



## Let's Read! Dec, 2013 Hosted by Open Doors

\*Books of Hosea through Malachi

\* Psalms 140-150

\* Proverbs (chapters 30 and 31)

\* Revelation

This month wraps up our Bible Read-Thru for 2013. If you didn't finish, please continue on your own. You can print any of the *Let's Read* newsletters and Reflection pages directly from our site, [www.OpenDoorsAGF.org](http://www.OpenDoorsAGF.org), or you can contact us by email ([opendoorsAGF@verizon.net](mailto:opendoorsAGF@verizon.net)) and we'll send by either email or "snail mail" any documents you may be missing.

If you did finish, please let us know your thoughts and feelings via the same email address.

For 2014 we will start with a 6-session class based on Rick Warren's best-seller, *The Purpose Driven Life*. All are invited, so please help us spread the word. Enclosed is information to pass along to anyone who may be interested in joining us. People may be especially glad to see Pastor Warren on DVD since he was featured (cover and all!) in the Parade Magazine this past Sunday.

December is a busy month with lots to do and lots to celebrate: especially the birth of our Savior. It's no coincidence that our readings this month include Psalms that are prayers for us as individuals and as a nation. And we conclude with several Hymns of Praise (146-150). Our readings in Proverbs end with 31:10-31, an apt description of an outstanding woman—an example and inspiration during this hectic season. And what else will we be reading?

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi

These are called the minor prophets, not because they are less important than the major prophets like Isaiah and Ezekiel, but because their writings are shorter.

- \* **Hosea** is a living picture of the message he preached. The Lord told him to marry a prostitute and to faithfully love her despite her unfaithfulness (just like the relationship between God and Israel). The Book ends with God proclaiming, *Israel, you have rejected me but my anger is gone; I will heal you and love you without limit. (14:4)*
- \* **Joel**, just 3 chapters, tells of a plague of locusts, symbolizing a real army that would attack Israel. Again God promises that if the people return to him He will forgive and bless them.
- \* **Amos**, a raiser of sheep and not a trained prophet, was used by God to also warn of punishment, tempered with a promise to relent if/when the people "choose good instead of evil."
- \* **Obadiah** is such a short book, there are no chapters. This prophet, whose name means "worshipper of the Lord," condemns Edom's cruelty to God's people and talks of punishing them and giving their land to his people.
- \* **Jonah** is a Book that stands out because only one sentence is preached by the prophet. But something Jonah says to God when he's angry that God has spared Nineveh, carries the Book's main message: *You are a kind and merciful God, and you are very patient. You always show love, and you don't like to punish anyone, not even foreigners. (4:2b)*
- \* **Micah** talks of doom to Samaria and Jerusalem, the capitals of Israel and Judah, along with a promise of reconciliation. Like Hosea who says God is interested in faithfulness not sacrifices, Micah writes this similar passage: *What offering should I bring...? Will thousands of sheep or a river of olive oil make God satisfied with me?... The Lord has told us what is right and what he demands: see that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God. (6:8)*

Check out the last Books: **Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zecharia and Malachi** for similarities and differences in contrast to the messages of the other minor prophets. And don't miss my favorite: Habakkuk 3:17-19!

Revelation: This last Book of the New Testament is a gem. Despite the frightening visions and powerful symbolism, it contains so many priceless Scriptures: Christ's messages to the seven churches (*Chapters 2 and 3*) and these words of comfort and hope, *Listen! I am standing and knocking at your door. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and we will eat together. (3:20)* The Book ends with a warning not to tamper with God's Word (22:18) and John, the beloved disciple who wrote this Book, adds a quote from Jesus: *I am coming soon...* and so we wait: joyfully, faithfully.