



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

\*Books of Ezekiel and Daniel

\* Psalms 120-139

\* Proverbs (chapters 27-29)

\* Epistles of Peter, John and Jude

As the year winds down let's look back at all that has happened, thanks to our Read-Thru 2013...

We made new friends and drew closer to some we already counted as friends. And most importantly, through our independent reading, group meetings, field trips, and "Lord Provides" projects, we grew closer to the Lord. As James told us last month: *When we draw closer to God, an amazing thing happens: He draws closer to us!* He actually meets us more than halfway; we just have to step out in faith. Thanks, dear readers, for stepping out with us into this wonderful Biblical adventure and making 2013 an exciting, productive, and broadening year.

Now, what about 2014? Please share your best ideas via [opendoorsagf@verizon.net](mailto:opendoorsagf@verizon.net). I'm thinking of some 6-session courses we could possibly host along with an independent Read-Thru. Let's definitely get our new "Following Jesus" booklet (*52 Things Jesus Said to Bring Us Closer to Him*) completed and circulated—and, finally, let's see how this month's reading can inspire us as we contemplate our plans for 2014:

Ezekiel and Daniel: *Ezekiel* was both a priest and a prophet, who ministered to Judah, both those exiled to Babylonia and those left in Jerusalem after the big take-over. The Book is in 5 parts: Ezekiel's vision of the Lord's glory and how God called him (1-3); several messages (some acted out) warning the people of Judah beforehand (4-24); judgements on nearby nations (25-32); Ezekiel's messages of hope after Judah was captured (33-39); and Ezekiel's vision of the new temple in Jerusalem (33-48). The best known of Ezekiel's visions is the one with the dry bones coming back to life again, in Chapter 37.

The *Book of Daniel* also brings to mind a couple of famous stories: the three men thrown into the fiery furnace and Daniel being thrown into the lions' den. You'll find it very interesting to read these stories in context, as actually recorded in God's Word. The first half of the Book (1-6) tells how Daniel and his friends are ripped from Judah and taken to Babylon, where they remain faithful to the Lord (and become important officials in the government of Babylon, then in the Medo-Persian empire after it conquered Babylonia). The rest of Daniel's Book reports several visions and how the angels explained them to him. We see how God controls human events, guides empires into power, and later lets them be conquered by other empires. It also shows how God cares for individuals who are faithful to Him and brings justice and victory for His people (See Daniel 7:13-14).

Psalms and Proverbs: This month we'll enjoy a number of small, but inspiring and well-known psalms, like #121, which starts like this: *I look to the hills! Where will I find help? It will come from the Lord who created the heavens and the earth.*" and #127, which starts with *Without the help of the Lord it is useless to build a home or guard a city. It is useless to get up early and stay up late in order to earn a living. God takes care of His own even while they sleep.*" My favorite in this section is #139, which I learned by heart. Initially I left out verses 19-22, but am thinking of adding them back in for the next time I share it so it's more authentic. Read the entire psalm and see what you think...

The theme of this month's Proverbs are "Don't Brag about Tomorrow," "The Law of Moses Makes Sense," and "Use Good Sense." They sound like they're filled with lots of much-needed, practical wisdom, don't they? Let's find out.

Letters from Peter, John and Jude: This month we'll finish all the Epistles. The ones from *Peter* and *John* are especially enriching because they're based on the actual experiences of Jesus' two closest disciples. *Jude* is a very short Book written by an actual brother of Jesus (as the book of *James*). Let's see what verses in these Books encourage us as we move forward—and may even inspire us to learn them by heart as we apply them to our lives! Have a great month!