

The Context Bible

Life Group Lesson 38

September 15-21, 2014

Acts 19:21-20:16

2 Corinthians 4-9

Have you ever wished the Bible was easier to read through like an ordinary book – cover to cover? Because the Bible is a collection of 66 books, reading it like an ordinary book is quite difficult. Compounding this difficulty is the fact that the later writers of the New Testament were often quoting or referencing passages in the Old Testament. In fact, much of the New Testament makes better sense only if one also considers the Old Testament passages that place the text into its scriptural context.

You are reading a running commentary to The Context Bible. This arrangement of Scripture seeks to overcome some of these difficulties. Using a core reading of John’s gospel, the book of Acts, and the Revelation of John, the Context Bible arranges all the rest of Scripture into a contextual framework that supports the core reading. It is broken out into daily readings so that this program allows one to read the entire Bible in a year, but in a contextual format.

Here is the running commentary for week thirty-eight, along with the readings for week thirty-nine appended. Join in. It’s never too late to read the Bible in context!

Week Thirty-Eight Readings

<p>9/15 Paul to Corinthians Again - The New Covenant 2 Cor 4</p>	<p>9/18 Paul to Corinthians Again - The Coming Life 2 Cor 5-6</p>	<p>9/20 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul’s Collection 2 Cor 9</p>
<p>Neh 11-13</p>	<p>Luk 19:45-19:48 Hab 2:18-2:20 Ezek 11 Prov 24:1-24:2</p>	<p>Prov 23:6-23:8 Luk 21:1-21:4 Luk 19:11-19:27</p>
<p>9/16 Paul to Corinthians Again - The Gospel Treasure 2 Cor 4</p> <p>Luk 20:19-20:26 Job 4-5</p>	<p>Paul to the Corinthians - The Heart 2 Cor 5-6</p> <p>Prov 4:19-4:27</p>	<p>Hag 1 Prov 10:2 Prov 11:4, 11:24-11:26 Prov 15:27 Prov 18:16 Prov 22:9</p>
<p>9/17 Paul to Corinthians Again - The Gospel Treasure 2 Cor 4</p> <p>Eccles 1-2</p>	<p>9/19 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul and the Church 2 Cor 7-8</p> <p>Lev 27 Deut 15:1-15:11 Prov 15:6, 15:10-15:11</p>	<p>9/21 Off</p>

SETTING

Our reading through Acts has paused to read in context Paul's letter we call "2 Corinthians" during the time period of its composition (Acts 19:21-20:16). In the framework of the letter, we have added a number of other Scriptures to mix into Paul's thoughts, some additional insights from Scripture.

The New Covenant (2 Corinthians 4; Nehemiah 11-13)

Paul's life and letters were rooted in history. In 2 Corinthians chapter 3, Paul equated the Corinthians to a letter delivered by Christ, written with the Spirit of the living God. Paul contrasted the Corinthians as God's written product with the Ten Commandments, the Corinthians being written on human hearts rather than tablets of stone. The Ten Commandments showed the people's inadequacies, as a display of accountability no one could master. Yet even as they were produced, the result on Moses' face was a radiance of glory so great he had to wear a veil.

For Paul, the "letter" that was the Corinthians was living history. They were a current expression of God's glorious interactive work with humanity on a grander scale than that of Moses' day. The glory of the work of Christ in the lives of his people is a new covenant that leads to glory and freedom. This is an ongoing transformational work of God. It is a changing of his people from one degree of glory to another as we are transformed into the image of the Lord.

We have added Nehemiah 11-13 to the reading as another foothold into the role of the Old Covenant of God's people. After the people had spent generations in captivity, slowly many Jews returned to Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. Nehemiah and the people took the book of Moses and read the law. Their lives affirmed the law, even as it brought judgment on people. It left the Jews in isolation as they withdrew from all who had any measure of genetic impurity. This covenant stands in stark contrast to the new covenant Paul declared.

Chapter 4 then takes this thought into the ways it has changed Paul and his companions. Paul had the ministry of the new covenant and, unlike Nehemiah who held the old covenant with its judgment upon the people, the new one was one of mercy and light. While Moses wore a veil from seeing the glory of God's writing of the old covenant, those who failed to see the light of the gospel wore a veil from the new covenant. These people were veiled from seeing the glory of Christ, the image of God.

This is Paul's second usage of "image" in this train of thought. It is the Greek word, *eikon* (εἰκών). He used it at the end of 2 Corinthians 3:18, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image (*eikon* - εἰκών) from one degree of glory to another." Paul's usage sets up a link. Christ *is* the image of God. We *are being* transformed into the image (*eikon* - εἰκών) of Christ (2

Cor 4:4). So all believers not only see without a veil, but they are actually becoming the image they see, not by their own aggressive works, but by the work of God. It is *happening to us*, not being achieved by us.

History is being written each day we live to God's glory.

The Gospel Treasure (2 Corinthians 4; Luke 20:19-20:26; Job 4-5; Ecclesiastes 1-2)

Paul understood that the tremendous fact of our transformation into the glory of God that is Christ, is not all glorious in the eyes of the world. The transformation and truth of what we are and what we are becoming is a treasure, but it is not held in some high priced, amazingly rare box. We have the treasure in jars of clay. Actual jars of clay available for everyday use were cheap. While they were breakable, they were also quite sturdy and durable. They were used for hauling all sorts of liquids as well as products like olives.

In this way we hold the treasure of God. We are not much different than the jars that were used in commerce:

- “Afflicted, but not crushed”
- “Perplexed, but not driven to despair”
- “Persecuted, but not forsaken”
- “struck down, but not destroyed.”

While this may not strike the average person as a “fun” life, it has a greater purpose in God's plan. It shows that the surpassing power belongs to God, not to us. We live in faith that as God raised Jesus, so he will raise us. We do not lament the role we walk in life. We do not mourn over playing our part in God's plan to bring his redemption to fruition in the lives of the world. We are pleased even in affliction to know that these temporary difficulties are a drop of water in the ocean compared to the eternity awaiting us.

We have inserted the reading from Luke 20:19-20:26 where Jesus' opponents sent spies into his presence to trick him into a treasonous charge against the Roman powers. While Jesus did not fall for their trickery, the story still serves as a reminder that life in this world for followers of Jesus will be walk a path with challenge and confrontations.

Another passage added for contemplation is Job 4 through 5. We know the affliction of Job, but much of the book focuses not on what happened to Job as much as on the reaction *to those events*. We read in Job 4 and 5 the thoughts of Job's friend Eliphaz. Eliphaz speaks of Job's troubles and Job's dismay over God's role in his personal

drama. Eliphaz suggests that Job is failing to follow his own advice he has parceled out to others in days gone by. Job is reaping his own sin, so Eliphaz believes (“those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same” Job 4:8). Eliphaz added that Job needed to seek God’s relief from God’s reproof, assuring “he wounds, but he binds up” (Job 5:18).

Ecclesiastes adds another perspective on life in this world, with its toil and trouble. The lessons of Ecclesiastes are not without the hope and confidence that God will bring some purpose and meaning to life, but it is hard to see before the historic work of Christ. The author’s words are profound: “vanity of vanities, all is vanity!” This theme is constant throughout the book. The book begins with it, and ends with it (12:8 “Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity.”) In fact, the word “vanity” is used 38 times in these short 12 chapters. That is more than half of its usage in the entire Old Testament.

The Hebrew word translated “vanity” is *hevel* (הֶבֶל). It literally means a “warm breath” or “vapor.”¹ Precisely what *hevel* means in this book is troublesome for scholars. The ESV, the New Revised Standard Version, and the New American Standard version keep the King James choice and translate it as “vanity.” The NIV, the New Living Version and others translate it as “meaningless.” The Amplified Bible uses two words “vapor” and “futile,” while the Common English Bible states, “Perfectly pointless...Everything is pointless.” The struggle to wrap into one English word the idea conveyed in the Hebrew has led at least one scholar to call for us to incorporate *hevel* into English using it instead of a translation!²

We can best get the idea of *hevel* by reading through Ecclesiastes! As in a flower arrangement, we see the careful placement of *hevel* in ways that evoke a picture of meaninglessness, of vexation over the limitations of life, of frustration over life’s unfairness, and over the unfixable problem of death. Chapters one and two give a catalogue of *hevel* in the world.

Hevel in the Natural World

Over the first set of verses, the Preacher notes the vanity of life “under the sun” (1:3). This phrase “under the sun” will get repeated use in this book. It is the perspective of the world from a human view, from where man dwells. It is not God’s view from above the heavens; it is the contrasting human view of life. In this area, there is a constant pattern that occurs: Things happen over and over. There is no ultimate accomplishment, nor is there anything new. The same thing goes on over and over.

¹ Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M., & Stamm, J. J., *The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament* (Brill 1999).

² Garrett, D. A. (2001). *Vol. 14: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, The New American Commentary*, (Broadman & Holman 2001).

The Preacher calls you to think about it: Man works, but eventually dies and another generation comes in and works. Then that generation dies and another comes in and works. No generation finishes the work of man, nor does any generation last (1:3-1:4).

The same is true of the sun. It rises and sets, only to do it again and again, day in and day out. It never accomplishes anything permanent where it no longer needs to cycle through rising and setting (1:5). So also the wind—it blows south then blows north. Over and over, it blows through its circuits. It never “finishes.” (1:6). Streams run to the sea, but never fill it up. They just keep flowing (1:7). The eye never reaches a point where it has seen all that is needed, or the ear hear all that is to be heard. Both just keep at it, never being satisfied (1:8).

The Preacher concludes the natural world as something that is on constant repeat. The same things happen over and over again:

What has been is what will be,
and what has been done is what will be done,
and there is nothing new under the sun.
Is there a thing of which it is said,
"See, this is new"?
It has been already
in the ages before us (1:9-1:10).

Hevel in the world of wisdom and knowledge

The Preacher then sets out to give his assessment as “king over Israel in Jerusalem”³ who applied his heart to searching out wisdom (1:12-1:13). In searching out the wisdom “under the heavens” (1:13) and the things done “under the sun” (1:14), even from the perspective of a king, it is all “vanity [*hevel*] and a striving after wind” (1:14). There is no way to fix all that is broken, and no way to count all that is lacking (1:15). With the greatest wisdom and knowledge comes sorrow and vexation (1:18), for one learns that life is not pain-free and without difficulty. In fact the opposite is true. Wisdom shows that “It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with” (1:13), or so it seems “under the sun”!

Hevel in Personal Life

The king experienced everything he could in an effort to find something beyond the vanity or *hevel* of life. He tried pleasure and enjoyment, but found them vanity.

³ Some scholars see here a direct reference that mandates Solomon as author. Others see this as a writing from the perspective of Solomon or some other king, noting the difficulty of understanding other passages if in fact Solomon were the author. See the discussion by Seow, Choon-Leong, *Ecclesiastes: A New Translation and Commentary, The Anchor Bible Series*, v. 18C (Doubleday 1997), at 37ff.

Laughter brought no real meaning or use. Wine did not produce real significance, nor did the busy chores of life (2:1-2:3). In a series of passages that sound like a hamster running on a wheel, fast and furious with no real results, the Preacher as king built houses, planted vineyards, made gardens and parks, planted orchards, and set up irrigation systems (2:4-2:6). In addition to these accomplishments, the king had great possession: slaves, herds, flocks, silver, gold, foreign treasures, singers, and concubines (2:7-2:8). This king exceeded in fame and fortune all who ever came before him, and had all his eyes could see, but looking at it, he saw it all as vanity [*hevel*]:

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun (2:11).

More Hevel in Wisdom

The Preacher recognized that wisdom was a virtue. At least a wise person walks with his eyes open, as compared to the fool. Yet both the wise man and the fool ultimately die. Even in life, both often experience the same events. It is not as if wisdom gives one escape from the end of life “under the sun” and so the Preacher “hated life...for all is vanity [*hevel*] and a striving after wind” (2:12-2:17).

The Hevel of Working

As the Preacher brings to a close his first set of teachings on the vanity of life, he goes into a discourse on “toil under the sun” (2:18). After death, even the best of man’s achievements and accomplishments go on to another. The succeeding generations may prove to be wise or may turn out foolish; there is no way to determine or any guarantees. Work is tough and vexing (hence it is called “work” or “toil”) and can tax a person, even as they worry over it all night. Thinking about this brought despair to the Preacher (2:19-2:20).

Yet, the Preacher does not end this section on vanity without giving some perspective beyond that of life “under the sun.” The Preacher does realize that from the hand of God can come enjoyment, wisdom, and knowledge to those who seek to please God in life. In this way, while all seems vanity under the sun, the best seems to be eating and drinking and finding enjoyment in work (2:24-2:26).

Paul’s reactions to life and suffering are different than Eliphaz in Job and different than the view of man “under the sun” found in Ecclesiastes. Paul saw the world with God’s wisdom, knowing both the sufferings of Christ as well as the glory of Christ. For Paul, his sufferings *showed* God’s glory. They echoed the path of the Savior. They were badges of honor in this world, as reminders of the history of Jesus as well as the assurance of eternal blessings.

The Coming Life (2 Corinthians 5-6; Luke 19:45-19:48; Habakkuk 2:18-2:20; Ezekiel 11; Proverbs 24:1-24:2) and The Heart (Proverbs 4:19-4:27)

Paul's train of thought continues in chapter 5 as he wrote to the Corinthians of the heavenly dwelling we have after this life. The Spirit of God that indwells us guarantees us this eternal dwelling in the heavens. The assurance is that this Spirit will bring us back to the same Lord God from which he came forth. Now we walk by that faith, knowing something better awaits us when we come before the Lord Jesus for eternity.

Paul wrote that his motivation for teaching – and his motivation for a plain and transparent life – was the fear/awe Paul had for the Lord and its implications for life. Paul lived his life to convey the truth of a crucified Messiah to men. Paul wanted the Corinthians to know he was not writing out of pride. Paul was not “trying to commend” himself to the Corinthians “again” (2 Cor 5:12), something of which some were evidently accusing Paul of doing. Apparently, some of Paul's opponents were proudly following those with “good visibles” (Wealthy teachers? Winsome and charming teachers?) as opposed to proudly following Paul and those with good hearts!

Evidently, some in Corinth charged that Paul's physical and material shortcomings were a reflection of his spiritual shortcomings. Some even charged that Paul was out of his mind! So, Paul turned the phrase proclaiming that if he and his companions are indeed “out of our mind, it is for the sake of God!” Importantly, however, Paul added that if he was in his right mind, which no sane person should dispute, then all Paul's actions were “for you [the Corinthians]” (2 Cor 5:13).

This is a marvelous question many have noted over the centuries. Was Paul a crazy man? Why would Paul give everything up for a life of pain, hardship, emotional misery, and personal danger otherwise? There are three core options: Paul was crazy, Paul was stupid and duped, or Paul had indeed encountered the Messiah. Paul clearly was not crazy, something we can still deduce by reading his many writings done over a decade of his life. As for Paul being stupid, or duped, there is no evidence of such stupidity or gullibility in his writings. He is repeatedly put to the test, and has no concerns that his experience and his miraculous works were anything less than real. That leaves the third option, for us and for the Corinthians: Paul was the real deal.

What was driving Paul? Christ's love for Paul and for all of us compelled Paul. Christ's love could never be clearer. The love was not merely spoken with words. Nor was it shown in simple affection or gifts. The love of Christ was demonstrated in this world by the ultimate sacrifice – a physical death and resurrection. Christ for us. Christ in our stead. That love pushed Paul to do all he could to proclaim to mankind the love of mankind's Savior.

Paul never viewed people or the world the same again. The world had been alienated from God, but could be reconciled through Christ. This was a real event that had

happened in Paul's lifetime. There were hundreds of witnesses, including Paul himself. This is why Paul saw a new creation in Jesus Christ of all believers. The old covenant was gone, but so was the old life.

Paul explained that the believer lives in a reconciled state of closeness to our God. Since God through Christ, had reconciled the world to himself, Paul became an ambassador through whom God made an appeal to men. Paul had a ministry of reconciliation, bringing the truth to people that a direct relationship with God was possible. People could now have sins forgiven and be renewed with God's unblemished righteousness. Paul was excited that God's day of salvation spoken of in Isaiah 49:8 had arrived (2 Cor 5:16 – 6:2).

This profound action of God among mankind moved Paul. Paul would minister and speak freely to the Corinthians to convey the wonderful truth of what God did in Christ and what it meant to humanity. Paul's hardships paled in comparison to his participating in seeing God's salvation bearing fruit in believers. So Paul gladly endured "troubles, hardships and distresses, beatings, imprisonment and riots; hard work, sleepless nights, and hunger" (2 Cor 6:5).

Paul was first and foremost God's servant. Those who would discredit him would discredit his Master, God. Paul was God's servant in the face of the hardships, but also in his "purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and the left; through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report" (2 Cor 6:6-6:8).

Paul was almost the opposite of how he was being portrayed. Paul was

genuine, yet regarded an imposter; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet living on; beaten and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything (2 Cor 6:8-6:10).

This explanation and answer to his critics could only grow out of deep conviction in the truth of Paul's mission and message. Paul's critics would have done well to embrace the admonition of Proverbs 24:1-24:2, setting down envy and words that stirred up trouble!

The Holiness of Believers

After this defense, Paul seems to pause and adjust to a slightly different subject. This may be one of the places where Paul put his pen down for a week, or a month, picking

it up at a later time to write on something else that has occurred to him. He wrote of the necessity of separateness between believers and unbelievers.

We understand this section a bit more if we note the meaning of the word “holy.” The Greek for “holy” is ἅγιος (*hagios*). Its meaning echoes that of the Hebrew word for “holy,” (*qodesh* - קֹדֶשׁ). Both words strongly convey the idea of “dedicated” in the sense of someone or something that was set apart. For example, certain people set apart for God’s service in the Old Testament were considered “holy.” In fact, the Jewish nation itself carried the term “holy” because it was a nation chosen by God, set apart from the other nations (Deut 7:6). Even the Sabbath day was set apart as different from the other days, and hence was called “holy” (Gen 2:3). These were “holy” because they were not “common,” but were separated from the common for dedicated and special use before God.

This is why the church and we believers are called to be holy. We are not your average fallen humans! We are set apart for God’s service; we are dedicated to God and his mission. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. We have within us Christ, our assurance of glory. And, so we are unique as a people among the nations of the world. We are holy!

Paul wrote that as holy people, set apart from others, dedicated for God as his children and as his dwelling place on earth, we are to live differently. We are not to be “yoked together with unbelievers.”⁴ Light and darkness do not dwell together, so we are to “purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit.” We are to perfect being set apart for God (i.e. “holiness”) out of our reverence for God who dwells within us and makes us separate (holy) (2 Cor 6:14-7:1).

This holiness of God is why Jesus threw the moneychangers from the temple (Luk 19:45-19:48). They had taken something special and treated it as profane. The Lord’s holy temple reflected the holy presence of the holy Lord. It called for a holy reverence (Hab 2:18-2:20). We also added the assurance for Paul and Israel that God would one day put within his people a new spirit, turning the hearts of stone into softened hearts of flesh found in Ezekiel 11.

⁴ This is a passage that is easily taken out of context by some to justify an “isolationist Christianity” where there is as little interaction with the world as possible. That is not a fair construction for two reasons. It loses the balance inherent in the immediate context itself. It is our unique calling and restored relationship that separates us from others. That results in a different lifestyle, yes, but not isolation. As Paul has already written, we are the aroma of Christ to those outside the church. Jesus taught the same when he taught that we were the salt of the earth. We preserve and flavor the world in the name of Christ. We are a light set on a hill, not because we are to be isolated from the world, but because we are what they see shining in the midst of the world’s darkness. Jesus sent us into the world to proclaim his message. It is the balance between being in the world for God’s purposes but not being of the world and its purposes.

Paul and the Church (2 Corinthians 7-8; Leviticus 27; Deuteronomy 15:1-15:11; Proverbs 15:6, 15:10-15:11)

In chapter 7, Paul again returned to the theme of defending himself in the face of attacks we can no longer hear directly, but can still understand by the nature of Paul's defense. Paul wrote that he had neither wronged nor exploited anyone. Paul was careful in writing his defense that the Corinthians understood that he was not scolding those who support him. In fact, he was greatly encouraged by them and would willingly die for them (2 Cor 7:2-7:4).

At this point in Paul's writing, Titus had returned to him with encouraging news of how the Corinthians felt and cared for him. Paul understood from Titus that his last letter hurt some Corinthians. Paul wrote that while he felt badly about hurting them, he was happy that the Corinthians' sorrow had led to repentance. Paul explained that godly sorrow can lead to wonderful, life-changing things for a Christian. Their sorrow produced an earnestness to clear themselves, an eagerness to make things right, to be concerned about certain issues, and a desire to see justice done. This reaction encouraged Paul (2 Cor 7:8-7:13).

Titus himself was also encouraged and delighted at the Corinthians' response to Titus and Paul's message. Titus grew in affection from his time at the church (2 Cor 7:13-7:16).

Paul then addressed the issue of the Corinthian contributions for the work of the saints. Jerusalem and its surrounding area were severely famine-stricken. Food was very expensive. Paul used this famine and the resulting starvation to bring funds from Gentiles in to the home Jewish church. No doubt this helped unite both giver (Gentile) and receiver (Jew) in Christ. For this contribution, the Macedonians (from where Paul was writing) were freely giving to God out of extreme poverty with overflowing joy (2 Cor 8:1-8:5). Paul wanted the Corinthians to follow through on earlier commitments and similarly give earnestly to the work. Paul reminded the Corinthians of Jesus' giving. As God, Jesus was rich, but he became poor on our account so we could become rich in our eternal destiny (2 Cor 8:6-8:15).

Titus was returning to Corinth to collect the remaining gifts, and Paul emphasized that the money was being handled VERY carefully so neither God nor man could question or criticize how the gift was used (2 Cor 8:16-8:24). Paul knew the importance of vows and tithing. Leviticus 27, the final chapter in that book, speaks directly about the importance of keeping one's word, especially as reflected in gifts and tithes to the Lord. Paul was devoting not only the Corinthian's gifts to the Lord, but the Corinthians as well! God cared about the way his people interacted with others in need, something we see in the sabbatical year release noted in Deuteronomy 15:1-15:11.

The final contextual readings for this section are two proverbs, one emphasizing the treasure in the life of the righteous compared to the trouble befalling the income of the wicked (Prov 15:6). The second proverb spoke to the importance of following God and his ways (Prov 15:10-15:11).

Paul's Collection (2 Corinthians 9; Proverbs 23:6-23:8; Luke 21:1-21:4; 19:11-19:27; Haggai 1; Proverbs 10:2; 11:4, 11:24-11:26; 15:27; 18:16; 22:9)

As Paul explained his heart on this issue of giving, he added an important admonition:

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work (2 Cor 9:6-9:8).

Scripture has a LOT to say about how we treat the money we have in our possession. Consider:

- Stingy people are deceptive in sharing. They say one thing but mean another (Prov 23:6-23:8).
- Our gifts to God are measured by their degree of sacrifice more than the net amount (Luk 21:1-21:4)
- Our possessions are not really *ours*. They are entrusted to us by the Lord to use for *his* purposes (Luk 19:11-19:27)
- Our efforts to honor God should always trump our efforts to make money! (Hag 1).
- Money we get through unholy ways does no good (Prov 10:2; 11:4).
- As the faithful give freely, God more than meets their needs. They are blessed (Prov 11:24-11:26).
- Greed and dishonesty effect entire households (Prov 15:27).
- Gifts open doors (Prov 18:16).
- Blessings come upon those who share with those in need (Prov 22:9).

Questions for Discussion

Consider building questions around these passages:

1. How do you see the hand of God moving you into a greater reflection of the glory of his Son?
2. How do you see the suffering and affliction of this world? Can you see ways it shows the glory and promise of God in your life?
3. In what ways do you treat God as holy? How does God’s holiness affect your everyday life?
4. What ways can you grow in the handling of the resources and money at your disposal?

5. *Week Thirty-Nine Readings*

<p style="text-align: center;">9/22 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul's Defense 2 Cor 10:1-11:15</p> <p>Ezek 13 Jer 23:19-23:40</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9/23 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul's Defense 2 Cor 10:1-11:15</p> <p>1 Kgs 22 Pslm 49 Prov 15:2, 7 Prov 20:17 Prov 6:12-6:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">9/24 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul's Defense 2 Cor 10:1-11:15</p> <p>Jer 40-42:6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9/25 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul's Defense 2 Cor 10:1-11:15</p> <p>Jer 42:7-44:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">9/26 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul's Suffering 2 Cor 11:16-12:10</p> <p>Hab 1:1-2:2 Luk 14:25-14:33 Job 24-25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9/27 Paul to Corinthians Again - Paul's Suffering 2 Cor 11:16-12:10</p> <p>Job 27-28 Prov 17:4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9/28 Off</p>
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