

# Bible Challenge 2017

## Week 36: September 3-9

### **Prayers: Psalm 102-104**

We begin with the prayer of the afflicted, pouring out his complaint before the Lord. After a series of psalms that are focused on praising God above the heavens, this psalm reminds us of God's care for we unworthy creatures below. He is a God who knows us, hears our prayers, and who can relate to us. It is a reminder not only of our human need, but also of the fact that the most common type of psalm found in the book of Psalms has to do with lament.

Even so, this complaint is one that does not disparage God for not acting in this situation, but is one that trusts God to act within his timing. How important that is for us to remember. Too often our complaints are such that we break off fellowship with God or that we shake our angry fist at him rather than saying, "I don't understand, but will trust." How important these psalms are for teaching us how to properly approach the God who created us and who has called us as his own.

Psalm 103 begins with words that are familiar to us because of the influence of Matt Redman's praise music and the song "10,000 Reasons," which is based on this psalm. While I do not agree with the notion of exclusive psalmody in worship, I do like praise songs and hymns that utilize as much scripture as possible. This psalm goes down and lists reason after reason for praising God...based on his character, his works, and his election of a people for himself. If you are at a point in your life where you are run down and don't really feel like praising God, this is a psalm that can help you find those 10,000 reasons...infinite reasons, to praise our God. And if you are looking to praise, but don't quite know how...or your "hows" are all feeling stale...pray this psalm... and don't stop at the end, for Psalm 104 continues in the same spirit as 103.

### **Gospel: Luke 9-10**

The two most significant events in these chapters are the sending out of Jesus' disciples and the Transfiguration.

What we find is two sendings. First Jesus sends out the 12 apostles to preach ahead of him. Later he will do the same with 72. In each case, they are sent out in pairs that they may co-labor in the Gospel and they are sent with the promise of opposition and persecution — preparation for taking the Gospel to the world after Pentecost. It should also be noted that there is also a promise of hospitality, that God will raise up people who will consider hearing the Gospel worth investing their money in, in addition to their time. It is the basis for Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 9:14 that the person who proclaims the Gospel should get his living by it.

The Transfiguration is the central event of the scriptures (interesting how the two sendings are on either side of this event). From the transfiguration onward, Jesus' primary focus becomes Jerusalem and his death. Further, in redemptive history, Moses and Elijah are both figures of significant importance. Moses leads the people out of bondage and Egypt through the wilderness into the promised land. Elijah prepares the people to be taken (by force) out of the promised land into a new wilderness. Jesus ultimately takes his people through the promised land and ushers us into heaven.

### **Wisdom: Proverbs 18-19**

"The Name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe." Sage counsel, indeed. One might add that the words of Edward Mote are a good commentary to Solomon's words... "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

### **History: 1 Chronicles 14-15, 17-22**

As we continue through the reign of David, we are reminded again of his relationship with Hiram the king of Tyre.

Often the church seeks to withdraw from the unbelieving world. David did not do so, but engaged in cooperation with this pagan merchant in such a way as that both benefitted from the relationship.

We have already read chapter 16 in August, as this contains the song of praise that David and the priests led the people in singing as the Ark was finally brought into Jerusalem. What we also discover in our readings this week is the account of God prohibiting David from building the Temple. It was in David's heart to do so and Nathan the Prophet, on initial consideration told David to build, but God told Nathan later that night that David was not to build the temple as he had too much blood on his hands. David was given the privilege of accumulating materials for his son, Solomon to use, when it would be constructed.

The text that follows is largely focused on David subduing his enemies, establishing his kingdom in the world around him.

### **Prophets: Hosea 6-10**

"I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." These are the words that God utters through his servant Hosea. The people of Hosea's day went through the motions...they practiced their faith at various festivals and they made various sacrifices as required by the law. Yet, their hearts were far from him. They simply sought to placate God through their ceremonial obedience, but they ignored his commands.

What does God desire from his people? He desires steadfast-love. This is the word "chesed" in Hebrew, which means a covenantal faithfulness even with others are not covenantally faithful. God demonstrates this in an ultimate sense to us by the sending of his Son, be he also calls us to be faithful to God with the same intensity as well as being faithful to one another in this way. The other thing he demands is "knowledge." From where do we get this knowledge? From the Bible. Information that comes to us from any other source cannot truly be called knowledge.

As you read this section of Hosea, think of it like a prosecutor's argument in a court case. God is making a case, through his prophet, that he has been faithful to the covenant and yet the people have been unfaithful. Thus God utters words of judgment with small promises of redemption in these chapters.

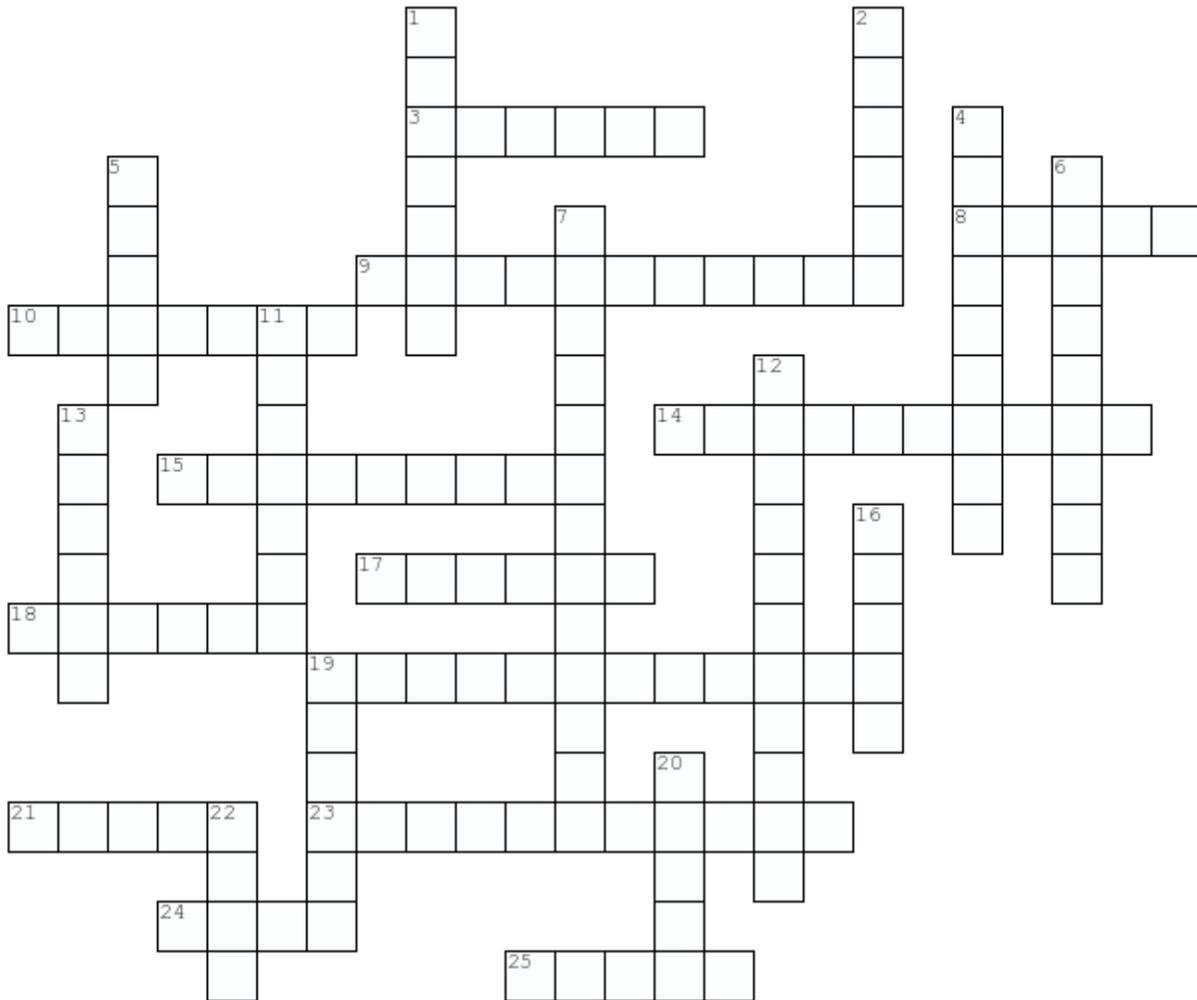
### **Epistles: 2 Timothy 3-4**

We close out 2 Timothy this week with some very familiar language. "All scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, reproof, ..., that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. The scriptures are breathed out by God himself, they are not the words of men nor of committees. They are breathed out by God — in theological terms, "Theopneustos" — God in-spired — into the spirits of the prophets and apostles.

One of the major themes of this letters — which is also a major theme of the scriptures! — is the importance of Biblical study to protect you from falling into false doctrines. The false doctrines abound though...a reminder that Christ's church has not done a thorough enough job at training in the breathed-out word of God and thus falls short in the good works we are meant to do. Thus, Timothy is charged by Paul to preach the Word faithfully, with patience and teaching.

Paul closes with some warnings, calling out several of the men who have caused him harm in his ministry and then offering greetings to friends. A final note on this letter. We read in the book of Acts of a fallout between Paul and Mark (Acts 15:37-40), but here Paul is asking for Mark to come to him for he is "useful." It seems like these men reconciled their differences and had built a friendship in the ministry.

# Week 36



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## Across

3. The Hebrew word for covenant faithfulness.
8. The word of God is designed to equip you for this kind of good work.
9. Paul tells Timothy to greet this man's household.
10. 'Many are the plans in the mind of man, but it is the \_\_\_ of the Lord that will stand.'
14. This person wrote '10,000 Reasons based on Psalm 103.
15. God prefers this of himself over sacrifice.
17. David was not to do this, but his doing this brought judgment on the whole nation.
18. The Lord came to this prophet and told him to stop David from building a replacement for the Tabernacle.
19. This means 'God-Breathed.'
21. When God's people put their trust in this, he tears them down.
23. David finally broke the power of these people from over Israel.
24. This Biblical author was with Paul in Rome while Paul awaited death.
25. The brother of Goliath of Gath, another giant.

## Down

1. People will have this kind of ears, accumulating to themselves teachers who will tell them what they want to hear.
2. One of the men who opposed Moses.
4. This coppersmith did Paul a great deal of harm.
5. The twelve and the seventy-two are sent out by Jesus in \_\_\_\_\_.
6. After the transfiguration Jesus' focus is on this city.
7. 'break up your fallow ground for it is time to seek the Lord that he may come and rain \_\_\_\_\_ on you.'
11. Who would be charged to build God's Temple.
12. The name of the Lord is a \_\_\_\_\_ (2 words).
13. Jesus met with Moses and this prophet on the mount of Transfiguration.
16. If we wish to follow Jesus we must first deny ourselves and take this up.
19. Once the Ark was in Jerusalem, David wanted to build this.
20. This king of Tyre was of great assistance to David.
22. Whoever has sense loves his own \_\_\_\_\_.