

Week 31

<p>July 30 Amos 6 Amos 7 Amos 8 Amos 9 Proverbs 25</p>	<p>? Amos 6:1-6 describes the wealthy people in Israel who lived in luxury while ignoring the demands of God’s law. Amos 8:4-6 shows that they had built their wealth by cheating the poor. They obeyed parts of the law (Sabbath) while ignoring the more important parts (such as justice and mercy). Does this description match the world of the 21st century?</p> <p>? Read Amos 9:11-15 carefully. Notice God’s promise of blessing “in that day.” God promised His people that many of the judgments prophesied earlier in Amos will be reversed “in that day” when God restores His people. Do you see the message of hope at the end of this book of judgment? Does this change your perception of the book of Amos? Do you see God’s mercy even in a time of judgment?</p> <p>? Copy your “verse for the day” from Proverbs 25.</p>
<p>July 31 2 Chronicles 26 Hosea 1 Hosea 2 Hosea 3 Hosea 4 Proverbs 26</p>	<p>* King Uzziah had a long and prosperous reign. But 2 Chronicles notes his unfaithfulness when he disobeyed God’s commands regarding Temple worship. Even this good king was judged when he disobeyed God’s commands.</p> <p>* Hosea prophesied during the years leading to Israel’s fall. His marriage and the names of his children are all part of his prophetic message of judgment on the Northern Kingdom. (Remember that the term “Ephraim” in Hosea refers to the Northern Kingdom.)</p> <p>? Hosea 2-3 shows God’s love for Israel and His sorrow at Israel’s unfaithfulness. When you are tempted to sin, do you realize that your sin brings pain to the heart of God? Will you remember this when you face temptation? Will this truth give you strength in the face of temptation?</p> <p>? Copy your “verse for the day” from Proverbs 26.</p>
<p>August 1 Hosea 5 Hosea 6 Hosea 7 Hosea 8 Hosea 9 Proverbs 27</p>	<p>* Hosea 5 warns of three forms of judgment that will come to Israel because of her sin: - Slow decay like a moth or dry rot (5:12) - Sudden destruction like the attack of a lion (5:14) - Worst, God will leave His people alone (5:15)</p> <p>? After Israel’s terrible apostasy, would you invite her to “return” and “be healed” (Hosea 6:1 and 7:1)? What does today’s reading teach about God’s judgment on sin? What does today’s reading teach about God’s great mercy towards repentant sinners?</p> <p>? Copy your “verse for the day” from Proverbs 27.</p>

<p>August 2 Hosea 10 Hosea 11 Hosea 12 Hosea 13 Hosea 14 Proverbs 28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * God planted Israel as a “fruitful vine,” but she turned to other gods (Hos 10:1). Because of her sin, Israel will perish like a “twig” swept away in a flood (Hos 10:7). Sin has turned the fruitful vine to a dead branch. ? Listen to God’s call to revival in Hosea 10:12. If we sow righteousness, we will reap God’s steadfast love. If we seek God, He will answer. Do you daily seek God? ? As you read Hosea 11:1-4, meditate on God’s compassion towards His children. As a new believer, how did God “teach you to walk” in His path? ? As you read Hosea 14, praise God for His promise to restore all those who call on Him in repentance. How have you experienced God’s mercy and forgiveness in your life? ? Copy your “verse for the day” from Proverbs 28.
<p>August 3 2 Kings 15 2 Kings 16 2 Chron 27 Proverbs 29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * As we move towards the late chapters of 2 Kings, the reigns of the northern kings are shorter and shorter. This shows the increasing instability of the Northern Kingdom. The warnings of Amos and Hosea are being fulfilled. ? As you read these chapters, do you see the results of Israel’s sin? When have you seen the results of sin in your own life? ? Copy your “verse for the day” from Proverbs 29.
<p>August 4 2 Chron 28 Proverbs 30 Proverbs 31</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Ahaz, the king of Judah, saw the results of Israel’s apostasy, but he did not repent. Why do you think Ahaz refused to turn to God in spite of God’s judgment on Israel? * The “numerical proverbs” (Prov 30:15-31) are riddles for wise people. To “solve” the riddle, ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) What does each item in the list have in common? B) What lesson does this list teach for our life today? ? Solve the riddle in Prov 30:24-28. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) What do these creatures have in common? B) What does this teach for your life? ? Husbands, do not take Proverbs 31 as a “checklist” for your wife. Instead, ask, “What positive characteristics does my wife demonstrate?” ? Wives, can you grow in any areas from Proverbs 31? * Young men, from this chapter learn that although outer beauty will fade, inner beauty will last for a lifetime. * Young women, seek to be a lady of true inner beauty. Read Proverbs 31 as a picture of true beauty.
<p>Weekly Summary</p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

Week 32

<p>August 6 Isaiah 1 Isaiah 2 Psalm 73</p>	<p>* Isaiah ministered in Judah from approximately 740-680 B.C. He was preaching in 722 B.C. when the Northern Kingdom was destroyed by Assyria. In Isaiah 1-39, the prophet warns of Assyria's coming attacks. In Isaiah 40-66, Isaiah looks to the future. He foretells Judah's exile in Babylon, her return from exile, and the promise of a coming Messiah.</p> <p>? Read Isaiah 1:18-20. What are God's conditions for blessing His people?</p> <p>? Psalm 73 is a "wisdom psalm." The psalm contrasts <i>what should be</i> (blessings on the righteous) with <i>what is</i> (prosperity for the wicked). What is the answer to the psalmist's search for understanding? (Read Ps 73:16-17 for an answer.)</p>
<p>August 7 Isaiah 3 Isaiah 4 Isaiah 5 Isaiah 6 Isaiah 7 Psalm 74</p>	<p>* Isaiah 3-4 shows both aspects of the prophet's message. Isaiah preaches judgment in 3:1-4:1, and he promises future blessing in 4:2-6. Isaiah's message was important both in Isaiah's day and in our day. As you read the book of Isaiah, look for his message for us today.</p> <p>? Make a list of the "woes" in Isaiah 5. Which of these issues are a problem in our society today?</p> <p>? Notice the progression in Isaiah 6:1-8. Have you seen God's holiness revealed in scripture? Have you confessed your sin and uncleanness? Has God taken away your guilt? Have you responded to His call for workers?</p> <p>? Do you ever feel like the author of Psalm 74:1? If so, you can read Psalm 74 as a prayer asking God for justice. You do not need to seek personal revenge for wrongs; you can trust your cause to God and His justice.</p>
<p>August 8 Isaiah 8 Isaiah 9 Isaiah 10 Isaiah 11 Isaiah 12 Psalm 75</p>	<p>? Meditate on Isaiah 9:6. Which of these names speak to your need today? Do you need a "Wonderful Counselor" to guide you to wise decisions? Do you need a "Mighty God" of power to defend you? Do you need an "Everlasting Father" who cares for you? Do you need a "Prince of Peace" to bring justice and reconciliation in your life? Trust God to be the One who meets your every need!</p> <p>? Notice the phrase "in that day" in Isaiah 12:1. To those who repent, God's judgment will someday turn to comfort.</p> <p>? Make a list of three "wondrous deeds" that God has done in your life.</p>
<p>August 9 2 Kings 17 2 Kings 18 Psalm 76 Psalm 77</p>	<p>* 2 Kings 17 tells the story of the final destruction of the Northern Kingdom. 2 Kings 17:7-18 tells the reason for this disaster: Israel had rebelled against God and she refused to heed the prophets' warnings.</p> <p>? If you lived in Judah, how would you respond to Israel's destruction? Would the destruction of the Northern Kingdom cause you to return to God in repentance?</p> <p>? Why is it so important to remember God's wondrous deeds? Psalm 77 shows one reason: in times of trouble, we can find hope by remembering God's past deeds of deliverance.</p>

<p>August 10 2 Kings 19</p> <p>Psalm 78</p>	<p>? Read Hezekiah’s prayer of trust. What problem do you need to “spread before the Lord?” (2 Kings 19:14)</p> <p>? To the Hebrews, remembering the past was an important way of passing the faith to their children. Psalm 78 teaches positive lessons (God's care for His people) and negative warnings (God’s judgment for sin). Parents, think of three lessons you can share with your children based on your own walk with God.</p>
<p>August 11 2 Kings 20 Isaiah 13 Isaiah 14 Psalm 79 Psalm 80</p>	<p>* Isaiah 13-23 includes prophecies against many nations surrounding Judah. These prophecies teach that Jehovah is not a “local deity” like other ancient gods. Instead, He is God of all nations.</p> <p>* Psalm 79 teaches that God’s name is honored when He judges the nations who rebel against Him.</p> <p>? Psalm 80 asks God to be the Shepherd who delivers His flock from enemy nations. Think of three ways in which God is your Shepherd. Take time to thank Him for His care.</p>
<p>Weekly Summary</p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

Week 33

<p>August 13 Micah 1 Micah 2 Micah 3 Micah 4 Micah 5 Micah 6 Micah 7</p>	<p>* Like Isaiah, Micah prophesied during the years just before the fall of the Northern Kingdom. Hezekiah was king of Judah. Micah saw the destruction of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria. He also saw God deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrians.</p> <p>? Micah 6:8 gives a summary of Old Testament law. All the law can be summarized in three attitudes: justice, mercy, and humility. Use Micah 6:8 to measure your life: Do you treat others with justice? Do you show mercy to the poor? Do you walk in humble obedience to God?</p>
<p>August 14 2 Chronicles 29 2 Chron 30 2 Chron 31 2 Chron 32</p>	<p>? Notice that Hezekiah does not blame God for Judah’s troubles. Instead, he repents of Judah’s sin and recognizes that God is a just God (2 Chron 29:3-10). As you read this section on Hezekiah’s repentance, ask, “Do I have such a serious hatred of sin? Do I see my sin as seriously as Hezekiah saw Judah’s sin?”</p> <p>? Because it had been so long since Judah observed Passover, the people were not ritually ready according to all the requirements of the Law. However, God looked at their hearts and accepted their desire to please Him (2 Chron 29:18-20). If God looks first at the heart, what does He see when He looks at your heart? Does He see a heart of willing obedience?</p>
<p>August 15 Isaiah 15 Isaiah 16 Isaiah 17 Isaiah 18 Isaiah 19 Isaiah 20 Isaiah 21 Psalm 81</p>	<p>* Isaiah 15 is a “judgment oracle” against Moab. It announces judgment on those who rebel against God.</p> <p>? Isaiah 17:7-8 looks forward to the day when the people of all nations will turn to the true God. Do you trust God <i>today</i> or do you trust in the “work of (your) hands?”</p> <p>* The Nile River was seen as the divine source of life in Egypt. But Isaiah (19:5-8) prophesied that God will someday dry up the Nile. Why? Because Egypt refused to turn to the true source of life, Jehovah.</p> <p>? Read Isaiah 19:19-22. The purpose of God’s judgment is to bring others to God. When God brings discipline into your life, do you cry out to Him in repentance or do you respond with rebellion and anger?</p> <p>? In Psalm 81, underline or highlight each promise that God gives to those who follow Him. Notice the wonderful gifts that God wants to give His children.</p>
<p>August 16 Isaiah 22 Isaiah 23 Isaiah 24 Isaiah 25 Psalm 82 Psalm 83</p>	<p>* The culmination of the judgment speeches from Isaiah 13-24 is Isaiah’s announcement of judgment on the whole earth (Isaiah 24). God will someday rule all nations. As a Christian, be encouraged – you are on the winning side!</p> <p>? Read Isaiah 25:8 and then read Revelation 22. Do you see how the promise of Isaiah 25 is fulfilled? Because God will someday “swallow up death forever,” we can live in confidence. Will you “wait for him?” Will you “be glad and rejoice in his salvation?” (Isa 25:9)</p>

<p>August 17 Isaiah 26 Isaiah 27 Isaiah 28</p>	<p>? Do you see the conditions of perfect peace in Isaiah 26:3? God gives peace to those: -Who keep their mind fixed firmly on Him -Who trust in God Will you meet those conditions? If so, God promises to bring peace in your life.</p> <p>? Notice this contrast: -Blessing does not draw the wicked to God (Is 26:10) BUT -Trouble draws the people to God (Is 26:16). Will you seek God in good times, or will you wait for His judgments to force you to surrender to His authority?</p> <p>* Because Israel refused to obey God, He judged them by turning even good teaching into confusion (Isa 28:9-13).</p> <p>? One of the signs of backsliding is when God’s people “honor Him with their lips” but do not obey Him from the heart (Isa 29:13-14). Do you serve God from the heart, or with outward observance alone?</p> <p>? Psalm 84 is a wonderful testimony to the psalmist’s desire to spend time in God’s presence. Do you have this kind of joy in God’s presence? Can you say, “My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord?”</p>
<p>August 18 Isaiah 30 Isaiah 31 Isaiah 32 Isaiah 33 Psalm 85</p>	<p>? In Isaiah 30-31, the prophet gives Judah two choices. She can trust in Egypt (by making an alliance with this sinful nation – 30:1-2) OR she can trust in God (30:15). Notice the results of each choice. Trusting in Egypt will lead to shame and humiliation (30:3); trusting in God will bring rest and salvation (30:15). Where do you put your trust? In human allies or in God?</p> <p>? Isaiah 32:17 is a beautiful promise. Meditate on this promise and ask, “Am I finding quietness and trust” by living a righteous life?</p> <p>? In Isaiah 33, the word “exalted” appears twice. Notice the results when God is exalted. How can we as Christians exalt God through our lives?</p>
<p>Weekly Summary</p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

Week 34

<p>August 20 Isaiah 34 Isaiah 35 Isaiah 36 Isaiah 37 Psalm 86</p>	<p>? Highlight each promise in Isaiah 35. Choose one promise that speaks to your needs for this new week. Each day this week, review the promise and ask God to make it a reality in your life.</p> <p>* Isaiah 36-39 is a historical interlude in the book of Isaiah. These chapters report events in Hezekiah’s life that you read in 2 Kings 18-20. Through the life of Hezekiah, Isaiah 36-37 illustrates the message of 28-35: faith in God brings blessing.</p> <p>? Read Hezekiah’s prayer for deliverance in Isaiah 37:14-20. The key to his prayer is verse 20: God will receive the glory for delivering Judah from her enemy. When you pray, do you seek God’s glory or your personal fulfillment?</p> <p>* Like Isaiah 37, Psalm 86 is a prayer for deliverance. Notice verses 7-9; God is the one who will receive glory for delivering His people.</p> <p>? Psalm 86:11 is a great prayer for each of us to pray. “Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.” “Unite my heart” means to “make it one.” David prays, “Give me a heart that is undivided in its loyalty to God’s name.” Each day this week, pray this prayer for an undivided heart.</p>
<p>August 21 Isaiah 38 Isaiah 39 2 Kings 21 2 Kings 22 Psalm 87</p>	<p>* Isaiah 38-39 continues the historical interlude. These chapters provide the historical context for the prophecies of Isaiah 40-55; Hezekiah’s folly will doom Judah to exile in Babylon.</p> <p>? Before reading further, does the miracle that extended Hezekiah’s life by fifteen years seem like a blessing? We will return to this question later.</p> <p>* Isaiah 39 is a powerful warning against pride. In his pride, Hezekiah shows his riches to the envoys from Babylon. Instead of honoring God, Hezekiah honors himself. The prophet warns Isaiah, “Babylon will someday return to carry away all that you have shown these envoys.”</p> <p>? What was your answer to the question about Isaiah 38? God answered Hezekiah’s prayer and gave him fifteen more years of life. 2 Kings 21 tells the sequel. During those fifteen years, Hezekiah fathered a son, Manasseh. Manasseh was the worst of Judah’s kings and is the king who brought God’s final judgment on Judah. What is the difference between Hezekiah’s prayer for deliverance in Isaiah 37 and his prayer for a longer life in Isaiah 38? The difference is his motivation. In Isaiah 37, Hezekiah sought God’s glory. In Isaiah 38, Hezekiah sought only his personal desire. The result of a prayer motivated by God’s glory was blessing. The result of a prayer motivated by personal desire was disaster for the nation. Do you pray for God’s glory and in His will?</p>
<p>August 22 2 Kings 23 2 Kings 24 2 Kings 25 Psalm 88</p>	<p>* The story of Josiah’s revival in 2 Kings 23 shows the wonderful possibility of revival even after fifty-five years of apostasy under Manasseh. God is a merciful God who was faithful to Judah in spite of her rebellion and sin.</p> <p>? From 2 Kings 22, we know that the revival in 2 Kings 23 was inspired by a rediscovery of God’s Law. Historians have said that every great revival in church history started with a return to the study and application of God’s Word. Is Scripture the final authority in your life? Are you grounding your life on God’s Word?</p> <p>* The fall of Judah to Babylon shows the terrible results of sin. Both Scripture and experience teaches that the pleasures of sin are brief, but the lasting effect of sin is long. Judah will suffer hundreds of years of pain as a result of her sin. Read 2 Kings 24-25 and realize that sin is never worth the cost.</p> <p>? Psalm 88 is the darkest psalm in the Bible. It is the only psalm that has not one expression of praise. It is appropriate to read Psalm 88 as we remember the pain of the Jewish people watching the fall of Jerusalem. Have you ever felt the despair expressed in Psalm 88? Can you trust God in dark days like this psalm describes?</p>

<p>August 23 2 Chronicles 33 2 Chron 34 2 Chron 35 2 Chron 36</p>	<p>* 2 Chronicles 33 tells the surprising story of Manasseh’s repentance and God’s mercy on this terrible king. In spite of Manasseh’s fifty-five years of rebellion, God showed mercy when Manasseh repented. As you read this chapter, meditate on God’s amazing grace even when we do not deserve mercy.</p> <p>* 2 Chronicles ends with messages both of judgment and of hope. - The message of judgment is seen in 2 Chron 36:17-21. The author shows that Judah’s defeat by Babylon was the direct result of her unfaithfulness to God’s commands. For 490 years, Judah failed God’s commands to observe the Sabbath. In judgment, God sent Judah into seventy years of captivity. - The message of hope is seen in 2 Chron 36:22-23. These verses point to the future return to Jerusalem by the exiles. Even in judgment, God did not forget His people.</p>
<p>August 24 Isaiah 40 Isaiah 41 Isaiah 42 Isaiah 43</p>	<p>* The first section of Isaiah (1-35) focuses primarily on the coming judgment on Judah. The final section of Isaiah (40-66) focuses primarily on the future hope. These chapters bring a great message of comfort to God’s people. The message of hope is both immediate (the return from exile) and future (the promise of a coming Messiah).</p> <p>? The command “fear not” appears eight times in Isaiah 40-44. Highlight each appearance and list the reasons that God’s children need not fear.</p>
<p>August 25 Isaiah 44 Isaiah 45 Isaiah 46 Isaiah 47 Isaiah 48</p>	<p>? Notice each of the promises in today’s reading. Choose one promise to claim for your present situation in life.</p> <p>? Isaiah contrasts false gods, who must be carried into captivity (Isa 46:1-2), with Jehovah, who carries His people (Isa 46:3-4). Do you carry your gods (the things in which you trust) or do you trust God to carry you?</p> <p>? How does the message of judgment in Isaiah 47 fit into the message of comfort that pervades Isaiah 40-66? (Clue: notice <i>who</i> is being judged in this chapter.)</p>
<p>Weekly Summary</p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>

Week 35

<p>August 27</p> <p>Isaiah 49</p> <p>Isaiah 50</p> <p>Isaiah 51</p> <p>Isaiah 52</p> <p>Isaiah 53</p> <p>Isaiah 54</p>	<p>* Isaiah 49-57 is largely a picture of the coming Messiah, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah 49-53 looks at the Messiah's suffering. Isaiah 54-57 looks at his triumph.</p> <p>? As you read Isa 49:15-16, think of how much God loves you. Could a woman forget her child? Of course not! But God loves you even more than that. He has "engraved you on the palms of my hands." Rejoice to think how much God loves you.</p> <p>? Why do we fear? Isa 51: 12-13 says that we fear because we forget Jehovah's promises to care for us. What do you fear today? Can you trust God with your fears?</p> <p>? Meditate on Isaiah 53 with its picture of the suffering of Messiah. Remember that Jesus suffered all this for you. Stop to thank Him for His sacrificial love.</p>
<p>August 28</p> <p>Isaiah 55</p> <p>Nahum 1</p> <p>Nahum 2</p> <p>Nahum 3</p> <p>Isaiah 56</p> <p>Isaiah 57</p> <p>Isaiah 58</p>	<p>? Isaiah 55:1-3 is one of the great "invitations" of the prophets. Read these verses and respond to God's gracious invitation. Are you thirsty? Drink of His living water.</p> <p>? If you have prayed for an unbelieving friend or family member, or if you have shared God's Word with others, Isa 55:10-11 gives you this promise: "God's Word will not return empty." Will you continue to pray and share in confidence that God will do His work in the hearts of people?</p> <p>* Sometime between 782 and 753 B.C., Jonah preached to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, and the people turned to God. Unfortunately, this revival did not last. By 722 B.C., Assyria had conquered the Northern Kingdom. Somewhere between 660 and 630 B.C., Nahum warned that God would judge Assyria and Nineveh would be overthrown. As you read this short book, remember that God's judgments are sure. He is a just God.</p> <p>* To those of us who preach, teach, or serve in the church, Isa 56:9-12 is a sobering warning. We must teach God's Word faithfully. We must not be "blind watchmen" or "silent dogs."</p> <p>? Do you want God to be with you? If so, keep a "contrite and lowly spirit" (Isa 57:15). God comes down from His "high and holy place" to dwell with the humble person.</p> <p>* Isaiah 58 contrasts empty fasting and Sabbath observance with true religion. True religion fasting because of humility rather than pride, serves the needy, and honors God's Sabbath out of "delight in the Lord."</p>
<p>August 29</p> <p>Isaiah 59</p> <p>Isaiah 60</p> <p>Isaiah 61</p> <p>Isaiah 62</p> <p>Isaiah 63</p> <p>Isaiah 64</p>	<p>? Do you need help from God? The promise of Isaiah 59:1 is a wonderful promise, "God wants to hear and to save His people." But Isa 59:2-13 warns, "If we persist in willful disobedience, our sins will hide his face from us and he will not hear our cries for help."</p> <p>* Isaiah 60-62 looks forward to the future glory of Israel, a day when God's "glory will be seen upon you." As you read these chapters remember that Isaiah is writing to people who will soon go into captivity in Babylon. But he looks ahead to the time when God will deliver them and "nations shall come to your light." God has not forgotten His people.</p> <p>? Luke 4:18-19 shows that Jesus came to fulfill the promise of Isaiah 61:1-2. Are you poor, brokenhearted, captive, or in mourning? If so, Jesus came to bring comfort and help. Claim His promise today.</p>

<p>August 30</p> <p>Isaiah 65 Isaiah 66 Zephaniah 1 Zephaniah 2 Zephaniah 3</p>	<p>* Isaiah ends his message by contrasting two choices. To Judah in the 8th century BC and to people in the 21st century, Isaiah says, “Your choice of a path in life will determine your ultimate destiny.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those who answer God’s call will enjoy “new heavens and a new earth” (Isa 65:17-25). - Those who persist in their rebellion will be judged “with flames of fire” (Isa 66:15-16). <p>* Zephaniah preached during the reign of Josiah. The Northern Kingdom has been destroyed by Assyria. Josiah has instituted his reforms, but there are many people who continue to disobey God. Zephaniah proclaims a message of “the Day of the Lord.” He shows that the day of the Lord will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A day of judgment on those who rebel against God - A day of blessing for those who follow God faithfully <p>? As you read Zephaniah, highlight the word “day.” Notice both aspects of the day of the Lord: the day of blessing and the day of wrath.</p>
<p>August 31</p> <p>Acts 17 1 Thessalonians 1 1 Thess 2 1 Thess 3 1 Thess 4</p>	<p>* Acts 17 tells the story of the beginning of the church in Thessalonica. Paul and Silas preached there for only a few weeks before they were driven out of the city by a mob. Paul wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians to continue the teaching he had started and to answer questions for these new converts. One of the biggest questions was about the second coming of Jesus. Every chapter of 1 Thessalonians mentions this topic. Paul wrote to clarify their understanding about Jesus’ return.</p> <p>? Notice the joy that the Thessalonians bring to Paul. He risked danger to bring the gospel to them, and now he rejoices as he hears positive reports of their faith. He rejoices to see that the seed he planted is bearing fruit. Think about the person who first brought the gospel to you. Write a note to thank them for investing in your life.</p> <p>? Highlight the qualities of a holy life in 1 Thessalonians 4-5. Paul teaches that God calls us to holiness, not impurity. As you read his description of a holy life, pray that God will strengthen you for holy living. In which of these qualities do you need to grow?</p>
<p>September 1</p> <p>1 Thess 5 2Thess 1 2Thess 2 2Thess 3 Acts 18</p>	<p>* In 1 Thessalonians, Paul told these new believers that Jesus would return. Apparently, some of the readers decided that since Jesus was returning, there was no need to work or to plan for the future. So Paul wrote to tell them to live faithful lives while they wait for the Lord’s return. 1 Thessalonians says, “The Lord will return.” 2 Thessalonians says, “But we do not know <i>when</i> He will return.”</p> <p>* Like Revelation, 2 Thessalonians does not try to tell us when Christ will return. Instead, 2 Thessalonians says, “This is how you should live until he returns.” Until he comes, “stand firm” (2 Thess 2:15).</p> <p>? What is one practical lesson from 1 and 2 Thessalonians to draw for your Christian life?</p> <p>* Acts 18 gives the background for reading 1 and 2 Corinthians. Paul came to Corinth from Athens. He spent eighteen months preaching and establishing a church in this important Greek city.</p>
<p>Weekly Summary</p>	<p>Write down one “big lesson” that you have learned from this week’s readings. Each day next week, review this lesson and ask God to help you to apply the lesson in your daily life.</p>