

1. Week 33: The Story So Far, Part 1

2. Recap & Preparing for CG:

Daily Reading for Week:

- 1 Chronicles 18-21, Psalm 68
- 1 Chronicles 22-24, Psalm 69
- 1 Chronicles 25-28, Psalm 70
- 2 Chronicles 1-4, Psalm 71
- 2 Chronicles 5-8, Psalm 72
- 2 Chronicles 9-12, Psalm 73
- 2 Chronicles 13-17, Psalm 74

Resources for Week:

- Read Scripture Video: Chronicles
- Read: Psalm 74, 78, 85, and 107

3. Focus of our time together:

To debrief and reflect on our journey through the Old Testament together.

4. Weekly ground rule / goal / value:

Goal: Our goal this week is to reflect together and to grow in our ability to do communal reflection well by resisting the temptation to give safe, passive, people-pleasing responses and to speak honestly and directly with one another.

5. Connection and Unity Exercise (Mutual Invitation, 15 minutes):

What one word best describes your experience of reading through the Old Testament and why? Keep this weeks goal in mind.

6. Opening Prayer:

Read Psalm 107 aloud together. Then offer short testimonial prayers for any “wonderful deeds” God has done in your life and community over the course of the year.

7. Intro to Discussion:

After 8 months of YOBL, we are finally reaching the end of the Old Testament. The Book of Chronicles marks the end of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is a look back on the story thus far, chronicling Israel’s journey from the vantage point of those Jewish survivors involved in the mostly unsuccessful “return from exile” we observed in Ezra-Nehemiah. It records mostly the same period of history as the Book of Kings, but offers a sort of revamped interpretation in light of the exile. In other words, it is not just a dry and redundant documentation of Israel’s history but a deep reflection and reinterpretation of Israel’s past. Similarly, we will now take a break from our race through the Old Testament to stop and reflect on our journey thus far.

For some of us, YOBL has been a rich and enlightening journey. For others, it has been a tedious, exhausting, and seemingly fruitless task. Many of us gave up reading quite a while ago. The next two weeks will give us an opportunity to synthesize and digest some of the most important ideas from the Old Testament and give us a framework for beginning a fresh journey through the New Testament. This week though, we’ll simply debrief and process our experiences thus far. Regardless of where you’re at with the reading plan, use this 3-week transition from the OT to NT to catch your breath and commit afresh to diving into the New Testament. Also, use this time to reflect on what worked and what didn’t work over the past 8 months and help one another discern any opportunities to try a new approach to reading the Bible together.

8. Questions for Large Group Discussion (75 minutes):

There will be no small group discussion this week.

Questions for Self-Examination: (25 minutes)

These questions are to help us look at ourselves, be aware and honest about who we are in light of our interaction with Scripture, and consider any appropriate action.

Use **Mutual Invitation** to invite everyone to answer the following two questions together:

1. What have been the most life-giving or draining parts of YOBL so far?
2. Spiritual practices—such as fasting, prayer, or, in this case, reading the Bible daily—reveal the heart. Sometimes, it reveals lovely things and other times hard

things. What has your attempt at reading the Bible daily revealed about your heart?

Questions for Interacting with Scripture (25 minutes):

These questions are to help us slow down to taste and notice Scripture, savor its richness, and meditate on its complexity of meaning.

1. What have you learned from the Old Testament?
2. Are there any specific books or passages that you've found rich and meaningful? Share them with the group if possible.
3. How has this journey affected how you think and feel about the Bible and your faith in Jesus? Has trying to read the Old Testament bolstered your faith, left you feeling disillusioned about God, made you even more overwhelmed at understanding the Bible, etc.?

Questions for Practicing Community (25 minutes):

These questions are to help us reflect thoughtfully on our felt experience together in light of our shared ground rules, goals, and values.

1. What aspects of our approach to YOBL have worked for you and what haven't? Consider the rhythm of daily reading, CG format, the group's discussion habits, and anything else that comes to mind. Don't be afraid to be critical and direct but rather be brutally honest about your experience with one another.
2. In light of this reflection, are there any ideas you feel you or someone else in the group or the group as a whole should consider for approaching the final months of YOBL and the NT differently?

9. Questions for Small Group Discussion:

There will be no small group discussion this week.

10. Closing (5 minutes):

End your time with the unity prayer, offering short requests to God to hear the heartfelt experience of someone else in the group.