

What I learned from reading through the Bible this past year - By Chris Long

In reading the 66 books of the Bible this past year, 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books, from the various authors, of Moses, Joshua, Kings and Chronicles, the prophets, Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament, and the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles of Paul, Peter, James, and John, and the Revelation in the NEW Testament. Fresh impressions surfaced and inspired me from the Scriptures.

Here are a few things that stood out to me this past year.

God emphasized the importance of keeping the historical record of his people Israel and detailing the record of both their good and bad kings, as recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles. This importance also resurfaced during my reading of the book of Jeremiah when the sinful King Jehoiakim of Judah read the transcript of Jeremiah's prophecies and burned them in the fire as recorded in chapter 36. Baruch, the scribe who recorded Jeremiah's prophecies, was instructed by Jeremiah to write them again to be kept for the record. That's how we have the prophecies of Jeremiah today.

Considering how much effort it took in the ancient world to write on parchments and the length of the prophecies of Jeremiah, that was quite a task. God instructed Jeremiah to dictate in detail the writings for the record.

Then there was the fresh impression that came to me while reading the book of Job, a book filled with drama of the battle between God and Satan with Job as the subject matter. After all that had befallen Job, the discourse between Job and his counselor friends is a great debate of apologetics and the existence of God himself.

Then there was the profound vision the prophet Ezekiel saw by the river Chebar as the heavens were opened and he saw a vision of God and His throne. The prophet, in his limited human ability, attempts to describe what he is seeing. The significance of this book was not only for Israel in their time of captivity in Babylon and the promised return as prophesied by Jeremiah to the land of Israel, but also looking down the corridors of time when the new Jerusalem will be established for God's people and His communion with them. This theme is continued in the book of Zachariah as God is showing his people there is a time to come – what is referenced in Job 19:25, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand on the earth at the latter day."

What also stood out to me this year was the concept of time. God has always existed, so he introduced himself to Abraham and to Moses as I AM. As each generation passed, it's as if no time had passed at all. As the Bible says, our life is but a vapor. It appears for a short while, and then it's gone. (James 4:14)

God declared in his creation of man, "Let us make man in our image." He made us eternal beings. Job declared, "If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." (Job 14:14) That is why Jesus declared in Revelation 1:8 to John, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

There is a continuance of time and yet ... "There should be time no longer," as stated in Rev.10:6.

"He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." (Eccl. 3:11)

As a student of the Bible now in my 47th year, I find new treasure each time I read through the Bible. I hope you will take the time this year to read through the Scriptures and let God speak to you from his inspired and eternal Word.