

READ THE BIBLE IN 2 YEARS

Weeks 79-91



Luke Powell

Introduction

Welcome to **part 7** of *Bible in 2 years*! You can find the first 6 booklets on [my website](#).

Once more, we are reading five days a week, with the weekends available for reflection or catch up. As you read, don't forget to:

- Pray, pray, pray. Let your reading time be soaked in prayer, availing yourself to the Spirit's guiding as you read.
- Avoid the temptation to read simply for the sake of it. The goal is not simply to read through the Bible, but to connect with God in His Word.
- You might want to consider re-reading the same passages each day. I have found it to be a powerful practice – God has a way of speaking during the second reading and revealing things I had missed first time round.
- Feel free to [contact me](#) if you have any questions or comments on the readings.

May God bless you in a mighty way, as you continue on this journey.

Week 79

Another week of Ezekiel's pictures, the Psalmist's great reverence for God's Word, and Jesus' wonderful life and ministry. Read with joy and may the Spirit lead you to worship each day.

Week 79 Monday

Ezekiel 24: As the siege on Jerusalem begins, Ezekiel sees the city as a cooking pot and the Jews as choice meat. The meat has spoiled due to impurity and will be emptied and burned – a picture of God purging the city of evil. Then we read of Ezekiel's wife's death, which God uses to show the people yet another picture. Just as Ezekiel refrained from mourning upon losing his precious wife, so God told the people of Judah not to mourn when their beloved temple was destroyed.

Psalms 119:41–48: It is God's Word that allows the Psalmist to trust (v42), find hope (v43), find love (41), find freedom (v45), and find delight (v47). The secret is to reach for and meditate on His Word (v47).

Mark 10: Plenty to digest in this passage! Jesus' teaching on divorce is best read in conjunction with Matthew 19:9 and 1 Corinthians 7. His words about children bring us down to earth! His encounter with the rich young ruler gets us thinking about our priorities, and his words about service have us rethinking what leadership looks like. As Jesus leaves Jericho he heals a blind man who called out to him.

Week 79 Tuesday

Ezekiel 25: Here begins a series of judgements on the nations which rebelled against God, beginning with Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia for their hatred of God's people.

Psalms 119:49–56: God's Word brings us comfort in suffering (v50, 52). He is our portion! And so we commit to obeying Him (v56).

Mark 11: Jesus' last week begins here, as he enters Jerusalem on a lowly donkey in fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9. The barren fig tree represents Israel which had become spiritually fruitless – but we must remember that God still promises the restoration of Israel at the end. Jesus then cleanses the temple while quoting from Isaiah and Jeremiah, condemning the godlessness that was found in what should have been a sacred place. Jesus' words on faith and prayer do not teach that prayer is a 'blank cheque' before God, but that if our wills are aligned with God's, our prayers will be effective. Lastly we see a bit of humour in Jesus, as he challenges those who challenged him and comes out on top.

Week 79 Wednesday

Ezekiel 26: God now tells Ezekiel of the destruction that will come to the city of Tyre, which rejoiced at the fall of Jerusalem.

Psalms 119:57–64: A practical piece of writing in which the Psalmist considers his ways and turns towards God's law in obedience. This is because he sees God's love all around him, and wants to love for this loving God (v64). How about us?

Mark 12: Jesus' parable of the tenants was a stinging rebuke to the Jews who wanted to kill him, and his words about the teachers of the law's impending punishment had much the same effect (v38-40). His words about taxes and the widow's offering remind us of how God views our attitude towards our money. His words about marriage in the afterlife give us a glimpse of what awaits us if we die in Him. Then comes an important teaching on the greatest commandment of all, before Jesus delights the crowd with his thoughtful words about his identity.

Week 79 Thursday

Ezekiel 27-28: God has harsh words for Tyre, a city that had everything but forgot God; as well as the neighbouring city of Sidon. We might prosper in many ways, but we don't want to forget the God who gave us life!

Psalms 119:65–72: Though the Psalmist has faced affliction (v67, 71) and persecution (v69), he gets through because of his trust and delight in God's word.

Mark 13: Here we read Jesus' words regarding end times. Notice his repeated advice to not be deceived by others claiming to be him. Also notice his emphasis that nobody knows the day or hour, and so we are to "watch" for his coming expectantly every day.

Week 79 Friday

Ezekiel 29: Egypt is now promised God's judgement because of their godless ways. Notice again that God's notice is always to get people to realize who He is (v9, 16).

Psalms 119:73–80: A profound truth in v73 – that we seek to obey God because we know He made us and so knows what's best for us. The writer has such a deep desire to honour his God!

Mark 14: The familiar account of the days leading up to Jesus' arrest, and his trial before the Sanhedrin. How bold Peter was in v29, and how bitter his sorrow by the end of the chapter! But note that Jesus still served both him and Judas at the table in v22-24. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane is a [great model for our own prayers](#).

As the Psalmist has been saying over and over, God's Word is our delight and our help! I hope you have found that to be true this week.

Your hands made
me and formed me;
give me
“ understanding to ”
learn your
commands.

Psalm 119:73

Week 80

I hope you are persevering through Ezekiel's harsh visions and the Psalmist's repetitive meditations! God will surely reveal Himself to us even in these writings, if we pray for His help and guidance. This week we also end Mark's Gospel and start the deep letter of 1 Corinthians. Read and meet with God joyfully this week.

Week 80 Monday

Ezekiel 30-31: More harsh words for Egypt, including a warning that they would follow the fate of Assyria, which was powerful and majestic but still fell at God's hand.

Psalms 119:81-88: In his time of difficulty and persecution, the Psalmist finds hope by hanging onto God's Word. Let us do the same.

Mark 15: Pilate knows that Jesus is innocent, but he hands him over to death anyway. Jesus is ruthlessly taunted and mocked – something that still happens to him today. As he dies, the curtain in the temple splits, a profound symbol of the open way to God through Jesus' death. Even one of the centurions who killed him recognized Jesus' deity in that moment, [reminding me of this song](#). And so Jesus is buried and a huge stone rolled in front of the tomb.

Week 80 Tuesday

Ezekiel 32: Another chapter of Pharaoh's judgement. Here God promises that he will die and end up with other evil people.

Psalms 119:89-96: V92 shows us how to endure affliction – by delighting in God's Word. The Psalmist views the word of God as perfect (v96).

Mark 16: [Jesus is alive!](#) The stone is found to be rolled away, and the women who had come to anoint Jesus' body become the first preachers of the risen Christ. Jesus appears to the disciples and commissions them to do His work, before being taken up to heaven in their sight.

Mark is a precious Gospel which I'm sure has touched you again over the past weeks.

Week 80 Wednesday

Ezekiel 33: God tells Ezekiel that his role is to be a watchman, warning the people of what is to come. If he doesn't do so, then Ezekiel himself will be held accountable for the people's failure to turn to God. But if he does his job of warning, then the people themselves have no excuse if they stay unrepentant. A good reminder to preachers to present God's plan of salvation to their listeners, and a good reminder to church goers everywhere to put into practice the words heard in sermons.

Psalms 119:97-104: Notice that the Psalmist goes to God's Word not just for guidance and understanding, but for delight (v103)! Are we too, completing this Bible plan because we find His Word sweet to the taste?

1 Corinthians 1: We are back with Paul again, as we look at his classic letter to the struggling church in Corinth. He appears to be writing to address various issues with which this church was wrestling. Modern churches learn much from his wise, inspired words.

The letter begins with a typical warm greeting and words of thanksgiving by Paul, after which he encourages the people to stand united and avoid dividing over loyalty to a leader/minister. Then comes Paul's great words about the cross being foolishness to the world, but power to those being saved! Revel in the cross, and in God's greatness, as you read these words.

Week 80 Thursday

Ezekiel 34: A stern word for the shepherds of Israel who did not pastor as they should have. This is another reminder for pastors of today to care for their flocks. Then God begins to describe how He is the ultimate Shepherd. Notice all the "I will" statements he makes – so many great promises to hold onto!

Psalms 119:105-112: Again we see that the Psalmist finds guidance through God's Word (v105), and also joy in it (v111). We must always keep both of these in mind as we read.

1 Corinthians 2: Paul again speaks of the wisdom of God which is strange to the world. He then explains the role of the Holy Spirit in discerning God's truth – without the Spirit, the things of God seem foolish.

Week 80 Friday

Ezekiel 35: Another country is promised God's wrath because of their hatred for His people. This time it is Mount Seir (another name for Edom).

Psalms 119:113-120: The Psalmist stands in awe of God's Word (v120). Are we reading through this plan with a similar sense of wonder? I pray so.

1 Corinthians 3: This is the third chapter in a row that Paul emphasises God’s wisdom and the world’s foolishness. Don’t miss his powerful words about the temple and God’s Spirit in v16-17. Also take note of his words about us planting and watering seeds of faith, but only He can make it grow. Yes, we are called to share the good news – but only God can bring about the change and growth that His people need.

A full week with much to take in. Catch up this weekend and think much on the lessons from Psalm 119 – let’s not read this book in vain but have the right attitude as we read!

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“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

1 Corinthians 1:18

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Week 81

A prayer-poem I wrote to kick off our week:

*Lord it's easy to lose focus or to zone out as I read
So I come to you right now and Lord I hope you'll hear me plead:
Fix my mind upon Your glory! Fix my heart upon Your grace!
Please unveil yourself Lord! Show me that these words reveal your face.*

Week 81 Monday

Ezekiel 36: God promises that the mountains, hills, ravines and valleys in Israel will once again be filled with his people – a promise that was partly fulfilled when the Jews came back home from exile in Babylon, and will be completely fulfilled at Christ's Second Coming. Many believe that the formation of the state of Israel in 1948, and the ensuing return of many Jews to their homeland, was the beginning of this fulfilment. Importantly, it is not just a physical restoration of the land, but *a spiritual restoration of the people* that God promises (v25-32). Christ brought this cleansing and renewal, and the new heart and new spirit mentioned here are offered to all people who will come to Him.

Psalms 119:121–128: Surprisingly, the first two verses don't mention God's Word! But then the Psalmist is straight back into his theme, declaring that he considers God's commands more valuable than gold (v127).

1 Corinthians 4: Paul knows that it is a serious thing to be entrusted with the gospel message! But he is adamant that it is only God who can judge his faithfulness in carrying out this particular calling. Meantime, he sees how God has put him and the other apostles "on display" (v9), so that the world can see God in them even through their suffering. Perhaps we would see our own suffering differently if we would imitate Paul (v16) in this way.

Week 81 Tuesday

Ezekiel 37: The chapter we've all been waiting for in Ezekiel! God gives flesh and breath to dry bones, a picture of the redemption offered to all people. We are all dead in our sins, but God's grace brings us back to life. Hallelujah! Ezekiel then prophesies that the split kingdom of Israel will come together as one again, with Jesus (the descendant of David) as their king, and a new temple set among them forever. We await this day.

Psalms 119:129–136: For the writer, obeying God is a delight because God's "statutes are wonderful" (v129). He longs for them deeply (v131) and they enable him to find light and understanding (v130) and freedom from the rule of sin (133). Oh how powerful is this book!

1 Corinthians 5: Paul is shocked that there is sexual immorality *within the church*. He cautions the people of this church to separate themselves from those who claim to be Christians but boast about their sin – because the church should be a place where the old ways of "malice and wickedness" are replaced with "sincerity and truth" (v8).

Week 81 Wednesday

Ezekiel 38: A fascinating and controversial passage. Meshek in the land Magog has been identified by some as modern-day Russia, with Gog then being the prince or leader of Russia. Thus some believe that a time is coming when Israel will be attacked by Russia and other countries north of Israel, but God will protect His people by sending an earthquake, rain, hailstones and burning sulphur. Whoever these nations turn out to be, we hold onto the fact that God continues to protect his people Israel, and the church.

Psalms 119:137–144: On the Psalmist goes, proclaiming that God's statutes are "fully trustworthy" (v138) – a view that most people (even some churchgoers) no longer take. As usual, the Psalmist speaks of his delight in the Word of God.

1 Corinthians 6: Again Paul is shocked – this time by the Corinthians' way of dealing with conflict. Instead of sorting it out among themselves, they were going to court and trying to ruin each other. Paul is clear that people with such a godless mindset will not inherit God's kingdom, and neither will anybody flagrantly doing godless things. Paul then warns the people of overeating and sexual immorality, and reminds them that their bodies are temples of the Spirit, belonging to God and not themselves. We can learn from this today, in a world where it is easy to neglect our health and our purity. The last few verses [remind me of this lovely song](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxCb6l3jkis) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxCb6l3jkis).

Week 81 Thursday

Ezekiel 39: Gog and his army are destroyed by God, and Israel spends months cleansing the land of their weapons and corpses while wild birds and animals feast on the dead bodies. In the end, God restores Israel and the nations see that God is holy and His people were being punished for their sins.

Psalms 119:145–152: V146 reminds us that our obedience of God is in *response* to His unfailing love, rather than a way to earn it. God’s promises mean so much to the writer that he happily gets up before dawn, or stays up through the night, to meditate on them (v147-8).

1 Corinthians 7: In response to the Corinthians’ question about sex, Paul affirms that celibacy is permitted but not commanded, because marriage is the proper context for sexual relations. Spouses should be considerate with one another in this area. Paul is also clear that divorce should not be on the table – although remember that Jesus did say that in the case of one spouse committing adultery, divorce is permitted. Paul then encourages the Corinthians to remain committed to God with an undivided heart – married or not.

Week 81 Friday

Ezekiel 40: Ezekiel is shown the rebuilt temple of the future in great detail. This would have been encouraging to the Jews in exile, who had been devastated by the destruction of the temple when their oppressors took over Jerusalem.

Psalms 119:153–160: The Psalmist recognises that many people are far from God because they are not in tune with His Word. But we the people of God are close to Him through His Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 8: Paul acknowledges that some young or “weak” believers might be tempted when they see more experienced believers partake of things that might lead to sin. He prefers to abstain from these things so that others aren’t led astray. Let’s be careful of our actions – other believers are watching and we don’t want to damage our witness.

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“I rise before
dawn and cry for
help; I have put my
hope in your
word.”

Psalm 119:147

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Week 82

Our long slog through Psalm 119 comes to an end this week. Ezekiel's vision of the temple continues, and Paul's words to the Corinthians are familiar to most of us. Read and worship!

Week 82 Monday

Ezekiel 41-42: Ezekiel goes on describing the future temple – which some believe was the temple that was meant to be built when the Jews returned from exile, but never was. Others believe this temple will be built during the 1000-year reign of Christ spoken of in Revelation, and others believe is merely symbolic of God's future reign with His people. [Here's a visual aid](#), if you'd like some help trying to picture all of this.

Psalms 119:161–168: The theme rolls on, with the Psalmist considering God's promise (found in His Word) to be a "great spoil" (v162) which causes him to rejoice and praise God. He also emphasizes obedience of God's statutes again (v167).

1 Corinthians 9: Here Paul addresses the rights of God's workers to receive financial support from the believers. He had not always enforced this, preferring to preach the good news with no compensation rather than demand a fee. But he is clear the apostles' material needs *should* be covered by those in the church. Paul then explains that he adapts his evangelism styles for different people (v19-23), before calling his people to discipline and focus in their Christian walk much like one training to run a race would (v24-27).

Week 82 Tuesday

Ezekiel 43: In Ezekiel 11 we saw the glory of God leave the temple because of the sin of Israel. Now Ezekiel sees God's glory return to the new temple. The fact that sacrifices are to be made in this temple makes us question the interpretation of this being a literal temple in the future reign of Christ – what need is there for sacrifices when Christ's sacrifice on the cross forever did away with the old system? But many Christian commentators believe that these sacrifices will be *memorial* in nature, much like our celebration of the Lord's Supper today.

Psalms 119:169–176: This epic Psalm comes to an end! The writer again states the delight he finds in God's words (v174), but his last words are unusual for this Psalm – he acknowledges how he has strayed from God, but still holds onto His commands. Ending on a note of repentance brings this upbeat Psalm down to earth.

1 Corinthians 10: Paul has some tough words here – reminding the people that their ancestors *seemed* spiritual but were still involved in godless things like sexual immorality, testing God, and grumbling. These are captured in the Word so that we can learn from them and avoid them (v6). Then some good news – we are able to withstand temptation in Christ (v13)! Paul's words in v12-17 are familiar to many of us from our celebrations of the Lord's Supper, and Paul then goes on to explain that though we are free from ritual laws, we must not use our freedom to do things that aren't beneficial. V31 is the high point of the chapter, summing it all up in one great statement which is worth memorizing.

Week 82 Wednesday

Ezekiel 44: In this new temple, Levites would be the gatekeepers while the descendants of Zadok would perform the priestly duties. The priests are called to a certain holiness, separating themselves from that which is common as an example to God's people. How we need such ministers today!

Psalms 120-21: Two short Psalms – 120 calls for God to save the Psalmist from liars and violent people, while 121 is the well-known description of God as the Maker of heaven and earth who watches over His people.

1 Corinthians 11: Paul teaches here that men and women should be noticeably different in their appearance – women should be wary of uncovering their heads (which, in Paul's day, would have made them look like prostitutes) or of shaving their heads (a sign of adultery in Jewish law). Men should be wary of letting their hair grow too long and thus looking like women. The two genders are equal before God and each have their roles – the important thing in the end is whether we have a submissive and worshipful heart. Paul then speaks on the 'love feasts' that the early church enjoyed which were followed by the Lord's Supper, warning that an irreverent attitude at these is dangerous for one's soul. This whole passage is, essentially, a call to reverent and worshipful mindset during church.

Week 82 Thursday

Ezekiel 45: Ezekiel is precise about measurements – Israel's work is to be accurate and fair. The people are called to celebrate feasts in God's honour, and again we read of the sacrifices to be made for atonement, which in the future will be memorials of the work Christ did on the cross.

Psalms 122: A prayer for Jerusalem. All these years later there is still not peace in that part of the world. We keep praying!

1 Corinthians 12: Paul here explains that the church is like a body with many parts. It would be foolish for the body parts to all be the same! And so it is with us – we each have our role to play based on the gifts we’ve been given. If you don’t know which spiritual gifts you have, consider doing this course.

Week 82 Friday 📖

Ezekiel 46: The ‘prince’ mentioned here by Ezekiel appears to be a religious ruler of sorts who performs a lot of the religious duties in the new temple. Detailed instructions about festival celebrations, entering and exiting the temple, cooking sacrificial meals, and giving land as a gift is given here.

Psalms 123: The Psalmist explains how desperately his eyes seek God and His mercy, in light of the difficulty in his life. How desperate are we too seek God in our tough times?

1 Corinthians 13: Most of us know this one! Paul’s famous passage on love was less about marriage (although it does still apply there) and more about living in a Christian community. We may be full of faith and good deeds but if love isn’t the root, we have missed the mark! Look carefully at Paul’s various descriptions of love and ask yourself if anybody could describe *you* using any of those terms. Love is the greatest value God has gifted us with – so let’s be defined by His love above all.

The temple and sacrifice descriptions haven’t been easy to get through, but we’ve read some lovely short Psalms and some powerful words from Paul this week. Catch up if you need this weekend and get ready for the “weeping prophet” Jeremiah next week!

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**“AND NOW THESE THREE
REMAIN: FAITH, HOPE AND
LOVE. BUT THE GREATEST
OF THESE IS LOVE.”**

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

”

Week 83

From one great prophet to another, and from one letter of Paul's to another this week! God's blessing awaits as we read and pray.

Week 83 Monday

Ezekiel 47-48: Ezekiel pictures a river flowing from the temple, bringing life to many creatures and trees around it. Some believe this is a symbolic picture, others believe a real river will flow there one day. Ezekiel's writings finish with a vision of the division of the land between the twelve tribes, with the new Jerusalem in the centre renamed "Jehovah Shammah" (The LORD is There) – a wonderful promise of God's glory among His people.

This has been a challenging but wonderful book to read. Let us not forget Ezekiel's passion for God's glory and people's call to holiness!

Psalms 124: An interesting read in light of the current war in Israel. God's people praise Him for protecting them from evil and being their help. We in the church can also celebrate God's miraculous help and deliverance as we read such words.

1 Corinthians 14: Paul goes into detail about speaking in tongues. It is a special gift, but can be abused in public worship and cause scenes of chaos and confusion rather than building up the church like prophesy. In the end, "everything must be done so that the church may be built up" (v26). Then Paul says that women should stay silent in church – some believe that this is a command for all women for all time, while others make the case that in Paul's day women were uneducated and so caused disruption when speaking, but in our time this is not the case. The truth is, *nobody* should speak in church if their words aren't going to contribute the encouragement and education of the church.

Week 83 Tuesday

Jeremiah 1: Jeremiah is known as the "Weeping Prophet" because of the gloomy message of destruction he brought to the Southern Kingdom of Israel. Called to prophesy as Judah was about to be taken captive by Babylon, he tried to warn them of the impending disaster, and then when Judah was taken he preached of restoration through repentance. Chapter 1 recounts Jeremiah's call to the prophetic ministry, and then uses pictures of the almond tree and the boiling pot to declare God's coming wrath on sinful Judah.

Psalms 125: Notice the effect of *trust* and *goodness* described in this Psalm. Notice also the effect of *evil*. Choose wisely your ways!

1 Corinthians 15: Here is one the great Biblical passages about the resurrection that God's people are promised. Paul declares that since Christ rose from the dead, we too will be risen and receive new bodies. Death is defeated and no longer poses a threat to the saved child of God! Therefore we must stand firm and unmoving in our work faith, doing God's work faithfully (v58). There are some other gems in between these thoughts, such as Paul's call for us to come to our senses and stop sinning (v34), and his declaration that it is Christ in him who makes him effective (v10).

Week 83 Wednesday

Jeremiah 2-3: A long passage in which Jeremiah accuses Judah of serious backsliding from God. Notice the two sins God's people are guilty of in 2:13 – rejecting God's living water and building broken cisterns to hold water. This is a picture of sin – rejecting God and trying to be filled on something else. We must be careful of proclaiming our innocence (2:35) instead of returning to God in repentance (3:12-13).

Psalms 126: Count the word 'joy' in this Psalm! It is repeated a few times, and reminds us that God does great things which cause joy in our souls. Perhaps you will take v5-6 to heart today.

1 Corinthians 16: Paul calls for donations to be made for people in need. He makes a few personal requests and gives some last-minute advice to stay strong and be loving (v13-14). A final goodbye passes on Christ's grace and Paul's love. How did 1 Corinthians bless you as you read it this time?

Week 83 Thursday

Jeremiah 4: The chapter begins where the last one left – with a call to repentance. Then comes a long proclamation of judgement against God's people, with an attack from the north imminent.

Psalms 127: We're reminded here that without God, our efforts come to nothing. V2 doesn't mean we don't need to work hard – the Bible values diligence – but again it will come to nothing if we are working without God. The Psalmist also speaks of children as a blessing from God.

2 Corinthians 1: Paul wrote this personal and heartfelt letter shortly after 1 Corinthians. As false teachers begin to infiltrate the Corinthians church, Paul writes to remind the people of the true Christian message, explores themes such

as God's faithfulness in trials, the importance of church discipline, the importance of giving, and the importance of solid doctrine.

Chapter 1 reminds us that God comforts us so that we can comfort others. Paul declares that God is the one who delivers us from deadly perils, and that in Christ all God's promises come true. A wonderful section near the end speaks of God's work in our lives in helping us stand firm.

Week 83 Friday

Jeremiah 5: Looking at the utter unfaithfulness of His people (v11), with stubborn and rebellious hearts (v23), God realises that he can't forgive them unless they return to Him. Since even the prophets and priests have gone astray (v31), God promises to send an enemy to punish.

Psalms 128: Four of the six verses talk about blessings; verses 1 and 4 explains how to receive them.

2 Corinthians 2: Paul's love for the people of Corinth is evident. He calls for forgiveness to lead the way in dealing with conflict. Then there is a section about God's people spreading "the pleasing aroma of Christ" (v15) to the world – a great picture of the Christian life.

Jeremiah's seriousness is quite startling! But we have the Psalms' worship of God and the practical words of Paul to round off our readings. Catch up if you need, and think much over what you have read this week.

“
The sting of death
is sin, and the
power of sin is the
law. But thanks be
to God! He gives
us the victory
through our Lord
Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 15:56–57

”

Week 84

Jeremiah's heavy words must be carefully considered. Jesus brought forgiveness of sins, but the repentance that Jeremiah speaks of is still necessary. Again we will find the Psalms give expression to our hearts' cries, and Paul's words to the Corinthians could well have been written to any church today. Read and be blessed!

Week 84 Monday

Jeremiah 6: Why is God so harsh on his people? He explains, because "they have not listened to my words and have rejected my law" (v19).

Psalms 129: Jesus is the one who ultimately frees us from the wicked one! Read this Psalm and be reminded of what Jesus accomplished for us.

2 Corinthians 3: Paul states the people of Corinth were like "letters of recommendation" for his ministry. Their changed lives proved the truth of the gospel. He then explains that the new covenant which Jesus and the Holy Spirit brought is greater than the glory of the old Mosaic law which brought condemnation. How wonderful to know that God's Spirit is transforming us "with ever-increasing glory" (v18)!

Week 84 Tuesday

Jeremiah 7: Jesus referred to v11 when he cleansed the temple in Matthew 21. Jeremiah continues calling Israel to repent and turn back to God. But they don't pay attention, and instead follow their own stubborn and evil desires (v24). This would have dire consequences, with God making the land desolate to try and bring the people right.

Psalms 130: A Psalm to remember! Here we learn that God doesn't keep a record of sins when his people cry to Him for mercy. We put our hope in Him, and He redeems us with grace. Praise Him as you read today.

2 Corinthians 4: A strong start and end to this chapter with the statement "we do not lose heart" (v1, 16). Paul goes on to explain just how difficult the life of an apostle is, constantly coming close to death, but reminds the Corinthians that earthly troubles are "light and momentary" (v17) in light of the glory awaiting us in heaven. For now, we "fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen" (v18) as we live for Jesus.

Week 84 Wednesday

Jeremiah 8-9: Still God laments the fact that his people refuse to repent (8:6, 12). Jeremiah weeps for his people in chapter 9, but they continue in their sin, and God promises punishment.

Psalms 131: This short Psalm is lovely, expressing a childlike faith in God and a contentment not to know it all.

2 Corinthians 5: A full passage! Dying brings us "at home with the Lord" (v8). But meantime we "live by faith, not by sight" (v7), compelled by Christ's love (v14) and not living for ourselves but for His glory (v15). This is because Jesus became sin for us on the cross (v21), allowing us to be reconciled to God (v18) and see ourselves as new creations (v17). Wow! Praise God for the wonderful things Jesus achieved for us.

Week 84 Thursday

Jeremiah 10: God is greater than the useless idols that the Gentiles worship. It was the Lord Almighty, not an idol, who "made the earth by his power" (v12). But Jeremiah still weeps as he foresees the coming destruction of his people, and prays for God's mercy.

Psalms 132: This Psalm looks back to David's reign as king of Israel. He was intent on finding a place for the ark of the covenant to rest – a fitting dwelling place for God. The Psalmist asks God to uphold the promises he made to David but let us remember that it is the descendant of David, Jesus Christ, who is enthroned in heaven, clothing us in righteousness and causing us to sing for joy (v9).

2 Corinthians 6: Paul's declaration that salvation is for *today* (v2) reminds me of [this song](#). In his great desire to see people reach God, Paul and the apostles were willing to go through great hardships (v3-10) if they removed a "stumbling block" from people's path to God. Then comes a warning – we should not partner with wicked people, but we should "come out from them and be separate" (v17). This does not mean we refrain from loving all people and pointing them to God with kindness, but it does mean that we are careful not to *join* in with godless people and their ways.

Week 84 Friday

Jeremiah 11-12: Because the people of God followed their own ways instead of obeying the covenant, God brought the curses he had promised upon them (11:8). Some people threatened to kill Jeremiah for prophesying in such a way, but God promised to protect him (11:21-23). In chapter 12 Jeremiah asks God why such evil people are allowed to

flourish, and God tells him that even worse things are coming – but that those who repent and return to him will not be wiped out completely.

Psalms 133: Another short Psalm, this time proclaiming the sweetness of true godly fellowship and unity.

2 Corinthians 7: A great call to holiness begins his passage – let us never forget God’s desire for us to live holy and reverent lives! Then we read of Paul’s great love for this group of people, and his great joy in their faith. Paul’s words about godly sorrow leading to repentance, earnestness and readiness (v10) make us think about our view of sin and salvation.

We’ve been startled by the harsh words in Jeremiah, but the pastoral words of Paul have kept us focused on Jesus. I pray that you are being blessed as you read – remembering your call to holiness, but trusting in the grace of Jesus to guide your life. Catch up this weekend, and worship God with all your heart.

“If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord,
who could stand?
But with you there is forgiveness, so that
we can, with reverence, serve you.”

Psalm 130:3-4

Week 85

Another week of prophecy from Jeremiah, Psalms of praise, and instruction from Paul. May God open our eyes to *himself* as we read.

Week 85 Monday

Jeremiah 13: A belt buried in the sand is a picture of Judah – once close and intimate with God, but now ruined. Then a picture of wineskins describes Judah – inebriated and without judgement. Lastly God’s harsh words of judgement for the spiritual adultery of his people remind us to remain committed and faithful.

Psalms 134: A short Psalm which calls even those serving God at night to keep on praising and lifting up their hands.
2 Corinthians 8: Paul informs the Corinthians of the joyful and generous ways of the Macedonian Christians. He calls his readers to also excel in these things, particularly in giving to those in need. Then Paul asks the Corinthians to prepare for the arrival of Titus and a few other deep Christians, who are an example of how to live the faith.

Week 85 Tuesday

Jeremiah 14-15: Many words of harsh judgement from God fill these two chapters. We cannot believe that God doesn’t mind sin – how he hates it! But the message remains: if we repent and turn to him, he will save us graciously (15:19).

Psalms 135: The words “praise the Lord” are repeated over and over here. The Psalmist recounts God’s mighty works and sings His praise as he ponders them. Let this Psalm lead us to praise as we consider God’s greatness today.

2 Corinthians 9: A classic passage that teaches us to be cheerful givers. Paul doesn’t mention any amount such as a tithe, but he does expect that the people of God would be willing to give of their riches with joy. Remember verse 6 today, which applies not only in financial matters – “*what you reap, you will sow*”.

Week 85 Wednesday

Jeremiah 16: God withdraws his blessing from the people (v5) because the people “behaved more wickedly than your ancestors.... following the stubbornness of your evil hearts instead of obeying” (v12). In Christ we do have forgiveness of sin, but in Christ we also have power over sin, and we must not go back to our sinful, godless ways.

Psalms 136: The great “His love endures forever” Psalm. Don’t just skip over that line, but read it every time and may it sink into your soul as you repeat it. [I recorded a week of daily devotions based on this Psalm.](#)

2 Corinthians 10: Don’t miss the profound opening verse in which Paul uses “the humility and gentleness of Christ” in his appeal to them. V2-6 is worth a careful study – we should not live by the world’s standards, but should live by the power of God in which strongholds are broken and each thought made obedient to Christ! Unlike the false leaders of the day, Paul does not want to commend himself, but wants the effectiveness of his ministry to show God’s approval.

Week 85 Thursday

Jeremiah 17-18: Judah’s idolatry has reached even the children (17:2). God compares the one who trusts in people to a bush in the desert, while the one who trusts in God is like a fruitful tree next to a stream. Then Jeremiah is called to stand at the gates of the city and preach against those who desecrate God’s Sabbath.

Chapter 18 contains a picture of God as a potter and Israel as spoiled clay. Again the cry rings out for the people to repent and turn from evil – but again they refuse (18:12), and so God goes ahead and punishes.

Psalms 137: As the Jews sit in exile they weep for what they have lost. This is [such a contrast to the Christian way](#) of singing through our trials!

2 Corinthians 11: Paul now explains his ‘godly jealousy’ (v2) for the Corinthians – he desperately wants them to stay faithful to the true gospel. How fitting is his call to avoid a ‘different’ Jesus than the biblical one, in today’s world of false teachings. Then Paul proves his commitment to Christ by listing some of the persecutions and sufferings he endured in his ministry. Surely only one who knows the God for whom he suffers would willingly go through all of this.

Week 85 Friday

Jeremiah 19: God is upset with his people for their idolatry and bloodshed (v4). A broken jar is a picture of what will happen to Judah.

Psalms 138: A Psalm of praise with a wonderful promise in verse 6. How good to know that though God is high and mighty, he still cares for his people.

2 Corinthians 12: Paul goes on proving himself to be a genuine apostle with a story of a vision he had – a kind of near death experience. But with great revelation comes the potential for great arrogance, and so God gives Paul some sort of suffering to keep him from being too puffed up, and tells him that grace will be sufficient to help him deal with it. Perhaps our own sufferings would be more bearable if we hear God’s words in v8 as directed to us today.

Paul is embarrassed to have brought all of this up, but claims that he did it to prove that he is a “true apostle” (v12), and to strengthen the Corinthians church that they may repent and live free from sin (v20-21).

Deep truths in the Word this week. I hope that we are spending much time *praying* as we read – applying the truths we encounter to our own lives prayerfully.

“

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

2 Corinthians 12:9

”

Week 86

On we go with Jeremiah's weeping for the God's people, the Psalms and their poetry, and Paul's practical Christian living advice. Read with joy this week, asking for knowledge and understanding through the Spirit!

Week 86 Monday

Jeremiah 20-21: Jeremiah is beaten for preaching God's message, and he regrets the ministry God called him to and even wishes he was never born. Yes, God's people can also deal with real depression. Then we see Zedekiah turn to Jeremiah for help because Babylon had begun attacking Judah. But God sees that his is not a genuine repentance, and so the siege continues.

Psalms 139: A wonderful Psalm about God's sovereign plan for our lives. Not only did He form us in our mother's womb, but wherever we go *He is there*. This Psalm has given so many people hope over the centuries, considering [God's great knowledge of our lives](#)! May it bless you today.

2 Corinthians 13: Paul's lovely letter comes to an end with more practical advice about examining yourself carefully to see that your faith is genuine. His last words are used as a closing benediction in many churches even today (v14). How has this letter impacted you in past few weeks?

Week 86 Tuesday

Jeremiah 22: Jeremiah speaks out against evil kings Zedekiah, Jehoahaz, and Jehoaichin – encouraging them to follow God's commands or face ruin.

Psalms 140: A prayer for safety. David was clearly under attack, and cries out for God to cripple his enemies. Verses 7 and 8 may be helpful for us to carry in our hearts today.

1 Thessalonians 1: Many believe this to be Paul's earliest letter, written in the early 50s A.D. Paul and Silas had spent time in Thessalonica before, and spent much time instructing the Christians there (Acts 17:2). Now Paul writes to them, encouraged by a report from Timothy about what was happening among that group.

In Chapter 1 Paul greets the Thessalonians warmly and then speaks warmly about their true faith. Look closely at his words describing this church. Could you and your Christian community be described in these terms? Are we "a model to all the believers" (v7) because of our faith, hope and love (v3)?

Week 86 Wednesday

Jeremiah 23-24: Again there is a warning for the pastors/shepherds who lead the people astray, and for the prophets who preach a false message of peace without repentance and godliness. But God promises the great King in the line of David – who we know is Jesus. He also shows Jeremiah a picture of two types of figs – rotten ones who represent the evil king and his rules, and healthy ones who represent the remnant of Israel who repent and turn back to God.

Psalms 141: A cry to God for help, and a promise to keep focused on Him. That is powerful – yes we should cry out to Him, but let us also always play our part in keeping our eyes set on Him.

1 Thessalonians 2: Paul is pleased that the Thessalonians regard the gospel as God-given and not just of human origin. He is also pleased that the holy and blameless lives that he and the apostles live are an example and witness to the Thessalonians. Let us remember that we too *can* and *should* live church lives. See Paul's great love for the people in v8, and v19-20!

Week 86 Thursday

Jeremiah 25: The prophet has been warning the people of Judah for 23 years! It's easy for us to think that this whole book takes place in a short time, but it is a long history of prophecies. The Judeans still ignore Jeremiah though, and so a 70-year captivity is predicted.

Psalms 142: David is holed up in a cave and he pours out his heart to God. What a hopeful thought is verse 3! Though our spirits grow faint, God watches over us.

1 Thessalonians 3: Paul's desire is to "strengthen and encourage" (v2) the Thessalonian believers, and he speaks of being overjoyed when Timothy brings a good report about their faith. Paul prays that their church be full of love (v12) and that they be holy and blameless (v13).

Week 86 Friday

Jeremiah 26: Still God gives more opportunities for repentance and mercy. But the religious Jews threaten Jeremiah for preaching such a message. Jeremiah accepts whatever fate comes his way, but not without repeating the message he received from God (v13-14). The angry crowd relents when they are reminded of another prophet who preached a similar message – Micah.

Psalms 143: David is feeling down as he is pursued by enemies, but he turns to God (v5) and trusts God (v8-9). He rests in God's unfailing love (v8, 12) while he fights his battle. A great example for us when we are in a bad way.

1 Thessalonians 4: Many people believe that the Bible is "Basic-Instruction-Before-Leaving-Earth". Here Paul instructs the people how to live a Christian life that pleases God, since it is His will that we be sanctified and holy (v3). This includes avoiding certain sins, and increasing in love, living a respectable life that wins people's respect.

Then Paul teaches on death. He shows that those who die with their faith in Jesus will come back with Him when He returns (v14), and that the Christians who are alive at that time will be "caught up" (or raptured) to meet Him in the air, and then live with Him forever. What a day this will be!

Consider with joy the deep things we have learned about Christian leadership, about dealing with hard times, about Christian living, and about death and resurrection in God's Word this week.



"Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody."

1 Thessalonians 4:11–12



Week 87

Familiar words from Jeremiah this week remind us that he wasn't always negative! We edge closer to the end of the Psalms, and we begin with the writings of John. Pray for wisdom and insight from the Spirit before you read.

Week 87 Monday

Jeremiah 27-28: God instructs the people to submit to Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, and to ignore the false prophets such as Hananiah who said that Babylon would quickly be destroyed. God uses the picture of 'yokes' (which were harnesses to control animals) to bring this across, promising a "yoke of iron" (28:13) for the neck of the nations serving Babylon.

Psalms 144: In spite of the fleeting nature of our lives, the mighty God loves us deeply, caring for us and equipping us for life. Like David, let's "sing a new song" (v9) as we consider this wonderful God today!

1 Thessalonians 5: This chapter begins with details about Christ's second coming, and a call to live sober and aware lives. Notice what v9 shows – that God's desire is for us to be saved when that day comes. More practical words of advice from Paul, which [inspired these devotions](https://lukepowellministries.com/daily-devotions/category/Strive+To+Do+Good+%281+Thess+5%3A14-15%29) (<https://lukepowellministries.com/daily-devotions/category/Strive+To+Do+Good+%281+Thess+5%3A14-15%29>) close this letter. Don't miss the great v23-24 which states God's ability to sanctify us and make us holy by His grace!

A powerful letter, which I'm sure has given you much to think about as you've read.

Week 87 Tuesday

Jeremiah 29: We've all been waiting for this chapter, because of the famous verse 11! But I wonder how many of us have ever read it in context? We see today that this verse is not a generic promise of blessing for individual Christians, but a promise for the Jewish exiles for deliverance from Babylon after 70 years when the people return to God sincerely. If anything, this is a picture of *salvation* for us – we were lost in 'exile' because of our sin, but God promises to welcome us back if we seek Him with our whole hearts.

Psalms 145: A lovely Psalm of praise. Try pick out all ways David describes God in verses that begin with the words "The Lord is..."

2 Thessalonians 1: Paul's second letter to the Thessalonian Christians is short, and was written to encourage the readers and enlighten them regarding Christ's second coming.

Warm words of encouragement begin the letter, with Paul lauding the Thessalonians for their growing faith, love and perseverance. He then begins teaching about Jesus' coming back "in blazing fire" (v7), punishing those who rejecting Him and being marveled at by those who love Him (v8-9). In the meantime, we are to live lives "worthy of his calling" (v11) in order to glorify God.

Week 87 Wednesday

Jeremiah 30: More good news for God's people, with the promises of regathering to the land, a king in the line of David, and a cure for the Israelites' incurable wound caused by their sin. V10 is an amazing picture of what God's salvation brings us.

Psalms 146: Another beautiful Psalm of praise that teaches us to praise God (v1-2) and trust God (v3-5) because of all the great things God does (v6-10). Which of these pictures of God will you hold onto today?

2 Thessalonians 2: Paul teaches the people about the rapture, and the "man of lawlessness". These articles may help you to get a better grip on this: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/who-is-the-man-of-lawlessness>; <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-is-the-rapture>

Paul then moves on to encourage the Thessalonians in their faith, reminding them that God chose, saved and called them (v13-14) and that they should stand firm and be encouraged by Jesus himself (v15-17). What powerful words for us too!

Week 87 Thursday

Jeremiah 31: An important passage with God's promise of restoration of the people of Israel and Judah at the end times, based on his "everlasting love" and "unfailing kindness" (v3). Matthew's Gospel quotes v15 as a picture of Herod's massacre of infants. Then comes the great promise of a *new covenant* between God and Israel/Judah (v31-40) which Christ initiated at the Last Supper, but which will only be embraced by Israel when Christ comes again and they accept Him.

Psalms 147: Meaningful words here about God's healing (v3), His power (v4-5), His understanding (v5b), His compassion (v7-9) and His permanence (v10).

2 Thessalonians 3: Paul asks the people for prayer, and reminds them that God is faithful to strengthen and protect them (v1-3). He then warns against the sin of idleness, and reminds them of how he and his fellow evangelists work hard and don't expect handouts. Finally, Paul gives a warm greeting and signs the letter with his own hand. A deep and meaningful letter from a great man of God!

Week 87 Friday 

Jeremiah 32: Babylon is now besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah buys a field and puts the title deed in a jar to preserve it – a picture of how Israel will be preserved by God through their exile. Again we read great promises from God to restore His people back to the land, with joy and singing.

Psalms 148: Much praise fills this Psalm! May much praise fill your day too.

1 John 1: On we go from Paul to John, who writes in a very different way! His lovely first letter begins by stating that he and others were eyewitnesses to Jesus' life on earth. He then talks of the Christian's call to walk in light and not darkness, and tells of the importance of confessing sin and receiving the cleansing that God has for us.

How powerful the Word of God! This weekend, meditate on the truths found in this week's readings, and continue to praise God for His mighty deeds and unfailing love.

— “ —————

“I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

Jeremiah 29:11-13

————— ” —

Week 88

A little poem that I have begun to pray each morning:

*Two choices as I start the day
The godly or the worldly way
Lord I commit to honouring You
In all I think and say and do
Amen*

Week 88 Monday

Jeremiah 33: Again Jeremiah receives a promise from God that Israel will be restored to a place of security and peace. God's praise will again ring out in the streets of Jerusalem, and the Messiah from the line of David will be the one to save them. This is Jesus of course, who came once and was rejected by Israel, but will come again and be accepted.

Psalms 149: The Psalmist calls for a *new* song to be sung to God (yes, new Christian music is encouraged by the Bible!). Look for the verses that speak of rejoicing and being glad in this Psalm. How wonderful that God gives us such joy.

1 John 2: John stresses again that we should not sin, but that *if* (not when) we sin, forgiveness is available through Christ. His claim that "Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did" inspired a devotional book I wrote, which you can get here (<https://lukepowellministries.com/shop/p/because-jesus>). John is clear that you cannot hate others and call yourself a Christian, and you cannot love the world and call yourself a Christian! Those who are anointed by God know these truths (v20-21). What challenging words for us today.

Week 88 Tuesday

Jeremiah 34: Zedekiah is warned about the Babylonian takeover, but promised an honourable death. Then God notes that though they promised to set their slaves free, the Jews put all their slaves back into bondage when the enemy withdrew for a time – and so God promised to repay them by 'freely' allowing their enemies to put *them* into bondage.

Psalms 150: The famous last Psalm in which all creation is called to loudly praise God! My friend Richard's song quotes this Psalm word for word from the ESV (<https://youtu.be/wvPFkpSGj7c?si=LgRilX5sU-RYUeu3>).

1 John 3: V1 is a keeper – memorise it! Once more John teaches that Christians do not go on sinning, but they live righteous lives by God's grace. This means believing in Him and loving each other through the Spirit (v23-24).

Week 88 Wednesday

Jeremiah 35: God uses the faithfulness of the Recabites to teach his people a lesson in obedience.

Proverbs 1:1-19: Let's get into the famous book of Proverbs! Solomon begins by stating his purpose in writing: to help others gain wisdom and discipline in their lives. V7 is the key verse of the whole book! In v8-19 we read a parable of temptation, and learn to flee from tempting situations.

1 John 4: John states that we should be able to test spirits and recognise those that are from God and those that aren't. Then comes his famous passage – count how many times he says "love" from v7! We love because of God's love for us.

Week 88 Thursday

Jeremiah 36: Jeremiah has his prophecies written down and read out to the people, who are deeply convicted by what they hear. But when the message is read out to the king, he burns the scrolls in a fire and sets out to arrest Jeremiah. Many people today try "burn" God's Word rather than obey.

Proverbs 1:20-33: We all 'eat the fruit of (our) ways' as v31 says. The question is, which ways will we follow? The wise ways of God or the foolish ways of the world?

1 John 5: A powerful end to a powerful letter! John states that love of God means carrying out His commands to love each other, and overcoming the world by faith. He emphasizes the importance of *faith* in the Jesus as the Son of God, and again insists that Christians should not go on sinning but should live free from worldly ways by living God and carrying out His commands.

John's words have convicted and challenged people throughout the centuries. How did they impact you, reading them a second time in 2 years?

Week 88 Friday

Jeremiah 37-38: Jeremiah continues to speak the words God gives him about the downfall of Israel at the hands of Babylon, but none of the people pay attention to what he has to say (37:2). Eventually Jeremiah is arrested on false

charges, beaten and thrown into a dungeon. King Zedekiah initially helps Jeremiah, but in ch38 hands him over to the officials who have Jeremiah lowered into a cistern of mud where he would surely die. But a man named Ebed-Melek helps him escape.

Proverbs 2:1-11: God's wisdom should be searched for like treasure! If we seek His wisdom we find pleasure and protection (v10-11).

2 John: A short letter from John to a lady of the early church. John is thrilled that people are turning to Christ, but worried about the influence of leaders who deny that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh. These 'antichrists' were insisting that the man Jesus 'became' the Christ at his baptism, and ceased being the Christ at his death. John insists that Jesus was the Son of God from the very beginning.

The words of Proverbs today reminded us of the power of what we are doing here. The wisdom found in God's words is unparalleled! We must cling to it and live in it, not just read it. Have a blessed weekend and be ready for more powerful truth next week.

“

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father— Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

1 John 2:1-2

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Week 89

We see Jerusalem fall this week, which makes for an interesting read. We also learn more about true godly wisdom, and begin John's Gospel which will give us a close look at Jesus again. Read with joy!

Week 89 Monday

Jeremiah 39: Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylon army besiege Jerusalem, and Zedekiah flees but is captured and tortured. The soldiers round up the people and take them to Babylon, except for some poor people who are left to farm the land and provide food. Jeremiah, however, is well treated.

Proverbs 2:12-22: Wisdom benefits you, saving you from the ways of the wicked which will lead to death. Friends, be sure to "walk in the ways of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous" (v20) today!

3 John: Let's read the shortest book in the New Testament today. John writes to Gaius, a man of God walking in the truth (v3), and condemns Diotrephes for his pride and self-importance (v9-10), while lauding Demetrius as a true follower of Christ (v12). A lovely little letter which gives us a glimpse into early church life.

Week 89 Tuesday

Jeremiah 40-41: Jeremiah is given a choice to go to Babylon or back to Judah. Before he can decide, he is sent back to Judah with provisions and a gift. But a plot to kill Gedaliah the new governor of Judah is soon carried out by an Israelite named Ishmael, who then also kills 70 other men and throws them into a cistern. When Johanan comes after Ishmael he escapes, and so Johanan takes the remnant of Jews and tried leading them back to Egypt away from the Babylonians.

Proverbs 3:1-26: V5-6 are very well known and remind us what real faith looks like. Notice how the writer encourages the reader to keep wisdom *close* at all times (v3, v21). He believes that this way of life must be held to always! Because, in the end, God's wisdom is worth more than silver, gold, or rubies (v14-15).

John 1: John's gospel is quite possibly the most loved New Testament book. The picture of Jesus John paints here is different to the other gospels, with John focusing more on Jesus' *teaching* than his miracles. You will see many words of Jesus in these pages, and I pray that you will be drawn to the Saviour as you hear Him speak.

In chapter 1, John writes a stunning introduction which claims that Jesus was with God from the very beginning, until he came in the flesh to dwell among people and offer God's invitation of redemption (v1-18). We then see John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus (v19-34) and famously declaring him to be the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (v29). Then we see Jesus call the first disciples, who are shocked that a *Nazarene* could be any good (v46). But Jesus proves himself to them and declared himself to be the 'ladder' between heaven and earth (v51).

Week 89 Wednesday

Jeremiah 42: Johanan wants to take the people to Egypt, but first asks Jeremiah to ask God for guidance. Jeremiah receives God's word telling the people *not* to go to Egypt but to stay in Judah. Sadly, the people don't listen. How often we seek God's guidance but don't listen; how often we also return to the land of slavery instead of staying in the promised land although it is difficult.

Proverbs 3:27-35: Five "do not's" start this passage, giving us good advice for godly living. Notice the truth in v33 – that the wicked are under God's curse, but the righteous (those saved by Christ) are blessed.

John 2: Jesus' first miracle takes place at a wedding, where water is turned into wine – a picture of what He can do in our spiritual lives! Jesus then cleanses the temple with a whip. How he despises religious people taking advantage of others! A startling claim about the temple would come back to the disciples after he died and rose again and cause them to believe.

Week 89 Thursday

Jeremiah 43-44: The people don't believe Jeremiah, and so they take him and Baruch and move out of Judah into the lower part of Egypt. They destroyed themselves (44:8) by this move, preferring idols in Egypt over their true God. Notice how 44:27 contrasts the famous Jeremiah 29:11 – God's plans for good and prosperity depend on our obedience and faithfulness. It is thought that Jeremiah died in Egypt.

Proverbs 4:1-12: V3-4 pictures a young Solomon being taught about God by David his father. As we read the Word day after day, it is essential that we "take hold" (v4) of what we read and "do not forsake" (v6) the truths God shows us.

John 3: Jesus' famous conversation with Nicodemus teaches us so much! We all need a second birth – a spiritual birth – to be part of the kingdom of God. It is believing in Jesus as Saviour that brings this blessing. Jesus came to bring us eternal life and not condemn (v16-17), but the truth is that those who don't believe are condemned (18, 36). John the Baptist's testimony about Jesus continues, and his words in v30 should be the heart cry of every Christian.

Jeremiah 45-46: We now go back to an earlier time and see Jeremiah share God's message with Baruch. He is told not to seek great things for himself – a message for all people of God, to put *His* greatness above our own. In ch46 we read Jeremiah's prophecy of the fall of Egypt at the hands of Babylon. Don't miss the words of hope for God's people at the end of the chapter.

Proverbs 4:14-27: Solomon contrasts the light path of the righteous with the dark path of the wicked. As I spoke of in this short daily devotion series (<https://lukepowellministries.com/daily-devotions/category/Wisdom+for+Each+Day+%28Proverbs+4%29>), Solomon gives us wisdom for each day at the end of the chapter.

John 4: Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman has many wonderful lessons. His teachings on living water and worship are profound, and his claim to be Messiah is clear. The woman tells everybody about Jesus and many believe – our testimonies have power! Jesus then claims that his food was to do the Father's will, before healing a young boy when his father decides to take Jesus at his word. Much to chew on in this chapter today.

A full week, and I pray that the Spirit has been bringing light and understanding to you in your reading! Catch up if you need this weekend, ponder much on what you have read, and be ready for the end of Jeremiah next week.

“This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.”

John 3:19-21

Week 90

As Jeremiah's great body of work comes to a close, consider how the words God spoke to him might still be speaking to us in our context today. Consider too how Solomon's wisdom has been relevant down through the ages, and how Jesus' words and actions all those years ago still bring life today. How wonderful to read God's Word in the 21st century and still be blessed by Him!

Week 90 Monday

Jeremiah 47-48: Philistines and Moabites are warned of God's impending judgement. Notice 48:7 – misplaced trust is the problem, as well as pride and conceit (48:29). The restoration spoken of in 48:47 is understood by most as the gift of salvation through Jesus for Gentiles everywhere.

Proverbs 5: Solomon warns his young sons of the dangers that lust brings. But this is not just about sexual sin – take careful note of the last three verses!

John 5: Jesus heals a paralysed man and tells him that sin can have worse effects on you than paralysis. The Jewish leaders are upset that Jesus would heal on a Sabbath – prompting a long teaching from Jesus about those who testify to his identity (<https://lukepowellministries.com/daily-devotions/category/Testify%21+%28John+5%29>).

Week 90 Tuesday

Jeremiah 49: God's judgement against various places is outlined but Jeremiah.

Proverbs 6:1-19: Solomon warns against laziness and deceitful plots, before pointing out some things that God despises. Live carefully and wisely.

John 6: Jesus feeds the 5000 and then walks on water, consoling the disciples with words you may want to take to heart today (v20). Then Jesus speaks on what it means for Him to be the "Bread of Life". Confused by this, some people leave Jesus, but Peter and the disciples know that Jesus' words contain life (v68).

Week 90 Wednesday

Jeremiah 50: Now Babylon's defeat at the hands of a nation from the north is prophesied, resulting in the Israelites being restored to their land.

Proverbs 6:20-35: God's Word is a lamp, a light, providing guidance (v23), especially for those tempted to commit adultery.

John 7: With many different views on who he might be, Jesus teaches the people more about his identity. He then makes the staggering claim that for those who come to him, "rivers of living water will flow from within them" (v38). Have you experienced this? Ask Him for this blessing in faith today.

Week 90 Thursday

Jeremiah 51: God's greatness is emphasised as the fall of Babylon is described in detail. Jeremiah instructs Seraiah to read out the words he had written, and then sink them in the Euphrates River as a picture of Babylon doom.

Proverbs 7: Once again, Solomon encourages his readers to bind his teaching to themselves and to help them stay away from sin – sexual sin in particular. In today's world of pornography and promiscuity, his words are very meaningful.

John 8: A famous story begins this chapter, and we see Jesus' double focus: don't condemn, but don't enable sin either. Then we see Jesus claiming big things again – not only does he claim to be the light for the whole world (v12) but by the end he is identifying himself with God the Father (v58) and claiming to have existed before Abraham! You cannot see Jesus as just a good human teacher – his own claims are much greater.

Week 90 Friday

Jeremiah 52: The fate of Zedekiah and Jerusalem is repeated here, and then comes an inventory of items taken by the Babylonians. We read of the three deportations of Israelites to Babylon, and the book ends abruptly with Nebuchadnezzar's kind gesture to King Jehoiachin.

This has been a tough book to read but we have learned much of God's seriousness about sin and His promise for deliverance through Jesus. How wonderful for Jeremiah to have had such good news to share in such a tough time.

Proverbs 8:1-21: A wise godly life is more valuable than gold, silver or rubies! Thus, let us fear God and hate evil.

John 9: Jesus heals a blind man, and the Pharisees get very angry that he would do this on the Sabbath. Jesus uses the opportunity to point out the Pharisees' own spiritual blindness.

And so we are done with our hard slog through Jeremiah! We have also benefitted from the wisdom of Solomon and the wonder of Jesus this week. I pray that these truths will stick with you this weekend.



**“Keep my commands and
you will live; guard my
teachings as the apple of
your eye. Bind them on
your fingers; write them
on the tablet of your
heart.”**

Proverbs 7:2-3



Week 91

Let's read some minor prophets this week, who have a very similar message to Jeremiah. Solomon's wisdom will help us in our daily lives, and seeing Jesus in his splendour will certainly touch our hearts. Pray this week that the same God who inspired the writing of this Book will also inspire its reading!

Week 91 Monday

Habakkuk 1: It appears that Habakkuk was a prophet around the same time as Jeremiah, warning of the impending attack by the Babylonians. His firm grasp of Old Testament Scripture and his words in chapter 3 have led some to conclude that he was a priest turned prophet. The name "Habakkuk" means "to wrestle" or "to embrace" – two things we see him doing as he considers his people's fate in this book.

Chapter 1 begins with Habakkuk's complaint to God. With violence, destruction and sin all around his land, why has God not intervened? God answers him in v5-11, promising to use the Babylonian army to crush Judah. But Habakkuk complains again – baffled that a holy God could use an evil nation to complete his plans.

Proverbs 8:22-36: Wisdom personified continues to state her case. Here we find out that wisdom was brought into the world by God from the very beginning. Living by God's wisdom, we are blessed!

John 10: Jesus uses a picture to explain his role – he is a good shepherd who leads and cares for his sheep. He is also the only 'gate' into the sheepfold – nobody comes to God but through Jesus! This followed by a tense conversation with the Jews in Solomon's Colonnade, who "do not believe" (v25) what Jesus has already told them. Jesus makes the extraordinary claim to be one with the Father (v30) which upsets them all deeply, but Jesus is quick to back up his statement with proof from his life. Notice v42 – do you believe?

Week 91 Tuesday

Habakkuk 2: The prophet contrasts the one who is puffed up with the one who lives by faith (v4). God pronounces five "woes" to the Babylonians – for their dishonesty and extortion (v6-8), for their unjust gain (v9-11), for their injustice and bloodshed (v12-14), for their drunken lust and violence (v15-17) and their idol worship (v18-20). God, however, is *holy* and we should be reverent and worshipful in His presence (v20).

Proverbs 9: Here we have a call to feast on the satisfying food of Wisdom, and a call from Folly to feast on her stolen food. Solomon contrasts the two and clearly shows that the way of Wisdom is the way that honours God and brings life to God's people.

John 11: A famous passage. Jesus seems late to respond to this family's crisis, but it was his plan along – do you need to trust in His timing today, even if he seems late? Jesus' words in v25-26 are spoken at Christian funerals all around the world today, reminding us that life goes on beyond the grave for those whose faith is in Him. Here we also find the shortest verse in the Bible "Jesus wept". Yes, Jesus felt pain just like we do. Then he raises Lazarus from the dead, and the Pharisees and chief priests plot to have him arrested, causing Jesus to stay out of the crowds for a while.

Week 91 Wednesday

Habakkuk 3: A powerful end to this book, as the prophet trembles while describing the power of God, and then declares with great faith that he will rejoice in God even if things are not going well. Can you echo v17-19 in your heart today?

Proverbs 10:1-16: Proverbs on various topics such as righteousness, diligence, discipline, integrity and love. Perhaps v12 might be a good one to keep in the memory banks.

John 12: Jesus is anointed by Mary in a moment of extravagant worship. How extravagant are we in worship? He then comes into Jerusalem on a donkey and they sing "Hosanna" in his honour, much to the Pharisees' disgust. Jesus again predicts his death, and calls his disciples to follow in his footsteps and lose their lives for the sake of the gospel – and God the Father's voice thunders as Jesus recommits to his calling. But still many refuse to believe, and Jesus promises harsh things for them (v48).

Week 91 Thursday

Zephaniah 1: Let's read the work of a Zephaniah, a descendant of the great King Hezekiah whose name means "Jehovah hides/protects". A contemporary of Jeremiah, his words are harsh and straightforward, warning God's people of the coming judgement God is bringing for their lives of sin.

Ch1 begins with a great sweeping away of all people and creatures on the earth and in the sea. We then see God preparing a sacrifice, where the people of Judah are those being offered. Finally there is a picture of a great battle

where the whole earth is consumed. It seems that Judah's defeat by the Babylonians partially fulfils this prophecy, and Jesus' return will complete it.

Proverbs 10:17-32: Notice all the verses about lips, mouths or words – we must carefully consider the way we speak. Remember that following God's way brings joy (v28)!

John 13: In a stunning display of love, Jesus washes the disciples' feet – even the feet of Judas and Peter who would betray and deny him. He then tells the disciples to love each other in the same way that he loved them. This remains our great call as Christians.

Week 91 Friday

Zephaniah 2-3: Various ancient peoples are promised God's judgement due to their sin, but God calls *His* people to repent (2:1-3) and promises that remnant of His people will prosper. Ch3 begins with judgement against Jerusalem, but ends by looking forward to the end when God will restore Israel as Jesus comes again. What wonderful promises we have here!

Proverbs 11:1-15: Once more Solomon contrasts the righteous and the wicked. Which will you be?

John 14: Jesus' powerful words in v6 have changed the lives of many. It is *only through Jesus* that we may find our way to God. Again we see Jesus claiming equality with God the Father, and promising to send the Spirit after his ascension. It was the Spirit who reminded the disciples of all Jesus' words, so that we could have an accurate depiction of his life and teaching in the gospels. Now we are called to obey his teachings (v23-24) in faith, and know His peace (v27).

Many recurring themes are cropping up – the judgement of nations and Israel, the wisdom of a righteous life, the divinity of Jesus. I pray that these truths are sinking deep into your soul!

“The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”
Zephaniah 3:17

Afterword

Here we are, another 13 weeks closer to finishing the whole Bible. In fact, we have only 13 weeks left. Can you believe it?

I'm sure you are feeling as if you still have much understanding to gain. Consider simply restarting the Bible again in 13 weeks' time when we are finished. God has a way of revealing new, fresh things on each read of these wonderful texts.

You can find the PDF for the next 13 weeks [on my website here](#).

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