

One Year Bible – Week 47

Summary: James Reading

Is James the book that contradicts Paul? Some people think the book of James goes against much of the teachings of the rest of the New Testament because of its emphasis on works (things we must do) as opposed to grace (what God has done). It is important to remember that James is not writing about how one becomes a Christian but rather how a Christian should live. Moreover, the content of the book of James is consistent with the rest of the New Testament in terms of the life conduct of a believer. As you read the book of James, hear the words of God for how you should live out your salvation given from God by grace.

Summary: Ezekiel Reading

The prophet Ezekiel was included in one of the first groups of Babylonian exiles. Therefore, as the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the people of Jerusalem, Ezekiel's role was God's messenger of judgment to the exiles of Babylon around the same time.

Chapters 33-48 tell of God being known through his restoration and spiritual renewal of Israel.

Things to Look for and Questions to Ponder as You Read:

- *OT* – Read Ezekiel 36:33-36. In these verses God talks of his restoration of Israel. From God's restorative work to the nation of Israel, people will wonder how such a land and people of desolation have returned vitality. Verse 36 provides a main theme of these last several chapters: "Then the nations around you that remain will know that I YHWH have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I YHWH have spoken, and I will do it." Israel is desolate. God will restore Israel. God will be known through his restoration of Israel. Does he not want the same testimony of our lives? – *Nov 8.*
- *NT* – While it is true that Jesus welcomes us to come to him without needing to "clean up" first, some misinterpret this invitation as a license to live however they might like. The book of James tells us that a faith practiced as indulgent behavior with insurance against condemnation is not really a true faith at all, but dead words. (See Jas 2:14-26)

Small Group Questions:

- 1) *OT* – Read Ezekiel 33:30-33. How would you describe the attitude of God's people being talked about in these verses? What are some

reasons that you think people might respond to God's truth in this way? What is the reason for verse 33? Does this description of Ezekiel's audience have any accuracy with people today? How can we guard against this from happening in our own church? – *Nov 16*

- 2) *OT* – Read Ezekiel 37:1-14. In your own words summarize this episode of Scripture. Why do you think God asks the question in v 3? What is the answer to the question as seen in this passage? How is life given here? For what reason does God give life in this passage? What do you think is meant by the use of the words "bones" and "graves," "breath," and "life/live?" Is there any connection with what is communicated in this passage to how we live our lives as God's people today? – *Nov 18*
- 3) *NT* – Read James 1:22-27. What is this passage calling believers to be like? What is an example of a person who listens to the word and deceives themselves? (v22) What do you think is meant by the words "looks intently" in verse 25? Why do you think James writes what he does in verses 26-27 following verses 22-25? How would you know if you were deceiving yourself as the person in v 22? – *Nov 18*

Journal the Psalms this week:

Read Psalm 117 & 118. Psalm 117 says to praise YHWH because of his love and faithfulness. Psalm 118 begins and ends with the same words: "Give thanks to YHWH, for he is good; his love endures forever." Meditate upon what these Psalms say about God. What words stand out to you? What would God be like if he was not good? If his love did not endure forever? By contrast, how do you relate to God because he is this way? Journal your reflections on these Psalms and your answers to these questions. – *Nov 18-20*

Reading Schedule:

Eze = Ezekiel / Heb = Hebrews / Ps = Psalms / Pr = Proverbs

Nov 15 – Eze 31:1-32:32 / Heb 12:14-29 / Ps 113:1-114:8 / Pr 27:18-20

Nov 16 – Eze 33:1-34:31 / Heb 13:1-25 / Ps 115:1-18 / Pr 21-22

Nov 17 – Eze 35:1-36:38 / Jas 1:1-18 / Ps 116:1-19 / Pr 27:23-27

Nov 18 – Eze 37:1-38:23 / Jas 1:19-2:17 / Ps 117:1-2 / Pr 28:1

Nov 19 – Eze 39:1-40:27 / Jas 2:18-3:18 / Ps 118:1-18 / Pr 28:2

Nov 20 – Eze 40:28-41:26 / Jas 4:1-17 / Ps 118:19-29 / Pr 28:3-5

Nov 21 – Eze 42:1-43:27 / Jas 5:1-20 / Ps 119:1-16 / Pr 28:6-7

