

Through the Bible in 24 Months



WEEK 24 OF 104

What Will Not Pass Away

Week 24 of 104 • 23% of the way through the Bible

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

General Old Testament	Deuteronomy 6–15
Wisdom Literature	Proverbs 27–28
Gospels	Matthew 24:1–35
General New Testament	Acts 27

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Everything in this week's readings is either coming down or holding fast. Moses warns a people about to move into houses they did not build and vineyards they did not plant that the danger ahead of them is not hunger but a full stomach and a short memory. Proverbs tells you not to boast about tomorrow, and reminds you that riches are not forever and a crown does not last to every generation. Jesus sits on the Mount of Olives looking at the most magnificent building in the Jewish world and says not one stone will be left on another, and then adds that heaven and earth will pass away but His words will not. And Paul stands on a ship coming apart under his feet and says, I believe God.

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 Deuteronomy 6–15

Do Not Forget the Lord

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

These chapters are the heart of Moses' preaching. Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one, and you shall love Him with all your heart, soul, and strength. Teach it to your children at every hour of the day. Then come the warnings: when you are full, when the houses are built and the wells are dug, beware lest you forget. God did not choose you because you were impressive or righteous. He chose you because He loved you and kept His oath. Then instruction on worship, false prophets, food, tithes, the seventh-year release, and an open hand toward the poor.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Deuteronomy 6:4–9 is the Shema, and Jesus called the command in verse 5 the first and greatest of all (Matthew 22:37–38). What does it actually mean to love God with all your heart, soul, and strength, and how is that handed to children in the way verses 7 through 9 describe?

2. Moses says repeatedly that the danger is not the wilderness but the good land (6:10–12; 8:11–18). Why is a full stomach harder on faith than an empty one, and where has prosperity quietly reshaped your own devotion without your noticing?
3. Three times in 9:4–6 God tells Israel that they are not receiving this land for their righteousness, and He calls them a stiff-necked people in the same breath. Why insist on that before they have even crossed the river, and what would have become of them if He had let them believe otherwise?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Read Deuteronomy 6:20–25 and write out the answer a father was to give his son when the boy asked what the commandments meant. Notice how much of the answer is story and how much is rule, and think about what that ratio should teach us.
2. Trace the words “remember” and “forget” through chapters 6, 8, and 9. Make two lists: what they were to remember, and what they were most in danger of forgetting.
3. Deuteronomy 8:3 says God humbled them and fed them with manna so they would learn that man does not live by bread alone. Read Matthew 4:1–4 and note how Jesus used this verse, and what it suggests about the purpose God has for a hard season.
4. Deuteronomy 10:12–13 asks what the Lord requires and answers with a short string of verbs. List them, then compare Micah 6:8 and John 14:15, and write one sentence about what all three have in common.
5. Deuteronomy 15:7–11 commands an open hand toward a poor brother and forbids a grudging heart and a wicked thought about the coming year of release. Identify one person you could genuinely help this month, decide on the amount or the act, and do it before the month is out.

WISDOM LITERATURE Proverbs 27–28

Sharpened by a Friend

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Two chapters full of short, hard-edged counsel. Do not boast about tomorrow, because you do not know what a day will bring. Let someone else praise you. Open rebuke is better than hidden love, and the wounds of a friend are faithful. Iron sharpens iron. Know well the condition of your flocks, because riches are not forever. Then

chapter 28 turns to law, wealth, and conscience: the wicked run when nobody is chasing them, the man who turns his ear from hearing the law finds even his prayer detestable, and the one who covers his sins will not prosper.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Proverbs 27:5–6 says an open rebuke is better than love that stays hidden, and that the wounds of a friend are faithful while an enemy's kisses are deceitful. Who in your life currently has permission to wound you, and what makes a rebuke faithful rather than merely painful?
2. Proverbs 28:13 says the one who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will find mercy. Why are both verbs needed, and what does covering a sin quietly cost the person who is doing the covering?
3. Proverbs 27:23 tells you to know well the condition of your flocks and to attend to your herds, because riches are not forever. What are the flocks in your life, and which of them has gone longest without an honest inspection?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Read Proverbs 27:1 and then James 4:13–16. Explain what is actually wrong with boasting about tomorrow, and write out the sentence James says we ought to say instead.
 2. Proverbs 27:17 says iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend. Make two lists: the people who sharpen you, and the people you are currently sharpening. If either list is empty, write down honestly why.
 3. Trace the proverbs in chapter 28 about the law and about listening to it (28:4, 7, 9, 18). Taken together, what do they say about a person who stops listening, and what happens to his prayers?
 4. Proverbs 28:1 says the wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion. Compare 1 John 3:19–21 and Hebrews 10:22. Where does that kind of boldness before God come from, and where does it not come from?
 5. Proverbs 27:2 says to let another praise you and not your own mouth. For the next seven days keep a quiet count of how often you steer a conversation toward your own accomplishments, and then name one specific thing you will say instead.
-

Not One Stone Left

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

As they leave the temple the disciples point out the buildings, and Jesus tells them that not one stone will be left upon another. On the Mount of Olives they ask when it will happen and what the sign will be. His answer is long and sober: false christs, wars, famines, persecution, betrayal, cooling love, the gospel preached in all the world, and then the abomination of desolation, at which they are to flee to the mountains without going back for a coat. He tells them the generation then living would see it, and that His words outlast the universe.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The disciples point out the temple buildings and Jesus answers that not one stone will be left on another (24:1–2). Why would that have been almost unthinkable to them, and what does it say about the confidence we place in anything visible, however magnificent and however religious?
2. Jesus gives His followers strikingly practical instructions for the crisis: do not be deceived, do not be troubled, flee to the mountains, do not go back for your clothes (24:4–20). Read Luke 21:20–24 beside this. How did those instructions actually save lives, and what does that say about attending carefully to what Jesus said rather than to what people say He said?
3. In 24:34 Jesus says this generation will not pass away till all these things take place, and in 24:35 He says heaven and earth will pass away but His words will not. Taken together, how do those two verses protect us from panic on one side and from date-setting on the other?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List everything Jesus says must happen before the end comes in 24:4–14. Then use Acts and the letters to identify which of those items the apostles actually saw in their own lifetimes.
2. Compare Matthew 24:15 with Luke 21:20. How does Luke describe the same sign, and what would that have looked like to a Christian living in Jerusalem?
3. Read Isaiah 13:9–13, spoken about Babylon, and Ezekiel 32:7–8, spoken about Egypt. Note how the Old Testament uses sun, moon, and star language for the fall of nations, and then read Matthew 24:29 again in that light.
4. Jesus says in 24:13 that he who endures to the end will be saved. Read Hebrews 3:12–14 and Revelation 2:10. What do these passages assume is possible for someone who does not endure?

5. In 24:12 Jesus says that because lawlessness abounds, the love of many will grow cold. Name one specific way your love for Christ or for people has cooled over the past year, and one specific thing you will do this week to warm it again.

GENERAL NEW TESTAMENT Acts 27

I Believe God

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Paul sails for Rome under guard with Luke and Aristarchus aboard. The season is late, the winds are wrong, and at Fair Havens Paul warns that going on will cost the cargo, the ship, and lives. The centurion trusts the pilot and the owner instead. A wind called Euroclydon takes the vessel for fourteen days of darkness. In the middle of it an angel tells Paul that he will stand before Caesar and that God has granted him every life aboard. Paul tells them so, insists the sailors stay, feeds two hundred and seventy-six frightened people, and they all reach land alive.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Paul warns that the voyage will end in loss, and the centurion believes the pilot and the ship's owner instead (27:9–12). It was a perfectly reasonable decision by the experts on board. When is the judgment of competent people the wrong place to put your trust, and how would you know?
2. After the promise that not one life would be lost, Paul tells the soldiers that unless the sailors stay in the ship they cannot be saved (27:22–31). God had already promised, and yet the means still mattered absolutely. How do God's promises and our obedience fit together, and where does that same principle show up in how a person is saved?
3. In the middle of a two-week storm Paul takes bread, gives thanks in front of everyone, and eats, and the whole ship's company cheers up (27:33–36). Why did such a small act change the mood of nearly three hundred exhausted people, and where could your steadiness do that for somebody this week?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace the voyage from 27:1 through 27:44, listing each port and each major decision. Identify the last point at which the disaster could still have been avoided.
2. List everything thrown overboard, and in what order (27:18–19, 38). What does that sequence tell you about how people rank their possessions once their lives are actually at stake?
3. Read Acts 27:23–25 and write out Paul's stated reason for confidence, word for word. Compare Romans 4:20–21 and 2 Timothy 1:12. On what exactly was his faith resting?

4. Paul was a prisoner with no authority whatever on that ship, and by the last paragraph everyone is doing what he says. Trace how that shift happened, and note what earned him the hearing he did not get at Fair Havens.

5. Name the storm you are actually in right now, whether financial, medical, relational, or spiritual. Write down what you are certain God has said about it, and then name one thing you will do this week because you believe Him.

NEXT WEEK'S READING: Deuteronomy 16–25 · Proverbs 29 · Matthew 24:36–25:30 · Acts 28

More studies available on ChurchOfChristBibleStudies.com