

# BIBLE CHALLENGE 2018

## WEEK 50

The Bible Challenge 2018 Intro and the reflections and notes for each week may be found at [biblechallenge.pendletonchurch.org](http://biblechallenge.pendletonchurch.org)

### Read 4 chapters per day

December 10-16: Daniel 11-12; Joel 1-3; Obadiah; Zechariah 1-14; Revelation 1-8

In Joel we find another prophecy of the "Day of the Lord." Compare it to last week's reading in Zephaniah and to Daniel's visions which are paralleled in Revelation.

Obadiah shows us God's judgment against another people; Edom. Recall the story of Jacob and Esau from Genesis. In the Bible Edom is the name of the people who descended from Esau. Why does the writer say God will send destruction on Edom? Not all the Edomites were destroyed and some of those who survived lived in southern Palestine. The Greeks and Romans called them Idumeans. Herod the Great, ruler of Israel at the time of Jesus' birth, was an Idumean. How does that information impact your understanding of Herod's relationship to the people, priests, and other spiritual and government leaders of Israel in the years leading up to Jesus' birth and during Jesus' lifetime? How do you think the Jewish people regarded Herod? To what degree do you think Herod's response to finding out about Jesus' birth (although he didn't know it was Jesus, but a Jewish king who had been born) resulted from his acknowledgement of his lineage?

Zechariah is another book filled with visions. This book is a comfort to the Jews of Jerusalem and attributed to the time when the people were rebuilding the temple and returning home from Babylon. Look for familiar phrases and images, and relate the writing of this prophet to the history recounted in Ezra and Nehemiah concerning the same period and events.

And...CONGRATULATIONS! Upon completing Zechariah you have read through the Bible in its entirety!! Between now and December 31st you will finish the second read-through of the New Testament.

Keep all these readings in mind as you turn once again to John's Revelation.

As you read through Revelation this time, do you find you have greater insight into its imagery and meaning because of your experience with the Hebrew Bible, the religious writings with which John was intimately familiar? Notice the relationship between the promises of God in the Hebrew Bible - promises of destruction and salvation - and the end and new beginning John writes about that God has revealed to him. There are differing opinions concerning how Revelation should be interpreted. Whatever the perspective from which one reads this fascinating book of the Bible, it is always relevant to seek the Holy Spirit for understanding of what God is speaking to one concerning one's own journey with God and how to pray for the church and the world. How is the Spirit leading you? What is the Spirit revealing to you about who you are in Christ and what God is calling you to be and do as Christ's ambassador for the Kingdom of God in this world right now? As you continue through the Advent Season, consider how Christ is born again in your life each day in the here and now.