

## Dear Read thru the Bible Readers for 2012,

Thank you for signing up to join me and read through the Bible. When you get this first installment of encouragement and information about what you are reading, it may not be exactly on schedule as some of you will be signing up during the week of January 1-8<sup>th</sup>.

I am writing this welcome on Tuesday, January 3 and on this day we are finishing up the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis and tomorrow (Jan 4) we leave Genesis to read the book of Job. You may wonder why? This is a chronological reading of the Bible and the first eleven chapters of Genesis are about the creation of the world through the Tower of Babel. From a timeline perspectives Moses, who wrote Genesis is covering a large time period. Some believe this covers millions of years, others say thousands, but the Bible is not trying to be a science book here. What I believe God is doing is showing us who the creator is. God is telling us it is not by chance but by God's declaration and design. God is the creator and you and I are not. God is also showing us in these first eleven chapters that we, humanity, have chosen to direct our own path, that's what gets us into trouble. The Bible calls this Sin which has come into the world but the rest of the Bible is about how God is redeeming the World and redeeming us even today.

Please remember that the Bible is God showing us God's plan to redeem the world. God's way is that because of sin, death has come into the world, and the punishment for sin is that we must die, or something must die. As I read Genesis 3 where Adam and Eve brought sin and death into the world, and as God says, you must die for your sins, God does God's first act of redeeming. As you read the end of the chapter Adam and Eve are hiding from God. That's what sin and guilt does, doesn't it? Why are they hiding? Because of their nakedness, that's what sin does, it exposes us. The Bible says that Adam and Eve had sown leaves together, but God does his first act of Redemption. The consequences of sin is death, that hadn't changed but God gives us a foretaste of God's redemption plan. I picture all of heaven watching to see, is God going to take Adam and Eve's life right there, but instead God, the Bible says kills an animal, the first death happens, to make clothes for them to cover their nakedness. The first death for sin! What did the innocent animal do to deserve death? Nothing, but instead of Adam and Eve's death something innocent died. This was a foretaste of God's plan to redeem God's creation, because God will send God's son to die for all our sins. Again we will ask the question, What did Jesus do to deserve to die? The answer is nothing, he is innocent but we deserve death and he takes away the sins of the World.

As you enter this journey, always keep before you the question. How is this showing God's desire to redeem the world and restore our relationship with God? There will not always be an obvious answer to that question so an answer could be, "I'm not sure" or "I don't see it, yet". But as we read through the Bible together we will discover God's wonderful plan for God's Children.

Thank you for joining this journey. There may be times you fall behind but don't give up and if you fall behind, then just pick up with the next book, when you receive one of these notes. Our goal is to be in God's word throughout the year and one way is to read thru the Bible.

Happy New Year, Pastor Chuck