

Through the Bible in 24 Months



WEEK 37 OF 104

The House God Builds

Week 37 of 104 • 36% of the way through the Bible

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

General Old Testament	2 Samuel 1-10
Wisdom Literature	Psalms 22-23
Gospels	Mark 6:30-7:13
General New Testament	1 Corinthians 2-3

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

David finally has everything. The rival house is finished, the tribes have come to Hebron, Jerusalem is taken, and the ark is home. So he looks around at his cedar palace and decides to build God a house, and God sends a prophet back with the sentence the rest of the Bible is built on: you will not build Me a house, I will build you one. Then you will read a psalm that describes a crucifixion a thousand years before anyone in Israel had seen one, and six verses about a shepherd and a table set before your enemies. You will watch Jesus look at a hungry crowd and see sheep without a shepherd. And Paul will tell a quarreling church that they are God's building, and that everything built on that foundation gets tested by fire.

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 2 Samuel 1-10

I Will Build You a House

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Saul is dead, and David's first act is to weep for him. Seven years follow as king over Judah at Hebron, a long war with the house of Saul, and the murders of Abner and Ish-bosheth, neither of which David will celebrate. He takes Jerusalem from the Jebusites, brings the ark home with dancing after a first attempt that costs a man his life, and offers to build God a house. God answers with a promise about a house He will build instead, and a throne established forever.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. David composes a lament for the man who hunted him for years (1:17-27). Read it and notice what he refuses to say about Saul. What does grief like that require of a person, and could you write it about anyone you have been hurt by?

2. In 2 Samuel 7 David offers to build God a house, and God answers that He will build David one. Read 7:12–16 with Acts 2:29–36. Where is that throne right now, and what difference does the present reign of Christ make to an ordinary Tuesday?
3. Uzzah put out his hand to steady the ark and died (6:6–7). Read David’s own explanation in 1 Chronicles 15:13. Discuss why sincerity and good intentions did not cover the error, and where that principle presses on us today.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace David’s rise from 2 Samuel 1 through 5:5. List each stage and how long it took. What does the timeline tell you about God’s patience, and about David’s?
2. Read 2 Samuel 7:12–16, then Acts 2:29–36, Hebrews 1:5, and Luke 1:32–33. Write down how the New Testament says each part of that promise was kept.
3. 2 Samuel 9 records David’s kindness to Mephibosheth. List everything David gives him, and name what the gift cost David and what it cost Mephibosheth to receive it.
4. Compare 2 Samuel 6:1–11 with 1 Chronicles 15:1–15. What did David do differently the second time he moved the ark, and where had he learned it?
5. David asked whether anyone was left of the house of Saul that he might show him kindness for Jonathan’s sake (9:1). Name the person you owe a kindness to because of someone else, and pay it this week.

WISDOM LITERATURE Psalm 22–23

The Shepherd Who Was Forsaken

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

These two ought to be read in one sitting. Psalm 22 opens with the cry Jesus quoted from the cross and then describes, a thousand years early, a death no Israelite had yet seen: bones out of joint, hands and feet pierced, and men gambling for clothing. Then the tone turns and the sufferer is declaring God’s name to the whole congregation. Then Psalm 23 gives six of the best-known verses in the Bible: a shepherd, a valley, a table, a rod and staff, and a house to live in forever.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Psalm 22 was written centuries before crucifixion existed. Read verses 1, 7–8, and 14–18, then read Matthew 27:35–46. How do you account for the detail, and what should it do to our confidence in the rest of Scripture?
2. At verse 22 Psalm 22 turns from agony to praise in the middle of the great assembly. Locate the turn, and discuss what it teaches about how to pray while the trouble is still going on.
3. Psalm 23:5 says the table is prepared in the presence of my enemies, not after they have been driven off. Talk about what it means to be fed while the trouble is still in the room, and whether you have ever experienced that.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List everything the sufferer says about his own body and about the people around him in Psalm 22:12–18. Then match each detail to a specific line in the gospel accounts of the crucifixion.
2. Compare Psalm 22:1 with Matthew 27:46. Why would Jesus quote the first line of this particular psalm, and what would a Jewish hearer have known about how it ends?
3. Trace the shepherd's actions through Psalm 23. Which of those actions is God doing for you right now, and which one are you resisting?
4. Read John 10:11–18 beside Psalm 23. What does Jesus add to David's picture of the shepherd that David could not have written?
5. Psalm 23:6 says goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Write down three specific mercies from the last twelve months, and tell somebody about one of them before Sunday.

GOSPELS Mark 6:30–7:13

Sheep Without a Shepherd

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

The apostles come back, and Jesus takes them away for rest that never comes. The crowd runs ahead on foot and is waiting when the boat lands, and Mark says Jesus was moved with compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He teaches them, then feeds five thousand men from five loaves and two fish. That

night He walks to the disciples across the water. Then Pharisees arrive from Jerusalem to complain about unwashed hands, and Jesus answers with Isaiah and with a word about Corban.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Jesus planned a rest and got a crowd, and He was moved with compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd (6:34). Notice what He does for hungry people first. What does that order say about what people most need, and about how we tend to reverse it?
2. Mark 6:52 says the disciples were astonished at the walking on the water because they had not understood about the loaves, and their hearts were hardened. Discuss how a person can watch a miracle and learn nothing from it.
3. In Mark 7:9–13 Jesus says the Pharisees had a fine way of setting aside God’s commandment in order to keep their tradition. Name the traditions we would fight hardest to keep, and work out how a congregation distinguishes a useful custom from a binding law.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. List everything Jesus tells the disciples to do in the feeding of the five thousand (6:37–43). Which parts were their work, and which part could only He do?
2. Compare Mark 6:45–52 with Matthew 14:22–33. What does Matthew include that Mark leaves out, and why might Mark, writing with Peter’s preaching behind him, tell it the way he does?
3. Read Mark 7:6–7 and then Isaiah 29:13. Explain in your own words what makes worship vain according to these two passages.
4. Trace the Corban argument in 7:9–13. How exactly did the tradition work, and which of the ten commandments did it nullify?
5. Jesus quotes Isaiah about people who honor God with their lips while their hearts are far from Him. Name one part of your worship that has become mechanical, and decide now what you will do differently this Sunday.

Building on the Foundation

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Paul reminds the Corinthians how he came to them, not with polished speech, but determined to know nothing among them except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He explains where the message came from: not from human insight but revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and delivered in words the Spirit taught. Then the rebuke. They are still infants, still carnal, still quarreling over preachers. Paul planted, Apollos watered, God gave the increase. They are God's field, God's building, God's temple, and every builder's work will be tested by fire.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. 1 Corinthians 2:1–5 says Paul deliberately set aside excellence of speech so their faith would not rest in the wisdom of men. Where do we still try to make the gospel persuasive by means other than the gospel, and what does that cost in the long run?
2. Paul calls the Corinthians carnal and says he had to feed them milk, and his evidence is envy and strife (3:1–4). Discuss why Scripture treats division as a mark of immaturity rather than of conviction, and how you tell the difference.
3. 1 Corinthians 3:11–15 says each man's work will be tested by fire. Look honestly at what you are currently building into other people, at home and in this congregation. Which of your materials would come through that?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace what 1 Corinthians 2:9–13 says about how the truth traveled from God to us. List each step in order, and note who does what at every stage.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 2:14 about the natural man. Compare Acts 17:11 and Romans 10:17. Does the verse mean an unbeliever is incapable of understanding Scripture, or something narrower? Give your reasons from the text.
3. 1 Corinthians 3:6–9 divides the labor between the preachers and God. List what belongs to each, then note who gets the credit in verse 7 and what that does to a party spirit.
4. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 and notice that the word you is plural. Compare Ephesians 2:19–22 and 1 Peter 2:5. Which temple is Paul talking about here, and what exactly is the warning?
5. 1 Corinthians 3:21–23 says all things are yours, and you are Christ's. Name one thing, a class, a work, a building, a ministry, that you have quietly been treating as belonging to a man, and change the way you speak about it this week.

NEXT WEEK'S READING: 2 Samuel 11-17 · Psalm 24-25 · Mark 7:14-8:10 · 1 Corinthians 4-5

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