



# Through the Bible in a Year

a chronological study of the Bible for women

Daniel  
Joel  
Ezra  
Psalm 137

## Week 37

### Daily Reading Plan:

\_\_\_ Joel  
\_\_\_ Daniel 1-3  
\_\_\_ Daniel 4-6  
\_\_\_ Daniel 7-9  
\_\_\_ Daniel 10-12  
\_\_\_ Ezra  
\_\_\_ Psalm 137  
\_\_\_ REST\*

\*Use this day to meditate on the week's Scripture reading. If needed, use it to catch up or read ahead.

#### Next week:

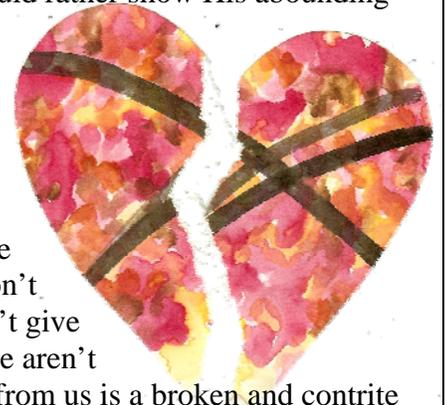
1 Kings 15-22  
2 Chron. 13-23

### MEMORY VERSE:

Rend your **heart**  
and not your garments.  
**Return** to the Lord your  
God,  
for he is **gracious** and  
**compassionate**,  
slow to anger and  
**abounding in love**,  
and he **relents** from  
sending calamity.  
Joel 2:13

### RENT HEARTS Joel 2:13

Mourning customs in the ancient Middle East were a little different than they are here in the West. To show an acceptable level of grief called for what we would consider an overly dramatic show, even hiring mourners to weep and wail. There were other important signs of sorrow, including ashes on the forehead, wearing sackcloth, and ripping your clothing. These were all actions that would show the world just how deep your grief was. Though these specific practices are foreign to us, we have our own set of appropriate behaviors to express the condition of our hearts. For example, we sit quietly with our head bowed during communion to indicate that we are in deep contemplation and appreciation of what Christ has done for us. Our participation in singing worship songs indicates our praise for God. Attendance at church services shows commitment to our faith in God. But any of those **could** be done just for show. They could mean nothing more than the garments torn as a sign of grief in a person whose heart remained unmoved. So God still says to us "Rend your heart and not your garments." He still cares more about what is going on inside our hearts in repentance and devotion to Him than in an external showing. He says "Don't make a show of it, really mean it." God knows whether you do or not. There will be no fooling Him. And, when your sorrow and repentance are real, then return to Him. Trust that if you are sincere, He will be gracious and compassionate toward you. He would rather show His abounding love than His reluctant anger. He is looking for a reason to relent from sending calamity. He wants our hearts and our actions to agree. He prefers a truly broken heart over an act of penance any day. Don't give Him meaningless sacrifices, don't give Him torn clothes, and don't give Him perfect appearances. Those aren't enough. What He truly wants from us is a broken and contrite heart so that He can transform us from within.



**NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S STATUE** Daniel 2:32-45 and **DANIEL'S VISIONS** Daniel 7:4-8:22

Fill in the boxes:

|                           | <b>DREAM STATUE</b><br>chpt. 2 | <b>FOUR BEASTS</b><br><b>VISION</b> chpt. 7 | <b>RAM AND GOAT</b><br><b>VISION</b> chpt. 8 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| BABYLON<br>605-538 BC     | 2:32, 37-38<br>Head of gold    | 7:4   |  |
| MEDO-PERSIA<br>538-331 BC | 2:32,39                        | 7:5   | 8:3-4  |
| GREECE<br>331-146 BC      | 2:32,39                        | 7:6<br>leopard                              | 8:5-14,21,22                                 |
| ROME<br>146 BC – 476 AD   | 2:33,40-41                     | 7:7,11,19,23                                |  |

(Richards 445)

**THE FIERY FURNACE** Daniel 3

What got these three men into trouble? \_\_\_\_\_

Write out the response of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to the news that they would be thrown into the fiery furnace if they did not worship the golden image (3:16-18): \_\_\_\_\_

Who do you think the fourth man in the fire was (3:25)? \_\_\_\_\_

What impact did the event have on King Nebuchadnezzar (3:28)? \_\_\_\_\_

What impact does it have on you? \_\_\_\_\_

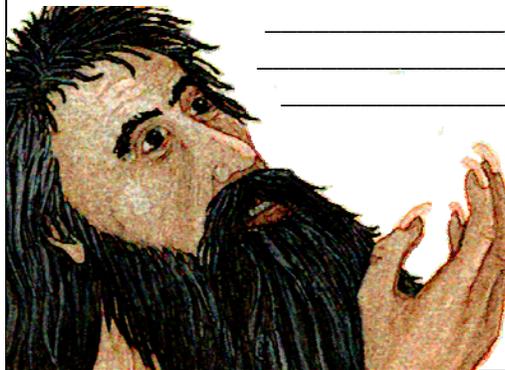
**RAISE YOUR EYES TO HEAVEN** Dan.4

Why did Nebuchadnezzar live among the animals? \_\_\_\_\_

How long would he live that way? \_\_\_\_\_

What words did Nebuchadnezzar say just before the dream came true? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Nebuchadnezzar do that caused his sanity to be restored? \_\_\_\_\_



**THE WRITING ON THE WALL** Daniel 5

This is the inscription that was written:

**mene, mene, tekel, parsin**

Daniel 5:25

What did these words mean? \_\_\_\_\_

Who were they directed to? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE LIONS OF MY IMAGINATION Dan.6

Why did the administrators want to find something against Daniel? \_\_\_\_\_

What problem did they have? \_\_\_\_\_

What solution did they come up with? \_\_\_\_\_

How did Daniel respond to this new decree? \_\_\_\_\_

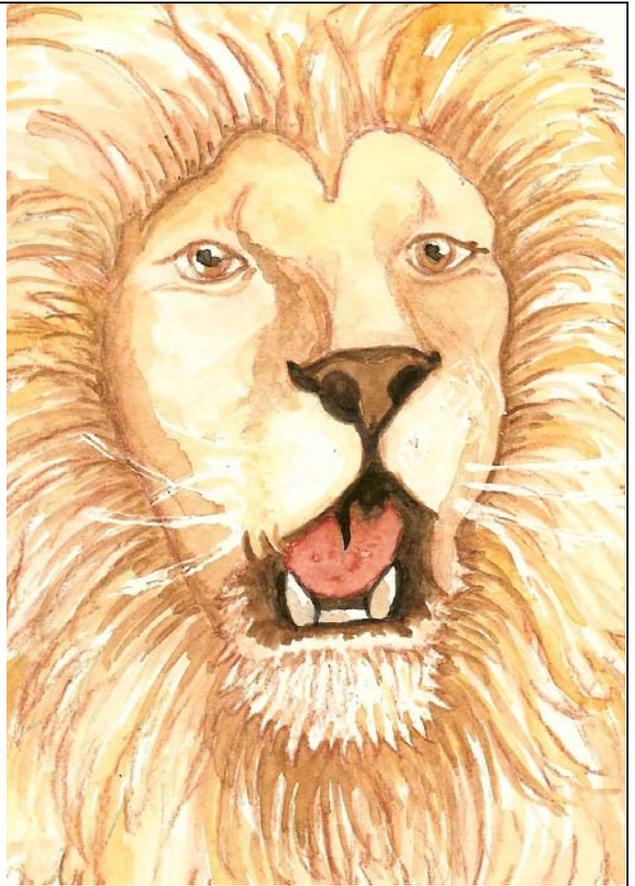
I have never been thrown to the lions for practicing my faith, but I have faced lions of a different sort. The lions that I fear are more along the lines of disapproval, ridicule and rejection. Even though they often only exist in my imagination, they still seem like a ferocious threat.

What words did King Darius say to Daniel as he was thrown into the lion's den? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think Daniel expected to happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What can we expect to happen if the threat of lions, real or imagined, causes us to keep our faith safely hidden? \_\_\_\_\_

**"If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels." Mark 8:38**



## DANIEL'S INFLUENCE

Sometimes it seems that today's culture is in such a deplorable state that it would just be better to withdraw from it. Rising anti-Christian sentiment and moral decay remind us that this world is not our home. Babylon was not home to the Jewish exiles either. Daniel is a powerful encouragement to us to see the opportunities that we have for influence, just by faithfully serving our God.

At the beginning of the book of Daniel, we see Nebuchadnezzar teaching Daniel and his friends the ways of the Babylonians, and looking to sorcerers and magicians as his advisors. Soon Nebuchadnezzar had developed a respect for Daniel and his God and witnessed for himself the miraculous event of the fiery furnace. Finally, Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven and praised God.

Belshazzar had so little knowledge or respect for God that he used the sacred goblets from God's temple to drink toasts to his idols. When Belshazzar refused to humble himself before God, he was struck dead so that Darius the Mede could come to the throne.

Darius thought so highly of Daniel's abilities that he intended to appoint him administrator over everything. When he was tricked into condemning Daniel, he witnessed the mighty hand of God protecting Daniel from the lions. After that, he made a decree that his entire kingdom must show fear and reverence to God. He also was supportive of the exiles who were rebuilding the temple.

Daniel didn't withdraw, or rebel - he influenced. Don't underestimate the influence that you can have even as we live as "exiles" in this foreign land.

## PUZZLE CLUES (taken from the NIV translation)

### Across

1. were helping rebuild the house of God Ezra 5:2
5. proclaimed at the Ahava Canal Ezra 8:21
7. what the Israelites are Ezra 9:9
11. preached to those building the temple Ezra 6:14
13. what the king intended for the wise men Dan. 2:12
14. the Israelites offered sacrifices despite this Ezra 3:3
15. given the name Belteshazzar Dan. 1:7
16. the great prince Dan. 12:1
17. Daniel did not want to do this to himself Dan. 1:8
20. appointed to build God's temple Ezra 1:2
23. what Ezra did over the exile's unfaithfulness Ezra 10:6
26. will prophesy Joel 2:28
28. restored by raising eyes to heaven Dan. 4:34
30. letter was written to Artaxerxes in this language Ezra 4:7
31. will be gathered Joel 3:2
33. the day of the Lord is great and \_\_\_\_\_ Joel 2:11
36. what the statue represented Dan. 2:39
39. backed up Cyrus' decree Ezra 6:12
41. grieve for destroyed harvest Joel 1:11
43. rend this instead of garments Joel 2:13
46. number of beasts in Daniel's vision Dan. 7:3
47. belongs to God Dan. 2:20
48. will be repaid for the years these ate Joel 2:25
49. what Nebuchadnezzar's dream was about Dan. 2:31

### Down

2. Ezra had devoted himself to this Ezra 7:10
3. where the hand wrote Dan. 5:5
4. a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses Ezra 7:6
6. what Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel Dan. 2:48
7. not a hair of their head was \_\_\_\_\_ Dan. 3:27
8. will be poured out on all people Joel 2:28
9. son of Pethuel Joel 1:1
10. what the priests are doing Joel 1:9
12. what Daniel and his friends ate Dan. 1:16
14. devours Joel 2:3
17. God gave Daniel the ability to understand them Dan. 1:17
18. months it took Ezra to travel from Babylon Ezra 7:9
19. will flow from the Lord's house Joel 3:18
21. Nebuchadnezzar would live among wild ones Dan. 4:25
22. excluded from priesthood Ezra 2:62
24. what Daniel and his friends plead for Dan. 2:18
25. revealed to Daniel Dan. 2:30
27. Nebuchadnezzar's image at Dura Dan. 3:1
29. what Ezra had because God's hand was on him Ezra 7:28
30. how Ezra felt about the people's sin Ezra 9:6
32. sent to explain Daniel's vision to him Dan. 8:16
34. number of men Nebuchadnezzar saw in the furnace Dan. 3:25
35. denounced by the astrologers Dan. 3:8
37. were accountable to the administrators Dan. 6:2
38. Belshazzar gave one for his nobles Dan. 5:1
40. month the temple was completed Ezra 6:15
42. what the captors demanded Ps. 137:3
44. keeps them out of God's presence Ezra 9:15
45. in memory of Zion Ps. 137:1

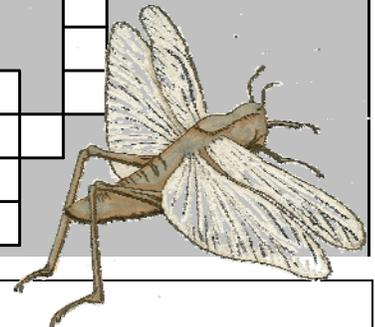
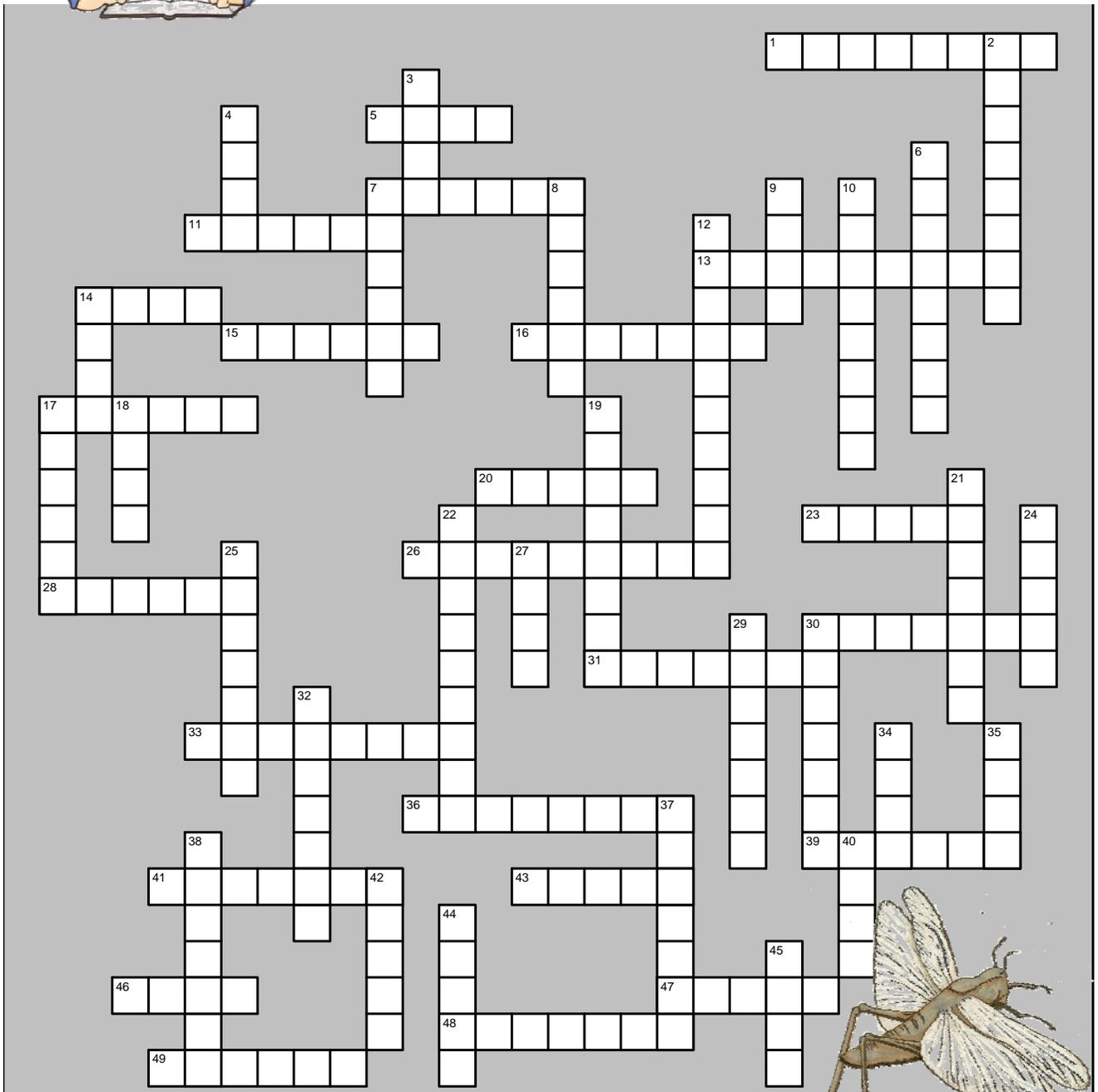
**PARTY TIME!** “When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the Lord, as prescribed by David king of Israel.” Ezra 3:10





# PUZZLE PAGE

WEEK 37



## THE YEARS THE LOCUSTS HAVE EATEN Joel 2:25-26

"I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten-- the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm--my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed.

What have the "locusts" eaten in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

## FACING THE LIONS OF OPPOSITION Ezra 4

As real as the threat that Daniel faced in the lions den was the threat that the returned exiles faced as they sought to rebuild. If you have ever attempted a comeback you may know very well the obstacles that they faced. Let's name some of them.

**1. DECEIT** – it happens. Someone comes alongside you acting like they are your best buddy and ally, when what they really want is to change what you are doing. They have your own agenda, but pretend it is the same as yours to get you on board.

What did the opposition say to Zerubbabel and his people in Ezek. 4:2? \_\_\_\_\_

How did they respond in v. 4? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. DISCOURAGEMENT & FEAR** – this one can be powerful. Voices of opposition whether real or in our own imagination, can sap us of the strength and determination we need to accomplish the task that God has given us. We fear attack, even if it just comes in the form of disapproval.

What did the surrounding people do to the people of Judah in v.4? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the response? \_\_\_\_\_

**3. FALSE ACCUSATION** –this one can infuriate us to the point of getting us off track. We can get so consumed with the injustice that is being done to us that we lose sight of the goal, and instead focus on how we are being wronged.

What tactic did the neighbors try in 4:6-16? \_\_\_\_\_

What does 4:24 – 5:2 say happened to the work being done? \_\_\_\_\_

**4. AUTHORITY CHALLENGED** – do we really know by what authority we are doing what we do? If we think it is our own, the opposition will likely be larger than our authority, but if we have God's backing, our authority has no real challenge.

What was Zerubbabel asked in 5:3? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened in 5:5? \_\_\_\_\_

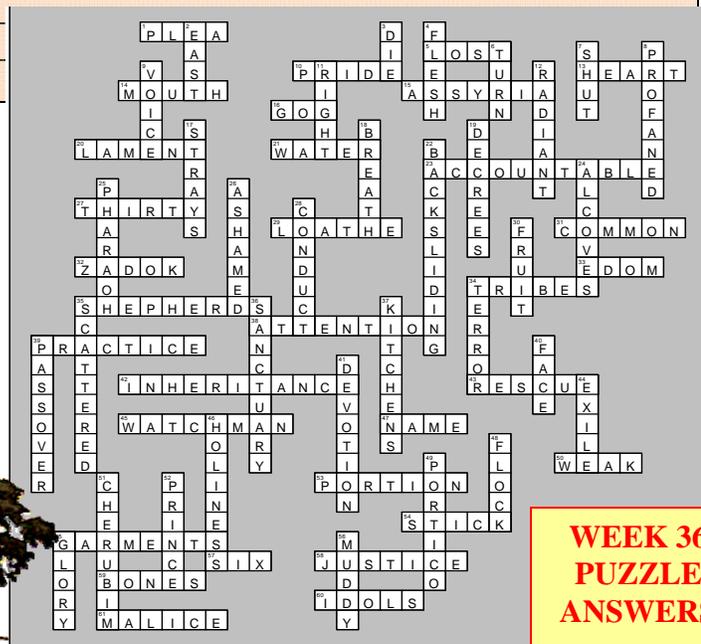
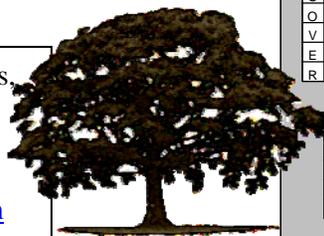
What followed in 5:12-16? \_\_\_\_\_

### WANT TO READ WHAT I READ?

#### NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S STATUE p. 2

Richards, Lawrence O.. Bible Teacher's Commentary. Colorado Springs: Cook Communications Ministries, 2002.

For comments or questions,  
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**WEEK 36  
PUZZLE  
ANSWERS**