

**One Year Bible Blog – Weekly Notes - www.OneYearBibleBlog.com
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*Weekly Notes will cover our readings from Sundays through Saturdays***

Notes & Group Questions from October 3-9 readings (Questions (Q:) for groups are bolded below)

JEREMIAH 1:1 - 14:10

10/3 - Today we begin the book of the prophet Jeremiah!

~ Jeremiah ~

Author: Jeremiah

Date: Sixth century B.C.

Content: Jeremiah's life covered the last forty years of Judah's existence. The burden of his message was for God's people to accept the judgment of God so that a new beginning could be made. He lived through the invasions by the Babylonian armies, the deportations of his people by the enemy, the slaughter of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the Temple of God. He warned the people concerning these events, pleading with them to turn from their sins, but to no avail. He received only scorn and persecution. Jeremiah's life is described in some detail, thus making him the best known of the Old Testament prophets.

Theme: In the crisis days during which Jeremiah lived, he had but one message for the people: Repent and turn to God. All false hopes must be abandoned and God must be given his rightful place in the nation. Nothing can save the people – neither their wealth, their armies, their diplomats, nor even their religion – only God can save. The destruction of Jerusalem stands as a memorial for all time that when a nation rejects God, the inevitable result will be ruin. Jeremiah also has a message of hope. Although Judah had abandoned God, God had not abandoned them and would once again show himself mightily on their behalf. *(Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" p. 13)*

10/3 - Today in Jeremiah chapter 2 verse 26 we read this sad statement - *"Like a thief, Israel feels shame only when she gets caught. Kings, officials, priests, and prophets--all are alike in this."* **Q: How about us in our lives today? Do we only feel shame when we get caught? Do we realize that God knows exactly what we are doing even if we think we might be doing something in "secret"? Do you realize there are absolutely no secrets with God?**

10/4 - We read some harsh words today from God to Israel in Jeremiah chapters 2 & 3 - calling the nation a prostitute and an adulteress. These are not words a person wants to hear from God - much less an entire nation hearing these words! Jeremiah wrote this book during the last 40 years of Judah's existence, which is not surprising to consider when we read this in chapter 3 verses 8 through 10 - *"But now Judah, too, has left me and given herself to prostitution. Israel treated it all so lightly--she thought nothing of committing adultery by worshiping idols made of wood and stone. So now the land has been greatly defiled. But in spite of all this, her faithless sister Judah has never sincerely returned to me. She has only pretended to be sorry," says the LORD.*" Again, not words you want to hear from God. **Q: Can you imagine a much worse insult from God? A prostitute? An adulteress? As harsh as these words are - I almost hesitate to ask this - But I think I should - Today, are we ourselves ever a "prostitute" or an "adulteress" to God? Do we give ourselves over to sins and lusts and false loves that break God's heart because of his love for us?** Well, when we act in such a bad way, we are fortunate that God says things like he did in verse 1 of chapter 3 of Jeremiah today - *"But you have prostituted yourself with many lovers, says the LORD. Yet I am still calling you to come back to me."* Even though we may sin gravely against God, he still calls us to come back to Him! Through Jesus today we can come back to Him! **Q: Do you need to come back to Him in any way in your life? Will you? Will you leave behind any and all "adulteress" or "prostitute" behaviors, and return to Him simply as the child of God that you were always made to be?**

10/5 - Today in Jeremiah chapter 5 verses 14 through 17 we read God's words to Israel about the coming of the armies of Babylon! Per Tyndale's One Year Bible Companion today - *"Babylon was indeed an ancient nation. The old Babylonian empire had lasted from about 1900 B.C. to 1550 B.C., and earlier kingdoms had been on her soil as early as 3000 B.C. Babylon in Jeremiah's day would shortly rebel against Assyrian domination, form its own army, conquer Assyria, and become the next dominant world power."* It is very interesting to see the rise of Babylon in history and how God foretold Israel that Babylon was coming. God gave Israel so many chances to repent, but Israel wouldn't. Jeremiah in chapter 6 verses 10 & 11 today tells us - *"To whom can I give warning? Who will listen when I speak? Their ears are closed, and*

they cannot hear. They scorn the word of the LORD. They don't want to listen at all. So now I am filled with the LORD's fury. Yes, I am weary of holding it in!" **Q: What about us today - do we listen when God speaks?**

10/6 - Today in Jeremiah chapter 6 verse 16 we read - "*Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.*" I love these verses! It reminds me that on a daily basis each of us is standing at a crossroads. A crossroads of where the world would have us go and where God would have us go. Too often I am afraid we take the worldly path and not the ancient path. "*Ask where the good way is*" - **Q: Do you do this in your life? How often? I think we can best do this through prayer. "Ask, and you shall receive" we have learned from Jesus. Do we ask Jesus in prayer where the good way is? Then, do we walk in it? And the reward for walking in it is - "you will find rest for your souls."** I like this a lot! **Who doesn't want rest for our souls? Is your soul at rest today? Why or why not? If your soul is not at rest, is it possible that you are walking along the wrong path? The worldly path? Will you seek instead the ancient paths? The good Way? Will you find rest for your soul?**

10/7 - Jeremiah chapter 9 verses 23 & 24 definitely stood out to me today: "*This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man gloat in his wisdom, or the mighty man in his might, or the rich man in his riches. Let them boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the LORD who is just and righteous, whose love is unending, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!"*" **Q: Think God is serious when he follows something he says with "I, the LORD, have spoken!"? Do we ever gloat in our wisdom? Gloat in our might? Gloat in our riches? Instead, have you ever boasted that you truly know God and understand that God is just and righteous? Do you believe that God's love is unending?**

10/8 - Jeremiah chapter 10 today is a powerful look at "idols." Back in Jeremiah's days we're talking about little chiseled "gods" made out of wood & stone. But today? **Q: What are our idols? Perhaps our money, our jobs, our status, our relationships, our technology :), our lust - or perhaps even ourselves?** Jeremiah 10:10 reminds us: "*But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King.*" All of our idols are not True, though we often hope they will be. Our idols will deliver us nothing. God and His Son will deliver life to the fullest!

10/8 -
Jeremiah's Prayer is 10:23-24 is such a beautiful prayer :
*"I know, O Lord , that a man's life is not his own;
it is not for man to direct his steps.
Correct me, Lord , but only with justice-
not in your anger,
lest you reduce me to nothing."*

I like that Jeremiah says in this prayer, "Correct me, Lord". He knows there is correction to be made in his life - even a prophet of God knew his need of correction! This is a nice example of humility to say the least. **Q: How often do you pray to God "correct me"? Why might this be a good prayer? Do you need God to correct you? Will you allow God to direct your steps?**

10/9 - Today's readings are a bit unique in that the Jeremiah chapters relate to Psalm 79! Psalm 79 is about the post-destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar et. al. It's interesting to see pre- & post- destruction. The Jeremiah readings today may seem to you a bit tough to read. It is certainly sad to read about the coming destruction. As I read through these chapters I think about Jeremiah and how tough it must have been on him to know what was coming. In fact, Jeremiah gives a passionate prayer for the people of Jerusalem in today's readings in chapter 14 verses 7 through 9. The question that I think sometimes can come up for some as they read chapters like this in the Old Testament is: "Is this the same God we read about in the New Testament?" And I of course believe that absolutely yes this is the same God! The life of Jesus on Earth was obviously in between the time of Jeremiah and the time of you and me today. Jesus' life, ministry, suffering, death on the cross, and His resurrection saved us from our sins - and this graceful life of Jesus' had obviously not taken place in Jeremiah's time. However, I do also believe that God is very graceful throughout history including all of the Old Testament. Keep in mind that God is often saying in these chapters in Jeremiah: "come back to me", "repent", "abandon your idols" - and no one listens. God was giving chance after chance after chance of repentance... **Q: What about you in your life today? Is God saying to you in any way to "come back to me", "repent", "abandon your idols"? And are you listening? Will you repent? Will you return to the Lord?**

PHILIPPIANS 4:1 - 1 THESSALONIANS 2:8

10/3 - Wow... so many great teachings from Paul here today as we close out his letter to the church in Philippi! Paul's letter to the church in Colosse begins in our readings tomorrow! I love Philippians chapter 4 verse 4 today - *"Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again--rejoice!"* **Q: How does this verse speak to you? Are you full of joy in the Lord right now? Are you always full of joy in the Lord? Why or why not? Do you think Paul's teaching here is correct - should we always be full of joy in the Lord?** Let us rejoice!

10/3 - Verses 6 & 7 are so very powerful for each of us to truly learn and put into practice in our lives today! *"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."* **Q: Do you worry? Why does Paul tell us not to worry about anything? What did Jesus say to us about worrying in the Sermon on the Mount? What does Paul tell us to do instead of worrying?** Pray. This is a powerful powerful thought! Think about this the next time you catch yourself worrying. You know that when you worry you are wasting energy and time. So, why not follow Paul's simple instructions here - when you catch yourself worrying, start praying. Really. Don't give one more minute or one more ounce of your energy to worrying. When you find yourself worrying, get down on your knees and pray! Tell God what you need - AND thank him for all he has done. Sure, it may be tough to thank God at your moment of worrying, but you should do so, in addition to telling him what you need. We should always thank God. And then... here's the beauty.... you will experience God's peace! His peace will guard your heart and mind as you live in Jesus! Let us each stop worrying and start praying! Actually... while I'm already down this path, think about this. **Do you think that you spend more time each day worrying or praying? Really, think about this. How many minutes a day would you say that you worry? And how many minutes a day would you say you pray?** My hunch is that worrying takes up far more minutes for most of us... Look at how we are wasting precious time on worrying! We don't have that kind of time... Let us pray!

10/3 - And finally Philippians chapter 4 verses 8 and 9 are so beautiful: *"And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you."* **Q: What type of things do you think about typically? Do you typically think about what is true and honorable and right? Do you often think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable? Do you think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise? Or are you filling your mind with other thoughts? Thoughts that, like worry, are a complete waste of your precious time here on this earth? Will you instead put into practice Paul's teachings - and the teachings you have received this year from the One Year Bible - and allow the peace of God to be with you?**

10/4 - Today we begin Paul's letter to the church in Colosse!

~ **Colossians** ~

Author: Paul the apostle

Place: Rome

Date: A.D. 60 or 61

Content: Paul wrote this letter while a prisoner in Rome to a city he had never visited. He had come to know of these believers while living in Ephesus on his second missionary journey, and now he was concerned because he had heard of some strange pagan theories that were creeping into the church. The views that were troubling the Colossians were a mixture of astrology, magic, and Judaism, which downgraded Christ to being just some sort of angel. Paul wrote to correct this error by showing that Christ is none other than God and possesses the fullness of the eternal God. Instructions follow concerning Christian living.

Theme: In this important letter of Paul's we are presented with a carefully worked-out defense of Christ's deity and glory. He is all in all and the believer has everything he needs in Christ. Paul warns that believers out not to be led astray by the foolishness and the false wisdom of men. Instructions for Christian living stress the power of God for men and the joy that believers may have by making use of all the resources that are theirs in Christ. *(Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" pp. 27-28)*

10/4 - Colossians chapter 1 verses 15 through 17 are some of the most powerful statements in all of the Bible about Who Jesus truly is! *"Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation. Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see--kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and for him. He existed before everything else began, and he holds all creation together."* **Q: Do you believe these**

words of Paul's are true? Do you believe that Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God? Did Jesus exist before God made the Earth? Do you believe that Jesus holds all of creation together? Does Jesus hold you together?

10/5 - I love Paul's teaching about the Christian life in Colossians chapter 1 verse 27 today! *"For this is the secret: Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in his glory."* **Q: Were you aware of this secret? Does Christ live in you? Have you accepted Jesus into your life and your heart as your Lord and Savior so that he has your permission - your submission - for Him to live within you? Do you want Jesus to live in you? Do you have assurance that you will share in Jesus' glory for eternity?**

10/5 - Paul's teachings in Colossians chapter 2 verses 6 & 7 definitely stood out to me today: *"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to him. Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with thanksgiving for all he has done."* I absolutely love the thought of letting our roots grow down into Jesus and draw up nourishment from Jesus! Meditate on this thought for a while... I honestly haven't really ever thought about "having roots in Jesus." I mean, I certainly know Jesus is my Lord and Savior. I know Jesus lives within me. And I know the whole Chapter of John 15 about the vine & the branches has gotten me in the past to think about truly being attached to Jesus. But something about these verses from Paul about letting our roots grow down into Jesus really is profound for me today... **Q: How deep are your roots in Jesus today? Is there room for growth in your roots?** Let us grow! And let us overflow with thankfulness!

10/6 - Colossians chapter 2 verse 8 is a teaching from Paul that reminds me so much of our modern world today... *"Don't let anyone lead you astray with empty philosophy and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the evil powers of this world, and not from Christ."* **Q: Have you ever heard anyone in our world today offer you empty philosophy or high-sounding nonsense?** I know I have... And perhaps I've even preached it on occasion in my past too. Scary stuff. There is stuff out there today that does indeed come from human thinking - not divine thinking - and from the evil powers of this world - not from Christ. I think we need to prayerfully be so vigilant to protect ourselves from these empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense. I almost hesitate to write this... but I am feeling like I should. I think we need to even watch out for empty philosophy and high-sounding nonsense in some churches today too. I really don't mean to be divisive to the body of Christ, the church, by saying this. But I say this for our own good - for brothers and sisters in Christ. One thing that I have seen in churches on occasion that has alarmed me is what I'll call "the cult of personality" around a pastor. Meaning, I think it can reach a point in a church where there is an unhealthy fixation on a pastor or minister. Don't get me wrong. We'll all probably have a favorite pastor or minister or priest. But let us be cautious if ever our devotion to a pastor surpasses (or gets anywhere near) our devotion to Jesus. It's then when the "cult of personality" can lead to empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense invading our hearts and minds. Maybe there is someone out there that needs to hear this... Just pray about it to Jesus if ever you feel that you are paying more attention to a pastor / priest / anybody than you are paying to Jesus. And ask Jesus what he would have you do. Perhaps it would be to move on to another church... A church where Jesus is clearly preached, worshiped, and followed. Trust me, there are multitudes of churches out there where Jesus and his work on the cross for your sins is preached. Make sure Christ and Him crucified is preached clearly at your church!

10/6 - I absolutely love the imagery Paul uses in verse 11 today: *"When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. It was a spiritual procedure--the cutting away of your sinful nature."* The cutting away of your sinful nature! Isn't that profound to think about? It almost makes me feel 100 pounds lighter spiritually just thinking about it... Our old sinful nature was an old beast of a thing that bogged us down. Makes us slow. Makes us groggy. Keeps us foggy. But - Jesus can take the scissors of spiritual circumcision and cut away that old sinful nature! **Q: Doesn't this make you feel 100 pounds lighter to think about this? Doesn't this thought of cutting away the sinful nature make you want to never want to put on that old musty moldy deadly suit of sin ever again? Let us be free instead! Has Jesus circumcised you spiritually? Has Jesus cut away your sinful nature once and for all?** This all makes me think about butterfly coming out of its cocoon about to take flight... Let us fly!

10/7 - Colossians 3 verse 4 is so powerful and is really something each of us should reflect upon: *"And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory."* Here is the thing that really stops me in my tracks when reading this verse: "Christ, who is your life." Those are 5 incredibly powerful words when put together! And I'm afraid that sometimes we don't really live our lives as if Jesus is indeed our life. He is! Or he should be... Here's the thing. I've had a lot of conversations over the years with fellow Christians about who Jesus is to them. And I've thought a

lot about who Jesus is to me. And I think many of us can easily get to the point of saying, "well, yes, Jesus is my Savior." We can acknowledge that He died on the cross for our sins. He saved us. We're into salvation! But, I think sometimes it can get a bit fuzzier for us when we think about Jesus being our Lord - in addition to Jesus being our Savior. Meaning, if Jesus is our Lord, then we really need to take incredibly seriously and to heart Jesus' words and teachings in the Bible! And really allow Jesus to lead our lives. Transform our lives. Lord our lives. Well, I think this Colossians verse takes things even a step further. Maybe we're at the point where yes, Jesus is our Lord and Savior. But now, Paul here teaches us that Jesus is our very life! That's big... That's saying our life = Jesus. Jesus = our life. If you really stop to think about this and allow this into your heart you'll know how huge this is. Jesus is our life.... wow! That's very good news! Our job isn't our life. Our money isn't our life. Our health isn't our life. Even our family isn't our life - those these can all be good gifts. But none of these things are our life. Jesus is our life! **Q: Today, can you honestly say Jesus is your life? If not, will you begin to really think about this and pray about this? Is Jesus your life?**

10/7 - Verses 12 through 14 of Colossians chapter 3 are awesome! *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."* **Q: How are you doing on each of these virtues in your life today - Compassion? Kindness? Humility? Gentleness? Patience? Forgiveness? Love? Do you think you can do each of these well using just your own will power? Or, do regularly pray to Jesus to give you these virtues within your heart and to bring them to fruition in your life? Can you allow love to lead within you? Will you allow Jesus to lead you?**

10/8 - Today we wrap up our reading of the book of Colossians! Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians begins tomorrow! Colossians 4:6 today is fantastic: *"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."* Let your conversation be always full of grace. **Q: How often is this true for us? Are there times when our conversation is un-graceful? Judgmental perhaps? Angry? Curt? But Grace... that's something to strive for in all of our conversations! If we are grace-full in our conversations, where does that Grace come from?**

10/9 - Today we begin Paul's first letter to the church in Thessalonica!

~ **First Thessalonians** ~

Author: Paul the apostle

Place: Corinth

Date: A.D. 50 or 51

Content: On Paul's second missionary journey he visited Thessalonica but was forced to flee because of the intense persecutions that arose there (see [Acts 17:1-9](#)). After making his way to Athens and finally to Corinth, Paul heard from Timothy, whom he had sent to inquire about the Thessalonians, that they were standing fast in spite of their suffering. Paul wrote this letter to comfort and encourage the young believers in the Lord. He also wrote to confirm their faith in the basic doctrines of the church concerning God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus, Christian living, but especially concerning Jesus' second coming. Apparently because some believers had died, the remaining Christians were concerned lest the believing dead miss out on the resurrection. Paul writes to assure them that the dead in Christ rise first.

Theme: Paul comforts the persecuted believers with the assurance that God is with us and has assured us of ultimate victory. The final victory will occur at Jesus' return, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven and gather us to himself, ever to be with him. In the light of this we should bear up under persecution, living lives that are godly and above reproach. (Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" p. 28)

10/9 - Today in First Thessalonians 1:5 we read: *"For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true. And you know that the way we lived among you was further proof of the truth of our message."* This is a great reminder that while we are out and about in the world being salt and light, we're not just out there on our own. The Holy Spirit is doing work concurrently in other people's hearts. And indeed, the Holy Spirit is doing the true work of salvation, not us. I do like that Paul wrote that "the way we lived" was further proof of the truth. Christians are called to be in the world, but not of it. And I do think people pay attention to how we live. **Q: How are we living our lives today? Are we living a life of love? Are we compassionate? Are we caring? Are we serving the poor? Or - are we bought into consumerism? Are we selfish? Are we serving ourselves? Does the way we spend our money and time look different from how the culture says we should be spending our money and time? Are we giving to our church? Are we worshiping God at a church once a week? Are we praying frequently? How are you living your life today? If someone took a look at your life would it be**

abundantly clear that you are following Jesus?

PSALM 75:1 - 79:13

10/3 - Psalm 75 verse 7 is so powerful and so true... I need to hear this over and over again - *"It is God alone who judges; he decides who will rise and who will fall."* You and I do not judge. Well, we might try to judge, but it's all in vain if we do. And we risk turning judgment onto ourselves when we do. God alone judges. God alones decides who will rise and who will fall. We do not. God is God. We are not. This is a very good thing to always remember! :) **Q: How are you doing in judging or not judging others these days?**

10/4 - I love Psalm 76 verse 4's reflection on God! *"You are glorious and more majestic than the everlasting mountains."* I wonder how often we look at nature and forget that God created nature? I think so often we can look at a beautiful sunset or a mountain or a forest or an ocean and temporarily forget that God created these beautiful things. If God created these beautiful things, then doesn't it stand to reason that God is more glorious and more majestic than all of his created things? I've said this one before on this blog: before I believed in Jesus or really even God, I honestly think I was evangelized by creation. Meaning - I would look at a starry night with my friends and say things like, "How could there be so many stars up there like that and there not be a God? Things like that can't just happen by chance!" Praise God for his creation that was evangelizing me toward Him! **Q: Has creation ever evangelized you? Do you think creation might be able to evangelize your friends who do not yet know God?** Let us pray that we don't ever end up worshiping creation instead of the Creator. Let us be impressed and thankful and admire creation - but let us give the glory and the worship to the Creator, God, who is more glorious and more majestic than the everlasting mountains...

10/5 - Today in Psalm 77 verses 11 and 12 we read - *"I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds."* I think these verses get at one of the amazing things about each of us reading the One Year Bible this year - both the Old & New Testaments. We are reading perhaps for the first time - or maybe the 17th time - about God's miracles of long ago. We are "remembering" God's miracles for our spiritual ancestors, for ourselves, and for those around us in our lives today whom we will teach about God's saving love. **Q: As you are reading through the One Year Bible this year, are you truly "remembering" God's miracles of long ago? Are you meditating on all of His mighty works and considering His mighty deeds? Are you being transformed by this process? And will you now go forth and help others in your life "remember" and meditate on God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit's miracles of long ago?** Let us pray for "remembrance" today for ourselves and for others in our lives.

10/6 - Psalm 78 verse 4 is a wonderful reminder that we have an important opportunity to disciple and teach others in the generation coming up behind us - *"We will not hide these truths from our children but will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD. We will tell of his power and the mighty miracles he did."* **Q: Are you discipling or teaching someone about God's truth, deeds, and love? How are you helping the next generation learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?**

10/7 - Psalm 78 verses 41 & 42 stood out to me today - *"Again and again they tested God's patience and frustrated the Holy One of Israel. They forgot about his power and how he rescued them from their enemies."* I am continually amazed at how similar we are today to the Israelites when they were wandering in the desert. I am sure that we can on occasion test God's patience and frustrate him. I would also venture a pretty good guess that many of us forget about God's power. And forget how God rescued us from our enemies - and continues to rescue us daily. **Q: How about you - do you ever forget about God's power? Do you ever forget about how he has rescued you? What can we do to help ourselves remember? How do we stop testing God's patience and forgetting about Him?**

10/8 - Psalm 78 verse 57 is a metaphor that I pray is never used upon any of us! :) *"They were as useless as a crooked bow."* Can you imagine a worse insult? Well, yeah, I suppose there are worse. But coming from a Psalmist, this is no good. **Q: What does it mean to be a crooked bow? What does it mean to be a straight bow? How is your bow these days? Crooked, and perhaps focused on things of this world? (and thus basically useless) Or straight, and focused on advancing the Kingdom of God in your life and the lives of others around you? (and thus very useful)**

10/9 - Psalm 79 verse 13 stood out to me today - *"Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will thank you forever and ever, praising your greatness from generation to generation."* I like that imagery of being sheep in God's pasture! And Jesus, of course, is our Good Shepherd. **Q: Are you content with the idea of being a sheep in God's pasture?**

PROVERBS 24:17 - 34

10/3 - Today in Proverbs chapter 24 verses 17 & 18 we read – *“Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, or the LORD will see and disapprove and turn his wrath away from him.”* This is a powerful Proverb and reminds me that Jesus took this Proverb one step further in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5. This Proverb says *“do not gloat when your enemy falls.”* This in and of itself may be a hard teaching in our lives. Well, let us also recall Jesus’ teaching in Matthew chapter 5 verses 44 and 45 – *“I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.”* Jesus tells us to actually love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us! How’s that for a hard teaching? But. . . a beautiful teaching. A True teaching. A teaching we must put into practice in our lives. So, yes, let us not gloat or rejoice when our enemy falls. But more than that, let us love and pray for our enemies. Why? Perhaps through love and prayer they will one day not be enemies, but could actually be brothers and sisters? **Q: How are you doing with these teachings in your life? Do you have any enemies in your life? Are you not gloating or rejoicing when they fall? Are you literally praying for and loving your enemies today? Would this be a holy thing to put into practice in your life this very day?**

10/4 - We read an interesting Proverb in chapter 24 verses 21 & 22 today - *“My child, fear the LORD and the king, and don't associate with rebels. For you will go down with them to sudden disaster. Who knows where the punishment from the LORD and the king will end?”* I find it interesting that this Proverb says fear both God and the king. This is interesting that “fear” of the king - essentially the government - is put on equal footing with fear of God. I think this is important for us to pay attention to. God cares about governments. God though is of course above all governments. (I think it is important here to note that this Proverb does not say “worship” God and the king - we most definitely should not be worshiping the government....) It's interesting that we are instructed here to fear the king and don't associate with rebels. Or else you'll go down with them to sudden disaster. Generally speaking, I can agree w/ this Proverb. But, this is also one of those Proverbs where I think to myself - “well, wait a second - what about this type of situation.....” I am sure we can all think of some situations where we *should* be associating with “rebels” of the government - and where that association is actually the moral high ground - the right thing to do. (if the government was a Nazi government for example) **Q: What are your thoughts on this Proverb? Should we always / sometimes / never fear both God and “the king”?**

10/5 - Interesting Proverbs today in chapter 24 verses 23 through 25 - *“Here are some further sayings of the wise: It is wrong to show favoritism when passing judgment. A judge who says to the wicked, “You are innocent,” will be cursed by many people and denounced by the nations. But blessings are showered on those who convict the guilty.”* As we know from our readings earlier this year, God cares a lot about judges - and that judges should judge justly. Honestly, I think being a judge would be a very tough job in a lot of ways. I imagine there may be a judge or two reading this. Hats off to you for your work. I have to believe that obviously most judges would agree with this Proverb. But... there's likely some judges that may not follow this Proverb. That is a sad thing to consider. Here's actually a thought that just popped into my mind here as I am typing this. **Q: How about if you and I pray for our local and national judges on occasion? Do you ever do this?** I confess that I don't. And I should. We all should. Let us pray that our judges will not show favoritism when passing judgment. Let us pray that they convict the guilty. Let us pray God would lead them in wisdom in their judgments that they must make. Let us pray our judges rightly uphold and interpret the laws they are hired to uphold and interpret. Let us pray for our judges!

10/6 - We read an interesting Proverb in chapter 24 verse 26 today - *“It is an honor to receive an honest reply.”* This is an interesting Proverb to me because it almost seems to be inferring that it is rare to receive an honest reply! **Q: It wouldn't really be an honor to receive an honest reply if that was standard operating procedure, would it? This is actually a bit frightening to think about - that perhaps many / most replies we receive are not honest?** I think there is truth in this... I'll have to chew on it a bit more. I will say this - how about if you and I make it a practice to give honor to others in our lives by giving them an honest reply! Let us be truth-tellers!

10/7 - Proverbs 24 verse 27 is quite practical - *“Develop your business first before building your house.”* This Proverb may simply mean - don't buy or build a house until you know where your source of income is coming from. Develop your business or job first. Makes sense... And this is incredibly practical advice in our modern world today of foreclosures and bankruptcy and debt. Perhaps we're building and buying houses (and many other things) before we have developed our business! **Q: How does this Proverb stand out to you? What does it mean to you?**

10/8 - Proverbs 24:28-29 teaches us: *"Do not testify against your neighbor without cause, or use your lips to deceive. Do not say, 'I'll do to him as he has done to me; I'll pay that man back for what he did.'"* (NIV) This is a powerful reminder that revenge is a bad idea! As is lying - particularly against innocent neighbors! **Q: Any chance we ever plot revenge or lie against others without cause in our lives today? Think this is pleasing to God?** Let us instead live by the Holy Spirit and only be pure witnesses of Truth!

10/9 - Proverbs 24:30-34 is great Proverb today with the lesson coming in verses 33 and 34: *"A little extra sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like an armed robber."* The interesting thing about this Proverb for me personally is that I honestly am not getting enough sleep these days - I could use a little extra sleep! :) And yet, of course, this Proverb is also so very true. I think we need to basically balance what this Proverb teaches versus what our modern world preaches / teaches. I think our modern world can encourage us to be a workaholic - work 50, 60, 70 hours a week! Sleep 4, 5, 6 hours a night! Go, go, go! And yet, I don't think that is what this Proverb is teaching... Certainly not in context with the rest of the Bible. I think being a workaholic is just as dangerous as being slothful. We need to find the happy middle - which I think only is ultimately achieved with God in our life. Without God we'll either think there's no point to life and be slothful or we'll think life is all about money, success, pride, etc. and be a workaholic. Let us live our lives with God where we know that work is important, but that work is most definitely not a god to be worshiped! **Q: Have you ever struggled with sleep issues in your life - too much or too little? How were they resolved? Or, how are you working to resolve them?**

Group discussions:

- Introductions.
- What were some of your favorite verses or passages from the past week's readings?
- What are some questions that were generated for you based on the past week's readings?
- What is something new you learned about God or the Bible from the past week's readings?
- How did God speak to you through the past week's readings?
- What is something you want to change or grow in your life based on the past week's readings?
- **Discuss the bold Questions in the Study Notes**
- Any prayer requests for the group for the coming week?

Each group is encouraged to close in prayer.

Daily questions for this next week's readings you may want to journal or pray through and discuss with your group next Sunday:

- My favorite verses or passages:
- What I learned from the readings:
- My questions for further study:
- How God spoke to me through the Word:
- Something I want to change or grow in my life based on the Word:
- My prayer points based on the Word:

Visit www.OneYearBibleBlog.com this next week for daily commentary and questions for reflection.

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