

**One Year Bible Blog – Weekly Notes - www.OneYearBibleBlog.com
March 13 - March 19, 2011, [Copyright © 2004-2011 One Year Bible Blog](http://www.OneYearBibleBlog.com)
Weekly Notes will cover our readings from Sundays through Saturdays**

Notes & Group Questions for March 13 - 19 readings (Questions (Q:) for groups are bolded below)

NUMBERS 19:1 - 29:40

3/13 - Today in Numbers chapter 20 verse 12 we read about God pronouncing that Moses & Aaron would not enter the Promised Land - *"But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!"* Why did this happen? Well, it's best to stick with Scripture - God says that Moses & Aaron did not trust God enough. They did not trust God enough to demonstrate his holiness to the people of Israel. Thus they will not lead them into the Promised Land. Where was the lack of trust? Go back to verse 8 and you'll see God tell Moses to "command the rock" for water - command meaning verbally... then in verse 11 we see Moses strike the rock twice - not using the verbal command God instructed him on, but using an action. There also may have been a pride issue when Moses in verse 10 says "must we bring you water from this rock?" You'll notice the little word WE - We being Moses & Aaron? -this is probably not the way to best recognize God for God bringing water out of the rock... It looks like Moses is taking credit. **Q: How about us in our lives today? Are there times when we disobey God's direct commands to us? Are there times when we take credit for God's work? Even if we generally follow God's instructions - as Moses clearly does for the majority of his life - should we be on constant watch that we do not disobey God?**

3/14 - Today in Numbers chapter 22 we read about Balak sending for Balaam - hoping Balaam will curse the Israelites. Balak sends messengers the 1st time and Balaam gets a message from God to not go with these messengers, as God has blessed the Israelites. What is interesting to me are verses 15-17: *"Then Balak tried again. This time he sent a larger number of even more distinguished officials than those he had sent the first time. They went to Balaam and gave him this message: "This is what Balak son of Zippor says: Please don't let anything stop you from coming. I will pay you well and do anything you ask of me. Just come and curse these people for me!"* For some reason these verses really reminded me of temptation in our lives today. Like Balaam with the messengers on their first visit, we may realize something is not what God would want us to do - and we send the temptation away. But... then the temptation can come back! In a bigger way - with more distinguished officials than before... with more allure than before... the temptation that we resisted once so valiantly can come back. And then, the question becomes - with the opportunity to be "paid well" by the temptation, will we still resist the temptation? Can we resist the temptation a 2nd time? Through Jesus, our mediator before our Heavenly Father, yes, I know we can. If temptation has visited you once - or twice - or even many times - will you pray to God today in the name of Jesus that temptation will never overcome you? **Q: How do you resist temptation in your life? Are you still tempted today? What are some current temptations? How will you resist them?**

3/15 - Today in Numbers chapter 22 we read about Balaam's talking donkey! Yes, this is a very unique portion of scripture, and, yes, one we can learn from. In verses 27 & 28 we read: *"When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat her with his staff. Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?"* There is a lot going on in the verses leading up to this point, and in the verses thereafter - which you can study more [at this link](#) . I think one thing for us to pay attention to here is how we are sometimes saved from a bad situation by what at first glance appears to be an "inconvenience." A donkey laying down and starting to talk is inconvenient to Balaam. But, this talking donkey saved Balaam from an angel with a sword in hand that Balaam could not see. Are there perhaps "inconveniences" in your life today that are maybe saving you from a bad situation? Or, do you recognize inconveniences in the past that saved you from a bad situation? I know I have. If my car breaks down or I get sick or I miss a flight - all inconveniences - I try to remind myself that it might just be possible that this inconvenience was meant to be. It may have saved me from something much worse happening. The inconvenience - the "talking donkey" - may have actually saved me from something I could not see. Keep your eyes open for inconvenient "talking donkeys" in your life :) - and praise God for them when they appear! **Q: Have you ever had any "talking donkey" experiences in your life? An experience that at first glance was a huge inconvenience to you, but in retrospect was an incredible blessing from God? Basically, have you ever had a blessing in disguise? Do you think God still can use "talking donkey" experiences in our lives today to get our attention?**

3/16 - Today in Numbers chapter 24 we read about Balaam's prophecies! Verse 17 is thought to be prophetic of Jesus: "

see him, but not in the present time. I perceive him, but far in the distant future. A star will rise from Jacob; a scepter will emerge from Israel. It will crush the foreheads of Moab's people, cracking the skulls of the people of Sheth." Tyndale's commentary today suggests that the star rising from Jacob may be the prophecy that convinced the wise men to travel to Israel in search of the newborn Jesus. And just when it looks like Balaam was turning out to be maybe not so bad in chapter 24... we get to chapter 25... In chapter 25 we read about Israel's sin in worshipping Baal and their sexual immorality. What we don't find out until Numbers chapter 31 verse 16 is that Balaam was the principal instigator of the idea of leading Israel toward this sexual sin & idolatry: "They were the ones who followed Balaam's advice and were the means of turning the Israelites away from the LORD in what happened at Peor, so that a plague struck the LORD's people." Revelation chapter 2 verse 14 also refers to Balaam's hand in the incidents that took place: "Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality." Reading about these incidents in chapter 25 today – **Q: do you think people today still live in this tension of serving God versus being seduced by idols? What saves us from this tension?**

3/17 - Today in Numbers chapter 26 we read about Israel's second census, which was commanded by God. (We'll read later in the Bible a census conducted by David that was not commanded by God, which was a sin.) This 2nd census in numbers was taken approximately 38 years after the first census. The first census in Numbers chapters 1 & 2 was taken after Israel had left Egypt. This second census is being taken just before the conquest of the Promised Land. In verse 51 today we read: "So the total number of Israelite men counted in the census numbered 601,730." This total of the second census compares to 603,550 from the first census, so is very comparable. These second census numbers obviously reflect the 24,000 deaths we read about in chapter 25 - so this number would have been higher. To me, overall, to see the numbers so similar over 38 years in the wilderness shows that God's hand of blessing was so clearly upon the Israelites. They were flourishing in the desert. Hopefully this is encouraging to us today. If we are in right relationship with God, I believe our lives will clearly flourish in whatever circumstances we might find ourselves in - even if we are in the desert! **Q: Have you ever found yourself in a spiritual desert? How did God bring you living water and back to abundance? Do you look forward to heaven, where there will be no more deserts?**

3/19 - I read an interesting commentary today that said the giving of the instructions of the offerings for the festivals in today's readings was done as part of the transfer of power from Moses to Joshua that was coming up soon. As we saw in yesterday's readings with the census, there are 600,000 men about to enter the Promised Land - potentially 2 million or so total including women & children - who these instructions for the offerings for the festivals were given by Moses from God, as we see in chapter 29 verse 40 today: "So Moses gave all of these instructions to the people of Israel, just as the LORD had commanded him." **Q: How do you see transfers of power in your church take place today? Are they done well and orderly? How can you serve to help in times of transition in your church? Will be a helper?**

LUKE 1:1 - 3:38

3/13 - Today we begin the Gospel of Luke!

Author: Luke

Place: Perhaps Caesarea

Date: A.D. 60-65

Content: Luke was a physician and a traveling companion of the Apostle Paul. He wrote his Gospel for a cultured Greek named Theophilus in order to show the true humanity of Jesus and his place in history. For this reason Luke was careful to examine all the evidence very carefully and give precise dates for the events that took place. He begins with an account of Jesus' virgin birth, giving many details not found elsewhere. Jesus' Galilean ministry is described, followed by a lengthy account of Jesus' trip to Jerusalem. After Jesus' death and resurrection, the disciples are left rejoicing, waiting for the promised power of God from heaven to fill them.

Theme: Whereas Matthew shows Jesus to be the Jewish Messiah and Mark shows Jesus as the servant of God, Luke depicts Jesus as the perfect God-man whose genealogy may be traced back to Adam. Jesus is the greatest man in history and is placed within the flow of world events by Luke. He is the greatest man because of what he taught, what he did, why he died – and because he rose again from the dead. For this reason we ought to accept him as our Lord. (Above commentary is from Tyndale Publishers "The One Year Bible Companion" p. 22) More commentary on the Gospel of Luke is at this link.

3/13 - In today's readings in Luke chapter 1 we read about the birth of John the Baptist being foretold by the angel Gabriel. Gabriel shares with Zechariah this powerful message about John in verses 16 & 17 - "He will persuade many Israelites to turn to the Lord their God. He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah, the prophet of old. He will

precede the coming of the Lord, preparing the people for his arrival. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will change disobedient minds to accept godly wisdom." This is a message for us to consider today – **Q: do we need to be persuaded to turn to God? Do we need our disobedient minds changed to accept godly wisdom? Can we open our ears to the message of John the Baptist some 2,000 years later? Will we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord?**

3/14 - In Luke chapter 1 verses 46 through 55 we read an amazing hymn known as Mary's Song or the Magnificat, which means "glorifies" in the Latin Vulgate translation. This is indeed a song from the mother of Jesus that glorifies God in a beautiful way. As you read through this song, below, please meditate upon its words. **Q: And maybe ask yourself this – are there ways in your life that you "sing songs" like this to God? Maybe it's not through literal song – but maybe you praise God through loving others, through serving others, through art, through prayer, through your church, and this list could go on... What is your unique way of glorifying God? Do you want to glorify God with all you do in your life?**

3/15 - I love Zechariah's prophecy in today's readings in Luke chapter 1! In particular verses 76-79 when speaking about his son John the Baptist: *"And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord. You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. Because of God's tender mercy, the light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."* Amen! **Q: How has the ministry or life of John the Baptist spoken to you? Is there anything we can learn from John the Baptist about being zealous for God?**

3/16 - One thing that seems to be standing out to me quite a bit in reading Luke this year is how much Luke writes about Mary. I like how Luke gives us a little bit more of a glimpse of the mother of Jesus in his Gospel. We saw this obviously in our readings 2 days ago about the Magnificat. And then today we read about Mary listening to the shepherds' words in verse 19: *"Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and thought about them often."* And then in verses 34 & 35 today we read: *"Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, "This child will be rejected by many in Israel, and it will be their undoing. But he will be the greatest joy to many others. Thus, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."* This last sentence of Simeon's seems to be the first glimpse of Jesus' suffering and death that will come later in his life.... **Q: How does reading about Mary stand out to you? What can we learn from Mary's life and obedience?**

3/17 - In Luke chapter 2 today we read about Jesus' wisdom at the young age of 12. How's this for a profound statement from Jesus to Mary & Joseph when they found him in the Temple in verse 49 - *"But why did you need to search?" he asked. "You should have known that I would be in my Father's house."* I like that! And I like that Jesus was paying such respect for the Temple as well - essentially calling it the house of God. I do believe this can be carried forward today to Jesus' love for his body, the church. I often think to myself, when I'm on my way to church, that "I'm going to the house of God." **Q: Do you believe that we can find Jesus today in his Father's house? Or are you searching elsewhere?** I do believe of course Jesus can be found outside of church... but I also know that I oftentimes experience his presence so profoundly at church - and Communion in church clearly being one such a time & place where I cannot help but find Jesus in a profound way. **Where do you find God these days?**

3/19 - You'll notice that Luke's genealogy in chapter 3 today is different from the genealogy in Matthew chapter 1 in a couple of ways: 1. Matthew starts with Abraham and goes to Jesus & Luke starts with Jesus and goes all the way back to Adam. This was done by Luke to show Jesus' relationship to the entire human race. Matthew focused more on Jesus' relationship with the Jews by going back to Abraham. 2. Matthew traces Jesus legal genealogy through his father Joseph back to Solomon son of David, while Luke traces Jesus bloodline through his mother Mary back to Nathan son of David. This is an interesting slight distinction. Line up Luke & Matthew's genealogies and you'll see the differences in the names between David & Jesus. **Q: How does today's genealogy in Luke stand out to you? Do you enjoy reading genealogies in the Bible? Do you trace any of your own family genealogies or family trees? Why do you think genealogies are important to people? Why are they important to God?**

PSALM 56:1 - 62:12

3/13 - Psalm 56 verse 10 makes a One Year Bible blogger quite happy :) *"O God, I praise your word. Yes, LORD, I praise your word."* **Q: Does this verse make you happy? Do you praise God for the gift of the Bible? Do you praise God's very Word, the Bible?**

3/14 - Psalm 57 verse 8 is amazing - *"Wake up, my soul!"* What 4 great words. . . wake up my soul! Do you ever feel like you need to say this to your soul? I know that I have in my past. There have been times in my life where I have felt spiritually asleep. Just completely slumbering. . . and I have begged my soul to wake up! Fortunately, I finally learned that I could not wake up my soul on it's own. I needed the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to wake up my soul. . . and the Spirit keeps it awake today. If you feel that you need your soul to wake up, will you prayer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to indwell your soul and to wake it up? **Q: How do you wake up your soul? Have you ever felt spiritually asleep? What awakens you?**

3/15 - Psalm 58 verse 11 stood out to me today - *"There truly is a reward for those who live for God; surely there is a God who judges justly here on earth."* I think this is wise for us to remember that God indeed judges. We don't. We shouldn't. But God indeed judges justly. This verse also brings up the question – **Q: How are you living for God? What will your reward be? Are you looking forward to the reward?**

3/16 - Psalm 59 has some powerful imagery of the *"night of danger"* in verse 14 and the *"morning of deliverance"* in verse 16 - *"But as for me, I will sing about your power. I will shout with joy each morning because of your unfailing love."* I like that thought - shouting for joy each morning because of God's unfailing love. I pray that in some way I "shout" for joy each morning because of God's love. **Q: How about you? Do you in some way "shout" for joy each morning because of God?**

3/17 - I like the imagery of Psalm 60 verse 4 a lot - *"But you have raised a banner for those who honor you -- a rallying point in the face of attack."* I do believe that if we honor God, he will in some profound way "raise up a banner" for us. A banner that will rally and encourage us in the face of attack - in the face of doubt or despair or sickness or just plain old fashioned attack from the Enemy - I believe God will give us a banner of hope. This banner could end up being one of a million different things I think, depending on the circumstances. For me, certainly a banner that rallies me each and every day is God's very Word, the Bible. I believe the Bible is indeed a banner that rallies us in the face of attack... What are some banners in your life that God is providing to rally you in the face of attack? Uh-oh, this whole banner imagery has reminded me of an old childhood song... :) Remember that children's song that goes something like this (over and over and over again...) - "Peter built the church on the rock of our faith. HIS banner over me is love."? What a great simple song! God's love very well should be a banner in our lives! **Q: How is God's "banner" over you? What are some examples of God's "banners" in your life?**

3/18 - Today we read Psalm 61, which has some powerful verses for us to meditate upon when the storms of life come crashing down upon us. This Psalm reminds us of who is indeed our true Rock – our true Refuge. Verses 1 through 5 are so powerful to meditate upon when you are going through a storm in your life:

"Hear my cry, O God;

listen to my prayer.

From the ends of the earth I call to you,

I call as my heart grows faint;

lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

For you have been my refuge,

a strong tower against the foe.

I long to dwell in your tent forever

and take refuge in the shelter of your wings.

For you have heard my vows, O God;

you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name."

Q: Do you cry out to God in prayer during the storms in your life? When your heart grows faint, do you call on God's holy name, and allow him to lead you to his Rock? Do you believe that God can be your refuge? Your strong tower against the foe? Do you long to dwell in God's house forever? Do you long to take refuge in the shelter of God's wings?

3/19 - Today we read in Psalm 62 verse 11 - *"God has spoken plainly, and I have heard it many times: Power, O God, belongs to you."* This is a powerful verse - no pun intended. . . :) Really, think about it. Where does power come from? Who gives power? Who takes it away? I think it is such a blessing when we truly understand this verse and then live it out. When we realize that we really have no power of our own. Any power - any thing - we have comes from God and God alone. And thank God for that. It's when we start believing we create or own or control power that we begin to get prideful or we'll misuse the power given to us. I think a great teaching on where power truly comes from comes from Jesus when

he is before Pilate in John chapter 19 verses 10 & 11 - *"Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above."* **Q: Where do you think your power to do anything at all comes from? Do you believe it was given to you from above? If so, how might truly realizing this change how you live your life? How might it change how you utilize the power given to you?**

PROVERBS 11:8 - 19

3/13 - Proverbs Chapter 11 verse 8 today teaches us: *"The godly are rescued from trouble, and it falls on the wicked instead."* This is a great reminder that God rescues those who trust in Him! **Q: Has God ever rescued you? More than once? Are you willing to share with us in the Comments section below a time that without a doubt God rescued you?**

3/14 - Proverbs chapter 11 verse 11 today teaches us: *"Upright citizens bless a city and make it prosper."* This is a great reminder to each of us to be good citizens and to bless our cities! **Q: How are you striving to be an upright citizen blessing your city and helping to make it prosper? Do you see spiritual issues in your city today? How are you helping to right those spiritual wrongs in your city? Do you pray for your city regularly? Do you think you should? Will you join me in praying for our cities?**

3/15 - Proverbs chapter 11 verses 12 & 13 today talk about how foolish it is to belittle a neighbor or gossip about others: *"It is foolish to belittle one's neighbor; a sensible person keeps quiet. A gossip goes around telling secrets, but those who are trustworthy can keep a confidence."* I have to admit - these verses are convicting to me today - as I've been doing this recently. It makes me sad to realize that I have, but I have. I pray that instead of me thinking I am so righteous that I can talk behind someone's back that I will instead remain silent. I pray for silence upon my tongue when it comes to gossip or belittling others... **Q: Have you ever struggled with gossip? How did you overcome this temptation to gossip?**

3/16 - Proverbs chapter 11 verse 14 teaches us today: *"Without wise leadership, a nation falls; there is safety in having many advisers."* This is a great teaching that it is wise to seek the counsel of others! Whether it is a nation or in our own lives, this is wise advice. We can't figure it all out on our own. We need many others in our lives to help counsel us along The Way. We certainly need the Bible to help counsel us along The Way... **Q: Do you have advisers in your life today? Are there times that you try to figure things out just on your own rather than consulting advisers? Which way works better? Has the counsel of advisers in your life ever changed how you might have approached a situation on your own? If you don't have advisers in your life, do you think you should? Where do you think you can find wise advisers these days? In church? In a small group? In a Bible study?**

3/17 - Proverbs chapter 11 verse 15 is saying one thing - which I get - but for some reason today, something else is being said to my heart. Here's the verse: *"Guaranteeing a loan for a stranger is dangerous; it is better to refuse than to suffer later."* It's that last half of this verse that is jumping out at me - and in a way unrelated to loan guarantees. :) Here's the tangent this verse brought to mind for me today. I am someone who does not do a very good job of "refusing" much of anything. I say yes to way too much and take on way too much. And part of me really enjoys this - I feel wanted, loved, invited, needed, busy, etc. But then... I suffer later. I then feel overbooked, stretched thin, and just plain tired and grouchy. So, for me, the second half of this verse tonight is a good verse on boundaries - it's better to refuse than suffer later.... I like that.... I need that! **Q: How are you with setting boundaries? Do you know when to say No and when to say Yes? What are some disciplines you practice to make sure you set appropriate boundaries? Has anyone read the ["Boundaries" book by Henry Cloud](#)? I hear it is fantastic from friends of mine that have read it! In fact, I heard it's great for small groups too. May be just what the doctor ordered for me...**

3/19 - Today Proverbs chapter 11 verse 18 teaches us: *"Those who sow righteousness reap a sure reward."* **Q: How are you sowing righteousness in your life? Do you love others at the same level you love yourself? Are you working diligently for your employer? Are you serving the poor? Do you believe that the farming analogy of sowing and reaping in this Proverb is true? And like any good farming analogy, will you patiently sow and patiently await the time of reaping of your sure reward?**

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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