

Through the Bible in 24 Months



WEEK 16 OF 104

Hear Him

Week 16 of 104 • 15% of the way through the Bible

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

General Old Testament	Leviticus 21-27
Wisdom Literature	Proverbs 18-19
Gospels	Matthew 16:1-17:13
General New Testament	Acts 17

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Every reading this week turns on whether anyone is listening. Leviticus hands Israel a calendar and a set of vows and says, in effect, your year and your word now belong to Me. Solomon says a man who answers before he hears is a fool, and that the first man to tell his side always sounds right until somebody asks the other fellow. At Caesarea Philippi Jesus asks His disciples what the crowds are saying and then asks the only question that matters, and six days later, on a bright mountain, the Father cuts through Peter's well-meant chatter with two words: Hear Him. Then Paul reasons in a synagogue, is checked daily by the Bereans, and stands up in Athens to tell a city of listeners that God now commands them to repent.

How to use this guide: Read all four passages during the week. Your teacher will take up two of them in class, one in each session. For the other two, work through the "Extended Class Discussion or Self-Study" questions on your own and write your answers in the space provided.

GENERAL OLD TESTAMENT Leviticus 21-27

Feasts, Jubilee, and Covenant

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

The reading opens with stricter standards for priests and for the offerings brought to them. Chapter 23 lays out the year: Sabbath, Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Weeks, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles. Then the lampstand and the showbread, and a man executed for blasphemy. Chapter 25 gives the sabbath year and the Jubilee, when land went back to its family and servants went free. Chapter 26 sets blessing and discipline side by side, and chapter 27 puts a price on vows.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Leviticus 23 hands Israel a calendar rather than asking for one. Look at how much of their year God claimed, and talk about what a family or a congregation would look like today if God set the schedule instead of fitting into it.

2. Every fiftieth year land returned to the family that had lost it and Israelites who had sold themselves went free (Leviticus 25:8–17, 39–43). What was God protecting with that law, and what does it show about how He regards land, debt, and people?
3. Leviticus 26 sets blessing beside discipline and warns repeatedly that God will chasten “seven times more” if they still will not listen. How is that different from simple punishment, and how does Hebrews 12:5–11 take up the same idea for Christians?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List the seven appointed feasts of Leviticus 23 in calendar order, noting the month of each and what the nation was told to do.
2. Read Colossians 2:16–17 and Hebrews 10:1 with that list in front of you. Then connect Passover to 1 Corinthians 5:7, Firstfruits to 1 Corinthians 15:20, and Weeks to Acts 2:1.
3. Leviticus 25:23 gives God’s own reason the land could never be sold permanently. Copy His words exactly, and consider what claim they make on anything you currently call yours.
4. Trace the promises of Leviticus 26:3–13 and stop at verse 12. Find where Paul quotes that verse in 2 Corinthians 6:16–18, and note whom he is describing.
5. Chapter 27 deals with vows, with what a person promised God in a moment of feeling and had to pay later. Name one promise you have made to God and not kept, and settle it before next Sunday.

WISDOM LITERATURE Proverbs 18–19

A Strong Tower and Good Counsel

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Two chapters of short, sharp sayings about the mouth and the ear. Solomon looks at the man who cuts himself off, the fool who wants to talk instead of understand, the person who answers before he has heard the question, and the litigant who sounds right until the other side speaks. Along the way come the name of the Lord as a strong tower, death and life in the power of the tongue, a friend who sticks closer than a brother, and the Lord’s counsel standing while our plans multiply.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Proverbs 18:1 says a man who isolates himself seeks his own desire and rages against all wise judgment. How does isolation actually creep up on a busy adult, and what does it do to a person over time?
2. Verse 18:13 calls it folly to answer before hearing, and 18:17 says the first to plead his case seems right until the other side arrives. Where have you watched those two verses prove true, and what habits would keep you out of them?
3. Proverbs 18:21 puts death and life in the power of the tongue. Name the ways an ordinary tongue gives life, and be specific about the last time yours actually did.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Go through both chapters and collect every verse about speech. Sort them into three columns: what to say, when to say it, and when to say nothing at all.
2. Compare Proverbs 18:10 with Psalm 61:3 and Philippians 4:6–7. Explain what “the name of the Lord” stands for, and describe what running into that tower looks like on a Wednesday afternoon.
3. Proverbs 19:2 warns about zeal without knowledge. Read Romans 10:1–3 and give one example, from Scripture or from life, of religious zeal that was sincere and sincerely wrong.
4. Proverbs 19:17 says pity on the poor is a loan to the Lord. Set Matthew 25:34–40 beside it, then list by name the people within reach of you who qualify.
5. Proverbs 19:20 says listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days. This week ask one person for honest counsel about a decision you have already made, and listen all the way through without defending yourself.

GOSPELS Matthew 16:1–17:13

The Confession and the Cross

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Pharisees and Sadducees demand a sign from heaven and Jesus refuses them one. He warns the disciples about leaven, and then at Caesarea Philippi asks who men say He is, and who they say He is. Peter answers, and Jesus promises to build His church. Immediately He begins telling them He must be killed and raised, Peter objects,

and Jesus calls that Satan's suggestion. Six days later Peter, James, and John watch Him transfigured, hear Moses and Elijah, and are silenced by a voice from a cloud.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. At Caesarea Philippi Jesus asks two questions, one about what the crowds are saying and one about what the disciples themselves say. Why does He ask them in that order, and why will the second question not stay answered only once?
2. In 16:18–19 Jesus promises to build His church and to give Peter the keys of the kingdom. Read Acts 2 next to that promise and talk about when and how it was kept.
3. Six days after Peter tries to talk Jesus out of the cross, the voice from the cloud gives one command: “Hear Him.” What had just happened that made that command necessary, and where do we make the same mistake Peter made?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Write out Peter's confession in 16:16, then read what Jesus says about its source in 16:17. Explain why flesh and blood could not have produced that sentence.
2. Trace the four things Jesus says in 16:21 must happen to Him. Then find the same prediction in 17:22–23 and 20:17–19 and note what He adds each time.
3. Read Matthew 16:28 together with Mark 9:1 and Acts 1:8 through 2:4. When did the kingdom come with power, who was standing there to see it, and what does that settle?
4. Compare the transfiguration with Peter's own account in 2 Peter 1:16–18. He says the experience proved something; identify it, and then read 2 Peter 1:19 and note what he calls even more reliable.
5. Jesus says the only way to follow Him is to deny yourself and take up a cross (16:24). Name one thing you want that following Christ this year will not permit you to have, say it out loud to one person, and let go of it.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

At Thessalonica Paul spends three Sabbaths in the synagogue reasoning, explaining, and proving from the Scriptures that the Christ had to suffer and rise. Some believe and some start a riot, and Jason takes the blame. At Berea the response is different: they receive the word eagerly and then check it daily. At Athens Paul walks a city crowded with idols, argues in the marketplace every day, and is finally brought to the Areopagus to explain himself to philosophers.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Luke describes Paul's method in Thessalonica with three verbs: reasoning, explaining, and demonstrating from the Scriptures (17:2-3). How is that different from the way belief is usually recommended to people today?
2. The Bereans are called more fair-minded because they received the word eagerly and then searched the Scriptures daily to check it (17:11). How do eagerness and scrutiny belong together, and what happens to a congregation that has one without the other?
3. At Athens Paul starts with an altar the Athenians built and ends with a resurrection and a command to repent. Walk through the speech and talk about what he was willing to grant them, what he would not grant, and how the sermon ends.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List every claim Paul makes about God in 17:24-29, and mark which ones an educated Athenian would already have accepted.
 2. Paul quotes two of their own poets in 17:28. Read 1 Corinthians 9:20-22 and Titus 1:12 alongside it, and describe what this shows about how Paul approached an audience.
 3. Acts 17:30 says God overlooked the times of ignorance but now commands all men everywhere to repent. Explain what changed, and say what the word "everywhere" rules out.
 4. Three different responses follow the sermon in 17:32-34. Name all three, and identify which of them you meet most often in the people you know.
 5. The Bereans checked the preacher against the Scriptures every day. Choose one thing you believe mainly because you were taught it, study it out for yourself this week, and write down what you actually find.
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NEXT WEEK'S READING: Numbers 1-4 · Proverbs 20 · Matthew 17:14-18:20 · Acts 18-19:10

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