

**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 for February 6-12 readings (Questions (Q:) for groups are bolded below)

EXODUS 23:14 - 35:9

2/6 - Today in Exodus chapter 23 we read about the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Harvest, and the Festival of Final Harvest (also known as Festival of Booths or Ingathering or Tabernacles). Commentary on Exodus chapter 24, entitled "**The Magnificent Meal on Mt. Sinai**" is at bible.org [at this link](#). This old covenant meal was a foreshadowing of Jesus' new covenant Last Supper with his disciples just before his death and resurrection. In chapter 24 Moses is called up on the mountain for forty days and forty nights - similarly Jesus spent forty days and forty nights in the desert after his baptism and before beginning his public ministry.

2/7 - Today in Exodus chapters 26 & 27 we read about God's plans for the Tabernacle, the Altar and the Courtyard. This is my 8th time reading through the One Year Bible, and I have to admit, I have zoned out a bit when reading these chapters in years past. But for some reason this year these details were fascinating to me today! Why the change? I'm not 100% sure, other than I do think repeated study of the Bible year after year does bear fruit and does grow our interest in every iota of God's Word. So, if by chance you felt like you were zoning out a bit when reading these chapters today, don't be discouraged. The interest will definitely come with time and further study of all of God's Word. Let me recommend to you that you don't skim over chapters like these though. Please do read each word. If you skim this year, you'll skim next year and you'll miss out on the fruit that will come from this study. **Q: Why do you think God put so much detail and planning into describing the Tabernacle, etc. in the Bible? Do you think God puts this much detail and thought into all of His creation? Into you?**

2/8 - Exodus chapter 28 verse 1 stood out to me in today's readings: "*Your brother, Aaron, and his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, will be set apart from the common people. They will be my priests and will minister to me.*" Here we see that the priests are being set apart as mediators between the people of Israel and God. And this role is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ as our high priest. Jesus is now the mediator between God and us. Personally, I still do see so much value in pastors and clergy in our lives and churches today. We'll study more about these important roles in Paul's writings in the New Testament. However, I also personally believe that we can approach the throne of God through Jesus Christ as our mediator - and that we don't need another human mediator here on earth to approach God. Jesus is more than enough. **Q: How is Jesus your high priest today? How does Jesus mediate between you and God?**

2/9 - Today in Exodus chapter 29 we read about the dedication of Aaron and his sons as priests! Verse 37 stood out to me in this chapter: "*After that, the altar will be exceedingly holy, and whatever touches it will become holy.*" It's interesting to consider the verses prior to this - with the 7 days of sacrifices of young bulls. For some reason this verse reminded me of Jesus and how people could simply touch the tassels of his robes and they would be healed. I think it's fair to say that Jesus was much more holy than this altar was - and Jesus did not require purification rituals or sacrificing of bulls to make Jesus holy, as this altar did. Jesus "embodied" holiness! **Q: Do you believe Jesus is Holy, Holy, Holy? What does Jesus' holiness mean to you today? Does it mean anything? Does it change anything in your life?**

2/9 - In Chapter 30 we read about the incense altar. I read a commentary that said the incense from this altar represented prayers to God from his people. We can see this similarity in Revelation chapter 8 verses 3 & 4: "*Then another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar. And a great quantity of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God's people, to be offered on the gold altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, mixed with the prayers of the saints, ascended up to God from the altar where the angel had poured them out.*" **Q: Do you believe that your prayers to God are like fragrant incense? Does this imagery help think about your prayer life? How is your prayer life these days?**

2/10 -Chapter 31 verses 1 through 3 stood out to me today: "*The LORD also said to Moses, "Look, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, intelligence, and skill in all kinds of crafts."* These verses make me wonder about our lives. **Q: How has God chosen you? What has God given you as gifts and skills? Do you believe that your gifts, skills, and wisdom come from God? How are you using these gifts, skills, and wisdom in the service of God?**

2/10 - In verse 13 we read: *"Tell the people of Israel to keep my Sabbath day, for the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between me and you forever. It helps you to remember that I am the LORD, who makes you holy."* **Q: How about for you? Do you think taking one day of rest – true rest – as a Sabbath is a good idea? Is there an activity that you are doing 7 days a week, that you can do just 6 days a week? Are you over-scheduling yourself maybe 7 days a week? Can you take 1 day a week to not be scheduled?**

2/11- Today Exodus chapter 32 verse 1 made me think about spiritual "boredom" - *"When Moses failed to come back down the mountain right away, the people went to Aaron. "Look," they said, "make us some gods who can lead us. This man Moses, who brought us here from Egypt, has disappeared. We don't know what has happened to him."* I guess what made me think in this verse was this - Moses was gone only 40 days and 40 nights, up Mt. Sinai. Granted, the Israelites were in the middle of nowhere, so this actually might be quite a long time for him to be gone in these circumstances. But, my thought is this – **Q: Do you think maybe the Israelites had somehow gotten "bored" with God? And I ask this because I wonder if maybe we today get "bored" with God or "bored" with our faith? And if so... why? Why did the Israelites get bored? Why do we get bored?** What makes me nervous about getting bored with our faith is that what we see take place later in this chapter to the Israelites I think can happen to us - we can pursue false Gods and indulge in dangerous sins. Typically, I find faith in God and a relationship with God to be the most adventurous thing on earth! However, I will admit that there have been seasons in my walk where I somehow got bored with my faith. And I think if I honestly look back at those seasons, I think the boredom came because I stopped moving forward in my relationship with God. I let my faith kind of stagnate as a status quo. I started to get distracted by worldly things. And I got spiritually bored. And this was not good. **So - I wonder - what's our cure for boredom in our faith? What keeps our faith fresh? Part of me thinks that daily spiritual disciplines are part of the answer. Reading the Bible every day. Really praying every day. Giving thanks to God every day. How about for you? What do you do to keep your faith fresh?**

2/11 - Today in verses 7 & 8 about the golden calf – *"Then the LORD told Moses, "Quick! Go down the mountain! The people you brought from Egypt have defiled themselves. They have already turned from the way I commanded them to live. They have made an idol shaped like a calf, and they have worshiped and sacrificed to it. They are saying, `These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you out of Egypt.'"* **Q: What about us in our lives today? Are we so different from the Israelites? Do we make our own versions of "golden calves" today? Do we have idols that we worship? Money? Career? Popularity? Relationships? Addictions? Our Intelligence? Technology? Do these idols stand in the way of our worship of God? Do they stand in the way of our relationship with God? Do these idols defile us? Do we think sometimes that these idols have actually "brought us out of Egypt" – instead of God? Will we give up these false idols and return to worshipping only God the Father, Son & Holy Spirit with all of our hearts, minds, soul and strength? Will you give up your "golden calf" at the feet of Jesus today?**

2/12 - Exodus chapter 34 verses 6 & 7 are beautiful and we will hear these words repeated again later in the Old Testament a few times: *"I am the LORD, I am the LORD, the merciful and gracious God. I am slow to anger and rich in unending love and faithfulness. I show this unending love to many thousands by forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion."* **Q: How do these words resonate with you? How do you see that God is merciful and gracious? Slow to anger? And rich in unending love and faithfulness? Have you asked God for forgiveness for your sins and rebellion?**

MATTHEW 24:9 - 27:31

2/6 - Jesus' teaching in Matthew chapter 24 verse 36 has always stood out to me - particularly when my friends today want to dive into conversations about "if" the end is near: *"However, no one knows the day or the hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows."* No one knows the day or the hour - only God. Good for us to keep in mind. We're not God. :) Verse 35 is an amazing reminder that Jesus' words in the Bible will outlast every single material thing around us today: *"Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will remain forever."* **Q: Do you believe that Jesus' words will remain forever?** In today and yesterday's readings in Matthew chapter 24 we read about the end times. **Q: Do you do much study of the end times? What are some books or resources or websites you could point others to, to study more about the end times?** I have to admit, I don't think about the end times very much. I know they will come, but I guess I feel like focusing on the end times too much might distract me from doing other ministry here and now. **How often do you think about the end times? Do you think there should be a balance of time and study when it comes to reflecting on the end times versus being active in ministry in our world today?**

2/7 - Today in Matthew chapter 25 we read about the 10 bridesmaids and verse 13 certainly stands out as Jesus teaches: *"So stay awake and be prepared, because you do not know the day or hour of my return."* **Q: What do you think it means in our lives today to be "awake" and ready for Jesus' return? Are you "awake" this very moment and ready for Jesus' return?** One of the most important points of this parable is that when Jesus returns you won't be able to barter or buy your way into the Kingdom. (as the 5 un-wise bridesmaids tried to do). You yourself will be ultimately responsible for your own spiritual condition! **How are you owning up to this responsibility?**

2/7 - Today we read in Matthew chapter 25 verses 14 through 30 Jesus' "Parable of the Talents." This story of the three servants has often been a parable I have struggled with. For a long time I didn't get what was so wrong about the guy who buried the money. "He at least gave back to the master the same amount he was originally given," I thought. "What's so wrong with that?" Well, as I read this parable again, the thing that really stands out to me is that this parable is not talking about simply money. . . but I think it is talking about our very lives and our time here on earth. I read it now as if God gives each of us a certain amount of time to live on this earth and a certain amount of gifts and skills. And then, we have to ask ourselves - will we simply just go through life very stably & comfortably with those gifts and skills – perhaps even just going through the motions and serving ourselves – to the extent that when God calls us home, we have really not produced much of anything in our lives? What if we spend our time & gifts in such a way that by the end of it we haven't really blessed or served others? We simply give back to God at the end of our lives what God gave to us and nothing more. OR - is it possible that God is calling each of us to do so much more with our lives? Is God calling us to really use the time, gifts and skills he has given us for something bigger than ourselves? Is God calling us to produce a great harvest of loving and serving and blessing others in our lives? So that when we arrive at heaven's gate at the end of our lives we will hear verse 21 from God Himself - *"The master was full of praise. Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!"* **Q: How about your life today? How are you multiplying the skills and gifts that God has given you in your life? How are you investing your skills and gifts in loving service of others? How are you at least "doubling" God's investment in you? What stood out to you in reading the parable of the talents this year?**

2/8 - Today in Matthew chapter 25 we read about the Final Judgment. Verses 34 is an amazing thing to imagine coming in the future: *"Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* What a beautiful thought - come and inherit the Kingdom prepared for YOU from the foundation of the world! **Q: Do you believe in this inheritance? Do you look forward to this inheritance? How often do you think about this inheritance?**

2/8 - Verses 37 through 40 are so powerful for each of us to consider while we are still here on earth: *"Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?' And the King will tell them, 'I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'"* Whatever we do for one of the least among us, we do for Jesus. And - what we do not do for the least among us, we do not do for Jesus. **Q: How is God calling you today to give food, give water, show hospitality, give clothing, visit the sick, or visit those in prison for the least among us? How do you do this for Jesus?**

2/9 – Matthew 26 Verses 26 through 28 today certainly will remind us of why Communion / the Lord's Supper is so important to us as believers in Jesus: *"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.'" Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."* This all took place the night before Jesus was crucified. The bread represents Jesus' body, given for us. The wine represents Jesus' blood, poured-out for many through Jesus' atoning death. **Q: Do our readings in Matthew today remind you of Communion / The Lord's Supper at your church? Is this a positive remembrance for you? How important is Communion / The Lord's Supper to you personally these days? Do you look forward to this remembrance at your church? Have you ever experienced Communion / The Lord's Supper with others in settings outside of your normal worship experience? Maybe at a prayer gathering or outside or in other beautiful settings?**

2/9 - Verse 35 always stands out to me whenever I read it: *"No!" Peter insisted. "Not even if I have to die with you! I will never deny you!" And all the other disciples vowed the same.*" I guess what jumps out at me in this verse is the question - are we really any different from Peter? Would we proclaim that we would not deny Jesus if you asked us straight up? Yes I think we would proclaim that. But then... I get to thinking. About how we live our life sometimes. About the

decisions we make. About maybe even the bad habits we foreswore off when we were a new Christian. **Q: And yet... do we still find ourselves going back to those bad habits - back to those sins? And, if we are doing this conscientiously - are we in a way denying Jesus when we knowingly sin now? Are we at times denying Jesus as our Lord by our actions? At times, are we really that different from Peter?**

2/10 - In Matthew chapter 26 we read about Jesus' arrest. Verses 53 & 54 stood out to me today when Jesus says: *"Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly? But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?"* After praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was prepared for what must happen now... Notice how prayer came before this confidence for Jesus of what must happen now. (and Jesus knew that he could call down angels for protection - but he knew he shouldn't) **Q: Do you model Jesus' action of praying before embarking on a significant life decision or trial? How and when do you pray when a significant decision is coming up?**

2/12 - The Passion readings today are always tough... they bring home the reality of what Jesus did for each of us. Tomorrow's readings are tougher. An image of Pilate asking the crowd in verse 22: *"But if I release Barabbas," Pilate asked them, "what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?"* I read an interesting commentary on verse 24 today: *"Pilate saw that he wasn't getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this man. The responsibility is yours!"* Tyndale's commentary said that even though Pilate verbally said the "responsibility is yours" and even though he washed his hands - his responsibility remained. He was essentially afraid about losing his job, because there was the threat to report him to Caesar (John 19:12). Pilate was the Roman governor from AD 26-36 for Judea and Samaria. One of his main duties was to simply "keep the peace" in this outlying area of the Roman Empire - and to do "whatever was necessary" to maintain the "peace"... **Q: Have you ever tried to "keep the peace" in your life – family – job – and ended up turning your back on God? Can true peace be found in our lives apart from God?**

PSALM 30:1 - 33:22

2/6- Today in Psalm 30 verses 4 through 5 we read: *"Sing to the Lord; you saints of his; praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning."* **Q: How does this verse speak to you? Do you believe that God's anger can last only a moment, but his favor last a lifetime? If you are weeping now in some area of your life, do you believe that God can bring rejoicing to you? Will you pray to God to grant you favor in this life and in life everlasting? Will you pray to God to heal any situation that you are weeping over today, and to bring you rejoicing tomorrow? Do you look forward to this rejoicing that will allow you to sing to the Lord as a saint and to praise his holy name?**

2/7 - Psalm 31 verse 1 is such a powerful start to this powerful Psalm of David's - *"O LORD, I have come to you for protection; don't let me be put to shame. Rescue me, for you always do what is right."* **Q: In your life today, do you need protection from something? If so, will you run to God for your protection? Do you believe that God can rescue you? Do you believe that God can save you from shame? Do you believe that God always does what is right?**

2/8 - Have you ever felt like Psalm 31 verse 10... *"I am dying from grief; my years are shortened by sadness. Misery has drained my strength; I am wasting away from within."* I recently read C.S. Lewis' book ["A Grief Observed"](#). Have you read this? It is a very short book. But, wow, it is a powerful short book! It is a memoir C.S. Lewis wrote after the death of his wife and it is so incredibly thoughtful and moving as C.S. Lewis works through his grief and his questions for and about God. Psalm 31:10 reminds me of this book... though not really... it seems like C.S. Lewis didn't quite get as down as the level of this verse. Anyhow - great book I think for any Christian who has lost a loved one. **Q: What has been consoling for you during a time of loss? Do you have any other book recommendations for people who might be going through grief? Books that were helpful to you when you went through a time of grief?**

2/9 - This is a wonderful look at God's goodness in Psalm 31 verse 19: *"Your goodness is so great! You have stored up great blessings for those who honor you. You have done so much for those who come to you for protection, blessing them before the watching world."* **Q: Do you believe that God's goodness is indeed great? Are you honoring God with your life and your actions and your thoughts each day? Do you believe that God is storing up blessings for you? Do you believe that God will bless you if you go to him for protection?**

2/10 - Today we read Psalm 32, which is a wonderful testimony of joy about God's gift of forgiveness to us when we

confess our sins to God! In Psalm 32 verses 1 & 2 we read: *"Oh, what joy for those whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!"* **Q: Do you agree with this Psalmist that there is joy in forgiveness? How do you confess your sins these days? Do you confess them verbally to someone else - a pastor / minister / priest / mentor / friend / accountability partner? Why do you confess them verbally? Do you confess your sins to God in prayer? After confessing your sins verbally or in prayer do you feel any different? Do you think confession is relevant? Do you think confession is a spiritual discipline that should be practiced regularly?**

2/11 - Psalm 33 verse 11 is strong today - *"But the LORD's plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken."* I think the thing that grabs me about this verse is that it is God's plans - not our plans - that stand firm forever. Therefore, it's only logical in my mind that we should align our lives such that they are part of God's plan - God's kingdom. I think reading the Bible each day is one excellent way to discern what God's plans are. And then - once we know what God's plans are, will we then align our lives with his plans? Knowing that his intentions can never be shaken? **Q: How do you align your life with God's plans? Do you consciously try to do this?**

2/12 - Psalm 33 verse 12 today is awesome: *"In him our hearts rejoice, for we are trusting in his holy name."* **Q: How Does your heart literally rejoice when you think about God? How do you trust in God's holy name?**

PROVERBS 7:24 - 9:6

2/6 - Proverbs chapter 7 verse 25 reminds us once again of the importance of guarding our hearts, the very wellspring of our lives: *"Don't let your hearts stray away..."* **Q: Is there anything in your life that is causing your heart to stray away from God's Truth? Will you not allow you heart to go down that dangerous path? Will you return your heart's allegiance wholly to your Maker and Provider? Will you allow your heart to be chained to God alone, and not to any temptations or sins?**

2/7 - I love the beginning of Proverbs chapter 8 with the imagery of Wisdom calling out to all humankind! Do you hear the call of wisdom in your life today?? Today we read in Proverbs chapter 8 verses 10 & 11: *"Choose my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge over pure gold. For wisdom is far more valuable than rubies. Nothing you desire can be compared with it."* **Q: How are you seeking God's instruction in your life above all else? Do you agree with this Proverb that wisdom is far more valuable than riches? Is reading the Bible each day in 2010 adding to your wisdom? Are you seeking to do more than just read the Bible this year? How are you diving into further study of the Bible? How are you allowing your study of the Bible to transform you? How are you allowing the Bible to change how you think, act, and live? How are you allowing the Bible to give you godly wisdom?**

2/8 - Proverbs 8 verse 13 is a powerful look at what Wisdom hates! *"That is why I hate pride, arrogance, corruption, and perverted speech."* **Q: When you look at your own life - do you hate pride, arrogance, corruption and perverted speech in your own behavior?**

2/11 - Proverbs chapter 8 verse 36 today tells us - *"But those who miss me have injured themselves. All who hate me love death."* This is a powerful reminder of why we should seek and love God's wisdom all of our lives. Let us not injure ourselves! Let us not hate wisdom. Let us not love death. **Q: How do you make sure that you don't miss God in your life?**

2/12 - Proverbs chapter 9 verses 5 & 6 are a reminder that not only does Temptation call us (as we've read earlier in Proverbs this year), but Wisdom calls out to us as well! *"Come, eat my food, and drink the wine I have mixed. Leave your foolish ways behind, and begin to live; learn how to be wise."* **Q: Which voice are you listening to these days? Whose invitation are you accepting? Temptation's? Or Wisdom's? Whose call will you answer? I love all of our Proverbs readings about wisdom these days. And obviously I think most of us would agree that we are finding wisdom in the Bible. My question for today is this - can we find wisdom outside of the Bible? For example, I read Jim Collins famous business book "Good to Great" a few years ago, and I believe I found some business wisdom in this book. I listen to Dennis Prager's radio show and think that I gain some wisdom from his comments on occasion. I read the Wall Street Journal and think that gives me some wisdom periodically. I think the difference though between these 3 modern day sources and the Bible is that Good to Great, Dennis Prager, and the Wall Street journal are not 100% wisdom 100% of the time. Whereas the Bible I believe is 100% wisdom 100% of the time. How about you? Do you think you get wisdom in places outside of the Bible today? Where are those**

places?

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:

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