

Through the Bible in 24 Months



WEEK 46 OF 104

Numbered Days

Week 46 of 104 • 44% of the way through the Bible

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

General Old Testament	2 Kings 18-25
Wisdom Literature	Psalms 38-39
Gospels	Mark 14:12-50
General New Testament	1 Corinthians 15:35-16:24

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

This week everybody is running out of time and only some of them know it. Hezekiah is told to set his house in order, prays, and is handed fifteen more years, and what he does with them is worth a long look. Josiah hears a book read aloud and tears his clothes, but the reckoning has already been set. A psalmist asks God, of all things, to make him know how short his life is. Jesus kneels in a garden with a few hours left and asks for the cup to pass before saying, "Not what I will." And Paul, writing to people who wanted to argue about the mechanics of the resurrection, says the plain thing: this mortal must put on immortality. Then he tells them to get to work.

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 Kings 18-25

Reform, Ruin, and Exile

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Hezekiah tears down the high places and even breaks the bronze serpent, and then an Assyrian officer stands outside the wall and mocks his God. The angel of the Lord answers. Hezekiah is given fifteen more years and shows off his treasury to envoys from Babylon. Manasseh reigns fifty-five years and fills Jerusalem with innocent blood. Josiah finds a lost book, tears his clothes, and launches the most thorough reform in Judah's history. Then Babylon comes, the temple burns, and the people are carried away.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. When Sennacherib's letter arrives, Hezekiah goes into the house of the Lord and spreads it out before God (19:14-19). Read his prayer carefully and notice what he finally asks for. How is that different from the way most of us pray when a crisis letter shows up?
2. The book of the law is found, read aloud, and Josiah tears his clothes (22:8-13), and what follows is the most thorough reform in Judah's history. Yet 23:26-27 says the Lord did not turn from His anger. Discuss what

that combination teaches about genuine repentance and about consequences that still have to be lived through.

3. Isaiah tells Hezekiah his sons will be carried to Babylon, and the king answers, “Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?” (20:19). Name the decisions people make on that principle today, and name what it costs the generation that comes after.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Hezekiah broke the bronze serpent Moses had made, because Israel had been burning incense to it (18:4). Read Numbers 21:8–9 and John 3:14–15, then describe how a God-given memorial turned into an idol and what that warns us about.
2. Make a list of everything Josiah removes, breaks, burns, or defiles in chapter 23. Count the items, and note how many of them had been standing since Solomon.
3. Read 2 Kings 21:1–16 about Manasseh, then read 2 Chronicles 33:10–13. Write down what the Chronicles account adds, and explain how both accounts can be true at once.
4. Gather the stated reasons Judah fell from 21:11–15, 23:26–27, and 24:3–4. Sort them, and note which sin the writer names as the one God would not pardon.
5. Hezekiah accepted a future disaster because it would not arrive in his lifetime. Name one decision you are currently making for your own comfort whose cost will land on your children, your congregation, or the person who takes your place, and change it this week.

WISDOM LITERATURE Psalm 38–39

My Days Are a Handbreadth

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Two psalms written from inside a bad season. In Psalm 38 the writer is physically sick, socially abandoned, and fully aware that his own sin is the cause, and he describes all three in detail that is almost uncomfortable to read. Psalm 39 begins with a man trying to keep his mouth shut and discovering that silence only raises the pressure. When he finally speaks, what comes out is a request nobody expects: Lord, make me know my end, and how short my life really is.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Psalm 38 describes guilt in bodily terms: no soundness in the flesh, wounds that fester, a heart that pounds, eyes that have lost their light. Discuss why unconfessed sin so often shows up in the body and in the sleep before it ever shows up in a confession.
2. Psalm 39:1–3 describes a man who kept quiet while his heart grew hot inside him until at last he spoke. When is holding your tongue wisdom, and when is it simply avoidance? Give an example of each from your own experience.
3. In 39:4 the psalmist asks God to make him know his end and the measure of his days, so that he may know how frail he is. That is not a prayer most of us have ever prayed. What would honestly praying it change about next month's calendar?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Work through Psalm 38 and list what the writer says sin has cost him in three areas: his body, his relationships, and his inner life. Note which of the three he mentions most often.
2. Compare Psalm 38:18 with Psalm 32:3–5 and 1 John 1:8–9. Write down what each passage says about the turning point between carrying sin and being free of it.
3. Trace the sequence in 39:1–3 step by step, from the resolution, to the muzzle, to the silence, to the burning, to the words. Then identify where in that sequence you usually are.
4. Psalm 39:12 says, "I am a stranger with You, a sojourner, as all my fathers were." Read Hebrews 11:13–16 and 1 Peter 2:11, and describe what it means to live somewhere without belonging to it.
5. Name one specific sin, not a category, that you have been carrying without ever putting into words before God. Confess it by name this week, and if another person was wronged by it, go and make it right (Matthew 5:23–24).

WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE

Two disciples follow a man carrying a water jar and find an upper room already prepared. At the table Jesus says one of them will betray Him, and then He takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it, and says, "This is My body." They sing a hymn and walk out to the Mount of Olives. Peter promises he will never stumble. In Gethsemane Jesus falls to the ground and asks for the cup to pass, three times, while His closest friends sleep. Then torches, a kiss, a sword, and everyone runs.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. At the table Jesus takes bread and a cup and gives them meaning that His disciples will carry for the rest of their lives (14:22–25). Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and Acts 20:7 alongside this, and talk about what we are actually doing on the first day of each week and how easily it becomes routine.
2. In Gethsemane Jesus asks plainly for the cup to be taken away and then says, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will" (14:36). Discuss how a person prays both halves of that honestly, without the first half becoming demand or the second half becoming resignation.
3. Peter says he will die before he denies, the disciples all say the same, and an hour later they are asleep and then gone (14:29–31, 37–50). Where has your confidence in yourself outrun your actual preparation, and what would watching and praying have looked like in advance?

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Trace how the Passover room was located in 14:12–16, step by step. List the details Jesus specified in advance and what actually happened, and describe what that says about the week He was walking into.
 2. Write out exactly what Jesus says over the bread and over the cup in 14:22–24. Compare Matthew 26:26–29 and 1 Corinthians 11:23–26, and note what each account adds.
 3. In 14:25 Jesus says He will not drink of the fruit of the vine again until He drinks it new in the kingdom of God. Read Mark 9:1 and Acts 2 alongside it, and write down when Scripture says that kingdom came.
 4. Read Hebrews 5:7–9 next to the Gethsemane account. List what Hebrews says about His prayers, His hearing, and what He learned, and explain how that helps you read Mark 14:33–36.
 5. Jesus told them to watch and pray so they would not enter into temptation (14:38). Identify the temptation you regularly walk into unprepared, and set one specific, concrete watch this week before it arrives rather than after.
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This Mortal Must Put On**WHAT YOU WILL FIND HERE**

Somebody asks the skeptic's question: how are the dead raised, and with what body do they come? Paul answers with a handful of seeds, the difference between a buried kernel and a standing stalk, and four short contrasts between what is sown and what is raised. Then the last trumpet, the change, and a taunt thrown at death itself. Then, with barely a pause, he turns to a collection, a travel schedule, a list of names, and a final round of greetings from ordinary Christians in Ephesus.

FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Paul answers the question about the resurrection body with a seed (15:35–44). Work through the comparison together. What stays the same between the seed and the plant, what changes, and how does that help with the objection that a body long dead cannot possibly be raised?
2. After the trumpet, the change, and the taunt at death, verse 58 begins with "Therefore." Read 15:54–58 as one thought and discuss how the resurrection makes ordinary, unglamorous work for the Lord something other than wasted effort.
3. First Corinthians 16:1–2 gives the church a plain pattern for giving: on the first day of the week, each one, laying something aside, as he has prospered. Take the four elements one at a time and talk about what each one would change about how most of us actually give.

EXTENDED CLASS DISCUSSION OR SELF-STUDY

1. Write out the four "sown and raised" contrasts in 15:42–44. Beside each one, note what it says about the body you will have and what it says about the body you have now.
2. Read 15:45–49 with Genesis 2:7. List what Paul says about the first Adam and the last Adam, and explain what it means to bear the image of the heavenly Man.
3. Compare 15:51–52 with 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17 and John 5:28–29. Note how many comings, how many resurrections, and how many judgments these passages describe when read together.
4. First Corinthians 16:13–14 gives five short commands in a row. Write them out and describe what each one would look like in a specific situation you are facing this month.
5. Set up your giving this week the way 16:2 describes: decided in advance, proportional to income, and set aside first rather than last. Write down the figure before Sunday rather than deciding in the pew.

NEXT WEEK'S READING: 1 Chronicles 1-5 · Psalm 40-41 · Mark 14:51-15:20 · 2 Corinthians 1:1-2:4

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