on the name of the Lord, and rebuild the temple. “They will be my people, and I will be their God.” (Zech. 8:8)

A recurring theme in our reading this week has been “the day of the Lord” which will be a time of judgment, doom, purification, restoration, deliverance, and reunion. In spite of all Judah’s wrongdoings and failure to keep God’s covenant, “the sun of righteousness will rise on those revering my name; healing will be in its wings.” (Malachi 4:2) Such writing describes for many the beginning of the messianic age; the coming of the king who would fulfill the prophecies.

While these expectations have yet to be fulfilled for the Jewish community, as we begin our New Testament readings, Zechariah’s words echo each Palm Sunday as we Christians announce God’s Son, our Messiah, Jesus’, arrival in Jerusalem:

“Look, your king will come to you...he is humble and riding on an ass, on a colt, the offspring of a donkey.” (Zech 9:9)

Prayer: God, thank you for our Old Testament which reveals You as our Creator, our loving, faithful Lord. Amen.

## **WEEK TEN (AUGUST 30–SEPTEMBER 5)**

**Day 243: August 30, 2020**

**Full Plan: Matthew 1:1–2:23**

**Abbreviated Plan: Malachi 4:1–6**

Welcome to the New Testament. Out of the gate, Matthew asks, “What will you do with fear?” Will it lead to anger and paranoia? (Herod) Or will you trust God, even when it doesn’t make sense? (Joseph, Magi) When we are afraid, God calls us to trust and go.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life: