



Let's Read! May, 2013 Hosted by Open Doors

*Books of Samuel I and Samuel II

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* Psalms 50-63

* Proverbs (chapters 12-13)

* Book of Acts

Dear Fellow Readers,

Now that we've read the four Gospels, we are embarking on a wonderful project that will culminate in an inspirational booklet. We already have a booklet entitled *Following Jesus Today and Every Day, 52 Ways to Walk in His Footsteps*. Our new one will be *52 Things Jesus Said to Draw Us Closer to Him*—and you are invited to help us put it together. Consider what Jesus said in the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (and see what additional quotes you'll find this month in Acts and later in the Epistles and Revelation). When something He says hits home with you, write it down, along with your own thoughts about it (or just send us your favorite quote and we'll develop it for the booklet). Here is a sample:

Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)

Jesus knows what it's like to live in this complicated, messy world and he invites us to partner with him so our burdens will be shared and our sleep will be sweet. He goes on to say that his "yoke" of obedience and hard work is light and easy to bear—after all, he'll be by our side. He calls us by name; we just need to respond and follow.

See also Proverbs 3 (especially 21-26), Mark 8:34-38 and I Peter 5:5-7

Please help us to collect powerful, life-changing quotes that will make this a booklet for Christians, and Christians-to-be, and all who are seeking to know Jesus better. Thanks very much.

Now... what's on our agenda for May?

Samuel I and II: This is actually one Book with two parts. It was separated because it was too long to fit on one scroll. And no wonder it's a 2-scroll Book—Samuel is a major personality in God's story. You'll read about his wonderful mother, Hannah, and liken her song to Mary's Magnificat (celebrating maternal faithfulness and God's faithfulness to the downtrodden). We'll read about how Samuel helped to fight Israel's enemies and then anointed their first kings, Saul and then David. These historical books take Israel from a loose, oppressed confederation of tribes to a strong, united nation.

Psalms 50-63: Many of these are written by David and perhaps were even sung and accompanied by him to soothe King Saul's troubled spirit. Hear these beautiful words that open Psalm 63:

You are my God. I worship you. In my heart I long for you as I would long for a stream in a scorching desert.

Since we have just 13 Psalms this month, let's read one aloud each day and repeat the process throughout the month.

Proverbs 12 and 13: These chapters are entitled *You Can't Hide Behind Evil* and *Wise Friends Make You Wise*. Let's see what we can learn and apply to our lives in very practical, everyday ways. As with the Psalms, let's read a chapter a day, which will take us through each of them at least 15 times. I've been learning Proverbs 3 by heart and have said it aloud many times already, so I know from experience that repetition of these wise thoughts gives us a whole new perspective that is missed with just one reading.

Acts: This priceless Book, a continuation of Luke's Gospel, was written between 75 and 85 AD. It tells how the Good News spread from Jerusalem to Rome, with its principal players being Peter and Paul. It's written in the first-person plural "we" by Luke, who accompanied Paul on some of his journeys. An important message in Acts is that Jesus' promises are not just for the Jews, but for followers of every race and nation. Look for wonderfully-true stories and amazing miracles: the coming of the Holy Spirit, healings, dramatic conversions, visions, courage, and lessons that make us proud indeed, and also grateful, that we have so many faith-filled ancestors (mentioned in Hebrews 12:1-2) cheering us on!