

One Year Bible – Week 2

Reading Schedule:

Genesis = Ge / Matthew = Mt / Psalms = Ps / Proverbs = Pr



Jan 8 – Ge 18:20-19:38 / Mt 6:25-7:14 / Ps 8 / Pr 2:6-15
Jan 9 – Ge 20:1-22:24 / Mt 7:15-29 / Ps 9:1-12 / Pr 2:16-22
Jan 10 – Ge 23:1-24:51 / Mt 8:1-17 / Ps 9:13-20 / Pr 3:1-6
Jan 11 – Ge 24:52-26:16 / Mt 8:18-34 / Ps 10:1-15 / Pr 3:7-8
Jan 12 – Ge 26:17-27:46 / Mt 9:1-17 / Ps 10:16-18 / Pr 3:9-10
Jan 13 – Ge 28:1-29:35 / Mt 9:18-38 / Ps 11:1-7 / Pr 3:11-12
Jan 14 – Ge 30:1-31:16 / Mt 10:1-25 / Ps 12:1-8 / Pr 3:13-15

Summary: Genesis reading

The introduction of the Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The history of the people of God was being traced through the lives of these individuals and God was revealing himself as their god. Throughout Israel's history, God would be commonly referred to as the "god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Though God did not begin with the Patriarchs, his fame among the people was being established as he was developing *his-story*.

Summary: Matthew reading

Jesus concludes his famous Sermon on the Mount with some challenging words to the original listeners and to us today. The second half of this week's reading in Matthew is a collection of episodes that provide a glimpse of Jesus' power and authority as he begins his earthly ministry.

Things to Look For and Questions to Ponder as You Read:

- You've likely heard the phrase "actions speak louder than words," which in other words means a person can say all they want but it is what they do that reveals their true identity. Well Jesus gave this same advice long ago by using the analogy of a tree's fruit. As you read Mt 7:15-23 consider your own actions as they relate to God's Word. Are there areas in your life where your words are inconsistent with your actions? Ask God to reveal these areas to you and then seek his help to change.
- Last week's reading introduced us to God's covenant with Abraham. (Ge 12:1-3, take a moment to reread these promises.) Though we know that Abraham was blessed by God (Ge 23:6b; 24:1, 34-36), we can also see that God's promise to Abraham extended far beyond his earthly life. How does knowing this form our understanding of God's promises to us?

- As you read the accounts of Jesus healing in Matthew this week, what do you observe about those who sought Jesus' healing? What do you observe about Jesus' response to those he healed? How do these observations relate to your relationship with God? Are there any in particular that challenge your current perceptions about or actions with God?

Small Group Questions:

- 1) What comes to mind when you think of the word "faith"? What is one phrase that you use to describe someone who is faithful to God?
- 2) "Therefore I tell you, do not worry..." (Mt 6:25ff) How many times have you found yourself worrying yet trying hard not to? These words of Jesus are not mere suggestion. He does not give the standard human encouragement "try not to worry." Instead he declares that worry has no place in life for the Christian. What is Jesus' reasoning for this declaration? What stands in the way of us living worry free?
- 3) Sodom and Gomorrah are infamous Biblical names, yet there is more to be learned from their story than to avoid sin. Notice the reasons given for their destruction and God's response. (Ge 18:20-33, esp v20; 19:13, 29) What qualities do you observe about God's character and how do they change or bolster the way you relate to him?
- 4) In Mt 8:18-22 Jesus shows a seemingly harsh response to a potential disciple. In this passage, the man wanting to bury his father is not speaking of an immediate need to dig a grave; rather he is using a phrase which meant that he will wait for his father to pass away before he follows Jesus. Why when met by Jesus do some people respond with reluctance? How can we counter that reluctance either in our own lives or in the lives of those around us?
- 5) The story of the calling of Matthew (Mt 9:9-13) shows a group of Pharisees, a group with religious status and influence, smugly scrutinizing Jesus for socializing with people seen as "unacceptable." Share with the group if you have ever observed anyone be treated or described as hopeless or unacceptable? How do Jesus' words in this passage affect the way we respond in such situations?

Journal the Psalms this week:

Psalm 8 introduces a literary device known as an *inclusio*. An *inclusio* functions as a literary book end of sorts; the beginning and the end are the same. The purpose of an *inclusio* is to highlight the main point of whatever is being communicated. Whenever you see this literary device it is as if the writer is telling you, "everything you read in between revolves around this." As you read Psalm 8, repeat to yourself, "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" Take an opportunity to journal your own Psalm of praise to God beginning and ending with, "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"