

Psalm 148, Hosea 6-11 (#114)

Psalm 148— This is a song encouraging all of creation to praise our exalted and majestic God. *What is your favorite verse in this psalm and why?*

Hosea 6— The Lord through the prophet gives a scathing indictment against Ephraim and Judah who think that through a superficial quick repentance they will be all fixed up and God will be delighted with them again. Their loyalty, obedience, and love is like the morning mist that vanishes. What Yahweh wants is a sincere love relationship and faithful obedience, not for them to just go through the motions of sacrificing burnt offerings. Gilead and Shechem had at onetime been godly cities in Israel but now they have been turned into places of murder, robbery, and promiscuity. Judah shouldn't become smug since a harvest of judgment is appointed for her too. *How do we know whether a relationship with God is genuine or not? See verse 4 and 6.*

Hosea 7— The evil and sinfulness of Ephraim continue as the Lord stacks up her list of transgressions one upon another, but she really does not think God sees and remembers. Fraud, theft, adultery, drunkenness, lies, arrogance, and idolatry describe her evil actions on a daily basis as she continues in rebellion against God with no desire to return and seek Him. Ephraim is a half-baked cake (v. 8)! Instead of seeking the Lord with sincere hearts, she begs foreign gods for food and runs to Egypt and Assyria for protection. *“Ephraim is a flat loaf not turned over (v.8b NIV).” Ephraim is “as worthless as a half-baked cake (v. 8b NLT).” What is the meaning of this verse?*

Hosea 8— God is ready to send His fierce judgment on this evil nation for her multitude of sins. An eagle (Assyria) will come against Ephraim for transgressing their covenant with Yahweh and disobeying His law. She has appointed her own kings, has worshiped the calf in Samaria, has sold herself to many lovers, and ultimately will be swallowed up and punished for her sins. *What is meant by the phrase, “they sow the wind and reap the whirlwind (v. 7a)?”*

Hosea 9— Israel has abandoned their God by committing all of the sins of the foreign nations including involvement with prostitutes and the worship of gods at the pagan shrines. Because of this wickedness, she will end up being slaves either in the land of Egypt or Assyria. The day for Israel's punishment has come because the depth of their sin has rivaled the unspeakable wickedness of Gibeah. It was a joy for Yahweh to find His young

bride Israel, yet even after 38 years in the wilderness she went astray at Baal-peor even before entering the Promised Land. Ephraim and all of her children are doomed to be struck down or to be wanderers among the nations because of the vile idolatry that is centered in Gilgal. *What happened at Baal-peor and Gibeah? See Numbers 25:1-18 and Judges 19:14-30.*

Hosea 10— As God blessed Israel, she became a lush vine, but the more He increased and prospered her, the more the pagan altars and sacred pillars increased. Since Israel rejected Yahweh as her king, her calf worship at Beth-aven will be destroyed. The very calf Ephraim worshiped is taken to Assyria as a gift to the king, but she will be ashamed because of her trust in this idol. Ephraim and Judah will no longer be contented and free calves because the yoke of Assyria will be placed on Ephraim and the yoke of Babylon will be put on Judah when they go into their captivities. Israel's confidence has been in her military might, and yet notwithstanding, her extreme evil will cause her total destruction. But now it is time to break up the unplowed ground, sow righteousness, and seek the Lord. The result of these actions will be that Israel will reap the harvest of God's steadfast love. *Is material prosperity (v. 1) a sign of God's blessing and approval on our lives? What should be our response if God allows us to have material wealth? See Luke 12:13-21 and I Timothy 6:17-19.*

Hosea 11— The Lord now switches analogies from husband-wife to father-son. This chapter is one of the most endearing and emotionally charged passages in the book of Hosea and speaks of the relationship between Yahweh and His son Israel. The more the Lord tried to lead Israel with the cords of kindness and love, the more he departed from Him and sought after Baals and offered sacrifices to idols. But the Lord cries, "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused. I will not carry out my fierce anger (vv. 8a and 9a NIV)." The Lord now seems to look to the future to the end times when Israel will be gathered from all the nations and will be settled in their own land. *What is meant by the questions, "How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim (v. 8 HCSB)?" See Deuteronomy 29:23.*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Key Ideas Bible Handbook, Ron Rhodes, c. 2016, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 13. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 14. The Message, c. 2002, Eugene Peterson, NavPress Publishing Group, Colorado Springs, CO. 15. NIV Study Bible, c. 2011, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI. 16. Understanding the Bible, c.2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN.

Psalm 149-150, Hosea 12-14, Galatians 1-3 (#115)

Psalm 149— This is a new song written to praise our God who never grows old. *Take a moment to rejoice, for God delights in you (vv. 4-5).*

Psalm 150— The psalmist reminds us where, why, how, and whom should praise God. *What causes you to rejoice in God?*

Hosea 12— Ephraim is in worthless pursuit of finding security through a covenant with Assyria and at the same time sending a gift of olive oil to Egypt hoping to find protection from them if it is needed. Although Jacob acted deceitfully with his brother Esau, he became a changed person when he was older. Like Jacob, we must return to the Lord, hold fast to love and justice, and put our trust in Yahweh (vv. 1-6). Ephraim, however, has not returned to the Lord, instead its leaders continue extorting the people with dishonest scales and love to cheat them in order to get rich. God says, “I have spoken to you through the prophets to get you to repent and change, but you are full of evil by sacrificing to idols in Gilgal (vv. 7-14).” *What two incidents in the life of Jacob showed that he was a changed man and no longer the schemer as in previous days? See verses 2 to 6.*

Hosea 13— Although Ephraim was once a leader among the tribes in Israel, they lost their authority and incurred guilt through their idolatry and the worship of the golden calf. Since Egypt, it was Yahweh who was their God and greatly blessed them in Canaan, but when they prospered Israel became satisfied and proud and as a consequence forgot God. Now the Lord takes vengeance and attacks wicked Israel (vv. 1-9). The people of Ephraim have constantly fought against God’s will by living as they pleased. When it came time for Ephraim to repent and seek the Lord, he decided to stay in the birth canal and die and refused to come out and be born. Although Yahweh would love to resurrect sinful Ephraim from the dead, He will not. Samaria must bear their guilt because of their rebellion and will soon fall by the sword (vv. 10-16). *Many today believe that God is an indulgent, tolerant God who winks at evil and will not judge people for their wickedness. What evidence do you find in this chapter that God is a just, holy, and righteous God who will not continue to tolerate sin forever? See verses 4 to 16.*

Hosea 14— In this last chapter, Yahweh calls His wayward people to repentance. What God is waiting to hear from Israel is for them to ask for forgiveness and return with a heart full of praise. He longs for them to see the futility and insanity of turning to Assyria or to their idols for salvation. The good news for those who are wise and insightful, and who recognize that the ways of the Lord are right, is that God will heal and love them and turn from His anger. This chapter and the book of Hosea ends with a multitude of blessings for the truly repentant, but those who rebel at His paths will stumble and fall into ruin. *Verses 4 through 8 seem to describe the meaning of Ephraim's name. What does the name "Ephraim" mean? See Genesis 41:52. Where did Ephraim's fruitfulness come from? See verse 8. How is this verse a reminder of fruitfulness in the Christian life? See John 15:4-5.*

Galatians— This short powerful book proclaims the freedom we have in Christ. The purpose was to refute the Judaizers who were trying to persuade the Gentiles that in order to be saved they must obey all of the Law of Moses including circumcision and the dietary laws. This book was written by the Apostle Paul to the churches of Galatia in about 49 A.D. Paul and Barnabas had planted these churches and then heard later that they were being persuaded to give up their freedom in Christ in order to obey all of the law. This book clearly declares the gospel of justification by faith in Christ alone apart from any works of the law (2:16).

Galatians 1— After a brief introduction, Paul begins by telling the believers at Galatia how surprised he is that they have so quickly allowed the content of the gospel to move from salvation by grace through faith to that of human effort and the keeping of the law. He clearly states that the gospel he preached did not come from a human source but was by direct revelation from Jesus Christ Himself. Paul then gives a short history of his life to authenticate his ministry starting with his zealous persecution of the church, his conversion experience, his immediately going to Arabia after being persecuted in Damascus, and then after three years, going to Jerusalem to be with Peter and James. *In verse 10 Paul says, "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ." Paul's first priority was to please God, not men. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 meaning the strongest), how bold are you in declaring your faith in Christ to the non-Christian world instead of appeasing them and going along with their agenda? This is a personal question.*

Galatians 2— Paul continues to prove his premise that we are saved by grace through faith alone. He recounts his meeting with James, Peter, and John in Jerusalem that took place fourteen years later. Even though false brothers had infiltrated the church, he and Barnabas did not give in to the Judaizers for a moment but boldly declared the truth of the gospel and the freedom believers have in Christ. Just as Peter was the Apostle to the Jews, the leaders of the church in Jerusalem recognized Paul's calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and didn't demand that Titus who had accompanied them on the trip be circumcised. Sometime later when Peter came to Antioch, Paul opposed Peter to his face because of his hypocrisy. When the circumcision group came from Jerusalem, Peter would separate himself from the Gentiles for fear of the Judaizers. Paul said that we Jews know we are justified by faith in Christ alone and not by observing the law which no one can ever keep perfectly. Just because Christians sin, it does not mean that we need to go back and reestablish the law as a means of salvation. The gospel of grace now infuses us with power that the law can never give us. Christ lives in us and produces His righteousness through us as we trust Him moment by moment. If man could become righteous through keeping the law then Christ died in vain. *What did Paul mean when he said, "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God (v. 19 NIV)?" Extra question: Explain the meaning of Galatians 2:20.*

Galatians 3— Paul begins in verse 2 with a question. Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the Law of Moses or believing the message you heard about Christ? "After starting your new life in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort (v 3 NLT)?" The principle of salvation by faith starts all the way back with Abraham in Genesis 15:6 where he believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness. So now all who have faith in Christ are Abraham's children. The law brings a curse not life, but Christ took the curse for us by dying on the cross (Deuteronomy 21:23). Because of his faith, God gave an unconditional promise to Abraham which preceded the law by 430 years. The "promise" declares what God will do for us, and the "law" speaks of what we do for God through our own efforts. The law was given to show people their sins until the coming of the promised seed (Jesus Christ) who would come and take away their sins. The law can't give life and makes everyone prisoners of sin. We, however, "receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ (v. 22 NLT)." Since we are all children of God by faith, the law is no longer our guardian. It doesn't matter your race, status in life, or gender. If your faith is in Christ, then you are heirs of Abraham and the promise God made to him. *In verses 2 to 3, what proof or evidence did Paul give that salvation is by faith and not by obeying the law? Extra Question: If we become sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus alone (v. 26), what is the meaning of baptism in verse 27 which on the surface seems to speak of a human effort?*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. *Serendipity Bible for Groups*, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. *MacArthur Study Bible ESV*, 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. *Life Application Bible HCSB* c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. *The Complete Bible Companion* c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. *ESV Study Bible* c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. *The World Bible Handbook*, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. *The Quest Study Bible NIV*, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. *The Transformation Study Bible*, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. *Key Ideas Bible Handbook*, Ron Rhodes, c. 2016, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR. 10. *500 Questions & Answers from the Bible*, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. *Homan Bible Handbook*, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. *Moody Bible Commentary*, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 13. *Life Essentials Study Bible*, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 14. *The Message*, c. 2002, Eugene Peterson, NavPress Publishing Group, Colorado Springs, CO. 15. *NIV Study Bible*, c. 2011, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI. 16. *Understanding the Bible*, c.2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN.

Proverbs 1, Galatians 4-6, II Chronicles 1-5 (#116)

Proverbs— Written by Solomon in his early years as the king of Israel with the help of Agur (Chapter 30) and King Lemuel (Chapter 31), the book of Proverbs gives wise advice for people to live godly, prudent lives in their relationships with others and to live successful lives in the face of difficulties and challenges. The book of Proverbs covers a multitude of important subjects including fearing and knowing God, gaining wisdom, generosity, living a godly lifestyle, relationships with neighbors and family, warnings against adulterous women, diligence, justice, discretion, integrity, control of the tongue, instruction and discipline of children, humility, the sovereignty of God, alcohol, and many other practical topics. The writer uses various literary forms including couplets, poems, brief parables, and pointed questions. #7 page 994. The purpose for this book is to help men and women live long satisfying lives without suffering the regrets and consequences that follow living lives of pride, selfishness, sloth, godlessness, and dissipation.

Proverbs 1— What principle is taught in verses 5-6 and 8? What great preacher in the New Testament had this quality? See Acts 18:24-26.

Galatians 4— Before the coming of Christ to redeem those under the law, people were like children under a guardian who receive instructions and commands from these guardians even though they are heirs of the father's wealth, and their guardian is a slave. But now through faith in Christ, we have been adopted as sons (and daughters) with the full rights and privileges of adult sonship including the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-7). "But now you Galatians are returning to childhood living by being enslaved again to useless principles and special days and seasons. I am so fearful that my ministry with you has been wasted. You have changed. You once had great love and empathy for my broken physical condition, but now I have become your enemy for telling you the truth. These Judaizer guardians have evil intentions to return you to the bondage of the law, but now I am going through labor pains until Christ is formed in you (vv. 8-20 paraphrased)." Paul then gives an allegory to show the difference between those who are born after the flesh or human effort, and those who are born of the promise. Those who wish to live under the law (Sinai Covenant) are like Abraham's son, Ishmael, who was a child of the slave Hagar. Those who wish to live by faith in God's promise are like Abraham's son, Isaac, who was a child of Sarah, the free woman (New Covenant) (vv. 21-31).
1. A phrase in verse 4 says, "But when the fullness of times had come (ESV, NKJV)." This refers to the timing of the first coming of Christ to earth. How were the conditions of the world ripe for Christ's first coming and for the spreading of the gospel to the known world in the first century? 2. What is the main principle being taught in the story of Sarah and Hagar in verses 21-31?

Galatians 5— After a contrast of slavery and freedom in chapter 4, Paul emphasizes the importance of freedom that only comes through Christ. The act of circumcision has no value in the Christian life since being circumcised obligates a person to keep all of the law and cuts that person off from Christ Himself. The true righteousness of God is received by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit with acts of love as the end result (vv. 1-6). The churches of Galatia were spiritually advancing, but this false teaching had caused them to get off course. This doctrine of the freedom in Christ is not a license to do anything we want but is an opportunity to serve one another in love (vv. 7-15). The key to living a life that is honoring Christ is to walk in obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The choice is clear, live under the system of the law with the end result being the works of the flesh (sinful nature) and finally ends in death (vv. 19-21), or keep in step with the Holy Spirit's promptings which produces in us the fruit of the Spirit (vv. 22-23) with eternal life as the end result. Daily we crucify (put to death) our sinful desires by calling on the Holy Spirit to give us power over them moment by moment. *How do we walk in (live by) the Spirit (v. 16, 18, and 24-25)?*

Galatians 6— This chapter speaks of the ways of walking in the Spirit and in love including the gentle handling of brothers who have sinned, sharing in the burdens of others, being responsible with one's own work and conduct, and generously providing for the needs of those who teach us (vv. 1-6). God has put in the universe the law of sowing and reaping. Our actions have consequences with the result of decay and death if we sow to the flesh or eternal life if we sow to the Spirit. We must never get tired doing good to all people and especially to believers because God guarantees a bountiful harvest. The Judaizers didn't keep the law themselves, but they wanted these people to be circumcised so that they can boast that they have made a convert. Paul boasted in the weakness and shame of the cross because through Christ's death the evil Satanic world system has been destroyed. Such a system had absolutely no attraction to him. What really matters is that through the power of the cross of Christ, God is creating a whole new creation of people who are being transformed from the inside out (vv. 7-17). *Explain the meaning of verses 2 and 5. It seems like Paul is contradicting himself.*

II Chronicles— Written by Ezra (Jewish tradition) approximately 430 B.C., I Chronicles and II Chronicles were one book but were divided into two books during the second century B.C. by the Greek Translators of the Septuagint Old Testament. It was originally written for those who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon to teach them the history of King David and the worship in the temple developed by him. II Chronicles gives a history of the kings of Judah who are in the line of David beginning with Solomon in 970 B.C. and ending with Zedekiah and the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. This book showed the Jewish people in Ezra's day where they fit into God's plan and the need of staying faithful to Yahweh while they wait for the restoration of the monarchy with the appearing of the Messiah. I and II Chronicles were written from a priestly viewpoint explaining that God has a purpose for Israel as well as giving a positive perspective by omitting the sins of David and Solomon. The first ten chapters of II Chronicles give a positive history of King Solomon. The rest of the book narrates the history of all the

kings of Judah with special emphasis on the good kings. The book begins with the building of the temple in Jerusalem and ends in chapter 36 with the destruction of the temple and Judah's exile to Babylon.

II Chronicles 1— Solomon's throne is strengthened and exalted by the Lord. Solomon summoned the whole assembly of Israel to come to Gibeon where God's tent of meeting was located although the ark had been taken by David to Jerusalem previously. Solomon offered 1000 burnt offerings to the Lord before all the people. The night after sacrificing the offerings, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and gave him the opportunity of asking for anything he wanted. Solomon asked God for a discerning heart to judge the people of Israel in wisdom and justice. Because of his unselfish request, God not only gave him wisdom but also promised him riches and honor more than any king before or after him. Solomon accumulated 1400 chariots, 12,000 horsemen, and made silver and gold as common as stones showing that God had answered His promise about material prosperity. He also had a thriving export business.

II Chronicles 2— Solomon now builds the temple and the royal palace. He writes a letter to King Hiram of Tyre asking him for his help with building materials and skilled craftsmen. He declares to King Hiram that the temple will be great because Yahweh is greater than all other gods. "But who is able to build a temple for Him, since even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain Him (v. 6 HCSB)?" In return Solomon would send Hiram annually 100,000 bushels of wheat flour, 100,000 bushels of barley, 110,000 gallons of wine, and 110,000 gallons of olive oil. King Solomon drafted over 180,000 laborers from throughout Israel to work on the temple project (vv. 1-10). King Hiram wrote a letter praising the Lord God of Israel and agreeing with the offer of Solomon. He said he would send an artisan by the name of Hiram-abi who was a very gifted craftsman. Solomon conscripted all the foreigners in Israel to be his labor force in building the temple and the royal palace. *If you were given \$10,000,000 to invest in God's kingdom or for the needs of others, how would you spend it?*

II Chronicles 3— In the fourth year of Solomon's reign and 480 years after the Israelites came out of Egypt, Solomon began to build the long awaited temple on Mount Moriah using only the best materials and skilled craftsman befitting the awesome God of the universe. The temple that was to be built for Yahweh would be 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high and would use finished stones and cedar and Cyprus wood overlaid with gold. The Most Holy Place was 30 feet by 30 feet and overlaid with 45,000 pounds of fine gold. The two cherubim were overlaid with gold with an overall length of 30 feet with the wings touching the walls on each side. The craftsmen also make a veil of blue, purple, and crimson yarn and fine linen and wove cherubim into it. In front of the temple were two bronze pillars that were 27 feet high.

II Chronicles 4— The bronze altar was 30 feet long by 30 feet wide and 15 feet high. The sea, a large reservoir used for ritual cleansing, held 11,000 gallons of water. In the temple there were 10 gold lampstands and 10 tables for

the bread of the Presence. Hiram-abi made all of the furnishings, utensils, water carts and basins, and the gold altar of incense. *What is the importance of Mount Moriah in Jewish history? See 3:1 and Genesis 22:1-2.*

II Chronicles 5— When the temple was finished in the seventh month, Solomon gathered all of the elders, tribal leaders, and the men of Israel before him in Jerusalem, in order to bring the Ark of the Covenant from Zion into the Most Holy Place in the new temple. After the priest placed the Ark in the Most Holy Place, the Levitical singers and the 120 priests who blew trumpets joined together to praise and thank the Lord. Then the glory of the Lord filled the temple so much so that they could no longer minister inside the temple. *The glory of the Lord came in a cloud and filled the temple in verses 13 and 14. Where else in the Bible do we see God’s indwelling presence? See Exodus 40:34-38, Ezekiel 43:1-5, Matthew 17:1-3, John 1:14, I Corinthians 6:19-20, and Matthew 18:19-20. Extra Questions: What was missing from the Ark of the Covenant that was previously inside it, and what was in the Ark of the Covenant at Solomon’s dedication?*

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Proverbs 2, II Chronicles 6-12 (#117)

Proverbs 2— *This chapter says we are to seek wisdom like silver and then “you will understand the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God (vv. 4-5 HCSB).” What are the two dangers that wisdom saves us from? See verses 11-15 and verses 16-19.*

II Chronicles 6— After the glory of the Lord filled the temple, Solomon then spoke to the people praising God for His faithfulness to Israel and His servant David. First, Solomon addresses the entire congregation and tells them that what is happening this day is a fulfillment of God’s promise to David that one day his son would build the temple which David wanted to build (vv. 1-11). Then Solomon spreads out his hands toward heaven and prays to Yahweh. Solomon begins by speaking of the uniqueness of God: His character, His faithfulness in keeping His promises, and His transcendence. Solomon then speaks of different occasions when the people of Israel might sin. In such cases he petitions the Lord to give justice, but also show mercy, forgiveness, and restoration when they truly repent and seek His face. Solomon ends his prayer, “O Lord God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; remember the mercies of Your servant David (v. 42 NKJV).” *Solomon asked God to hear their prayers in a variety of circumstances. What were the seven situations he mentioned? 1. vv. 22-23, 2. vv. 24-25, 3. vv. 26-27, 4. vv. 28-31 5. vv. 32-33, 6.vv. 34-35, and 7. vv. 36-39.*

II Chronicles 7— The Lord showed His acceptance of Solomon’s prayer and the new temple by sending fire from heaven and consuming the burnt offering and by filling the temple with His glory. The celebration of the dedication of the temple lasted 7 days and then another 7 days were spent in celebrating the Feast of the Tabernacles (or Booths). The hearts of the people rejoiced for the Lord’s goodness to David, Solomon, and His people Israel. After the dedication of the temple and his prayer, the Lord appears a second time to Solomon saying that his prayer has been heard, and that He has consecrated the temple with His presence. God gave the promise that Solomon’s royal throne would be established if he walks before the Lord in obedience and integrity, but if he turns away from God and follows other gods, Israel would be cut off and the temple he had built would be destroyed. *What are the four conditions that must be fulfilled by individuals, churches, or nations in order for them to hear from the Lord and receive His healing and forgiveness? See verse 14.*

II Chronicles 8— In his first twenty years as king, Solomon had great success negotiating in trade ventures with King Hiram of Tyre which included a fleet of ships to Ophir to acquire 17 tons of gold. He formed an international network of commerce that made him famous and powerful. Solomon's extensive building programs included the temple, the palace complex, the storage cities, the chariot cities, the cavalry cities, and any place else he desired to build. Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh and built a house for her but did not let her live in the palace of David since it was holy because the ark had been there. He carefully observed all the offerings that were required in the Law of Moses and celebrated the Sabbaths, New Moons, and the three annual festivals that were commanded. He also made sure that all of the ordinances of David were fulfilled regarding the organization and responsibilities of the priests and Levites. *As you read this chapter, what is the one very disturbing thing Solomon did? See Deuteronomy 7:3-4. How does this apply to Christians today?*

II Chronicles 9— The story of the queen of Sheba was representative of the many kings, queens, and ambassadors who came to visit Solomon to test his wisdom and see if all the rumors about him were true. After verifying the greatness of his wisdom and seeing the temple, palace complex, the amazing dining hall, the presentation of his staff, and the burnt offerings, her breath was taken away. Because of her visit the name of Yahweh was praised for all He had done through Solomon. After exchanging the riches of their countries including gold, spices, and other things out of their royal bounty, the queen of Sheba returned the 1200 mile journey to southern Arabia with her entourage (vv. 1-12). The writer describes the ivory throne overlaid with gold that was so extravagant and impressive that no other kingdom had anything like it. The rest of the chapter tells of the luxurious splendor of Solomon's kingdom, the vast quantity of gold, ivory, and exotic animals, including chariots and horses which were bought and sold at a profit. II Chronicles does not describe Solomon's turning away from God and leading the nation into worshiping idols, but only records that he died and reigned 40 years, and that his son Rehoboam became king in his place (vv. 13-30). *Reading about the wisdom and riches of Solomon in this chapter is very impressive. Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 and list the ways and activities that Solomon experienced in order to find enjoyment and fulfillment. What was his final assessment of all of it? See 2:11.*

II Chronicles 10— This chapter is a turning point in the life of Israel since Solomon's son, Rehoboam, has the opportunity to keep his country unified with a correct response to the northern tribes concerns, but instead he divided Israel. Jeroboam and the northern 10 tribes wanted Rehoboam to lighten the oppressive forced labor and the excessive taxes that Solomon had imposed upon them, but in a moment of imprudence Rehoboam decided to follow the advice of the young men he grew up with instead of the elders who served with his father. Israel then separates from Judah, and Rehoboam barely gets out of Shechem alive after making this disastrous decision, but these turn of events was from the Lord due to Solomon's apostasy. *Why was Solomon apprehensive*

about his successor? See Ecclesiastes 2:18-19. What part might have Solomon played in the way the reign of Rehoboam turned out?

II Chronicles 11— Rehoboam mobilizes an army of 180,000 choice warriors to go to battle against Israel, but the prophet Shemaiah convinces him to go back home and not fight against his fellow Israelites. Rehoboam strengthens and fortifies the cities of Judah and Benjamin. Because of the idolatry of Jeroboam and the Northern tribes, the priests and Levites as well as others moved to Judah so that they could seek and worship Yahweh. Rehoboam had many wives and children and dispersed his sons throughout the fortified cities of Judah.

II Chronicles 12— Rehoboam leads Judah into great sin by following all the detestable practices of the other nations. Because of this, King Shishak of Egypt comes into Jerusalem and seizes the treasures of the Lord's temple and the royal palace including the gold shields Solomon had made. After King Rehoboam humbled himself before the Lord, the Lord's anger was turned away from him. Rehoboam, however, did what was evil and did not desire to seek after the Lord. *Just like his father Solomon, although not as numerous, Rehoboam had many wives and concubines. Does God approve of polygamy? Back up your answer with biblical references and illustrations.*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV, 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Key Ideas Bible Handbook, Ron Rhodes, c. 2016, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 13. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 14. The Message, c. 2002, Eugene Peterson, NavPress Publishing Group, Colorado Springs, CO. 15. NIV Study Bible, c. 2011, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI. 16. Understanding the Bible, c.2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN.