

Week 21: “Our God Of Unending Grace”

Wk 21 - Day 1: Genesis 21

Explanation: Genesis 21 opens with the long-awaited birth of Isaac. Scripture emphasizes that “the Lord visited Sarah as he had said” and did for her “as he had spoken.” After years of waiting, questions, mistakes, and moments of unbelief, God fulfills His promise exactly as He said He would. Isaac’s name comes from the Hebrew word meaning “he laughs.” Earlier, Abraham and Sarah had laughed in disbelief at the promise of a child. God graciously turned their doubtful laughter into a joyful testimony. Yet the chapter quickly moves from celebration to conflict. Sarah sees Ishmael mocking Isaac and demands that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away. Abraham is deeply distressed, but God assures him that He has not forgotten Ishmael. Though the covenant promise will continue through Isaac, God promises to make a nation from Ishmael as well. When Hagar runs out of water in the wilderness, she places Ishmael under a bush and moves away because she cannot bear to watch him die. Then God hears Ishmael’s cry. His name actually means “God hears,” reminding us that even in the wilderness, he was never beyond God’s attention or care. God then opens Hagar’s eyes to a nearby well and promises to remain with Ishmael as he grows. At the end of the chapter, Abimelech recognizes that God is with Abraham and asks to make a covenant of peace with him. After settling a dispute over a well, Abraham worships the everlasting God. God had proven faithful in promise, provision, and protection.

Application: This chapter reminds us that God’s grace does not expire while we are waiting. Abraham and Sarah had waited decades, made mistakes, and struggled to believe, yet God remained faithful. God always keeps His promises and gives you the power you need to do what He wants you to do. No matter how long you may have to wait, you can trust God to accomplish His purposes. Grace also reaches people we might overlook. Hagar and Ishmael were outside the covenant line through Isaac, but they were not outside God’s compassion. He heard their cries and provided for them in the wilderness. Sometimes God’s grace is seen in fulfilled promises; other times it appears as unexpected provision in a painful place. Hagar thought she was looking at the end, while God knew there was a well nearby and a future still ahead. Our God of unending grace is faithful when we are waiting, compassionate when we are hurting, and present when we cannot see the provision He has already prepared. As we walk in His grace it will also become visible to others. His faithfulness through our waiting, failures, and changes can become a testimony to the people watching our lives. Because He is the everlasting God, His grace never runs out!

- What does this chapter teach us about God’s concern for people who may feel forgotten or pushed aside?
- What are some visible markers of God’s grace that others might be able to notice if they had observed your life over the years?
- Why do difficult seasons sometimes make God’s grace harder to recognize?
- Sarah went from laughing in disbelief to laughing with joy. Where has God changed your perspective about a situation over time?

Wk 21 - Day 2: Matthew 21

Explanation: Matthew 21 begins with Jesus entering Jerusalem as the promised King. He rides on a donkey in fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy, while the crowds shout, “Hosanna to the Son of David.” The word hosanna comes from a Hebrew expression meaning “save now” or “please save.” “They were quoting from Psalm 118:25–26, and this psalm is definitely messianic in character.” Ironically, many who welcomed Him expected political deliverance while failing to recognize the deeper salvation He had come to provide. Jesus enters the temple and drives out those who had turned worship into commercial exploitation. He declares that God’s house should be “a house of prayer.” His actions reveal both His authority and His desire to restore what had become spiritually corrupt. The chapter then records several confrontations with religious leaders. Through the fig tree and the parables of the two sons and the wicked tenants, Jesus exposes outward religion that produces no genuine fruit. The religious leaders repeatedly resist Him, yet Jesus continues teaching and calling them to repentance. Even His warnings are expressions of grace. He exposes their sin because there is still an opportunity to respond. The tragedy of the chapter is that people can stand near Jesus, hear His truth, witness His authority, and still harden their hearts against Him.

Application: Grace is not merely God overlooking our sin. Sometimes grace confronts us. Jesus cleansed the temple, exposed hypocrisy, and warned religious leaders because He loved people too much to leave them unchanged. Our gracious God continually calls people to repentance even when they have resisted Him repeatedly. Every warning from Scripture is evidence that God is still inviting us to turn around. Matthew 21 is also a warning against the perils of spiritual fruitlessness. The fig tree looked healthy from a distance but produced nothing. Likewise, our religious activity can create the appearance of spiritual life while our hearts remain far from God. Grace should produce transformation. The proper response to God’s patience is not continued resistance but humble repentance and a life that bears fruit.

- What expectations did the crowd likely have when they shouted “Hosanna”? How is Jesus different from the kind of king many people expected?
- What “fruit” should become increasingly visible in someone who has experienced God’s grace?
- Imagine Jesus walked through the priorities of your week the way He walked through the temple. What might He celebrate and what might he confront?
- Why was cleansing the temple an act of grace as well as judgment?

OUR MIGHTY God

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

Wk 21 - Day 3: Nehemiah 11

Explanation: With Jerusalem's walls rebuilt and the people spiritually renewed, Nehemiah 11 addresses another problem: the city still needs people willing to live there. Most of the population had settled in surrounding towns, so leaders live in Jerusalem, and lots are cast to select additional families who will relocate there. The people praise those who "willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem." The Hebrew idea behind "willingly offered," carries the sense of volunteering freely. Living in Jerusalem was an honor, but it also involved sacrifice. The restored city still carried responsibilities, risks, and significant work. The chapter lists priests, Levites, gatekeepers, servants, leaders, and ordinary families. God's restoration of Jerusalem required more than a rebuilt wall. It required people willing to fulfill their purpose and serve faithfully. These long lists demonstrate God's grace in preserving His people after exile. Jerusalem had once been broken, burned, and nearly empty. Now homes are being occupied, worship is functioning again, and a community is being rebuilt. Grace did not simply bring the people out of captivity, it continued on to give them another opportunity to live faithfully in the place God had restored.

Application: God's grace does more than rescue us from the past; it gives us a new place and purpose in His work. Jerusalem's restoration became meaningful because people were willing to step into what God had rebuilt. Sometimes grace calls us to inconvenience. Those who moved into Jerusalem were willing to rearrange their lives for something greater than personal comfort. God may similarly lead us to serve, give, relocate priorities, or accept responsibilities that cost us something. Never underestimate the importance of simply being physically present in the place where God wants you. You may not be asked to perform some dramatic ministry, but simply being there is a ministry. The men, women, and children who helped to populate the city of Jerusalem were serving God, their nation, and future generations by their step of faith. We also see that God's grace gives each person a place in His larger work. Our God of unending grace takes what was broken and makes it useful again. Even if others don't recognize or appreciate your ministry, you can be sure that God knows all about it and will reward you accordingly. The question is whether you will be a spectator of His work or willingly offer yourself to become part of what He is doing?

- What areas of God's work often depend upon people willing to serve behind the scenes?
- What comfort might you need to surrender in order to participate more fully in God's work?
- Why is willingness such an important part of serving God?
- Why is it significant that Jerusalem needed people, not just walls?

Wk 21 - Day 4: Acts 21

Explanation: Acts 21 follows Paul as he continues toward Jerusalem. Along the journey, believers repeatedly warn him that suffering awaits. In Caesarea, the prophet Agabus dramatically binds his own hands and feet with Paul's belt and predicts that Paul will be arrested in Jerusalem. Paul's friends plead with him not to go, but he responds, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Paul is not seeking suffering, but neither will the threat of suffering turn him away from faithfulness. When the believers realize that Paul cannot be persuaded, they pray that the will of the Lord be done. This captures the heart of surrendered discipleship. God's grace does not always remove hardship; sometimes it gives strength to remain faithful through it. When Paul reaches Jerusalem, misunderstanding quickly develops. Some Jewish believers have heard false reports about his ministry, while later a hostile crowd accuses him of defiling the temple. Paul is seized, beaten, and nearly killed before Roman soldiers intervene. Yet even in confusion and opposition, God preserves Paul's life and gives him an opportunity to testify. What appears to be the collapse of his ministry actually becomes another stage in God's larger plan.

Application: We sometimes think grace should make life easier, but Acts 21 shows another side of grace: God gives us what we need to remain faithful when life is hard. Paul's confidence was not that nothing painful would happen. He already knew difficulty was coming. His confidence was that Jesus was worthy of obedience regardless of the cost. Our God of unending grace may not always remove the burden, opposition, misunderstanding, or uncertainty. Instead, He gives courage for the next step and strength to endure what we could not face alone. The chapter also teaches us not to judge God's work only by immediate appearances. Paul's arrest looked like a setback, but God would use it to place Paul before crowds, governors, kings, and eventually in Rome. Grace means that even the difficult chapters of our lives are still in God's hands.

- Do you think Paul made the right decision to ignore the warnings and make the journey despite the danger ahead? Would you have made the same decision?
- Why do you think Paul's friends interpreted the warnings as prohibition while Paul interpreted them as preparation?
- How should Christians respond when faithfulness does not produce an immediately positive outcome?
- How can God's grace sustain us without removing the problem itself?

OUR MIGHTY

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

God

Wk 21 - Day 5: Psalm 86

Explanation: Psalm 86 is a prayer of David during a time of distress. He repeatedly calls upon God for help, but his confidence rests primarily in who God is. Verse 5 declares, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy." The Hebrew word translated "mercy," describes God's steadfast love. His mercy is not unpredictable or temporary. It flows from His faithful character. David later echoes God's self-description from Exodus 34: "Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." The word translated "gracious," describes someone who generously shows favor to the undeserving. David knows that God has every reason to judge sin, yet He is patient, compassionate, forgiving, and abundant in steadfast love. David responds by asking, "Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." David's response is significant. God's grace does not simply comfort us; it changes us. David wants the God who forgives him to also reshape the way he lives. Experiencing grace should not make us careless about obedience. It should produce a heart increasingly devoted to God.

Application: Psalm 86 shows us why God's grace can truly be called unending: grace is not merely something God gives; graciousness is part of who He is. We often measure God's patience by our own. We become frustrated quickly, hold grudges, and eventually decide someone has received enough chances. God's mercy is so much deeper and more abundant than we can even imagine. To be clear, that doesn't make sin insignificant. David's response to grace is, "Teach me thy way." When we experience God's grace, it should always lead us toward greater obedience, worship, and devotion. It should also lead us away from sin and carelessness. We can be encouraged to know that when we stumble, you don't have to wonder whether God still has compassion for you. You can confess honestly and return to Him because you know that His character has not changed. Our God of unending grace is good, ready to forgive, slow to anger, and abundant in steadfast love. That gives us confidence to call upon Him again and again.

- Why should receiving grace make us more obedient rather than less concerned about sin?
- When you fail, is your first instinct to run toward God or pull away from Him? Why?
- Is there an area where you have received God's grace but still need to let Him change the way you live?
- Is there someone you need to extend grace to because of the grace God has shown you?

Week 22: “Our God Who Provides”

Wk 22 - Day 1: Genesis 22

Explanation: One of Abraham’s greatest tests of faith comes in Genesis 22, when God asks him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Isaac was not only Abraham’s beloved son, but also the one through whom God had promised to continue His covenant. Abraham obeys, trusting that God could still fulfill His promise even when he could not understand how. As Abraham and Isaac climb Mount Moriah, Isaac asks, “Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham tells him that God will provide himself a lamb. The Hebrew word translated “provide,” normally means “to see.” The idea is that God sees the need beforehand and therefore provides for it. At the last moment, God stops Abraham and points him to a ram caught in a thicket. Abraham names the place Jehovah-jireh, meaning “The LORD Will Provide.” God never intended Isaac to be the sacrifice; He provided a substitute in his place. The scene also points forward to the gospel. On another day, another beloved Son would be offered, but this time God would not provide another substitute. Rather, Jesus Himself would become the sacrificial Lamb provided for the sins of the world.

Application: Genesis 22 reminds us that God’s provision is often seen most clearly when we reach the end of our own resources. Abraham could not see the ram while climbing the mountain, but God had already prepared what would be needed. Where does the Lord provide our needs? In the place of His assignment. Abraham was at the right place, so God could meet his needs. We often want God to show us the provision before we take the step of obedience. Abraham teaches us to trust the Provider even when we cannot yet see what He has provided. We have no right to expect the provision of God if we are not in the will of God. When does God meet our needs? Just when we have the need and not a minute before. Sometimes it looks like God waits until the last minute to send help, but that is only from our human point of view. God is never late. Most importantly, we can always find comfort knowing that our God who provides has already met our greatest need. We needed rescue from sin, and He provided Christ in our place. If God has provided for our eternal need through His Son, we can trust Him with the needs we face today.

- Is there anything in your life you would struggle to place fully in God’s hands?
- Where are you currently being asked to trust God before you can see how He will provide?
- Would you still trust God if He asked you to surrender the thing you prayed for?
- Looking back, where can you see that God had already prepared something before you knew you would need it?
- What does this passage teach us about holding God’s blessings with open hands?

Wk 22 - Day 2: Matthew 22

Explanation: Matthew 22 begins with Jesus’ parable of the wedding feast. A king prepares a celebration for his son and sends servants to call those who had been invited. Surprisingly, many refuse to come. Some are simply too busy with their farms and businesses, while others mistreat and kill the king’s servants. The king then sends his servants into the highways to invite others, and the wedding hall is filled. The picture emphasizes God’s gracious invitation into His kingdom. The feast has already been prepared; the invitation is offered freely. Yet each person must respond. The chapter continues with religious leaders trying to trap Jesus with questions about taxes, resurrection, and the Law. Jesus answers each one with perfect wisdom. When asked for the greatest commandment, “Jesus quoted the “Shema” (Deut. 6:4), a statement of faith that was recited daily by every orthodox Jew. He summarizes God’s will: love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. The Greek word translated “love,” describes devoted, purposeful love that expresses itself through action. God not only invites us into relationship with Him; He provides clear direction for how that relationship should shape our lives. Then Jesus turns the conversation back on the Pharisees and asks them a question: “Whose son is the Christ?” They answer, “The son of David.” That answer was true, but it was incomplete. The Pharisees knew the right facts about the Messiah, but they had failed to recognize the Messiah standing right in front of them.

Application: Our God who provides has prepared what we could never prepare for ourselves: entrance into His kingdom through Christ. Salvation is not a feast we earn or create. God prepares it and graciously invites us to come. The tragedy of the parable is that people can reject an incredible invitation because other things feel more important. Work, possessions, schedules, and ordinary responsibilities can become excuses for ignoring what God provides. God’s provision also calls for a response. Grace is free, but it is never insignificant. Receiving God’s invitation should result in a life increasingly marked by love for Him and for others. If we have a right relationship with God, we will have no problems with His commandments. Love is the basis for obedience. In fact, all of the Law is summed up in love. If we love God, we will love our neighbor; and if we love our neighbor, we will not want to do anything to harm him. We also should examine our view of Christ. We are reminded that it is possible to know a lot about Jesus without truly recognizing who He is. Jesus is not simply a teacher, example, or helper. He is Lord, and He deserves our trust, obedience, and surrender.

- How can good things like work, family, possessions, or responsibilities become excuses for ignoring God?
- What does the king’s persistence in inviting people teach us about God?
- What does loving God with all your heart, soul, and mind look like practically?
- Why are people sometimes more comfortable seeing Jesus as a teacher or helper than as Lord?

OUR MIGHTY God

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

Wk 22 - Day 3: Nehemiah 12

Explanation: Nehemiah 12 records the dedication of Jerusalem's rebuilt wall. The chapter begins by identifying priests and Levites who had faithfully served through different generations. God had not only provided a wall; He had provided people to lead worship and ministry. For the dedication, Nehemiah organizes two large thanksgiving choirs that travel around the top of the wall before meeting near the temple. Why did Ezra and Nehemiah organize this kind of a dedication service? Why not just meet at the temple area, let the Levites sing and offer sacrifices to the Lord, and send everybody home? The people were bearing witness to the watching world that God had done the work, and He alone should be glorified. The same wall that enemies once mocked is now filled with worshipers celebrating God's faithfulness. Verse 43 says they offered great sacrifices and "rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy." The phrase describes the overwhelming gladness, celebration, and joy. Their expression was not simply because a construction project was finished. They recognized that God had provided restoration, protection, leaders, worshipers, and a renewed community. The chapter ends with the people also providing for the priests and Levites. God's provision to them moved them to provide for His work.

Application: Nehemiah 12 reminds us that when God provides, we should not rush past it without giving Him praise. The people did not simply enjoy what God had helped them accomplish—they intentionally gave Him praise for it. We can be quick to focus on the next need and forget what God has already done. Sometimes His provision is obvious—a prayer answered, a need met, a door opened. Other times it is something we may overlook: strength for a difficult season, people God placed around us, protection we never saw, or simply enough grace to keep going. Nehemiah 12 challenges us to look back and ask, "Where has God provided for me?"

- What is the value of stopping to celebrate God's provision?
- Why do we sometimes move on so quickly that we forget to thank God for answered prayer?
- When you look back over the last year, where do you see God's provision most clearly?

Wk 22 - Day 4: Acts 22

Explanation: After being seized by the crowd in Jerusalem, Paul is given permission to speak. Rather than beginning with an argument, he tells his story. He explains his Jewish background, his former persecution of Christians, his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, and God's call upon his life. Paul recounts Ananias telling him that God had chosen him "to know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." God had not only saved Paul; He had provided him with a new calling and purpose. Paul's testimony however, does not immediately calm the crowd. When he explains that God sent him to the Gentiles, they erupt in anger and demand his death. Yet God continues to preserve him through the Roman commander and even uses Paul's Roman citizenship to protect him from unlawful beating. God's provision in Acts 22 is not the removal of all opposition. Rather, He provided Paul with a testimony to share, an opportunity to speak, courage to stand, and protection that allowed his mission to continue. Paul's entire time in Jerusalem was one filled with serious misunderstandings, but he pressed on. Perhaps at this point some of his friends were saying, "We told him so! We warned him!" For Paul and his associates, it may have looked like the end of the road, but God had other plans for them. Paul would witness again and again, and to people he could never have met had he not been a Roman prisoner. God's missionary did get to Rome—and the Romans paid the bill! That's what happens when God's people are willing to be daring!

Application: Sometimes we think we have nothing significant to offer God because we lack the right words or abilities. Acts 22 reminds us that God has already provided every believer with something powerful: a testimony of what Christ has done! Paul did not have to manufacture a story. He simply explained who he was, how he met Jesus, and how Christ changed the direction of his life. Our testimony does not have to be dramatic to be useful. God can use an honest account of His grace. This chapter also shows that God's provision does not guarantee an easy response. Paul obeyed and still faced rejection. Yet God provided exactly what Paul needed to continue. Our God who provides may not give us freedom from every difficult situation, but He supplies grace, courage, opportunities, and resources for the assignment He gives us.

- If you were to tell someone the highlights of your testimony and how God has worked in your life, what would you share?
- If someone asked you today, "Why do you follow Jesus?" how would you answer in two or three sentences?
- What can we learn from Paul about speaking truth even when we know it may not be well received?
- Why do you think Paul continued trying to reach people who had treated him so badly?

OUR MIGHTY

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

God

Wk 22 - Day 5: Psalm 23

Explanation: Psalm 23 begins with one of Scripture's most familiar descriptions of God: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." David would have understood shepherding firsthand. From his perspective, he knew that sheep depend upon their shepherd for food, water, direction, protection, and safety. By calling God his Shepherd, David is acknowledging his complete dependence upon Him. The Hebrew word translated "want," means to lack or be without what is needed. David is not claiming that believers receive everything they desire. Rather, he is declaring confidence that his Shepherd will faithfully provide what he truly needs. God provides green pastures for nourishment and still waters for refreshment. He restores the soul and leads in paths of righteousness. Even when the path enters "the valley of the shadow of death," the Shepherd remains present. The rod and staff picture both protection and guidance. David then shifts from the picture of a shepherd to that of a gracious host who prepares a table, anoints his head with oil, and fills his cup to overflowing. The psalm ends with confidence that God's goodness and mercy will pursue David throughout his life and that he will ultimately "dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

Application: Psalm 23 reminds us that our God who provides does not merely give us things, He gives us Himself as our Shepherd. His provision looks different in different seasons of life. Sometimes it is green pastures and sometimes it is strength for a dark valley. Sometimes He changes our circumstances and sometimes His greatest provision is His presence within them. We often define provision by what we still lack. David teaches us to begin with who we already have: "The LORD is my shepherd." Because we have Him, we ultimately have everything we need. If the Shepherd is faithful, we do not have to live controlled by fear over tomorrow. Following the Shepherd also means trusting His direction. Sheep do not choose the route; the shepherd does. We can trust that even the path through the valley is still under His care.

- Which picture in Psalm 23 best describes what you need from God right now?
- What valley have you walked through where God's presence became especially meaningful?
- Where are you tempted to worry about tomorrow instead of trusting your Shepherd today?
- What would change if you evaluated your life by God's faithfulness rather than by what you currently lack?
- Complete the sentence:
"Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I can trust Him to provide _____."

Week 23: “Our God Who Prepares A Home For Us”

Wk 23 - Day 1: Genesis 23

Explanation: Genesis 23 begins with Sarah’s death at 127 years old. Abraham mourns for her, but he also must find a place to bury her. Although God had promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, Abraham still describes himself as “a stranger and a sojourner” among the people living there. Abraham approaches the Hittites and asks to purchase the cave of Machpelah from Ephron. Though Ephron initially offers the property to him, Abraham insists on paying the full price. The transaction is publicly witnessed so that Abraham’s ownership cannot later be disputed. Abraham possessed God’s promise, but he had not yet experienced its full fulfillment. Machpelah became the first piece of the Promised Land Abraham legally possessed. He buried Sarah there, and later Abraham himself, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah would also be buried there. What began as a burial place became a lasting testimony that Abraham believed God would one day give this land to his family. Even in a chapter centered on death, there is quiet hope. Abraham grieves, but he does not live as though God’s promise has died with Sarah. He plants his faith in the very land God had promised for the future.

Application: Genesis 23 reminds us that faith can grieve and still have hope. Abraham mourned deeply, but his sorrow did not erase his confidence in what God had promised. We also live between promise and fulfillment. Scripture describes believers as strangers and pilgrims in this world. We enjoy God’s blessings here, but this world is not our final home. Our God who prepares a home for us gives us hope when life reminds us how temporary everything is. Loss, change, and uncertainty remind us not to place our deepest security in possessions or circumstances. Like Abraham, we can make present decisions based on future promises. Because God has prepared something greater for His people, we can live faithfully even when we have not yet received everything He has promised.

- How can grief and faith exist at the same time?
- Why was Abraham willing to pay full price for land God had already promised his descendants?
- How did the purchase of Machpelah demonstrate faith in God’s future promise?
- How should knowing that our ultimate home is with God affect the way we hold possessions and plans?

Read Genesis 23:1-20
Read Genesis 23:21-25

Wk 23 - Day 2: Matthew 23

Explanation: Matthew 23 is one of Jesus’ strongest confrontations with the scribes and Pharisees. He is not attacking them for caring about obedience; He is exposing the danger of outward religion without inward transformation. They taught God’s law, but many of them were more concerned with appearance, status, recognition, and control than with humility and genuine devotion. Jesus repeatedly calls them “hypocrites.” The Greek word originally referred to an actor who wore a mask. Like an actor in a play, these hypocritical leaders looked spiritual on the outside, but Jesus says their hearts were filled with pride, greed, and self-interest. They were careful about small religious details while neglecting what Jesus calls “the weightier matters of the law: judgment, mercy, and faith.” Jesus also describes them as “whited sepulchres.” Tombs could be made outwardly clean and attractive, yet death remained inside. His point is that spiritual appearance can never substitute for a changed heart. But the chapter does not end with anger. It ends with grief. Jesus looks at Jerusalem and says, “How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” That picture reveals the heart behind His warnings. Jesus wanted to gather, protect, and receive them, but they repeatedly resisted Him. So Matthew 23 is both a warning and an invitation. Jesus exposes false religion because He wants people to stop hiding behind appearances and come honestly under His care.

Application: It is easy to read Matthew 23 and think only about obviously hypocritical religious people. But Jesus’ words should make all of us examine our own hearts. We can know the right language, attend church, serve, teach, or look spiritually mature while still neglecting what God is doing inside us. A helpful question is: Am I more concerned with looking right or being right with God? We can become very skilled at managing what other people see while ignoring pride, bitterness, selfishness, or hidden sin. This chapter also reminds us that conviction is part of grace. Jesus did not expose these leaders because He wanted to embarrass them. He confronted them because He wanted them to turn around. Sometimes God’s grace looks like comfort; other times it looks like Him putting His finger on something in our life that needs to change. And the ending of the chapter ties directly to the week’s theme. Our God who prepares a home for us wants to gather us close to Himself. Jesus offers refuge, belonging, and protection, but we have to stop resisting Him. We do not have to impress Him or hide behind a mask. We can come honestly and let Him deal with what is really going on in our hearts.

- Where are you most tempted to care about appearing godly rather than actually becoming godly?
- What does the image of a hen gathering her young teach us about Jesus’ heart?
- Why can religious pride make repentance especially difficult?
- Complete the statement: “Jesus offers me a place of refuge, so I no longer need to pretend that _____.”

OUR MIGHTY God

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

Wk 23 - Day 3: Nehemiah 13

Explanation: Nehemiah 13 takes place after Nehemiah had been away from Jerusalem for a period of time. When he returned, he discovered that many of the commitments the people had made earlier were already beginning to unravel. One of the clearest examples involved Tobiah, a man who had repeatedly opposed Nehemiah's work. Eliashib the priest had actually given Tobiah a large room inside the temple courts, which was a space that had been intended to store offerings and supplies for worship. Nehemiah immediately removed Tobiah's belongings, cleansed the rooms, and restored them to their proper purpose. Nehemiah also found that the Levites were no longer being supported, so many of them had left their responsibilities and returned to their fields. The Sabbath was being ignored, with buying and selling taking place as though God's commands no longer mattered. He also confronted marriages that were pulling families away from faithfulness to God. The repeated problem throughout the chapter is spiritual drift. The walls were still standing, but the life inside the city was becoming disordered again. Jerusalem had been restored physically, but it still needed to remain a place devoted to God. That is why Nehemiah acts so strongly. He understands that what belongs to God should not slowly be handed back over to compromise.

Application: Nehemiah 13 is a good reminder that spiritual drift usually does not happen all at once. Most people do not wake up one morning and decide to walk away from God. It usually happens little by little—one compromise, one neglected habit, one priority pushed aside. It is worth asking: What have I allowed back into my life that I once knew needed to go? Maybe it is an attitude, habit, relationship, distraction, or priority that has slowly started taking up space again. God had restored Jerusalem to be a place where His people could worship and live faithfully, but that home had to be kept centered on Him. In the same way, God wants our hearts and homes to be places where He is honored, not crowded out. Nehemiah's actions were uncomfortable, but necessary. God loves us enough to confront what is out of order so He can restore what belongs to Him. A helpful personal question from this chapter is: If God walked through the "rooms" of my life, is there anything taking up space that belongs to Him?

- What does the chapter teach us about how quickly spiritual commitments can weaken?
- Is there something you once surrendered to God that has slowly begun taking space in your life again?
- What practical habits could help keep your home and life centered on God?
- If the Lord inspected your life right now, what might he want to "clear out"?

Wk 23 - Day 4: Acts 23

Explanation: Acts 23 begins with Paul standing before the Jewish council. Almost immediately, the high priest Ananias orders Paul to be struck. Paul recognizes that the council is divided between Pharisees, who believed in resurrection and the spiritual realm, and Sadducees, who rejected both. As Paul speaks, the disagreement becomes so intense that Roman soldiers have to remove him for his own safety. That night comes one of the most important moments in the chapter: "The Lord stood by him." Paul had been misunderstood, attacked, and was now imprisoned, but Jesus had not abandoned him. Jesus tells him, "Be of good cheer," meaning to take courage or be confident. Paul could have courage not because his situation looked safe, but because Jesus already knew where his story was going. Then Jesus says, "As thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Rome was not simply Paul's personal ambition; it was part of God's purpose for him. Paul did not yet know how he would get there, but Jesus had already established the destination. The very next morning, more than forty men make a vow not to eat or drink until they have killed Paul. From Paul's perspective, the promise of Rome could have immediately seemed impossible. Yet Paul's nephew hears about the plot and reports it to the Roman commander. The commander responds by sending Paul away under the protection of hundreds of Roman soldiers. God uses an unnamed nephew, overheard information, a Roman commander, soldiers, horses, and even the Roman legal system to keep moving Paul toward the place Jesus had promised. The chapter ends with Paul arriving safely before Governor Felix in Caesarea. He is not in Rome yet—but he is closer than he was before.

- Why is God's presence sometimes more important than receiving immediate answers?
- What present obstacle could you use some encouragement for as you move forward?
- What would you say to someone who assumes hardship means they have missed God's will?

Application: Sometimes God prepares the next place for us before we can see any possible way of getting there. Paul was imprisoned, surrounded by enemies, and facing a murder plot, yet Jesus said, "you're going to Rome." Our God who prepares a home and place for us is not limited by the obstacles between here and there. If He has determined the destination, He can also provide the path. Notice also that Jesus first gives Paul His presence before giving him information about the future: "The Lord stood by him." Before Paul knew what would happen next, he knew he was not alone. We may not know where every road is leading, but we can trust the God who already stands in our present and knows our future.

OUR MIGHTY

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

God

Wk 23 - Day 5: Psalm 84

Explanation: Psalm 84 expresses a deep longing to be in the presence of God. The psalmist begins, “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!” The term the psalmist uses carries the idea of being lovely, beloved, or deeply cherished. He longs so intensely for God’s courts that he says his “soul longeth, yea, even fainteth.” He even notices the sparrows and swallows making nests near God’s altars. The picture communicates belonging. Even small birds have found a home near the presence of God. The psalmist then describes those traveling toward Jerusalem for worship. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, a place associated with weeping or dryness, they make it a place of springs. Their difficult journey does not stop them because they know where they are headed. Verse 10 captures the heart of the psalm: “A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.” The psalmist would rather stand at the doorway of God’s presence than live comfortably among wickedness. The chapter closes by describing God as a sun and shield who gives grace and glory and withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly.

Application: Sometimes we spend a lot of time thinking, “I’ll be okay when this gets better.” We think that when work settles down, when the bills are easier, when the family situation improves, when the stress lets up I’ll finally be at peace. But the psalmist reminds us that our real security is not found in finally getting an easier life. It is found in being close to God. We are all going to walk through hard seasons. Sometimes life is just difficult. But the valley is not the final destination. Our God who prepares a home for us gives us hope that there is more ahead than what we are dealing with right now. The picture of the sparrow finding a home near God is also a simple reminder that there is a place for us with Him. We may feel overlooked, unsettled, or like we do not quite fit anywhere, but with God we belong. So we can enjoy the life God has given us without expecting this world to give us everything we need. Homes change. Jobs change. People change. Seasons change. But our relationship with God is secure, and He has prepared a forever home for His people. That gives us something steady to hold onto when everything else feels uncertain.

- What are some things people look to for security that can change quickly?
- Have you ever gone through a season where you felt unsettled or like you did not quite belong? What helped?
- What does the picture of the sparrow finding a home near God’s altar mean to you?
- How does the promise of a forever home with God give hope in everyday life?

Week 24: “Our God Who Rules & Reigns Forever”

Wk 24 - Day 1: Genesis 24

Explanation: Genesis 24 tells the story of Abraham sending his servant to find a wife for Isaac. Abraham is determined that Isaac not marry from the surrounding Canaanite peoples, so he sends his servant back toward Abraham’s relatives. The servant prays for God to guide him and asks for a clear sign: the woman who offers water not only to him but also to his camels will be the one God has provided. Before he even finishes praying, Rebekah arrives and does exactly that. What stands out in this chapter is how God’s rule is seen through ordinary events. There is no dramatic miracle, no fire from heaven, and no audible voice. God works through a journey, a prayer, a conversation at a well, a young woman’s kindness, and a family decision. The servant later says, “The LORD led me.” The Hebrew idea behind “led,” means to guide or direct along the right path. Looking back, he can see that what seemed like a series of normal decisions was actually being directed by God. Rebekah then agrees to go with the servant, and she eventually becomes Isaac’s wife. Through this ordinary family decision, God continues the covenant line He had promised to Abraham.

Application: Genesis 24 reminds us that God’s rule is not limited to big, dramatic moments. He is just as much at work in normal decisions, conversations, timing, and everyday circumstances. We often want God to show us the whole plan before we take the next step. But this chapter shows a servant who simply obeys what he knows, prays for direction, watches carefully, and keeps moving forward. That is a helpful pattern for normal life. We may be asking God about a job, a relationship, a move, a family decision, or a next step. But remember we don’t always need a spectacular sign. Sometimes God’s guidance becomes clearer as we pray, obey Scripture, use wisdom, and pay attention to the doors He opens. Our God who rules and reigns forever is also ruling over the details we cannot control. That does not mean every small event is a secret message from God, but it does mean our lives are not outside His care. We can make wise decisions without living in constant fear that one wrong move will ruin His plan.

- Where in your life right now do you wish God would make the next step clearer?
- How does believing that God rules over the details help with anxiety about making decisions?
- Have you ever had a decision make more sense in hindsight than it did in the moment? What did you learn from it?

Wk 24 - Day 2: Matthew 24

Explanation: Matthew 24 begins with the disciples admiring the temple buildings. To them, the temple looked strong, permanent, and untouchable. Jesus shocks them by saying that the day is coming when “there shall not be left here one stone upon another.” That statement leads them to ask about the future, His coming, and the end of the age. Jesus begins by warning them about deception. False messiahs and false teachers will come, so His followers must be grounded in truth. He also tells them they will hear of wars, famines, earthquakes, persecution, and increasing lawlessness. Yet He says, “see that ye be not troubled.” The Greek word carries the idea of being alarmed, disturbed, or thrown into panic. Jesus does not deny that frightening things will happen; He tells His followers not to let fear control them. He also makes it clear that difficult events do not mean God’s plan has stopped. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world.” Even while opposition increases, the mission of God continues. Human chaos cannot shut down the purposes of God. Jesus later describes His return as public, unmistakable, and glorious. The Son of Man will come with power and great glory and gather His people. His return will not be something hidden that only a few people notice. Jesus then stresses that no one knows the exact day or hour. He compares His return to the days of Noah, when people continued with everyday life until judgment came suddenly. The warning is living so absorbed in normal life that we are spiritually unprepared. The chapter ends with the picture of a faithful servant who continues doing what his master assigned while waiting for him to return.

Application: Matthew 24 is especially helpful for people living in an age of constant news, breaking alerts, predictions, and uncertainty. It is easy to hear about conflict, disasters, political tension, or cultural change and immediately become anxious. Jesus never tells us to pretend everything is fine. He tells us not to live troubled and controlled by fear. Our God who rules and reigns forever is not reacting to history as it unfolds. He already knows where history is headed, and Jesus makes it clear that He will have the final word. The purpose of Matthew 24 is not to give us a chart for decoding every headline. The point is that Jesus wants His followers to be discerning, steady, ready, and faithful. We can spend so much time trying to figure out what every event means that we neglect what Christ has already told us to do. Being ready for Jesus means living faithfully now. It means loving people, sharing the gospel, staying grounded in truth, resisting deception, serving where God has placed us, and keeping our priorities straight.

- If you were constantly mindful that Jesus was returning soon, what would you want to change about the way you are living now?
- How should believing that Jesus will ultimately reign change the way Christians react to bad news?
- Why do you think Jesus gives His disciples signs but refuses to give them an exact date?
- How can the certainty of Christ’s return give us peace when the future feels uncertain?

OUR MIGHTY God

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

Wk 24 - Day 3: Esther 1

Explanation: Esther 1 opens with King Ahasuerus ruling over a massive empire stretching from India to Ethiopia. He throws an extravagant celebration that lasts for months, showing off his wealth, power, and glory. Everything about the chapter is meant to make the king look impressive and completely in control. Near the end of the celebration, the king orders Queen Vashti to appear before his guests so he can display her beauty. Vashti refuses and her refusal embarrasses the king in front of his officials. The king's anger quickly turns into a major political decision. His advisers fear that Vashti's actions will influence other women throughout the empire, so they recommend removing her as queen. A royal decree is sent throughout the kingdom, and Vashti loses her position. What is striking is that God is never mentioned by name in Esther 1. Yet this chapter begins setting up everything that follows. Vashti's removal creates the opening that will eventually place Esther in the palace before anyone realizes why she will be needed there. The king appears to control the empire, but he cannot see what God is doing behind the scenes. Human rulers make decisions, personalities clash, and circumstances change, yet God's larger purpose continues moving forward.

Application: Esther 1 is a good reminder that God can be working even when we don't clearly see Him. There are seasons when life just looks like a series of ordinary decisions, disappointments, or unexpected changes. We may wonder where God is in any of it. But the beginning of Esther shows us that we should be careful about judging a situation too early. Vashti losing her position probably looked like nothing more than a royal controversy. No one in the room knew that God would use that moment to help position Esther for something much bigger. That does not mean every bad decision people make is something God approves of. Ahasuerus was impulsive and prideful. But God in his authority and power is able to accomplish His purposes even through imperfect people and messy situations. That gives us peace when something changes unexpectedly. We may not understand what God is doing yet, but we do not have to assume He has stopped working. We can trust that the people who appear powerful are never more powerful than God, and the circumstances that surprise us never surprise Him.

- Have you ever seen a small event later turn out to have much bigger consequences than you expected?
- How can pride and the desire to impress others affect the decisions people make?
- What does this chapter teach us about the difference between appearing powerful and actually being in control?
- What is a current situation in your life that you need to remember God is still in control of?

Wk 24 - Day 4: Acts 24

Explanation: Acts 24 finds Paul standing trial before Felix, the Roman governor. The Jewish leaders bring a lawyer, who accuses Paul of stirring up trouble, leading a dangerous sect, and attempting to dishonor the temple. When Paul is given the opportunity to respond, he calmly explains that the accusations cannot be proven. What he does openly admit is that he follows "the Way" and believes what is written in the Law and the Prophets. Paul then points to the heart of the disagreement: the resurrection of the dead. He says that he has the same "hope toward God" that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous. Because he knows everyone will ultimately stand before God, Paul says he works to keep "a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." Felix postpones making a decision but later calls for Paul with his wife Drusilla to hear more about faith in Christ. Paul speaks about righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come. Those subjects become very personal for a powerful governor who was used to doing what he wanted. Felix becomes afraid and tells Paul, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." That convenient time never seems to come. After two years, Felix leaves Paul imprisoned in order to gain favor with the Jewish leaders.

Application: This chapter reminds us that position does not equal ultimate authority. Felix could decide whether Paul remained imprisoned, but Felix himself would one day answer to a greater King. Our God rules and reigns forever, which means every leader, government, and person ultimately stands under His authority. That should also give us courage when we feel powerless. Paul could not control the accusations, the governor, or how long he would remain in custody. But he could control whether he remained faithful. Sometimes faithfulness means doing the right thing even when someone else seems to hold all the cards. Felix also gives us a serious warning about putting off a response to God. He was convicted enough to become afraid, but instead of responding, he said, essentially, "Maybe later." We can do the same with forgiveness, repentance, obedience, or a change we know God is asking us to make. A "more convenient time" can easily become no time at all.

- How do you think Paul remained so calm when people were saying things about him that were not true?
- Is there an area of your life where your conscience has been bothering you about something you need to address?
- Why is "I'll deal with it later" such a dangerous response when God is dealing with our heart?
- What decision have you been tempted to postpone even though you already know what the right thing is?

OUR MIGHTY

2026 BIBLE READING GUIDE

God

Wk 24 - Day 5: Psalm 93

Explanation: Psalm 93 is a short psalm, but its message is powerful: “The LORD reigneth.” Everything else in the chapter flows from that truth. God is pictured as a King clothed with majesty and strength, firmly established on His throne. Verse 2 says, “Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.” Earthly leaders come and go, governments change, and circumstances shift, but God’s rule has no beginning and no end. He did not become King because people voted for Him or because history turned in His favor. He has always ruled. The psalm then describes floods lifting up their voice and pounding with their waves. In Scripture, raging waters often picture chaos, danger, and forces beyond human control. Yet verse 4 says, “The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters.” The waves may be loud, but they are not stronger than God. The Hebrew word often translated “reigns,” means to rule as king or exercise royal authority. Psalm 93 is declaring that nothing happening in the world sits outside God’s ultimate authority. The chapter ends by saying that God’s testimonies are “very sure.” Because the King is dependable, His Word is dependable too. His throne is steady, His truth is trustworthy, and His character is holy.

Application: Psalm 93 is helpful when life feels noisy. Sometimes the “waves” are problems at home, financial pressure, bad news, conflict, uncertainty at work, or situations we simply cannot control. Those things can become so loud that they feel like the biggest reality in our lives. The psalm does not say the waves are imaginary. It says God is mightier than the waves. Whatever is making the most noise in your life is not automatically the thing with the most power. Our God who rules and reigns forever gives us something steady when everything around us feels unstable. We may not control what happens next, but we know Who remains on the throne. That also means we do not have to build our peace around circumstances going exactly our way. Leaders change. Plans change. People disappoint us. Life can turn quickly. God does not. When you cannot make sense of everything happening around you, you can still come back to what is certain: God reigns, His Word is sure, and He is greater than anything that feels out of control.

- What situation feels especially noisy or uncertain in your life right now?
- How does knowing that God’s throne is “from everlasting” give stability when life changes?
- When circumstances do not make sense, what truth from God’s Word helps steady you?
- What is one thing you are trying to control that you may need to place back into God’s hands?