

READ The BIBLE Together



MATTHEW 18-28

26th November 2017 – 10th March 2018

SHALOM CHURCH, SINGAPORE
(Upholding the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith)

The *reading* of Scriptures is an important discipline for our Christian Life, and it is our aim to inculcate this godly culture in Shalom Church through our **READ-The-Bible-Together** program.

Since this is **READ-The-Bible-Together** and not **STUDY-The-Bible-Together**, the questions and notes in the following pages are kept relatively simple, serving as our reading aid.

If you desire to study **MATTHEW** in greater depths, you may wish to consult any of the following:

- Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew by *William Hendriksen*
- Expository Thoughts on Matthew by *J. C. Ryle*
- Matthew Henry's Commentary on Matthew

May the Holy Spirit make our reading of Scripture an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners in our midst, as well as building believers up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation!

For this week [[26th November - 2nd December 2017](#)] you will be reading GOD'S
WORD in **MATTHEW 18**.

You may use Questions 1-13 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 18**,
or you can go straight to Question 14 after reading the text.

In **MATTHEW 18**, we come to the fourth major teaching section of this Gospel. For the second time in **MATTHEW**, *Jesus* explicitly refers to the church (see also **16:18**), and this time it comes in the context of church discipline and restoration.

18:1-4

1. In **verse 1**, the disciples asked who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. What prompted them to ask this question?

2. In reply, *Jesus* said that he who humbles himself like a child is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. In addition, He said that unless you become as little children, you cannot even enter the kingdom of heaven.
 - (a) What does it mean to "*become as little children*"?

 - (b) When you see a young child, you will naturally be asking, "*Who is the parent?*" So who is the parent of this little child here in these four verses?

 - (c) Are you one of these little children?

18:5-9

True children (that is, humble followers of Jesus) welcome other children (other humble followers of Jesus).

3. What did the Bible say concerning us if we receive other children?

4. How serious is it if we cause other children to sin?

5. What should we do to avoid sinning and falling away?

18:10-14

As His followers, we should love one another. We should not despise, look down or treat other believers with contempt. Instead, we should treat one another with love and care.

We should act in this way towards one another because this is how God our Father loves and cares for each of us. He commands His angels to protect us and attend to our needs (**verse 10**). And He lovingly pursues each of His children, as seen in the parable of the lost sheep (**verses 12-14**).

6. What is the message of the parable of the lost sheep?

Review and Apply: MATTHEW 18:1-14

7. Think about the various hospitality and care ministries in Shalom Church. Do they reflect the principles above, and if not, what can you do personally to improve things?

18:15-20

As His followers, we should love one another. Loving one another could mean seeking to restore one another, when we fall into sin and refuse to repent. These six verses shift our attention to this work of restoration (commonly called *church discipline*).

8. Our Lord *Jesus* outlined three stages of response to someone sinning in a church community. What are they?

9. At any of the stages, what happens if the person who has sinned responded with repentance?

10. What does “*let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector*” mean?

11. What is the message of **verses 18-20**, and how is it link to **verses 15-17**?

18:21-35

12. What is the message of the parable of the unforgiving servant?

13. Some things are fairly easy to forgive.
 - (a) When is it really hard to forgive?

 - (b) Is there any one you need to forgive now, freely and joyfully, in light of this passage? Will you?

14. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 18** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[3rd – 9th December 2017](#)] you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 19.**

You may use Questions 1-5 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 19**, or you can go straight to Question 6 after reading the text.

Few things are more painful than **divorce**, and its impact on our culture cannot be overestimated. This is the very issue *Jesus* was asked about in **MATTHEW 19:3** ~ *Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reasons?*

His reply certainly doesn't fit with our current cultural expectations, and many today would consider it outdated. However, God's design for marriage hasn't changed, and His Word is still our final authority on this matter.

For the good of our marriages and the glory of His name, we desperately need to hear the voice of the One who created marriage in the first place.

1. In reply to the Pharisees' question on **divorce** (**MATTHEW 19:3**), *Jesus* pointed them to God's design concerning **marriage** ((**MATTHEW 19:4-6**). What He said can be summarized as follows:
 - (i) God is the One who invented marriage (**verses 4-5**)
 - (ii) The Inventor said that marriage is to be between _____ man and one _____ (**verses 4-5**)
 - (iii) Their marriage is meant to be permanent (**verse _____**)
- (a) Why do you think *Jesus* answered the question of **divorce** by talking about **marriage**?
- (b) What is the implication of (i)?
- (c) What is the implication of (ii)?

(d) What is the implication of (iii)?

(h) What aspects of *Jesus'* teaching on **marriage** are hard for you to understand/accept? Take time to discuss your struggle with your RTBT group members.

2. In **verse 9**, the Pharisees gave a follow-up question to *Jesus'* answer concerning **divorce** ~ *Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"*

This question was based on the permission for **divorce** in the Old Testament law given in **DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4**. The Pharisees were essentially trying to pin *Jesus* down, as there were different schools of thought in first-century Judaism about what might be allowed for divorce.

One school of thought believed that a man could **divorce** his wife if she had committed any type of immodest behavior or sexual immorality (the school of Shammai).

The other school of thought (Hillel, the more dominant point of view) interpreted **DEUTERONOMY 24** much more broadly, saying that **divorce** was possible whenever a wife did anything displeasing to her husband. This latter interpretation of the law basically led to men **divorcing** their wives for just about any reason.

This is the background for the follow-up question posed to *Jesus*, and His reply to them can be found in **verses 8-9**.

(a) What is the message of **verse 8**?

(b) What is the message of **verse 9**?

Notes

In the Old Testament, sexual immorality/adultery was punishable by death (**DEUTERONOMY 22:22, LEVITICUS 20:10**). This is why **PROVERBS 6:32** says that the one who commits adultery "*lacks sense*" and "*destroys himself*". While not requiring physical death, the New Testament would similarly underline the seriousness of this sin: **1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10, HEBREW 13:4, REVELATION 21:8**.

In one stroke, with His reply in **MATTHEW 19:8-9**, *Jesus* restricts **divorce** to just one reason (sexual immorality/adultery), and removes the death penalty for this sin. Although sexual immorality/adultery is here given as a Biblically acceptable reason for divorce, yet *Jesus* is not saying that this is something that one must do. Rather, the offended party can choose NOT to **divorce** but work at reconciliation. This would be in line with the teaching given in **MATTHEW 18** whereby in the parable of the unforgiving servant, *Jesus* taught His disciples to forgive extravagantly (**MATTHEW 18:21-35**). The implication is that we are to work and pray toward reconciliation and restoration, not because it's easy, but because Christ is in you. **Divorce** is possible, but because of the gospel, it's not inevitable.

- (c) Another Biblically acceptable reason for **divorce** can be found in **1 CORINTHIANS 7:12-14** (take time to read it). *Paul* is talking about marriage between a believer and an unbeliever, and he says that if any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not leave her. Also, if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not leave her husband. So the believing spouse should not initiate divorce with an unbelieving spouse, but should stay married and work toward that unbelieving spouse's salvation. However, in the case that the unbelieving spouse wants to leave, he says that the Christian spouse is "*not bound in such cases*" (**verse 15**). In other words, if an unbelieving spouse chooses to abandon a believing spouse despite that believing spouse's love for him/her, then **divorce** is preferable in this situation. We don't initiate this kind of **divorce**, but we don't have to fight it if someone insists on leaving."
- (d) In the event of a Biblically acceptable **divorce**, may the one who was sinned against remarry? What about the one who sinned?
- (e) How has the reading of **MATTHEW 19:8-9** change your view towards **divorce**? Elaborate.

- (f) How can Shalom Church show both tenderness and courage in facing this issue of **divorce**?
3. In response to *Jesus'* teaching on **divorce**, the disciples responded by saying that it is better to remain single (**verse 10**), and our Lord's answer can be found in **verse 11-12**.
- (a) What was *Jesus* saying? (Please use your own words)
- (b) How can Shalom Church better serve and care for those who are single?
4. In **verses 13-22**, we have two events: *Jesus welcoming the children* and *Jesus rejecting the rich young man*. Both events were greatly surprising to the people then. Why would *Jesus* receive those whom those whom the disciples thought He should reject, and rejected a man the disciples thought He should receive? The overall message is that *Jesus* receives the humble while He rejects the proud!
- (a) In what ways can we live out the lessons of "*Jesus welcoming the children*" in our church life?
- (b) In what ways was the rich young man proud, and how can we ensure that we do not join him?
5. What is the message of **verses 23-30**?

6. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 19** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[10th – 16th December 2017](#)], you will be reading GOD’S WORD in **MATTHEW 20**.

You may use Questions 1-3 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 20**, or you can go straight to Question 4 after reading the text.

Jesus closes in **MATTHEW 19:30** by saying, "*But many who are first will be last, and the last first.*" This truth serves not only to conclude **verses 13-30** where children are received by Jesus, while a respected and wealthy man was turned away, but it also sets the stage for **MATTHEW 20**. Note that this phrase was repeated in **MATTHEW 20:16!**

1. **Verses 1-16** contain the parable of *Jesus* commonly named “The Parable of the Vineyard Workers”.
 - (a) What is the surprising element of this parable?

 - (b) What question/difficulty do you have with this parable?

 - (c) The message of this parable can be summed up by the words of **verse 16**. What does it mean that the last will be first, and the first last?

2. (a) According to **verse 28**, what is the life mission of *Jesus*?

- (b) According to **verses 17-19**, how will *Jesus* carry out His life mission?

 - (c) From **verses 20-24**, what were the life goals of the disciples?

 - (d) The life goals of the disciples and the life mission of *Jesus* stand in diametrically opposite direction. How can we know this? (**Verses 25-28**)

 - (e) What is the message of **MATTHEW 20:17-28** and how should it change the way we view and live our life?
3. In **verses 29-34**, we read of two blind men receiving their sight from *Jesus*.
- (a) What did they do in order to receive sight?

 - (b) What are we supposed to learn from this event?
4. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 20** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[17th - 23rd December 2017](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 21**.

You may use Questions 1-10 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 21**, or you can go straight to Questions 11 after reading the text.

As we come to **MATTHEW 21**, we could call it "*the beginning of the end*". From **MATTHEW 1**, we have travelled with *Jesus* from Bethlehem to Egypt to Nazareth, throughout Galilee, into Capernaum and Gennesaret, into the Gentile areas of Tyre and Sidon, to Magadan and Caesarea Philippi, and into Jericho and Judea. Now, for the first time in **MATTHEW**, *Jesus* enters Jerusalem.

MATTHEW 21 starts to tell us the last week of *Jesus*' earthly life (the Passover week). Over a period of eight days, *Jesus* entered Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, challenged the religious leaders, instituted the Lord's Supper, got arrested, was tried, was crucified, and then was raised from the dead. This was the week all of creation had been waiting for. In **GENESIS 3:15**, God has said to the serpent that the seed of the woman will crush its head, while it will strike his heel. This prophecy is beginning to be fulfilled in this week! The events of this week, planned before the foundation of the world, were not just climactic for *Jesus*' life; this was the climactic week for all of history!

In **MATTHEW 21** *Jesus* asserts Himself as the Messiah, the promised King who would save His people from their sins (cf. **MATTHEW 1:21**). He is not a King for the Jews only, for His saving rule would extend to the nations. We are part of this purpose, for we are called to submit every part of our lives to His rule and reign. Christ is worthy of our adoration and the abandonment of our lives. From **MATTHEW 21** onwards, *Matthew* gives us a breathtaking, awe-inspiring, life-transforming picture of this King who will one day return.

21:1-11

These 11 verses narrate the triumphant entry of *Jesus* our Lord into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. .

1. How did *Jesus* get the donkey, and what does this tell you about Him?

2. What was the response of the multitude to Him riding into Jerusalem (**verses 8-9**), and why do you think they have such a response?

3. **Verse 11** gives us an insight into the people's understanding concerning *Jesus*. Is their understanding right or wrong? Elaborate.

21:12-17

4. What did *Jesus* do in the Temple at Jerusalem, and why did He do it?
5. **Verse 15** tells us that the chief priests and scribes were indignant. What's the reason for their unhappiness?
6. In response to the complaint of the religious leaders, *Jesus* quoted **PSALM 8:2** in His reply. What is the significance of this?

21:18-22

7. What is your understanding of this "Fig Tree Incident"? Discuss it with your RTBT Group members. (**MARK 11:12-14, 20-24** is a parallel account you can read)

21:23-46

In **verse 23** we find the religious leaders coming to challenge the authority of *Jesus*. The reply of our Lord was most interesting. He did not answer them directly, but instead asked them for their view concerning the source/origin of *John's* baptism – from God or men?

The reason for doing so becomes clear when we consider the reasoning of the religious leaders narrated in **verses 25b-27a**. They were not objective in their assessment. Rather, they were motivated by selfish reasons and hence became dishonest and deceitful in their dealings. To call attention to their selfish-dishonest heart, *Jesus* told two parables.

8. In **verses 28-32**, we have the Parable of the Two Sons. What is the main message of this parable? (Pay attention to the context)

9. In **verses 33-44**, we have the Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers. What is the main message of this parable? (Pay attention to the context)

10. What was the response of the religious leaders after hearing the two parables (**verses 45-46**)? Is their response good or bad? Elaborate.

11. What have you learnt about *Jesus* from **MATTHEW 21**? Share them during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[24th - 30th December 2017](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 22**.

You may use Questions 1-6 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 22**, or you can go straight to Question 7 after reading the text.

In **MATTHEW 21:43**, as *Jesus* came to the end of his Wicked Vinedressers parable, He said, "*Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*"

In **MATTHEW 21:44**, it was clear that the Jewish religious leaders understood the message to be that God will take His kingdom from them and give it to another people.

Is God justified in doing this? *Jesus'* next parable (Parable of the Wedding Feast -- **MATTHEW 22:1-14** will address this question. Note that *Jesus* began His parable with "*The kingdom of heaven is like . . .*" (**22:1**).

This parable can clearly be divided into two parts. In the first part, the focus is upon the abundant kindness of God and the corresponding stiff-necked behavior of the Jews.

1. The king in this parable stands for God while the people invited stand for the Jews.
 - (a) How can we see the kindness of God towards the Jews from **verses 2-6**?

 - (b) How can we see the stiff-neck behavior of the Jews from **verses 2-6**?

 - (c) The king's wrath in **verse 7** must be read in the light of his overflowing kindness depicted in **verses 2-6**. The behavior of the invited people is a good summary of how the Jews have responded to God all through their history. Hence, when we set the stubbornness of the Jews against the backdrop of God's kindness, we have to conclude that God is justified to take His kingdom from them and give it to another people!

2. **Verses 8-14** form the second part of the parable. Since the Jews rejected God's salvation and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, God now sends His salvation to the Gentiles!

A particular man was singled out in **verse 11** – *he did not have on a wedding garment*.

- (a) What is the issue here?

- (b) What is the end for this man?

- (c) What is the meaning of **verse 14**?

- (d) What is the message and relevance of **verses 8-14** to you?

3. **Verses 15-22** depict a confrontation between the Pharisees and *Jesus*. **Verse 15** makes it clear that the Pharisees came with malice.
- (a) What question did they ask *Jesus*, and what was their real motivation in asking this question?
- (b) How did *Jesus* deal with their trap?
- (c) How can we live out the words of **verse 21**? Give two examples from your life.
4. **Verses 23-33** depict a confrontation between the Sadducees and *Jesus*. We can safely assume that, like the Pharisees, these people came with insincere motives.
- (a) The interesting but ridiculous story narrated by the Sadducees was motivated by their disbelief concerning the resurrection. What is the definition of “resurrection” and do you believe in it? Elaborate.
- (b) How did *Jesus* answer them?
- (c) Why did *Jesus* say that God is the God of the living by quoting **EXODUS 3:6**? In other words, how is it that “*God is the God of Abraham*” means “*God is the God of the living*”?
5. In **verses 34-40**, a Pharisee lawyer asked *Jesus* which is the great commandment in the law.

In His reply, *Jesus* gave two commandments.

(a) What are they, and why did Jesus give two commandments instead of one?

(b) Can you ever obey these two commandments?

Are we required to obey these two commandments today (as a Christian)?

How can we obey these two commandments?

6. From **verses 15-40**, the religious leaders have been asking *Jesus* questions after questions. Now in **verses 41-46**, *Jesus* turned the table and asked them a question instead: *Whose Son is the Christ?*

In reply, they answered that the Christ is the Son of David.

Jesus then gave a follow-up question, quoting **PSALM 110:1**: *How can Christ be the Son of David, when David addressed Christ as Lord?*

From **verse 46**, it is clear that the Jewish religious have no answers.

What about you? What is your answer to this follow-up question posed by *Jesus*?

7. What have you learnt about *Jesus* from **MATTHEW 22**? Share them during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[31st December 2017 – 6th January 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 23**.

You may use Questions 1-5 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 23**, or you can go straight to Questions 6-7 after reading the text.

“The danger of spiritual deception is real, even for those who are sincere in their religious convictions; therefore, we must submit to God's Word and look to the mercy of Christ in the gospel. It is possible for you and me to believe genuinely that we are doing God's work, obeying God's Word, and accomplishing God's will, yet to be deceived and to experience eternal damnation” says David Platt on his commentary **“Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Matthew”**.

David continues, *“By all accounts, Matthew 23 is a difficult text. It's not difficult to understand, as most people can grasp what Jesus is getting at in this passage. But this text is difficult in that its message is especially penetrating and convicting. Jesus exposes the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders. And if we're listening rightly, we can feel our own hearts being operated on in the process . . . In this text, Jesus addresses the scribes and the Pharisees, and He calls them hypocrites, sons of hell, blind guides, fools, robbers, self-indulgent, whitewashed tombs, snakes, vipers, persecutors, and murderers. Many people read this passage and focus on how evil these men must have been to evoke such wrath and condemnation from Christ. However, the scribes and Pharisees were the most highly regarded religious leaders of their day, being very devout in the things of the law. And we shouldn't see them as being insincere; they believed fully in what they were doing, that it was right and good. And so did everyone else. For this very reason, this text offers us a serious caution.”*

May God expose our blind spots, uncover our hearts, and save us from ourselves, as we read **MATTHEW 23**.

1. In **verses 1-4**, Jesus highlighted a problem area in the life of the Jewish religious leaders --- they do not practice what they preached! In short, we call it *hypocrisy*.

BUT what is *hypocrisy*? How does “*don't practice what you preach*” look like?

In the example Jesus gave in **verse 4**, these religious leaders tell people in God's Name to carry certain heavy burdens. The people are bound to do so because God has required it. However, the religious leaders themselves make no real effort (would not even move one of their fingers) to do what they said is God's requirements. This is *hypocrisy*.

However, if the religious leaders are committed and have sought to carry those heavy burdens, but failed to do so properly and regularly (due to their weakness), then the charge of *hypocrisy* would not stick.

In other words, if we call others to do XYZ because God commands it, but we ourselves are not committed to do XYZ, then we are guilty of *hypocrisy --- not practicing what we preached!*

(a) Search your heart and ask God to search your heart as well: *Is MATTHEW 23:1-4 talking about you?*

(b) If your honest answer to (a) above is “Yes”, what should be your next step?

2. In **verses 5-7**, *Jesus* highlighted a second problem area in the life of the Jewish religious leaders.

(a) Why would these people do what is described in these 3 verses?

(b) How can we fall into the same sin today?

(c) How can we overcome the sinful motivation within us that will propel us to do as they did, albeit in our own way?

3. (a) What is *Jesus* condemning and commending in **verses 8-12**?

(b) How will it look (in your daily life and in our life together in Shalom Church) as we seek to follow the words of Jesus in these 5 verses?

4. From **verses 13-36**, we have the eight “woes” pronounced by *Jesus*.
- (a) In the *first* woe (**verse 13**), *Jesus* rebuked the Jewish religious leaders for “*shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men.*” What is it, and how can we be guilty of the same?

 - (b) What is the *second* woe (**verse 14**), and what is its implication for us today?

 - (c) What is the *third* woe (**verse 15**), and how can we be guilty of the same?

 - (d) The *fourth* woe is found in **verse 16** while **verses 17-22** provide an elaboration of it. What is the heart motivation that drives such a conduct?

 - (e) How are the *fifth* woe (**verses 23-24**), the *sixth* woe (**verses 25-26**) and the *seventh* woe (**verses 27-28**) similar and different from each other? What steps should we take to avoid going down the same route?

 - (f) The *eighth* woe is found in **verses 29-30** while **verses 31-36** provide an elaboration of it.

What is *Jesus* denouncing in this *eighth* woe?

How can we be guilty of the same sin today?

5. How should we understand the words of *Jesus* in **verses 37-39**?

6. How does **MATTHEW 23** call you to change the way you live?

7. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 23** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For the next two weeks [[7th -20th January 2018](#)],
you will be doing a *guided* reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 24**.

For the week [[7th -13th January 2018](#)]

Verse 1 informs us that *Jesus* left the Temple with His disciples. On their way out, His disciples talked to Him about how great the Temple was. In reply, *Jesus* said in **verse 2** that a day is coming when the Temple will be destroyed so completely that “*not one stone will be left on another*”.

Shocked, the disciples asked *Jesus* two questions:

- [i] *When will these things be?*
- [ii] *What will be the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age?*

Some have taken these two questions to be actually one question. However, for this reading of **MATTHEW 24**, I will take them to be two separate (though somewhat related) questions.

Question 1: *When will these things be?*

The disciples wanted to know when will “*these things*” (the destruction of the Temple) happen. Our Lord’s reply to this question can be found in **verses 4-35**. He told them to expect the Temple to be destroyed in their generation! See **verses 34-35**.

Now concerning the destruction of the Temple, during the disciple’s times, there will be signs predicting the event before its arrival.

According to *Jesus*, there will be these four signs to look out for:

[1] ***False saviours and prophets would abound!***

Verses 4-5 ~ *Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.*

Verses 11 ~ *Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.*

Verses 23-24 ~ *Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.*

[2] _____ ***would abound! (Verse 7b)***

[3] ***Wars and _____ would abound! (Verse 6-7a)***

[4] _____ ***would abound! (Verses 9-10)***

Note a common thread that runs through these 4 things:

Verse 7 – *the end is not yet . . .*

Verse 8 – *these are the beginning of sorrows . . .*

In other words, when the four things mentioned above happened, they are only the run-up to the event, the signs indicating that the destruction of the Temple is near.

A check with history reveals that these things did take place, soon after AD 33, and it went on for about 37 years, climaxing in AD 70 whereby the Romans came and destroyed the Temple! Like how our Lord puts it, "*heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away*" (**verse 35**).

Concerning the event itself . . .

Jesus said that it will take place when “you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (verse 15).

When that happens, Jesus wants His people to know that “it is no longer the run-ups but the event itself! When you see it, get out of Jerusalem and flee to the mountains! Run!”

And as the Good Shepherd, ever concerned for His people, He says to them, “Pray! Pray that this event will not take place during winter or on the Sabbath!” (Verses 16-20)

What is this ‘abomination of desolation’?

Daniel was the first person to use this term in DANIEL 9:21 ~ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.

This was a prophecy by Daniel and it was fulfilled in 168 B.C. when a man called Antiochus IV Epiphanes entered the Temple in Jerusalem, set up an altar to Zeus and sacrificed a swine there! It was an abomination to the Jews, an act greatly abhorrent!

Now Jesus borrowed this term, and said to the disciples in MATTHEW 24:15 that when you see this ‘abomination of desolation’, know that the time has come! To whom or what was He referring to? He was referring to the Roman army, as a parallel passage in LUKE 21:20 confirms it: But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

Why was the Roman army called ‘abomination of desolation’? Because the Roman army carried flags with the picture of their Emperors, and the Roman soldiers actually offered sacrifices to these pictures! And these soldiers, carrying these flags, are going to walk around the Temple and then later burnt it to the ground!

In simple words, Jesus is saying to His disciples, “When you see the Roman army surrounding Jerusalem, this is it! The time for the Temple’s destruction has arrived! Get out of Jerusalem as fast as you can!!”

When did this event occur? A.D. 70, under the leadership of Titus who later became the Emperor of Rome! And the Temple was utterly destroyed, so completely that people would not have believed that it was once inhabited!

Recall that Jesus said all these things in A.D. 33 (37 years before it happened)! At that time, the Temple was still standing in all its outward glamour, and not a single Roman soldier stands outside the gate of Jerusalem, ready to attack it! And yet everything that Jesus said, they all came to pass exactly and in every detail!

Jesus could tell us exactly and accurately things to come, as demonstrated in His prediction of the Temple's destruction. ***What does this tell you about Jesus, and what is the implication of this for you?***

For the week [14th -20th January 2018]

Recall that **verses 4-35** was the reply of *Jesus* to the first question: *When will these things be?*

Jesus was addressing the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem that will take place in A.D. 70. *Jesus* referred to it as "*those days*" (**verse 29**), told them of signs leading up to the event itself, and assured His hearers that it would take place in their lifetime (**verses 34-35**).

Before we come to the second question of the disciples, let's take some time to address the objections some may have that **verses 4-35** do not refer to the destruction of the Temple but the return of Christ.

(A) What about **verse 14**?

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Surely the gospel wasn't preached to all the nations before AD 70! So how can "*those days*" refer to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem?

This is a problem only if you understand "*all the nations*" in the way you use it in 2017, and not the way the Bible used the term. Consider these New Testament Scriptures;

- **ACTS 2:5** ~ *And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.*

Would you argue that the 'every nation under heaven' here include South Africa and South Korea?

- **ROMANS 1:8** ~ *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*

Would you say that the ‘*the whole world*’ here include Afghanistan and Australia?

- **COLOSSIANS 1:5-6** ~ *because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;*

Surely, ‘*all the world*’ here would not include Somalia and Singapore?

The ‘*whole world*’ as used in the New Testament is a reference to the Roman Empire, the then known world. Jesus was saying in **MATTHEW 24** that the gospel will spread to every part and every corner of the Roman Empire before Jerusalem is destroyed.

ACTS, ROMANS and **COLOSSIANS** (all written before A.D. 70) tell us that the gospel has indeed reached every part and every corner of the Roman Empire before AD 70! So instead of being a valid objection, **MATTHEW 24:14** is yet another evidence of how every word that Jesus has said, concerning AD 70, came to pass *exactly!*

(B) What about **verse 29**?

Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

“*Sun darkened, moon not giving light, stars fall*” is a special way of speaking called **apocalyptic language**. “*Sun darkened, moon not giving light, stars fall*” is used to convey the message of God intervening in human life visibly and bringing about a great era change.

Take some time to read the following passages to see how such language were used in Scripture:

ISAIAH 13:9-10 (cf. **ISAIAH 13:1**, talking about the fall of Babylon – God intervening to cause a change of era in human history)

ISAIAH 34:4-5 (God punishing Edom)

EZEKIEL 32:7-8 (the punishment and destruction of Egypt)

Coming back to the destruction of Jerusalem, we have to note that the destruction of Jerusalem was a watershed event, marking the end of an era and the beginning of a new! It was indeed God intervening in human life visibly and bringing about a great change in human history.

(C) What about **verse 30**?

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

On its own, this verse surely looks like it is talking about the return of Jesus. However, when placed in the context of **verses 4-35**, which is talking about Jerusalem's destruction, it can be understood in another equally valid way:

❖ **ISAIAH 19:1** ~ *The burden against Egypt. Behold, the LORD rides on a swift cloud, and will come into Egypt; the idols of Egypt will totter at His presence, and the heart of Egypt will melt in its midst.*

"God riding on a cloud and coming" is a way of saying that God is coming in judgment and to punish!

❖ **PSALM 97:2-3** ~ *Clouds and darkness surround Him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. A fire goes before Him, and burns up His enemies round about.*

The picture of **PSALM 97** is God coming to judge and then to rule. Again, note the use of clouds in describing such a coming.

Hence, **MATTHEW 24:30** can be understood to be talking about *Jesus* as the enthroned King, sitting at God's right hand (fulfilment of **PSALM 2** and **PSALM 110**) and coming to judge Jerusalem in A.D. 70!

(D) What about **verse 31**?

And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

It is not necessary to understand this verse to be talking about the Second Coming of Jesus. Rather, we can understand this to be talking about the spread of the gospel throughout the whole Roman world then. Note that the word '*His angels*' in Greek basically mean '*His messengers*'!

With the fall of Jerusalem/destruction of the Temple, a change of era will take place. Now King *Jesus* will send His preachers/messengers to go all over the world,

even to the farthest part of the earth, and preach the gospel to every creature, which is exactly what happened after A.D. 70.

Since AD 70 until today, *Jesus* has sent His messengers to gather His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven. The Gospel has reached Europe, Africa, America and Asia. Whether it is iron curtain or bamboo curtain, Berlin Wall or Great Wall, nothing can stop the spread of the Gospel. Nothing! Why? Because King *Jesus* has sent His messengers out and He will triumph!

Question 2: *What will be the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age?*

It could be that in the understanding of the disciples then, the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem would also mean the end of the age. However, from the reply of *Jesus*, it is clear that the two events are separate, although related. The destruction of Jerusalem is a foretaste of the destruction of this world.

In speaking about His coming (again) and the end of the age, *Jesus* used the phrase “*that day*” (**verse 36**) instead of “*those days*”. And He started **verse 32** with the word “*But*”. The word ‘*but*’ is meant to set up a contrast. What is the contrast? Concerning end of the Temple, here are the signs to look out for (see page 21)! Concerning the end of this world, there are NO signs, for *of that day and hour of My Second Coming, no one knows!*

Instead, *Jesus* said that it would come unexpectedly (**verses 37-42**). Hence, He calls us to “*watch*” (**verse 42**).

In verses 43-44, *Jesus* gave one illustration of what it means to “*watch*”. What is it?

In verses 45-51, *Jesus* told a parable to illustrate another aspect of “*watching*”. What is the message?

In what ways (name two) must your life change, in the light of MATTHEW 24:36-51?

For this week [[21st – 27th January 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 25**.

You may use Questions 1-3 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 25** or you can go straight to Question 4 after reading the text.

1. In **MATTHEW 25:1-13**, we have the Parable of the Ten Virgins.
 - (a) What is the main message this parable? (Explain how you arrive at your answer)

 - (b) What questions do you have concerning this parable?

 - (c) In what way should this parable impact you?

2. In **MATTHEW 25:14-30**, we have the Parable of the Talents.
 - (a) What is the main message of this parable? (Explain how you arrive at your answer)

 - (b) What questions do you have concerning this parable?

 - (c) In what way should this parable impact you?

3. The last 16 verses (**MATTHEW 25:31-46**) talk about the coming Judgment. *Jesus* is the Judge and all people will appear before Him for the final judgment (**verses 31-32**). Those called "*the sheep*" will inherit the kingdom (have eternal life) while those called "*the goat*" will be thrown into the everlasting fire (have everlasting punishment).
- (a) On what basis would *Jesus* the Judge pass His sentence on the sheep and the goat? (**Verses 25—40, 42-45**)
- (b) What questions do you have concerning this coming judgment?
- (c) In what way should these 16 verses impact you?
4. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 25** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[28th January - 3rd February 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 26:1-30**.

You may use Questions 1-8 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 26:1-30** or you can go straight to Question 9 after reading the text.

As we turn to **MATTHEW 26**, the public teaching ministry of *Jesus* is over. From now onwards, we shall begin to see His sufferings as the Lamb of God.

"We now approach the closing scene of our Lord Jesus Christ's earthly ministry. Hitherto we have read of His sayings and doings — we are now about to read of His sufferings and death. Hitherto we have seen him as the great Prophet — we are now about to see Him as the great High Priest.

It is a portion of Scripture which ought to be read with peculiar reverence and attention. The place whereon we stand is holy ground. Here we see how the Seed of the woman

bruised the Serpent's head. Here we see the great sacrifice to which all the sacrifices of the Old Testament had long pointed. Here we see how the blood was shed which "cleanses from all sin," and the Lamb slain who "takes away the sin of the world." We see in the death of Christ, the great mystery revealed, how God can be just, and yet justify the ungodly. No wonder that all the four Gospels contain a full account of this wonderful event. On other points in our Lord's history, we often find, that when one evangelist speaks, the other three are silent. But when we come to the crucifixion, we find it minutely described by all four."

J. C. Ryle

From the first 5 verses of **MATTHEW 26**, we see that Jesus knew the time for His suffering has drawn near. From the same 5 verses, we also see that His enemies have intensified their effort to kill Him, and we have every reason to believe that He knew it. Yet nowhere in these 5 verses do we read of Him fleeing from the suffering awaiting Him.

WHY? He knew that His mission in coming to this world -- to glorify God and save His people from their sins. Let us never lose sight, but ever adore our Lord's steely determination to glorify God and to save us!

"Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

*"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.
In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.
Then I said, 'Behold, I have come —
In the volume of the book it is written of Me —
To do Your will, O God.' ""*

HEBREWS 10:5-7

The Anointing at Bethany (verses 6-13)

1. The disciples' response to the woman's extravagant, lavish conduct can be seen in **verse 9**. Do you agree with their verdict? Elaborate.
2. *Jesus'* response to the unhappiness of the disciples can be found in **verses 10-13**. In essence, what was *Jesus* saying? (Please answer using your own words)

3. Ponder: Would you (as a Christian) say your acts of devotion to Jesus were . . .
- Extravagant
 - Decent
 - Cautious
 - Miserly

Is your giving (of money, time, energy or whatever) more respectable than lavish?

In what ways could you demonstrate extravagant love to your Savior?

Notes from J. C. Ryle

"Wherever the Gospel of Matthew is read, the deed that she did is known. The deeds and titles of many a king, and emperor, and general, are as completely forgotten, as if written in the sand. But the grateful act of one humble Christian woman is recorded in one hundred and fifty different languages, and is known all over the globe. The praise of man is but for a few days. The praise of Christ endures forever. The pathway to lasting honor, is to honor Christ.

. . . we see in this incident a blessed foretaste of things that will yet take place in the day of judgment. In that great day no honor done to Christ on earth shall be found to have been forgotten. The speeches of parliamentary orators, the exploits of warriors, the works of poets and painters, shall not be mentioned in that day. But the least work that the weakest Christian woman has done for Christ, or His members, shall be found written in a book of everlasting remembrance. Not a single kind word or deed, not a cup of cold water, or a box of ointment, shall be omitted from the record. Silver and gold she may have had none — rank, power, and influence she may not have possessed — but if she loved Christ, and confessed Christ, and worked for Christ, her memorial shall be found on high. She shall be commended before assembled worlds.

Do we know what it is to work for Christ? If we do, let us take courage, and work on. What greater encouragement can we desire than we see here? We may be laughed at and ridiculed by the world. Our motives may be misunderstood. Our conduct may be misrepresented. Our sacrifices for Christ's sake may be called "waste," — waste of time, waste of money, waste of strength. Let none of these things move us. The eye of Him who sat in Simon's house in Bethany is upon us. He notes all we do, and is well-pleased. Let us be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the Lord's work, because we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58.)"

The Greed of Judas (verses 14-16)

4. In these 3 verses, we read that *Judas* was prepared to betray his teacher for 30 pieces of silver.
 - (a) What does this tell you about his love for Jesus and his love for money?

 - (b) What would you do, if you were standing in the shoes of Judas? For how much silver would you agree to betray Jesus?

The Passover and the Lord's Supper (verses 17-30)

5. During the Passover, Jesus dropped a bombshell. What was it?

6. How did the disciples (minus Judas) respond? Is it good? Why?

7. How did the Judas respond? Is it good or bad? Why?

8. (a) Using your own words, re-tell how Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper.
 - (b) What is the purpose of this institution?

 - (c) What do you think is the meaning of verse 29?

Some things to ponder over

- (I) Each time we partake of the Lord's Supper, give thanks for the symbol. Above all, give thanks for the reality the symbol represents --- *Jesus' body broken, and blood shed so that you can know forgiveness and eternal life!*
- (II) It is sad but true that some will religiously celebrate the Lord's Supper but have no genuine love for Jesus. Perhaps they would never betray Jesus openly like Judas, but their hearts are just as hard as his. Jesus knew Judas. Jesus knows us.
- (II) When we hear of some scandal or sin in the church, we might self-righteously think, "*I wonder who could have done a thing like that!*" It's far healthier to look at ourselves, and say: "*I could have done that if God hadn't kept me!*"
9. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 26:1-30** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[4th - 10th February 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in

MATTHEW 26:31-56.

You may use Questions 1-11 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 26:31-56** or you can go straight to Question 12 after reading the text.

MATTHEW 26:31-35

1. (a) What precisely did *Jesus* predict would happen?
- (b) How could He be so sure?
- (c) What else was He sure about?

2. Why do you think *Peter* and the other disciples were so confident that they would remain loyal to their Master?

3. What does it show about their understanding and faith at that moment?

Note: Not one of the disciples believed Jesus. None of them pleaded with God to prevent them falling away in such a shameful way. None of them really understood their weakness. They will be tested to the extreme, so that their self-dependence will be broken, and start to live a Christ-dependent life. God is still doing the same thing with His people today!

Let us fix our eyes on God our Savior who alone is wise and who is able to keep us from stumbling, and to present us faultless before the presence of God's glory with exceeding joy, on that Day!

MATTHEW 26:36-46

4. What was *Jesus* doing in the Garden of Gethsemane?

5. Why was He exceedingly sorrowful, even to death?

6. In His prayer, Jesus mentioned "*this cup*". What is it?

7. How should we understand "*not as I will, but as You will*"?

8. While *Jesus* was busy engaging the Father in Gethsemane, the disciples were sleeping. Considering what they had experienced in the last 12 hours, it is understandable that they were so exhausted and sleepy.

(a) So why did *Jesus* not allow them to sleep but woke them up instead?

(b) What lessons should we learn from this event?

MATTHEW 26:47-56

9. What did Judas do or say that was especially terrible (in light of the conversation at supper earlier – cf. **verse 25**)?

10. What did *Jesus*' reply in **verse 50** show about Him?

11. Look at the verses again.

(a) Who is obviously in control of the situation?

(b) Was the huge army (**verse 47**) really necessary for this situation? Elaborate.

Note: We could say that the arrest of *Jesus* turned out to be a non-event. This is because *Jesus* had no desire to resist his Father's will, for His great concern was that the "*Scriptures should be fulfilled*" — that He would be the Lamb of God to die for His people and glorify the Father.

The last line of **verse 56** paints the most pitiful picture. All His disciples forsook Him and fled. At this hour, it looks as if *Jesus* was utterly defeated while His enemies were triumphantly victorious. However, appearance can be deceiving!

12. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 26:31-56** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[11th - 17th February 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 26:57-75**.

You may use Questions 1-5 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 26:57-75** or you can go straight to Question 6 after reading the text.

Jesus before the Sanhedrin (Verses 57-68)

The Jewish religious leaders had no trouble arresting *Jesus* but faced tremendous trouble finding a charge to convict Him and sentence Him to die.

1. In their desperation, what did they do?

Verses 60-61 ~

Verses 62-63 ~

2. In view of what they have done in (1), and considering the time of the day when these were all done, what can we say about this trial?
3. (a) After they had successfully convicted Jesus of a crime worthy of death, what else did they do to Him?

(b) What does this tell us about their attitude towards *Jesus*?

4. Ponder the words of *Jesus* in **verse 64**. Why did Jesus address Himself as '*the Son of Man*' when He was asked if He is the Son of God?

Peter Denied Jesus (Verses 69-75)

5. What lessons can you learn from this incident?
6. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 26:57-75** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[18th - 24th February 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in **MATTHEW 27:1-26**.

You may use Questions 1-5 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 27:1-26** or you can go straight to Question 6 after reading the text.

Verses 1-2 tell us that the Sanhedrin (highest Jewish body of authority) made the final decision to put *Jesus* to death. Having no real political power to execute the death penalty, they have to move *Jesus* to Pilate the Roman governor and get his endorsement.

1. What was *Judas'* reaction when he learnt that *Jesus* would really be executed?
2. (a) How did he try to do amends?

(b) What did his actions tell us about his mindset then?

(c) What did *Judas* finally do, and why?

3. Imagine that you had an opportunity to talk with *Judas* before he took his final step in **verse 5b**. What would you say to him?

4. **Verse 26** says that *Pilate* released *Barabbas* to the Jews, and when he had scourged *Jesus*, he delivered Him to be crucified.

(a) What motivated *Pilate* to finally agree to have *Jesus* crucified, although he was persuaded that He was innocent, and pressured by his wife to release *Jesus*?

(b) Who was *Barabbas*, and what is the significance that *Jesus* took his place in receiving the death sentence?

(c) What role did the Jewish religious leaders play in nailing *Jesus* to the cross?

(d) What role did the Jewish people play in nailing *Jesus* to the cross?

5. In pondering over these 26 verses of **MATTHEW 27**, *Horatius Bonar* wrote the following hymn:

*I see the crowd in Pilate's hall,
Their furious cries I hear;
Their shouts of "Crucify!" appall,
Their curses fill mine ear.
And of that shouting multitude
I feel that I am one,
And in that din of voices rude
I recognize my own.*

Would you agree with *Horatius Bonar* that you too would join the shouting multitude then to demand the death of *Jesus*? Elaborate.

6. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 27:1-26** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[25th Feburary - 3rd March 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in [MATTHEW 27:27-56](#).

You may use Questions 1-4 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 27:27-56** or you can go straight to Question 5 after reading the text.

1. Why do you think the Roman soldiers resorted to abuse and violence towards *Jesus* who was already condemned to be crucified? (**Verses 27-31**)
2. After reading **verses 32-44**, ponder the last two stanzas of *Horatius Bonar's* hymn:

*I see the scourgers rend the flesh, of God's beloved Son;
And as they smite I feel afresh, that I of them am one.
Around the Cross the throng I see, that mock the Sufferer's groan,
Yet still my voice it seems to be, as if I mocked alone.*

*Twas I that shed that sacred Blood, I nailed him to the Tree,
I crucified the Christ of God, I joined the mockery.
Yet not the less that Blood avails, to cleanse me from sin,
And not the less that Cross prevails, to give me peace within.*

- (a) Would you agree with *Horatius Bonar* that you “*shed that sacred Blood, nailed him to the Tree, crucified the Christ of God, joined the mockery*”? Elaborate.
- (b) In the last lines of his hymn, *Horatius Bonar* implied that the blood of *Jesus* was shed even for those who were involved in putting Him to death. Do you agree? Can you cite Scriptural support for your answer?
3. In **verses 45-56**, we are given a description of the last few hours of *Jesus*' earthly life, while nailed to the cross.
- (a) What significant things took place during this time?
- (b) Who was present at the cross that day to witness His death? Why do you think it is important that *Matthew* would list down these people?
4. How should we understand the cry of *Jesus* in **verse 46**?
5. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 27:27-56** during your 10-minute RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

For this week [[4th -10th March 2018](#)], you will be reading GOD'S WORD in
MATTHEW 27:57-28:20.

You may use Questions 1-8 as an aid in reading and understanding **MATTHEW 27:57-28:10** or you can go straight to Question 9 after reading the text.

1. **27:57-61** tell us of the burial of *Jesus*. Why would *Matthew* bother to tell us His burial?

2. (a) What was the concern of Jewish religious leaders? (**27:62-64**)

(b) How was that concern addressed? (**27:65-66**)

3. What happened on the third day after *Jesus*' crucifixion? (**MATTHEW 28:1-10**)

4. Who appeared to the women that morning, and what was said to them?
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5. **MATTHEW 28:7** shouted, "*He is risen from the dead!*" What is your belief/position concerning the resurrection of *Jesus*? Elaborate.

6. **MATTHEW 28:4** tells us that those guarding the tomb of *Jesus* at that time had a most frightening experience that morning!
- (a) What happened to these guards subsequently? (**MATTHEW 28:11-15**)?
- (b) Imagine you were one of those guards. What would you have done? Why?
7. *Matthew* concluded his gospel narratives with two main points. What are they?
- Verses 16-17 ~**
- Verses 18-20 ~**
- Why do you think he ended his gospel narratives in this way?
8. **MATTHEW 28:18-20** is commonly called "*The Great Commission*". In it, *Jesus* called us to **make disciples**.
- According to the Great Commission, how can we **make disciples**?
9. Share one lesson you have learnt from **MATTHEW 27:57-28:20** during your 10-minutes RTBT Group Discussion. *What will you be sharing?*

Acknowledgement

Whatever the weaknesses of this Read-The-Bible-Together guide, they would have been far greater without the kind help of brother Andrew PANG and sister Lydia FAN. They gave their time and energy to review the entire guide, asking questions all the way and giving many valuable suggestions. Thank you!

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another! (Proverbs 27:17, ESV)

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Questions or comments concerning this RTBT guide?
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