

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

October – Week 40 Completed

1 - Isaiah	1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 - Isaiah	5-9	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 - Isaiah	10-14	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 - Isaiah	15-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 - Isaiah	22-26	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 - Isaiah	27-31	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 - Isaiah	32-37	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word:
To know Him better
To love Him more
To walk in His ways
To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: Isaiah (meaning, "Yahweh saved") is sometimes called the "Evangelical Prophet" because of his full and clear prophecies regarding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (more than any other Old Testament writer)! His prophecies are punctuated with exclamations of praise! He tells of the coming Messiah, His earthly ministry, death, and resurrection! He tells of the coming of Messiah to reign as King! His ministry began just before the death of King Uzziah (also known as Azariah) about 740 BC and continued through the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah in Judah, and during the reigns of the last three kings of Israel: the end of Pekahiah's reign, and the reigns of Pekah and Hoshea. "The Holy One of Israel" and "Adonai Yahweh" are repeated titles for God. This week ends with the invasion of Judah by Assyria, mentioned in 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Isaiah. Tradition says Isaiah was murdered by Manasseh (Hezekiah's son), who had him sawn in two in the trunk of a carob tree, alluded to in Heb. 11:37.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

There is controversy about the Hebrew word עַלְמָה (pronounced "all-ma", used seven times in the Bible) in Isaiah 7:14, which is quoted in Matt. 1:23. Some claim the Hebrew word should be translated "young woman" instead of "virgin". This word first appears in Gen. 24:43 referring to Rebekah, who would marry Abraham's son, Isaac. Please note that in Gen 24:16 the Hebrew word for "virgin" בְּתוּלָה (pronounced "beh-two-lah") is also used for Rebekah, a "marriageable" young woman. In Ex. 2:8 it is used of Miriam, Moses and Aaron's older sister. Other places: Ps. 68:25, Prov. 30:19, SoS 1:3, 6:8 - all of which seem to be compatible with the idea of a "virgin", and some translations use "virgin" almost every time. When the translators of the Septuagint (approx. 200 BC) came to this passage (Is. 7:14), these experts in Hebrew and Greek used the Greek word παρθένος (pronounced "par-thin-ahs"), which means "virgin" - this is what they understood the meaning to be! Skeptics wanting to deny the virgin birth of Jesus with this argument are making a division that simply doesn't exist in the Hebrew word's use in Scripture. "Immanuel" is from the Hebrew spelling in 7:14 (עִמָּנוּ אֵל "ee-mah-new ale"). "Emmanuel" is the Greek spelling, Ἐμμανουήλ ("em-man-ou-ale") in Matt. 1:23. Most English versions use "Immanuel" again in Is. 8:8, but translate it as "God with us" in 8:10 (same spelling: עִמָּנוּ אֵל). Many think the devil's name is "Lucifer" because of 14:12. Almost all new translations, being translated from Hebrew (not just a revision) have "star of the morning", "Day Star", "morning star", or "shining one". The Hebrew word is הַיְלָל ("hay-layl"), meaning, "shining one". During the Middle Ages the word in the Latin Vulgate was changed from the original "lucifer" (shining one) to "Lucifer" making it a name. The first English version was translated from the Latin by John Wycliffe. At that point the "L" was already in place, and as a name, he simply brought it over to the English. The next English translations (Coverdale-1535, Matthew's-1537, Great-1539, Geneva-1560, KJV-1611) revised previous versions, retaining the "L". To their credit, the KJV translators saw the Hebrew text read differently, and put a note in the margin: "O day starre" (old spelling of "star"). Sadly, modern editions of the KJV no longer retain the margin notes. By not translating the Hebrew word into English, one may be led to interpret the passage to be about the devil instead of the king of Babylon, but the clear context is talking about a man.

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

People go underground "before the terror of Yahweh and the splendor of His majesty (2:19,21). Yahweh of Hosts is exalted in justice, and shows Himself holy in righteousness (5:16). Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh of Hosts; the earth is full of His glory (6:3)! It is Yahweh of Hosts we should regard as holy. He is our fear, our sanctuary, the Stone of striking and Rock of offense (8:13-14, Rom. 9:30-33, 1 Pet. 2:8 - Jesus is Yahweh). His plans will stand (14:24). The "Everlasting Rock" keeps the steadfast of mind, the one trusting in Him, in perfect peace (26:3-4). He alone is God (37:16,20).

What is the Devil's Name?

The idea that the devil's name is "Lucifer" continues today through old English versions of Isaiah 14:12. Almost all new English translations (translated from Hebrew, and not simply revisions of previous versions) have "star of the morning", "Day Star", "morning star", or "shining one". The Hebrew word is הַיְלֵל (pronounced "hay-layl", a word that only occurs once in the Hebrew Scriptures), meaning "shining one". So, what happened that caused this discrepancy?

When the translators of the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures (often called the Septuagint, abbreviated as "LXX") came to this verse, they translated the Hebrew word into a Greek word with approximately the same meaning, ἑωσφόρος ("heh-ohs-fah-rah's", meaning "morning star", a word used 7 times in the LXX: 1 Sam 30:17; Job 3:9, 11:17, 38:12, 41:10; Psalm 109:3; Isaiah 14:12). They did not treat it as a name by simply bringing over the sound of the Hebrew name into Greek letters (as they did with other names). An example, the name "Bethlehem": בֵּית לֶחֶם ("bait-le-khem", meaning "house of bread") was brought into the Greek translation as Βαιθλεεμ ("Baith-le-em") and not simply translated into Greek as "house of bread".

Jerome translated the Scriptures into Latin between 410 to 435 AD. He translated the Hebrew word for "shining one" into the Latin equivalent, "lucifer", meaning, "shining one". However, during the Middle Ages, the Church began to teach that this word in the Latin Vulgate should be viewed as a name, and so the updated versions of the Vulgate were changed from the original "lucifer" (with a lower-case "L", meaning "shining one") to "Lucifer" making it a name - and teaching that this is Satan. The difference can be seen when comparing Jerome's Vulgate with the Clementine Vulgate published in 1592 by Pope Clement VIII. The word "lucifer" is used three times in the Vulgate: Job 11:17, Isaiah 14:12, and 2 Pet. 1:19, and it is easy to see why, given the meaning of the word.

The first English version was a translation made from the Latin text (not Hebrew and Greek) by John Wycliffe. By that time (1382 AD) the upper-case "L" was already in place, and as a name, he simply brought it over into English as a name. The English versions that followed - the Coverdale Bible (1535), Matthew's Bible (1537), Great Bible (1539), Geneva Bible (1560), and the KJV (1611) - all being revisions of earlier versions retained the Latin word, "Lucifer" as a name. However, to their credit, the KJV translators saw that the Hebrew text read differently (not a name), so they put a note in the margin: "O day starre" (old spelling of "star") as an accurate translation from the Hebrew word into English. Sadly, modern editions of the KJV no longer retain the original notes made by the translators in the margins.

The decision made in these early English versions to follow the Latin Vulgate and not translate the Hebrew word הַיְלֵל ("hay-layl") into English, has resulted in this Middle Ages teaching to persist to this day, leading people to interpret Isaiah 14:12 as being about the devil instead of the king of Babylon. For about 1,600 years, the readers of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin Scriptures would not have read Isaiah 14:12 and think that it was referring to a proper name. People may yet interpret the meaning of this passage in Isaiah to be for both the king of Babylon and the devil, but we should know that it does not contain the devil's "name".

Some have objected to translating the Hebrew word into English by stating that it makes the Bible refer to both the devil and Jesus as "the morning star". In Revelation 22:16, Jesus said, "I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." Jesus did not refer to Himself with the Latin word, "lucifer" or Greek word, "ἑωσφόρος" (as found in Isaiah 14:12 about the king of Babylon)! A quick look at both the Vulgate and the Greek text show that the words are different (note that in the right hand column, the adjectives follow the noun in both languages):

The Latin Vulgate in Isaiah 14:12

lucifer
"shining one"

The LXX in Isaiah 14:12

ἑωσφόρος
"morning star"

The Latin Vulgate in Revelation 22:16:

stella splendida et matutina
star bright and morning ("the bright and morning star")

The Greek New Testament in Revelation 22:16

ὁ ἀστήρ ὁ λαμπρὸς ὁ πρωϊνός.
the star the bright the morning ("the bright and morning star")

"Satan" comes from Hebrew meaning, "the adversary". "Devil" comes from Greek and means, "accuser, or slanderer". These words are (labels or titles) and are not names. So, it seems that the devil's name has not been given to us, but only titles, like in Revelation 20:2 "the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan".

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

October – Week 41 Completed

8 - Isaiah	38-42	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 - Isaiah	43-46	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 - Isaiah	47-51	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 - Isaiah	52-57	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 - Isaiah	58-63	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 - Isaiah	64-66	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 - John	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: as we finish Isaiah, you may want to use a colored pencil to highlight all the times God declares there is none like Him, and that He is the only God. **Israel** received "double for all her sins" (40:2). Is God "unfair"? No, the wage of sin is death (Rom. 6:23), so punishment less than death is mercy. An illustration: death equals 100% punishment; if His punishment was perhaps 20% (exile, not death) then, if Israel received "double" (40%), that is still mercy (60% less than deserved). **Isaiah** mentions Cyrus by name (44:28, 45:1) approximately 200 years before he became king and let Israel return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. **Once** again, we see in 57:1-2 that God removes the righteous (this time by death) before sending wrath. (See Weeks 8 and 20 for more on God taking the righteous out of the way before sending judgment and wrath. Truly, God is consistent with what He told Abraham in Gen. 18:23-33.) **John** opens his account of the life of Jesus much like an attorney presenting his opening statements, then he calls forward witnesses who had an encounter with Jesus and their testimony about Him. **John 1:1c** is clear: "the Word was God." - not "a god", nor "Jesus is the Father, Jesus is the Son, and Jesus is the Holy Spirit". John (by inspiration of the Holy Spirit) used a nuance available in the Greek language to indicate the Trinity. If either of those heresies were true, John could have specified that! (See the supplemental page on John 1:1c.) **Some** cults teach that Jesus was raised "spiritually" but Jesus' reply regarding authority proves that He was raised bodily from the dead - you destroy this temple (His body) and I will raise it (His body) in three days (2:18-21). **One** man encountering Jesus was Nicodemus, who said that Jesus was a teacher from God. Nicodemus was a good man; but, Jesus said it was necessary for him to be born again! Being a good man would not get him into Heaven. Jesus also mentions the time Moses lifted up the bronze snake in the wilderness (Num. 21:8) - this was God's only provision for them to live if bitten by a snake. Their only hope was to take God at His word. Likewise, Jesus is God's only provision for eternal life.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

The prophecy in Isaiah 53 tells of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Messiah, and in 53:10, that He rendered "Himself as a Guilt Offering". In Hebrew, the word is אִשָּׁמָה (pronounced "ah-shawm"), the same word used in Leviticus 5 and 6. A Sin Offering could be offered for whole nation, the priesthood, and individuals. However, the Asham was only for individuals. In the same way, Jesus paid for the sins of the world (John 1:29, 3:16-17; Rom. 5:18; 1 John 2:2, 4:14, etc.), but it doesn't mean everyone will have eternal life. His Guilt Offering will only be applied to individuals who receive Him (John 1:12-13). **John 1:1** tells us that the Word continually existed prior to creation: the Greek word for "was" ἦν ("āin", rhymes with "pain") means continual action in the past - the Word was existing continually before the beginning. **The** Greek word for "love" in John 3:19 ("men loved the darkness rather than the Light") is "agape", a love that is willing to sacrifice for the thing loved, even if evil (for "darkness" to hide sin. Also 2 Tim. 4:10, 2 Pet 2:15).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

We see the deity of Jesus in Isaiah: Yahweh comes and His reward is with Him in 40:10-11; Jesus is the One coming and His reward is with Him in Rev. 22:12. Yahweh is the First and the Last (41:4, 44:6); Jesus is the First and the Last (Rev. 1:17-18; 22:13). Yahweh does not give His glory to another (42:8); Jesus shared His Father's glory (John 17:5). While some may be called "god or gods", Yahweh says "before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after me" (43:10, 45:5, 48:12; and in 44:8 God says, "I know of none."); therefore, Jesus cannot be "a god" (John 1:1c). Yahweh says "there is no savior besides Me" (43:11); Jesus is "our great God and Savior" (Titus 2:13). **The** Everlasting God, Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary and strength to the weak (40:28-29). He created us for His glory (43:7).

John 1:1c – “and the Word was God”

The first verses of John give us a very specific and wonderful view of who Jesus is and the triune nature of God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This one was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” First, the Word was already existing before anything was created. The Greek word for “was” in verses 1-2 is ἦν (“āin”, rhymes with “pain”) and means continual action in the past, so, at the time of the beginning, the Word was already continually existing. The Word was God and was with God, therefore, while He is God, there is more to “God” than just the Word. He made all things, and more than that, everything that has been made was made by Him, so He Himself is not a created thing. Therefore, He falls into the category of “God” rather than someone created. Verse 14 lets us know that the Word is Jesus. Context is always very important!

The third clause in John 1:1 is concise and elegant. It is properly translated “and the Word was God”. With just five short words, John, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, puts to death two heresies: Sabellianism (“Jesus is the Father, Jesus is the Son, Jesus is the Holy Spirit”; one God wearing three hats, moving between these three roles, and that the “Word” and “God” are completely synonymous); and Arianism (the Word was “a god”, a created being). In fact, what John actually wrote, was the only way he could have written it to indicate the orthodox view of the Trinity - that the Father is God, the Son (the Word) is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, but there is only one God, in three distinguishable persons - the Father is not the Word or Holy Spirit, the Word is not the Father or the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Word. As the Father and Spirit have the quality, essence, and nature of God, so does the Word. God is more than just the Word; this is how He could be “with” God - the Word was with the Father and Holy Spirit.

The two heresies mentioned above are still with us today. Sabellianism (pronounced “saw-bel-ee-an-ism”), also known as “Modalism”, is found in United Pentecostalism and Swedenborgianism. It was named after Sabellius in the 3rd century. His view was declared a heresy, and Sabellius was excommunicated in 220 AD. Arianism is named after Arius of Alexandria (256-336 AD), and was rejected as heresy in 325 at the Nicene council. This view makes the Word a created being, not deity. We find this view in various cults today. (The Watchtower, The Way International, etc.) Is it possible that John 1:1c could be understood one of these ways? **Absolutely NOT!**

What if one of these heresies were correct? Could John have written John 1:1c in such a way to make it clear. **Absolutely!**

First, in John 1:1, the third clause, this is what John wrote: καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος
and God was the Word

“The Word” is the subject, so we move it first in English, “and the Word was God” (deity, having the nature, quality of God, but not all there is to “God”).

Here are other options available to John; they are options that John did **NOT** write:

If the Holy Spirit wanted John to communicate the Sabellianism view, John could have written it any one of three ways:

- καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος - (“and the God was the Word”) this makes the “Word and “God completely the same thing
- καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν ὁ θεὸς - (“and the Word was the God”) this also makes the “Word” and “God” completely the same.
- καὶ ὁ λόγος θεὸς ἦν - (“and the Word God was”) this has the nuance that “the Word alone has the nature of God”. (However, the Father and the Holy Spirit also have the nature of God.)

What if Arianism was true? Could John have made it clear? **Absolutely!**

- καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν θεὸς - (“and the Word was God”) this word order means, “the Word was (a) god”

Why do the above options make so much difference? Because Koine Greek does not work like English. English has to follow word order rules; Koine Greek is not so limited, and therefore is capable of nuance, precision, and emphatic options that we don’t have in English. Another difference is that, in English, the Definite Article (“the”) has a very narrow/limited use; however, the Koine Greek Article is so much more powerful and useful than our English definite article. It can function like our definite article (to make something indefinite to be definite), but that is not its primary function! The Greek article can do so much more; they used it when we never would, and they omitted it when English demands it. Languages are not codes, and therefore, we cannot treat the Greek article and Greek word order as an English definite article or word order. However, this is exactly what the cults do to make John 1:1c say something other than what the Greek text says.

In the Greek text of John 1:1c, “God” is moved forward for emphasis which stresses essence, quality, nature of the Word. The lack of the article keeps us from identifying the person of the Word (Jesus Christ) with the person of God the Father, and the person of the Holy Spirit. Said differently, the word order tells us that Jesus Christ has all the divine attributes that the Father and Holy Spirit have. Lack of the article tells us that Jesus Christ is not all of God (Father and Holy Spirit) rolled into one. The Word is God, but there is more to God than just the Word.

Summary: The way John wrote the verse proves both Sabellianism and Arianism to be false teaching - heresy. If one of those views were true, he would have written it differently. The lack of the article shows Sabellianism to be error. The word order shows Arianism to be in error.

John 1:1c – “and the Word was God”

Sources used for this paper:

Journal of Biblical Literature (JBL) Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15:39 and John 1:1, by Philip B. Harner, pages 75-87

A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, by H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, pages 140, 148-150 (where they quote a number of other related sources, not owned by me)

Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar, by William D. Mounce, pages 33-34

Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, by Daniel B. Wallace, pages 266-269

Going Deeper with New Testament Greek, by Köstenberger, Merkle, and Plummer, page 163

A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, by A.T. Robertson, page 794

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

October – Week 42 Completed

15 - John	4-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 - John	6-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 - John	8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 - John	11-12	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 - John	13-16	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 - John	17-18	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 - John	19-21	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: gives John's reason for writing (20:31): to believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and by believing, you will have life through His name. **John** continues to provide evidence for the deity of Jesus: in Ex. 3:14 Moses asked God's Name and was told "I AM WHO I AM", and to say, "I AM sent me to you". John lists seven famous I AM statements of Jesus, The: Bread of Life (6:35); Light of the World (8:12); Door (10:7); Good Shepherd (10:11); Resurrection and the Life (11:25); Way, Truth, and Life (14:6); and True Vine (15:1). (More are listed in "Insights") Also, 7:37-41 says Jesus did many signs but they didn't believe in Him, so John quotes two passages from Isaiah (53:1 and 6:10), and says that Isaiah "saw His glory and spoke of Him". Who did Isaiah see in 6:1-3 when the Seraphim were calling out, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is Yahweh of Hosts"? It was Jesus (7:41)! Jesus is Yahweh! **There** are contradictory statements (7:19-20) coming from different groups: the visitors to Jerusalem (for the Feast of Booths) who were not aware of the plot to kill Jesus, but in 7:25-26, the people of Jerusalem knew about the plot. Some didn't know from where the Christ would come (7:27), but others knew (7:42). **Jesus** often referred to Himself as "the Son of Man"; 12:31-34 reveals they understood this is a Messianic title taken from Dan. 7:14, and they understood "lifted up" was an Aramaic expression for execution (see "Week 26 Insights") in contrast to knowing Messiah will reign forever. (Jesus used the same word when talking to Nicodemus in 3:14.) This being "lifted up" became the point where Jesus would draw all to Himself. **We** must obey Jesus: the words spoken by Jesus will be used to judge all rejecting Him and His words (12:48). Obedience shows our love for Him (14:21,24). **The** faith that saves is the faith that remains ("abide" in John 15 means "remain"). **Jesus** said the Holy Spirit will remind them of what He said (14:26), so we can have confidence that the New Testament is accurate. **The** disciples received the Holy Spirit in John 20:22. The Holy Spirit came upon them with power to be witnesses (Acts 2), and filled again in Acts 4:31 to speak God's word with boldness!

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Jesus refers to Himself as the "I AM" in striking ways, saying things like, "unless you believe that 'I AM', you will die in your sins." 8:24). These can be obscured in English by the addition of "*He*" in italics. See 4:26; 6:20; 8:18,24,58; 13:19; and 18:5-8. **Greek** can make a "contrary to fact" conditional statement ("Second Class Condition") which has a built in "flip-side". An example is in Jesus' statement (4:10) about "living water"; grammatically, the flip-side is, "but you do not know the gift of God or who is speaking to you, so you have not asked Him, and He has not given you the living water." **The** two most common Greek words for "no" or "not" (οὐ - rhymes with "you", and μή - pronounced "may") can be used to indicate if a "yes" or "no" answer is expected. (Mentioned briefly in Week 28 for 1 Cor. 12:29-30). Another example is (4:29) where most English translations have, "Could this be the Christ?", but it should be understood as expecting "no"; "this is not the Christ, is it?". It isn't that she did not believe Jesus is the Messiah, but she used a good strategy because of her reputation: "you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband" (note: Jesus doesn't accept "common-law marriages"). If she had said, "I've seen the Messiah!", she may have been ridiculed. But by asking, expecting "no", they responded by going out to see Jesus for themselves, to know that, "this One is indeed the Savior of the world" (v.42). When both οὐ and μή are used together, they make the strongest possible negative statement available in Koine Greek, to be understood as, "no possible way". Examples: "no possible way he will thirst - to forever" (4:14); "no possible way he should die - to forever" (11:26).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

John begins (1:1) and ends calling Jesus "God" - He received and blessed Thomas' worship as "Lord and God" (20:28). Seeing Jesus is seeing the Father (14:9). The Father was greater (14:28) because the Son became a man.

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

October – Week 43 Completed

22 - Jeremiah	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
23 - Jeremiah	4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>
24 - Jeremiah	7-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 - Jeremiah	11-14	<input type="checkbox"/>
26 - Jeremiah	15-18	<input type="checkbox"/>
27 - Jeremiah	19-22	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 - Jeremiah	23-25	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word:
To know Him better
To love Him more
To walk in His ways
To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: we begin Jeremiah, often called the "Weeping Prophet" - his message was so hard because the people would absolutely not listen to Scriptures and God's messages through the prophets (6:16). His own family and hometown (Anathoth, belonging to the descendants of Aaron - 1 Chron. 6:54-60, and the home of Abiathar - 1 Kings 2:26) wanted to kill him (11:21-23; 15:10). **Jeremiah** was called as a prophet five years before the book of the Law was found (2 Kings 22:3 and Jer. 25:1-3) in the days of good King Josiah. For a time perspective: from Jeremiah's call to the destruction of Jerusalem was 42 years (25:1-3; 32:1; 2 Kings 25:8). The 4th year of Jehoiakim = the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar (25:1); the 13th year of Josiah + 23 years of Jeremiah's ministry = 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar (25:3); Zedekiah's 10th year = the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar (32:1); Jerusalem was destroyed in Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year (2 Kings 25:8). Jeremiah doesn't give his age, but he was young when Yahweh called him to be a prophet (1:6). Let's suppose he was 20 when he was called, he would have been 62 at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. But we don't know his age, so why guess about this? Consider his lifetime of ministry, as well as the results of his ministry. Note his faithfulness as a prophet during a terrible time of Israel's history. **At** the time of his call (1:10) he was appointed six things: four were negative (pluck up, break down, destroy, overthrow) and two were positive (build and plant). **This** book may seem heavy to us ("doom and gloom"), however, watch for the references and examples of God's love and highlight them (I often use red for God's love - a reminder of the blood of Jesus); you'll find yourself using a lot of red. **It** has been said, "the Psalms are the outcry of man's heart to God, and, Jeremiah is the outcry of God's heart to man" ("My people have forgotten me" [2:32]; "they don't know me" [2:8, 4:22, 9:3]). **It** has also been said that many people (even Christians) have an improper view of God because they don't understand the book of Jeremiah. **When** Jeremiah complains (12:1-4), God shows His hurt: "My house", "My inheritance", "the beloved of My soul" (12:7). **We** see God bending over backwards to not destroy the city (if you can find one man [5:1], keep the Sabbath [17:19-27], judge rightly [22:1-4], submit to the king of Babylon [27:11-15], go out to the king of Babylon [38:17-23] each with a promise to spare the city). God keeps calling to repentance (but they would not). **Again**, as we saw in Weeks 8, 20, and 41, we have another example that God will not send His wrath on the righteous with the wicked: the vision of "good figs" - the people sent to Babylon, and "bad figs" - the people left in Jerusalem (24:1-10).

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

There is a Hebrew "play on words" in 1:11-12, but it is not obvious in our English translations: What does an "almond tree" have to do with Yahweh "watching" over His word? "Now the word of Yahweh came to me saying, 'What are you seeing, Jeremiah?' And I said, 'I see a rod of an almond tree (שֶׁמֶן "shah-kaid").' Then Yahweh said to me, 'You have seen well, because I am watching (שֶׁמֶן "show-kaid") over My word to do it.'" (Both have the same root.) **Most** of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but 269 verses were written in Aramaic. (200 in Daniel, written during the Babylonian captivity, and 67 in Ezra, written after the Babylonian captivity.) One verse (10:11) in Jeremiah is in Aramaic. Why? It is a warning about false gods. In 10:18 God says He will sling out the inhabitants of the land, and He did, exiling them to Babylon, and Aramaic was the language of Babylon. This was a stark warning about the captivity. **Jerusalem** went into captivity in the fifth month, "Av" (1:3). (See the Hebrew Calendar sent with Week 6.)

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

He is "Lord GOD of Hosts" ("Adonai Yahweh Tsabaot"). There is none like Yahweh, the true God, living God, the everlasting King (10:6-10,12-13). He is the Maker of all (10:16). He wants us to know Him (9:23-24). His word is to be eaten, a joy, and a delight (15:16). In a Messianic prophecy, He is called "Yahweh Our Righteousness" (23:5-6).

By the way, Gen. 31:47 is the 269th verse, having two Aramaic words in it, spoken by Laban.

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

Oct./Nov – Week 44 Completed

29 - Jeremiah	26-28	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 - Jeremiah	29-31	<input type="checkbox"/>
31 - Jeremiah	32-33	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 - Jeremiah	34-36	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 - Jeremiah	37-40	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 - Jeremiah	41-44	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 - Jeremiah	45-48	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: Jeremiah didn't give up; he was opposed, insulted, mistreated, and misrepresented, but he remained faithful, he opposed the false prophets, and God took care of him. Through all of these things, God gave him wonderful revelations of His love for His people, His promises to bring them back to their land, and the coming Messiah's New Covenant. **Historical** events in Jeremiah are not always in chronological sequence. **The** prophet Micah is quoted (Micah 3:12) in 26:18. **God** said the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar would last through his grandson (27:7). This was fulfilled in Dan. 5. **God** provided opportunities for them to repent and obey so that He could relent from sending calamity and spare the city. But the people wouldn't turn from their evil ways. God offered to save the city if King Zedekiah would submit to the king of Babylon (27:12). But he didn't. After the attack began, God gave King Zedekiah another opportunity to save the city by surrendering himself to the officials of the king of Babylon (38:17-23). But he didn't. God's offer of mercy was rejected every time. They left Him no other option; they had to be exiled. **He** told them they would be exiled 70 years (29:10) and that He would be found by them if they would seek Him with all their heart (29:10-14). What wonderful love and faithfulness! Contrast this to Jesus' statement to the leaders of the Jews in John 7:34, "You will seek Me and not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come." Rejecting Jesus has a more dire consequence. **False** prophets are judged: Hananiah was warned in the fifth month (28:1) and died in the seventh month (28:17). Other false prophets were "roasted in the fire" by the king of Babylon (29:21-22). They were not preserved like God's faithful servants in Daniel 3. **God** is not finished with Israel (31:31-37; 32:37-41; 33:14-26). **Even** after the fall of Jerusalem (chapter 39) the horrible level at which the people had given themselves over to sin continues, and even then, they would not repent (they went to Egypt anyway, and continued idolatry to the "Queen of Heaven"). **Even** in the judgments against other nations, we still see God's love and promises for Israel (46:27-28).

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Jeremiah doesn't have the most chapters or verses, but by the Hebrew word count, it is the longest book of the Bible (English version word counts vary). **English** versions often refer to "making" a covenant. The Hebrew idiom is "cutting a covenant", and 34:17-19 gives a picture of how that was done. This is also significant in Genesis 15:6-21 in Yahweh's covenant with Abram. Hebrews 6:18 says it is impossible for God to lie; how much more when He "cuts a covenant". **Most** English translations of 31:22 (except the CSB) say, "a woman will surround (or encompass, or protect) a man", resulting in a number of different interpretations. In Hebrew, the word is נְקִיבָה ("neh-kay-vah" - "female") not אִשָּׁה ("ee-shah" - "woman"). Almost all Hebrew nouns are grammatically "masculine" or "feminine". (Grammatical gender is not always the same as "natural gender".) The context of the verse is about Israel returning to their land and cities. The Hebrew words for "land" and "cities" are grammatically "feminine". It may be that the "land" / "cities" are surrounding (encompassing, protecting) the returning men (people). **The** name of Jerusalem in 33:16 is יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ ("Yahweh Tseed-kay-nu" - "Yahweh Our Righteousness"). **A** deceived person, by definition, doesn't realize they are deceived. "Do not deceive yourselves" (37:9) in Hebrew is "do not deceive your souls". 2 Thess. 2:10-12 says ones not receiving the love of the truth will be delivered to believe the lie. Love/obey the truth! (Jesus, and the Bible)

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God reveals His will in 26:3,13; 36:3 - He wanted the people to turn from their evil ways so that He could relent and not bring the calamity and destruction. He loves with an everlasting love (31:3). He made the heavens and earth with great power - nothing is too difficult for Him. He is great in counsel, mighty in deed, and His eyes are open to all the ways of men. He will judge each according to their deeds (32:17-19,27). His steadfast love endures forever (33:11).

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

November – Week 45 Completed

5 - Jeremiah	49-50	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 - Jeremiah	51-52	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 - Lamentations	1-2	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 - Lamentations	3-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 - 1 Timothy	1-6	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 - 2 Timothy	1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 - Ezekiel	1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: Jeremiah ends with the judgments against the nations, and a recount of the fall of Jerusalem.

The Ark of the Covenant is not mentioned in the list of things taken to Babylon (52:17-20). **Jeremiah** 52:31-34 is exactly the same as 2 Kings 25:27-30 - showing that the writings of the prophets were among the documents used in the records of the kings. **Lamentations** is believed to be written by Jeremiah as he grieves the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. (The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, from the 2nd century BC, [the Septuagint or LXX] also ascribes this book to Jeremiah.) Jeremiah's laments are entirely free from an "I told you so" attitude. His heart is broken by the devastation brought on by the people's disobedience. However, He takes consolation from God's Word and His attributes - a great example to all who are grieving! Trust God. He loves you. He is intimately acquainted with all your ways. He is all powerful. He is faithful. It is always right to trust Him. He will lead. All we have to do is trust and follow Him. **They** had too much hope in their king (4:20). Their hope would have been better placed by taking Psalm 91 to heart. **The** two "Pastoral Letters" to Timothy provide encouragement and instruction to this young pastor in the church in Ephesus. **In** 1 Timothy, Paul instructs regarding public worship, qualifications of church leadership, confrontation of false teaching and myths in the church, the need for godliness, as well as relations to various groups in the church: widows, elders, slaves. **2 Timothy** is chronologically the last of the three Pastoral Letters; Paul was in prison and his death was rapidly approaching. **We** must entrust the things of God to faithful men who will teach others (2:2). **Paul** asked Timothy to bring Mark because "he is useful to me for service" (4:11). Mark had deserted Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:13), and Paul didn't want to take him with them again (Acts 15:36-41). Mark was forgiven! **Scripture** is "God Breathed" (3:16-17). **Ezekiel** is a "visual aid" prophet, unable to speak except when delivering God's message, he often acted out the message from God. (He was able to speak again after Jerusalem was destroyed.) Jeremiah listed three times that people from Jerusalem were taken captive to Babylon (52:28-30). Daniel, Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach), and Azariah (Abednego) were taken to Babylon in the first group (dated from Jehoiakim in Dan. 1:1). Ezekiel was in the second group (dated from Jehoiachin in 1:2), so he was already exiled to Babylon when he was called to be a prophet, to speak to his fellow captives before Jerusalem was destroyed.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

The first four chapters of Lamentations are acrostics. Chapters 1, 2, and 4 have one verse for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 3 has three verses per letter. Chapter 1 has the letters in the usual letter sequence, but in chapters 2, 3, and 4 the order of the 16th and 17th letters (v, v) are flipped (verses 46-48 and 49-51 in chapter 3). **In** Week 41 we saw that men loved (agape) darkness. In 2 Tim. 4:10, Demas (also mentioned in Col. 4:14 and Phile. 24) loved (agape) the present world ("age"). A Hebrew idiom in Ezek. 2:3 - "to the bone of this day", means, "to this very day".

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

He is the keeper of the fatherless and widows (Jer. 49:11). There is no one like Him (49:19). He is the One bringing back Israel, and has not forsaken Israel (50:4-5,19-20; 51:5). God pardons sins (Jer. 50:20). He is the One who made the earth by His power, established the world by His wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by His understanding (51:15). He is the God of recompense - He will fully repay; He is the King, Yahweh of Hosts (51:56-57). His steadfast love never ceases, His mercies never end and are new every morning, His faithfulness is great (Lam. 3:22-23). He does not afflict from His heart (3:33). God does not owe it to anyone to pardon, so we should not presume upon grace (3:42). His curse is hardness of heart (3:65). He is the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God (1 Tim. 1:17). There is one God, one Mediator between God and men - Christ Jesus (2:5). He knows who are His (2 Tim. 2:19).

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

November – Week 46 Completed

12 - Ezekiel	5-9	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 - Ezekiel	10-13	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 - Ezekiel	14-16	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 - Ezekiel	17-19	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 - Ezekiel	20-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 - Ezekiel	22-24	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 - Ezekiel	25-28	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word:
To know Him better
To love Him more
To walk in His ways
To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: Ezekiel continues to prophecy against Jerusalem. **God** said Jerusalem is "at the center of the nations" (5:5). This statement was made long before Lief Erikson and Christopher Columbus set foot in the Americas. On a map with the International Date Line on each side (east and west), and pushing the land masses together, we see that 5:5 is amazingly accurate! **In** 5:7 God says, not only have they not obeyed His statutes and ordinances, but they were lawless even by the standards of other nations. **In** chap. 8 God brings Ezekiel in visions to Jerusalem and shows him a series of horrible sins, saying, "you will see still greater abominations". **In** 9:1-6 we have another example of God delivering the righteous before wrath. **The** sin was so great in Jerusalem that God had to leave (chapters 10-11), but not before He gave a promise of regathering Israel and giving them a new spirit and a new heart (11:17-20). **False** prophets (chap. 13) were seeing falsehood and lying divination, and said, "Yahweh declares" when He had not sent them; yet they "hope for the fulfillment of the word". If they were true prophets, hope was not necessary, because God's Word never fails. **The** wickedness of Jerusalem was so great that God said even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, they would be spared for their own righteousness, but they would not be able to deliver the city (14:13-21). Nothing less than the sacrificial death of Jesus is enough to save others. **Please** do not misunderstand the sexual language and imagery in Ezekiel. God is communicating His hurt as the "jilted husband"; His "wife" (Israel) is unfaithful by worshiping idols. It hurt (crushed, broke) God's heart (6:9). How awful it is to put anything on the same level as (or higher than) God. Chap. 16 graphically contrasts God's faithfulness to the wickedness of Israel and Judah. The splendor of Israel's "golden years" was Yahweh's splendor (16:14). **Do** not be fooled by some people's agenda in using 16:49 to undermine the truth of Sodom's sexual perversion; yes, the things in verse 49 are true, but so are the "abominations" in v.50 (described in Gen. 19, and is, therefore, where we get the term "sodomy".) As horribly as God has been treated in chapter 16, He promises a New Covenant in which His love endures to restoration and forgiveness (60-63). **God** addresses the idea of "generational sins" (chap. 18). Each person is responsible for their own sins and choices (compare to Deut. 24:16). **Contrasting** God's love and faithfulness to Israel's disobedience (chap. 20) includes an interesting statement, "And I also gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live;" (20:25) - what does that mean? Jesus gives us a good example in Matt. 19:3-9 where He makes it clear that, God gave a law regarding divorce, but, it was not His will, it was because of the hardness of their hearts. God regulated it (and slavery and other issues). A difficult "visual aid" is the loss of "the delight of your eyes", Ezekiel's wife (24:15).

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Most English translations use "LORD" to indicate when the name "Yahweh" (יהוה) is in the Hebrew text. "Lord GOD" is used when the Hebrew word "Lord" (אֲדֹנָי "Adonai", "ah-dough-nigh") is used with "Yahweh" (אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה - Adonai Yahweh); so "GOD" also signifies "Yahweh". The Masoretes also adjusted the vowels in Yahweh to reflect this. **Most** versions say God made Ezekiel "a sign" (12:6,11). The common word for "sign" is אוֹת ("oat"), but in these verses the Hebrew word is מוֹפֵת ("moe-fate"), a "wonder". (One translation, the LSB, appropriately says, "I have set you as a wondrous sign".) **Another** interesting word is in 20:46 and 21:2; some versions say, "speak" or "preach". The Hebrew word is הִטָּן ("nah-tahf") "cause to drip". Oholah means "Her Tent". Oholibah means "My tent (is) in her" (23:4).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God disciplines so His people would not stray from Him, nor defile themselves with their transgressions, that they will be His people, and He will be their God (14:10-11,23). He does not take pleasure in the death of the wicked; but God's desire is that the wicked would turn from their ways and live (18:22,32). He looks for a man in the gap (22:30).

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

November – Week 47		Completed
19 - Ezekiel	29-32	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 - Ezekiel	33-36	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 - Ezekiel	37-39	<input type="checkbox"/>
22 - Ezekiel	40-42	<input type="checkbox"/>
23 - Ezekiel	43-45	<input type="checkbox"/>
24 - Ezekiel	46-48	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 - Titus 1-3, Phile. 1		<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: continues prophetic judgments on specific nations, then turns to Israel's future with promises of blessing. **Regarding** the prophecies against the nations, Josh McDowell's "Evidence That Demands a Verdict", (in chap. 11) lists prophecies against 11 nations, including Ezekiel 26-35 (Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, Ammon, Edom). He lists the details of their history, and the exact fulfillment of these prophecies. He documents the probability (humanly speaking) of these 11 prophecies coming true as, 1 in 5.76×10^{59} . He illustrates the size of this number; but the point is, only God could be so accurate! **God** promised Ezekiel he would receive his ability to speak (24:27) when an escapee arrives to tell him of the destruction of Jerusalem. This was fulfilled in 33:22. **In** 32:17-32, we see that the people of the nations go down to Sheol (see Week 31 "Insights"). In verses 21 and 31 we see there is no "soul-sleep" (a false teaching that says, after our body dies, we sleep with no consciousness until the resurrection - but 2 Cor. 5:6-8 says, to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord). **Some** like to listen to the proclamation of God's Word for entertainment; we need to be doers of the Word (33:30-32). **Chapter 34** contrasts the bad shepherds and the Good Shepherd, has a promise of restoration of Israel, and a promise that David will shepherd them. I counted 15 references to "My flock/sheep". **In** chapter 36, what a contrast from the ones who profaned His name, compared to the faithful ones in Heb. 11:16, of whom it was said, God was not ashamed to be called their God. But then, God promises the restoration of Israel and their salvation - that God will put a new heart and His Spirit in them. **Chapter 37** continues the theme of the restoration of Israel, that David will be king over them, and make a new covenant with them (v.26). **After** Israel is restored, chapters 38 and 39 tell of a great battle. **In** chapters 40 through 48 we have information about the Millennial Kingdom. (John tells us in Rev. 21:22 that there is no temple in the New Jerusalem in the New Heavens and New Earth, but much is said regarding the description of the temple Ezekiel saw.) **Then** to the "Pastoral Letter" written to Titus, whom Paul left in Crete (1:5), to give guidance about the ministry: to set things in order, appoint elders / overseers (1:5, 7), deal with false teaching, and other pastoral advice and encouragement. He is probably the same Titus mentioned in Gal. 2:1,3, and who helped Paul with the church in Corinth (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6-16; 8:6,16,23; 12:18). He was later sent to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10). **The** quote in 1:12 is from Epimenides of Crete (6th century BC). Paul quotes him, but it does not mean all of the writings of Epimenides should be included as Scripture. **Philemon** is unique/distinct in that it is not a "pastoral letter", but a letter to an individual, Philemon, and not a church, regarding a run-away slave. It is closely related to Colossians (Col. 4:10-17 and Philemon 2, 23-24).

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

The "Granville Sharp Rule" (a Koine Greek grammatical rule) is used when two words refer to the same person. In Titus 2:13, "...the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ", the Greek grammar is clear that Jesus Christ is God and Savior. Granville Sharp (1735-1813) discovered this rule. The KJV translators were not aware of the rule, and translated it as two persons, "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ". (Corrected in new versions.) "**Onesimus**" (Ονήσιμος "ah-nay'-sim-us") in Philemon 10 means "useful"; compare this to v. 11 (formerly "useless").

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

In the prophecy regarding Egypt, we see in Ezekiel 29:18-20 that Nebuchadnezzar was working for God who reigns over the nations to accomplish His purposes! **In** 33:10 the people were fully aware of their sin, but in the next verse, God states again that He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and that it is His will that the wicked turn from their way and live. He calls them to return, and says if the wicked repent, he will live (33:14-16). In v.18-19 - our righteous walk needs to be "present tense". **He** feeds His flock, seeks the lost (34:15-16). **God** cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

Nov./Dec – Week 48 Completed

26 - Daniel	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
27 - Daniel	4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 - Daniel	7-9	<input type="checkbox"/>
29 - Daniel	10-12	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 - Hebrews	1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 - Hebrews	5-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 - Hebrews	8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: the chapters in Daniel are not in chronological order: this is the chapter sequence: 1,2,3,4,7,8, 5,9,6,10-12. **The** book of Daniel dates to the 6th century BC. Some (contrary to the evidence) claim Daniel wasn't written until 165 BC. However, (1) Jesus referred to the prophet Daniel as authoritative (Matt. 13:43;24:14,30;26:64 etc.); (2) it is in the Septuagint (Greek translation), so it was written and translated before 165 BC; and, (3) Daniel has 200 verses (2:4 -7:28) written in Aramaic, specifically, "Imperial Aramaic", a distinguishable style of Aramaic, common in the 6th century BC. Because Daniel accurately prophesied the coming Messiah's death and resurrection, it should not surprise us that his prophecies regarding Babylon, the Medes and Persians, Greece, and Rome are also accurate. Therefore, we can be sure that the things yet to come will surely be fulfilled. **In** Daniel's own daily Bible reading, he saw that Jeremiah prophesied the 70-year exile (25:11-12 and 29:10), and he understood Bible prophecy to be literal (9:2). **We** cannot be sure who wrote the letter to the Hebrews (Hebrews and 1 John do not give the author's name). The Greek text style is different from Paul's letters (English translations smooth it out). Also, compare the description of receiving the Gospel in 2:3 (as a 2nd generation Christian), compared with Paul's assertion (Gal. 1:11-12) that he received the Gospel straight from Jesus. **Hebrews** shows Jesus is superior to the angels and Moses, and that His priesthood, tabernacle, and covenant, are superior! **Jesus** taught the words of the Father (John 7:16, 14:24), but, in Hebrews, Jesus is the message - the greatest revelation of God - He is the exact representation of His nature (Heb 1:3). Know God better by getting to know Jesus better, as He is revealed in the letter to the Hebrews! **Hebrews** 9:22 says, "almost all things are purified with blood". Why "almost"? Lev 5:11 makes an exception: if a person was too poor to afford two turtledoves or pigeons, they could bring a grain offering for their Guilt Offering atonement. Lev. 17:11 says that the life of the flesh is in the blood, so it was given for atonement. **In** the description of the Tabernacle "furniture" (Heb. 9:3-4), you may note the Golden Altar of Incense, which was originally placed outside the veil (in the Holy Place, not the Holy of Holies) was moved into the Most Holy Place. This move took place in 1 Kings 6:20 when Solomon built the temple. **Hebrews** (chapters 7-10, and other New Testament verses) makes it clear Jesus' sacrifice was "once for all". He doesn't need to be sacrificed over and over again. Please see "The Bible Vs. Tradition" PDF.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

The Hebrew names (1:7): Daniel = "My Judge (is) God"; Hananiah = "Yahweh (is) Gracious"; Mishael = "Who That (as) God"; and Azariah = "Yahweh Helped". **We** have an idiom: "getting chewed out". Aramaic has a similar idiom in Dan. 3:8 and 6:24, usually translated as "brought charges" or "accused", but is literally, "they ate the pieces of them/him". **In** 7:14, the Aramaic word translated "serve" (ܫܪܘܢ pronounced "peh-lahkh") is only used for "serving someone (or something) considered to be deity". The Messiah is to be served as deity! **In** week 42 I mentioned when both οὐ and μή are used together, they make the strongest possible negative statement available in Koine Greek. In Hebrews 8:12 (and 10:17), "and their sins and their lawless deeds there is no possible way I will remember still". Comforting!

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God is the One who changes times and seasons, removes and establishes kings, gives wisdom and understanding, reveals the profound and hidden things, knows what is in darkness, and light dwells with Him (2:21-22). His dominion is everlasting, and His kingdom is from generation to generation (4:34). He is ruler over mankind (5:21). Our life-breath is in His hand (5:23). He delivers and rescues (6:27). He is great and awesome and keeps covenant and lovingkindness for the ones who love Him and keep His commandments (9:4). **Jesus** is the greatest communication of God (Heb. 1:1-3). **The** deity of Jesus resounds in the first chapter of Hebrews in the quotes from the Old Testament!

Tradition vs. The Bible

Tradition: The “sacrifice of the Mass” (one of the most important events in being a Roman Catholic - ‘It remains the center of the Church’s life.’ - Catechism 1343)
“The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: ‘The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.’ ‘In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner.’” - Catechism 1367

As a sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God. - Catechism 1414

Holy Communion separates us from sin - Catechism 1393
Mass - “The Sacrifice of the Eucharist as the central act of worship of the (Roman) Catholic Church... As defined by the Church at the Council of Trent, in the Mass, ‘The same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, is present and offered in an unbloody manner.’ Consequently, the Mass is a truly propitiatory sacrifice, which means that by this oblation ‘the Lord is appeased, He grants grace and the gift of repentance, and He pardons wrongdoings and sins, even grave ones. For it is one and the same victim.’”

“The re-presentation means that because Christ is really present in his humanity, in heaven and on the altar, he is capable now as he was on Good Friday of freely offering himself to the Father. He can no longer die because he now has a glorified body, but the essence of his oblation remains the same.’”

“He voluntarily offers himself, the eternal high priest, as really as he did on Calvary.’”

“The priest is indispensable, since he alone by his powers can change the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.” (Hardon)

“Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood when He said to the Apostles, *Do this in commemoration of Me*. The priests exercise this power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the words of consecration in the Mass, which are the words of Christ: *This is My body; this is My blood*.” Baltimore Catechism 249-250

The Mass is the unbloody sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ. Baltimore Catechism 263

The Mass is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross because the offering and the priest are the same—Christ our Blessed Lord; and the ends for which the sacrifice of the Mass is offered are the same as those of the sacrifice of the Cross. The ends for which the sacrifice of the Cross was offered were: 1. To honor and glorify God; 2. To thank Him for all the graces bestowed on the whole world; 3. To satisfy God’s justice for the sins of men; 4. To obtain all graces and blessings. Baltimore Catechism 265-267

Host - “A victim of sacrifice, and therefore the consecrated Bread of the Eucharist considered as the sacrifice of the Body of Christ... Latin *hostia*, sacrificial offering.” (Hardon)

The Bible says,

“For the death that He died, HE DIED TO SIN, ONCE FOR ALL; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.” (Rom. 6:10) (Hint: What does ‘once for all’ mean? A little more? Regularly? Or never again?)

“And the former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers, because they were prevented by death from continuing, but He, on the other hand, because He abides forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did ONCE FOR ALL when He offered up Himself. For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.” (Heb. 7:23-28)

“But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place ONCE FOR ALL, having obtained eternal redemption.” (Heb. 9:11-12)

“For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now ONCE at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered ONCE TO BEAR THE SINS OF MANY, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Heb. 9:24-28)

“By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE FOR ALL. (Heb. 10:10) “but He, having offered ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOR ALL TIME, sat down at the right hand of God,” (Heb. 10:12)

“For by ONE OFFERING He has perfected FOR ALL TIME those who are sanctified. (Heb. 10:14)

“He then says, ‘And their sins and their lawless deed I will remember no more.’ Now where there is forgiveness of these things, THERE IS NO LONGER ANY OFFERING FOR SIN. (Heb. 10:17-18)

“For Christ also died for sins ONCE FOR ALL, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God...” (1 Pet. 3:18)

“It is finished.” (John 19:30)

“...they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.” (Heb. 6:6)

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

December – Week 49 Completed

3 - Hebrews	11-13	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 - Hosea	1-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 - Hosea	8-14	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 - Joel	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 - Amos	1-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 - Amos 6-9, Obadiah 1		<input type="checkbox"/>
9 - James	1-5	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word:
To know Him better
To love Him more
To walk in His ways
To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: begins with the "Hall of Faith". **Some** define faith using 11:1. The words "believe" and "faith" have become watered down in English usage. A better English word would be "trust". As we read Hebrews 11, and see the words, "By Faith", we should understand them to mean, "Because of his/her trust in the character of God, His mighty power, and His great faithfulness...". **We** have to trust Him to be pleasing to Him (v.6). When anxiety says, "I don't know what is going to happen; what am I to do?", trust Jesus, the One shepherding us. He is faithful to lead us; we simply need to trust that He will lead us. Faith, in a nutshell, is a proper understanding of God - His faithfulness, goodness, and love. Trust Him. Keep your eyes on Him (12:2). **Do** not take God's discipline lightly (12:5-6). He is working His holiness in us (v.10), and without holiness/sanctification, we will not see the Lord (v.14). **Do** not give up the blessing for temporary relief (12:15-17). **Hosea** means, "Save". God reveals Himself, again, (as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel), as the husband of an unfaithful wife. God repeatedly expresses His love for His people. **Regathered** Israel will return to seek Yahweh their God and David their King (3:4-5). **Why** did they lack knowledge? (Hos. 4:6) Because they rejected it! Read God's Word, don't reject it. **The** words, "O come, let us return to Yahweh" are followed by a promise that was never claimed (6:1-2). They never got away from the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who caused Israel to sin (not even in Elijah's victory on Mount Carmel, nor in Jehu's purge of Baal worship). "**Let** us know, let us press on to know Yahweh;" (6:3) is good encouragement for continuing to read through the Bible. "**They** made kings, but not through me" (8:4); except for a couple of exceptions, most kings in the northern kingdom of Israel were appointed by men. **Joel** ("Yahweh is God") doesn't mention who was king in his day, but his message was directed to Jerusalem (mentioned six times, plus references to "House of God", "Zion", "Holy Mountain", etc. for a total of over a dozen references). **Amos** was from Tekoa, a city in Judah (2 Chron. 11:6). Beware of the famine (8:11-12). **Obadiah** is the shortest book in the Old Testament, with prophesy against Edom, possibly written after the exile of Judah and Jerusalem. **James** was not written by the brother of John, but by the half-brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55-56; Gal. 1:19), who also gave leadership over the Church Council in Acts 15:13-21. **James'** letter of 108 verses has 54 commands.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Amos 8:2 has a Hebrew "word play", lost to us in English: "summer fruit" (קִיץ "kites") and "end" (קֵץ "kates") sound similar. **The** "cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) is sometimes misunderstood as "observers", watching us run our race. However, the Greek word μάρτυς ("mar-toos") means, "witness" in the sense of "one who testifies" in court. This is a cloud of ones testifying to the faithfulness of God (as given in chapter 11). **Heb.** 12:2 "looking to Jesus" - the Greek word ἀφορώω ("ah-fah-rah'-oh") means "to view with undivided attention by looking away from every other object". In weeks 42 & 48 we saw οὐ and μή used to make the strongest possible negative statement in Greek. Heb. 13:5 (a quote of Deut. 32:6,8) says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." A paraphrase of the weightiness of the Greek text would be, "There is no possible way I will leave you" and "there is no possible way I will forsake you." In English, "Let" is often understood "to allow", but in James, it is often an imperative: 1:2 "you all must consider"; v.4 "it must have its perfect work"; v.5 and 6 "he must ask"; v.7 "he must not suppose"; v.9 "he must glory". **James** 5:4 mentions, "Lord Sabaoth", which comes from the Hebrew word סְבָאוֹת ("tsa-bah-oat") meaning, "hosts" (as in a large army).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God wants us to know Him (Hosea 6:1-6). His compassions grow warm and tender (11:8). He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness (Joel 2:13). He does nothing without revealing His counsel to His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). He gives every good and perfect gift and does not change (James 1:17).

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

December – Week 50 Completed

10 - Jonah	1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 - Micah	1-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 - Nahum 1-3, Hab. 1-3		<input type="checkbox"/>
13 - 1 Peter	1-2	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 - 1 Peter	3-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 - Zeph. 1-3, Hag. 1-2		<input type="checkbox"/>
16 - Zechariah	1-7	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word:
To know Him better
To love Him more
To walk in His ways
To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: six and a half books of the "Minor Prophets", plus 1 Peter. **We** first saw Jonah in 2 Kings 14:25. **His** city is mentioned in Josh. 19:13. **Some** find the account of Jonah a little "fishy", but it is a "whale" of an account revealing the character of God 😊. Watch for reoccurring words: "great", "perish", and "appointed". **Jesus** quoted and made reference to books of the Old Testament as authoritative. He also promised the Holy Spirit's help in writing the New Testament (John 14:26). The authority of the Bible firmly rests upon the person of Jesus Christ! He affirmed the book of Jonah twice (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; and a parallel in Luke 11:29-32). **Jonah** teaches us God has compassion on all who repent and turn to Him. **Micah** (3:12) was quoted in Jer. 26:18. He tells of Yahweh's reign (4:1-7), Messiah's birthplace (5:2), and God's expectation (6:6-8). **Nahum's** prophesy is directed against Nineveh. **Habakkuk** has a great message regarding wickedness and violence: God will judge; and He can use godless nations to do it. He tells us, "the righteous will live by his faith/faithfulness" (2:4). Someday the "earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea" (2:14). His final verses (3:17-19) express trust and rejoicing in Yahweh in uncertain times. **1 Peter** was written from Rome (called "Babylon" in 5:13). 1:1-2 begins with a statement revealing the work of the Trinity, that we are chosen by the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that we may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood. He gives encouragement about looming persecution by reminding us of God's great mercy and salvation, the call to be holy, and the permanence of God's Word. We are to first sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts, and then be ready to make a defense for the hope we have. He shares practical things for life and for church leadership. **Zephaniah** was a great, great, grandson of Hezekiah (1:1) and prophesies against Judah and her enemies, but ends (3:9-20) with promises of blessing, joy, and restoration. Notice God's desire in 3:7 was that they would fear Him so their dwelling would not be cut off as He punished, yet the people's response was to "corrupt all their deeds". How sad. Their dwellings were destroyed and they were taken to Babylon. **Haggai** prophesied after they returned from Babylon; God used him to encourage the people to rebuild the temple. **Zechariah's** first six chapters have a series of visions; the remaining are prophetic messages to the people.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Jonah means "dove"; Micah "Who (is) as Yahweh"; Nahum "Comfort"; Zephaniah "Yahweh hides/protects"; Haggai "My feast"; Zechariah "Yahweh Remembered". **Fun fact:** Zeph. 3:8 contains every Hebrew alphabet letter (even the five final forms). **English** versions differ in 1 Pet. 3:14 in his quote from Is. 8:12: don't fear them, or, don't fear their threats), the Greek text says that we are not to fear "their fear" (what they are afraid of) which is closer to the Hebrew text of Is. 8:12 "and his fear you will not fear" (in the context of "conspiracy"). A note of encouragement from a wooden translation of 1 Pet. 5:7, "casting all your anxiety upon him, because to Him, it matters, concerning you."

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

Jonah is more about God's character than it is about Jonah. **Messiah** is God (Micah 5:2) because only God is eternal. **He** forgives iniquity, does not hold His anger forever, delights in lovingkindness, has compassion, treads down our iniquities, casts sins into the depths of the sea, gives truth and lovingkindness (Micah 7:18-20). **Against** His enemies, He is jealous, avenging, a master/owner of wrath, taking vengeance on ones hostile to Him, yet slow to anger, great in power, but will not clear the guilty; He is good, a stronghold, He knows the ones taking refuge in Him, and will make a complete end of those hostile to Him (Nahum 1:2,3,7,8). He is loving to those who believe in Him and has wrath against those who make themselves His enemies. This contrast, that God is "just" and "justifier" (Rom. 3:25-26): He made grace and forgiveness available to us because He had justice against sin through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

December – Week 51		Completed
17 - Zechariah	8-14	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 - 2 Peter	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 - Malachi	1-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 - 1 John	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 - 1 John	4-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
22 - 2 John, 3 John, Jude		<input type="checkbox"/>
23 - Revelation	1-2	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: will finish the Old Testament. **Zechariah** was a post exile prophet, a contemporary to Haggai and Zerubbabel, and those returning from Babylonian exile to Jerusalem, as decreed by Cyrus (2 Chronicles 36:22-23), Ezra (1:1-8). (Isaiah mentioned Cyrus by name hundreds of years earlier - 44:28-45:1). **Zechariah** gives amazing statements on who God is and the identity of Messiah. In 2:8-13, Yahweh is speaking, and He says He will dwell in their midst, that nations will join themselves to Yahweh and become His people, and He says, "and you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you." Yes, Yahweh sent Yahweh! In 3:2, Yahweh rebukes Satan, saying, "Yahweh rebuke you". Watch for pronoun changes! In 7:13, Yahweh says, "just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen". In 11:13, Yahweh said, "Throw it to the potter, the magnificent price at which I was valued by them." Yes, Yahweh was valued at 30 pieces of silver when Jesus was betrayed by Judas. In chapter 12:10, Yahweh is speaking, and He says, "they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son...". Yes, Yahweh would be pierced. The Word (Jesus) spoke the first portion ("Me"). The Father (and/or the Holy Spirit) makes the second statement ("Him"). In 14:3-4 Yahweh's (Jesus') feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. Yahweh will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem, the "City of Truth" or "City of Faithfulness" (8:3). In 10:9-10 he tells (just after their return from Babylon) of another scattering and regathering from among the peoples (we are seeing this today). **The Feast of Booths** will be required in Messiah's Kingdom (14:16-19). **2 Peter** 3:8 is often quoted halfway, "a thousand years as one day", but notice the context; the verse goes both ways. We are to be patient regarding His promises because of how the Eternal God views time: He could put 1000 years on one side of the scale, and one day on the other side, and neither is weighty to Him! Jesus didn't return in 70 AD (as some say), because He is still waiting for people to repent (3:9). In **Malachi**, the people became lazy and lackadaisical in their relationship with God. He says, "Return to me!", Elijah will come. Messiah will come! **After** Malachi there are 400 years of silence, until John the Baptist's dad, Zechariah meets Gabriel. **1 John** is a "we know" book, and a Christian should be a "we know" person (by studying through the whole word of God). Why was it written? For joy (1:4), to not sin (2:1), to not be deceived (2:26), to know and believe (5:13). **Jesus** was the atoning sacrifice for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world! (2:2) **Walk** in the light as He is in the light, walk as He walked. **Love** the brothers. **2 John**: don't let in false teachers. **3 John**: walk in truth. **Jude**: the brother of James, the half-brother of Jesus: contend earnestly for the faith which was "once for all delivered to the saints". (We cannot add things to the faith beyond what He has given us, once for all, in the Bible.) **Revelation**: see the "Alpha and Omega" document.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Malachi means "My Messenger". In **Week 47** we mentioned the "Granville Sharp rule". Important examples of this grammatical rule are in 2 Pet. 1:1, 11 regarding the deity of Jesus. He is clearly called "God" in the Greek text. In 1:1, Jesus Christ is "God and Savior"! Again, in 1:11, Jesus Christ is "Lord and Savior". If He is "Lord and Savior", He is "God and Savior". In **Weeks 41 and 45** we mentioned that unsaved people can have agape love - that they will sacrifice for something that is a priority to them, and in 2 Pet. 2:15, Balaam "loved" (agape) the wages of unrighteousness. **2 John** mentions the chosen "lady", κυρία (koo-ree'-ah), which is the feminine form of "lord", κύριος (koo'-ree-ahs).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

His Name will be feared among the nations (Mal. 1:14). Yahweh does not change (Mal. 3:6). He is able to keep us from stumbling and make us stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy; He is the only God our Savior, and He deserves glory, majesty, dominion, and authority from eternity past, now, and forever. Amen. (Jude 24-25)

Who is the Alpha and the Omega?

"Alpha" and "Omega" are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. "The Alpha and the Omega" is also used as a title. Who is "The Alpha and the Omega"? (Spoiler alert! The identity of "The Alpha and the Omega" proves the deity of Jesus Christ - that He is God!)

Rev 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega", says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." He is the "Almighty". 2 Cor. 6:16-18 tells us the "Lord Almighty" is God. Rev. 4:8 says He is "Holy, Holy, Holy" – the Lord God Almighty. Rev. 11:17; 15:3; and 16:7 all refer to the Lord God Almighty. In Rev. 19:6 He is called Yahweh in the word "Hallelujah" (in Hebrew, "Praise Yah!") and is the Lord God Almighty.

Rev 21:6-7 "Then He said to me, "They are done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son."" Again, we see that "Alpha and Omega" is a title used for God ("I will be his God") the Father (and He will call others "My son"). Also, please take note that a new title, "beginning and end" is added. It makes sense because it would mean the same thing as "Alpha and Omega". Again, this is Yahweh!

Rev 22:12-13 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." Notice that another title has been added, "the first and the last". He is coming quickly with a reward. So, WHO is coming quickly? Look at verse 20...

Rev 22:20 "He Who bears witness to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly" Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." John says that Jesus is the one who is coming quickly. Go back to verse 12-16 to see who was talking when He claimed to be "The Alpha and Omega". Verse 16 says, "I, Jesus, sent My angel to bear witness to you of these things for the churches." It was Jesus who claimed to be Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End, First and Last. Notice that the title "First and Last" is used in both the Old and New Testaments...

Isaiah 44:6 says, "Thus says Yahweh, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, Yahweh of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me." The "First and the Last" really is Yahweh, the only God! Let's go back to Revelation 1:17-18 to see Who the "first and last" is: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying 'Do not fear; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.'" This is repeated again in 2:8, "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: This is what the first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says" - Jesus is dictating letters to John, and He says (a second time) that He is the first and the last, that He became dead, and now lives. If the "First and Last" is Yahweh, and He is, when did Yahweh die? Answer: Jesus is Yahweh and He died for our sins. The Father is Yahweh! Jesus is Yahweh! This is consistent with the rest of the Scriptures: there is a person called the Father, and He is called God. There is a person called the Son (or Jesus) and He is called God. We also find in Scripture that there is another person called the Holy Spirit, and He is called God. (One example: Acts 5:3 Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit; in 5:4 Peter says, "You have not liked to men, but to God.") So, we see three distinguishable Persons who are each called "God", and yet, the Bible is clear that there is only one God, Yahweh!

This is why we see the Scriptures say, "baptizing them in the name (not "names") of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19); "...chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to the obedience of Jesus Christ and the sprinkling of His blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you." (1 Pet. 1:1-2); and, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (2 Cor. 13:14)

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

December – Week 52		Completed
24 - Revelation	3-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 - Revelation	6-8	<input type="checkbox"/>
26 - Revelation	9-11	<input type="checkbox"/>
27 - Revelation	12-13	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 - Revelation	14-16	<input type="checkbox"/>
29 - Revelation	17-18	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 - Revelation	19-20	<input type="checkbox"/>
31 - Revelation	21-22	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word: To know Him better To love Him more To walk in His ways To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: we finish our reading goal for this year! **The** Holy Spirit named this book (1:1), "The Revelation of Jesus Christ". Does this mean, "about Jesus Christ", or "belonging to Jesus Christ"? The answer: "Yes!"; it is about Him and it is His. **The** Greek word for "revelation", ἀποκάλυψις ("apah-kah'-lew-psi"), means to "uncover", "unveil". "Apocalyptic literature", shouldn't mean "obscure". The name isn't "The Obfuscation (clouding, mystification, complication, or confusion) of Jesus Christ"; rather, it is the "unveiling", so we can see. **Early** Christians, Justin Martyr (135 AD) and Irenaeus (180 AD), quote from this book and attribute it to John the apostle of Jesus, the son of Zebedee. **To** be sure, some symbolism is used, and much of it is explained within the book. Keep in mind when John says, "like" or "as", he isn't telling us "what it is". He is telling us "what it is like". (Just as in Acts 2:2, it wasn't a violent rushing wind; it only sounded like it.) Consider, if you were living 2000 years ago and saw 21st century technology for which no words existed in Koine Greek, how would you describe it? You'd tell what it was "like". As we read through the Bible, we should take it literally unless it is clear from the context that we are not supposed to take it literally. (Example: chap. 12, the woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet is a picture of Israel and is not a literal description.) God is capable of literally fulfilling everything in the book! It is also possible to take it literally in what John said it is like: in 9:17, he describes "horses" (if you saw a tank 2000 year ago, what would you call it? People are riding it... it must be a horse! The horse's heads are "like" heads of lions, not actually lion heads), but notice, "fire, smoke, and brimstone" come out of their "mouths", but he didn't say "like" fire, smoke, and brimstone! If this is a tank cannon, the fire, smoke, and brimstone are quite literal! **There** are seven blessings: the first (1:3) is for those reading, hearing, and keeping the prophecy written in this book. The other six: 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:16, 22:7, and 22:14. **May** the Lord bless you as you read through this book! **We** will see Trinity statements: the first time is 1:4-5. **For** the "seven Spirits" before His throne, see Isaiah 11:2. **Jesus** gave us the outline for the book (1:19): He told John to write (1) the things which he saw (when Jesus appeared to Him on Patmos), (2) the "things which are" (the Churches), and (3) the things which shall take place "after these things". 4:1 begins this third part, "After these things (the churches), I looked, and behold, a door open in heaven". "**Alpha**" and "Omega" are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This phrase is used with "First and Last" and "Beginning and End". **As** we finish this year's reading of the Bible, please plan to continue to read through the Bible yearly. God will continue to reveal things to us through His living Word (Heb. 4:12). We will never exhaust all He has for us. The Old Testament ends with the promise: Messiah is coming! The New Testament ends with: Messiah is coming! Amen! Come quickly Lord Jesus!

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

In Rev. 1:1, some translations say He "signified" what must shortly take place, but the word σημαίνω (say-my'-no, used six times) means "communicated", not that "everything is symbolic". The best Greek lexicon (BDAG) lists Rev. 1:1 (and Acts 25:27) as examples of the definition: "to make known, report, communicate". **Some** versions in 3:14 say, "Beginning of the creation of God". The word ἀρχή ("are-khay") is often used for "ruler". The English translation, "Beginning", should be understood in the sense of "ruler", "originator", or "source", not that "He was created".

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God is on the throne. He made all things for Himself. He is holy. Salvation is His. His deeds are great and marvelous. He is worthy of worship. Jesus is King of kings, Lord of lords, Faithful and True, the Beginning / End, the First / Last.

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Calvary Chapel Springfield, Missouri

Congratulations on reading through the Bible this year! And thank you for using Open My Eyes! My prayer is that God has sharpened your appetite for His Word and that you are looking forward to reading through the Bible again in the coming year!

I often get asked, “What is the best translation?” This is like asking, “What is the best vehicle?” If you live on a farm, it may be a pickup truck. If you have a family with children, it may be a minivan. If you have to travel a lot, it may be a small hybrid with better gas mileage. Use a translation that fits your reading level, one you can understand. However, what if you have a family and a farm, you may want a truck and a minivan. Therefore...

As you consider your Bible reading for next year, I commend to you the suggestion made by the translators of the 1611 King James Version (in “The Translators to the Reader” - in the bottom fifth of the next to last page) where they quote Augustine as saying that a variety of translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures.

Languages are not like codes. It is usually true that the total meaning of a word (“Semantic Range”) in one language (in the “target language” - English) will not exactly match the total meaning of the word in the “source text” (Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek). Therefore, translators have to pick a word that comes close to matching the meaning. Usually, you will have meanings not covered by the translated word, and it is possible that the translated word has some nuance that is not a part of the word in the source text. Multiple translations, using different words may help you better understand the meanings of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words.

There are some very good versions (LSB, NASB, NKJV) having a goal to tell you what the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts say (“word for word”). There are also some very good versions (CSB, HCSB, NLT, NIV) with a goal to communicate what the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts mean (easier to read, “thought for thought”). It is good to read both kinds of translations. Sometimes, a literal translation doesn’t accurately convey the grammatical meaning, but a thought for thought version is not constrained to being “word for word” and can supply subtle nuance to give a better understanding of what the text means. Example: in 1 John 3:6,9, the “word for word” versions give the impression that if you sin you are not saved. However, the “thought for thought” versions, indicate that the saved person doesn’t “keep on sinning” or “continues sinning”. Why the difference? There is no word for “continue” or “keep on” in the Greek text, but it is definitely in the grammatical meaning (because the tense has the nuance of continual or repeated action). Let’s suppose that, as you go through the day, you are presented with 100 temptations, and 99 times you chose to not sin, but you blew it once, it is obvious that sinning is not your continual or repeated action. (By the way, I noticed that the NASB20, added the word “*continually*” in italics to indicate that the word is not in the Greek text, but the meaning is present in the text because of grammar, and is, therefore, a correct translation.)

Another idea (also mentioned in “The Translators to the Reader” in the 1611 KJV) is that it would be wrong to take something the Spirit has made certain, and make it less certain. And, it is wrong to take something the Spirit has not made certain and make it certain. Reading more than one translation makes these statements easier to distinguish.

There have been a couple of years where I read through the Bible twice (January-June, and July-December). Sometimes, in a year, I read through the Old Testament once and the New Testament twice. Sometimes I follow the same Open My Eyes guide, but I include reading a Psalm each day. The important thing is to continue spending time with the Lord in prayer and in His Word every day. Follow the Lord’s leading. I am including two other reading plans: straight through, and a Chronological Reading plan from the Blue Letter Bible. (You can use the Open My Eyes plan as an index to find which week we read a book. For instance, if you wanted to review Hebrew poetry, you’ll find we started Job in Week-29 and you can then review the comments.)

May the Lord continue to bless His word to you, so that you will know Him better, love Him more, walk in His ways, and become conformed to the image of Jesus!

Bruce Steventon