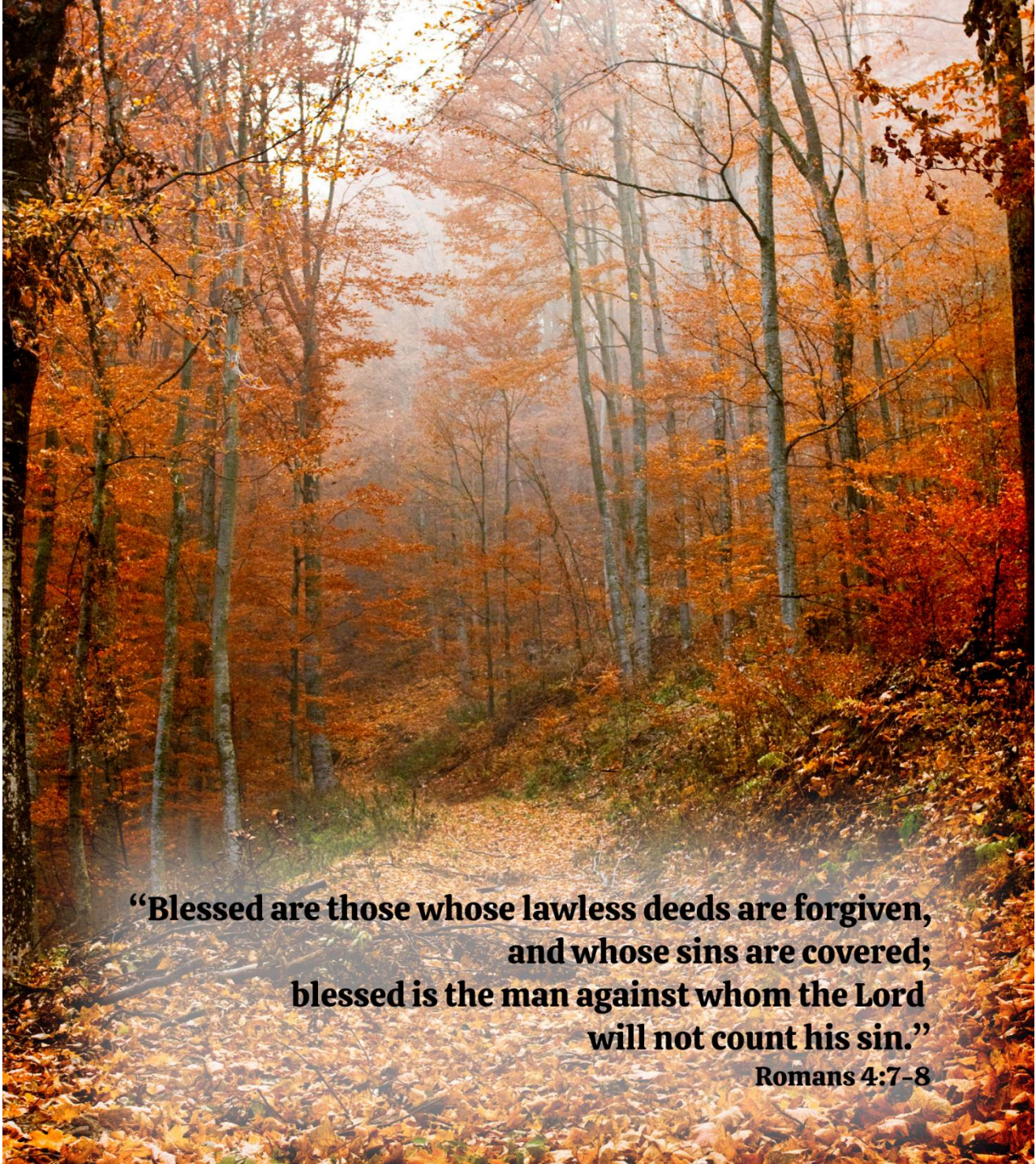


October 2023

Memory Verse and Bible Reading Plan



**“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
blessed is the man against whom the Lord
will not count his sin.”**

Romans 4:7-8

Reading Jeremiah

Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible in terms of number of words. The ministry of Jeremiah extended from about 627 to 585 B.C. He served under the last five kings of Judah—Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. He also ministered at the end of his life to the band of refugees who wound up in Egypt.

The southern kingdom of Judah fell during Jeremiah's prophetic ministry (586 BC), having been threatened for many years by outside powers—first Assyria and Egypt and then by their eventual conquerors, Babylon.

More than any other OT prophet, Jeremiah shares the depth and details of his personal life and struggles.

Jeremiah has a pretty bad reputation: judgment, tears, judgment, tears—and then more judgment. He lashed out against the sins of his countrymen, especially for their idolatry, which sometimes even involved sacrificing their children to foreign gods. Jeremiah teaches us that human beings are rebels against God.

But Jeremiah loved the people of Judah in spite of their sins, and he prayed for them. The covenant was broken. Judgment is imminent. What can be done?

As covenant breakers, they won't go unpunished. But Jeremiah doesn't stop with judgment. He declares that God is not finished with his people, and he has determined to make a new covenant with them. God keeps his promises, and his people will one day enjoy all of the blessings of renewal and restoration.

This covenant won't be like the last one. God will do for his people what they're unable to do for themselves. He'll give them a new heart, and fulfill his promise of regeneration for all within the covenant family, who will have a new heart and a will with the ability and desire to obey God.

The book of Jeremiah also provides us the clearest glimpse of the new covenant God intended to make with His people once Christ came to earth. This new covenant would be the means of restoration for God's people, as He would put His law within them, writing it on hearts of flesh rather than on tablets of stone. Rather than fostering our relationship with God through a fixed location like a temple, He promised through Jeremiah that His people would know Him directly, a knowledge that comes through the person of His Son, Jesus Christ (Jeremiah 31:31–34; see also Hebrews 8:6).

Redemption comes through pain, not through avoiding it. By his words and suffering he points to the sovereign grace of God in his control over world history and his faithfulness to his covenant that will be fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Outline of Jeremiah:

- I. Call of the Prophet (ch. 1)
- II. Warnings and Exhortations to Judah (chs. 2 - 35)
- III. Sufferings and Persecutions of the Prophet (chs. 36-38)
- IV. The Fall of Jerusalem and Its Aftermath (chs. 39-45)
- V. Judgment against ten Nations (chs. 46-51)
- VI. Historical Appendix (ch. 52)

Reading Daniel

The book of Daniel is written by Daniel while he and his people are in exile in Babylon. The book is another historical narrative that reminds us of God's universal sovereignty over all the nations of the earth, even the most pagan. The book of Daniel isn't really about Daniel, but Daniel's God, God is the hero. In this book we meet the Most High God who is sovereignly ruling over the kings and kingdoms of human history until the Messianic Son of Man consummates history and brings his people into the everlasting Kingdom of God.

“God saves a sinful and weak people; he preserves young men from impurity and old men from lions; he answers prayer and interprets dreams; he exalts the humble and humbles the proud; he vindicates the faithful and vanquishes the profane; and he rescues covenant-forsaking people by returning them to the land of the covenant” (ESV Study Bible).

The book divides neatly into two sections.

The first has Daniel writing of himself in the third person (chapters 1-6), and it records a series of six historical sketches, in which Daniel and/or his friends are delivered and/or otherwise vindicated.

In the second section of the book, Daniel speaks of himself in the first person (chapters 7-12), and records a series of visions relating to Israel and the surrounding nations. Daniel predicts the rise of the Greeks, and even gets as far as the Romans.

What can we take away from Daniel?

First, live by faith and be faithful wherever God plants you in this culture we live in. The gospel according to Daniel should give us courage against our foes, hope in our distress, and how to persevere in hope even with no immediate solutions to the problems that get us down.

Second, remind yourself again and again of the folly and danger of idolatry. Another way of thinking of idolatry is the sin of focusing on the world’s values, wanting what the world offers, putting the things of this world and this life above God, of seeking security, worth, value or meaning in temporal things.

Third, through all the strange visions of the last six chapters we are reminded: “The true God reigns!” In the end, it will not be Babylon, Persia, the United States or any other kingdom that stands. Dominion, glory, and the kingdom will be given to one like a son of man, and all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.

Reading Ezekiel

It is almost impossible to do justice to this book in this short of space. It is filled with obscure and strange visions. It is the Revelation of the OT.

The book of Ezekiel is a covenant lawsuit brought by God against the house of Israel. And at the heart of Israel’s running violations of the covenant, culminating in her judgment at the hands of the Babylonians, was the fact that Israel needed to be born again. God promises to deal with this problem once and for all. He will bring them out of exile. He will sprinkle clean water upon them. He will cleanse them from all their filthiness. God will then take away their stony heart and give them a new heart, a regenerate heart.

Ezekiel was taken off to Babylon as a young man in the first captivity, which occurred in 597 B.C. The city of Jerusalem did not fall completely until a few years later, in 586 B.C. Thus the first part of Ezekiel’s ministry had reference to the pending fall of Jerusalem, even though he was not ministering from within that doomed city, the way Jeremiah was.

The book begins with the vision of God in “the wheels,” a vision which symbolizes God’s departure from the Temple in Jerusalem and indicates His presence with the exiles in Babylon. The presence of God is highly “mobile,” which means God cannot be kept in some temple-box. But the God who can depart because of all the abominations is also a God who can, in His sovereignty, return. And thus, the book concludes with a glorious vision of God’s return to His people.

What can we take away from Ezekiel?

First, it’s like a mirror in which we can see our own sin more clearly. We are like Israel in our idolatry, pride, and unfaithfulness. We won’t take action to address our sin if we don’t first see what’s wrong with us.

Second, we see that God has a much larger redemptive plan that He is working. Don’t get lost in the hard to understand details of the visions, keep the big picture in mind. This applies to each of us, it is easy to lose perspective in the midst of life’s challenges and trials. Remember God is at work, He has a plan. God is always present even in the midst of judgment and suffering, even in exile in Babylon.

Third, see God’s continued grace to the most undeserving people in spite of their sin, Israel and us.

You can divide the book into four main sections:

Chapters 1-24, prophesy of the fall of Jerusalem.

Chapters 25-33, prophesy against the surrounding Gentile nations.

Chapters 34-39, prophesy of God's grace, faithfulness and restoration, a new covenant and a new heart.

God's discipline is always with a goal to restore.

Chapters 40-48, prophesy of a glorious Temple and how a restored Israel will bless the entire world.

Bible Reading Plan – October

1	Jeremiah 1-3	Job 1
2	Jeremiah 4-6	Job 2
3	Jeremiah 11-12, 26	Job 3
4	Jeremiah 7-8	Job 4
5	Jeremiah 9-10	Job 5
6	Jeremiah 14-17	Job 6
7	Jeremiah 18-20	Job 7
8	Jeremiah 35-36	Job 8
9	Jeremiah 13, 22	Job 9:1-20
10	Jeremiah 23-24	Job 9:21-35
11	2 Kings 22-23	Job 10
12	2 Chron. 36:1-8	Job 11
13	Daniel 1-3	Job 12
14	Daniel 4-6	Job 13
15	Daniel 7-9	Job 14
16	Daniel 10-12	Job 15:1-16
17	2 Kings 24-25	Job 15:17-35
18	2 Chron. 36:9-10	Job 16
19	Ezekiel 1-3	Job 17
20	Ezekiel 4-7	Job 18
21	Ezekiel 8-11	Job 19
22	Ezekiel 12-15	Job 20
23	Ezekiel 16-18	Job 21:1-21
24	Ezekiel 19-21	Job 21:22-34
25	Ezekiel 22-25	Job 22