

## THROUGH THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

9/17 – Eccl 1-3, 2 Cor 9  
9/18 – Eccl 4-6, 2 Cor 10  
9/19 – Eccl 7-9, 2 Cor 11:1-15  
9/20 – Eccl 10-12, 2 Cor 11:16-33

9/21 – Sng 1-3, 2 Cor 12  
9/22 – Sng 4-5, 2 Cor 13  
9/23 – Sng 6-8, Gal 1  
9/24 – Isa 1-3, Gal 2

\*\* Summaries/outlines from The Holy Bible, Contemporary English Version, ©1995 by the American Bible Society.

### ECCLESIASTES

This book is a search for meaning in life. What can humans do to find satisfaction and happiness? What is worthwhile in life? The search begins with a gloomy outlook—life is boring and as senseless as chasing the wind.

Ecclesiastes looks at one area of life after another, to see whether meaning and purpose for living can be found. The book decides that humans cannot understand the meaning of life, and that life is too short and unfair. This may seem depressing, but Ecclesiastes also shows that some things in life are better than others. For example, it is better to be wise than to be foolish. And God does intend for people to enjoy his gifts of work, food, drink, friendship, and marriage. And most important of all: *Respect and obey God! This is what life is all about. God will judge everything we do, even what is done in secret, whether good or bad. (12:13-14).*

#### **OUTLINE**

- I. The Search for Meaning in Life (1:1-2:26)
- II. Everything Has Its Time (3:1-8)
- III. Life Isn't Always Fair, So Live Wisely (3:9-6:12)
- IV. No One Knows What the Future Will Bring (9:1-11:6)
- V. Respect and Obey God (11:7-12:14)

#### **BIBLE BLURB (from @bible summary)**

Ecc1: Everything is meaningless! There is nothing new under the sun. I applied my heart to know wisdom, but much wisdom brings much sorrow.

Ecc2: I built houses, gathered possessions and sought pleasure. It was meaningless! The wise die like the foolish. I despaired of my toil.

Ecc3: There is a time for everything: to live, to die, to mourn, to dance. It is the gift of God that man should find pleasure in his work.

Ecc4: I saw the tears of the oppressed. Two have a good reward for their toil. I saw everyone follow a new king. This too is meaningless!

Ecc5: Do not make rash vows before God. The lover of money never has enough. What is gained by toil? It is good to find enjoyment in life.

Ecc6: Here is an evil: to have wealth and honour but not to enjoy them. What do the wise gain over fools? The more words, the less meaning.

Ecc7: The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning. Do not be too righteous, or too wicked. Men have gone in search of many schemes.

Ecc8: Obey the king's command. Though sinners do evil, it will be well for those who fear God. No one can know what goes on under the sun.

Ecc9: The same fate comes to all. A living dog is better than a dead lion. Enjoy the days of your vain life. Wisdom is better than strength.

Ecc10: A little folly spoils wisdom. Whoever digs a pit will fall into it. The lips of a fool consume him. Through laziness the roof leaks.

Ecc11: Whoever watches the clouds will never reap. You do not know what will prosper. Enjoy your youth, but know that God will judge you.

Ecc12: Remember your Creator in your youth, before the days of trouble come. Everything is meaningless! Fear God and keep his commandments.

### SONG OF SONGS

The title of this book means "the most beautiful songs"; in some translations, it is called "The Song of Solomon."

This book is a collection of songs, or poems, in which a woman and a man tell about their love for each other. Sometimes they speak to themselves, sometimes to each other or to friends, and in some of the poems they seem to be remembering earlier times in their relationship.

The poems have been interpreted in different ways. Some have thought that the man was King Solomon himself. Others read the book as a drama: The woman was taken to the court of Solomon, but she was still in love with a man back in her hometown, and finally the two are reunited. Some interpreters believe that the man and woman stand for God and his people or Christ and the Church.

But it is also possible to take the book as a collection of poems expressing the deep and powerful love that a woman and a man can have for each other. In fact, they may have been part of marriage celebrations in ancient Israel.

## OUTLINE

- I. Love is Better than Wine (1:1-17)
- II. Love Makes Everything Beautiful (2:1-3:5)
- III. The Wedding (3:6-5:1)
- IV. Why is the One You Love More Special than Others? (5:2-7:13)
- V. If Only You and I... (8:1-14)

## BIBLE BLURB (from @bible summary)

Sg1: Let him kiss me! I am dark and lovely. Tell me, where do you pasture your flock? Follow the tracks, my love. Behold, you are beautiful.

Sg2: She is a lily among thorns. He is an apple tree in the wood. Here he comes, leaping on the mountains. My beloved is mine and I am his.

Sg3: By night I sought the one whom I love. I brought him into my mother's house. Behold, O daughters of Zion, the carriage of King Solomon!

Sg4: You are beautiful, my love! Your eyes are doves, your breasts are like fawns. My bride is a garden. Let my beloved come to his garden.

Sg5: My beloved is knocking! I opened to him but he had gone. The guards found me and wounded me. My beloved is ruddy, his body is ivory.

Sg6: Where has your beloved gone? He has gone to his garden. You are beautiful, my love. Fair as the moon, awesome as an army with banners.

Sg7: Your thighs are like jewels, your breasts like the fruit of a palm. May your kisses be like wine! Beloved, let us go into the fields.

Sg8: Do not awaken love until it pleases. Love is as strong as death. Solomon had a vineyard, but mine is my own. Make haste, my beloved!

## ISAIAH

Isaiah spoke for the Lord to the people of Judah during the reigns of four kings of Judah. Over this period of about forty years, the Assyrian empire was expanding. Nations joined together to fight Assyria, but Assyria finally conquered Israel and most other nearby countries. Thousands of people were led away as prisoners. And although the kingdom of Judah wasn't completely conquered, it had to pay heavy taxes.

The messages in this book can be divided into three parts. The first part is especially concerned about the Lord's holiness and his power as king of the whole earth. As a holy king, the Lord was angry about evil in Judah. Government officials were corrupt; violence and injustice were everywhere. The Lord said he was going to have Assyria and Babylonia punish the people of Judah and other nations. But the Lord offered his people hope for the future, if they turned back to him and trusted him to protect their nation.

In the second part the Lord spoke to people who had been punished. They were discouraged, and he offered them hope. But the Lord wanted them to understand that idols have no power, and that he alone is the true God. If the people of Israel turned back to him, then he would rescue them from Babylonia and the other nations where they had been scattered. They would return to their own land, and he would bless them and make them prosperous. The Lord was able to make this tremendous promise to his people because he created and rules the entire earth.

In the third part the Lord promises an especially bright future for those who are faithful to him. And in this section, people from all nations are included, not just the people of Judah. These promises are like windows that allow a glimpse into a future time when the Lord will create a new world full of joy and free from suffering.

## OUTLINE

- I. Introduction (1:1-31)
- II. Messages about Judah and Israel (2:1-5:30)
- III. Events from Isaiah's Ministry (6:1-9:7)
- IV. More Messages about Judah and Israel (9:8-12:6)
- V. God Will Punish Other Nations (13:1-23:18)
- VI. Messages of Hope for the Lord's People Who Are Suffering (24:1-27:13)
- VII. The Lord Will Punish His Rebellious People (28:1-31:9)
- VIII. The Lord Will Punish Edom and Bless Jerusalem (32:1-35:10)

- IX. Assyria, Babylonia, King Hezekiah, and Isaiah (36:1-39:8)
- X. The Lord Will Rescue His People (40:1-48:22)
- XI. The Lord's Servant (49:1-53:12)
- XII. The Lord Will Keep All His Promises (54:1-55:13)
- XIII. All Nations Will Be Part of God's People (56:1-8)
- XIV. Leaders Unfaithful to God Will Be Punished (56:9-59:21)
- XV. The Future Glory of Jerusalem (60:1-62:12)
- XVI. God's Wonderful New Creation (63:1-66:24)

#### **BIBLE BLURB (from @bible summary)**

Isa1: The LORD has spoken: I raised children but they have rebelled. Wash yourselves. I will smelt away your dross. Zion shall be redeemed.

Isa2: The mountain of the LORD will be established. On that day the pride of men will be humbled. They will flee the splendour of the LORD.

Isa3: The LORD will take away all support from Judah. Children will govern. You grind the faces of the poor. The women of Zion are proud.

## **2 CORINTHIANS**

#### **OUTLINE**

- I. Paul Gives Thanks to God (1:1-11)
- II. The Work of an Apostle for God's People (1:12-2:17)
- III. Guided by the Love of Christ (3:1-7:16)
- IV. Gifts for the Poor (8:1-9:15)
- V. Paul is a True Apostle (10:1-13:10)
- VI. Final Greetings (13:11-13)

#### **BIBLE BLURB (from @biblesummary)**

2Cor9: I boast to the Macedonians about the gift you promised. God loves a cheerful giver. Your generosity will overflow in thanksgivings.

2Cor10: Our weapons destroy arguments against God. What we say by letter we do in person. We only boast within the sphere God has given us.

2Cor11: I am jealous for you against these false apostles. I speak as a fool. Do they boast? I have greater labours, beatings and dangers.

2Cor12: I will boast of a man who saw paradise. I was given a thorn to keep me from pride. This is foolish! I will gladly be spent for you.

2Cor13: This will be my third visit. Christ is powerful among you. Test that you are in the faith. Be mature. The grace of God be with you.

## **GALATIANS**

From the very beginning of this letter to the churches in the region of Galatia, Paul makes two things clear to his readers: he is a true apostle, and his message is the only true message. These statements were very important, because some people claimed that Paul was a false apostle with a false message.

Paul was indeed a true apostle, and his mission to the Gentiles was given to him by the Lord and approved by the apostles in Jerusalem. Paul had even corrected the apostle Peter, when he had stopped eating with Gentile followers who were not obeying the Law of Moses.

Faith is the only way to be saved. Paul insists that this was true already for Abraham, who had received God's promise by faith. And Paul leaves no doubt about what his own faith means to him.

#### **OUTLINE**

- I. A True Apostle and the True Message (1:1-10)
- II. God Chose Paul to be an Apostle (1:11-24)
- III. Paul Defends His Message (2:1-21)
- IV. Faith is the Only Way to be Saved (3:1-4:31)
- V. Guided by the Spirit and Love (5:1-6:10)
- VI. Final Warnings (6:11-18)

### **BIBLE BLURB (from @bible summary)**

Gal1: Paul, to the churches of Galatia. You are already turning to a different gospel! The gospel I preached came by revelation from Christ.

Gal2: I went up to Jerusalem and saw the leaders. I opposed Cephas about circumcision. We are justified by faith in Christ and not by works.

### **Getting to Know God Through His Book - 4 Questions - Ask...**

**Insight**—what does the passage say? Paraphrase the main point(s) and the commands to follow, promises to claim, examples to follow (or avoid), etc.

**Question**—what don't I understand? Need to know more about? How does this passage make me feel?

**Praise**—what does this passage teach me about God? Turn what the passage says into praise for the Lord's goodness, power, holiness, wisdom, etc.

**Apply**—what is God saying to me from this passage? Confess how you have not followed it. Pray, asking God to help you obey. Get quiet and ask God to speak to you.

**Journal**—write out your prayers, thoughts, responses to God and His Word

### **HOW TO PRAY**

Scripture is God speaking to us. Prayer is us speaking to and listening to God. Jesus gave us the model in the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6). Keep your relationship fresh with the Lord by both reading and praying - two way communication. Remember to look up like Jesus did when He prayed.

1. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name – focus on God, adore, praise, thank Him – long to see His glory and honor.
2. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done – ask for what you know will please Him, pray back the Scripture – that is His will.
3. Give us this day our daily bread – ask for your needs and others to be met.
4. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us – ask for forgiveness, from God, and from others you may have hurt. Ask God to help you forgive and restore others too. Ask Him to get rid of bitterness and have love & compassion for those who have hurt you.
5. And lead us not into temptation – ask God to take over your day, protect you and others from evil.
6. For thine is the kingdom, power & glory – end by re-focusing on God, His kingdom, power, and glory!
7. Listen – ask God to speak to you by His Spirit – always test what you hear by His Word.
8. Pray the Blind Bartimaeus Prayer (Mark 10) – Tell God what you feel, what you want, and ask God what you should do to get what you want (if what you want is right).