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Quick recap

Discussed various biblical themes, including intertextual links, motifs, and literary structures in the Hebrew Bible. They explored how individual elements come together to form larger patterns and meanings in both biblical narratives and modern texts, using examples like photo mosaics and Jesus' teachings.

Next steps

- [Chuck to send Phil the link to his book "Dancing in the Kingdom of His Name" again](#)

Summary

Intertextual Links in the Bible

Discussed the concept of intertextual links in the Hebrew Bible, drawing parallels to modern hyperlinks, and explored how the Bible's sparse language allows for intentional connections between passages. Examined a photo mosaic of Louis Armstrong to illustrate how individual elements come together to form a larger picture, similar to how Jesus' teachings can be found throughout the Bible without direct references. Introduced the idea of breaking down biblical narratives into smaller units to better understand their structure and meaning, using the Eden Narrative as an example. They also discussed how motifs and repeated elements in texts, like the pattern of sin, can provide deeper insights into the overall message and themes of the Bible.

Biblical Patterns and God's Order

Discussed the biblical narrative of the Israelites requesting a king like other nations, leading to the appointment of Saul, and later David's sin with Bathsheba, which repeats a pattern of desire and taking. He highlighted how Jesus breaks this pattern by refusing Satan's temptations, emphasizing God's will over personal desires. Chuck also explored the motif of order emerging from chaos, from creation to the flood, the Exodus, and Jesus' baptism, symbolizing new beginnings and the establishment of God's kingdom. The discussion concluded with a brief mention of the temple as a recurring theme in the Bible.

Biblical Themes and Symbolism

Discussed biblical themes and symbols, focusing on the significance of gardens, sacrifices, and mountains. Chuck explained how various biblical narratives, such as Eden, Noah's Ark, and the tabernacle, illustrate recurring motifs of creation, sacrifice, and divine-human interaction. They explored the concept of high places as locations for worship and the biblical command to destroy altars on such sites. Phil inquired about the practice of tearing down high places, and Chuck clarified that this was part of efforts to eliminate idolatry and redirect worship to the one true God. They also briefly touched on Jesus fulfilling prophecies from the Tanakh.

Biblical Themes and Christ's Foreshadowing

Chuck discussed various biblical themes, including Christophanies, types of Christ, and foreshadowings in the Tanakh. He explained how these concepts connect to Jesus and explored the stories of figures like Abraham, Moses, and Solomon as examples. Chuck also touched on the significance of the crucifixion and how it relates to these themes, emphasizing the role of faith and sacrifice.

Biblical Narrative Structures Explained

Chuck and Phil discussed various literary structures in the Bible, including chiasms and nested narratives, which Chuck explained help organize and remember biblical stories. They explored how these structures can provide deeper insights into the text and how different biblical books relate to each other. Phil shared his personal approach to Bible study, emphasizing the importance of reading the text in context and avoiding the misuse of verses out of context. Chuck mentioned his book "Dancing in the Kingdom of His Name" and directed Phil to a relevant chapter online for further reading.

Church History Book Overview

Chuck explained the structure of his book, which outlines the history of the church from biblical times to the present, focusing on key events and themes. He described how he spent eight years writing the book, drawing from his experience in a church network in New York where he participated in a program called Brooklyn Fellows. Chuck also discussed his approach to describing the Trinity, using the concept of "dancing in the kingdom" to illustrate the interplay between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Body, Soul, and Disability Perspectives

Chuck and Phil discussed the Jewish conception of the body and soul as inseparable, contrasting it with the Greek idea of a separable spirit. They explored how disabilities are perceived as integral to a person's identity by some individuals, and Phil shared personal stories about friends with disabilities and the challenges they faced. They also discussed Phil's upcoming fence-building project and the challenges of building relationships in their new neighborhood.

Transcript Summary

Okay, so today we're going to talk about design a little bit. And so, one of the things is we had talked about this before, where the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible, is very sparse with the language. And so, every word is in there very deliberately, and so chances are, if you see a word in one situation, and then you see it again later on in another situation, you say, you know what, there's similar things they're talking about. There must be an intentional link between those. So those are called intertextual links. The Bible Project, they get up to date with that and calls them hyperlinks.

We did talk about that lack of descriptions before, and so that makes possible these intertextual links.

You see this picture here of Louis Armstrong? if you go to this little square here, they magnify that, so you get this thing over here. And so this picture of Louis Armstrong is a mosaic, a photo, mosaic. And one of the things to point out is, if you look at this particular segment here, if you took a magnifying glass out and looked at it more carefully, you see that Louis Armstrong's not in any one of these pictures. to make this mosaic here.

So this would be similar to when Jesus says, the scriptures are all about Him. It's not that everything's talking directly about him, but when you put everything together, you can see how it works together. So not every passage is directly about, but it's all going to point to Him in some kind of way, like this mosaic here.

Another thing that we bring up here when we talk about the mosaic, when we talk about each of these little pictures, they are like little units, these little photographs are like little bit of units. And we can do a similar kind of thing when we look at Scripture. If you get good at this stuff and want to spend time with it, you can really take a passage, and you can break it down into all the little units.

So, here's an example here called the Eden Narrative. We can see here, it starts out and breaks things down a couple of verses at a time. So chapter 2, verses 4 through 6 talk about, there's no garden, there's no humans, and there's no rain. And then the next little passage, God plants a garden and forms the human, and we just keep on going.

So these are all the individual little units that we can sort of pick out. And then we can put these together in bundles. We take these first 4 units here, and say, that in general it's like going from a wasteland to Eden. We go from no garden, or humans, and now we have a human put in the garden.

And the next little section here, Adam's alone, so what's the solution? Two humans. And now we go from isolation to communion.

And we can keep on going that way, we can build these things up so we can say this first level of structure, as we build these little packages go from Wasteland to Eden, from Isolation to Communion, and then we have the fall and then to fall out.

And then we could even try to make larger packages here. These these first two sections here can be described as from isolated wasteland to communion in Eden.

So if you really wanted to spend time with this kind of a thing, you could sort of break things down into these little units there, and the reason for doing that is to sort of see the structure in more detail. And once we see the structure in more detail, we might be able to pick out things that we might not have been able to notice before.

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And so, one of the things we can see here is that we have a storyline. We start out here, there's no garden, there's humans or rain, and in here, humans are exiled from Eden, and all this happens in Eden, and then we can break down each of these little narratives here into these different sections. And if we've done that well... when we run into little sections later, we might be able to say, oh, I recognize that. It happened here.

It's not just the words themselves that might allow us to say ... I see this word here, this word here, and this little passage here looks like this little passage here. Once you do that, you sort of connect the two, you might say, what's the meaning of putting these two things together? I see this same word and in passage and another passage and they seem to line up ... So, what's the meaning of that?

One of the things to point out here is that when we look at the type of text that the Bible is, it's designed to give meaning. It's not designed to be, like, just a history. But it's designed to make us say, what's the meaning of all of this?

By the time Moses wrote these passages, other things have been written that were similar in other cultures that had their creation narratives. If we did a little comparison, we can say, there's some elements here that match this other narrative that's here. And so in our modern-day way of deconstructing things, we might say, oh well, Moses just borrowed this from here, you know, and so it's not... that's nothing new. But if we look at this a little differently, we can say, that at the time of Moses, there's a certain language that they were using at the time, and there are certain things in their culture that were there, and that provided a way of providing a context, to create a new narrative. We use not just the words of the culture, but we can use some of the same kind of elements. So when we look at the other cultures, and we say, what's the meaning that they try to give?

In the other cultures the gods sort of got tired of taking care of themselves, so they created humans to take care of them. And they don't even particularly liked the humans they created. And then there are all sorts of gods, and so what kind of creation do we have? It's really messy. It's not really well ordered, you know, because everybody's in competition. And so I see that kind of meaning in those older narratives, and Moses comes along here, and with God's speaking through him, and we can create a new kind of narrative to say, no, we have a new meaning that we're giving to humans. We're not creating humans to feed the gods, God's going to feed the humans! God's provided the garden. God's provided the fruit. So this is a new kind of meaning that we have.

So that's why we can take a look at all these little details here and put them together. so that we say, what kind of meaning are we trying to construct in this place? And when I tie this text to a text over here, what meaning am I adding? We'll take a look at some samples of that as we go along.

What we're going to see here is that there's this word, motif. These are repeated elements that are used to tie a narrative together. And the example I have here is from The Lord of the Rings.

And in that narrative we have this ring, and people get tempted by the ring, some people really get taken in, and some people resist, and they resist in different ways, and so the ring motif is being used throughout. there are variations being thrown in there so we see some similarities and then we see some variations, and from there we can try to construct a larger meaning out of that.

Now, so we go to the Tanakh. And we can do some similar things. So, one of the things that we see throughout is the pattern of sin, where there are 3 actions: we see something, a desire is going to emerge, and then I'm going to take it. We say that with the humans in a garden. It was the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and they wanted that knowledge for themselves. Say, they saw it, they desired it, and they took it, without waiting for God.

We can follow that along with Abraham and Sarah. They travel down to Egypt, and we aren't told this detail specifically in there, but they saw a slave they liked, Hagar and they took her. Then we see Achan seize gold of the Canaanites, and takes it and hides it in his tent and bad things happened to him after that point. With the Israelites. There's this tall, handsome guy, you know, and what the Israelites do, well, they said, you know, we have a problem, and it's not us. The problem is, we don't have a king like everybody else - and so God did something that we have to be careful about- God said you want to see a king like everybody else? I'm going to give you king like everybody else. Yeah, you know, in this case here, this case here, they had saw. And then David sees Bathsheba, desires her and takes her.

Now, one of the things we do with this narrative is we follow it into the New Testament. Because in this Old Testament and the Tanakh, what we see is this repeated pattern, People see, desire, take, it happens over and over and over. These are only some of the examples. Now we get up to Jesus, and it's as different here, he experiences temptations, Satan is offering the kingdoms of the world, but after his fasting, he said, Jesus sees the thing that Satan's offering to him, But he doesn't go and take it. He says, no, not my desire, but God's will. Father's will be done. Okay, and this is a thing where you

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can see with Jesus, he's going to break the patterns that we see happen over and over again. And so, we see that what's happening in the time of Jesus is basically a continuation of the Tanakh storyline. We can look all the way to Revelation, and we can see the patterns that started way back in Genesis.

Here's another motif, the emergence of chaos, or the order coming from chaos. So Yahweh brought humans out of chaos into a new world. He starts out by separating, creating order. Then within that, he creates a place for humans to flourish. And that was his endpoint, creating a place for humans to flourish, so that they could be with him and work with him.

With Noah we see the chaos that's in Noah's time, we see all the violence. Then God throws in more of this chaos in terms of the flood, But from that Noah and his family emerged from the Ark, And they see a newly ordered world, and they start working with God, they create this garden, Unfortunately, one of the things is we can grow grapes, and from that we can make wine - and then we had the unfortunate incident with Abraham and his wife getting drunk.

The Exodus story, that's a story of going from chaos to order. Joshua crossing the Jordan River, this is sort of like crossing the Red Sea, you know, we're going through the chaos to go into this new land where there's this new order that God's going to instill. So we're going from the chaos of our journey into, uh, disordered place. In Isaiah, we see this interesting thing here, where of his narratives, we see Oh, he just sort of describes what's happening as a new exodus. Where we're going to get a new king. Okay, he's looking to the future with Jesus. We're going to see a new exodus from our world right now. We're going to have a new king, And the chaos we see right now, that's the nations that surround us. And from that, God is going to create a kingdom. We're going to create this order out of chaos.

And so we follow this in the New Testament, Jesus goes into the Jordan River. the flowing water, that' represents chaos there. In his baptism, Jesus, he gets immersed into the chaos. And comes out from that. It's not as obvious as some of the other motifs, but You know, if we try to think of chaos in a more creative ways, and imaginative ways>

In Session 1, we talked about the idea of the temple, that's another motif. And one of the interesting things here is that this is the artist at the Bible Project that did this here. And they sort of did these little drawings that sort of illustrated how things can be related together. We see people in a garden with the two trees. And we see the people outside the garden when they got tossed out of the garden, We see Seth and Abel doing sacrifices. And if we look at the details there carefully, we see that they're sort of doing it at the door of the garden, the entryway to the garden.

And here we see with Noah in the ark sort of like, this is a temple area again. We see here sacrifices being made, just like we saw with Cain and Abel and emerging violence, we also see that after Noah, more violence and things emerging out of that. So if we look at all those details, you can say there's parallels that are going on there.

We can just look at the tabernacle itself. What do we see outside the tabernacle? The altar of sacrifice. So basically, that tabernacle is sort of another picture of what's happening there, we can see these different elements all being put together all over again.

There's the motif of mountains. We don't maybe catch this detail all the time, but Eden was a mountain. How do we know that? Because out of Eden comes this river, and it splits into four rivers and goes all over the place. Then we see Mount Sinai, where Moses' sees a burning bush experience, and that's where Moses brought his people back, back to the mountain where he meets Yahweh,

The mountaintops are a motif of Eden, a place where God meets with the humans. In Eden things did not go well, and the humans got kicked out so the mountain motif points to restoration, We come up to Mount Sinai, and at least Moses is able to go up that mountain, again, to go up on a high place. to meet with God. Okay. And we see this happen, actually, in cultures all over the place, where high places are where people go. to meet the gods.

We see all sorts of mountains used in various ways here. Mount Hor where Aaron died. Mount Hermon was the highest peak in ancient Israel, and we see that name pop up a few times. Mount Gerizim - this is interesting. So Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal are sort of near each other with a little valley in between. And when the Israelites went into the Promised Land, the tabernacle was set up between those two. One of the things that Aaron told his people is that, one group of guys go up in this mountain, you guys go up in that mountain where you're going to shout the blessings of God if we do things right, and another group will go up the other mountain where you're going to see the curses of God if we don't do things right. And the tabernacle then becomes a place of witness, where we hear all that. Mount Gerizim, by the way, is where the Samaritans have their place of worship.

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Mount Nebo, that's where Moses viewed the Promised Land, went up and met God for the last time in his pre-resurrection body. Mount Zion is that high place in Jerusalem. So high places are places where we go and we meet God in different ways.

There are various places in the Bible where different kings tore down the high places, or were supposed to tear down the high places. Those high places are where people constructed their altars on to worship their god or idols. So the instructions were to go up and tear down those places of worship.

And there's other things here, we see where all the prophecies that are in the Tanakh that Jesus fulfilled. Only some of them are listed here. There are hundreds of them. Before his crucifixion, Jesus pointed to Isaiah 53:12 - although they did not have numbers back then. The way you refer to verses was you gave the first sentence and said, that's the passage being referred to. So he referred to this passage where he said, "it is written, and he was numbered with a transgressors, and I tell you this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, that is what is written about me, is reaching its fulfillment." And that is just one of many, many prophecies I'm sure you've heard about Jesus.

Another thing we see here are We call these, uh, Christophanes, places in the Tanakh where these humans appear who are representatives of God. We don't know exactly if they were God the Father, is that God the Son or Yahweh. We can't understand this. We call these a pre-incarnate appearances of the Son of God, and just a few of them here.

When the Lord appeared to Abraham in human form, remember 3 people went up and saw Abraham and said, we're going to go down to Sodom. So, who are those people? Apparently they were divine. people, and one of them seemed to be an aspect of God, whether it's Yahweh, the son, the father, we have the wherewithal to really sort through that stuff. And there's a few other places here where we see these people just sort of popping in where it seems to be God in human form. So it another little motif, if you will. These people start appearing all over the place.

One of the things you could do is take a look at all those passages together and say, what do they have in common? You can do a study on that topic. These appearances could be considered as a type of Christ, something in the Tanakh represents a foreshadowing of something in the New Testament.

Moses and others can be seen as a foreshadowing of Jesus. In the Eden narrative we see that God promises that the seed of the woman is going to step on the head of the serpent, and so as we read the Tanach we occasionally ask what about this person or that person. And so one of the ways to read the Tanakh is to follow the storyline through and look at these hopeful characters pop up and ask could this be this one, no, oh, he had a good start, and then he was not so good. We see that over and over again, where these hopeful characters like Moses, Aaron, you know, King David, you know, and they keep on falling down at the end.

One of the interesting things about Solomon is that, if we go back to Genesis, Adam and Eve looked at the fruit of the tree of knowledge and wanted it for themselves but they didn't want to wait for God, They just took it. But when we go to Solomon where he is getting ready to take the kingship, he says, God, I need... your wisdom ... and God gave it to him. So there's repetition and variation. Adam and Eve took ... but Solomon asked, and God gave it! So imagine how the narrative would have been different if Adam and Eve said, Let's wait for God. That would have been a whole different story.

In the story of Abraham? How did Abraham think about this. How did he understand was God really asking for? When God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac what was going on in Abraham's head at that time? We can't understand that, really. At this point here, Abraham is already 100 years old by the time Isaac comes along. Okay? And so, here's this one child, he has with Sarah and now, Yahweh is asking to ... sacrifice him? What's Yahweh thinking about? But he trusted that somehow God is going to provide. And so that was a sacrifice he was willing to make, willing to do what God asked.

So here we see a type of Jesus' crucifixion. Moses is in the wilderness, and things are not great there, people are not happy, and God sent serpents among them to bite them. Remember that story? And then Moses was told to take a staff, you know, and... I don't know how long it took them to do this ... and fashioned a serpent to go around that, and hold that up. And when people looked at that, then they would not die. That's a foreshadowing of Jesus offering himself and for us to look on Jesus. Some of these little things here, if we just take a look at it and think about it and say, oh, you know what, these things sort of go together. Of course, if you're doing this from scratch, you're sort of saying, I ran into this, and I ran into this, and there's some similarities, and how do they really go together, and then you start to build your themes.

Fortunately, these days, we have people who have done a lot of work for us. When we have commentaries and things like that. But back in the day before there was a lot of writing around, you just memorize these things and tried to put the pieces together yourself. You actually had to memorize things and meditate on them in order to do this process that we

have a lot of people do this for us. We take our concordance, and we can see where words are, you know, and all that. So we don't have to work nearly as hard.

In Revelation, the sacrifice is missing from the temple. It's missing, because Christ was the sacrifice. Revelation is really interesting, because at one point, it looks like they described this temple, but then towards the end of Revelation, it says, but there is no temple, because Jesus at the temple, you know, God is the temple. So we have to take that and say, well, is there a temple or there isn't? What some people have done is Israel's going to have one fate, and the church is going to have another fate, and Israel's going to have the temple still, but we don't. But it doesn't say that. However it's a narrative that we see in the United States and it's very, very popular in some places.

Now we're going to introduce something called a chiasm. If you look at the Greek letters, The Greek letter for chi looks like our X. So if you take the X and trace a line from the top left point and follow it down the left side going from top to bottom, we sort of go in and then out. So what a chiasm does, is it has this structure here where if I look like the first and the last things, they're on the same vertical line - they're going to sort of mirror each other. And the second thing, and the second from last thing, will line up all the way down to the middle. So there is that structure is called a chiasm.

Sometimes the pair we see will be similar and sometimes they'll be the opposite. And this structure is all over the place.

So, here's a little chiasm here around this story about Noah's Ark. In the first pair, we see at the beginning, Noah's commanded to enter the ark, and at the end Noah and the animals leave the ark. In the second pair, the rains fall and then the waters recede. And in the middle there, we have the earth being flooded. The reason for a structure like this is it sort of helps define the storylines, and it also makes it easier to remember, because as soon as I start, I know I'm going to end up in the same sort of spot. Okay, so it makes it easier to remember the story, if that's what you had to do.

The Bible itself can be seen as a chiasm, where... In the beginning, God formed an ordered universe of life and flourishing out of chaos, intending to universe be a temple where humans rule as creatures in God's image. Those image bearers are instructed to fill the Earth and God's rule was to extend with them to the entire earth. Now, you go to the end of our story in the Bible, the image bearers now are going to continue the project that they were supposed to follow beginning, extending the life and flourishing of the kingdom of Heaven to all the earth. Okay, so if you look at the elements at the end, the elements at the very beginning, and you can see these pairs matching up.

So just to choose another pair like item D here. So, out of the nations, God chooses one family through which He will form a new nation, Israel. And then go down here to D' and we see that out of Israel, God creates a new spiritual Israel, through which He will accomplish his goals.

And the center of this story is F, where Israel continues to rebel, rejecting God so that they could be like everybody else. That is like the beginning of the kings of Israel. And then after the time of exile, only a remnant of Israel returned to the Promised Land, which is now controlled by foreigners. And even Jerusalem and his temple are only a remnant of what they once were. So we see here this little... pair of things here is sort of the center of our story.

So the story begins where, starts out with his people and He's going to use them to populate the earth. And then things start to fall apart. And in the middle of that narrative is that here's Israel, and I have my nation, but they're just still rebelling against God and even when God starts to bring them back, things, it's not the place we're supposed to end up at. So, you have to follow the story all the way through. To see where it ends up.

We also have entire books of the Bible, like Leviticus, that can be constructed like a chiasm. And there are many other places. So here's one webpage I found here. (<https://superiorword.org/chiasms-in-the-bible/>). This page shows us chiasms throughout the Bible starting in Genesis. So you have chiasms inside of chiasms, and you can go all over the place with this. There's one person I saw who did this to such an extreme sort of way.

There's one interesting one I thought I'd point out there. Maybe, uh, not a chiasm itself, but it's like a story inside a story. Take a look at the story of David and Bathsheba. And it starts out where all the kings have gone off to war, And David stayed behind, and then he has this little thing with Bathsheba, and look at the contents of that. Well, he had his affair, the child was born, invited Uriah back, and tried to get him to sleep with his wife but that didn't happen, So he arranges for Uriah to get killed, the baby is eventually born and then it dies, and there is a time of mourning. In the meantime, the story began with it was time kings were off to war, and Joab was out there outside this city, and ready to take it. And then you have this narrative with Bathsheba, And the story goes back to where Joab has basically sort of done his job. But he thought that he I shouldn't go and enter the city because he wasn't the king. He thought that the king should be the one to go in and triumphantly enter the city. So he calls David out to go do that thing, and you see David putting the crown on his head, you know, after not doing the work. And in the meantime, we have the story of Bathsheba, to color it.

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So, what happens when we look at the Bathsheba narrative, we realize that it took way longer than the thing that Joab did. So obviously, this is a narrative construction. It's not like, Bathsheba's thing happened in between all of this stuff. They're two separate things. But the construction here is to say, you see this? Let me tell you something real about that, and they look at the inside story.

Mark does that so many times. that some people called these pairs of stories , Markan sandwiches. Where you have an outer story and an inner story. He does about a dozen or 20... two dozen times. He does that all over the place. So, it's a construction carried into the New Testaments by the New Testament writers who were Hebrews and they knew their Tanach and were using the old techniques.

When we look at the Old Testament, it just seems to run together, because we're not trained to read it. We expect to read it like a history book.

Many of the stories in the books of Kings and Samuel are repeated in Chronicles. Samuel and the Kings were considered to be part of the former prophets (Even though we really don't know who wrote them). Chronicles is the last book in the Writings. It's the last book of the Tanakh. And so, what's happening at Chronicles is it sort of reflecting on what happened back there with the Kings, But it gives a different take on what happened. It's more of a priestly look at what happened in those previous narratives.

There are versions of the Bible that don't include the chapter and verse divisions. Luke and Acts are written as a single narrative. If you read it without the chapters and verses, It just seems to go really fast. There's no headings. You know, you read it like a novel, and everything just seems to go really fast. The benefit of that is you see it unbroken. And so you can see it more as a story. So that could be a way of introducing people to the story.

But if we do things like the stuff we talked about here tonight, and drill down into the verses, and make all these little constructions that will slow us down and to allow us to read things more carefully. So that's part of the benefit of that exercise, is that forces us to slow down to read it. The other way of doing it is, like, the old-fashioned way of memorizing and meditating on it.

In the Jewish culture, where everyone's supposed to have memorized the scripture without chapter and verse markings, People will mentioned a sentence, and since everybody else has memorized it they know where that reference is. But for use, we even have the scripture on our phone, And when we go to research it, we don't have to flip through the Bible, the app will find the chapter and verse for us. And we can click on the verse you want to look at it, then you look at it interlineally, and pick out a Greek word, and we can see all the places it pops up. But even though it is an effective for us to do Bible studies, because we don't take the appropriate time with the scripture, the next day we might not remember what we read.