



2021 FAMILY READING PLAN: ESSENTIAL BIBLE STORIES

Happy New Year! Our focus throughout this year will be on reading important stories from the Bible that every Christian should know. We will start in the book of Genesis and work forward. Whether you have read these before as a family or are delving into them for the first time, we hope that you will enjoy this journey through the Holy Scriptures!

Your Goal: Read the Bible together once per week. Feel free to sit comfortably in your living room, at your dining room table, etc. You may wish to have copies of the Bible for each member of the family, but only one copy is necessary. Take turns reading. When children are old enough to read, encourage them to read at least a few verses.

WEEK	READING	THEME
January 10-16, 2021	Genesis 1, Genesis 2	Creation
January 17-23, 2021	Genesis 3 Genesis 4:1-16	The Fall Cain and Abel
January 24-30, 2021	Genesis 6:5-22, Genesis 7	Noah's Ark
January 31-February 6, 2021	Genesis 8, Genesis 9:8-17	Noah's Ark (Continued)
February 7-13, 2021	Genesis 11:1-9 Genesis 13:14-28 Genesis 15:1-6	Tower of Babel Introducing Abram God's Covenant
February 14-20, 2021	Genesis 17:1-18, 15-21 Genesis 18:1-15	Naming of Abraham & Sarah Promise of a Son
February 21-27, 2021	Genesis 21:1-8 Genesis 22:1-19	Birth of Isaac Sacrifice of Isaac
February 28-March 6, 2021	Genesis 27:1-40	Jacob and Esau
March 7-13, 2021	Genesis 28:10-22 Genesis 32:22-32	Jacob's Ladder Jacob Wrestles
March 14-20, 2021	Genesis 37	Joseph
March 21-27, 2021	Genesis 39	Joseph and Potiphar's Wife
March 28-April 3, 2021	Genesis 41	Joseph Interprets the King's Dream

(Next Issue will begin April 4, 2021!)

PRAYING AS A FAMILY

Your Goal: Offer these prayers at least once per week. Stand together as a family facing a place of prayer with an icon, etc. You may read them together, or take turns offering the prayers. For additional prayers, please refer to the "**Come to Me**" prayer book (available at orthodoxgoods.com).

The Usual Beginning Prayers

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Glory to You, our God, glory to You!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who are in all places and fill all things. Treasury of blessings, and giver of Life, come and dwell within us, and cleanse us from every blemish, and save our souls, O blessed One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us! (three times)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, cleanse us of our sins; O Master, forgive our transgressions; O Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for Your Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (three times)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

A Prayer for Our Family

Lord Jesus Christ, You reign on high with Your Eternal Father and the Holy Spirit. By Your presence, You blessed the home of Your Ever-Virgin Mother and the righteous Joseph. Come also to us and fill our home with Your blessings. We humbly pray to You: unite our family in a bond of peace and harmony. Instill in our hearts wisdom and virtue, and help us to obey Your

commandments. Banish from us all anger and bitterness, and instead grant us a spirit of forgiveness and peace. Help us to be examples of Your love. In moments of trial and temptation, give us the strength to avoid sin. Send your holy angels to guard us from all misfortune and evil. O Christ, we enthrone You as King of our home: may we also be made worthy of a place in Your heavenly kingdom forever. Amen.

Praying for Others

If you would like to pray for specific people...

Save, O Lord, and have mercy on (name anyone you wish to pray for at this time).

St. Ephrem's Lenten Prayer

Add this short prayer during Great Lent (March 15-April 23). It is said from Sunday evening through Friday evening.

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power and vain talking.

But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience and love.

Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not judge my brother. For blessed are You forever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer to the Mother of God

Hail Mary, full of grace, O Virgin Birthgiver of God, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have given birth to Christ, the Savior and deliverer of our souls.

A Prayer to the Holy Trinity

The Father is my hope, the Son is my refuge, and the Holy Spirit is my protection. O Holy Trinity, glory to You!

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the prayers of Your most-pure Mother and of all the saints, have mercy on us. Amen.

***"Every prayer must come from the heart,
and any other prayer is no prayer at all.
Prayer-book prayers, your own prayers, and very short prayers,
all must issue forth from the heart to God, seen before you."
(Saint Theophan the Recluse)***