

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Jeremiah by John Calvin and Phillip Ryken, and notes from the HCSB Study Bible, and the Reformation Study Bible

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Jeremiah 15:1-4 Not even Moses and Samuel

Notes (See back page for authors)
Jeremiah has been praying for God’s mercy on Judah (chap. 15) and now God answers. “No.” Calvin notes that *God again repeats what we have before observed,—that as the impieties and sins of the people had arrived at the highest pitch, there was no more room for pardon or for mercy.*

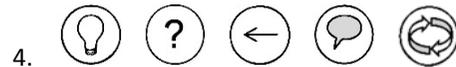
The burden of God’s righteous judgment is heavy on Jeremiah. It is not just that his prayers have been rejected, God says that even if the great intercessors Moses and Samuel asked for compassion on Judah it would be denied.

A time comes when God’s judgment will be carried out. For Judah as a nation, that time is now. In 2 series of 4 judgments God pronounces their doom. Death, sword, famine, and captivity await. They would be killed by the sword, dragged away by dogs, devoured and destroyed by birds and wild animals. Because of Manasseh’s sin, God would withhold His favour from Judah.

The time for God’s judgment is at hand. We know that God will judge the world. We know His judgment will be just but terrible. Are we warning? Are we weeping, like this weeping prophet?

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)

- How did God answer Jeremiah’s prayer for mercy on Judah?
- What are the 2 series of 4 judgments God promises?
- Why will God judge Judah? The world?



Praise Pray Psalm 92²

- Commit you and your family in prayer to speak warning to non-Christians, by God’s help
- Pray for a member of your church
- Pray for your family
- Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Jeremiah 15:19-21 Return and be restored

Notes (See back page for authors)
God finally gives Jeremiah an answer. However, the answer may have come as a surprise, even a shock, to Jeremiah.

Hear Ryken’s summary: *The first thing God told Jeremiah to do was to turn around, to repent. If anyone was letting anyone down, Jeremiah was letting God down...Some of the things he said were “worthless” rather than precious. Jeremiah was still a sinner, and sinners cannot approach God with a long list of credits. They can only come with their debts. They cannot pray on the basis of their merits; they can only beg on the basis of God’s mercy.*

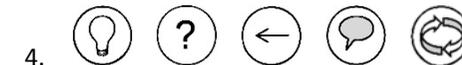
It is ironic that God had to tell Jeremiah to repent. For years Jeremiah had been telling the people of Israel to turn back in repentance. But he had some repenting of his own to do. He needed to turn back from his self-righteousness and return to his calling.

The second thing God did for Jeremiah was to repeat his promises to him...God here repeats the promises he made when he first called Jeremiah to be a prophet (see 1:18-19)...When God promised not to let Jeremiah down, it was not a new promise. It was the same old promise promised all over again. God promised to make Jeremiah strong in the face of the danger and to save his life in the end.

This is a profound lesson about God’s remedy for discouragement in the Christian life...What the discouraged Christian needs most is to remember the promises of the Bible. Every last one of God’s promises is still true. Spiritual renewal comes from hearing again the promises God has already made in Jesus Christ—that he will rescue us, save us, and redeem us.

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)

- What was the first thing God told Jeremiah to do?
- Why did Jeremiah need to repent?
- What was the second thing God told Jeremiah?



Praise Pray Psalm 92

- Pray that you and your family will hear and believe God’s promises, with God’s help
- Pray for your family
- Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
- Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

Reading Jeremiah 15:15-18 I ate them

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Jeremiah longs for God’s just judgment on God’s and Jeremiah’s enemies. He seems puzzled, and less that satisfied with God’s promise of prayer yet punishment– of care yet casting away. He was committed to God’s word and to God’s ways. Why was it going so badly?

When he had received God’s words, he says he ate them. Ryken comments that *Jeremiah understood that the Bible is the one book to be devoured. Like the prophet Ezekiel, he gobbled up God’s Word (Ezekiel 3:3). He understood that the Word of God is more than just hors d’oeuvres. When God spoke, Jeremiah belied up to the banqueting table and started packing it in.*

As well, Jeremiah walked in God’s ways. Ryken notes that *Jeremiah also obeyed God during his free time. He was not a partier...Jeremiah did not waste his time sitting on a bar stool and laughing at the world. Instead, he spent his Friday nights at home. This was not because he was a party pooper, but because he had a passion for purity...Sinful revelry filled him with indignation.*

Yet it seemed to him that is was all for nothing. In spite of his commitment to God’s word and God’s ways he faced unending pain and incurable wounds. God seemed to him like a mirage that was fading away. When such things happen, we must hold on, by faith. We must eat God’s words, find delight in them, and trust that the answers will come.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What was Jeremiah’s relationship to God’s word?
2. What was Jeremiah’s relationship to God’s ways?
3. Why were things not going better then?



Praise Pray

- Psalm 92
1. Commit with your family to God’s word and God’s ways
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Jeremiah 15:5-9 You have left Me

Notes
(See back page for authors)

God continues with His promise of judgment. So severe will be this judgment that no one will ask about Jerusalem’s good. No pity, no grieving. Now this city that once taught peace (Jerusalem means “teaching of peace”) will have no one even asking about their peace (shalom).

But why? Why was God’s favour, God’s peace, to be removed from His city? Because, God says, “You have left Me.” Though they had once delighted in God, at least on the outside, they have now instead withdrawn from Him more and more. As Calvin notes, *they not only forgot God for a time, but departed far from him, so as to become wholly alienated.*

Therefore God has removed His compassion. Instead of peace, He brings judgment. Ryken notes that *so many men would die that widows would be more numerous than the sand of the sea. The mother of the perfect family (seven sons) would lose her children and die from shock.*

We might be inclined to think – Judah deserved this, but we don’t. Yet we must consider carefully God’s warning. We know God preserves His people. But, we must regularly ask, “Am I His? Have I once called myself God’s, only to have left Him? Am I turning my back against the only Saviour?” Test/examine yourselves to see if you are, indeed, in the faith. (2 Cor 13:15)

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What would happen to the city that once taught peace?
2. Why was God bringing this severe judgment?
3. If Judah could be judged, can we? Why or why not?



Praise Pray

- Psalm 92
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to test yourselves and stay in the faith, with God’s help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Jeremiah 15:10 Woe is me!

Notes (See back page for authors) Jeremiah is overwhelmed with God’s pronounced judgment. And, his concern is not just for Judah. “Woe is me!” he says. This isn’t just hard for us as a nation, it is hard for me. Like Job (Job 3:1), Jeremiah wishes he had never been born. Everything he says causes conflict, everyone curses him. His call from God was hard. Genuinely so.

Yet, this is not just a personal pity party. Calvin notes that *it is evident from the context, that all this was expressed for the benefit of the public, even that the Jews might know, that their hardness of heart in despising God’s devoted servant, yea, in maliciously opposing him, would not turn out to their benefit.*

So it is today as well. God gives elders responsibility to watch for people within His church. Those who instead of joy bring grief to the elders keeping watch over them will find that it will be to their own disadvantage. (Heb 13:17) At the same time, we see it was not enough for Judah to have Jeremiah preaching to them and praying for them. And it’s not enough to have godly elders preaching to and praying for you. Like Jeremiah, we all need a greater Prophet.

Ryken reminds us we have one! *Sinners need someone, not just to pray for them, but to offer a perfect sacrifice for their sins. They need intercession plus atonement. Jesus Christ offers both...Get back, Moses! Step aside, Samuel! Move over, Jeremiah! Let Jesus Christ stand before his Father to plead for the salvation of lost sinners. His prayers will never fail!*

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What is Jeremiah’s response to God’s promised judgment?
2. Why does he wish he had not been born?
3. Who is Jeremiah’s hope – and our hope?
4.     

Praise Pray Psalm 92
1. Pray for your elders – those who watch out for your soul.
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Jeremiah 15:11-14 I (God) will pray for you

Notes (See back page for authors) God responds with mercy to Jeremiah’s groaning. And He gives Jeremiah a glimmer of hope. God promises to set Jeremiah free. He promises to care for him and to pray for him in his time of trouble. What an encouragement to us as well. God does care about His people! He even prays for us. The New Testament reminds us of this same great news. God the Spirit and God the Son pray for us (see Rom 8:26, 34)

But, notice that God does not promise Jeremiah that he will have no trouble. We think that if God hears our prayers, and even more so if God Himself prays for us, peace will come. Yet, notice God’s response to Jeremiah. Having promised to care for Jeremiah and to pray for him, God tells him that he will have trouble and distress. The enemy from the north will come.

Personal (and national) wealth and treasures will be taken away. Jeremiah himself will be taken away, with the people, to the land of the enemy. There, the faithful people of God will suffer along with the faithless people who are God’s in name only. Together they will face God’s righteous judgment.

Can we trust God, even if trouble comes? Can we find comfort that God will hear us, but might not take our trouble away? Can we accept that when the visible people of God sin, the faithful as well as the faithless may suffer? Like Jeremiah, we must.

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What was encouraging about God’s response to Jeremiah?
2. What might have been discouraging?
3. Why do the righteous suffer?
4.     

Praise Pray Psalm 92
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that even in trouble, God is caring for His people
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member