

Bible Reading Guide 2020

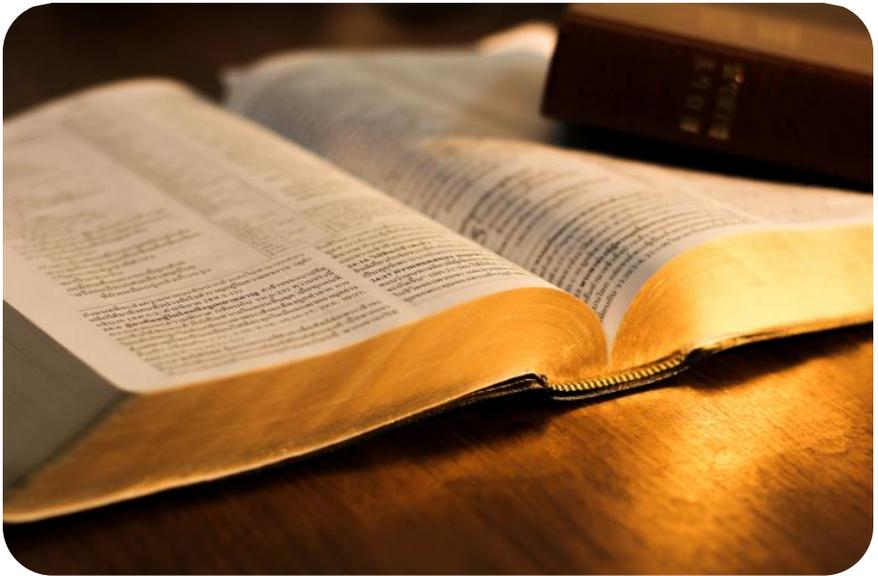
Week 4

January 19-25, 2020

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 read.



~Lord's Day, January 19, 2020 ~

Reading: Psalm 5-6

PSALM 5

Psalm 5 is one that was offered during a period of distress. The background and particulars are not known. However, given that David is the author, it is likely it was during a period when Saul pursued him. The wicked words of his enemies characterize the Psalm. It begins with a prayer. It then turns to highlight the actions of the wicked. It ends with confidence in God, who saves and delivers his people.

Discussion Questions

1. When in distress, do you turn to the Lord as David does in this Psalm? Suggestion: During times of difficulty, keep a journal and write down your thoughts and prayers. Be specific.
2. Though the Psalm highlights the wicked words of evil people, what does that communicate regarding the state of their hearts? See Matt. 15.

PSALM 6

David pens this Psalm though the background is uncertain. The occasion *may be* one of the health crises in the life of David. Whatever the circumstance that occasioned this Psalm, David turns to the Lord for help. The Psalm can be divided into two stanzas. The first (6:1-7) offers the concern of the King to the one true King. The second (6:8-10) is a plea for the enemies to flee from his presence. It could be that they were tormenting David during his physical struggle.

Discussion Questions

1. Because we live in a fallen world, sickness and disease will be with us until the Lord returns. These times can be very difficult. Follow the example of David and set forth your plea for help to the God who saves.
2. What do you think is the meaning of the term “Sheol”?

~Monday, January 20, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 17, Matthew 17

GENESIS 17

Genesis 17 is a very significant chapter in the Bible. In this chapter, God changes the name of Abram to Abraham (and his wife to Sarah). The critical item of this chapter is found in 17:9-14, when God gives Abraham the covenant sign of circumcision. This sign was required for all of his offspring and their offspring after them. This sign was later adopted and changed to baptism in the New Testament. The covenant promise made to Abraham is one of a spiritual nature, ultimately. All those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ are in the line and lineage of Abraham. See Rom. 4.

The latter half of the chapter sets forth the promise of an heir of Abraham and Sarah. The promise of a son will ensure the covenant promise to make Abraham’s name great and continue the line of the “seed of the woman” as given in Gen. 3:15.

Discussion Questions

1. What day were the children to be circumcised? Do you think there is any significance to that command?
2. What happens to those who are not circumcised? Why?

3. What is the problem facing Abraham and Sarah about having a child?

MATTHEW 17

Matthew 17 contains the narrative of the transfiguration and the second offering of Christ's prediction of his death. First, in 17:1-9, Jesus ascends the mountain and communicates with Moses and Elijah. These two figures are prominent in the Old Testament. Moses, the quintessential character of the Bible and Elijah, the prophet who faced the wickedness of the people and the prophets of Baal as well as the wicked queen, Jezebel. The scene is very similar to the events we witness in Ex. 19.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it that Moses and Elijah show up on this mountain?
2. What are they talking about with Jesus? See Luke 9:31.
3. What is the reason that the disciples were not able to cast out the demon from the boy? See 17:20. How much faith is required?

~Tuesday, January 21, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 18, Matthew 18

GENESIS 18

Genesis 18 contains the narrative of the mysterious visit from the three men (18:2) and their promise that Sarah would have a son. When Sarah heard these words, she laughed (hence the name Isaac, which means "laughter."). After the prediction of the birth of Isaac, these three men went to Sodom – an introductory element that sets up the narrative of chapters 18-19.

The second half of the chapter contains the exchange between God and Abraham regarding the fate of Sodom. In this intercession, Abraham learns about the mercy of God and the need to intercede on behalf of people. In this, we see the Lord Jesus Christ as our mediator before the Father.

Discussion Questions

1. Some people think these three men are representative of the LORD and two angels. How is that supported in this passage? See 18:1-2, 10.
2. Mediate on 18:14. Is anything too hard for the Lord?
3. What does Abraham's labor in prayer for the sake of Sodom teach you regarding intercessory prayer?

MATTHEW 18

Two critical items are set forward in this chapter. First, 18:15-20 describes the steps required when there is an offense between brothers and sin in the church. This section is known as "the steps of biblical church discipline." The second section, closely related to the previous one, is the parable of the unforgiving servant. What is vital to this parable is the need for brothers and sisters to freely forgive because God has forgiven you.

Discussion Questions

1. Who does Jesus say is the greatest in His kingdom?
2. What are the steps of biblical church discipline as given in 18:15-17. Why is it important to keep the matter quiet in the church until it needs to be known?
3. Restate the parable in 18:21-35. What precipitates the parable? See 18:21.
4. Why is it vital that God's people always be quick to forgive? What happens to those who refuse to forgive others?

~Wednesday, January 22, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 19, Matthew 19

GENESIS 19

This chapter is the recording of the events that lead to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. What is important to note in this chapter is the display of both God's righteous judgment and his holy mercy. He judges wicked people while, at the same time, rescues Lot and his family. Sadly, his wife was not spared because she did not obey the command of the angels.

Discussion Questions

1. What does this event tell you about the anger and justice of God?
2. What does this event say about God's attitude towards sin?
3. How does this event highlight God's mercy? Why was God merciful to Lot and his family?

MATTHEW 19

Matthew 19 can be divided into three sections. The first (19:1-12) is the teaching on the subject of divorce. The second (19:13-15) demonstrates Christ's desire for children to come to Him. The third (19:16-30) is the sad account of the rich young man who could not come to Christ because the riches of this world hindered him. There are many lessons in all three sections. There are also difficult words, especially in the first section.

Discussion Questions

1. What causes Jesus to teach on the subject of divorce?
2. What reason does Jesus offer as the basis on which a divorce may be permitted?

3. What section of the Bible does Jesus use as the basis of his argument and lesson?
4. Why does Jesus desire children to come to him? What does that teach us regarding our children and grandchildren? What responsibility do you have as parents and/or grandparents?
5. Why is it possible that riches and wealth and material good may prevent one from coming to Christ?

~Thursday, January 23, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 20, Matthew 20

GENESIS 20

This chapter is another event in the life of Abraham when he lies to save himself. Regardless of Abraham's lie, God preserves his life and does not treat him as his sin deserves.

Discussion Questions

1. What motivates Abraham to lie? What is the lie?
2. How does God intervene in this event?
3. What does God's intervention maintain as it pertains to the seed of the woman?
4. How does Abraham seek to justify his lie?

MATTHEW 20

This chapter can be divided into four sections. The first (20:1-16) describes the nature of the Kingdom of God (20:1). These verses are framed as a parable. The main purpose of the parable is to highlight the grace of God.

The second section (20:17-19) is the foretelling of the death of Christ for the third time.

The third section (20:20-28) is the request of the mother of James and John for them to sit on the right and left hand of the Savior in His kingdom. In this section, Jesus teaches on the need to be a servant.

In the fourth section (20:29-34), Jesus heals two blind men. In so doing, he shows his pity and compassion for the struggles of men.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the point of the parable in 20:1-16?
2. Why does Jesus desire his followers to be servants? Does that describe your life?

~Friday, January 24, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 21, Matthew 21

GENESIS 21

This chapter can be divided into three sections. The first (21:1-7) highlights the birth of Isaac and the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham and Sarah in chapter 18. Note also that Isaac was circumcised when he was eight days old. Like his older half-brother, he was part of the covenant of God, although Ishmael was from the seed of the serpent. The second section (21:8-21) shows God protecting the child of Hagar. The third section (21:22-34) contains the treaty made with Abimelech.

Discussion Questions

1. What does the birth of Isaac say about God and what he promises to do?
2. Why is it important that Isaac was circumcised?
3. Why does God protect Hagar and Ishmael?

MATTHEW 21

Matthew 21 begins the passion week of Christ with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The significant elements are the triumphal entry (21:1-12), the cleansing of the temple, and the cursing of the fig tree (21:13-22).

Discussion Questions

1. What sort of welcome does Jesus receive when he enters Jerusalem? How does this compare to the events that will occur in a few chapters?
2. Why does Jesus cleanse the temple?
3. Why does Jesus curse the fig tree?

~Saturday, January 25, 2020 ~

Reading: Genesis 22, Matthew 22

GENESIS 22

This chapter is very significant in the story of redemptive history. The central doctrinal theme of the chapter is that of “substitutionary atonement.” The chapter opens with God telling Abraham to offer his son – the son of promise – as a sacrifice. It is in the land of Moriah that this sacrifice will take place. Abraham dutifully obeys the Lord and takes his son on the journey. On the journey, Isaac inquires as to the animal for the sacrifice. Abraham, in faith, answers him, “God will provide.” Upon arriving at the location, and just as Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, God intervenes and provides a ram as a substitute. Two issues are important. The first is the God did indeed provide a substitute. Second, the location of the sacrifice is the place where the temple of the Lord would eventually be built (See 2 Chron. 3).

Discussion Questions

1. If you were told to sacrifice your child, would you be as willing to obey as Abraham was to obey? What does Abraham's obedience say about his faith in God?
2. Faith always produces obedience. How does Abraham's behavior demonstrate this principle?
3. What image is being shown when God provides a substitute for the sacrifice? Who is the true sacrifice and substitute for sinners?
4. What do you think God would have done had Abraham been permitted to carry out the command of God and sacrifice his son?

MATTHEW 22

Matthew 22 contains three separate testings from the enemies of Christ while He is ministering in the temple. The first is over the issue of taxes and the civil magistrate (22:15-22). The second comes from the Sadducees over the issue of the Resurrection (22:23-33). The third comes from an attorney who questioned Jesus regarding the Law (22:34-41). At the end of the chapter, Jesus stumps his adversaries by asking them a question that confounds them.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the point of 22:20-22?
2. What is the greatest commandment? What is the one that is like it?

