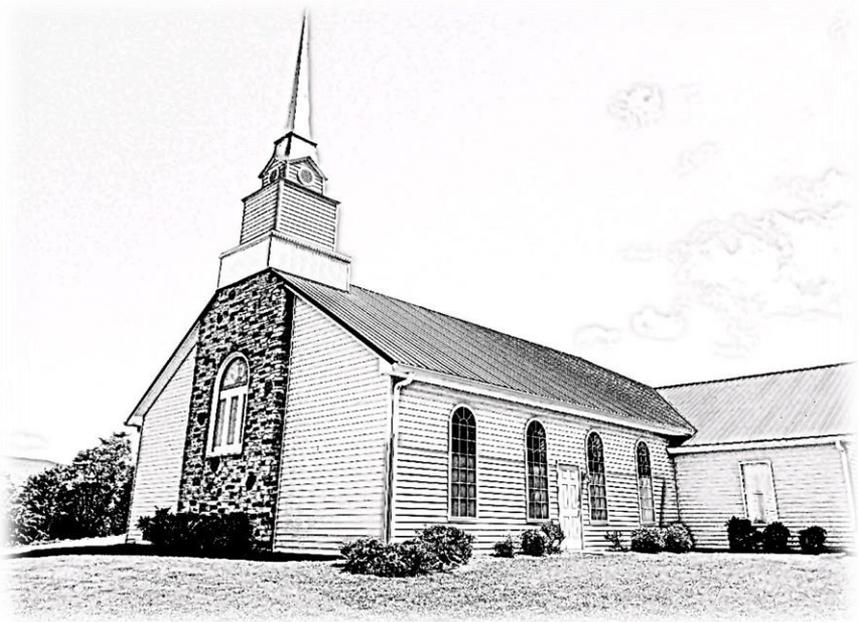


# Bible Reading Guide 2020



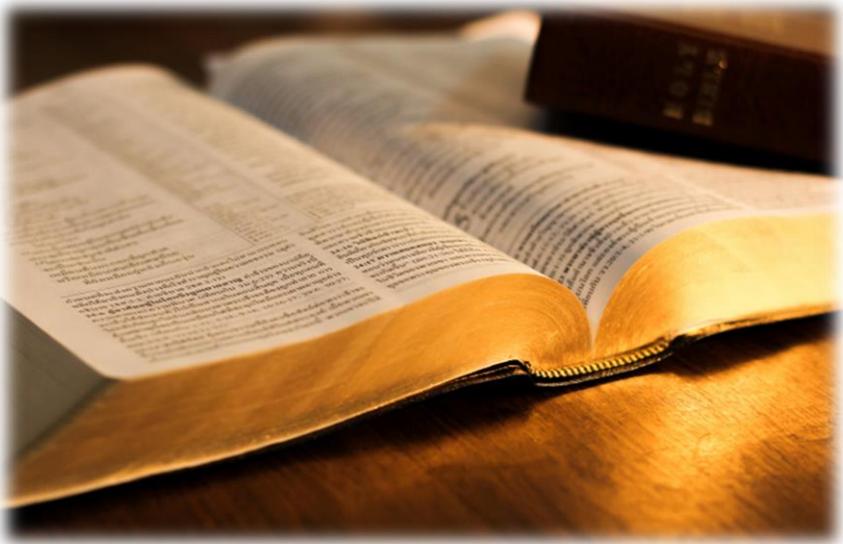
Week 7  
February 9-15, 2020

Written by Rev. William F. Hill, Jr.

# Instructions

1. Pray
2. Read the assigned text of Scripture.
3. Answer the discussion questions as offered. Keep a notebook of your thoughts and answers.

Each chapter is a summary. It is not meant to be overly educational or intellectual. It is meant to give the reader a good thumbnail sketch of each chapter.



## ~Lord's Day, February 9, 2020 ~

Reading: Psalm 11-12

### **PSALM 11**

The Psalm clearly states that David wrote it. The theme of the Psalm is that of “refuge.” David was accustomed to threats and dangers from those who opposed him. In this Psalm he seeks help from YHWH in times of great difficulty.

The Psalm begins with a prayer directed toward the LORD. It is a lesson for all of God's people: that in times of great struggle, we need to find our help in Him and the means he provides to relieve us of trouble. David compares the attitudes and actions of the wicked and reminds himself and his readers that the LORD is holy and he sees the actions of men.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your attitude when things are difficult in your life?  
To whom do you turn, and to whom do you trust?
2. Take note of the comparison between the behavior of the LORD towards the righteous and the wicked.

### **PSALM 12**

This psalm can be divided into three sections. The first (12:1-2) states the problem. The second (12:3-6) states the petition regarding the problem. The third (12:7-8) demonstrates the resolution that comes from the LORD.

The first section summarizes the issue as presented by the writer. This is a Psalm of David, and the king is concerned with the ungodly behavior of those around him, especially in the area of the

tongue. The comparison between the godly and the ungodly is summarized by how they use their lips.

The second section highlights David's plea to God. He desires justice. He asks for God to intervene in the matter. AS he does so, he compares the words of the wicked with the pure words of the Almighty.

The third section grants hope as a just God deals faithfully with people. While the wicked will always be amongst us, the LORD protects his people.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is the use of the tongue the central problem in this Psalm?
2. How does David illustrate the wicked use of the tongue?
3. As you look at your use of words, can they be described as godly or wicked?
4. What does the use of your tongue say about your heart?  
See. Matt. 15.

**~Monday, February 10, 2020 ~**

Reading: Genesis 35, John 7

### **GENESIS 35**

In this short chapter, Jacob is renamed to Israel and renewed the covenant promises that he made to his fathers. Chapter 35 sits in stark contrast with chapter 36. In this chapter, the favor of God towards Jacob is clearly demonstrated.

This chapter also highlights the death of Rachel – the wife of favor. She dies giving birth. Additionally, the list of the sons of

Jacob is given. These names eventually become the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does God tell Jacob to make an altar? What is the express command of God to Jacob at Bethel?
2. Idolatry is a major sin in the life of the people. In what ways have you violated this command in your life? What idols are hindering your walk with the Lord?
3. Why does God renew the covenant with Jacob in 35:9-15?
4. Why do you think God renames Jacob?

## **JOHN 7**

The context of this chapter is important. John tells us in verse 2, “now the Jews’ Feast of Booths was at hand.” To understand this chapter, it is important to understand this feast, at least in summary.

The Feast of Booths was the longest festival of the Jewish year. It followed the Day of Atonement (see Lev. 16). According to one commentator, “it was a celebration of God’s gracious provision for the Israelites in the wilderness and the completion of the year’s harvest. There was a ceremonial water-drawing (commemorating the provision of water in the wilderness) and a lamp-lighting ritual. The first of these ceremonies provides the setting for Jesus’ proclamation.” Therefore, the main idea in this chapter is that proclamation offered by Christ in 7:37-39: “if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.” Jesus connects the Feast with what it represents – that he is the life-sustaining water from the rock that gives life to all who drink from him.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Jesus refuse to go into Judea?

2. How does the background of the Feast of Booths frame this entire chapter? Note: it will frame chapter eight as well.
3. How did the people respond to the words of Christ in this chapter? See 7:40-48).
4. What named individual is present in this chapter? How does he respond to the crowds? What does that imply about his reception of Christ? See John 3; 7:50-52.

## ~Tuesday, February 11, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 36; John 8

### **GENESIS 36**

This chapter is a long list of the descendants of Esau. What is important to note about this chapter is the thrice-repeated statement that “Esau is Edom.” (36:1, 8, 43). Edom became a bitter rival of the people of God and these descendants represent the seed of the serpent that seeks to destroy the seed of the woman.

Discussion Questions:

1. Find a Bible map and locate Edom on it.
2. Why does the narrator mention that the Edomites had kings before the time when the people of God had a king?

### **JOHN 8**

This chapter continues within the context of the Feast of Booth. The other ceremonial rite was the lighting of a lamp in the city of Jerusalem. During this ceremonial lighting, the city would be illuminated. Jesus takes advantage of this ritual to declare to the people that he is the light of the world. This statement echoes back to distinct times in the life of the people of old. First, the pillar of fire that guided the people in the wilderness. Second, the

candlestick that illumined the table of showbread in the tabernacle. These two items are now fulfilled as Jesus connects the event with himself and his ministry. In the end, this is a claim to deity. As a result, Jesus enters into a dialogue with his enemies and declares to them that they are the children of the evil one (and not Abraham) because they do not receive his words and obey them. Later in the chapter, Jesus refers to the burning bush that spoke (see Ex. 3) and declares that he is the great “I am” (8:58). Again, this is a claim to deity and the people who heard were angered.

Discussion Questions:

1. 7:53-8:11 is a disputed text. That is, many do not believe it was originally penned by John or, possibly, it was misplaced in the narrative. What do you think?
2. How does Jesus support his statement that he is “the light of the world?”
3. Why do the people respond so badly upon hearing the words of Christ?

**~Wednesday, February 12, 2020 ~**

Reading: Genesis 37, John 9

### **GENESIS 37**

Genesis 37 introduces the story of Joseph. This chapter can be divided into two sections. The first (37:1-11) highlights the gift of dream interpretation as well as the favoritism offered to Joseph from his father. The second section (37:12-36) highlights the wicked plot of Joseph’s brothers and how the LORD brings Joseph to Egypt.

The first section is significant in the narrative that follows because of how God uses it to protect and preserve a people and bring them safely to Egypt. This first section also predicts Joseph's rule over his own house.

The second section highlights the wicked conspiracy of Joseph's brothers because they were jealous of him (37:4). This attitude eventually leads them to sell their brother into Egypt.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does Jacob love Joseph more than the rest of his sons?
2. Why does the narrative offer two dreams with essentially the same meaning?
3. Why does Joseph go to visit his brothers?
4. What did the brothers want to do to Joseph at first? Who intervenes in their plans? What do they eventually do?
5. Where does Joseph end up, specifically?

## **JOHN 9**

The context of John nine is important to the narrative that follows. The main theme is “sight,” and the point of the chapter is given in 9:38. Jesus often used real-life circumstances to press home his teaching. He does that in this chapter by giving sight to a blind man.

The chapter opens with a question: “who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” The Jews believed that any temporal circumstance of difficulty was a direct result of some specific sin (E.g., Job's friends believed that). Jesus responds that it was neither the sin of the man or his parents. The issue is that he would be used for such a time as this to teach that he alone can give sight to the blind. The point of the entire narrative is to shame

the wise and bring to faith the ignorant. Only through the work of the Holy Spirit can the blind be made to see. The other point being made by Christ is he is divine. It was firmly believed that only God could grant sight to the blind and here Jesus, in giving sight to this blind man, makes a statement to his opponents.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does this chapter and the previous chapter connect?  
See 9:5.
2. How many times do the enemies of Christ interrogate the man that was given sight?
3. How does this chapter teach that the way of salvation is hidden from the arrogant and wise and given to the ignorant?

~**Thursday, February 13, 2020**~

Reading: Genesis 38, John 10

### **GENESIS 38**

This chapter seems to be an interruption to the narrative of Jacob and his family. It is important to remember the final verse of chapter 37, as you consider what is happening in chapter 38. Remember, the previous chapter ends the narrative with Joseph in Egypt. He is a slave in the house of Potiphar. Now we back up slightly to consider the other brothers and their wicked behavior. What is highlighted, specifically, is the fractured covenant people who begin to intermarry with the Canaanites. If left unchecked, the covenant people would be scattered. Chapter 39 picks up where 37 left off and begins to demonstrate how God would protect his covenant people.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Who are the two main actors in the chapter?
2. How does this chapter threaten the covenant people of God?
3. What practical lesson should be learned from the chapter regarding marriage?

## **JOHN 10**

This chapter contains another of the “I am” statements of Christ. This time, Jesus states that he is the “Good Shepherd.” The imagery is rich and cannot be missed. Throughout the corpus of Scripture, God’s people are often called “sheep.” Consider the following passages: Psa. 23; Ezek. 34; Is. 40; Mk. 6:34; Psa. 100.

In this chapter, Jesus tells them that he is the good shepherd of the sheep. Unlike the poor shepherds of Israel (Ezek. 34), he will faithfully lead them and guide them. He also contrasts his ministry as a faithful shepherd with that of the poor shepherds of his day. This chapter is a lesson for Christ’s under-shepherds in the church. Christ demands and desires faithful pastors who will lead his people. Those who do so for selfish gain are hirelings and useless to the Good Shepherd.

This chapter also contains a second “I am” statement: Jesus declares that he is “the door.” In this pronouncement, Jesus is declaring that the only way to the Father – that is, to eternal salvation – is through him.

When you combine these two items (the good shepherd and the door), you can apply it to the work of the Christian ministry today. Pastors are not Christ, but they are to point people to Christ. They are to lead and guide the sheep (God’s people) to good and useful food (Christ is the bread of life). Thus, faithful pastors are to point the sheep to “the door,” which is Christ. Pastors cannot save

anyone. Christ can and does. The work of the Christian ministry is all about Christ and should point others to Him. Any ministry that does not do that is useless to Christ and his sheep.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. The chapter opens with the words, “truly, truly.” Why the repetition?
2. How does Christ describe his ministry as the “good shepherd?”
3. How will you know if you are hearing the voice of the Good Shepherd?
4. What does the statement, “I am the door” teach regarding salvation?
5. How do you understand 10:16? NOTE: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints often use this verse (incorrectly) in their doctrines.

## ~Friday, February 14, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 39, John 11

### **GENESIS 39**

Genesis 39 picks up where Genesis 37 left off. In this chapter, we have two scenes to consider. The first scene (39:1-19) covers the events that lead to the second scene (39:20-23).

The first scene finds Joseph in the house of Potiphar. Potiphar is the captain of the guard and working for Pharaoh. As this scene opens, we note that “The LORD was with Joseph.” At first glance, you may be tempted to question that statement due to the circumstances of Joseph’s life. Yet, it was true. As a result of the favor of the LORD, Joseph was well regarded in the eyes of his master. Thus, he was given great responsibilities. Of course, this is a precursor for what is to come in the life of Joseph. It is during

this time of favor that Potiphar's wife seeks to destroy him through her constant attempts to cause Joseph to sin (39:7, 12). Yet, Joseph, a righteous man enjoying the grace and favor of the LORD, refused her on every attempt (Note 39:9). Due to his godly behavior, Joseph is falsely accused and thrown into prison.

This opening scene carries several biblical-theological themes that must be noted: Joseph is a type of Christ. He has been made to wander in a land that is not his own. He has been sold into slavery by wicked men and determines to live in a godly way before others. The LORD's favor was upon him. As a result, he was falsely accused and persecuted for righteousness sake.

The concluding scene finds Joseph in a worse circumstance than the previous one. Yet, again, we note that the LORD was with Joseph (39:21, 23). Though his circumstances were difficult, due to the presence and favor of the LORD, Joseph was successful.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. In what way does Joseph avoid sinning in this chapter, and what is the lesson for you when it comes to temptation?
2. Scripture is clear that for all who desire to live a godly life, persecution will come. In what way is Joseph being persecuted for his faith in Jehovah?
3. How does the life of Joseph foreshadow the life of Christ in this chapter? We will note many more parallels in the chapters ahead.
4. What is one thing absent in the life of Joseph through all that he suffered?

## **JOHN 11**

John 11 is the narrative of the death of Lazarus. Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Marth (11:3) and John tells us that Jesus loved them all. Word came to Jesus that Lazarus has died. Jesus delays

going to the tomb of Lazarus but eventually determines to go. The disciples are fearful of this decision because of the intentions of his enemies. When he arrives, he is faced by Martha who insists that had Jesus been present Lazarus would not have died. All of this sets the stage for Jesus to utter another of his “I am” statements, this time, “I am the resurrection and the life.”

That “I am” statement is significant. Jesus has repeatedly expressed his divine sonship and authority prompting his enemies to accuse him of blasphemy. Now, in the face of the great enemy, death, Jesus pronounces his dominion over death and then sets forth in a vivid picture of his authority over it. After making this grand pronouncement, Jesus proves his authority by raising Lazarus from the dead.

That statement, coupled with the actions, gives great hope to the people of God. Life is found in Christ and it can be found in no other. He is the resurrection and the life. Those that believe in Him lives, though he may still physically die. The opposite is true. Those that refuse to believe in the son of God are dead even when they are living. Another hope offered in these words of Christ is that believers who die will be raised (1 Cor. 15). We have a sure and steadfast hope, settled on the unchanging Word of God, that death has lost its power and sting. Though our bodies waste away, when Christ returns, we will be resurrected to glory.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Do you believe in the Son of God? That is, do you believe the Gospel? Without it, you are dead, though you may be alive right now. Ponder anew the glorious truth and hope found in Christ.

2. Meditate on the hope of your resurrection. We live in a world filled with sin and misery. Contrary to some teachers, we do not and will not have our best life now. WE await it in the future hope of the resurrection and glory that awaits all who believe in Christ.
3. When is the last time you meditated on the resurrection? Read 1 Cor. 15 and reflect on it.
4. Why do you think Jesus waited four days before going to the tomb of Lazarus?
5. When Jesus called Lazarus from the tomb, did he come out? How does that action of Christ compare to the Holy Spirit's calling you from death to life?

## ~Saturday, February 15, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 40; John 12

### **GENESIS 40**

Genesis 40 is a description of Joseph's life in prison. The narrative continues from the end of chapter 39.

In this chapter, we read of the two officers of Pharaoh's court that were put in prison because they displeased him. Both of them had dreams that they did not understand. The first, the chief cupbearer, dreamed a dream regarding his eventual restoration. Joseph, through the help of divine revelation (40:8), informs the chief cupbearer that he will be restored to the service of Pharaoh. The second, the chief baker, noticing that Joseph was able to interpret dreams, brought his dream to him. Sadly, his interpretation indicates that Pharaoh would execute him.

The act of interpreting dreams leads Joseph to request the chief cupbearer: remember me when you are restored. We read that he

forgot him and, thus, Joseph languished in prison for two years (41:1).

Discussion Questions:

1. How is God's providence manifested in this chapter?
2. What does the reply of Joseph at 40:8 say about his walk with the LORD?

## **JOHN 12**

John 12 begins the ascent to Jerusalem and the beginning of the Passion of Christ. In this chapter, there are three main sections to consider.

The first section (12:1-8) contains the narrative of the anointing of Mary. In this passage, Jesus rebukes the grumbling disciples and argues that Mary has done a good thing and will be remembered. The important truth is contained in the fact that Mary was willing to give all to the Savior and for the sake of the Savior. We need more Mary's in the church today!

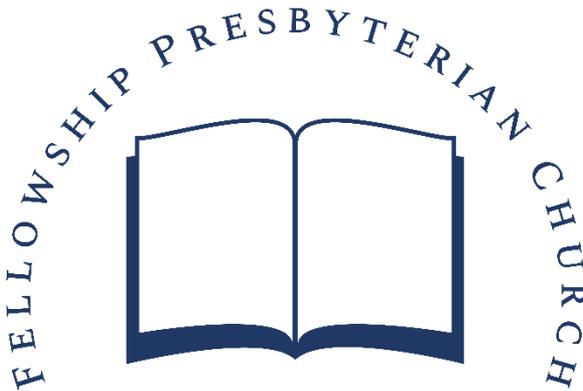
The second section (12:12-19) contains the story of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Here the crowds praised him. It would not be very many days later that they would demand his execution. How fickle the heart of man.

The third section (12:27-50) contains a teaching of Christ regarding his crucifixion and the response of the people. Not unlike our day, the people of Christ's day did not believe. They could not see and they would not see. As a result, they are judged and will be judged. Their end is tragic. On the other hand, to all who believe in Christ, to them, life is given by the Father.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does Mary anoint Jesus?

2. How does Mary's action demonstrate her heart attitude?  
What was it that she gave?
3. What Old Testament passage does Jesus draw on in this passage (12:36-43)?
4. Two people are contrasted in 12:44-50. Who are they and what is the main thing that separates them?



PREACH THE WORD - 2 TIM. 4:2