



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

In our first month of study we will be spending time in Genesis and Job! In fact, you'll finish both these books by the 31st of January - woohoo!!

Genesis and Job contain two genres of literature (at least): *historical narrative* and *poetry*.

Historical narrative, according to author Kristie Anyabwile, is "history told in story form."

When reading narrative we must avoid focusing on individual stories - moralizing them or diminishing them to quick "applications" - and instead look for the overarching theme, also known as the "plot arc". What is the big picture of God? Who is He and what is He doing with the characters in the story?

About thirty percent of the Bible is made up of poetry. Though Job contains historical narrative at the beginning and end of the book, most of what's in between is poetic. We also see poetry in Genesis 1-2. Biblical poetry uses parallel lines and lots of figurative language to express theological truths. This is why you'll see two, three, or four lines that seem to say the same thing over and over. Writers used this repetition to say one thing multiple ways.

STUDY TIPS FOR GENESIS & JOB

As you read through these books, don't rush application! Ask the 5 Ws and an H questions (from the Bible Study Basics lecture!) and focus on who GOD is, not the quick takeaway. In Genesis, we see the beginnings of God's covenantal system (Genesis 3, 12, 15). Take note of His promises and what He says about His character to the people in Genesis and to Job.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): This week, try keeping excess noise to a minimum during your study time. Get up earlier or stay up later to have some quiet, or play classical music as you read. Try listening to an audio Bible (YouVersion) while you read.

Visual (Watchers): Make your study area less distracting by setting up a space free of distractions, aesthetically pleasing to you! Take notes in bright colors or listen on audio and doodle what you are learning.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Your challenge is extra energy that can make it difficult to focus on your text. Try sitting on an exercise ball while studying or holding a stress ball or fidget spinner as you read. Take notes by hand and keep your phone in another room.

“Bible study is about intimacy, not a checklist. Remember that!

LEARN AT YOUR OWN PACE

Reading the Bible in a year gives you a big picture. Don't try to capture all the details each day or get consumed with breaking down every passage. Read through the chapters and pick one section to particularly focus on. Write down questions as you go!

When you've finished your reading, comment in the week's lecture with "done!" or ask any questions you have - this community exists to help you!



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You finished your first week - great job! Whether you read a little every day or lumped some passages together, I hope you came away with a deeper appreciation for God as creator, sustainer, and judge.

STUDY TIPS FOR GENESIS AND JOB

You'll be spending more time in the book of Job this week. Job falls under the genre of wisdom literature and as such, its themes wrestle with questions of existence, suffering, and meaning of life. It is one of the oldest books in the canon and Jewish tradition attributes authorship to Moses (though the story was probably transmitted orally to him from years before). Job is a "blameless" man, which in Hebrew means he has integrity and devotion to God similar to Noah. The fear of the Lord, also attributed to Job refers to a "unique devotion of those who follow the way of wisdom" and of God, as scholar Norman Habel put it.

Also according to Habel, Job's friends are professional wise men from the region of Edom (where Job is suspected to have lived). Their dialogue with Job, then, is not just a discussion among friends but an exploration of suffering in light of God's sovereignty. Because tone is often lost for western readers, note that the opening line of each friend's discourse is usually a sarcastic comment toward Job or the previous speaker.

As you read through these books, don't rush application! Ask the 5 Ws and an H questions (from the Bible Study Basics lecture!) and focus on who GOD is, not the quick takeaway.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): This week, use the pomodoro method. Set a timer for 20 minutes, read the text and read out loud, then break for 5 minutes and walk around before beginning again!

Visual (Watchers): Utilize the lecture videos related to the text you're studying - Bible Project, YouTube, etc! Try making an outline of the text you've read. For example: Outline each chapter by the theme of each paragraph and identify the theological principle at the conclusion.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Take handwritten notes as you read. Use highlighters, fun pens, and paper to interact with your text. You can type up your handwritten notes later. Rewrite the passage in your own words.

“ The Bible is the only place where God has shown us His character, priorities, and plan in a historical, literal way.

LIVED THEOLOGY

As you read this week, keep in mind the theological principle about God. This is the takeaway you're after - not quick application to your life. It is the work of the Spirit to use these truths to transform you. Begin listening for His leading throughout the day and practicing ongoing prayer!



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

Two weeks down, friend! You're winning at this! Two weeks in is when we tend to get a little lax with our habits... but this is when it matters most! It takes three weeks to form a habit. A great way to remain consistent? Study at the same time and place each day. Have a "trigger" (e.g. making coffee, washing your face) right before so your body begins to associate your reading time with that existing habit!

STUDY TIPS FOR GENESIS 12-29

We are back in the world of historical narrative! As we read, remember: These accounts are depicting what happened. The writers typically don't comment on what happened. Some of the moral judgments are understood in context of the law (which is yet to come chronologically). But most of the time, writers simply state what happened without any moral commentary. The Old Testament is not Aesop's Fables! Secondly, we meet an interesting character in Genesis 14. Though he's only mentioned this one time in the Old Testament, Hebrews 5-7 talk about him at length. It may be worthwhile to add those three chapters to your reading or listening schedule this week!

In Genesis 15 we encounter the Abrahamic covenant. This will be a pivotal chapter in the rest of Genesis and for the entire Old Testament; take note! As we move into the accounts of Hagar, Abimelech, Sarah, Ishmael, Isaac, Lot, and more, check your western mindset and modern bias at the door. Utilize study bible notes and cross references liberally; commentaries if you have them. Remember that this is a different time and culture and look for the theological principle about God: who is He, what is He doing, and how does His heart come through?

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Read your notes out loud after you've written them. If you're creative, try turning the theological principle or key verse into a song! E.g. say John 3:16 to the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Connecting songs with concepts is a great memory work hack!

Visual (Watchers): Teachers sometimes utilize something called a "vocabulary journal" for kids who are visual learners. This would work well for Bible study! In your notetaking time, write down new words and their definitions, concepts that stand out, names for God, etc. Mark these with different colors so you can note them as you review.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try tension and relaxation techniques while you study; tensing a muscle and relaxing it periodically. Create hand signs (or find correlatory hand motions from ASL) to express the verse or concept for the day/week's reading.

“ The Bible is one cohesive story told by many different people over many different centuries.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

As you read this week, you'll be entering into a lot of very imperfect stories. The lives we encounter in Genesis are messy, full of impulsive choices, pride, selfishness, and sin. It is clear that these people need a Savior! All of the Old Testament is preparation for what happens in Luke 1-2. All sin grieves God. All of it deserves judgment. And yet God keeps making a way, cutting a covenant with no help from Abraham so through his imperfect faith, God can bless the world.



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You're at the end of month one and this is a huge accomplishment. Celebrating wins along the way, as you read through the year, will help you keep momentum! You have almost completed two books of the Bible - two BIG books! Between Job and Genesis you'll have read almost 100 chapters. Try to keep that momentum this week and cement your habit!

STUDY TIPS FOR GENESIS 30-47

My friend Chris Ammen of Kaleidoscope Bibles once said about the book of Genesis: "The book of Genesis was written to slaves to remind them of their identity and history. People who were always subservient to others were being told: Slavery is not who you are. This is your family, your heritage." I love this perspective! Think about it: If you were an Israelite slave during the Exodus and wilderness wandering, your family history, your lineage, was a story of oppression for *four hundred years* (we're not at that point in the story yet - I don't want to get ahead of myself!). Then Moses writes Genesis, the transcript of an oral history of the Israelite people. Suddenly, you're reminded that you are MORE than a slave. You are an image bearer of God! You are a member of His family! You are part of a series of covenant promises between a God who will do whatever it takes to reach you!

I find this perspective helpful to studying Genesis. There's a possibility Genesis was not the first book of Torah to be written, though it is first chronologically. I imagine Genesis being read to the younger generation as a confirmation of their chosen identity. Israel would be a light to the nations - imperfect, often failing, in need of salvation, but a light nonetheless. And from the imperfect family of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, an even brighter light would come. Abraham believed God. Isaac followed in his father's footsteps. Jacob wrestled with God for a true blessing. Joseph trusted God's call to righteousness even when it sent him to prison. In these people, we get a glimpse of God's gracious work in the lives of imperfect people - just like us.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Underline main points, themes, significant repeated words, with highlighters. If you participate in discussion online, say your question aloud as you type it, as if you were speaking up in class.

Visual (Watchers): When learning new place names, concepts or themes, close your eyes and visualize the word you're learning. When you type up your notes (if you choose to) use different fonts, bolded letters, and designs to engage with the content. Consider using an attractive visual program like Canva!

Kinesthetic (Doers): Make flash cards with your takeaway from each study session. Write out what you learned about God and the passage and review it as needed. If the Bible is giving you a visual of something - like the ark of the covenant, or Noah's ark, or the Temple - try drawing or building a model with blocks as you listen.

“ The Bible’s progressive development makes it much more trustworthy.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

In this last month, you'll be tempted to either skip your reading or rush application. Try not to do this! Even if you can only listen on audio as you drive, do it. Schedule some deeper study days to really invest in the Word and prayer. Remember: this is the most important thing in your life. That shouldn't make us guilty, but it should make us ask: *Am I rearranging my priorities to put God first?* Lastly, don't try to push an application if there isn't any! Just let the truth be the truth. God will use it later!



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WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

We are beginning a new month, and a new book of the Bible! As we begin our study of Exodus, keep in mind why these first five books were written: to tell slaves their family story. To show them their rich identity, the saving grace of God through the first Passover, the wilderness wandering and the giving of the Law!

STUDY TIPS FOR GENESIS 48 - EXODUS 18

The Egyptians were known for their blatant racism toward other people groups. They believed themselves superior and were especially put off by the Hebrews, whose primary work was husbandry and agriculture (the Egyptians were disgusted by shepherding). Egypt was also very concerned about an invasion from the Hittites in the north, so the Hebrew population was a threat; what if they joined the Hittites in overthrowing Egypt? As we discover, it doesn't take a Hittite invasion to overthrow Egypt. It just takes Almighty God!

David Guzik said that Egypt served as a "mother's womb" for Israel, where they grew from a small clan to an entire nation. In this womb another womb bears a child: Moses. Moses' parents hid him for three months 'by faith' (Heb. 11:23) and then Moses' mother did what Pharaoh commanded: she put him in the Nile River. But she did it in HER way... by laying him in a basket and entrusting him to the Lord. Hebrews 11 goes on to say:

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. (Hebrews 11:24-26)

The faith of Moses' mother laid a foundation for Moses to become one of the greatest leaders in biblical history. We'll learn more about that this week!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Work in quiet areas without distractions, or, if you have kids around, eliminate other noises - fans, music, TV, noisy toys. If other noises are eliminated, listen to instrumental or classical music. Listen on audio as you read and follow the text with your finger.

Visual (Watchers): Make your study area or living room - wherever you're sitting to read - visually appealing and relaxing. Limit distractions. Take notes as you read. Use bright colors on your selected text or passage, handwrite notes then type them up later. Leave white space in your notes so the note page is not visually overwhelming. Try using a different color for each section of your notes, e.g blue for the chapter theme, pink for the big idea, red for repeated words or definitions.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Take handwritten notes as you read. Use highlighters, fun pens, and paper to interact with your text. You can type up your handwritten notes later. Stand up while reading (try reading while on a treadmill or listening on audio!)

“Exodus was written to slaves as a reminder of their true family identity.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Exodus reveals that God will be faithful to His people even when they don't deserve Him, even when they are ungrateful, even when their complaint is a direct affront to His provision. His grace is on display here as much as in the New Testament! He is bringing them to a place to call their own, where they can be a light to the nations... if they will live devoted to Him.



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In Exodus 19:3-4 God reminds Israel of his deliverance from the Egyptians - proof that He truly loves them and can be trusted. David Guzik notes that "the *deliverance* (**I bore you on eagles' wings**) was for *fellowship* (**brought you to Myself**). God didn't deliver Israel so they could live apart from God, but so they could be God's people." What was true for Israel then is true for us today! God's deliverance through Christ was for fellowship with Himself. We are God's people because of the cross and empty tomb.

STUDY TIPS FOR EXODUS 19-38

The Ten Commandments issues in Exodus 20 (alongside every other part of the Law) are given in context of loving fellowship with God. There's a tendency to say the Law was given only to show Israel how bad they were at keeping it; this is *not* the heart of God's Law! God's Law was His *grace* to His people in that specific era of time, or covenantal period. It's important to note that in Exodus 19, God offers the people a CHOICE in this covenant. One writer puts it this way:

"After Israel had arrived at Horeb, Moses ascended the mountain. God commanded Moses to ask the people on His behalf if they wished to remain in the covenant and be obedient to Him (Exod 19:8). Moses relayed the message, and the people responded at once: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Exod 19:8). Thus, we truly have a covenant transaction here: God proposed the covenant and added a promise, upon which the people accepted it."

This was not a "new" covenant but a renewal of the same one given to Abraham. God reissued the same beautiful promise to dwell with His people and provided a Law to help them do this. God desired humans to flourish in community with one another - and this Law would show them how.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Law can be hard to read, so try to listen and read at the same time. You may want to listen to the same passage morning and evening to catch anything you miss!

Visual (Watchers): Use highlighters to mark repeated words and draw lines between repetitive phrases. You may start to see some patterns! Try some of the visual notetaking methods from Module One.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try sitting with a weighted blanket or the heaviest comforter you have. Fold it up and place on your lap while you listen or read!

“God desired humans to flourish in community with one another and this Law would show them how.

LIVED THEOLOGY

As we begin a month focused on the Law, it is so important to understand the goodness of the Torah. As my friend Ryan Coatney put it: every other pagan religion around Israel had a temple with a statue of a god inside. But Israel had a tent, with a tiny cubicle, inside which was a box... inside which was the Law. The Law is "a picture of what it means to be truly human"... reconciled to God and in healthy relationship to fellow men. Under the new covenant in Christ we do not view the Law as "bad" but as able to be fully lived out by Christ's Spirit in us.



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We are entering the land of Leviticus this week! Here is the good news: You only spend a week and a half in this book. While it feels irrelevant, distant or hard, this book is FULL of beauty. It's the only book in the Torah that takes place completely at Mount Sinai, and the only book focused completely on the Tabernacle. Leviticus is designed in a chiastic pattern, almost like a "C" curve of repetition. This was to aid in memorization and retention of the oral tradition, since the Bible was passed down orally at first.

A: Ritual laws

B: Priestly commands

C: Purity commands

X - high point of the book; the Day of Atonement in Lev. 15-16

C: Purity commands

B: Priestly commands

A: Ritual laws and call to faithfulness

Scholars have pointed out that the first half of Leviticus, before Lev. 15-16, has to do with right relationship to *God*. The second half has to do with right relationship to *people*. As Jesus said: The whole Law and Prophets hang on these two things.

STUDY TIPS FOR EXODUS 39-LEVITICUS 18

You are more than welcome to skim this book if it's your first time. However, I HIGHLY recommend utilizing the Teachable study helps to get the most out of this book and really see its meaning! There is so much here you'll see later on in the New Testament, but you have to be a bit patient to draw it out. If you can schedule some additional study days or times, it will be helpful in the long term!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Act out the text! Stand up and read it aloud, using inflection or different voices for the characters in the account/text. Auditory learners really benefit from word-based interaction with a text. It helps to hear it as well as read it. Listening while engaged in other activities is helpful for these learners: listening to the audio bible while cooking, walking, knitting, folding laundry and other hands-on tasks.

Visual (Watchers): Draw diagrams, depictions and visual representations of what you read in the text. Consider listening on audio and doodling as you listen!

Kinesthetic (Doers): You may need a physical outlet for your energy. Try taking breaks to exercise between chapters or walking while listening to the Bible on audio. Rewrite the passage in your own words. "Teach" someone else the information! Sum it up in a comment, describe it to your kids or significant other.

“The first half of Leviticus has to do with right relationship to God. The second half has to do with right relationship to *people*.

LIVED THEOLOGY

As you read Leviticus, keep in mind that the Law is *grace*. It is not a punishment; it is not the enemy. The Law is God's gracious way of permitting humans to live in His presence and this same Law is the foundation, the essence of the life we live today through Christ. God's Word has not changed. It just changed expressions. The Law's tablets used to sit in the Holy of Holies... now it dwells in a new temple of our hearts!



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Leviticus 26 tells the people to 'walk, keep, do'. To walk in God's commands, to keep them, and to do them. This is similar to what we saw in Deuteronomy toward parents, advising them to speak of God's commands when they come and go and sit and rise. The commands of God were and are for the benefit of His people, but we must exert some effort to obey God!

Today under the new covenant in Christ the Spirit enables us to fulfill God's commands. Our effort is not directed toward "abiding" - as Jesus stated in John 15. We cannot bear fruit, be like Christ and fulfill His law, unless we are connected to the Vine. God's people are still required to honor His law of love, but we do it in a different way - through Christ! Funny though: the "walk, keep, do" command still applies. We must walk in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:1). Jesus said if we love Him, we will keep His commands (John 14:15) and that those who hear the word should do what it says (James 1:22).

STUDY TIPS FOR LEVITICUS 19-NUMBERS 6

In the second half of Leviticus we move from laws for priests (relationship with God) to laws for the people and their relationships to one another. You already read a few last week! Keep in mind that God prioritizes both vertical and horizontal relationship. He wants us right with Him and right with others.

All the laws that are noted here have to do with God's lifegiving nature and a just treatment for humanity in a culture that was ruthless. God did not completely eradicate the cultural systems of the day, but he brought justice into them. He even demanded justice of animals and for humans to treat their animals well! All of this points to God's heart: to protect the Life he created and ultimately reconcile us to Him once for all.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Try going back to some of the tips you tried earlier. Consider rotating through the ones you like best! Many of you really like listening on audio and reading at the same time.

Visual (Watchers): If you've fallen off the wagon on note taking, try it again! Grab those fun colors to highlight words or try drawing what you hear on audio.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Consider taking a daily walk and listening on audio as you walk. Then, when you get home, write a paragraph summary of what you heard.

“The Law and Prophets hang on right relationship to God *and* right relationship to people.

LIVED THEOLOGY

As we move into Numbers we see a unique law regarding jealousy or suspicion of unfaithfulness. It is worth noting that God did not permit false accusation but required that a person suspected of sin be judged by Him alone. Only a supernatural result could judge the person in Numbers 5. Once again we see the theme in Scripture of God's desire for fairness, not leaving judgment to the hands of unjust or jealous people. God's goal is for us to love Him and love others - just as Jesus said.



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

Israel has received the Law at Sinai and now they are moving onward to God's Promised Land. One would think, after encountering the Living God, they would trust God to do what He said! After all, He rescued them from slavery and parted the Red Sea. But the Israelite's memory is short. When Moses sends spies into the land, they report that the land is full of great, strong warriors that make an Israelite victory unlikely (on their own strength!). Caleb and Joshua are the only two who think God could help them succeed, but the people refuse to listen. Thus begins the 40 year wandering.

From the outside looking in, we are quick to wonder HOW Israel could be so untrusting! God has proven Himself again and again. But eyes that are not fixed on God's goodness have a hard time seeing His hand. The Israelite people fixed their eyes on the earthly situation instead of focusing on the greatness of God. Their situation became bigger than God Himself, and their lack of trust resulted in a wilderness rather than a victory.

STUDY TIPS FOR NUMBERS 7-22

Numbers highlights the imperfections and sins of the people, including Moses. Notice that it always comes back to faith! Israel just needed faith that God would do what He said He would do. Moses needed faith for the same when speaking to the rock instead of striking it. As this week's bonus readings point out, Moses took credit for God's miracle AND disobeyed God at the same time - the reason He also did not enter Canaan. How often do we either ignore God's hand in our lives or take credit for what He did - credit ourselves for doing such a good job? Let's keep our eyes open to see God's blessings.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Reminder to keep notetaking 1-2x a week! This is a great practice to engage with the text. Try teaching it to someone else too!

Visual (Watchers): There are a variety of videos in this week's readings and last week's. You can utilize these to go deeper in the text!

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try setting a 7 minute timer when you sit down to study. Take a 2 minute break and reset for 7 minutes. Repeat until you're done!

“How often do we either ignore God's hand in our lives or take credit for what He did?

LIVED THEOLOGY

We are so quick to think we would do things differently in Israel's situation. Their forgetfulness of God's faithfulness is a pattern we, too, adopt. And it's related to their focus. When we focus on our circumstances, our struggles, our trials, or our comforts, we fail to see how much God is doing. When we see even the food on our table as grace, we are less likely to think *God doesn't care*. Recounting God's past faithfulness is a big part of this! Remember what God has done BEFORE and all that to shape your view of His character.



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As we enter the second half of Numbers, we encounter one of the strangest stories in the Old Testament: the account of Balaam. When I was first reading the Bible I assumed Balaam was a “good guy”. After all, the Bible calls him a prophet! But we later learn that Balaam did intend to curse Israel for money (paid by Barak) and only didn’t get to because of supernatural intervention. Even later on we learn that Balaam intentionally led pagan women to seduce Israelite men, who in turn led those men away from God. Not such a good guy after all!

Jewish Midrash or legend suggests that Balaam was the “anti-Moses”. Because God set up the universe in symmetry, in contrast to the good of Moses there existed an evil, and in this case it was Balaam. He was indeed a powerful “prophet”, but the things he prophesied were evil - even when they came to fruition (such as Balak becoming king).

We often forget that the forces of darkness have power and they present that power as light. As Jeremy Jenkins says: Just because it works doesn’t mean it’s good. This is proven in Balaam’s story. Balaam was a vessel of spiritual power; that’s why he was hired. And a spiritual war is fought in and through him. God protected his own by frustrating Balaam, but we should not ignore the spiritual nature of this account - and remember that such spiritual battles still occur today.

STUDY TIPS FOR NUM. 23-DEUT. 2

Try to review some of the articles or videos about Deuteronomy before you start that book, and check out the information about cities of refuge and how they point to Christ!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): If you've fallen behind, remember to start on the most current day's reading and just go from there! You will read these books again in the future, I hope. Listen on audio as needed and pick your day to go deeper in your study.

Visual (Watchers): Utilize the videos from this week - there are quite a few! Or consider looking up an audio bible on Youtube.

Kinesthetic (Doers): If you grabbed the comfort cross from the Every Woman a Theologian spring launch, this is a great item to fidget with while listening to the audio bible and taking notes! You can also use a stress ball or fidget spinner.

“God protected his own by frustrating Balaam, but we should not ignore the spiritual nature of this account - and remember that such spiritual battles still occur today.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Remember to ask yourself: who is God in these passages? How does he act toward His people? What angers him and what does he promise to do? Then consider the differences between yourself the people of Israel and translate that principle to today. Revisit the lecture on application of bible passages as needed!



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Deuteronomy means “second law”. In these chapters we see a restatement of the Mosaic Law, a reminder of all Israel has been taught so far. The book is estimated to have been written around 1406 B.C. The first generation of Israelites (the wandering generation) is dying out and the new generation is being prepared to enter the Promised Land. Because they were not adults at the time of the covenant, these “children of the wilderness” have the covenant described to them so they will not forget God’s promises.

Twelve times Moses addresses all of Israel as one unified body. He reiterates everything previously taught at Sinai, reminding them of the law they have consented to obey. The end of the book teaches them the consequences of disobedience and the rewards of trust and holiness. It is summed up in Deuteronomy 30:

“I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days.” (Deuteronomy 30:19–20)

STUDY TIPS FOR DEUTERONOMY 3-23

This is a beautiful book. As you study, try to put yourself in the shoes of the Israelites. Your parents failed to keep the promise, but you get to participate in it! There is a huge challenge ahead but God has promised to be with you every step of the way.

God specifically commands parents to retell the story of the Exodus to their children. Why? So they had a tangible daily reminder of God’s promise, His faithfulness, and His redemption - the basis for their trust! No matter who we disciple today, we can keep this in mind.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): If you haven't written in your quiet time for a while, try note taking or turning your takeaways each day into a single note card to review at the end of the week!

Visual (Watchers): You can do the same as the auditory learner but with color coded index cards or by drawing a picture of the scene as you listen on audio.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Get out the exercise ball again to sit as you read/study or try standing at a desk/high countertop as you read or listen.

“God specifically commands parents to retell the story of the Exodus to their children. Why? So they had a tangible daily reminder of God's promise, His faithfulness, and His redemption.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

How can you share the truth of Christ while you “come and go and sit and rise”? We are all commanded to do this, whether or not we are parents. Someone needs to hear YOUR story of redemption, what slavery God delivered you from. And sharing that testimony is a big part of evangelism!



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As we finish Deuteronomy this week, you'll see Moses recap everything Israel has learned thus far. He ends it with a challenge for Israel to choose life (following and walking with God) or death (separation, by worshiping other gods). Joshua affirms this when he also calls Israel to "choose today who" they will serve (Joshua 24:15) before entering the land.

Joshua is a "new Moses" but he is also unlike Moses. Moses acted as both a leader and, in a sense, a priest. He interceded for the people on Sinai and directly communed with God. But when Joshua takes leadership, he acts as judge and ruler but the priestly duties are left to Aaron's descendants. (This may be foreshadowing to the rule of David, who could not build the Temple because he was a man of war. Joshua was also a warrior.)

Many people object to the conquest because God judges Canaan. But through the story of Rahab we learn that no one in Canaan HAD to be judged. Those who believed God was the true God and rejected the demonic, pre-flood "gods" of Canaan could join Israel! Rahab becomes part of the Messianic line due to her faith, and it is likely other Canaanites did too.

STUDY TIPS FOR DEUTERONOMY and JOSHUA

The conquest of Canaan can be hard to read. A few things should be helpful as you understand this book. First, the Canaanites were not innocent! They were given 400 years to repent and in Deuteronomy God explicitly states that Israel was NOT receiving the land because of their righteousness but because Canaan was being judged for their sin. Secondly, Israel was warned this could also happen to them if they chose to worship demonic gods. And, hundreds of years later, this is exactly what happens. God is fair to both Canaan and Israel. Lastly, the language around battles is often hyperbolic; using sweeping terms to sum up a "complete victory".

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): I am back to listening on audio this week, trying out Her. Bible! This app is an audio Bible read in female voices!

Visual (Watchers): out the videos in this week's study helps! Whiteboard Bible is one of my favorites.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try listening as you take a walk this week! You can also listen to last week's Verity Podcast with more ideas for kinesthetic learners on audio.

“God explicitly states that Israel was NOT receiving the land because of their righteousness but because Canaan was being judged for sin.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Wrestling with the Canaanite conquest is something I relate to. I spent months studying it during a bout of postpartum anxiety. I came out on the other side with a deeper understanding of these texts and greater security in the love and kindness of God. It is vital to remember that the war between Israel and Canaan was first a spiritual one. The demonic gods of Canaan were ancient and had a great hold; they had to be eradicated, with their worship and constituents, for Israel to redeem the land. For more on this, see the Naked Bible Podcast or Dr. Michael Heiser's Unseen Realm.



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week are going to wrap up Joshua and begin the book of Judges. The second half of Joshua depicts the settlement of the Promised Land, establishment of cities of refuge and land for the Levites, and finally the death of Joshua, Eleazar and Joseph. One commentator noted that the burial of these three in the Promised Land proves God's faithfulness: all of them were born in the land of captivity and saw God's faithfulness realized by being buried in the place of promise!

The book of Judges does not state its author but most believe Samuel compiled the accounts. Throughout Judges the author says "in those days there was no king in Israel", indicating the author lived in a time when kings had been crowned. The book covers a span of about 300 years.

The word translated "judge" in this text does not have the same connotations as the English. In English, a judge determines guilt or innocence. These judges could do the same but their leadership extended further. They would better be considered "rulers" but not kings. They both administered justice AND commanded the people. The book of Judges lists 12 such individuals. The accounts of the judges are not necessarily chronological; they may have occurred concurrently in different cities across the nation.

STUDY TIPS FOR JOSHUA and JUDGES

Notice the pattern of language in Judges. You'll see the phrase "and everyone did what was right in his own eyes" - leading to rebellion, followed by discipline, followed by repentance and deliverance. If anything, Judges shows us that without a savior to renew our hearts we are captive to patterns of sin and unfaithfulness.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Try writing out what you learn from the text and making flashcards of your takeaways.

Visual (Watchers): This week's videos are kind of long but if you want to get a good understanding of the conquest, they are worth your time!

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try doing something with your hands while you listen! Knit, draw, hold a stress ball.

“Judges shows us that without a savior to renew our hearts we are captive to patterns of sin and unfaithfulness.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Think about the circumstances that led Israel to rebellion. What were they doing, or not doing, to walk away from God so quickly? What was happening in their homes and hearts that faithfulness was not translating to subsequent generations? It's easy to judge Israel for their sin but let's also look within our own hearts. Are we being lazy about seeking the Lord? Discipling our kids? Facing our own sin? Lord, help us walk with you!



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This month's reading plan is wild! You'll be going through SO many books and integrating Psalms into your reading of Kings and Chronicles. It's really satisfying - you'll feel like you're covering so much ground... because you are!

Last week's overview of Judges will be helpful to you as you read the rest of the book. As a reminder, the judges of Israel were more likely local than national judges, which means there was overlap between their leadership (more than one judge could lead at once). None of these judges, as we quickly see, are perfect men or women. Some, like Gideon, quake in their boots. Others like Samson should be disqualified by their moral behavior. Yet God uses them to deliver His people. Eric Rust says "Only a feeling of utter inadequacy and moral insufficiency can fit men to be God's instruments."

One bothersome story we read in Judges 11-12 is that of Jephthah and his daughter. Jephthah hastily vows to give His only daughter to God if he is victorious. When he returns home and sees her run out to him, it dawns on him what he has done. Commentators have argued over whether Jephthah truly sacrificed his daughter; something God detests and forbids, or if he simply dedicated her to God (she would die childless, effectively ending Jephthah's family line). I find the latter more consistent with God's character, law, and interpretation, though if Jephthah did otherwise it would be due to ignorance of God's law due to Israel falling far from the purity of faithfulness and holy living.

STUDY TIPS FOR RUTH

We will also read Ruth this week! As you do, remember that Ruth is not a romance - though it is a beautiful story of love. Focus on the love between Naomi and Ruth before focusing on Boaz and Ruth; Ruth's devotion to Naomi and Naomi's guardianship of Ruth are the main focus of the story. Look for how Ruth's character points to Christ.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): This week you might try rewriting the Judges passages as stories for kids! This can help you summarize and process.

Visual (Watchers): Utilize the videos this week for the hard passages.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Integrate more hands on notetaking this week - one or two days. I recommend this for all readers, but especially for those dropping off in diligence, try picking this back up alongside any audio listening.

“Only a feeling of utter inadequacy and moral insufficiency can fit men to be God's instruments.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Judges can be confusing and hard to read, but a consistent theme emerges: people who do not teach the truth of God's word to their children raise children who do not know the Lord. They in turn do not walk in the fear of God - and their lives reflect this. Even in Israel's rebellion God raises up imperfect leaders to rescue His people from oppression. And then during these seasons of oppression He even raises up a woman who, though not an Israelite, loves the way He does. Ruth shows us that a small life in a tiny town makes a big difference when that small life is marked by faithfulness. Ruth is part of the line of the Messiah!



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week you enter 1 Samuel. Before the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) divided Samuel into two books, it was one complete history. In 1 Chronicles 29:29 we learn that Samuel, Nathan and Gad compiled the acts of King David, so these books are probably the work of all three.

Chuck Swindoll points out some things to look for in 1 Samuel:

"Providence: *God repeatedly made everyday events work for His purposes. He used Hannah's contentious relationship with Peninnah ([1 Samuel 1:1-28](#)), led Saul to Samuel during Saul's search for lost donkeys (9:1-27), and caused David to learn of Goliath while taking food to his brothers (17:1-58). These are but a few examples.*

Kingship: *As the divine King, God designated a human vice-regent, David, to rule over His people. This history validates David's house as the legitimate rulers of Israel. It also fulfills Jacob's promise that the scepter will never depart from Judah, David's tribe ([Genesis 49:10](#)).*

Reversal of human fortune: *Hannah's barrenness gave way to children ([1 Samuel 1:1-28](#); [2:21](#)); Samuel became prophet instead of Eli's sons (2:12; 3:13); Saul rose to prominence though he was from a lowly tribe; and David was anointed king though he was the youngest son (16:1-13). Normal human patterns were reversed by God so that His plan could be furthered, showing His sovereignty over all."*

STUDY TIPS FOR 1 SAMUEL

Remember to look for these big ideas and focus on who GOD is rather than inserting yourself into the story first!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Lately I am listening on audio while I shower and get ready in the morning/evening. You can even buy in-shower bluetooth speakers!

Visual (Watchers): Try making a chart or drawing of Saul and David's relationship as it forms over the course of the book.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Revisit a stress ball, walking or standing while reading, or holding a comfort cross while reading.

“As the divine King, God designated a human vice-regent, David, to rule over His people.

LIVED THEOLOGY

In the book of Judges the author repeatedly emphasizes: "In those days there was no king in Israel." In this season of chaos and disobedience, Israel is a coalition of 12 tribes who don't always get along. They are supposed to be ruled by God alone, but instead covet the other nations and desire a king. God grants their wish and gives them Saul. Saul's life and eventual demise is a lesson in what happens when we fear people more than we fear God. Saul's paranoia begins when he fears what the people will think of him; do they like David or Jonathan more than him? Is there a threat to his reign? Saul is forgetful that GOD is the true king of Israel, and because of this he loses his potential for true leadership. As we learn who God is this week, we also learn a lot about humanity and how the fear of the Lord really does lead to wisdom.



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week you will wrap up 1 Samuel with the dramatic accounts of Naval, Abigail and David, followed by Saul and the witch of Endor and Saul's demise. Remember that first and second Samuel were once one book, divide into two! So this account will continue as we read next week.

Your reading plan intersperses Psalms that were likely written during the events you've studied. These Psalms will give you some perspective on how David was feeling and what his response was to the situations he faced.

As the accounts unfold, you may have noticed Saul grow increasingly anxious, paranoid, and violent. He has already been told the kingdom will not stay with him, but rather than repent and live out the rest of his days faithfully, he fights everyone and everything he can. At one point Scripture says Saul "caused havoc" everywhere he went! He was not a man of peace and order. He was confused and caused confusion.

In contrast, we see David - though imperfect, and about to become even more so in 2 Samuel - seeking God and keeping God's perspective in his leadership. He even reveres God so much he won't lift a hand against Saul!

STUDY TIPS FOR 1 SAMUEL and PSALMS

As you study Psalms, read slowly, note the parallels, and engage with the emotions. How was the author feeling? What does he do with those feelings? What truth about God does he turn himself toward? Circle the attributes of God as you read and pray these back to Him!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): I love Psalms for auditory learners! These are great to read/pray aloud to yourself. Also check out the Psalms albums by Shane and Shane!

Visual (Watchers): The 1-2 Samuel videos this week will give you some great context for what we are reading!

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try creating a chart or outline of the Psalms you read this week and what part of 1 Samuel they correlate to.

“David reveres God so much he won't lift a hand against Saul.

LIVED THEOLOGY

David is not the hero of this story. He is a model of intimacy with God, he has much to admire; but he is not the hero. As we get closer to 2 Samuel we are going to see the promise of a TRUE hero, one who will be tempted as David was (in every way!) and is yet without sin. This man will also be a king, but won't be recognized as such. And He will fulfill God's promise that the throne of David will be an eternal throne!

Who is it? The shoot from the stump of Jesse: Jesus! At Christmas, my family does what is called a Jesse Tree. It follows the lineage of Christ from Adam to Mary. The name Jesse Tree comes from the lineage of David the the right of the tribe of Judah to reign. It's not Christmas, but this is a great week to be thinking about the importance of those genealogies and how they fulfilled God's words!



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week you are spending more time in Psalms and starting 1 Chronicles. The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles can be hard to read - it's one big genealogy! It can feel pointless or boring, but I promise these chapters matter.

Understand that 1 Chronicles was written after the first exile for Israel to be reminded of their inheritance! The list of fathers and sons affirms that Israel and its priests have a right to the land and that the throne of David is the true kingly line. This list of names seems irrelevant to us but it will be part of the lineage proving Jesus' kingship later on!

Interspersed with 1 Chronicles you're reading a lot of Psalms. People either love the Psalms or... don't! A lot of times we struggle with Psalms because we read them in the same way we read historical narrative. We expect it to be straightforward, cut and dried. But the Psalms show the journey of intimacy with God and how we are ushered from brokenness and despair to a glorious hope... even when our circumstances don't always change.

STUDY TIPS FOR 1 CHRONICLES and PSALMS

Be careful, in the Psalms, not to take one verse out of context. Most Psalms begin with either lament or praise, outline a process of outcry to God, and end in recognition of His glory. Read all the verses in context of one another. Also note the parallelism; it looks repetitive to say the same thing two ways, but this is the nature of Hebrew poetry. You're hearing one concept from two angles. Try to pinpoint the principle about God!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): For tough passages like 1 Chronicles, it's ok to skim and listen on audio, then sit down to study more deeply in Psalms.

Visual (Watchers): Lots of videos this week! Try the Calvary Chapel sermon on 1 Chron.1-10; it's very helpful!

Kinesthetic (Doers): Pick 2-3 favorite Psalms and imagine you're teaching someone else how to understand them. What would you say? What would you highlight? Use this as your study process.

“ The Psalms show the journey of intimacy with God and how we are ushered from brokenness and despair to a glorious hope... even when our circumstances don't always change.

LIVED THEOLOGY

You're wrapping up this month's reading plan, which means we are creeping up on half the year in the Word! Don't lose momentum. Psalms is a great place to "rest" in your reading, to really enjoy it and use the words as a basis for your prayer time. Let the Psalmist's words invite you to worship!



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

As we enter the next month of our reading plan, we also enter the book of 2 Samuel! Originally first and second Samuel were one book. The Septuagint, or Greek Old Testament, divided the book into two sections and when translated to English, we received that division in modern Bibles. First and Second Chronicles mirror much of the content in 1-2 Samuel, so you'll be reading sections of both and ending the month in 1 Kings.

One of the accounts we will wrestle with this month is the famous passage regarding David and Bathsheba. But before that, we see the conflict between Saul's followers and David's, David's dedication to honoring God's anointed even after death, and the story of Uzzah, who dies because he touches the Ark.

These passages teach us many things but one is particularly clear: Israel is very ignorant of the Law of God. They are not actively being taught these truths as evidenced by Uzzah's irreverent grabbing of the Ark and David's command to have it transported HIS way instead of the way God outlined in Exodus 25. The conflict, confusion and lack of discipleship reach their apex next week when we see David himself break TWO of God's commandments through adultery and murder.

STUDY TIPS FOR 2 SAMUEL and PSALMS

Reminder: you're still hopping between historical narrative (Samuel, Chronicles and Kings) and poetry! These two genres have to be read differently. Look for patterns, simile, and metaphor in the Psalms; exaggerated expressions of emotion and a pattern of praising God in suffering. In historical narrative, remember that the author is *observing* what happened, not always commenting on the morality of it.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Try *listening* to the Psalms and *reading* the historical passages, or vice versa!

Visual (Watchers): Try making a chart or drawing of the principles you learn from each daily reading. You could color code these and have one for each day of the month!

Kinesthetic (Doers): The visual tip could work for you this week, or you could do a combo of the auditory and visual methods together!

“Israel’s conflict, confusion and lack of discipleship reach their apex when we see David himself break TWO of God’s commandments through adultery and murder.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

David is all of us. It’s easy to set him on a pedestal as a man after God’s heart, but when David loses sight of God’s law and becomes enamored with his position and success - no longer depending on God to protect him - he falls into sin. Watch this progression and be reminded of who God is and what He has for us this week!



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week you will study the difficult passages about David and Bathsheba. You'll also spend a lot of time in Psalms. This is actually a great combination, and here's why: reading tough accounts like the one about David's great and grievous sin can be hard to process. We might wonder how God could still use someone like David after such an unjust betrayal of his closest advisors and friends plus the abuse of his power and anointing. And in Psalms, we learn how to process these feelings!

It is good and right to be upset by David. The prophet Nathan certainly was; God certainly was! And in Psalms we learn how to process those feelings by practicing lament and praise. More on that in a minute.

As you read about David's kingship, notice that he is in a "calm" period... the harvest after famine, the calm after a storm. No longer chased by Saul and reliant on God, David gets lazy. He doesn't even go to war with his men; he lets them do the dirty work while he hangs out at the palace. And in his passivity, he sins against Bathsheba, his mighty men, Israel, and God. This is a parallel to Adam's passivity in the Garden of Eden and a foreshadowing of the perfect Adam and King, Jesus, who would right the wrongs of the imperfect "types" before Him.

STUDY TIPS FOR PSALMS

Psalms are poetry. Sadly, I hear from many people that they don't "like" poetry, which usually means they think they don't have time to sit and think through the meaning. But that's why poetry is vital. It is meant to be read slowly and prayerfully, letting the meaning sit with you - not rushing it. Read the Psalms this way. Re-read them, listen to them, and pray them this week.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Psalms make great memory verses and songs (such as Shane and Shane's Psalms album). I like to write out these verses on my hand to memorize!

Visual (Watchers): Psalms are very easy to color code with highlighters and cross reference with each other. If you've gotten out of the habit, try picking it back up!

Kinesthetic (Doers): The visual tip could work for you this week, or you could do a combo of the auditory and visual methods together!

“David's sin is a parallel to Adam's passivity in the Garden of Eden and a foreshadowing of the perfect Adam and King, Jesus, who would right the wrongs of the imperfect “types” before Him.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Are you rushing through your faith instead of sitting with God's truths? Where can you slow down and truly meditate on the Word this week? This is what Psalm 1-2 tell us to do, and it's no coincidence they are at the beginning of the book of Psalms - they set the tone for how we are to read it! Make time this week to really meditate and pray.



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

We begin 2 Samuel 16 and immediately see the consequences of David's sin. As God predicted, David has brought chaos and unrest into his home and his family life quickly reflects it. His son Absalom does something we have seen before in the narratives of both Noah and Jacob: he sleeps with his father's wives. This was a statement of authority; an attempt to usurp the patriarch. In Absalom's case it was a show of power "in the sight of all Israel". It's both disgusting and incredibly bold.

But who encouraged Absalom to do this? Ahithophel! Bathsheba's grandfather incited David's son to this offensive act. To Ahithophel, David's sin was incredibly personal. He took vengeance on David's act toward his descendent by using one of David's own descendants to his ends.

Absalom may also have been angry at his father due to the situation with Amnon and Tamar (earlier in 2 Samuel) and David's hesitancy to bring Absalom back to Jerusalem after he ran away for killing his half brother. Whatever the case, David's acquisition of many wives followed by his lust for Bathsheba shows us how generational sin patterns affect an entire family. We have a choice in whether we partner with them, but they affect us all the same.

STUDY TIPS FOR PSALMS and 2 SAMUEL

My suggestion for study this week: listen to the 2 Samuel passages on audio and study the Psalms in your actual bible, taking notes and highlighting patterns, the 5 W's, and more!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Psalms make great memory verses and songs (such as Shane and Shane's Psalms album). I like to write out these verses on my hand to memorize!

Visual (Watchers): Psalms are very easy to color code with highlighters and cross reference with each other. If you've gotten out of the habit, try picking it back up!

Kinesthetic (Doers): The visual tip could work for you this week, or you could do a combo of the auditory and visual methods together!

“Generational sin patterns affect an entire family. We have a choice in whether we partner with them, but they affect us all the same.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

One commentator on David said that “sin reduces a person” and that public sin in a leader's life reduces them publicly. That's what has happened to David. It should make us stop and consider: how is sin in our lives reducing US? What are the effects? Have we partnered with any patterns from our parents when Christ came to free us from sin? Generational patterns only have as much a hold on us as we allow them to. But the process of walking in Christ's freedom takes time, obedience, counsel, and listening to the Spirit's affectionate guidance.



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

As I was looking through the passages for this week, I landed on Psalm 131. There are many beautiful psalms you'll encounter, but this tiny one is our focus this week:

"My heart is not proud, Lord,
my eyes are not haughty;
I do not concern myself with great matters
or things too wonderful for me.
But I have calmed and quieted myself,
I am like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child I am content.
Israel, put your hope in the Lord
both now and forevermore."

In these three verses the psalmist 1) acknowledges the limits of his knowledge and sovereignty; 2) draws near to God for comfort 3) calls his community to hope in God. There are some things we can learn in the movement from humility to praise. First, it's impossible to praise God without humility! Our worship pours from a heart that fears God. Secondly, the psalmist notes that his relationship with God is like that of a weaned child - not a nursing baby. A weaned child is independent and maturing; while he could technically survive apart from his mother, he chooses to stay close for her comfort and love. Such is our relationship with God!

STUDY TIPS FOR PSALMS and 2 SAMUEL

I recommend listening on audio to the historical passages and breaking down the psalms like we did above!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Try memorizing Psalm 131 this week by writing it a few times, saying it out loud, or writing the first letter of each word on your hand.

Visual (Watchers): Psalms are great for visual breakdown of verses. If you haven't done the inductive method yet, this is a great time to devote yourself to trying it!

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try standing at a table while you read your bible a few times this week or schedule to walk and listen on audio.

“A weaned child is independent and maturing; while he could technically survive apart from his mother, he chooses to stay close for her comfort and love. Such is our relationship with God!”

LIVED THEOLOGY

The Psalms outline how to process our emotions with God. How are you doing in this regard? How can you follow the Psalmist model of bringing your raw emotions to God and letting Him turn them to trust and praise?



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week you'll dip your toes all over the Bible! You'll begin Kings, where David's reign is ending; you'll spend more time in Psalms (including the beautiful Psalm 72) and you'll finish out the week in Song of Solomon, also known as Song of Songs!

We will spend more time on Solomon in next week's notes. This week we will concentrate on Song of Solomon, because this text is one of the most interesting in all of Scripture! The alternate name for the book, Song of Songs, means "greatest of all songs". The content of this book is such that the Jewish Council of Jamnia in A.D. 90 fought hard over whether it should be included in the Jewish canon! Some Jewish scholars even say men were not allowed to read the book until their 30s due to the sexual content.

That said, this book gives us a uniquely beautiful look at how God honors sex in marriage. The general view of Song of Songs across church history is that it was an allegory to God's relationship with Israel, though later scholars began to affirm a more literal interpretation. It is worth noting that Solomon's harem is mentioned (according to some commentators) in Songs 6:8. They note that this was written earlier in Solomon's regime when he only had 140 wives, not the 1,000 with which he ended his reign.

STUDY TIPS FOR SONG OF SONGS

Don't fight the poetry! Read Song of Solomon noting the parallels, symbols, and metaphors. Pretend for a minute you're in English or literature class. What themes would your teacher want you to note? How many different metaphors are employed and what are they ultimately pointing to?

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Begin picking a verse a week to write out on index cards and memorize.

Visual (Watchers): Check out the videos this week in Teachable for learning more about Solomon's reign!

Kinesthetic (Doers): How would you teach Song of Songs to someone else? What points would you touch on? Write those down!

“This book gives us a uniquely beautiful look at how God honors sex in marriage. The general view of Song of Songs across church history is as an allegory to God's relationship with Israel.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

How does Song of Songs change your view of marriage and sex, if at all? What do you think it could teach us in today's culture? How does the allegory to faith sit with you?



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

For the first time in a while you'll be reading only ONE book of the Bible this week! We will be deep diving into Proverbs, most of which was written by Solomon.

The book of Proverbs is wisdom literature, a different genre than we've been used to for the last few months! Proverbs employs a lot of parallelism to express thoughts. Parallelism comes in four primary forms:

- Synonymous: the same idea, repeated
- Antithetic: a contrast of ideas or concepts
- Emblematic: one idea is figurative and the other is face-value
- Synthetic: the second line furthers the thought of the first

When reading Proverbs note that we are NOT reading law. Instead, Proverbs expounds on the impact the law of God has when a person follows it. Proverbs also aren't stating universal promises or guarantees; Proverbs is stating general life principles. An example of this would be the verse in Chapter 22 about "training up a child".

STUDY TIPS FOR PROVERBS

Proverbs can be repetitive and have so many thoughts in succession it's easy to get lost or zone out. Try focusing on 2-3 per chapter that really speak to you. Use these in your prayer time, write them out and memorize them, or follow the cross references to see what else the Bible says about the topic!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Try the hack of picking a Proverb a day to memorize, looking at it whenever you sit down to eat!

Visual (Watchers): The video by Mike Winger on how Proverbs impacted his life might be a good watch this week.

Kinesthetic (Doers): If you haven't been studying the Word because you're struggling to focus, make sure your phone is OUT of the room and grab something to keep your hands busy!

“Proverbs expounds on the impact the law of God has when a person follows it.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Proverbs gives us so much practical life advice it's hard to know where to begin! Where do we start when living out these principles? Here are some questions to ask.

What is the underlying principle in the LAW that this Proverb explains?

What do I learn about God in this verse?

How would this proverb translate to today?

Am I trying to live this on my own strength or letting God guide me?

Do I ask for wisdom? Do I fear God?

Proverbs make a great read aloud with kids, too. Try reading a chapter a day at breakfast this week!



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week we are moving around in the Old Testament again: 1 Kings, Chronicles, Psalms and Proverbs! Even though we are skipping around, all these narratives are connected. I love that we get to connect dots across these books.

We have moved from the reign of David to the reign of Solomon. The chapters in Kings that you'll read have to do with the construction of the Temple. Take note of any parallels you notice between the Temple and the tabernacle (which is what Israel was using for worship up to this point!). And pay close attention to 1 Kings 8-9, where we learn God's standard for Solomon.

It's worth noting that, when we learn about the construction of Solomon's palace, Solomon had already married Pharaoh's daughter. What?! Solomon MARRIED into the family of Israel's former captors? Yes, he did. And he most likely did it for political reasons. Already we see that Solomon is beginning to operate like the kings around him: making treaties by marriage even when he was told not to multiply wives. This will prove to be the end of his reign.

STUDY TIPS FOR 1KINGS, PSALMS AND PROVERBS

Whenever we hop around in the Bible we have to adjust our expectations to the genre of what we are reading. Take note when you switch genres and set your expectations accordingly! It can be kind of fun to move from a plain story to a poem to wisdom literature. Let each one speak to you in a unique way! Think about how you see God and his heart in each style of writing.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Psalm 136 is great to read aloud. It's very repetitive and chants almost like a song!

Visual (Watchers): Try drawing a picture of the Temple based on what you read in Kings and Chronicles, then compare to a picture you look up online!

Kinesthetic (Doers): If you haven't been studying the Word because you're struggling to focus, make sure your phone is OUT of the room and grab something to keep your hands busy!

“Already we see that Solomon is beginning to operate like the kings around him: making treaties by marriage even when he was told not to multiply wives. This will prove to be the end of his reign.

LIVED THEOLOGY

In what ways do WE make excuses to mimic the world? What Solomon did made sense in his culture. It was NORMAL to marry into other nations as a means of ally-ship. But God called Israel's kings to trust HIS provision and protection. When we stop trusting God to protect and provide, we quickly begin to emulate the world's ways. Have you done this? Take time to think and pray about it.



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week we will be reading the entire book of Ecclesiastes alongside the end of Proverbs and some passages of 1 Kings/Chronicles! I don't know about you, but Ecclesiastes can be a tough study for many readers... including me! It's the ultimate book of wisdom literature. You'll be reading the entire book in this week's plan, so here's what to expect.

Solomon died in 931 BC so we know this book was written before then, though likely at the end of his life (scholars suppose Song of Songs was written early in his reign). Ecclesiastes has the tone of an author looking back on his life and all the things he has experienced. Solomon admits to having tried to find purpose in many different things, only to discover that fulfillment can't be found in gold, work, power or sex.

Solomon wrestles with the meaning of life but ultimately comes back to what he knows to be true: that God must be at the center of any life worth living. He mentions God's purposes multiple times throughout the book even though he was clearly not living with God in mind for the latter part of his reigning years.

STUDY TIPS FOR 1 KINGS, ECCLESIASTES AND PROVERBS

Ecclesiastes is hard to read for a few reasons; first, we know what Solomon should have done. We were "there" reading the account of God's promise to him. Ecclesiastes is like an account of how Solomon blew it! Secondly, there is much repetition and pessimism in the author's writing. Though this can be frustrating, look for the truth within repetition and note how the author recalibrates his feelings and thoughts with objective truth. What does he return to? What foundation do we have when everything we have tried turns to dust?

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Read Proverbs 31 out loud. This poem is written as an acronym with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet as the first letter of each line.

Visual (Watchers): Note the analogies and metaphors employed in Ecclesiastes! Write down each visual Solomon gives.

Kinesthetic (Doers): If you haven't been studying the Word because you're struggling to focus, make sure your phone is OUT of the room and grab something to keep your hands busy!

“Look for the truth within repetition and note how the author recalibrates his feelings and thoughts with objective truth.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

We are all capable of being Solomon: promised wisdom, goodness, and the presence of God only to squander it pursuing other things. Solomon had fulfillment in front of him, yet he STILL went after it everywhere else. What are you trying to use for fulfillment? How can you turn to God for that first?



Bible In A Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

This week we will journey further into 1 Kings and Chronicles. We will spend most of our time with the prophet Elijah, whose faithful dedication to truth earned him a spot as one of the most honored biblical prophets in all of history. It is Elijah who joins Jesus and Moses at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17). Many people believe Elijah will be one of the “two witnesses” predicted in Revelation (Revelation 11).

Elijah is one of the most “human” characters we meet in the Bible. He walked in power and boldness, challenging Ahab and Jezebel for their open Baal worship. He faces off with the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel and outruns Ahab’s chariot by the Spirit’s power! But after all of this, Elijah struggles with depression and fear. In his story we see the compassion God has on our humanity as well as the real-life impact of spiritual warfare.

You’ll be reading Elijah’s whole story this week as well as the transfer of anointing to Elisha, his successor. But one of the most memorable - and wicked - characters you’ll meet is Queen Jezebel, Ahab’s wife. Jezebel had incredible power and was the impetus behind Ahab’s Baal worship and as a consequence, Israel’s fall into idolatry.

STUDY TIPS FOR 1 KINGS AND CHRONICLES

As with all historical narrative we want to be cautious and not reduce it to moral lessons: “be like Elijah, don’t be like Jezebel”. Pay attention to the underlying message about God. Who is He? Also keep in mind that behind every idolatrous religion is a demonic spirit. Elijah is not facing a “fake god”; he is facing a spiritual enemy in the power of the Living God. No wonder He is exhausted! God shows Himself strong through and for Elijah just as He does today.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Pair listening with an activity like cleaning, doing dishes, or folding laundry. Make it a priority this week!

Visual (Watchers): You might try drawing what you read. There are many narrative accounts this week! Also try watching one of the children's depictions like Superbook - they tell the story in an engaging way.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try taking a walk and listening on audio. Teach these accounts to your kids or summarize with notes and type up a Powerpoint as if you were teaching someone else.

“Keep in mind that behind every idolatrous religion is a demonic spirit. Elijah is not facing a “fake god”; he is facing a spiritual enemy in the power of the Living God.”

LIVED THEOLOGY

Elijah's depression following intense spiritual warfare is not an uncommon experience. Many pastors will feel a greater level of temptation or weakness on Mondays. As a women's ministry leader, I encounter greater warfare when I return from an even or launching a new study. You can even experience spiritual pushback just showing up the Word. God is still sovereign and He equips us to face this and battle well!



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

As we continue through the New Testament we encounter familiar challenges in the lives of early Christians. How do we stay unified? How do we protect against false teaching? How do we reject legalism? How do we pursue holiness in a culture of license and selfishness? The questions answered in the epistles by loving apostles like Paul and Peter are questions many of us struggle with today.

Rich in both theology and Christian practice, books like Hebrews show us the connection between what we believe ABOUT God and how we follow Him in daily life. Contrary to what some teachers tell us, a right theology matters immensely. What we believe about Christ impacts how we live for Him, the holiness we choose (or don't), and how we treat other people.

First Peter, 1 Timothy, and Titus concentrate on interpersonal relationships within the faith community. Hebrews concentrates on how Christ fulfilled the Jewish law.

STUDY TIPS FOR THE EPISTLES

Hebrews is a complicated book and is better understood by reading it alongside Leviticus. If your Bible has cross references, you'll have links to the appropriate Old Testament verses referenced in this letter. I recommend following these verses on your deeper study days so you can make the Old Testament connection and understand the author's argument. The other epistles contain lasting instructions for church families while addressing context-specific issues, like female teachers. Utilize the extra resources this week for multiple perspectives on some of these issues. A study Bible should also contain comments and cross references to help you on your way!

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Try listening to each epistle in a different Bible translation this week! I like the NLT on YouVersion.

Visual (Watchers): As you watch overview videos, open your Bible to the first page of the book and note any important takeaways to remember next time you read it.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try reading your Bible while sitting in a spinning/office chair, so you can have movement as you study.

“Contrary to what some teachers tell us, a right theology matters immensely. What we believe about Christ impacts how we live for Him, the holiness we choose (or don’t), and how we treat other people.

LIVED THEOLOGY

A common theme in these passages is an emphasis on unity, peace, and love among the brethren. Are you experiencing this in your church community? If not, why not? Think about the unity the apostles encouraged and note HOW they wanted people to get there. Is there anything missing in your Christian experience that the epistles speak to this week?



Bible in a Year Club

WITH EVERY WOMAN A THEOLOGIAN

Well friend... you did it. At the end of this week, you'll have read the entire Bible in a year. I am incredibly proud of your accomplishment, but even more than that I am THRILLED for what God will do through the storehouse of truth you've compiled over these last 52 weeks! You have pressed into the Word through difficult texts, wrestling questions, distractions and life's responsibilities. I hope you celebrate!

This week is a bit of a doozy, a great way to finish strong! You'll be reading through the final few epistles and the entire book of Revelation. Reading Revelation quickly is one of the best ways to grasp the big picture movements of the text. I love that we are ending on the victorious note of Christ's second Advent, His return and reconciliation of all things.

As easy as it can be to get distracted, let's finish strong this week! Set a timer for your time in the word and dedicate yourself to meeting God as you wrap up 52 weeks in the Word.

STUDY TIPS FOR REVELATION

There are multiple ways to interpret Revelation, as some of the extra resources this week will articulate. Scholars advise readers not to over-analyze apocalyptic literature (Revelation and parts of Daniel); it is laced with symbolism and therefore, some parts are not to be taken literally (e.g. "blood up to a horse's bridle"). The book speaks to God's judgment on evil and the great war between the forces of the enemy and the army of God. Revelation quotes more Scripture than almost any other book in the Bible, so watch for the cross references and see if you can match the verses to the books from which they came! Reading Revelation is like a journey through the whole Bible in one book; an excellent way to end our Bible study journey together.

TIPS FOR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Auditory (Talkers): Listen to Revelation as you read. Some translations may be dramatized which would make it more interesting!

Visual (Watchers): You can look up charts depicting the different interpretations of Revelation for a visual of the timeline.

Kinesthetic (Doers): Try reading your Bible while sitting in a spinning/office chair, so you can have movement as you study.

“Revelation speaks to God’s judgment on evil and the great war between the forces of the enemy and the army of God. Reading Revelation is like a journey through the whole Bible in one book; an excellent way to end our Bible study journey together.

LIVED THEOLOGY

Take time to meditate on the Word this week. As you wrap up your reading plan, ask God to show you the main takeaway He wants for your year in the Word. What did you learn about Him?