

## GPS

God's Plan of Salvation



Your map to  
Bible Reading 2012

## The GPS Reading Map - March

After reading so long in Genesis our reading really picks up speed this month. We will march out of Egypt with the Israelites, heading to Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments. Then we will turn north to the Promised Land and watch Israel's terrible failure there. The month will end with Joshua taking command and Israel beginning its invasion of Canaan. We ended last month seeing the promise that Abraham's children would become as numerous as the stars become reality (Exo 1:7) and we will end this month seeing the land promise begin to come to pass as well.

### Week 10 - March 4-10 - Exodus \*8 \*9 \*10 \*11-12 \*13:17-14:31

**SNAPSHOT** - **Exodus 8** continues the war between God and Pharaoh, as more plagues slam into Egypt. Note the compromises that Pharaoh begins to offer (8:28). **Exodus 9** lists plagues five through seven. **Exodus 10** closes out the first nine plagues with locusts and darkness. Normally we only read one chapter a day but our fourth reading is two chapters. **Exodus 11-12** are crucial to understand the Passover. It is a lengthy read but well worth it. The last reading this week is **Exodus 13:17-ch. 14**. We need to read the last part of chapter 13 to see God's guidance in the cloud and pillar of fire. **Exodus 14b** is the amazing and incredible story of the Red Sea deliverance. You may wish to read the Song of Moses in Exodus 15 on your own, but it is not part of our scheduled reading.

**DANGER/UNDER CONSTRUCTION** - We will see God hardening Pharaoh's heart repeatedly in our reading this week (8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12, 34; 10:1, 20, 27, 11:10; 14:8). Sometimes the Scriptures say Pharaoh hardened his heart while other times God is said to do the hardening. Either way it shows the events that God brought on Egypt caused faith in Israel while simultaneously only causing Pharaoh to set himself against God even more. Pharaoh chose to oppose God while Israel chose to submit to God. The message (and means) were the same in both cases. The difference was in the heart.

**RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD** - Make sure you spend time with 9:20-21. This is an incredible commentary on how faith always leads to works. When we truly believe, we are changed and what we do changes. Ask yourself "How am I changed because I believe in God's promises to save me? What do I do different because I have faith in Jesus Christ to save me?"

**IN THE MINIVAN** - The Passover reading is long but provides a great opportunity to role play and imagine. Walk your family through a Passover, calling on everyone to imagine what it would be like, how excited everyone must have been, what it is like to eat in hurry, and even the fear that everyone must have experienced as death visited Egypt. Make this real *because it was!* From there you can talk about how Israel ate the Passover every year. Talk about why they did that and what it meant. Finally, ask your children if they wish we did a Passover celebration today. Then make the tie to the Lord's Supper where we celebrate freedom from sin!

### Week 11 - March 11-17 - Exodus \*16 \*17 \*19 \*20 \*24

**SNAPSHOT** As noted last week, we skipped Moses' song of celebration in chapter 15. **Exodus 16** introduces us to manna. **Exodus 17** shows more grumbling and a vicious battle won by God's power. We are jumping chapter 18 where Moses' father-in-law gives him advice about how to handle the huge responsibility of judging all the people's problems and disputes. **Exodus 19** brings Israel to Mount Sinai. Verses 4-6 become theme verses for what Israel is to be and why God redeemed them. In **Exodus 20** God gives His people the Ten Commandments, the basis for the covenant or Law of Moses. Some of the more detailed aspects of Moses' law are contained in chapters 21-23 which we will not read. **Exodus 24** gives us the covenant ratification ceremony. In verses 9-11 Moses and other key men eat in God's presence! We haven't seen this kind of fellowship between God and man since the Garden of Eden. The Law of Moses provides a limited kind of restoration to man and God being together. It isn't perfect or all we would want but it is a step in the right direction!

**RUBBER** - This section of Scripture provides us two key applications. First, Jesus makes use of the story of manna

and says He is the true manna in John 6:48ff. Think about what Jesus means by that. What did manna represent and mean to Israel? What does Jesus mean to disciples today? Secondly, too often all we have to say about the Ten Commandments is that we aren't under them today. That is true (note Col 2:14; Gal 3:25) but when God gives a list of His top ten concerns shouldn't we pay attention and study them? Examine the Ten Commandments and consider how they frame all of life and all of our relationships. What do we learn from them?

**IN THE MINIVAN** - Twice in our readings this week Israel complains and murmurs. Unfortunately, that problem didn't die in the desert with the Israelites! Talk about grumbling and why Israel grumbled as they did. Discuss why people complain today. Make the emphasis on how God feels about our murmuring. This is the week to teach gratitude and thankfulness as replacements to grumbling and complaining. We have so much. How can we murmur against God for what we don't have?

## **Week 12 - March 18-24 - Exodus \*32 \*33 \*40 Numbers \*13 \*14**

**SNAPSHOT** - We are jumping a long section of Exodus that includes the free-will offerings for the Tabernacle (ch. 25), and the extraordinarily detailed plans for the construction of the Tabernacle and the priests' clothing (chs. 26-31). **Exodus 32** contains the shocking story of flagrant disobedience and idolatry at Sinai. **Exodus 33** continues that story, making it clear that God no longer intends to go with Israel (see verse 2). After Moses intercedes God does decide to go with Israel once more (verses 13-16). From there we skip over the details of erecting the Tabernacle (chs. 34-39) and go directly to its final erection and God's glory filling it (**Exodus 40**). God is dwelling among His people! We will not read the book of **Leviticus** but all disciples should have some familiarity with the concept of sacrifice and especially sin offerings (see chs. 4 and 5, for example). Leviticus 10 tells of Nadab and Abihu's sin, providing an important lesson on worshiping as we please instead of as God instructs. Much of Jesus' work at the cross is prefigured in the Day of Atonement (ch. 16). **Numbers** opens with some important details about the size of the Israelite nation and some additional laws. Israel leaves Sinai after being camped there for a year in chapter 10. There is grumbling (again) and even Miriam gets caught up in it (chs. 11-12). We will read **Numbers 13-14** that describes Israel's crisis of faith and failure to trust God. These chapters explain why Israel had to wander in the wilderness for forty years.

**RUBBER** - Think carefully about the Tabernacle and even consider skimming through a little of Leviticus so you can consider how this material points to Christ and what He has done for us. The Tabernacle and the Levitical priesthood were all about sacrificing, pointing to the ultimate sacrifice of Christ for us. If we don't appreciate the holiness of God and the awfulness of sin and its terrible price we won't be impressed with the cross! The faithless ten spies of Numbers 13 give us a good chance to think about faith, how it is built up, and why with so much evidence for God's power and goodness these people didn't trust Him. Are we any better today?

**IN THE MINIVAN** - This week the Golden Calf and the failure to enter into Canaan are the key points for children. Review the Ten Commandments and then talk about how those commandments were violated by worshiping the Golden Calf. Discussion can include how Israel was mimicking Egyptian worship practices instead of worshiping as God instructed, and how people always want something tangible to see when they worship. The account of the failure to enter the Promised Land in Num 13-14 should spark talk about peer pressure, demonstrating faith when few others are, and trusting in God. Other talking points can include how pessimism and negativity are contagious, and how focusing on yourself and what you can do instead of God's power always leads to defeat.

## **Week 13 - March 25-31 - Numbers \*21:4-9; 25 \*32 Joshua \*1 \*2 \*3**

**SNAPSHOT** - We are moving past some of the material associated with the wilderness wanderings. Numbers 15 contains more laws, while Numbers 16-17 covers Korah's rebellion. Numbers 18-19 has more laws, and in Numbers 20 Miriam dies, Moses sins by striking the rock, and Aaron dies. We are reading the account of the Bronze Serpent (**21:4-9**) but we will skip over Balaam's miserable story (chs. 22-24) to get to the idolatry at Peor (**Numbers 25**). A census, the plan for Joshua to succeed Moses, and more laws of offerings and vows occupy Numbers 26-30. Numbers 31 tells of the war against Midian. We are reading **Numbers 32** because the tribes settling on the eastside of Jordan becomes important throughout the rest of the Bible story. Numbers concludes by recounting the journey of Israel (ch. 33), the boundaries of the land (ch. 34), the cities of refuge (ch. 35) and more

information about women inheriting (ch. 36). Unfortunately, we are not reading in Deuteronomy, where Moses preaches powerfully about what God has done for Israel and charges them to faithfulness before they enter the Promised Land. Sadly they enter that Land without Moses (Deut 34). **Joshua 1** opens with new leadership and God's promises to him so that he can lead confidently. **Joshua 2** tells the exciting story of Rahab and the spies. In **Joshua 3** the Israelites cross the Jordan. Much here establishes that Joshua is a leader like Moses and there is an emphasis on the ark of the covenant as representative of God's very presence with His people.

**RUBBER** - The Bronze Serpent story provides an excellent illustration of salvation today. If one believed in the Bronze Serpent but refused to look upon it would they be healed? Make certain you spend time with Joshua 1:1-9. How can we be strong and courageous today? What is the key to Joshua's success (see verse 8) and how is that a key for our success as well today?

**IN THE MINIVAN** - The two stories of sin in Numbers 21 and 25 provide vivid reminders that while God wants to save His people they often don't seem to want to be saved! Talk with your children about sin, and why we are so easily drawn into it. Emphasize God's gracious provision to heal and deliver, but don't fail to mention God's judgment upon sinners. These Old Testament stories help us take God seriously! Joshua's story marks a new leader as the people go into a new land. Discuss how it must have felt to be Joshua. Think about the powerful miracle of Joshua 3. What would it have been like to be there and see that happen? How much courage would it take to be a priest and to walk into the overflowing Jordan? How can we build that kind of faith today?