



*a year of*

# DEVOTIONS



DAILY REFLECTIONS THROUGH  
THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

THE PIETRZAK PACK

MMXXI

A YEAR OF DEVOTIONS  
DAILY REFLECTIONS THROUGH THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

Compiled from the three hundred sixty-five devotions first published at  
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Soli Deo Gloria.

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# P R E F A C E



This book began with a simple resolve: to open the Bible every day for a year and to write down, plainly and honestly, what God impressed upon our hearts. Throughout 2021 these reflections were shared one day at a time at PietrzakPack.com, each following a reading plan that carries you through the whole of Scripture in a single year.

Collected here are all three hundred sixty-five of them, kept in the order they were written. Each day opens with the passages read that morning, a verse to carry with you, and a short devotion drawn from it. Some days are gentle; some are direct; all of them mean to point past themselves to Jesus Christ, in whom every page of Scripture finds its meaning.

Our prayer is unchanged from the day the first words were written: that whoever reads them would be drawn not to us, but to Him. Take this book slowly — a day at a time — with your Bible open beside it, and let the Word do its quiet work.

— *The Pietrzak Pack*





I

# JANUARY



*“Behold, I make all things new.”*

REVELATION 21:5

DAYS 1 – 31

DAY 1

# Let there be LIGHT!

*Friday, January 1*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 1-3 · MATTHEW 1

*“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.”*

— GENESIS 1:3-5

Thinking about the dawn of creation, we can only picture a “dawn” with great light. It would have been amazing to see this all unfold...and what did the nothingness look like? It’s all so much in itself to try to fathom...but so much happened when God said, “Let there be light”!

Looking ahead into the New Testament, we know that Jesus is called “the Light of the world.” (John 9:5). Jesus is God, and through every miraculous Scripture, we can truly see that. So when God said, “Let there be light” in His creation, it’s almost a foreshadow to the Light that He will be for us, His created people! LET THERE BE JESUS!

“And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.” Matthew 1:16-17.

I know I’ve mentioned this in previous posts, but I LOVE history & seeing how different events are connected! Jesus, our Light of the world, was woven intricately into time, but existed before time & will be forevermore, because He is GOD! He came precisely at the right time. As in creation, He was there in darkness. He came to bring light to the darkness. He came to bring people out of

darkness! People have been in sin & darkness since Adam & Eve, but Jesus has given us a way to escape all of it! Now we have light! LET THERE BE LIGHT!

“And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:14–15.

From the beginning of time, there was a promise of a child who would bring light to a sinful, dark world. One who would grow as the last Adam, the last sacrifice...the One who would make a way for us to be born again, out of the grip of sin & death:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.

If we want hope, light & life, WE NEED JESUS. We need this new birth experience for now & for our eternity. Let God light up your world, and let all His goodness come into focus in 2021!



## Fruitful Fulfillment

*Saturday, January 2*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 4-6 · MATTHEW 2

*“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:”*

— GENESIS 4:3-4

**L**ife demands so much from us...but how many times do we stop and ask, “God, what do YOU want from me?” Of course, God has allowed for many great opportunities in our lives, but many times, we don’t stop and be sure that what we are doing is God’s perfect Will. What is the true fruit of our labor which we should be bringing forth for The Lord?

Cain brought literal fruit to God as an offering. While he did bring something, it’s not what God asked for. Abel, his brother, brought the true firstfruits of his labor for The Lord. It wasn’t literally fruit, but it was the first fruits of his flock, of the fine sheep he worked so hard to maintain. Bloodshed was always the expected sacrificial offering, and Cain tried to take the easy way out. He did not bring the TRUE fruit like Abel, and so Cain’s offering was not expected. In anger, Cain finally did shed blood, but not in a sacrificial offering... he ended up killing his brother Abel out of jealousy...

Remember, the TRUE fruit God wants is the very best & most we can give from our hearts! He wants us to seek Him in prayer to truly understand what we need to give and do for Him. As Mothers, we have children, the very fruit of the womb...growing with our children closer to God is the best we can give to Him! That’s fruitful fulfillment!

“And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work



and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.”  
Genesis 5:28–29.

Lamech spoke prophetically of his son Noah before he died. He knew Noah would someday do something great for God, and we surely know he did! Noah & his family were the only ones ON EARTH who lived for God during his life, so God spared them on the ark from the flood.

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”

Matthew 2:1–2.

Next time you think you don’t have much to give, look in the eyes of your child, and know that God’s plan extends WAY beyond us! Our children are the most important fruit we bear & are able to give to God! They are the next generation of fruit-bearers! All the prophecies from the Bible, from Old to New Testament, were fulfilled...with Jesus being born, the greatest Fruit of the womb of Mary, our God & Savior! And it reaches to us & our children too!

Give your best & most to God, and watch the fruit of your labors multiply & bring you great fulfillment!



# A New Flood

*Sunday, January 3*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 7-9 · MATTHEW 3

2020 seemed, for most people, as though it was a year of sinking sand, or a flood which was impossible to overcome. The waves crashed & hit so hard from day to day. It was very comparable to the flood in Noah's time which consumed the whole earth:

“For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.”

Genesis 7:4.

As was emphasized in the last post, Noah & his family were the ONLY ones saved from this flood! None others were righteous, walking with God! Thank God for Noah & his family; without them we wouldn't be here today, and of course we wouldn't be here without Jesus!

That was a flood we would have wanted to escape. 2020 was a flood most of us wanted to escape too...but there is a flood of water which we SHOULD be drawn to...

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 3:1-2.

In the New Testament, John the Baptist cried from the wilderness. In the Old Testament, Noah cried out to others about the impending flood, but none would listen to him. The flood baptized the earth, washing away the sinful people who would not obey God. John the Baptist spoke of a baptism of repentance & immersion in water...a new flood which washes the sin from people, dying only to our sinful past, not dying physically as in the days of Noah!

“Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” Matthew 3:5-6.

It's time for everyone to experience that new flood! The one meant to save, not to destroy! God said He would never again destroy the earth by flood again...instead, He now uses water baptism & baptism of His Holy Ghost to save souls!

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Matthew 3:11.

A new flood. A new life. A new fire & passion for Christ! Get on board the Acts 2:38 ark!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.



# God's Glorious Kingdom

*Monday, January 4*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 10-12 · MATTHEW 4

*"And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."*

— GENESIS 11:5-6

One thing we have to be careful of is satisfaction & accomplishment. We like to impress others & ourselves by what we are able to do...God also looked at His creation and knew it was good, and although we are created in His image, we cannot be so awestruck by our own work that we forget the work of God (who is the ONLY ONE GOOD!). We can't be so satisfied with ourselves and the material that we forget God & the supernatural! This is what happened in the story of the Tower of Babel, and it's reflected in the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.

The people had decided it was a good idea to use their efforts to build a high tower to heaven, ultimately worshipping the work of their own hands. Here is the solution God had for them:

"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Genesis 11:7.

God divided them language by language, because when they were united, they used their efforts for evil & forgot all about having a reliance upon God. The devil tempted Jesus to a greater degree than this—he showed Jesus all the great kingdoms of the world in such a tiny fragment of time—yet Jesus did not give in like those with the tower...because He is God, and He is good!

“Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Matthew 4:8–10.

God created us to worship Him! We can’t worship what we create. If we forget God, we forget our purpose. That’s not to say we should never strive to achieve—actually, it’s quite the opposite! We must choose to achieve all we can for God’s glory! God’s majesty and greatness will bring us more satisfaction than any city, any status, or something created in vain. Please God & be pleased with what you do!



## A Starlit Spirit

*Tuesday, January 5*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 13-15 · MATTHEW 5: 1-26

*“And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”*

— GENESIS 15:5-6

**T**he Lord continued to confirm to Abraham (at that time, still called Abram) the wondrous promise He had in store for Him. Sure, Abram had his times of doubt...we've all asked if God would come through...but through this particular confirmation, Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness! Through this belief, Abram would be blessed with a growing family as many as the stars in Heaven! Now that's a multiplied miracle! Abram was an example of a star of faith in the Old Testament. It's these same people, souls or "stars" which stemmed from the seed of Abraham which would shine a light to all those around to point & direct people to God! We need to be stars of faith with the starlit Spirit of God, shining a light into the darkness! That was God's intention from the first time He said, "Let there be light!"

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Matthew 5:6.

Abraham's life reflected what was later preached by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount! Abraham wanted God's Will. He wanted to be righteous. And he was truly blessed & filled with a HUGE FAMILY TREE!

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before

men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:14–16.

Abraham looked up to the heavens that night & peered into the future starlit souls who would shine the light of God’s holy, starlit Spirit into a dark, dying world...all so that Jesus would be glorified! He came as the Light of the World, and there was a star which guided the way to Him (being the TRUE light)!

We need to be stars in the Kingdom of God. We need to bring light, life & hope into the world through God’s Spirit working in us!



## In Due Time

*Wednesday, January 6*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 16-17 · MATTHEW 5:27-48

*“And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*

*And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.”*

— GENESIS 16:2-3

**I**t is a normal, familiar feeling to be unable to wait for something that's coming, especially something you know will change your life & your future... one of the greatest things being a child! Sarai overstepped her boundaries in telling Abram (soon to be Abraham) to go in unto her maid Hagar. A child was born, but it was a deviation from God's ultimate plan & Perfect Will. Hagar gave birth to Ishmael, who became the father of the future Islamic/Arab people. Sarai tried to take her future into her own hands, instead of being patient & waiting upon God to do the work in due time...in HIS perfect timing!

Sarai's (soon to be Sarah) promise of a child would one day come to pass, and at many points along the way, God re-assured & re-affirmed this to Abraham. While we are waiting, we must seek out encouragement through eyes of faith, knowing that in obedience & patience, a miracle IS on the way!

“But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.” Genesis 17:21.

Wow! An even more specific confirmation came through! A time! A name! A new life was about to be formed & change not only this little growing family... but our entire history!



Don't let go of God because you think a promise fell through. Stay connected, and He will re-assure you all throughout your life!

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”  
Matthew 5:48.

It may be hard to be perfect, but when we let Christ work through us, we let perfection work through us. We follow after God's perfect Will & His perfect timing. Keep on going, and remember, things WILL get better in due time!



## Prayer: A Life-Preserver

*Thursday, January 7*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 18-19 · MATTHEW 6:1-18

**A**braham & Sarah were an example of a couple who learned to build trust with God through prayer & faith. Through this powerful connection, new life happened! A miracle son would finally be born to Sarah! We are not mothers without our children, and Sarah finally realized that God hears our pains & sorrows. He knows the deepest desires of our hearts. He makes things happen! Prayer really is a life-preserver!

“And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.”

Genesis 18:10.

At first, this was unbelievable to Sarah. Yes, she longed for a son. Yes, God knew her heart & I'm sure she prayed & begged God for this miracle child for so long. But she did laugh at the thought of her old age. She didn't understand how God would do it, but He **WOULD**! He makes a way where there seems to be no way! He makes life out of death!

“Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.” Genesis 18:14.

Nothing is too hard for The Lord! He brings new life, like a new baby, and He **SAVES LIVES** from impending doom—just like saving Abraham's nephew Lot from the judgment upon Sodom & Gomorrah. Abraham's prayers & intercession for Lot touched the throne of God! Lot & his two daughters were saved from God's wrath upon the cities!

“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the

fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Genesis 18:22–25.

After the angels left from visiting Abraham & telling him about his coming son, Abraham could have let them leave. But, the angels were headed for Sodom & Gomorrah to destroy it according to God's Will...so Abraham remained before The Lord to pray & intercede for the righteous ones (Lot & his family in particular). His prayers were a life-preserver! God spared Lot & his daughters, but his wife looked back & did not make it...

God creates life. God preserves life. God hears our prayers! Remember, don't pray what you think others want to hear...pray from your heart to God alone. Have some serious private time with Him, and watch what He will do!

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6:6.



## A Multiplied Miracle

*Friday, January 8*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 20–22 · MATTHEW 6:19–34

When we ask God for something, we don't want Him to hold back. We want to see all God has in store for us. It's always easy on the receiving end, but how about the giving end? If God always gives His best, we should too! Multiplied miracles come if we don't have a fear to sacrifice. When we don't withhold anything from God, the miracle we receive will bear more fruit than we could ever imagine! What we get might just be greater than what we have if we are not afraid to give it to God!

Sarah, Abraham's wife, told Abraham to dismiss her maid Hagar and her son Ishmael. Although Ishmael was also Abraham's son, he was not the promised child God had given to Sarah and Abraham. But God did not forget Hagar, or her son. Her son was still of the seed of Abraham, and God never goes back on His Word! Ishmael would also be a great nation, even distanced away from Abraham:

"And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation." Genesis 21:17–18.

As hard as it was, Hagar obeyed what she was told to do by Abraham. She left with Ishmael, and in her anguish, God her the cry of her son, and her cry as well. Out of that difficult experience, that sacrifice of all they ever knew, came the promise of abundant generations of life on the other side! Not just a miracle, a multiplied miracle!

Multiplied miracles happen at times of multiplied sacrifice—in choosing to obey God even when it's difficult or confusing. Remember, there's always a purpose! This was the situation not only with Hagar & Ishmael, but with

Abraham & his son Isaac. Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his promised son. Painfully, yet not resistantly, Abraham obeyed...and God came through!

“And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.” Genesis 22:11–12.

We can't hold back from God, Moms! We may be holding back multiplied miracles! Abraham did not withhold his son, and God provided another sacrifice. In providing another sacrifice, He also re-confirmed the promise of protection upon the seed of Abraham and many generations to come! What great faith! What a multiplied miracle!

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:31–33.

Everything else will come in time when WE make time for God! If WE pursue His perfect, righteous Will & we don't look back, then we can look forward to many multiplied miracles to come!



## Path to Prosperity

*Saturday, January 9*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 23–24 · MATTHEW 7

*“And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.”*

— GENESIS 24:60

A Mother of thousands of millions!? Woah there, I'm not so sure about that! Of course we know that this means over a long time and many generations she will be the Mother of that many. Just think! We are continuing a line of growth as well! Our family trees probably have some kind of direct connections to Rebekah, somewhere, some way! It's all about a continued promise traveling down a path to prosperity! When we purpose ourselves to connect with God, He will ALWAYS prosper our way!

“And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:”  
Genesis 24:39–40.

Abraham walked BEFORE The Lord, and when his servant arrived at the proper place at the proper time in prayer, God brought Rebekah out to the servant BEFORE he was even done praying about it! She was the one God provided for Abraham's son, Isaac, to marry! God prospered the way! When we get in touch with God first, we miss a whole lot of detours & distractions! We can look ahead to Matthew 7 for a confirmation of this:

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:” Matthew 7:7.

We prosper when our SOULS prosper! When we seek an abundant spiritual life, God allows everything else to fall into place where it needs to be. All the rest will come in time when we give God our time!

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 1:2.

After God confirmed Rebekah to be the right woman through the connection with her family, Abraham’s servant confirms that God had him on a path to prosperity. He says that because of this answered prayer, he cannot be hindered to go back to Abraham & bring Rebekah to Isaac:

“And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master.” Genesis 24:56.

Hinder me not! I have to get to the next miracle! The Lord will continue to prosper us as we prioritize that special connection to Him!



# Can't Pause the Cause!

*Sunday, January 10*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 25-26 · MATTHEW 8:1-17

Sometimes, you get clogs in the pipeline. Sometimes, the water pressure isn't the best. Sometimes, it seems like there's a problem in our lives that just won't go away, no matter how hard we try, and we just can't get past the obstacle in the way. Well...

GOOD NEWS! YOU CAN'T PAUSE THE KINGDOM'S CAUSE! God's rivers of living water will continue to flow throughout our lives, the more we trust God with our lives! The more we have faith! He will get us through the tough times & get us "un-stuck"! God's Will WILL be done! Are we choosing to be a part of His unstoppable promises!?

"And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water." Genesis 26:18-19.

The Philistines stopped the wells of Abraham after he died. So, Isaac his son decided to dig them up again! He didn't walk away and say, "Oh well, that's a lost cause..." He probably remembered that you can't pause the cause of God! God makes things HAPPEN! God brings new hope & new life, even when we are feeling hopeless and stuck. Go back to the old wells! Speak life again! Get out of the hold-back and get ahold of God!

"And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." Genesis 26:22.

Even in times when Isaac faced persecution for digging some wells, he just moved on to the next best opportunity! He dug another one! He didn't give up. The Lord made room for him! God "un-clogged" his path! He removed the



problem, and Isaac also claimed the promise to be fruitful in the land! Is something clogging our connection to God? Before God un-clogs our path, it might just be time to renew & refresh our connection to Him first! Then, He will make a way where there seems to be no way!

“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19.

“And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.” Matthew 8:2–3.

One of the greatest clogs in our connection to God is a lack of faith! The lepers, the blind, the centurion’s servant...all were healed because they already claimed the unstoppable ability of the power of God! If God wants it to happen, it will! But the only thing which could be in the way of experiencing God’s promises is ourselves! We can’t pause the cause of the Kingdom! It’s time to get on board with a whole lot of faith, and be made whole!



## Pillow to Pillar

*Monday, January 11*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 27-28 · MATTHEW 8:18-34

*“And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.”*

— GENESIS 28:18

God came to Jacob in a dream, while he lay upon a stone pillow...maybe not too comfortable, but it's all he had to try his best to add a little tiny bit of comfort to his sleeping condition. God said that the land Jacob was on was blessed, and that He would give it to Jacob and multiply generations of children, continuing the promise of Abraham. When Jacob awoke, he knew he was in the presence of God, and quickly used his pillow as a pillar for The Lord!

“And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.”

Genesis 28:22.

The same resources we use for comfort can be used in the Kingdom of God! Maybe even to comfort someone else, and let them know the goodness of God! Jacob may have thought he was just on a journey to find a wife & get married. He knew he took his brother's blessing, but God let him know what an honor it is to be blessed of The Lord! And so, Jacob said he will give a tenth of all he has back to God because he realized the magnitude of his blessing! We can lay on our pillow & just seek to receive from God, or we can become pillars, standing tall for God, embracing our blessings fully, and sharing our blessings with others!

“And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea;

and there was a great calm.”

Matthew 8:24–26.

Even when it seems like God is “on His pillow” or not aware of our situation, He just has another miracle on the way! We just have to wait, have faith & trust that He’s always there to help us & guide us when we pray! Jesus is more than a pillar, for it takes many pillars to hold up a building...JESUS IS OUR ROCK! The One & only Rock of our salvation!

Stand strong upon Jesus, our Rock! Honor Him with all you have, and don’t sleep through your miracle!



## WE NEED JESUS!

*Tuesday, January 12*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 29–30 · MATTHEW 9:1–17

**T**he terminally ill. The barren womb. The broken heart. When Jesus Christ, our God and our Lord, steps on the scene, you can believe with everything you've got that He will do a miracle healing & transformation! He loves us. He has mercy upon us. **WE NEED CHANGE. WE NEED JESUS**—physically, mentally, Spiritually, emotionally, behaviorally...in every way!

“And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: And she called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall add to me another son.” Genesis 30:22–24.

For a **LONG** time, Rachel was not able to have children. Many mothers today are saddened by this too, but oh what the power of God can do! Praying about things **MOVES MOUNTAINS!** God remembers us when we are hurting, in any & every situation! God allowed Rachel to have a son, and we have to believe God will turn the impossible to possible too! Rachel even named Joseph prophesying that she would have another son one day, and she did! His name was Benjamin. When a miracle happens once, **IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN!** But where is our faith??

Jesus heals our bodies, and He is the only One who can also heal the soul!

“And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Matthew 9:10–13.

Yes, Jesus is the Great Physician who can heal our bodies. But He is also the One Great God who can deliver us and heal us from the sickness of sin! The Pharisees saw what Jesus was doing on the outside, sitting with sinners. But they did not see the operation taking place on the inside as Jesus worked upon their hearts! Sometimes, we need to pray for God to bring us through physical surgery...but sometimes, we need to pray for God to DO surgery on our hearts!

Has it been a long time since you surrendered it all to God? Have you prayed for a physical issue, but maybe lost focus on God after the healing came? We've all veered off-track before. We've all needed times of refresh & re-focus. No time like the present! And the greatest present we can receive is Jesus in us!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.



## Commit through Conflict

*Wednesday, January 13*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 31–32 · MATTHEW 9:18–38

**I**t's difficult to get over a disagreement quickly...so many emotions...and sometimes, pride doesn't allow for a solution. Thankfully, Jesus has a solution for us. In fact, He IS the Solution! Through a humble, consistent commitment to Him, we will not only get through our problems, but those leftover emotions won't linger for long! Just commit to Christ through the conflict!

Sometimes (most of the time) these conflicts take place right within our families. For example, Jacob had issues with his father-in-law Laban:

“Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.”

Genesis 31:44–45.

Another pillar was built! Even though Laban and Jacob were both guilty of different types of deception, they maturely humbled themselves and put it behind them. When situations arise like these conflicts, don't hang onto hate! Just as this pillar was built, work at gently re-building those relationships with others! Also...WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE! God always brings the ultimate healing, peace & solution to our problems with others...and that's because He is watching, even when we are not!

“And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; And Mizpah; for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.”

Genesis 31:48–49.

Now to be honest, Jacob wrestled with a lot of people and issues...He also was at odds with his brother Esau for taking his blessing (and birthright)! But the most important thing he had to overcome was himself...and submit to God! Once we also do that, we can be at peace and things start going right again! Jacob

wrestled within himself and his flesh for far too long, then came a moment where he wrestled with God...and Jacob was no longer a deceiver; he was devoted to God!

“And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Genesis 32:28.

...And he sure did prevail! He ended up making peace with Esau after this humble submission to God! Whether it be between family or with someone we don't know as well, just give it to God in prayer! Stop wrestling with it! God will work miracles!

“And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.” Matthew 9:28–29.

Do you believe Jesus is able to do this? To heal a body, or even a conflict? To bring peace? Once we submit to Him and give Him control of our lives, His power overcomes every problem!



## The Journey Continues

Thursday, January 14

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 33–35 · MATTHEW 10:1–20

*“And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: And the sons of Zilpah, Leah’s handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Paddan-aram.”*

— GENESIS 35:22–26

Jacob (aka Israel) had 12 sons. God had a promise for all of them to grow, multiply & expand into many nations. It’s hard to see the magnitude of what we are doing in real time. To see how far our dreams, goals & aspirations will go. If we believe God, they will go a long way! Don’t sink into give-up mode! If it’s in agreement with God, it will multiply!

“And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.” Genesis 35:11–12.

That’s a far-out promise! One that would unfold for generations to come! So many new births of people would eventually lead to new births of many souls in the New Testament! This is because after those 12 sons went out into the nations and physically multiplied, there came the 12 Apostles of Jesus which Spiritually went out and multiplied the church!

“Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his



brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Matthew 10:2–6.

All the nations were formed for the mission of these 12 Apostles! They eventually were instructed to reach both Jew AND Gentile! Every person, every nation, all those that came out from the generations of Israel until now! There’s always a Spiritual, Scriptural reason for everything God has planned!

You never know what God is going to do with what you already have. Don’t give up! Let the journey continue! See what God’s going to do over the course of this thing. Don’t lose hope. Don’t lose vision. Don’t lose your goals for 2021 and the future to come! Pray for God to guide you in the right direction & see how much your dreams expand further than you ever thought possible! It may be a tough road, but it’s worth it! We are in this together, and God will bring the joy in this journey!



## God is Always There!

*Saturday, January 16*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 36–38 · MATTHEW 10:21–42

*“And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.”*

— MATTHEW 10:36

As was previously posted, conflict is the most common habit in our lives! Especially with those we live with. Sibling rivalry is a big one! It may not be that bad, the occasional fight here & there...but in Joseph’s case, sibling conflicts had life-changing consequences...it all started with those of his own household! Somehow, God used His unfortunate situation for His glory in the end, and as we continue reading about Joseph, we will see that God is ALWAYS there!

“And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.” Genesis 37:23–24.

Joseph’s brothers envied him so much because of the favor he received from his father, and the dreams he had. His brothers constantly felt “below” him. So, they let Joseph know how it literally felt to be low down & humbled. This one act caused Joseph to be taken away as a slave to Egypt, and so much more conflict to come...but through these humble circumstances, God raised Him up again. When no one else was there, GOD WAS!

“And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.” Genesis 37:26–27.

Sometimes, we feel so betrayed by the ones we love...but just think about how Jesus felt at the cross! He loves us ALL. So He experienced the ultimate betrayal.

Jesus knows how it feels. He is God. He understands our feelings. If you feel like crying out in frustration, cry out to God in prayer!



## Stand Under God's Hand!

*Saturday, January 16*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 39–40 · MATTHEW 11

Continuing on in the story of Joseph, we are how he went through a lot of ups & downs. But, no matter where he was tossed & turned, God's mighty Hand was steady upon his life! And that's because Joseph's heart was steady with God, trusting Him every step of the way! A steady heart toward God will ease a worried mind & bring true rest under God's Hand!

"And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." Genesis 39:3.

Prosperity happens when God is the One in control! Joseph didn't give into the pressures around him; he only gave into the power of God!! Although he was a servant to start, he became Potiphar's "right-hand man" because he was under God's right Hand of power! Joseph's life was a witness to many. Through him, they could see what a blessed life living for The Lord looked like! But again, he did experience many tests & trials, yet he was faithful through them all! Potiphar's wife even tricked him & he ended up in jail for something he didn't do. Although it seemed like his reputation with Potiphar was destroyed, his relationship with God was still strong! And God raised him up once again!

"But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper." Genesis 39:21–23.

Joseph prospered in everything he put his mind to, and in all the work his hands did...and that's because he cared about what GOD desired for his life. He knew God's Will would be done, and God would take care of him. So stay strong

in the faith, and stay strong under the mighty Hand of God through a prayerful connection!



## Tried & True?

*Sunday, January 17*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 41–42 · MATTHEW 12:1–23

What are we willing to give up to please the world, or ourselves? Is it easy for us to sacrifice our morals and Spiritual standing to sink into the comforts & pleasures of this life? While it's true that God wants us to live a good, joyful, fulfilling life, it's also true that we must be tried. We must prove what our priorities are, to show God what (or Who) we love most. Will we stand tried & true?

Joseph was a true man. Every trial & sacrifice which came his way, he came through on God's side! He didn't turn his heart away from God in those moments of difficulty. Now in our reading, it comes to the point where we see if Joseph's brothers have changed. Now comes their test to see if they have become tried & true! There was a famine in the land, and the brothers made their way to Egypt for food...and they had to come to Joseph, being now Pharaoh's "right-hand man." His brothers didn't recognize him, but Joseph knew exactly who they were!

"And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said unto him, Nay, my Lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies." Genesis 42:9–11.

True men, huh? I can't even imagine the burning explosion of frustration which was bubbling up in Joseph, wanting so badly to reveal his true identity! Instead, he challenges his brothers according to their words, to see if they are true men or not:

"Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies." Genesis 42:16.

They were told to bring back Benjamin, the youngest, while Simeon stayed hostage. The brothers could have left, never returning and forgetting about Simeon like they did to Joseph, or...they could be tried & true:

“If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.” Genesis 42:19–20.

What are we willing to give up for God? Are we ready to stand firm in our morals & Spiritual standards, no matter what? Will we be proved tried & true? Is it worth is to us?

IF WE STAY TRIED & TRUE, GOD WILL SURELY BRING US THROUGH!



## Unite with Forgiveness

*Monday, January 18*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 43-45 · MATTHEW 12:24-50

**G**rudges, regrets, anger, frustration...while it may seem justified at times, it only brings division! Through repentance & reconciliation with God and with the ones we are angry with, we find true peace, release, forgiveness & unity!

Joseph was someone who seemed justified in having the above-mentioned feelings...from our journey thus far, Joseph's brothers' one decision of selling him off to Egypt led him through a whirlwind of other unfortunate scenarios! But remember, he was tried & true...all the way up until he revealed himself to his brothers! And he **FORGAVE** his brothers!

“And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.” Genesis 45:3-5.

In doing this courageous act of forgiveness, Joseph pieced his whole family back together again! Through his relationship with God, Joseph was also able to hold Egypt & Canaan together through a famine! Joseph recognized this was all the mighty Hand of God!

“And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and Lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.” Genesis 45:7-8.

I pray to be that aware of God! To be able to forgive and come together in the most difficult of circumstances! Joseph was a person who reflected the character & love of God! Just how Joseph was placed in Egypt to preserve life & deliver people, Jesus came that He would make a way for ALL to be saved; to deliver



souls from sin!! Then will come eternal life! Just as Joseph's family reconciled & came together, we must also come together and fully surrender to God! Leave the past behind!

“And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:”

Matthew 12:25.



# The Bread of Life

*Tuesday, January 19*

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 46-48 · MATTHEW 13:1-30

**S**ourdough starter is an interesting thing. It was used mostly in pioneer days to capture yeast from the air to eventually be able to bake bread. All you need is flour & water, let it sit out, and after 7 days, God does the rest (just like creation time!). It stands on its own after a while, mature & active, ready to use as yeast! It can last for YEARS in the fridge, pulling it out whenever you want to use it! Crazy huh!? I'm making one now and the method still works!

Even before pioneer times, bread has been a major source of sustenance. People came to Joseph during the famine to buy bread:

“And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.” Genesis 47:11-12.

Before the start of the journey, Joseph's father had a dream & prophesy from God:

“And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.” Genesis 46:3-4.

God's promise would be kept! We will see in further reading how the Israelites multiplied in the land, but also how the desperation for bread in the famine caused the people to be servants to Pharaoh. Money ran out. Goods to barter ran out. The people were all that were left, and again, they needed bread as sustenance to live! But one day, they'd come back to their homeland again, out of bondage! (Moses-coming soon!).

...And Jesus is coming soon, too! This great nation which was multiplied created a harvest for Jesus to offer Himself as Bread of Life! The harvest of people

must receive the seed of the planted Word:

“And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;” Matthew 13:2–3.

This parable which Jesus was about to teach the multitudes was about the seed of The Word being planted & the ability to receive it! Are we thorny? Stony? Weeded? Or good soil? Check out that parable in Matthew 13!

We need to live by every Word from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4)! In Joseph, bread runs out! Eventually, all that was left was themselves. Same with Jesus! He provides for us in this life, but in the end, our souls are what’s left! Are we feeding it true sustenance? God’s Word, The Bread of life & rivers of living water which will not run dry?? Teach a man to fish instead of fishing for him! Hide The Word in your own heart so you are never empty & void of God! A baby can only go so long with someone feeding him. Soon, it’s time to feed himself!

Whether it be feeding a sourdough starter, or starting to feed your soul, both require start-up & maintenance...but only one leads you closer to Jesus! Feed your soul the Word of God daily!

From the Words of Jesus: “I am that bread of life.” John 6:48.



## What May Seem Like Suffering...

Wednesday, January 20

TODAY'S READING · GENESIS 49:50 · MATTHEW 13:31-58

*“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)”*

— GENESIS 49:22-24

Joseph was fruitful from the beginning. He wasn't born with “bad luck” as some people may say, considering all that happened to him...since Joseph stayed faithful to God through all the hatred and difficult situations, Joseph always came out strong! God actually used all those things for an important purpose! JOSEPH REMAINED FRUITFUL BECAUSE HE REMAINED FAITHFUL! What may seem like suffering might actually be leading to a victory! Joseph was able to receive great blessings & prophecies from his father before his father died! So much was birthed out of the pain!

Just think about childbirth! After the pain, our lives are touched & changed forever by the gift of that life...and through all Joseph went through, he was even able to touch the hearts of the Egyptians! They grieved with him through his father's death:

“And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.” Genesis 50:3.

The mourning connection between Joseph and the Egyptians was even recognized by the Canaanites:

“And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians:

wherefore the name of it was called Abel–mizraim, which is beyond Jordan.”  
Genesis 50:11.

His brethren even fell down before him once again, ensuring they were forgiven & safe from Joseph turning on them...but Joseph acted in a godly way! God never turns on us, and so Joseph didn’t turn on his brothers! God is with us, even when we are suffering! And He is able to use those situations in mighty, miraculous ways!

“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”  
Genesis 50:20.

So much abuse & physical hurt happened to Jesus, yet it was used to save all people when we are baptized in water & Spirit today! So remember, what may seem like suffering might actually become a victory!



## Who am I?

*Thursday, January 21*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 1-3 · MATTHEW 14:1-21

**M**any tasks face us each & every day. The list seems to pile up and topple over upon itself constantly! We ask, “Who am I to be able to accomplish all this!? I can’t possibly...” and the descriptions go on & on...

But when we face the impossible, we must face our God in prayer...because He makes it possible! Especially when it’s something which pleases God & a part of His perfect Will! Moses asked this same question to God: “Who am I?” And God’s response is, “I AM!”

“And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

Exodus 3:11.

Moses most definitely thought he was unqualified to bring his people out of bondage as God wanted him to do. He automatically thought he was not cut-out for the job. And, he was right! But God was not wrong in choosing him! Moses just forgot one important detail: God would be with Him! It would be God working through Moses, not Moses’ strength & power alone!

“And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Exodus 3:12-14.

Alone, we crumble under the pressure of each day’s demands. With God, we rise up in victory! Next time you ask, “Who am I?” Remember, God is watching,

waiting & saying, “I AM! I AM HERE! I AM THE SOLUTION! I AM WITH YOU! CHOOSE ME!!!”

He is the God Who would soon part the waters for this man Moses, and He is the God who fed a sea of 5,000 people:

“And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.” Matthew 14:19–21.

5,000 PLUS WOMEN & CHILDREN! He is ALWAYS I AM!

Don't get intimidated by the To-Do list, instead, face it with God & finish strong!



## Enough Already!

*Friday, January 22*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 4-6 · MATTHEW 14:22-36

**Y**ou mean to tell me it's possible for things to get better? You mean to tell me that God is still in control?? What if I've been suffering for years? REALLY? ENOUGH ALREADY!!

The way the world is going these days, it seems like we might just want to cover our ears & run away. Who is telling the truth? Who is going to offer something that works? When will there be peace in the world? It all starts in people's hearts! God has been diligently getting to the heart of the matter since the beginning of time, and all along the way, those who were open to God found peace & prospered. Those who closed God out found themselves closed out from peace & a fruitful life!

"And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord. And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage." Exodus 6:7-9.

The biggest mistake is to tune out God when the going gets tough! The above passage really fascinated me...we know about the hardness of Pharaoh's heart in not letting Israel go (which we will soon read more about), but how about how closed-off Israel was to Moses' message of freedom? They were so tired, grieved & abused that they couldn't get themselves to believe God was going to help them through Moses! But again, that's the biggest mistake! We keep ourselves in bondage when we stop believing in God! We know that soon God will part the waters & bring His people to freedom in a miraculous way! Thank God Moses kept fighting for Israel!



...And we know God did many, many more miracles! We can't forget Who God is and what He can do! Just ask Peter when he wanted to walk on water with our God, Jesus:

“But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.”

Matthew 14:30–32.

No matter if we've been crying out for a long time, like the Israelites who were in bondage, or a quick cry for help like Peter, we can't give up!! We can't reject the idea of being saved, as the Israelites eventually did, because of the length of our suffering. Remember Joseph! What may seem like suffering is just the preparation for the next best miracle in our lives!

So, it's not time for us to say “enough already” to God, it's time for us to say “enough already” to our problems, fears, doubts & unbelief!!



## Hearken, Don't Harden!

*Saturday, January 23*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 7-8 · MATTHEW 15:1-20

Pharaoh's decision to harden his heart against Moses and his people once led to an ongoing pattern of hardness-this time, GOD hardening his heart! God did so because Pharaoh already chose that path himself, so God allowed it to continue. When Pharaoh hardened and did not hearken to God, Moses or the Israelites, he ended up being afflicted in the end! When we hearken to God and listen with intent to obey Him, we will have peace & contentment in our hearts & lives!

"But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord , when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." Exodus 7:4-5.

...All for His glory! This desperate, undesirable situation with Pharaoh was used to make Egypt know The Lord & understand that no god of this world compares to our Heavenly Father-our God! Also, I'm sure this all gave some confidence to Moses & the Israelites that God was with them!

We must make the choice to hearken unto God! That way, God can continue to show Himself through miracles in our lives and not works of judgment when we harden our hearts.

"And thou shalt say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear. Thus saith the Lord , In this thou shalt know that I am the Lord : behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood." Exodus 7:16-17.

So many plagues, so many examples of what hardening our hearts can do...yet also, we see through Moses what hearkening unto God can do too! How long will some refuse the work God wants to do in their lives!?

“This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.” Matthew 15:8.

Pharaoh endured so much hardness, because he was a hard man himself. Each time he was presented with a stronger plague, he appeased Moses & said he would let his people go if he took the plague away...and he didn't listen until the ULTIMATE PLAGUE-sacrifice of the first born! Since the ultimate plague eventually came the ULTIMATE SACRIFICE-JESUS CHRIST, born in a manger!

Pharaoh's heart was far from God, although he wanted to see the power of the plagues being removed...but that's all. He didn't want God. He just wanted his situation fixed. How many times have we been the same way? We only run to God in desperation, not celebration? In our crazy moments, but not our every day life? Don't harden away, hearken today!!



## No Comparison!

*Sunday, January 24*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 9-11 · MATTHEW 15:21-39

**A**t every decision point, we want to be sure we are making the right choice. Could we be missing something? What's the opportunity cost? What else could be out there? Thankfully with God, we can be settled in knowing there is **NO COMPARISON TO HIM!** He does the miraculous! He does what this world cannot do! Everything God does keeps us in wonder & awe of Him!

The magicians of Pharaoh used their fakery to conjure up what seemed to be comparisons to God's miracles. They could get away with some things, but they soon found out they couldn't compare to God! Pharaoh soon knew, although pride wouldn't allow him to admit, that his magicians weren't the real deal...only **GOD** is!

"And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians." Exodus 9:10-11.

Who can stand against God!? **NO ONE!!** The miracles of God are **ENDLESS!** God, being Jesus Christ our Lord, did so many things to follow in the New Testament...how could we walk away from God and settle for anything less!?

"And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."

Matthew 15:30-31.

The multitude WONDERED!! They were in awe! I pray we never lose the wonder & awe of God's miracles, because He is still doing them today! We just have to open our eyes of faith and give Him the glory!



## Leaven, or Heaven?

*Monday, January 25*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 12–13 · MATTHEW 16

Here I go on the sourdough again! I did not realize I'd be able to gain so many Spiritual lessons from it, but many Scriptures I've found kind of compare to it in an interesting way!

I already mentioned about how sourdough starter is a process which captures yeast from the air to be able to bake bread when we were talking about Jesus as our true Bread of Life, but let's delve a little bit more into the yeast aspect...

"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." Exodus 12:15.

"Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread."

Exodus 12:20.

The yeast captured in sourdough leavens bread, and during the time of the Passover, the Israelites were not supposed to have it or consume it. They were just supposed to have unleavened bread. There would not be enough time to let it rise & be "picture-perfect." They had to leave Egypt fast! Ever since, Jews have eaten unleavened bread at Passover according to Scripture to remember this point in time when God miraculously brought them out of Egypt!

There is also another leaven-the leaven of pride-which causes people to rise & be "puffed up, picture-perfect" just like bread! Jesus warns us about this!

"How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees."

Matthew 16:11–12.

It's up to Jesus to raise us up, just like He raised Himself up from the dead! We have to be unleavened bread! God can't work with us if we have already tried to puff ourselves up with a prideful leavening agent...He has to do the work!

When asked by Jesus who He was, Peter looked beyond Jesus' earthly appearance, and knew that He was more than flesh...Jesus was & is divine; HE IS GOD! Peter didn't choose leaven, he chose heaven! So Jesus said to him:

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:19.

Although I'm thankful for the leaven my sourdough starter brings, I'm even more thankful for the Spiritual things!



## OVERTAKEN

Wednesday, January 27

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 14-15 · MATTHEW 17

*“The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil;  
my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand  
shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered  
them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.”*

— EXODUS 15:9-10

**O**vertaken. Overwhelmed. Does it just feel like it's time to say, “Ok problem, you win!” ??

If that's how you feel, then you're not alone! I too sometimes want to just throw in the towel on top of the rest of the laundry pile & call it a day...but with God, there is no such thing as defeat! When we are overtaken by daily life, we need to be overwhelmed in God's presence!

“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” Exodus 14:13-14.

Don't fight with others, fight through your battles with God! Don't stress yourself out trying to keep the peace...hold your peace by holding Jesus close! It may take a lot of reminding-hey, it did for the Israelites! But in almost being overtaken by Pharaoh, they went forward with God and He made the impossible happen!

“And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Matthew 17:20.



Believe what God says!! Don't be overtaken by your problems, be overtaken by  
GOD!!



# Just Right!

*Wednesday, January 27*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 16–18 · MATTHEW 18:1–20

God wants us to put Him first so that we can have a balanced life. In doing so, things will be just right! We will have our priorities straight!

From Old to New Testament to now, God has provided exactly what we need!

“And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.”

Exodus 16:18.

God gave manna to the Israelites, and He can surely provide the “manna” you need in your situation! No more, no less. Just right! Even in the wilderness, we are never left wandering!

“See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” Exodus 16:29.

God even gives us just enough so we can rest without worry. He made a way for the Israelites to have enough to rest from gathering on the sabbath day, and He will make sure that you will be physically provided for with your emotions at ease!

I know today there's a lot of “what will tomorrow bring? Do I have enough of what I need?” As you prepare, keep in mind that JESUS is enough and He is ALL WE NEED!! He will provide for us when we trust in Him!

“How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.” Matthew 18:12–13.

Our God cares so much for us! Each an every sheep. Each and every lost soul! If you feel lost & unbalanced, look to Jesus to make things just right!!



# The Key to Connection

*Thursday, January 28*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 19–20 · MATTHEW 18:21–35

**W**e've all heard of the key and the kite lightning electrical experiment conducted by Benjamin Franklin. The key, attached to the kite, was the way in which he was able to show how lightning can be used to produce an electrical current.

But, there is a another, more important key we need in our connection to God: forgiveness! Although it is essential that we receive the 3 keys of the Kingdom (Repent, Baptism & receiving the Holy Ghost), we also need to have mercy & forgive, just as God always does for us! This loosens us from the bonds of connection to our problems and helps us to focus on our connection to God!

“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.” Exodus 20:18–21.

Before this occurrence, the Israelites murmured against the plan God gave Moses. Although He brought them out of Egypt, the people were hesitant to believe much of what was happening. They kept wondering if they were going to be taken care of...but still, God wanted to reveal Himself partially to them in the mountain. God gave Moses the 10 Commandments & wanted to forgive them and give them more opportunities to connect. Moses said this fear was to teach them reverence to God and to encourage them to sin no more.

But, the people were afraid of the power of God and were still hesitant to connect, so Moses went forth...

God has so much mercy! He is always willing to forgive and give us a fresh start! How much do we really want it? As you can see, God is always doing all He can to reach us. Are we reaching back? Is the spark of connection igniting?

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.” Matthew 18:21–22.

Jesus is so patient, so longsuffering, all for the love and desire He has to connect with us! He died for us, so let’s live for Him! FORGIVE! Put the past behind! Go forward with that person you’ve had trouble forgiving, and go forward with God! Let there be a lightning shock of life back into your friendships and relationship with God!



# Heaven Bound!

*Friday, January 29*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 21–22 · MATTHEW 19

What's the difference between a slave & a servant? A slave is forced to serve, but a servant serves out of a willing heart! One is force-bound, the other is free-bound! We all must be willing servants of Christ-bound to the freedom we have in Him, all the way to Heaven!

“If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.” Exodus 21:2.

Servants had a choice to be free of their masters, but some decided stay, especially if they had a family & built their lives there. These servants must have been treated fairly, like a normal job, or else...why would they stay?

“And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.” Exodus 21:5–6.

Everything God establishes is just & good, especially when we decide to abide under His authority & serve Him! He provides for us as a good & loving Master. He gives us true freedom, because it extends beyond this world, to Heaven in eternity! The Bible says we will always serve something or someone, and we cannot serve 2 masters (Matthew 6:24)...and there's none better than Jesus! If we are going to be bound servants to anything, let's be bound to Jesus! Let's be Heaven bound!!

“And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the

hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.” Matthew 19:5–8.

God never wants the marriage covenant we have with Him to end! It’s a promise of eternal love! We must not only agree with it...we must be bound to it! Dedication without persuasion! Once this decision is made final in our hearts & minds, the destination will be glorious!



## Perfect Provision

*Saturday, January 30*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 23-24 · MATTHEW 20:1-16

As we mentioned previously, God does everything JUST RIGHT! He provides fairly. He gives us enough, no more no less, so that we never lack or have to scramble to store more than we need. Although God sometimes does bless us abundantly more than we could imagine, in those cases, we should share those blessings!

“And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil.” Exodus 23:25-26.

True fulfillment doesn't only mean receiving what we need; it means getting rid of what we don't need! That's God's perfect provision! God blesses & multiplies our necessities, but He takes away our diseases! PERFECT BALANCE! But we must trust & serve The Lord with our whole heart to experience that kind of fulfillment. We can't hold onto unbelief!

“And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.”

Exodus 24:7-8.

Obedience precedes the promise! Obedience to all of God's Word is the entryway into a life perfectly provided for by God! He drives out diseases and our enemies when we choose NOT to be an enemy of God!

“And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.” Matthew 20:9-10.



Everyone deserves to be blessed by God, and God provides perfectly & justly to all who ask! When we look around & start comparing our blessings, we become envious & covetous, but God knows exactly what we need, when we need it. All our needs are different! There is a perfect purpose for all of God's perfect provision!



## Are we prepared?

*Sunday, January 31*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 25-26 · MATTHEW 20:17-34

Every time people are going to be coming over, I feel like I'm never fully prepared...like, even if I clean, I'm sure there HAS to be something I'm missing (and usually with a family of 6, there is lol). Looking back on the tabernacle prepared by Moses & the children of Israel, it was the first place prepared for The Lord, so you know it HAD to be special!

“Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them. The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure. The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another.”

Exodus 26:1-3.

The curtains were hand-crafted & hung just right! The tables were in place. The candlestick was burning...and most importantly, the holy of holies was there behind the veil! That's where God's presence resided at that time!

“And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.” Exodus 26:33.

Similar to the tabernacle plan, we need to be sure OUR HEARTS are cleaned up and prepared for The Lord! The same servant mentality we have for our guests needs to be given to Jesus as He comes to live in our hearts by the Holy Ghost! Actually, beyond anything else, we are servants of The Lord first & foremost! A place needs to be set at the table in our hearts for The Lord to join us!

“And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a

ransom for many.” Matthew 20:27–28.

Jesus did not just come to make sacrifices...He came to be OUR SACRIFICE! That’s the difference between the Old & New Testament. The tabernacle plan had a place for sacrificing...it was prepared for that type of service to God. But are our hearts prepared to be living sacrifices? To deny our self-will to follow His perfect Will? Let’s get prepared today:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.







I I

# FEBRUARY



*"We love him, because he first loved us."*

1 JOHN 4:19

DAYS 32 – 59

## A Welcoming Work

*Monday, February 1*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 27-28 · MATTHEW 21:1-22

All the preparation of the tabernacle of the Old Testament was not just work...it was a welcoming committee for the presence of The Lord to dwell! In the New Testament until now, we are preparing to welcome the presence of Jesus into our daily lives!

We should never forget why we do the work of the ministry...it's not because God likes when we are busy, but it's because we are making way for Him to come through in our lives and the lives of others!

“And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord : it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.” Exodus 27:20-21.

Jesus, like the light burning in the tabernacle, was like a pure olive branch beaten to bring light into a dark world. He took the beating and pain so new life could be brought forth through the new births of souls! We need to welcome Him into our lives like the light in the tabernacle, and like the people praising Him at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem!

“And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.” Matthew 21:1-2.

They were near the Mount of Olives! And just like the tabernacle, pure olive oil was needed for the light...and no light is more pure than that of Jesus!

“And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.” Exodus 28:36.

Again, everything we do needs to be for Jesus, to represent His holiness! When we make the work of the ministry all about ourselves, it's no longer a welcoming work, honoring the presence of God! We need to flip that mindset, just like Jesus flipped the tables of the moneychangers in the temple! Jesus already bought us with the price of His Blood!

“And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.” Matthew 21:12–13.

From the tabernacle, to the temple, to our hearts, we need to be sure our work is a welcoming work unto The Lord!



## A Sweet Moment

*Tuesday, February 2*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 29–30 · MATTHEW 21:23–46

It's a wonder to think of what it must have been like to see Jesus face to face in person! Imagine being the woman at the well, a blind person, or one of the apostles! What would the conversation be like? It would surely have been a sweet moment to savor!

In the Old Testament, God personally met with Aaron every morning & evening on the altar of incense:

“And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.” Exodus 30:6–8.

This perpetual sweet incense has indeed lasted throughout the generations—because our prayers go up today as sweet incense to The Lord! Just as God received these offerings and sacrifices, He receives our prayers today! With that sweet incense came a sweet anointing, too!

“Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin: And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense,” Exodus 30:23–27.



Are we ready vessels? Ready to send up incense of prayer? Ready to receive an anointing upon our lives? In order to prepare for that, we must desire it enough to be set apart & surrendered fully to God! Praying is a serious thing-God always hears! The anointing of God's Hand upon our lives is serious too-we become ready to grow in ministries! Think about it-the priests had to have a heart & mind for this daily commitment...so why would God expect any less of all of us? All of us can now approach God at the holy of holies every time we enter into prayer!

Let's purpose ourselves to take the steps necessary this year to find those sweet moments of prayer with God. Let's pursue that anointing! Remember, it all starts with making a decision to be set-apart and ready for God's greatness! God hears every prayer, and when we have His Spirit, He quickens us further into the Spiritual realm and the things of God! It's essential for our salvation!!

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38.



# It's time to go!

*Wednesday, February 3*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 31-33 · MATTHEW 22:1-22

Getting ready, up & out the door on time can usually be a challenge with many kids, but when timing is important for an event (most importantly, church!), you start planning ahead to be sure you'll be out the door in no time at go-time!

Things don't always go smoothly, but planning ahead & being prepared certainly helps! That's why, when it comes to God, preparing our hearts is so important! In the end, when God calls us to do something (and at the very end, to go to Heaven), the only thing that matters is if our hearts are in the right place!

"Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him."

Exodus 32:26.

After Moses talked with God in the mountain, God told him his people were corrupting themselves. They had made a golden calf & started to worship it! So, Moses went down and asked who was on The Lord's side. Many of those who chose idol worship and did not turn back to God were killed, but those who were left had to make things right. They had to bring their hearts back into obedience to God in order to be ready when it was time to go continue the journey.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way. And when the

people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments.” Exodus 33:1–4.

God allowed them to go forward, but He was still heartbroken at their stiffnecked ways. This really touched me. God wasn’t pleased with them, but He still wanted them to get to the promised land. Even the people began to mourn & feel the hurt & pain of their disobedience to God. Although it was to be a land flowing with milk & honey, it all seemed bittersweet.

Today, Jesus looks for ready hearts to go celebrate with Him in eternity. An earthly promised land is one thing, but what’s most amazing is our Heavenly home! Jesus gave His all to us, and still does! So, our whole hearts must be in love with Him. We can’t experience Heaven without that crucial dedication of our hearts in repentance, baptism & receiving the Holy Ghost! Will we be ready when it’s time to go?

“Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:” Matthew 22:4–5.

We can’t make light of The Light of the world! In order to go to the marriage supper of The Lamb as the Bride of Christ, we all must surrender our hearts. Nothing else is more important!!

“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.” Mark 13:31.



## Stir it up!

*Thursday, February 4*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 34-35 · MATTHEW 22:23-46

What happens if you only let soup simmer, unstirred? All the ingredients will not spread evenly throughout the pot! Each bite probably won't have balanced flavor-some might have a lot of one thing, and none of another! Just as soup needs to be stirred to make a good soup with balanced flavor, we too need to be stirred to let our lives settle & balance out!

We may not like a stirring in our lives, or for things to get shaken up, but sometimes it's the best motivator to improve or change completely! The same was true for the children of Israel!

"And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments." Exodus 35:20-21.

A stirred up heart & a willing spirit allows us to offer up our best to God! They got stirred up because they realized their wrongdoing in making a golden calf as an idol. They realized they had to live by the 10 Commandments. They were stirred by conviction of what they had done, and they wanted to turn things around & give their best to God! We can do our best at anything when we don't stay comfortable on level 1! We need to stir it up & level up!

"And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair." Exodus 35:26.

Don't be afraid to get stirred! To admit a wrong and make it right! To improve on something that may have been challenging for years! It's all possible with Jesus, and in the end, it's all for Him!

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." Matthew 22:29.

I have to admit when I make wrong turns...those times when I should have listened to God over myself...those times I didn't let God stir me toward something better! I pray The Lord help us to be ready to be stirred up in Jesus' Name!



# Striking Gold

*Friday, February 5*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 36-38 · MATTHEW 23:1-22

**I**magine digging around your yard one day and striking gold! What an exhilarating feeling! There are many things you can do with gold here in this life on earth, because in the here & now, it's worth so much. But what about the Creator of gold? Of every mineral, particle and person? JESUS CHRIST! He is the Pearl of Great Price and is the true treasure! Gold may be strikingly beautiful, but we really strike gold when we find Jesus!

“And he made the vessels which were upon the table, his dishes, and his spoons, and his bowls, and his covers to cover withal, of pure gold.” Exodus 37:16.

Pure gold was used throughout the building of the tabernacle. In fact, the people brought so much of every item to build the tabernacle that they had to stop bringing it because it was TOO MUCH! Imagine too much gold, plus other beautiful items! It all seems so majestic and royal...but the most beautiful part about the whole tabernacle was God! His presence swelled there. Sacrifices were made. It was a holy & humbling place. It was not just a work of art!

“And he made the incense altar of shittim wood: the length of it was a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit; it was foursquare; and two cubits was the height of it; the horns thereof were of the same. And he overlaid it with pure gold, both the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it: also he made unto it a crown of gold round about.” Exodus 37:25-26.

The incense altar was another example of a golden masterpiece. But remember, the most beautiful part of it all was its purpose! Sending sweet incense up in a connection to God! The gold and the altar itself are great, but GOD IS GLORIOUS! Jesus put it this way:

“Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?” Matthew 23:17–19.

We can't miss the meaning! God did want the tabernacle made that way, but over time into the New Testament until now, He wanted to be sure that He was carried on in everyone's hearts. If we follow rituals but do not have a relationship with The One who refines US as pure gold, then we are poor and do not understand true treasure, or the riches found in God's Word! Be striking and shine as gold when you strike a relationship with Jesus, and let Him shine through!



## Written on His Heart

*Saturday, February 6*

TODAY'S READING · EXODUS 39-40 · MATTHEW 23:23-39

**T**he Bible documents the beginning of time to the end of time. It is the Book of our lives! And since Jesus is the Word made flesh, and He is our God, we are not only written upon paper, but we are written upon His heart! Jesus loves us so much. He was the Ultimate Sacrifice, so we can go the extra mile for Him! We must write Him upon our hearts as well!

“And the stones were according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes.” Exodus 39:14.

The breastplate was a priestly garment worn by Aaron. Upon this breastplate were stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel. A breastplate is significant because it is worn over the heart. God wanted Aaron the priest and those priests after him to not only represent His people, but have a heart for His people and the work of The Lord! This is because God has a heart for us. Just like this breastplate, we are written upon the heart of God. He will never stop loving us! AGAIN, HE IS THE WORD MADE FLESH! HIS WORD IS LIKE A BREASTPLATE WITH OUR LIVES WRITTEN INTO THE STORY! KEEP ON LOVING JESUS!

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” Matthew 23:37.

Oh, how far His love extends! The Pharisees stoned those who were sent by God. Those stones were used to kill, but they forgot the special stones of long ago...the ones which represented each tribe of Israel upon the priestly breastplate! They lost the meaning. They lost touch with the love of God and became touchy & irritated with those speaking in the Name of The Lord. They only grew



interested in self-gain & self-acknowledgment rather than selfless love and honor to The King! Jesus desires to gather us under His wing, like a loving hen gathers her chicks. Will we be too prideful to live under Christ's shadow? I pray not! Jesus help us to always love You and share Your love with others in Jesus' Name!



# All We Have

*Sunday, February 7*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 1-3 · MATTHEW 24:1-28

**H**ave you ever pushed yourself so hard under pressure, but felt it still wasn't enough? Did you ever give it all you had, but still come up short? It is normal to feel unworthy. Exhausted. Spent...but as long as we keep going forward with Jesus & give it our all, we CAN make it through those tough times! We are NEVER worthy. We are NEVER at a place of pure perfection. But we CAN be our most when we give our ALL!

Again, be your most by giving your all. Don't shy away from the difficulty of the challenge. The sacrifice is probably a growth point! Just look back at the different kinds of sacrifices which were made back in the tabernacle days:

"And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the Lord be of the flock; male or female, he shall offer it without blemish."

Leviticus 3:6.

No matter what kind of offering it was, peace, burnt, sin, etc., the animal had to be without blemish. This means there was nothing physically wrong with them. As animals, they couldn't make any sinful mistakes, so a physically spotless animal was the most accepted sacrifice. The inwardly blemished people gave an outwardly blemish-free animal as a sacrifice. Today, Jesus makes a way for us to be daily sacrifices for Him when we always stay humble and be sure to come to a place of repentance. HE WAS AND IS THE GREATEST SACRIFICE! When we go through the Acts 2:38 plan of salvation, the comfort of the Holy Ghost strengthens us through our sacrifices. When we come with a blemish-free heart through repentance, we are free from guilt and shame which will hold us back!

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38.

So...it's ok. With Jesus, WE CAN ENDURE TO THE END! Every hurdle in our lives seems too great when we face it without Jesus. Jesus uses these situations in powerful ways to change us for the better! Don't be afraid to give all you have after getting knocked down. With Jesus, you'll only come up stronger!

"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matthew 24:13.



## Wise & Faithful

*Tuesday, February 9*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 4-5 · MATTHEW 24:29-51

**I**t is one thing to be wise in knowing what to do, but it is another thing to be faithful in the follow-through! Putting our wisdom & faith into action is where it counts! That's when we are obedient to the desires of God. We can't just hear & know, we have to do it...in the here & now!

Just as in the days of old, God expects us to be faithful & obedient. God laid out His plan to those in the Old Testament:

“And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty; When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Leviticus 4:13-14

What if the congregation just didn't feel like sacrificing?? Thank God they did! They were not only wise, they were faithful. Although they sinned through ignorance, once it was known, they knew they had to make it right & follow through with the obedient, sacrificial process. The children of Israel didn't always get it right, as we will continue to see...but many sacrifices were made in those days which God accepted. Even if we don't feel like it, even when we want to take the easy way out, keep in mind that God's way is best, and HE WILL GET US TO HEAVEN! OUR COMFORTS WON'T!

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:” Acts 17:30.

God's process for us is repentance. That readies us for baptism of water & Spirit. That readies us for Heaven & eternal life!

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 24:45–51.

When we lose sight of Jesus and our Heavenly home, we tend to slack on being wise & faithful...we allow a little sin to creep into our lives. This will continue to lead us down a dangerous path! If Jesus comes tomorrow, will we be found wise & faithful? Something to ponder & pray about!



## A Forever Fire

*Tuesday, February 9*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 6-7 · MATTHEW 25:1-30

We can't really make up for lost time...it's a phrase which means we can do something in the present to cancel out something in the past...and while we can improve upon our past, we can't go back and change it. It's the same in any relationship, especially our relationship with God. We can't let that fire of passionate love for Him go out! Yes, we can rekindle it, but once that original fire is gone, it's gone...the sad thing is, some people see no use in rekindling the relationship...but we have to be faithful in a forever fire that does not go out!

“And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.” Leviticus 6:12-13.

There was a set time each morning where the priest burned offerings unto God, and the fire for those offerings never went out! Just as this was true for the tabernacle days, we can't lose the fire behind our sacrifice for The Lord! We can't lose the fire in our relationship with God! No fire meant no sacrifice. No sweet savor unto The Lord. The process & connection stopped. We can't do the same!

“And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.” Matthew 25:6-10.

A relationship with God is to be kept our whole lives. It's not supposed to be rushed at the end when we see Jesus coming again...that just shows we are in it for Heaven, and not our Heavenly Father. Later in this chapter Jesus says, “I never

knew you.” We can only get to know others, and our Jesus, over time. We can’t put Him off now and claim to know Him later. The fire must burn now so later we will not burn & yearn for Jesus when the door is shut! It’s quite sobering to think about. Keep the forever fire going in Jesus’ Name! It’s not too late!



## The Fuel of Service

*Wednesday, February 10*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 8-10 · MATTHEW 25:31-46

Sometimes, even doing a meaningful good thing can be exhausting. As we talked about before, it could be tempting to let that fire go out...but one way to keep the energy up and a right heart & Spirit in the matter is to remember what the fuel behind the service really is! The work is for Jesus, and He is the fuel! HE IS THE CONSUMING FIRE! The fuel to the fire in our service and relationship with God is He Himself. If we become self-willed, that consuming fire will come upon us unawares...

“For our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:29.

..Just ask Aaron’s sons! 2 of Aaron’s sons were caught up in their own process, their own way of doing things. Too concerned with their own and not God alone. They sacrificed their way instead of God’s way, like Cain!

“And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.” Leviticus 10:1-2.

Their strange fire caused The Lord’s consuming fire to burn forth! Remember, it’s The Lord’s work before it’s our work! His fire originally consumed the offerings, not the fire made by Aaron’s sons!

“And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.”

Leviticus 9:23-24.

This event of God’s fire consuming the offerings took place right before Aaron’s sons committed that sin against God. You’d think they’d understand the



strength of God's fire and the power more than anyone else! But when God isn't our fuel, we are just onlookers. We are not in-takers! We see, but we do not love and appreciate what's taking place. It goes as far as our eyes, but not our heart! Our fuel has to be Jesus! That way, we won't let our strange fuel & fire get in the way!

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Matthew 25:41-46.

We can think we have the service of God all figured out. But without reaching out & putting our faith into action, there is no fuel behind our work. We might as well be offering strange fire like Aaron's sons...and as we can see from this New Testament passage, **GOD IS STILL A CONSUMING FIRE! HE IS STILL THE FUEL AND REASON FOR SERVICE!** Because, if we don't reach out to the least, we are not serving Jesus. He is there in those moments. He is there to give us strength before those moments come. Let Him be your fuel today!



# A Clean Slate

*Thursday, February 11*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 11-12 · MATTHEW 26:1-25

**H**ave you ever tried something so many times, yet it just doesn't seem to work? I know we've all done it and said, "There must be another way!" Sometimes it's best to just start fresh with a new plan & a clean slate. That's what Jesus wants from us! When we see how unreliable it is to trust our own way with God, we must abandon all and trust in Him! We ourselves must be clean, pure, holy & ready for a reliable relationship with Him!

Jesus IS THE WAY! And not the other way, the ONLY WAY! Breaking bondage to what was and "coming clean" to Jesus allows us the opportunity to live a beautiful holy life with Him, just like the vessels in the Old Testament:

"And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed. And every earthen vessel, whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it." Leviticus 11:32-33.

As people, we need to already be broken vessels to be cleaned out. If we are closed off to God's cleaning process, then we will stay frustrated with what's not working. Only a life with Jesus works out in the end! We need to repent, be baptized in Jesus' Name and receive the Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking in new tongues! We also need daily connection to Jesus and examination of our souls to really live a holy, clean life for Him!

"For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am

holy.”

Leviticus 11:44–45

When we do not fear coming clean to Jesus, knowing that He alone can make us truly clean from our past and give us a clean slate, then we can please Him. We won't betray Him if we are cleansed from self-will and come into His perfect Will! Judas was too concerned with his current state and dirty slate & soul. He allowed the love of money to overtake His love for Jesus:

“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.”

Matthew 26:14–16

It's always better to do it God's Way! We are not alive in sin. We are dead. We need a clean slate in order to be alive in Christ!



# The Body of Christ

*Friday, February 12*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 13 · MATTHEW 26:26-50

When we repent and are baptized of water & Spirit into the Body of Christ, we become a part and a member of something far greater than our own mortal bodies. We become connected to and in love with the One, Jesus Christ, who has power over the body & flesh. He is King over all natural and supernatural! He heals all our diseases. He even helps us control our fleshly & sinful tendencies. He even overcame His own flesh in the garden. This is the powerful Body of Christ!

“When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests: And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.”

Leviticus 13:2-3.

God has a method of examination & treatment for every form of disease which manifests itself in human bodies. Back in Biblical times, the people relied on godly priests to diagnose these issues, because direction on these matters came straight from God! More doctors and scientists should go back to the True Book and rely on Biblical principles again! HE IS THE GREAT PHYSICIAN! And if we are to become and be part of the Body of Christ, I'm sure He is an expert on what His Body needs! He created and designed us from the start! He knows our bodies. He knows our hearts. He wants us to be a part of HIM!

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my

blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Matthew 26:26–28

He gave His Body and blood that we may be close to Him, as a part of that same Body through repentance, and baptism of water and Spirit for the remission of sins! He came in flesh with the power already to heal bodily diseases and put fleshly desires to death. In doing this and resisting the devil and his temptations, he will flee from us! Jesus knows our bodies, and the only way to overcome our bodies’ weaknesses is to be a part of HIS BODY!



# Give what you have!

*Saturday, February 13*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 14 · MATTHEW 26:51-75

**T**his chapter of Leviticus talked about the sacrifices & offerings given after a cleansing from leprosy has taken place. There seemed to be so many listed, with different processes of what to do with the blood and how to handle it with each animal...but one thing was always in common: the act of giving it up to God!

“And he shall offer the one of the turtledoves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get; Even such as he is able to get, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the meat offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed before the Lord . This is the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing.” Leviticus 14:30-32

This particular law was for someone who was too poor to give the normal required sacrifice...but still, they could give something! This is different than Cain and Abel though, where one sacrifice was one of self-will and the other of God's Will. In the above case, God still had a requirement, but it was attainable even for the poorest. We can't give whatever we want, but God requires what we are able to give...as long as we have that one thing in common: the desire to give from the heart! The heart is really all He requires, and we all have that!

“Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that

smote thee?”

Matthew 26:64–68

If this wasn't sad enough, so many hearts turned away from Jesus, imagine the cold heart of one who was closest to him? Judas betrayed Him, being one of the 12, but Peter, one of the closest of the 12, denied Him 3 times...that might be worse than the slaps in the face, although all people are His creation...His own rejected Him...they turned their hearts away...and although Peter wept and turned his heart back to Jesus, that moment was truly a deep rejection. Peter must have felt like Judas for a moment...

“And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.”  
Matthew 26:75.

From Old to New Testament, it's a giving heart that matters! A willingness to give in to God, give into His Word, give into His plan for salvation, and give Him our best, all the way to Heaven! What we have is enough, and that's because we all have a heart!



## Washed in the Blood

*Monday, February 15*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 15-16 · MATTHEW 27:1-26

**B**efore the shedding of the Blood of Jesus, the priests in the tabernacle went through a similar process which represented the Blood of Jesus being upon us later. The similarities and comparisons are also confirmations about why we NEED Jesus Blood upon us in our own impressions of water baptism! In it we experience His ultimate sacrifice, and through it, we are washed & cleansed of our sin!

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:” Leviticus 16:21

Just as there were both sacrificial and scapegoat animals during the tabernacle days, Jesus is both for us today! He bore our sin, being innocent Himself, and He was the ultimate sacrifice! He shed innocent Blood, and carried each and every sin which was, is & is to come...powerful, sobering, breath-taking...

“And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.”

Leviticus 16:23-24

After the repentance came the washing! Just like we must begin our cleansing in baptism with repentance as well!

“When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the



people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.”

Matthew 27:24–25

The innocent Blood is upon us when we decide to come under it in baptism! We are no longer guilty of Jesus’ death, we become a part of it ourselves! This is the only way we can die to sin, live a fresh life, and receive His Spirit. We are not only ready for a new earthly life, but a new eternal life also awaits us! Get under the precious Blood of Jesus!!!



## The Director

Monday, February 15

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 17-18 · MATTHEW 27:27-50

*“After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the Lord your God. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.”*

— LEVITICUS 18:3-5

**E**ven when it looks like things are out of control, God IS in control! HE IS THE DIRECTOR; THE SCRIPT IS WRITTEN! We can only live if we do and keep His commandments & ordinances!

Again, God is in control...but He is not controlling! In fact, He gives us the ability to choose whether or not we want Him to be The Director. To call the shots. To guide us...think about it...He is the Creator, so He must know how to best be the Director! Don't be closed off to His leadership in your life!

“Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the Lord your God.” Leviticus 18:30.

Let's not stray toward the “No Trespassing” sign! There's always good reason...and it's not to keep us out of something good, it's to keep us inside something better! GOD'S PERFECT WILL! Choose Jesus every time!

“And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” Matthew 27:37.

Because He was worthy to go to the cross for all of us, HE IS KING. HE IS DIRECTOR!

“Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.”

Matthew 27:45

God never lost His power!! The same God who said “Let there be light” went to the cross for us and allowed great darkness. All we can think of is how...

This is how: He is Director. He is Jesus. He is King in control no matter if we allow Him into our personal life or not...He has the final say when the time comes...let Him be Director in your life!



## The Strength of His Love

*Tuesday, February 16*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 19-20 · MATTHEW 27:51-66

Love drives us to do crazy things sometimes...things we wouldn't normally do...most of all, love gives us the strength to sacrifice...especially when we love Jesus first! Since God is love (1 John 4:8), He will give us strength to love others more deeply. To strengthen our commitments. To help us be consistent in our devotion to Him first, and to our loved ones. He will help us when it's hardest. When we are at our weakest. It's not just a love...it's strength!

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.” Leviticus 19:18

It may not seem fair at times...but there is more strength in love than in a grudge! Holding negativity drains...but the love of Jesus always sustains! Through any time of sacrifice, trial, battle, or storm! Jesus helps us to love even when it feels like there's none left to give. He loves us, and He helps us to love those around us and sacrifice for their well-being and happiness!

“And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

Leviticus 19:33-34

When we fall in love with Jesus, we can even have the strength to love a stranger! Again, all this starts with Jesus...how much are we willing to sacrifice for Him, not just a loved one or a stranger? Is Jesus a stranger to you know? Just remember, a closeness with Him leads to greater closeness with others! LOVE JESUS FIRST! Like Joseph of Arimathea, who loved Jesus so much, he gave Him his own tomb:

“And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.”

Matthew 27:59–60

Let the strength of Jesus' love show what love truly is!



## Living Sacrifice

Wednesday, February 17

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 21-22 · MATTHEW 28

*“Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the Lord for a burnt offering; Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.”*

— LEVITICUS 22:18-19

Sacrifice was always required in the Old Testament, but it didn't stop in the New Testament, even until this day! While it is true that animal sacrifices are no longer required, those sacrifices were leading up to something much greater: living sacrifices! Jesus was the first Living Sacrifice in rising from the dead, and now we must do the same! It's always good to check ourselves to see what we can remove so we can move closer to Christ!

Every time exercise takes place in the physical body, we are choosing to endure pain now to enjoy being fit later. If we are willing to do so many things in the physical, we sure can make sacrifices in our soul to be closer to The One who gave it all for us! Just like eating kale over chocolate, we need the nourishment of The Word of Truth over the fluffed up lies of this world!

“And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord, offer it at your own will.” Leviticus 22:29.

No one forces us to exercise or eat healthy. It's a personal choice. In personal devotion to God, we must give thanks through our soulful, Spiritual sacrifices which build our character! We will see the benefits in eternity, and the blessings here on earth! And the greatest one being a loving relationship with Jesus! He never fails us! Sacrifice is truly the greatest blessing.

“And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.”

Matthew 28:5–7

Jesus IS ALIVE! THE ULTIMATE LIVING SACRIFICE! We must live for Him!

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Romans 12:1



## A Pure Love

Thursday, February 18

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 23-24 · MARK 1:1-22

*“And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God.”*

— LEVITICUS 23:22

What are we leaving behind as we go through life? Are we distracted by our stuff, unconcerned with others, or our relationship with God? I've been praying for God to help me prefer others and to realize that it is better to give than to receive. That is the way of Christ. That is pure love. We need to prepare ourselves for Him so we can do more for those around us! He will strengthen us to go even further beyond ourselves!

“He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the Lord continually. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the Lord. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.”

Leviticus 24:4, 6-7

There was a purity about the tabernacle. Everything used was untainted, not mixed or corrupted with anything less than what God required. How are our bodily temples doing? Do we have a pure love? In order to look at what we can leave behind for others, we must look at how diligent we are in preparing The Lord's way before us in our own lives! We can't bring others along if we haven't traveled the path!

“As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the



wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

Mark 1:2–3

Jesus will make our paths straight, leading to His heart. He will lead us to others to show them the pure love of God. Are we ready for the journey?



## Freedom Found!

Friday, February 19

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 25 · MARK 1:23-45

*“And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.”*

— MARK 1:36-39

Throughout the Bible, even up until now, people seek release. Redemption. Freedom from whatever it may be that's weighing down & holding back. And without even knowing it sometimes, people are seeking Jesus! As it says above, “All men seek for thee.” God was always pointing to Himself as the answer! Whatever it is that you're looking for today can be found in Him!

From devils & disease in the New Testament to release from bondage in the Old, God always had freedom to offer! His compassion allows Him to care for strangers like friends. We must show the same compassion & love to others, and set them free from the mindset that no one cares...many people are stuck in that place, like a prison...but our Christ-like attitude can change that!

“And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.”

Leviticus 25:39-41

God always causes us to return. Release. And to remove the cause of our bondage. Those of this world may desire to abuse their positions of power,

keeping people in terrible conditions...but God, with ALL the power, gives us new life, new hope & freedom! It's all found in Him! ALL SEEK FOR HIM, WHETHER THEY REALIZE IT OR NOT! That's why we must spread The Word of where freedom can be found-freedom physically, mentally, emotionally, behaviorally & Spiritually!

“And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.”

Mark 1:40-42

Be released in Jesus' Name!!



## Every Devoted Thing

*Saturday, February 20*

TODAY'S READING · LEVITICUS 26-27 · MARK 2

*“Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the Lord of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the Lord.”*

— LEVITICUS 27:28

Every time we do something for God, or give to Him, He sees it. He honors it. It is most holy unto Him! Remember, our hearts are the most precious to Him! When we give from our hearts, especially when we give our time & talents in our devotion to Him, God blesses that.

“If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.”

Leviticus 26:3-6

These couple chapters of Leviticus show the great blessings of obedience to God, and the cursings of disobedience. We must devote ourselves to God & give Him our all! We can give what we want, but we have to give what God wants, too! He loves when we devote things especially to Him, but we can't withhold other things either! We can't replace a relationship with things-the first & best devoted thing should be our hearts & lives! Obedience is better than sacrifice, as Samuel said!

“And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.”

Mark 2:13–14

Wait, what!? A tax collector!? YEP! This Levi was Matthew! And as soon as Jesus asked Him to follow, He obeyed. He didn't just say, “Here, just take all the money Jesus, that should help out the poor or something. Have a nice day!” Nope. Matthew gave himself. He forsook his past. He had a change of heart. Every. Devoted. Thing!!

So remember, Cain gave something contrary to God's requirements, so it was not accepted. God will take all we have, but will it come from our hearts? In the end, at the judgment seat, did we obey God's Word, or just sacrifice? Give & devote your love & time to God, and start with the heart!



## Be Part of the Count!

*Sunday, February 21*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 1-2 · MARK 3:1-19

Numbers is a book that is very direct & straight-forward: it numbered the army camps of Israel by tribe! God is the God of the highest mountain and smallest detail-just as it was important to keep order & number those prepared for war, and it was important to gather a certain number of original disciples, it's important today to be part of the count of people on The Lord's side!

"As the Lord commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai. And the children of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war; Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Reuben, were forty and six thousand and five hundred." Numbers 1:19-21.

This is one example of the number list detailed out for one specific tribe, the tribe of Reuben. I think it's so incredible to have these kinds of records & documents available-but the more amazing thing is that this isn't just history! This is OUR history! We are to be written in as followers of Jesus (or the tribe of Jesus!) when we go through the Acts 2:38 plan of salvation! IT REALLY COUNTS IN ETERNITY!!! We become soldiers bringing lost souls to Him!

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38

Here are the original 12 disciples...and there have been many more since! Let's be a part of the count!!

"13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would:  
and                      they                      came                      unto                      him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send

them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.”  
Mark 3:13–19.



## The Father's Family

*Monday, February 22*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 3-4 · MARK 3:20-35

All the families of the tribes of Israel played significant roles in bringing the tabernacle together and putting things in place. It may seem at times like things are falling apart, completely dysfunctional, chaotic, unintentional, maybe even without purpose...but God can use any family! He has blessed us with so many family members, and the more we ask God to help us keep things in order (just like the tabernacle), the more He will! He is our Heavenly Father, and He has a plan for each one of us!

“For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.” Mark 3:35.

The best family we could have is the one who strives to be close to Jesus, our Heavenly Father. The family who chooses to follow Jesus as King and leader will truly thrive & prosper. We will always come up short if we don't work at building our family upon The Rock, The Word! Does that mean perfection and no more conflict? Nope! But we sure have a better handle on things when we place it all in God's Hands!

“This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of the congregation: and their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers;” Numbers 4:28-29

...And the list goes on! So many families, so many important things to do for The Lord! As it says in an old song, “Only what's done for Christ will last!”

“And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.” Mark 3:25.

Let Jesus, our Father, our God, unify your family! If there are people or situations that are falling apart, let God piece it all together. Allow Him to use your family in a mighty way through a devoted life...today!





## The Extra Mile

*Tuesday, February 23*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 5-6 · MARK 4:1-20

**W**ait a minute...the extra mile?? How about the strenuous path we are already on!? Life is demanding. That's just the way it goes. But thankfully, with Jesus, He gives us peace along the way. Strength along the way. Comfort along the way...think about it like climbing a mountain...beyond that extra mile is an incredible view!

“He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk. All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.”

Numbers 6:3-5.

Those who desired to take a Nazarite vow back in those tabernacle days did exactly this. They went that extra mile. Beyond the usual standards and expectations, they pushed themselves beyond their comfort zones! They wanted to do more for God! No athlete wants to come in last, some settle for trying their best, but some push for more than their best...and the only way we can push for more than our best performance is by relying on God's power! This type of vow separated from the rest, but they didn't care about being different, because they were doing God's best! God has more in store for us than this world can ever offer...go the extra mile in His Kingdom first, then see all that will follow! Again, such an incredible view!

Let God's Word into your heart...but don't let it pass through. Let it stay. Let it abide, tabernacle & reside! Jesus IS His Word!! Take a Nazarite vow to follow Him every step of the way, because He is with us every step of our journey!

“And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.” Mark 4:20.

Jesus already went beyond the Nazarite vow to show His commitment to us. He went beyond the extra mile. Beyond the grave! He will help us get beyond our problems by pressing into His power! Some thirty fold, some sixty, some an hundred...let's be 100 percent on board with Jesus! This world may leave us exhausted to keep going, let alone going that extra mile...but Jesus keeps us motivated & inspired!!!



## Withholding Nothing

Wednesday, February 24

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 7-8 · MARK 4:21-41

*“This was the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed, by the princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold: Each charger of silver weighing an hundred and thirty shekels, each bowl seventy: all the silver vessels weighed two thousand and four hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary:”*

— NUMBERS 7:84-85

Together, each tribe of Israel gave so much to God for the tabernacle. Not only animal sacrifices from their flocks, but different items and tools. Think about it...from the caring of each animal, to the making of each item, then to giving it up to God...what heart! What great sacrifice! They were a people who understood that no gift is greater than God, and all good things come from God anyway! They withheld nothing!

“And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the Lord. And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, unto the Lord, to make an atonement for the Levites. And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for an offering unto the Lord.” Numbers 8:11-13

Beyond things given in honor of the service of The Lord, the special tribe of the Levites were given as the firstborn of the people of Israel to do special jobs in service of The Lord. We should strive to be like this tribe too! Not only sacrificing outside themselves, but giving themselves to be mightily used of God! In Jesus, we have this same ability! Don't stop short, because God's Hand isn't short! He will be there to strengthen you. The closer you get, the more of yourself you give, the more fulfilled you will feel!

“And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.”

Mark 4:21–22

Just like the candlestick burning bright in the tabernacle all those centuries ago, our light must burn bright for Jesus today! We can't hide our talents. Our time. Our tools we could be using in The Kingdom of God! Don't just invest in this life-put your best into the life to come...that's where it counts!!



## Linked to the Past

*Thursday, February 25*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 9–11 · MARK 5:1–20

**I**t's always a good thing to hang onto memories, especially the ones that uplift, motivate & inspire us...but when we are linked to the past in a way which holds us in chains, and holds us back from change, then we must break free from that. We cannot go back; we can only go forward!

“And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.” Numbers 11:4–6.

For some reason, the children of Israel were stuck on remembering their slavery in Egypt...but it wasn't something that helped them in a positive way. God had done so many miracles already by this point, delivering them & providing for them...but all they could do was complain! They were still in bondage in their minds, thinking that Egypt gave more to them than God ever could...they were afraid of change...

The same thing happens with us! We get so comfortable with where we are at, that we don't think even God could offer us anything better-but remember, no change, no growth! No chains linked to the past=freedom to grow in The Lord!

We can also look at the possessed demoniac which Jesus healed:

“And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.” Mark 5:2–4

Chains were constantly broken by this man on the outside, but on the inside, he had always been locked up, as a slave to this unclean spirit...that was his past,

that's what he was known for...but Jesus can break the yoke of any reputation! Even though the name of the spirit was legion (meaning many), Jesus easily cast them out! Immediately the spirit was driven into a herd of pigs, and they drowned in the sea...and the man was delivered!

No matter how long we have been suffering, or how many legions of chains may be linking us to a difficult past, we need to remember that God is able to heal, and he is better than anything we have ever experienced! Don't be a slave to the past!



# Doubtless

Friday, February 26

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 12-14 · MARK 5:21-43

*“Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.”*

— NUMBERS 14:30

Only Caleb, Joshua and the younger generation were able to enter the promised land. Doubtless, for certain, the older generation would not be able to...and it all stemmed from being doubtful! God was doubtless about keeping them from the promised land because the people were so doubtful that God would follow through and help them prevail! Every step of their way, they spoke against God...the One who did so many miracles, like parting the Red Sea for instance! Every step forward, they wanted to turn back. Back to Egypt. Ultimately, back to the comfort of their sin as well...so doubtless, their doubt held them back!

We've all been there. When we forget the miraculous power of God, we doubt everything. We complain about everything. We rely more on what we can see around us than the fact that God can CHANGE everything around us, if only we would pray!

“And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.” Mark 5:39-41.

Everyone laughed in Jesus' face when He spoke life and not death. When He spoke positivity instead of negativity. The people were perfectly content giving



up on this girl...but not Jesus! He said unto her, arise! And she surely does!

God will doubtless give us the negative report if we speak it and give up. He chose to show His glory & power in this instance amidst their unbelief, but maybe the girl wouldn't have been so close to death in the first place if it wasn't for their doubt & unbelief?

But what would happen if WE were doubtless? If WE were so sure of God's power and ability to do the miraculous in OUR situations? Ask. Seek. Knock. Pray. God never turns away!!



## Seasons of Life

*Saturday, February 27*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 15-16 · MARK 6:1-29

Every season of life comes with its challenges, and some seasons have more challenges & restrictions than others. As Moms, we have many reasons to fall in love with our season of little ones...but also many reasons why it's the most challenging and isolating time of our lives. But whatever season we're in (as I've been reminded by many friends and family), it's only a season. It will pass. And in this season, we should embrace the lessons learned & love shared...and I'm sure we will realize the good far outweighs the bad!

“This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?” Numbers 16:6-10.

In the above passage, the sons of Levi, particularly the sons of Korah from the tribe of Levi, were impatient and displeased with the season they were in. They wanted a different purpose. They wanted more and lost the importance of what they were already doing for The Lord. But Moses reminded them that they were set in that place for a special purpose-he said, “seemeth it but a small thing?”

What you are doing is NOT a small thing...being a Mom and dealing with small people on a daily basis can sometimes seem like a purpose that's stuck in one place. One stage or phase of our children's lives can seem like it will be impossible to “graduate” from...but growth IS happening! Things WILL change! And soon they won't be so little anymore...cherish the “small” things!

One of the hardest things can be translation-helping them understand. As a homeschool Mom I run into this on a regular basis. But once the hurdle of explanation is overcome, and they finally pick up on the lesson or moral of a story, it's so rewarding. It's like you gave them a gift and they finally realize what it is! Yes, we'll have our tough days. Days where we need to re-evaluate our explanations and try better the next day...but Jesus' disciples ran into the exact same thing, even with the urgent salvational message! And Jesus suffered the greatest rejection of all...

“And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.” Mark 6:10–13.

There was good, and there was bad. Bottom line: dust yourself off and move on! With our children, we have the blessing of living with them. We have many more days to get our message across than some of the people the disciples spoke to...for some of those people, it could have been their only chance to hear the message before the disciples left to visit another town. Again, we should be thankful we can keep our children close...honestly, we are ALL God's projects. God has work to do on each one of us, not just our children. In fact, Jesus says we should BECOME like little children in our faith: “Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 18:4.

We can learn so much through our struggles. It's a time for our children to grow, but also ourselves. Rain or shine, appreciate your season!



## Dry Times

*Sunday, February 28*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 17-19 · MARK 6:30-56

*“And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers’ houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.”*

— NUMBERS 17:6-8

How could a rod bud & blossom inside the tabernacle of witness, and not out in its natural environment? Wouldn't be too dry & too desolate? No way! The rods were in the presence of the supernatural environment! In the presence of the One who created the environment! Of course it would happen, according to God's Will of course-and it was His Will that one should bud, and that was Aaron's! All of them could have by the power of God, but one was enough to show the Israelites that the murmuring, worrying & complaining should cease...God can bring new life to dry, worn-out places in our lives!

“And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?” Mark 6:35-37.

No way! Just like the branch didn't need the natural environment to bud & blossom, the people didn't need the provision & sustenance of bread from the

other people in the marketplace! They needed to linger a little longer with the supernatural Bread of Life, Jesus Christ! After Jesus taught them spiritually, He provided for them physically. He gives us all we need to get through our desert times!!

You'll make it through this dry season, if that's how you're feeling right now. With God, you'll not only make it, you'll thrive! You'll blossom! You'll grow by feeding off of the Bread of Life!!







III

# MARCH



*“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”*

PSALM 23:1

DAYS 60 – 90

# Stopped in our Tracks

*Monday, March 1*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 20-22 · MARK 7:1-13

Sometimes, God decides to stop us in our tracks...at times, we are on the wrong path, or we are on a path that seems right to us, but we don't see the whole picture...we don't see the steps ahead...we don't see the need to change...so, God uses situations to stop and re-direct us!

“Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive. And Balaam said unto the angel of the Lord, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.” Numbers 22:31-34.

God's ways are certainly not our ways! And He uses His interesting ways to get in our way when it's needed. Again, to stop us in our tracks! He did that to Balaam in order to remind him that he should follow God's lead in what to say to Balak, who was wanting Balaam to curse Israel. Balaam then says to Balak that he will only speak the words God puts in his mouth, just like God put words in his donkey's mouth earlier! Later we find out Balaam was able to bless Israel instead of cursing! All by refusing his ways and choosing God's way!

“He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like



things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.” Mark 7:6–9.

Sometimes, that track we are on is tradition...while traditions are not always bad, some of them can become distractions to God’s plan. We can lose the point and meaning in our traditions sometimes, and only do them out of habit. We can’t lose our hearts down the path of life, or it won’t lead us where we should be...our whole heart needs to be invested & committed to God, every step of the way!



## The Right Angle

*Tuesday, March 2*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 23-25 · MARK 7:14-37

Most of the time, things are coming at us from all sides. All angles. The problems don't wait in line to get our attention...they all shout at once! Instead of breaking down & being buried beneath it all, we need to get the right angle & right approach to the problems. Most importantly, we have to understand what happens when we have God on our side!

“And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all. But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do? And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.”

Numbers 23:25-27.

Balak continued to bring Balaam to several different locations surrounding the children of Israel to curse them. He tried many different angles. But instead of cursing, Balaam continued to bless Israel! He only spoke what The Lord put in his mouth, as we talked about last post...and that's because our own words & actions alone have the power to defile us! Our enemies honestly can't do anything to us when we are working for the one true King! We can curse ourselves, or we can be blessed by God...the choice is ours!

Unfortunately, in the next chapter of Numbers, Israel allowed the idolatrous influences of Moab & the Midianites to overpower them. They initiated it. They had the wrong angle & wrong approach to that temptation. Right after the blessing of Balaam, they allowed corruption & curse!

Do we have the right angle? Do we have the upper hand when problems & temptations arise from ALL angles?

With God's Mighty Hand upon us, we will ALWAYS have the upper Hand! We need to stay prayerful, watchful & aware of all influences in our lives. Is this a

negative, or a positive to me??

“And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” Mark 7:20–23.

In the end, it all boils down to where our hearts are at...it doesn't matter what the enemy tries to do, or where we end up, as long as we keep a hold on God! For Paul, he praised in prison. For Stephen, forgiveness set him free, even in death. Sometimes, it may not look like victory, but with God we are winning! It may be true that things are coming at us from all angles, but how are we responding? Do we have the right angle? Or do we let corruption creep in because we have no fight left in us?

Let God speak to you, and in turn, speak life! Speak a good report! Blessing, not cursing!



# Ask

*Wednesday, March 3*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 26–28 · MARK 8

**D**o we really understand how easy it is to come to Jesus? If we do receive an answer, are we quick to receive it, or do we think the world can offer something better? When it comes to Jesus, all you have to do is ask Him in prayer! Then, be ready to receive the answer He gives! Don't second-guess God!

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" Matthew 7:7.

This was true in the Old Testament and New...and Now! For example, the daughters of Zelophehad had no brothers to receive their father's inheritance, so they wanted to receive it. Instead of complaining (wanting change but doing nothing about it), they went straight to the man of God (Moses) who sought The Lord on the issue. Sure enough, a law was put in place to show the succession of the inheritance if there were no sons to receive it. God blesses those who are bold enough to ask!

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them." Numbers 27:6–7.

Sometimes, we really don't understand the providing power of Jesus. We don't appreciate the time spent waiting on The Lord, so we place our trust elsewhere...we ask other people instead of asking the One who can do miracles! When we ask Jesus, the answer IS on its way! He may place people in our path who we CAN trust, but we will know that by seeking The Lord in prayer and not seeking what may seem like a "quick fix" or the "next best thing." Also, ask for His perfect will! That's always better than our fleshly motives!

"When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among

four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?” Mark 8:19–21.

This is something I have to work on for sure! I need to remind myself of His past miracles. I need to remember all the times He has provided for me. Then I will understand on a daily basis that simply asking Jesus is the most powerful thing we can do!



## I can't believe my eyes!

*Thursday, March 4*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 29–31 · MARK 9:1–29

Our eyes can be the biggest liars out there! I know that seems like a bold statement, but they can tell us it's hopeless when it's not. They can tell us it's impossible when it's not...

Our physical eyes can't tell us what eyes of faith can tell us! When we lay everything down before Jesus, we surrender our fears of what's going on around us. We say, "This doesn't look good, but we have a good God!" We can't believe our eyes, but we CAN believe GOD!

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him." Mark 9:23–25.

...And the tormenting spirit left the child! The father asked Jesus to help his areas of unbelief. He did believe to a point, but he needed help completely surrendering to Jesus. We are so used to what our eyes tell us. We are so used to giving into fear rather than faith! The father's desire was there, he wanted to believe, but he had to make the bold & faithful decision to do so as he brought his son before Jesus. He had to sacrifice his ways for Jesus' ways, just like the Old Testament children of Israel had to bring their sacrifices, lay them down & surrender:

"But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord for a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish: And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals to a bullock, and two tenth deals to one ram, A several tenth deal for

one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:"

Numbers 29:8–10.

All God is asking for today is our faith in Him as we obey His Word. He's not asking us to lay animals down upon an altar any longer...He is asking us to lay down our history of sin, unbelief, fear & doubt! We must lay down our ways for His ways, just as Jesus laid down His life for us:

"And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead." Mark 9:9.

Peter, James & John saw Jesus transfigured before them, talking with Moses and Elijah. Peter wanted to make 3 tabernacles, 1 for each of them, because they were afraid & did not know what else to say. Their fear stopped them at their physical sight! 3 were there, but 2 of them had been dead already. It was the power of God, Jesus Himself, Who allowed that occurrence to take place. God made it known by specifying to listen to Him alone, and that they could not talk of this until after the Resurrection of Jesus. The Word then states that Peter, James & John questioned what the Resurrection meant...

If it was easy for the disciples to question & doubt, how easy it must be for us to rely on our eyes! Just as the father who brought his possessed son before Jesus, we must resurrect out of our ways and desire the ways of Christ! Ask for help for any area of unbelief, and replace fear with faith!



## Be a Part

*Friday, March 5*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 32-34 · MARK 9:30-50

**W**e all want to feel like we are a part of something...but usually when we have that longing feeling, we are “apart”, not “a part.” We want to be a part, but instead, we are apart. Sometimes, that happens because of intimidation of others. Or, sometimes that happens because of a fear of commitment on our end. Whatever the case may be, I pray we will cast all that aside, especially when we want to be a part of the Body of Christ & God’s Kingdom!

God is not looking for perfection...He is looking for a willingness to be perfected. He is looking for people who will fight for His Cause!

“And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here? And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord hath given them?” Numbers 32:6-7.

The children of Reuben & Gad wanted a land that was just shy of the promised land...yes, it made sense for their cattle to be there considering the great grazing conditions of the land...but what about them? These were the survivors! Their parents were not able to enter the promised land, but the younger generation was spared...and they were going to stop short!? So they agreed to go to war, be a part & fight, but then they would go back & reside there...

“And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers’ stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord toward Israel. For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people. And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones: But we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the



land.”

Numbers 32:14–17.

The children of Reuben & Gad mattered in the fight. YOU matter in the fight!! Don't ever think God doesn't need you, or that you can't measure up, or you can't be a part of God's church in this day & hour! There are no special qualifications that you need to create yourself...God has created you to grow, to change, to learn anyway...all you need is a willing commitment to the cause! Cast off the things that hold back!

“And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:”  
Mark 9:47.

Our eyes can tempt us to be a part of something else, something apart from God. Our eyes can deceive us into thinking we don't need church...we don't need God...but just as the last post, don't believe your eyes! Believe God! He has a special plan, and we have to stay close to Him & be a part of Him to find out!



# Real Refuge

*Saturday, March 6*

TODAY'S READING · NUMBERS 35–36 · MARK 10:1–31

When do we feel safe & protected? Do familiar things keep us comfortable? Is it an earthly paradise which makes us feel most protected, or a strong fortress?

There are so many things which can put us at ease in this life, but only One gives us real refuge & a sense of security forever: that's our God!

“And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood: Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.” Numbers 35:27–28.

God even provides refuge to a killer! He gives cities for them to dwell in until they are fairly tried & judged. Our God is a God of justice! And, if He protects even those who have murdered, how much more will He provide refuge to those of us who simply ask!? The Scripture above tells us how the accused killer left the cities of refuge before the appointed time! In this case, the person even had a time of release & was not facing death, but brought death upon himself by leaving God's refuge too early! He was then an open target for the revenger to kill...don't let anyone seek revenge because you left your place of refuge!

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.” Ephesians 4:26–27.

We can't let mixed up emotions cloud our judgment. We can't let impatience pull us out of God's safe place of refuge for us-and that safe place is His church! We can't let the comforts & riches of this life give us a false sense of security:

“Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was

sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!”

Mark 10:21–23.

We can't have the “rich young ruler” mentality, because he only had “rich young refuge.” His refuge he built on his own would only last him so long. He was content keeping the commandments, but holding tight to his riches...instead of following after the Living Word standing right in front of him! Our idea of religion is not enough. We need Jesus, our living God, living & active inside of us. We need to be invested in His church, not the riches of this life. We need to store up treasures in Heaven & have an eternal perspective...that's where real refuge is! But we need to follow Jesus closely to get there!!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:38–39.



# It's been long enough!

*Sunday, March 7*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 1-3 · MARK 10:32-52

**W**e can only handle certain things for so long...honestly, we weren't meant to stay in one place forever...our God is a God of growth, change, transformation, refreshment & REVIVAL! And that can't happen by repetition, it can only happen by a trusting relationship with Him!

"The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them." Deuteronomy 1:6-8.

Moses told the Israelites, "You've been here long enough!" It was time to go to the promised land! But remember, the older generation had been murmuring against this growth & change. They did not have child-like faith anymore. They were perfectly comfortable staying put, no longer ready to out-grow and change for God! The promised land didn't look like the paradise or utopia they dreamed about...yet. It had big giants & big cities!

"Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there. Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes;" Deuteronomy 1:28-30.

...BUT WE HAVE A BIG GOD!! And He is THE ONLY GOD! The One who will fight for us and make us seem bigger than our enemies! BUT WE

## HAVE TO BE WILLING TO GROW!

“Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.”  
Deuteronomy 2:3.

“And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.” Mark 10:49–52.

Imagine if this blind man stayed put, saying, “Eh, I’m not feeling up to the chase. Too many people want Jesus’ attention. Who am I, anyway?” Instead, he knew he had been in that position long enough! He finally out-grew his problem & matured. He needed Jesus! WE ALL NEED JESUS! He is our God. He is our Hope. He will fight for us when we choose to take that leap of faith into His embrace! We will always be missing something if we don’t go when we are called. Only JESUS, OUR GOD, MAKES US WHOLE!!!



## The Courage to Fear

Monday, March 8

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 4-6 · MARK 11:1-18

*“For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”*

— DEUTERONOMY 5:26-29

**T**he children of Israel were afraid to hear the voice of God directly. Even though God chose to speak with them out of the fire, the people thought they would die if they continued to hear it for themselves...so, they asked Moses to hear and bring the Word back to them.

But didn't Moses stay near the fire of the burning bush when he was standing there alone with God years before? That's why God is talking about a different kind of fear when He said, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me..." Yes, the people were afraid, and this type of fear made the people distance themselves from God...but wants us to have a courageous heart with a fear that brings us CLOSER to God, respecting Him & following His commandments! That it might be well with them & their children forever!

Generations afterward, the children God spoke of were still distancing themselves from God, even in the temple...they stood in the place where they

should draw closest to God, except they were buying & selling instead, making their hearts light-years away from the temple:

“And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.”

Mark 11:15–17.

It must have taken a wicked boldness to do what they were doing, but it takes real courage and love to fear & serve The Lord! It might have been easier to just buy a sacrifice. It’s always easier to make our jobs easier! But what about seeking The Lord, His Plan, & His Way? He already bought us for a price! He paid the price and gave His life for us! WE SHOULD HAVE THE COURAGE TO FEAR & FOLLOW SUCH A FAITHFUL GOD...AND FORSAKE THIS WORLD’S DECEITFUL INFLUENCES!

Do we have the courage to fear God? Do we have the ability to drown out this world to hear Him speak to us directly, or is a job or career becoming our obsession & distraction? Let’s examine our hearts on these matters daily! Keep me in prayer, and I’ll do the same for you! God bless!



## Too Big a Job

*Tuesday, March 9*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 7-9 · MARK 11:19-33

*"There must have been a mistake...this task/job/problem was definitely  
not meant for me!"*

— SAID ALL OF US AT SOME POINT OR ANOTHER. I DO BELIEVE IN  
THE SAYING THAT GOD DOESN'T GIVE US MORE THAN WE CAN  
HANDLE...BUT IF WE DON'T TURN TO GOD TO HELP SOLVE OUR  
PROBLEMS OR COMPLETE A JOB, THEN I BELIEVE IT WILL BE TOO  
BIG & WE WON'T BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT! THAT'S BECAUSE GOD  
WANTS US TO REALIZE THAT WHEN WE HAVE A BIG JOB TO BE DONE,  
WE NEED A BIG GOD! THE ONLY GOD, JESUS CHRIST!

"Hear, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven, A people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak! Understand therefore this day, that the Lord thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee."

Deuteronomy 9:1-3.

We just have to face these things head-on. They are what they are, but God is who He is!! These giant problems are no match for our giant God! But the question is, will we turn to Him in times of trouble? Also, when we do, will we forget Him after the victory?

"Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy



gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;" Deuteronomy 8:11–14.

Sadly, when there are no problems in our lives, we start to attribute the success to ourselves and think we no longer need God...but remember, our low valley experiences & our mountain-top experiences are all times we need to see God at work in our lives! We need to see Him high & lifted up in our good times & seek Him in our problematic times. We can't stop obeying, loving & serving God the minute we make it! We need to remember where we came from with God, where we are, and ultimately Heaven which is our goal!

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." Mark 11:22–23.

Some mountains, we were meant to climb. Some, we were meant to remove... but BOTH scenarios need God's help! We can do any job with Jesus...but if it's something like a disease or addiction, that's a mountain that needs to be removed! Don't stop at the mountain. Keep going! Don't stop following Jesus after the victory. KEEP GOING!

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."  
Luke 1:37.



## Loving Structure

*Wednesday, March 10*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 10–12 · MARK 12:1–27

There are many things we have to get done & accomplish each day, but honestly, we are the greatest projects...the most work needs to be done on us by God, helping us to respond & react properly to each situation that occurs. Honestly, it's not our situations which need the most attention, it's us! We need ourselves to be loving structures consistently built by God! But first, the demolition needs to take place:

“And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place. Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 12:3–4.

We need to remove what's NOT helping. We need to take an axe to our hindrances. Sometimes, that comes in the form of our over-reactive emotions (that's me!), and God needs to help us balance that out through prayer & His Word. Sometimes, it comes in the form of loving something, a lifestyle, or someone, more than God in an obsessive manner...if we don't cut down the idols, they'll deconstruct us in the end, and all our efforts will be in vain, counter-productive to God's plan. Ok, now time for the loving, strong structure to be built:

“But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee. Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man

whatsoever is right in his own eyes.”

Deuteronomy 12:5–8.

We can rejoice in Jesus! His blessings! His commandments! His ways! They are not the set-back, they are the solution! They are the loving structure we need in our lives. If everyone does what is right in their own eyes, no one would be right...there is only One righteous & good, that's Jesus, our God!

“Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.” Mark 12:6–7.

A man had a vineyard, and he sent his servants into the field to collect the fruit, but the workers beat & killed them. Finally, he sent his son, who he thought they would respect, but they killed him for the inheritance...God WANTS to give & provide for us! We don't need to be in “competition mode.” When we choose to fully surrender & follow Him, nothing is held back! We don't have to get anxious about God not following through. He watches for us. He cares for us. We need to love Him by doing the work He has called us to do, without being worried about the reward...first, the reward in this life is seeing God work on us, His projects. We see many things about us being changed for the better. Then, the next part of the reward is eternity with Him!

The loving structure of God's handiwork in our lives starts with Acts 2:38:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.

Baptism of water & Spirit is just the beginning! God's got a lot to build, because He's got a lot of love!



## The Peace of Release

*Thursday, March 11*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 13-15 · MARK 12:28-44

*“At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.”*

— DEUTERONOMY 15:1

Holding onto things seems to keep us comfortable for a while...like if we were to let go, we would lose ourselves & become disoriented because we have detached ourselves from that thing. But what is “that thing” to us? How long have we been dealing with it? 7 years, more or less? No matter what it is or how long it’s stuck around for, God gives peace in release!

“And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the Lord’s release.” Deuteronomy 15:2.

This release of God talked about in this chapter of Deuteronomy was like a pardon or debt forgiveness...everything owed was forgiven! Honestly, this time of COVID has been a similar time...much has been given out and forgiven financially...but how about Spiritually? Are we making sure our hearts match up with what’s taking place in this time of release? Have we released, but don’t have peace about it?

When we release our problems, our grudges, truly letting go & forgiving, we release ourselves! It’s about the other person who wronged us. It’s a release from the prison of unforgiveness. When I first heard that preached, I was amazed at the sense and Truth in that. God did not design us to carry grudges. He designed us to forgive & release! That’s not to say things won’t hurt us, but we control how long we hang onto the hurt!

“For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.” Deuteronomy 15:6.

When we release it all, it releases more of God in our lives! So much can happen when we put the pain aside! When God steps INSIDE, blessings flow forth OUTSIDE! The change in your outside circumstances starts with a release of past circumstances...and more of God!



## Distorted Distractions

*Friday, March 12*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 16–18 · MARK 13:1–20

As I was reading the Scriptures for today's reading, I realized that distractions aren't simply "other options" that we choose sometimes...they are distorted to be important...we end up prioritizing them over what really matters...they are meant to deceive us in such a way that we forget the goal we were striving for, especially God...distractions are so much more than what they seem, so we can't give into them!

"Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make thee." Deuteronomy 16:21.

Trees seem harmless, right? So what if there were a few trees by the altar? Well, it doesn't take humans long to worship the earth, anything upon the earth for that matter...especially a grove so close to the altar of The Lord! It was a tree with fruit which enticed Eve (with the help of the serpent), and many people ended up worshipping groves of trees back then. Seems odd, but we all have many things we value...some even that, if we are not careful, pull our attention & focus away from God. Trees could grow tall, distort & ultimately distract us from that altar. That place of humility with God. Our hearts can take a turn for the worst if we allow that to happen!

"And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Mark 13:1–2.

As trees, buildings are tall. In this case, they grabbed the attention of this disciple right after leaving the temple, the place of worship. Buildings can sometimes be a dangerous reminder of the work we can do in our own strength & power (the tower of Babel, for instance!). One of the disciples tried to impress

Jesus with the buildings and handiwork of men, but this disciple was just distracted by the distorted magnificence of the place.

That's not to say everything we do is bad or worthless, but the things we do when we let God into the picture are so much better! Jesus' response here shows us the power of God, and how His power overpowers all we try to do in our own pride! Jesus was referencing what will happen at the end of the world...always bringing us back to that eternal perspective, instead of worshipping the here & now. Let's strive for God's goals together to stay on course and REALLY build something great!



## Speak Life

*Saturday, March 13*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 19–21 · MARK 13:21–37

*“When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. 11 And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. 12 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:”*

— DEUTERONOMY 20:10–12

**W**e never want to make it a habit of going on an anger rampage...if we do as this Scripture passage describes, then we need to speak peace first into the situation. In this case, speaking peace was speaking life! That’s because it truly was a matter of making war or not. We need to look at our lives just as seriously when we speak to others! They could just be on our side. We could just be able to avoid a fight (or war) with this person. It’s all about the approach! And this is exactly what Jesus did...He came doing good, and many received Him peacefully. But many also received Him angrily and accusingly, therefore the Scriptures were fulfilled and He was crucified and rose again...we may not be received well by all, but either way, peace first is always the answer! **AND JESUS WON THE WAR FOR ALL!!!**

“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. 32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. 33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.” Mark 13:31–33.

His Word is true, no matter what! We don’t have to worry about who doesn’t receive our words of peace...we just need to pray that they have a change of heart...because we know that beyond all the drama, war & fighting in this life,



there is the even greater battle for the soul, and where we will spend eternity...we need to pray that each one of us keep an eternal perspective, and that each person we speak to accepts the message peacefully as well! The first step in the right direction is Acts 2:38!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.

Have peace with God by following His every Word! HIS WORD WILL NOT PASS AWAY, AND WE DON'T WANT TO PASS AWAY WITHOUT HIS WORD!



## Custom-Made

*Sunday, March 14*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 22-24 · MARK 14:1-26

*“And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?”*

— MARK 14:3-4

It is very easy to get “caught up” in the customs...to follow ways, rules, traditions of old, but not understand the meaning behind it all (or lose the meaning completely). In losing that meaning, we lose heart. We lose the “why.” And we start saying, “Why me? Why do I have to do this? Why have I been doing this all these years?”

If it's a custom of the world or a custom we adhere to while we follow Jesus, we are all custom-made. But we do have to remember that before we are shaped by these customs, we were custom-made & designed individually by God! It's HIS handiwork that made us who we are, and when custom becomes ritual, we start to confuse what's important! This woman knew that her alabaster box could have been sold for money, and giving that money to the poor could have been an indirect act of love to God as well...but she chose a direct love, bypassing some of the customs which made sense. These customary practices held back the disciples in a net of “should haves” rather than seeing the love she was sharing clearly!

“An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever: Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee. Nevertheless the Lord thy

God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the Lord thy God loved thee.”

Deuteronomy 23:3–5.

God changed the curse into a blessing! He could have just allowed the curse to come upon His people, but instead, He turned it to something good! The curse seemed like it was going to be the custom. Like it was bound to happen. But God had better plans!

Following God’s Word is our greatest custom, and having Him within us as the Holy Ghost gives us wisdom & further discretion on how to follow Jesus as closely as we can in this day & hour. Before we are under the world’s “custom control,” we are under God’s control! It’s all about showing Him our love!



## What's in the bag?

*Monday, March 15*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 25-27 · MARK 14:27-53

*"Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.  
Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a  
small. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just  
measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land  
which the Lord thy God giveth thee."*

— DEUTERONOMY 25:13-15

What are you carrying? Have you felt un-balanced lately? We are all attached to certain things in life, but do these things make our lives more valuable? God is the only one that brings value to our lives! He creates life! He provides! He makes whole! He brings balance to the weighed-down soul!

Just think about it...you're trying to walk into work carrying a coffee & phone in one hand, and your favorite gum & an iPad in the other, plus a bag with a bunch of random stuff in it (plus a laptop). Oh, and a really cool looking calendar notebook you just bought is being carried under your arm...makes it hard to pull the door open at work, right? And the mask makes it hard to ask for help!

We probably don't need half those things! Just like it's hard to do our own jobs when we pile on un-needed items and unnecessary stress, it's also hard to do the work of The Lord! What's stopping us? What's clouding up our mind & cluttering up our soul? What's occupying our priority list? What's in our bag!? How about a balanced basket of firstfruits instead:

"That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there." Deuteronomy 26:2.

“And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God: And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.” Deuteronomy 26:10–11.

We can worship God as we bring Him our best! Talk to God & pray away all the unnecessary distractions. Simplify your life prioritizing Jesus! He will help us keep a balanced basket of goods which He is pleased with as we give Him our first, not our last. He will keep our lives in order! Also, when we give to God, we can also share with others from our balanced basket:

“Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them.” Deuteronomy 26:13.

“38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.” Mark 14:38.

Let’s make prayer a priority! It’s the only way to manage and eliminate the many things weighing us down. Give God your best; don’t worry about the rest!



## Forwards, or Backwards?

*Tuesday, March 16*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 28-29 · MARK 14:54-72

Which way is up? Where are we going? What are we doing?! Some days might feel a little “dazed & confused”...like there’s so much to do, and we are doing lots of things, but getting nowhere. That’s the time to stop & seek God’s. Direction! Well, it’s best to seek Him BEFORE we start our crazy, complicated days, but especially IN those moments, we need to reach out instead of running around aimlessly. His Word has all the direction we need! In fact, in following His Word, we not only KNOW the way, but we are BLESSED in the way we go!

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.” Deuteronomy 28:1-2.

“And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:” Deuteronomy 28:13.

In following Jesus closely through His Word, we will be the head, not the tail! We will take on the day head-first & head-on instead of falling behind & playing catch-up! But if we don’t choose Jesus, and choose our own smarts & strength, we will never measure up to God’s awesome plans for us!

“He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.” Deuteronomy 28:44.

Then, we WILL be the tail! We will be wagging around lost when we don’t find time with Jesus! Life just won’t make sense until we connect with Him first:

“And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:”

Deuteronomy 28:66.

We will be blessed when we follow The Blessed One! JESUS CHRIST!!!

“But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Mark 14:61–62.



## The Living Word

Wednesday, March 17

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 30–31 · MARK 15:1–25

*“For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.”*

— DEUTERONOMY 30:11–14

God never meant His Word to be a hidden treasure, but a treasure out in the open to receive of freely! His Word is easily accessible, but once we obtain it, THEN it should become hidden in our hearts. We can't hold onto it weakly, because then it will live weakly in our lives! We need to hold it in our hearts, so it becomes a part of our living bodies! That way, we can see God's Word alive & active in us! Jesus is The Word made flesh, and we must allow The Word to do the same in us & through us when we receive the Holy Ghost!

“When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.” Deuteronomy 31:11–13.

Just like in the Old Testament days described above, we need to gather and hear The Word of God spoken into our lives! We must read it & absorb it on our



own, but also gather with others to receive it as a group of believers. Why is this? Well...one soldier can study and train on his own, but then he stands alone to fight the war! We need to be like an army, a group of soldiers connected, learning, building each other up, ready to fight the good fight of faith, keeping each other accountable and protected every step of the way! God did not design us to do it on our own...we need each other, and most importantly, WE NEED GOD!

“And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him.” Mark 15:12–13.

Just as some of the Israelites didn’t realize the value of God’s Word (that our lives truly depend on The Living Word), the Jews did the same when they yelled for Jesus to be crucified. They did not realize that He was & is THE WORD!!! They had always seen the priests & elders follow The Word, but never had they saw anyone EMBODY The Word! Bring it to life! They never thought God’s Word could look so lowly & humble, but how else could our glorious God come down onto our level and get into our hearts with His Spirit!?

We need to realize the value of God’s Word in our lives, and appreciate it! The Word is God, The Word is Life, and we need to let Him live & breathe through us so others can see the joy & hope in salvation which He brings!!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.



## Hold onto The Rock!

*Thursday, March 18*

TODAY'S READING · DEUTERONOMY 32-34 · MARK 15:26-47

*"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."*

— DEUTERONOMY 32:4

Throughout this last song of Moses before his death, he used many references to The Lord as our Rock. He is The Rock unbreakable when we are crumbling under the weights of life! He is the Firm Rock when we need that answer of TRUTH! He is unmovable when our world is changing at rapid pace! There are so many endless reasons & references to GOD OUR ROCK! And they always bring us hope, stability & comfort!

"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:" Deuteronomy 32:31-32.

Our Rock can do what a little rock or pebble can't! Think about it, have we trusted in The Rock, or just a rock? Someone made without hands, or something formed by our own imaginations, our own building codes...is it up to God's code? Do we put more faith & trust in our little strength instead of God's ultimate strength & power? Something to consider!

"And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted, Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection."

Deuteronomy 32:37-38.

Let me assure you: just any old rock won't rise to the occasion like that of our God, The Rock! Our rocks can be anything from habits, to addictions, to our own routines, to worshipping our wants instead of God's desires, to just about

anything! Let's kick over the little rocks & make room for THE ROCK, THE CORNERSTONE!

“And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.” Mark 15:37–39.

Even in death, Jesus was the STRONGEST ROCK, OUR GOD! The veil was torn! We need to tear down every little rock which clutters the foundation for The Rock to take His righteous & rightful place in our lives! PUT THE CORNERSTONE ON THE THRONE OF YOUR HEART!



## Never Left Wondering

*Friday, March 19*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 1-3 · MARK 16

God gives us many reasons to be in awe & wonder of Him, so we are never left wondering if He is alive, active & working miracles! We can know it for sure! His amazing miracles leave us no choice but to believe & follow Him completely! To be baptized of water & Spirit! To have newness of life, just as Christ rising from the dead!

“Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” Joshua 1:7-8.

It is easiest to be in wonder of something when you're close to it...if you're far away, well, you're just left wondering! Confused! In doubt! That's why the closer we are to God, the closer we are to the wonders of His love & miracles! And, we can only develop that close relationship with Him through obeying His Word & a prayerful connection!

“And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.” Joshua 3:13.

Joshua believed & obeyed God! And God DID follow through! What a wonder it must have been to see this parting of the waters again. How comforting for the people to know that if God did it once, He will do it again! The going through the Red Sea & Jordan kind of reminded me of the waters of baptism...

once we pass through & receive His Spirit, we get to be in wonder of the greatest miracle of all-new life in Christ!

“And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.” Mark 16:6.

Jesus gave us the pattern to a resurrected life in HIM! Dead to sin in repentance, buried in baptism, and risen with the Holy Ghost in new life! Jesus rising was the greatest miracle, and He desires each one of us to experience that for ourselves!

“Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;” Mark 16:14–17.

All these signs which followed are true WONDERS! And they continue to happen TODAY! The question is, have we stopped believing? Have we stopped short in following through with all God commands in His Word? Do we want to see a wonder!?

It all starts with seeking first the TRUE WONDER HIMSELF, JESUS CHRIST!

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33.



## Expect a Victory!

*Saturday, March 20*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 4-6 · LUKE 1:1-20

*"...I'm gonna see a victory, for the battle belongs to You, Lord..."*

That's part of a worship song we sing in church from time to time, and in reading Joshua today, complimented by Luke, I can truly picture the accuracy of these words! What a Wonderful Warrior our God is for us! If we let Him fight the battles, we can expect a victory! WE CAN CLAIM IT! Even when it looks impossible, God CAN and WILL make a way! Do we believe it?!

Since we can expect a victory, we can start celebrating beforehand...just the trumpets blown marching around the city of Jericho! Since God was going to fight for them, all they could do was a victory march!

"And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rearward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets." Joshua 6:8-9.

There were still armed men, but they trusted God as the Greatest Warrior! They blew trumpets & celebrated as God instructed! He is still fighting our battles today, but sometimes we doubt. Sometimes we don't expect victory, we just hope for it...we end up speaking negativity, and we forget God can do what seems impossible...that's when God has to quiet us down, just like Zacharias! He didn't believe he & his wife could bear a son in their old age (although they know about Abe & Sarah!). This son did end up being born & grew up to be John the Baptist!

"And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto

him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.” Luke 1:18–20.

Zacharias should have celebrated at the glad tidings of the angel, but instead he spoke doubt! So, he was not able to speak until his son was born! And just as Zacharias was given a specific time to speak, the Israelites marching around Jericho were given a specific time to shout!

“And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.” Joshua 6:16.

We have to learn to expect the victory, celebrate & praise God in the process, but understand that the “shouting” comes only in God’s timing. We do still have to be patient! Just because we know our God will see us through, does not mean we overstep the boundaries and live carelessly. We have to follow the plan the way God wants it done! We have to celebrate along the way, and shout when God gives the ok! Don’t doubt; there WILL be a shout!!!



# Impossible Impressions

*Sunday, March 21*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 7-9 · LUKE 1:21-38

**W**e are very quick to judge a book by its cover, a situation by its circumstances...we are given a bad first impression by situations most of the time, and that locks us up in a fear of pursuing the victory, of completing the task...

Or, what's even more difficult, is when we are given an impression which deceives us into thinking we don't need God, and things seem "too easy" or "too good to be true." **WE ALWAYS NEED THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD!** We need those in our lives who can help guide us in the right direction-like a godly pastor!

"And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them. And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them."

Joshua 9:14-16.

Here is a deceiving first impression...all seemed well, but this group was supposed to be a defeated enemy. It's kind of like when we are supposed to do something, but only do it half-way. The project is left incomplete, and we just never return to it. We give up. We throw away the victory! That's exactly what happened here...these people were supposed to be removed so Israel could overtake the their area, but instead, they made a permanent league with them & they became Israel's servants.

It doesn't seem all bad, but it wasn't according to the greater plan God had for them! **WE CAN'T BASE OUR ACTIONS ON FIRST IMPRESSIONS!! WE HAVE TO ALWAYS BASE OUR ACTIONS UPON GOD'S PERFECT**



WILL! God is the ONLY ONE who can help us make sense of these seemingly “impossible impressions.”

“And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.”

Luke 1:36–38.

WITH GOD, THESE IMPRESSIONS ARE NO LONGER IMPOSSIBLE! With God, we understand the next steps to take when a situation presents itself to us. We just need to go with GOD’s flow, not the flow of fear, panic, pride, or selfish desire...Mary didn’t understand it at first, but she didn’t run from this angel’s first impression with her. She went along with the beautiful plan God had for her, and what a beautiful thing she did! Joshua did not seek counsel of The Lord before accepting a bad offer, and a victory was lost. We MUST seek God concerning anyone or anything that tries to make an impression upon us! We need God’s direction always!



## God's Timeless Existence

*Monday, March 22*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 10-12 · LUKE 1:39-56

*"Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day."*

— JOSHUA 10:12-13

This is such an incredible thing to read about! As humans, we think time is elusive. It's going to keep going, whether we like it or not...but we can't forget our God, our Creator! He started the clock, and He can stop it! And it also says in this chapter that there was never before or after this a day where God stopped time in its tracks...but on an individual basis, time will be up for each one of us someday, as hard as that is to think about...are we connected with our Creator? The One in control of our time clocks? That's certainly a thought to give some time to!

"As the Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses." Joshua 11:15.

Nothing is left undone with God! He brings it all together; He is in control of it all...even time itself!! He even entered into time and gave Himself a birth & death date...but His clock hasn't run out! He lives on & desires to live in each one of us today as the Holy Ghost!

"And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she

spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

Luke 1:41–43.

Elisabeth had the Holy Ghost move upon her as her baby (John the Baptist) leaped in her womb when Mary came to visit, being pregnant with Jesus at the time! The same Spirit which allowed Mary to conceive moved upon Elisabeth... and that’s The Spirit which God desires to fill us with, with the evidence of speaking in new tongues!

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:4.

...But this outpouring of God’s Spirit was much after this time of visitation between Mary & Elisabeth! However, Elisabeth was right when she said:

“For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.” Luke 1:44–45.

Just like the performance of the sun & moon standing still and the enemies defeated in Joshua, there would be a great performance of God with miracles & the miracle of the Resurrection...and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost! Mary was also on-point when she said:

“He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.” Luke 1:51–52.

God continues to do miraculous things every day! He may not stop the sun & moon, but I pray He stops us in our tracks, keeping us in wonder, awe & love with Him...before time’s up...



# The Might for the Fight

*Tuesday, March 23*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 13-15 · LUKE 1:57-80

**H**ave we lost the battle in our minds already? Has intimidation set in, and never left? Sometimes, even when the battle or challenge we are facing has not started yet, we lose by fear which causes us to lose motivation. To lose the might for the fight! Whether it be a word of encouragement or a song of praise to The Lord, we have to speak it and remember that we have a God who will get us through the struggle!

“As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.” Joshua 14:11-12.

Caleb STILL had the might to fight, just like he had back when Moses sent him to spy out the land! And just like he didn't let intimidation stop him before, it didn't stop him now either! **EVEN THOUGH** he was older, he knew God was always the same God! If God was with him, he would win! We can't let our state of body or state of emotions or state of mind cripple us out of our victory over our problems! Keep up the might to fight, because God fights for you!

“And the east border was the salt sea, even unto the end of Jordan. And their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan: And the border went up to Beth-hoglah, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.” Joshua 15:5-6.

Because Caleb let himself have goals and dreams in The Lord, he was able to help fight & expand the borders for God's people! If God wanted it to happen, it would happen, so why not fight!? Why not keep up the might & motivation!? We

can't expand outwardly in our accomplishments until we let ourselves get there in our souls first! Pray about it...and praise God, because a victory is coming!

“And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;” Luke 1:67–71.

Even if we are not like Caleb at first, and we fear and doubt just a little, like Zacharias, we can come back to a place of praising God & being confident in Him! Zacharias was silenced after doubting that Elisabeth could have a child in her old age, but when the child came, and the name was set, God opened his mouth...and the first thing he did was praise! He encouraged everyone that God is still God since the world began, and greater things are coming! He regained his might for the fight!

Don't let fear stop you from trying! Speak to the mountains with Scripture! Praise God in the process! Watch victories happen in Jesus' Name!



# Great People, Great Work

*Wednesday, March 24*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 16–18 · LUKE 2:1–24

Our great God calls us to be a great people of a great work! That doesn't mean a busy people or an overwhelmed people, but people who are willing to do the work of The Lord! No matter how much we pour ourselves into His Perfect Will, plan & purpose for our lives, He always pours into us the strength needed to keep going...and He fights for us! So, the work we do for God is never as strenuous as what we would do on our own!

“And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the Lord hath blessed me hitherto? And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.” Joshua 17:14–15.

Upon the children of Joseph's request, Joshua responded that if they wanted something greater, then they had to do a great work! The children of Joseph pointed out the fact that they were a great people, and they needed more space to dwell in. So, Joshua told them to go & cut down the trees to make more room!

“And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only: But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.” Joshua 17:17–18.

Not only would they be able to expand to a greater land by cutting down the wood, but they would be able to drive out the Canaanites (who they were not able to drive out previously)! That's because Joshua said they were a great people with great power! He encouraged them & reminded them that they had the

ability to do this. They didn't need something else just handed to them, they needed to conquer what they were already given!

That's the same with us! We look for a different opportunity when our original opportunity turns into a challenge...but then we miss the lesson! The Great Power Joshua was talking about was our GREAT GOD! No matter if we feel great or small, God is always greater! He outnumbers the enemy against us, being ONLY ONE! Sometimes, it is time to look for a different door...but you should always try opening the one in front of you first, as God leads! You never know what might be behind it!

"And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:6-7.

When Mary followed the direction of God & gave birth to our God, Jesus Christ, she did one of the greatest works, being one woman! It's all about following God's lead!

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."  
Luke 2:20.

When the shepherds heard about the birth of Jesus, they were afraid at first, but then they went to see Him and told everyone about Him! They were also a great people who did a great work! They didn't let the magnitude of the job scare them into staying in the pasture. Again, they followed God's lead!

The greatest work we can do doesn't come from our own strength-it comes from following the lead of God's strength...and that's what makes us great!



# He Fails Not!

*Thursday, March 25*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 19–21 · LUKE 2:25–52

**W**e fail a lot. So much trial & error (but mostly error!). We are imperfect because we **NEED** a perfect **GOD!** The **ONE TRUE GOD!** He completes us, **AND** He completes everything He says He will do. All loose ends tied up. Nothing left undone. We are never left lacking or missing anything when we trust God with our lives!

“And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.” Joshua 21:43–45.

God gave Israel the land He promised them, and it was divided evenly among every tribe! Not to mention protection from their enemies! It seemed like a complicated process to divide the land among that many people, but remember, **NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD!** We would have had to stop many times to check the math, but God already knows! That’s why we should never find shame in trusting God. We are not weaker, we are **STRONGER!** We are only satisfied through Him alone. Our own smarts & wits won’t fulfill us in the end...because in the end, there’s no trophy for “best you name it”. There’s a Heavenly home for those whose hearts & eyes were set on Heaven in this life!

“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and



blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;”

Luke 2:25–31.

Simeon’s eyes were waiting on The Lord...he could find no rest until he saw Jesus! He LONGED for Him! He was satisfied when He saw Him! His eyes saw God’s salvation! He held Jesus in his arms as Jesus holds us every single day...

Our eyes see enough failure...from the world around us, and from ourselves... we can’t be our best unless we trust in The Best, and that’s God!! God can help us to gain the land, resist the enemy, and achieve everything He desires us to...we just have to trust! To seek Him! To love Him...and remember, HE FAILS NOT!!!



## Courage & Diligence

*Friday, March 26*

TODAY'S READING · JOSHUA 22-24 · LUKE 3

Even back in Biblical times, there were many challenges when it came to serving The Lord. As much as we think the world may have been a simpler place, sin is still sin, and just because the temptations may have been different, the motive was always the same: the world wants you to serve self, but God's people need to step out with diligence & courage to serve Him alone!

"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." Joshua 22:5.

Joshua told this above passage to the children of Reuben, Gad & Manasseh. As they did, we must take diligent heed to follow God's Word with our whole heart & soul! Not leaving anything "up for grabs" by the world. We can't withhold anything from God or make an altar to any other gods by serving self! These above-listed tribes DID listen to the words of Joshua, but accusations came from their brethren, the other tribes, because these 3 tribes built an altar...and their brethren thought it was in worship to idols...but it wasn't!

"And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to."

Joshua 22:10.

The 3 tribes assured the rest that they built the altar to serve God alone...and that's why we have to have diligence. Many around us will question our motives & our sincerity when it comes to serving God...even our own family at times! They will question how important it is to follow the WHOLE Bible. They will want to know that we are doing it out of a genuine love for God-so we have to do

the courageous thing, step out in faith & assure them that our love for God and our desire to serve Him is REAL!

“Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward. And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the Lord your God hath promised unto you. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day.”

Joshua 23:4–8.

What I love about this above passage is that Joshua didn’t tell the people to be courageous when he was talking about war...he told them to be courageous to follow God’s Law! His Word! It sure does take boldness & courage, and if it did then, we know it sure does now! Again, sin has always been sin, but sin itself is becoming more diligent and courageous nowadays...standing up & standing out as if it were Truth...so we need to protect ourselves and our children by following The Word of The Lord!

“As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Luke 3:4–6.

We need to be a little like John the Baptist! If persecution comes against us, we need to stand firm in the faith! We need to tell the Truth, no matter the cost! Joshua & John the Baptist were great examples of diligence & courage, and they spread it to so many others! It may take a lot to stand for God today, but He has a lot to stand for beyond this life! Get closer to Him today!

## Pass It On!

*Saturday, March 27*

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 1-3 · LUKE 4:1-30

What would happen if we kept hope to ourselves? If we didn't bother to spread positivity? If we allowed Jesus to be just a memory? Many people would drown in a sea of emptiness, including us! When we speak the Hope & Life of Jesus that's in His Word, we speak it to others yet reminding ourselves how good God really is!

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:16-19.

Although Jesus was thrown out of the temple for the things He said, these words mean so much to us! The Pharisees & priests of the temple at that time did not bother with the poor, brokenhearted, captives, blind or bruised...they ignored the needs of others while trying to focus on God, Who cares about others so much...Jesus had to point it out...their conviction made Jesus the convict... Jesus went on to say that people like foreign widows & lepers were used as part of God's plan...speaking to the Gentiles who also needed this Word of Hope & Life! And that's when He was pushed out...

...And that's why it's important for us to pass it on! There are those out there who are suffering that don't realize who they can be in Christ, and there are those sinners that need a Savior...we have all sinned & come short, so we need to pass on the hope of eternity! And the open door to that life starts with Acts 2:38!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.

From Old to New Testament, if God’s Word wasn’t passed on because of lack of diligence and lusting after idols, at some point it became refreshed & revived... in the book of Judges, different judges judged Israel and kept the people in the ways of God. When they stuck with God, they were blessed!

“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord , nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord , and served Baal and Ashtoreth.” Judges 2:10–13.

“Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.” Judges 2:16.

If we don’t refresh The Word to ourselves daily, and if we don’t speak it to others, we will be spoiled and destroyed by those who try to pass us their negativity. Our children, the next generation, will be left in the hands of a world that could never love like God loves. We will believe the lies of the “no hope” religion of this world. We will give into the fear of all that is taking place...but when we have Jesus, we are no longer broken, blind or in bad shape...we have Hope & Life in Him! PASS IT ON!



## Hath I not sent thee?

*Sunday, March 28*

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 4-6 · LUKE 4:31-44

*“And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand.”*

— JUDGES 4:6-7

Sometimes, we all need a reminder of what God’s capable of...not what we are capable of, because that list ends pretty quickly...but when we remind ourselves of God’s strength & power, we don’t have to fear the situation we are thrown into!

The above Scripture talks of Deborah, a woman of great confidence who judged Israel. [Note to Moms: Women in the Bible did amazing things, especially because they trusted GOD to work through them!] Deborah was confident not in herself, but in her God! She said, “Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded...?” If Israel was to go and fight as God commanded, then the victory would be commanded too!

“And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?” Judges 6:14.

We can also look at the example of Gideon! He did not start out with as much confidence in himself or in God from the beginning, questioning why his people were suffering, but God quickly reminds him, “Have not I sent thee?” It’s God

who sends us out on this journey we call life! He knows what we will face, if we are willing to face it.

Sometimes, the problem has not yet been solved because we haven't faced it with God! If we don't face God in prayer, we will have no idea how to judge our situations like Deborah. Our confidence will not build up as we will see Gideon's do in later chapters.

We also have to keep going. After one challenge is a greater one...and we have to keep reminding ourselves Who our God is, who we are in Him, and that we can do anything God sends us out in this world to accomplish! We can't stop at our past victories. We can't forget the climb to the mountaintop when we've found a comfortable ledge! We must press on!

"And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent."

Luke 4:42-43.

As Jesus said, "Therefore am I sent."



## Peeling the Layers

Monday, March 29

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 7-8 · LUKE 5:1-16

*“And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.”*

— JUDGES 7:2-3

Gideon and his army were preparing for a fight against the Midianites, but there was one problem: they had a lot of soldiers! This actually seems like it would have been a good thing, right? More soldiers, more chance to win! Instead, God had a lesson in this even greater than the victory against the Midianites: God wanted to show Gideon & Israel that it was Him they should fasten their eyes upon! Once we start numbering & calculating the magnitude of the task before us, we develop different layers which hinder us from moving forward: intimidation, fear, weakness, loss of drive...so God had to peel back the layers of the army to show that He was at the heart of it all, and He alone would cause the victory through Gideon & his army, no matter how small!

We sometimes have to peel back the layers of our hearts too. There are things we get wrapped up in which really stop us from accomplishing things. We need to let God circumcise our hearts, allowing there to be a release into the deeper things of God!

“And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of



whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.”  
Judges 7:4.

...And sometimes, God just keeps peeling! He peels away our doubt, unbelief, you name it! All of those things become an army of too many soldiers in our lives, like Gideon...then we end up fighting those things off instead of fighting the real battle before us! All those fears & worries are just distractions from the goals God has planned for us!

“Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.” Luke 5:4–6.

Simon Peter had a layer of doubt-instead of facing too many enemy soldiers like Gideon, he faced nothingness...the situation seemed like a lost cause. But then, after an act of faith & obedience to Jesus’ command, there was a great multitude of fish!!

As God peels back the layers of our lives, those thick pieces of doubt we’ve developed over time, something WILL come out of the nothingness! We WILL be able to face a giant task! And it’s not because we become invincible...it’s because we serve the only eternal, powerful God Who makes all things possible! Let the layers go in Jesus’ Name!



## Preserved for a Purpose

*Tuesday, March 30*

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 9-10 · LUKE 5:17-39

*“And he went unto his father’s house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself. And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem. And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.”*

— JUDGES 9:5-7

Jotham escaped his brother’s mass killing of the rest of his brothers. But these things don’t just happen so we can survive & live another day...God preserves us for a purpose! Jotham prophesied boldly on a mountain the bloodshed that would take place because Abimelech should not have been made king by Israel... and later on, Jotham would become king! God does not just allow us to rise off our bed & live another day just to “go through the motions.” We need to seek God’s Perfect Will & plan for our lives!

“But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.” Luke 5:22-25.

This man did not rise up and leave in fear of the scribes and Pharisees. He did not leave as if it was just another day, back to his same old self...he rose up glorifying God! He knew what it meant to be stuck. Paralyzed. Dead in a living body...that's why he could glorify God all the more! I'm sure he & his family desired to follow Jesus closely after that! Even if we are not rescued from a paralyzing situation, we can be rescued from our routines in order to have a better relationship with God! Just take a look at Levi (Matthew):

“And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him.”

Luke 5:27–28.

Jesus gave a simple command, but this simple command tugged upon Matthew's heart so greatly that he responded immediately...God preserved him for a greater purpose! Now this doesn't mean all of us should leave our jobs, but it does mean we should take a good look at our everyday routines-are we making room for God's purpose, or just our own? Do we take every day for granted, not realizing every breath is a miracle? God may not call us to leave our jobs, but He IS calling us in some way...are we ready to follow?



## Because of Who He is!

*Wednesday, March 31*

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 11-12 · LUKE 6:1-26

*“And Gilead’s wife bare him sons; and his wife’s sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father’s house; for thou art the son of a strange woman. Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.”*

— JUDGES 11:2-3

Jephthah had an unfortunate past. He couldn’t help the way he came into the world. He could have let rejection and accusation define him for the rest of his life, but he decided to step up when the time was right. His brothers, like Joseph, came around after a while. They needed Jephthah to fight with them against their enemies:

“And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The Lord be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words. Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpah.” Judges 11:9-11.

Jephthah went from rejected to revered, because God restored him! Jephthah even went to talk to The Lord in Mizpah as a witness to all the people...he understood it was GOD who brought him back & brought him through! It didn’t matter who Jephthah was defined as...it’s because of Who God is that Jephthah got redefined and received a better position than he had before!

“And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days? And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they

which were with him; How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.” Luke 6:2–5.

Jesus faced the most rejection and accusation, more than any one of us! He understands what we are going through in our times of feeling like an outcast... but one thing was for certain-He was no outcast to The Word! He was & is the Living Word! The Pharisees tried to act as though they owned The Word and were more knowledgeable of it, but Jesus quickly showed them the parts they rejected when they accused Him of breaking the law...David offered shewbread, and He could offer corn! God’s Word stands firm & true always, and when we reject the rejection & accusation to follow Him, He won’t let us down! It’s not about our reputation, it’s about our relationship with Jesus!

IT’S ALL BECAUSE OF WHO HE IS!

“Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” Luke 6:22–23.







I V

# APRIL



*“He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.”*

MATTHEW 28:6

DAYS 91 – 120

## Sweet Victory!

Thursday, April 1

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 13-15 · LUKE 6:27-49

*"Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnah, and came to the vineyards of Timnah: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion."*

— JUDGES 14:5-8

Samson was a man who was separated unto The Lord since birth. The life God had in mind for him started with a miraculous encounter by an angel to Samson's mother. She was to be careful what she consumed while pregnant with Samson in order to preserve him for service to The Lord! Just goes to show our purpose really does start in the womb, and the plan is made long before!

Samson's younger life was victorious against his enemies. Later on, he does get lost in his own ways, but in the beginning we can see that he had many sweet victories! In the above Scriptures, it states that he beat up a lion with his own two hands! Then, if that wasn't sweet enough, God allowed honey to be in the carcass of the lion!

This was just a little reminder that while Samson's strength was great, it was ultimately God who gave him the victory-Samson couldn't have made that honey appear-and remember, God was the one who designed Samson's strength for His



purposes in the first place! This is something Samson should have remembered in the long run, but again, we'll get to that later! ;)

“And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised? But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day. And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.” Judges 15:18–20.

Samson was brought to the Philistines by the children of Judah because there was so much tension between them and the Philistines because of Samson. When he got there, he took the jawbone of a donkey and killed a thousand men! Samson knew it was God who allowed him to have that sweet victory...but he didn't remember the honey! He thought he would die of thirst! We have to remember that if God did it once, He will do it again! So God caused water to flow from that jawbone!

“Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.” Luke 6:47–49.

All our accomplishments, our sweet victories, are made possible by & through Jesus! He is The Rock who allows us to stand through the storm! He alone not only causes us to win, but he sustains us and strengthens us for the next battle—sometimes with a little honey & a little water! Samson was a strong man at first because he was founded upon The Rock of The Word of God, but later on, this same strong man becomes like the house on the sand. He loses his purpose. We must pray into our purpose as we pursue our daily walk with The Lord! It's the

only way to experience sweet victory! And just as Samson's was given since birth, our birth was always meant to lead us to a new birth!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.



A P R I L

## Look to Jesus!

*Friday, April 2*

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 16–18 · LUKE 7:1–30

*“And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.”*

“And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death; That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother’s womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.” Judges 16:6, 16–17.

Samson gave Delilah many different answers (lies) about where his strength came from, but finally, he said it came from his hair, which was part of his covenant with God. While it’s true that his uncut hair was a part of his covenant with God, that’s NOT where his strength came from!

We get so wrapped up in looking to other sources of strength too...we can even become like Samson and say, “I do this or that for God, so that’s why I’m a strong person.” While God does honor us following His commands, the strength does not come from us! Our loving connection to God is what brings us strength. Samson’s strength was taken when he fell in love with Delilah more than he was in love with God!

“And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.” Judges 16:28.

At the time of his death, Samson wanted to be avenged for his two eyes, which the Philistines took which made him blind. In reality, Samson gave his eyes away long before they were plucked out by the Philistines! He looked away from God. He gave himself more credit than God. He forgot that the covenant started back in the womb of his mother, before he had any physical strength to begin

with! But, in this last outcry to God, Samson did get one last bittersweet victory by crushing himself along with his enemies.

“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Judges 17:6.

In the days following Samson, who did judge Israel for a time, there was no king. All did what was right in his own eyes...and oh, how deceptive things become when we look away from God! Each person has their own idea of right instead of looking to the Righteous One!

“When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.”

Luke 7:20–23.

Keep your eyes on Jesus! Don’t ever doubt His ability to do miracles in your own personal life. We don’t look for another. We can’t find it in any other, or in ourselves. It’s all about the strength, power & everlasting glory of our GOD!



## The Greatest Battle Strategy

*Saturday, April 3*

TODAY'S READING · JUDGES 19–21 · LUKE 7:31–50

*“And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the house of God, and asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up first.”*

— JUDGES 20:18

Israel was going to have to fight against one of the tribes of Israel-Benjamin. Israel wanted to separate themselves from the sins which those of the house of Benjamin were committing. This desire for separation was a noble act, because in this separation, they desired to be closer to God. All along the way, the children of Israel sought The Lord for every step they were to take...and that is the greatest battle strategy: praying & seeking God!!

Even with this strategy, it doesn't mean we are perfect & saved from failure-we are going to mess up sometimes. We may not experience success on the first try. God may be trying to strengthen us through the overcoming of our failures & weaknesses. It may be the way that we build that strong alliance & reliance upon God! Israel was told Judah should go up first in battle, but they lost. Instead of turning away from God, they sought Him even more:

“And the people the men of Israel encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array in the place where they put themselves in array the first day. (And the children of Israel went up and wept before the Lord until even, and asked counsel of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up again to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother? And the Lord said, Go up against him.)” Judges 20:22–23.

Israel then experienced their second defeat! What was going wrong!? The strategy was correct, but they needed more of it! As the saying goes, “More

prayer, more power!” And that’s exactly what they did, and they fasted as well:

“Then all the children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept, and sat there before the Lord , and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord . And the children of Israel enquired of the Lord , (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days,) saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the Lord said, Go up; for to morrow I will deliver them into thine hand.” Judges 20:26–28.

“Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting,” Matthew 17:21.

This kind of people, God’s people, the victorious people, don’t go out to win against the enemy without the greatest battle strategy! That’s prayer, and fasting accompanied with it makes an even greater impact as we prepare ourselves for God to intervene in our lives in a mighty way! Through this battle strategy, God gave the Israelites a strategy which would defeat the enemy!

“And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.” Luke 7:37–38.

This same strategy was practiced by this woman. She came near to Jesus pouring out her all. Everything ounce of perfume, every tear, every care in the world...she gave it all to Jesus! She was tired of herself. She wanted to win & overcome. She wanted to draw close to The One who loved her most...in doing this, her sins were forgiven-and that’s the greatest battle to overcome! The one within ourselves! So thankful that Jesus has been our all in all, since the time of the battles of the Israelites to this woman to now.

In the end, it’s not about the battle we are facing as much as it is about facing Jesus in prayer & loving Him with a whole heart. We have already won the battle through prayer!!



## THERE IS BETTER LIFE!

*Sunday, April 4*

TODAY'S READING · RUTH 1-4 · LUKE 8:1-25

When something goes wrong, or prolongs a dream or goal we have from taking place, how quick are we to walk away? Do we hang on too tightly to what we envision the outcome to look like, or do we let God break it down in order to multiply it to something greater? What if we only experience half the miracles we could potentially experience because we don't let God surprise us and change things for our good?

I know, LOTS of questions to start this one out, but I've been asking myself these questions lately! I want to be sure that I let God's dreams for me happen, because that's where the better life is! I don't want to lose hope when it seems to not go my way; I want to let God use it for a better life than I ever thought possible! Give God your dreams! Just look at Ruth!

“And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.” Ruth 1:16-17.

Using Ruth's physical eyes, it was clear that there was nothing left for her. Naomi could no longer offer her anything of value...but God could still use this dead dream! THE VOWS WERE STILL VALID! Somehow, God gave this foreign Moabite hope in Him that her connection to Naomi and her family was still fruitful. The physical seed of her dead husband couldn't provide anything, but GOD could cause a Spiritual, miraculous encounter to take place to cause life in this family once again! Just like Jesus rose from the dead today!

“And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art



come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.”

Ruth 2:11–12.

The miraculous encounter was with Boaz, a near kinsman in Naomi’s family! Ruth came to trust the wings of God to carry her where she needed to be. How often do we leave it all behind to trust that God can multiply our dreams? That His purpose is greater than our own visions for ourselves?

“And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.” Ruth 2:16.

Again, His purpose is greater! There is BETTER life with Him! He doesn’t accidentally take care of us, like Boaz with Ruth...Boaz purposefully let more grain fall for Ruth to take home to Naomi, and God lets blessings come down to us on purpose when we place our dreams in His Hands!

“Moreover Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.”

Ruth 4:10.

God used Boaz to complete the dream!! And this connection would be used for more than one child, but this is the same bloodline which led from David to Christ! THERE IS BETTER HOPE! THERE IS BETTER LIFE!

“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” Luke 8:15.

The threshing floor brought forth wheat from the soil, but that’s not where the promise came from...Ruth’s heart was good soil! She wanted to serve Naomi’s God, and He became her God! She trusted Him with her life which seemed hopeless & dead...and as the Scripture says, fruit was brought forth with patience! **DON’T GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS; GIVE THEM TO GOD!**

**TAKE THE “RUTH LEAP OF FAITH” STARTING HERE:**

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the

Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.

The Resurrection of Jesus was to show that we can have new life too! Experience the miracle of new birth, new life, new dreams & a new loving connection to Jesus today!



A P R I L

## EXPECTATION

*Monday, April 5*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 1-3 · LUKE 8:26-56

When we pray, are we bold enough to expect something to take place? Are we ready to receive what we prayed for?

In many instances in the Bible, it seems as though faith is defined as being bold enough to expect God to do something miraculous in your life. Claiming it...

“(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” Romans 4:17.

Jesus sure quickens the dead! He calls the ones who seem the most unworthy! He changes our situation! And how much more when we EXPECT it! When we don't doubt God! Although God is not obligated to do something if it's not according to His perfect Will, He always has the best in mind for us, no matter the outcome!

“And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.”

1 Samuel 1:11.

God heard the plea of Hannah! Prayer DOES change things!! He knew the sincerity in her heart that she would follow through and allow her son to be given to the service of The Lord. He indeed gave her a son, and he became Samuel, one of the great prophets! All because she did not give up...she didn't just pray in her home, but she brought her concern all the way to the House of God! Her desperation was an expectation of Who God is and what He could do. She knew

miracles could happen, so she sought one for herself. And we need to do the same!

He makes the dead womb live again! And through the boldness to expect something to happen, to crawl that extra mile, a woman with an issue of blood was healed!

“And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.” Luke 8:46–48.

God blessed this woman’s faithful act of boldness! She was done hoping...she wanted to expect! She didn’t care who watched her. Although she trembled at the experience, it was her boldness to come forward which allowed that virtue to flow out! When we expect, but we also accept whatever outcome God has planned, that’s where we find peace! We can always expect God to come through, no matter what the answer is to the problem!

Sometimes, we cannot expect much of ourselves. We are not able to handle every situation flawlessly...but GOD CAN! AND HE WILL! But will He come into our lives seeing bold faith? The kind that expects God to do something great? Or does our doubt only get us so far into the miraculous? We need to go all the way in Jesus’ Name...even if we have to crawl to get there!



## A Dusty Road

*Tuesday, April 6*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 4-6 · LUKE 9:1-17

Life is not an easy road to travel. We experience so many ups & downs along the way, but sometimes, all we are doing is simply kicking up dust. Sometimes, it's a little lonely & a little empty...but Jesus gives us fulfillment and love when we get connected with Him through prayer & His Word!

Lots of things can happen on that dusty road. Without Jesus, the road gets even more dusty. Our judgment gets clouded, and we lose our way...kind of like when the ark of God was stolen by the Philistines!

“And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son? And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.”

1 Samuel 4:13-17.

When this was told to Eli, he fell down dead...

“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Genesis 3:19.

Since the Israelites had not been obeying God, especially Eli the priest's sons, Israel was judged immensely in losing the battle with the Philistines & having the ark of God stolen. It caused Eli to fall down dead. It also caused Eli's son Phineas' wife to die in childbirth, crying out because the glory of The Lord departed from

Israel. Such a lonely, dangerous road we end up traveling when we depart from God!

The Philistines realized the power of God because the ark caused Dagon, their God, to crumble! When the dust settled, they knew they had to send back the stolen ark! So, they sent it down a road of its own, and God guided the kine cart back to where it belonged!

“And he smote the men of Beth–shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord , even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. And the men of Beth–shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us? And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath–yearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and fetch it up to you.”

1 Samuel 6:19–21.

“And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.”

Luke 9:5.

These Words of Jesus in Luke, about shaking the dust off if The Word was not received, was the same concept with the ark. The ark represented the power & presence of God at that time. Those who did not receive it with fear & respect were judged. We need to give God the glory and receive Him wholeheartedly! We don't want to be left in the dust!



## INTERRUPTIONS

*Wednesday, April 7*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 7-9 · LUKE 9:18-36

*“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”*

— LUKE 9:23-24

Sometimes, the interruptions in our lives are more than just an inconvenience. Usually, we have to be called out of what we are doing in order to do something greater! Sometimes, the interruptions ARE the calling! Coming after Jesus means denying ourselves...we have to be interrupted, losing our original life to gain a better one! And that was the case of Saul seeking his father's lost asses & finding something better!

“And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us. And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.” 1 Samuel 9:5-6.

...And this man they would go see is the prophet Samuel! And Samuel sure did show them the way to go-GOD's way! The better way! This mission was never about the lost donkeys, it was a situation used by God to lead Saul to his great purpose! One day, he would become king!

“Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying, To morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people,



because their cry is come unto me.”

1 Samuel 9:15–16.

In these few chapters of 1 Samuel, the purpose was not yet revealed to Saul. He was just spending time with Samuel first, then Samuel would reveal God’s plan for his life. But according to this passage, we know what’s coming! Imagine if Saul hadn’t listened to his servant? If he had said, “No, I just want to go home. We’ve been searching for the asses long enough.” But instead, he searched a little longer & found so much more! He was willing to let his desire & preference be interrupted by his servant (and that’s exactly what God had in mind!).

“For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?” Luke 9:25.

Nothing in this world means more than Jesus! We have to be willing to set those things aside to let Jesus in when He interrupts/calls us! The greatest things are in store from The Lord-this world does not compare!!



## Who are we exalting?

*Thursday, April 8*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 10-12 · LUKE 9:37-62

What takes up most of our attention? Is it our family issues? Our daily tasks? Or is it just our own personal needs? I know sometimes for me those things, while important, bring me to a point where I'm too aware of them...like I'm stuck in a tunnel and I'm not able to see anything else clearly except for the needs of my children and my home. They do deserve our most, but our best should always go to God! He has the instructions of how to properly handle situations which arise in our families.

He is love, so HE knows how to love them best...when we appoint ourselves as their lifeline by overdoing it, we take the place of God! And we become drained in the process! So...who, or what, are we exalting?

"And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day." 1 Samuel 10:9.

The direct connection Samuel had with God was incredible. God said he would meet Saul, and shortly, he did. God spoke to Samuel in the above chapter and gave Saul instructions of what to do, and in giving Saul another heart, all the things which Samuel said came to pass...because they came from God!

We are in need of another heart most of the time...a heart which exalts God over our issues. One that puts God first instead of thinking that WE are the ones who save the day...HE MUST BE EXALTED! Here is the first step in the heart-transplant process (our hearts are always needing examination, but this is the first step in cleaning it out & starting fresh!):

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38.

“And Samuel said unto the people, It is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers.” 1 Samuel 12:6–7.

And Samuel explained the process they had gone through many times where God saved them out of the hands of their enemies...so many different instances... and Samuel was trying to show them that He doesn’t just want to be the God of our problematic desperation, but the God of our everyday devotion, regardless of what is going on or how we feel! We need to escape the tunnel. We need to take the blinders off. I want to be able to see Jesus clearly in my life and exalt Him above all! HE IS KING!

“And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God: But if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.”

1 Samuel 12:12–15.

Jesus has always been King, but the question is, are we putting Him on the throne? Our feelings and emotions each day will be stable if we keep Him in place as King in our lives. We can’t replace Him with ourselves. We can’t do it all in our own strength. We can’t hide in the tunnel of our problems without giving them to God, because we are not only trapping ourselves, but idolizing our issues! Let’s exalt Him together!

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Luke 9:62.

“But what about...?” That’s the question of us all! In this chapter of Luke, a few were asked to follow Jesus, but they had different excuses. To the people, they seemed like legitimate reasons/issues/desires which should be addressed before

leaving them behind...but they didn't realize that in following Jesus, all those things would be taken care of!

And that's not to say we just stand there and do nothing while doing the work of The Lord, for Jesus says above, it is putting our hands to the plough; it's true work! It's just a matter of who we are exalting! If we are doing God's work, relying on His strength to get us through, then we shouldn't be looking back and longing for anything else! We shouldn't look back to our tunnels of despair! WE CAN'T LOOK BACK TO EGYPT! WE NEED TO KEEP OUR EYES FORWARD AND EXALT JESUS!



A P R I L

## The Big Picture

*Friday, April 9*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 13-14 · LUKE 10:1-24

*“Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*

**F**or I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.” Luke 10:20, 24.

Sometimes, when God has healed us or given us a victory over something we've been struggling with, we rejoice over that...and there's nothing wrong with being excited about those things, but sometimes in rejoicing, we forget what the big picture is all about-JESUS! He is The One who brought us to that point of celebration in the first place! If we're not careful, and we look at the little picture for too long, we'll start to doubt God and put faith in ourselves (and that never works out too well! We will probably get more problems stacked on top of each other because we forget to rely on God to help us through!).

As the Scripture states, many prophets & kings of old would have loved to see the things the Apostles saw...like king Saul, for instance! Although it would have been a wonder to him, it also makes you wonder if he really would have changed his ways...

Saul became king for the right reasons, but ended up going the wrong way. His impatience and high regard of himself led him down a prideful path of destruction. He tried to continue in the flesh what was started in the Spirit! He missed the big picture! (Kind of like that tunnel situation we talked about last time!):

“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

Galatians 3:3.

Although Saul did not receive the Spirit of God at that time, since people received it after Jesus ascended, the same concept applies in a different way: God started this work in Saul, but Saul became “all about himself”...as Samuel expressed to him, and as this above Scripture also states, Saul did foolishly:

“And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord : I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.” 1 Samuel 13:10–13.

Saul could no longer wait for Samuel. The people were scattering, losing faith in Saul just as Saul was losing faith in God and the prophet Samuel. His impatience got the best of him and he made a sacrifice before Samuel arrived. He really missed the big picture! Sacrificing isn’t about impressing people or “saving face,” it’s all about connecting with God! And what could have been a forever kingdom of Saul came crumbling down into a temporary one because Saul was focused on temporary things!

So, let’s give all glory to God! Let’s not rejoice over the things we think we have control over. Or rejoice because we think we don’t need the help of God...we ALWAYS do! No matter what! It’s Him at work behind the scenes anyway, even when we don’t see Him! We need to pray and seek His perfect Will so we don’t miss the big picture-and the biggest picture being Heaven & eternity with Jesus Christ!



## A Blessing in Disguise

*Saturday, April 10*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 15-16 · LUKE 10:25-42

*“But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”*

— 1 SAMUEL 16:7

What could God possibly be doing right now?? I've said this many times recently...and I think today's reading was to show me the old saying, "Don't judge a book by its cover" or more specifically, "Don't deem a situation a failure until you see what God's using it for"! This reading & post sort of couples with the last one-we need to keep focused on the big picture, our God, & not get lost in our circumstances!

Samuel was going to anoint the next king of Israel out of the sons of Jesse. All were valiant looking men on the outside, but God told Samuel to anoint the one who was valiant on the inside-and that was the youngest, David! He would be the one who would fight Goliath! And that's because David knew GOD was his strength!

“And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our Lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit



from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.”  
1 Samuel 16:12–16.

It’s quite interesting how God works! From Saul’s perspective, this was a boy who was skilled at playing the harp, and later Saul was told The Lord was with this boy. Little did he know that this young man David would become the next king of Israel! The same Spirit of God which left Saul was upon David, and Saul now had an evil spirit which only someone with God’s Spirit upon them could dismiss. David didn’t look like much on the outside, but God was preparing so much on the inside for him to do something great!

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.”

Luke 10:33–34.

We can also take a look at the story of the good Samaritan! The Samaritans and Jews did not get along much, and the Jews looked at the Samaritans as unclean people because they were only partly Jewish...but this was the type of person who ended up helping a Jew! A compassionate heart is possible in anyone. Our label, or “book cover,” doesn’t apply when we trust God to use our situations to do a great work & glorify Him!

ANYONE can repent, be baptized in Jesus’ Name, receive His Spirit & live a godly, holy life! Any situation, no matter how unfortunate it seems, can be turned around and used for good...but we must give it all to God in prayer & ask for patience through the process (I know I need a constant reminder of that!). We never know what God’s doing behind the scenes. We just have to trust Him—it may just be a blessing in disguise!



## Is there not a Cause?

*Sunday, April 11*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 17-18 · LUKE 11:1-28

God is aware of the giants in our lives...in fact, sometimes He allows them to be there for certain reasons. Many people ask, "If God knows about this issue, why doesn't He just make it disappear?" I think the answer is simple...God already finds the cause important, but do we? And, are we willing to do anything about it, as God is always willing to help us?

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Luke 11:9-10.

God wants us to connect with Him about these "giant-sized issues." When we come to Him in prayer & ask for help, He is always willing to come into the situation! As anything is in life, we must take the initiative. Without this cause, this relationship with God, there would be no reason for our existence! If God just "poofed" everything away, we would never overcome another challenge, learn another lesson, or gain another victory by depending on The Lord!

"And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" 1 Samuel 17:26.

God never hesitates to come to our defense, especially when we come to Him in prayer...but how often do we stand & defend God, especially when it's dangerous? David wasn't afraid to stand up and defend the Cause of God, which was so much greater than simply a battle....this was so much more! It was to show the power of God to all those there, even to remind God's people of His willingness to fight for His people!

“And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?” 1 Samuel 17:29.

Is there not a Cause?? Is there not a God?? WE CAN SO THIS!! Those giants don't stand a chance when we toss them into the Hands of God! God is so much bigger than every issue we face. We can't let intimidation allow us to forget to fight the battle, or forget about God!

THERE IS A CAUSE! THERE IS A GOD! THERE IS A GIANT THAT WILL FALL TODAY IN JESUS' NAME!



## Building Bridges

*Monday, April 12*

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 19–21 · LUKE 11:29–54

*“Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.”*

— LUKE 11:47–48

**T**he generation of people Jesus was speaking to were building sepulchres to prophets who their family members killed. The people really lost the meaning behind the work of the prophets...they weren't appreciative of the work the prophets did, but they built the sepulchres out of habit...

The prophets were people who God used mightily to speak God's messages, and so they had to build solid bridges/relationships with God in order to keep that special connection. But, these people Jesus was speaking to were not interested in building their own relationships with God. They built sepulchres in a heartless way. They were the scribes, Pharisees & lawyers who loved their position & prestige more than giving their hearts to God or others...but Jesus' love was seen in all He did!

Jesus' manner of building meaningful bridges & relationships is similar to what David did! When the enemy was after David, he was able to rely on those who he had built bridges with to help him!

“But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see, that I will tell thee.” 1 Samuel 19:2–3.

David & Jonathan, Saul's own son, became best friends! Jonathan could have taken the safe way out and sided with his father Saul against David, but the meaningful connection between the 2 friends motivated Jonathan to protect David!

“For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice: wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?” 1 Samuel 19:5.

Jonathan reminded his father that God was using David for great things, and it's in building a meaningful bridge & connection with God that brought Israel to victory through David! Is there not a Cause!? Because of Saul's anger and detachment from God, and all his burned bridges, much of his family sided with David instead of Saul. Even Michal, Saul's daughter & David's wife, helped David!

“Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal David's wife told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to night, to morrow thou shalt be slain. So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped.” 1 Samuel 19:11–12.

As we can see, it's important to build bridges of loving connection with God & those around us. Later on in these chapters of 1 Samuel, we see David & Jonathan make an oath with God as the center witness between the two. When our friendships & relationships have God in the center, it will be the strongest bond & bridge yet!



## Cornered

Tuesday, April 13

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 22-24 · LUKE 12:1-31

*“In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”*

— LUKE 12:1-2

Sometimes, we just feel surrounded on every side. Cornered. Pushed against a wall. Overwhelmed by all the different issues we must face on a day-to-day basis...we don't know where to turn, or who to trust...but as the Scripture says, the Truth WILL be revealed, especially when we trust in God!

“But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Luke 12:31.

When we stare at the list of problems first & send ourselves down a puzzling path of headaches trying to figure it all out, it is so easy to give up...instead, give that list up to God in prayer! Seek Jesus first, and those things will become just an added bonus once they are managed & solved by God! David practiced this many times-being chased down & cornered not only by Saul, but the Philistines too!

“Therefore David enquired of the Lord , saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines? Then David enquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.” 1 Samuel 23:2-4.

When we seek God first as David did, we can expect victory! The Truth is revealed! We can know if it's better to pursue the problem before us, or to abandon it altogether. David's reliance on God was key to his achievements in life! It was key to escaping the corner...because he relied on the Cornerstone!

"Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth. And David abode in the wilderness in strong holds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand." 1 Samuel 23:13-14.

Saul was after David every day, but God protected him! Just as our problems don't just disappear, we must have a daily relationship with God in order to fight & win those daily battles! Next time you feel cornered, use that corner as a place of prayer! God will bring you out!



## The Value of Love

Wednesday, April 14

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 25-26 · LUKE 12:32-59

*"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."*

— LUKE 12:34-37

What does it mean to treasure something? Usually, we mean to value or cherish it in our hearts. We don't mean that we are trying to put a price on something...in fact, the things we treasure are usually priceless-especially love! Since God is love as it says in 1 John 4:8, He should be our biggest Treasure...as the Scripture says, our heart is where our treasure is! And when our hearts are ready, waiting & watching for The Lord, He is there for us! That loving bond with Jesus is the TRUE Treasure, truly priceless!

David's heart was in God's treasure box. He valued the supernatural over the natural. He respected those God put in authority over him. One day, this investment bore much fruit! God sent Abigail to David before David could kill Nabal, her husband. Nabal disrespected David, and David was about to murder him. But Abigail, a faithful servant who understood the value of her loving commitment to her husband, but also understood the treasure of God and His anointed, came in the way to stop the act from taking place!

"Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the



man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.” 1 Samuel 25:3.

It is literally stated that she had good understanding! And although she wasn’t receiving much love back home, she understood the value of it...and because of her humble and courageous act to protect a man unworthy of sparing, God ended up allowing Nabal to die and she became David’s wife!

“And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my Lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel; that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my Lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my Lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my Lord, then remember thine handmaid.” 1 Samuel 25:30–31.

Even before The Lord smote Nabal, Abigail knew he probably had it coming...so in the end, her act of stopping David from killing her husband was actually sparing David from a bad reputation, not favoring Nabal! This was an act of love only God could orchestrate! The love of God brought them together in a love greater than she had known all her life!

Seems like a puzzle, right? I know! Just thinking about how much God loves us enough to piece this all together amazes me! The love of God is greater than anything else. Greater than any counselor or life coach. Let God be the One to sort it all out! He IS Love, so He understands what you’re feeling & going through more than anyone else!



## Like a Fig Tree

Thursday, April 15

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 27-29 · LUKE 13:1-22

*"Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."*

— LUKE 13:7-9

Kind of like this fig tree, we all want one more chance. One more chance to get it right. One more chance to talk to someone we may not have had the greatest first impression with. One more chance to prove ourselves & fix a mistake...thankfully, someone had a heart & passion for this fig tree! They said, "Give me one more year to work on it!" But they also accepted that if there's nothing that could be done to change the fig tree, then it could be cut down... but, if it bore fruit, all would be well!

The man in the garden with the fig tree had to go through a special process to give it another chance at producing fruit. The tree had to be pliable & moldable in order to be ready to bear fruit. We have to go through a similar change process in order to have a chance at a better, more productive life for The Kingdom of God and for eternity! It starts with repentance, then the washing in baptism, then receiving the Holy Ghost!

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13:5.

We will be cut down like the unproductive fig tree if we don't have a moldable, pliable repentant heart! Unfortunately, king Saul was a case of a fig tree that just needed to be cut down to size & replaced by a better fig tree. He was sorrowful, but only about losing his good reputation with the people, not about losing his relationship with God...

“Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.” 1 Samuel 28:19–20.

Saul summoned a witch to bring up the spirit of Samuel...but God used this evil situation to speak this report to Saul through Samuel, who was already dead. Saul & his sons would die the next day in battle, and the kingdom would go to David!

If we want the Kingdom of God dwelling in us, we must repent truly repent, be baptized by full immersion in water (just as Jesus was fully buried), then be filled with the Holy Ghost (just as Jesus rose again from the dead)! Jesus made a way of repentance for those in the Old Testament, before He came to earth, and He made this process for us after He died & rose again! It’s a simple process, but it makes us a productive fig tree in the Kingdom of God!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 2:38.

“neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

Luke 17:21.



## The Ultimate Recovery

Friday, April 16

TODAY'S READING · 1 SAMUEL 30-31 · LUKE 13:23-35

*“The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.”*

— LUKE 13:31-33

How often do we speak confidently to our problems and tell them “God’s got this”? These problems are like little sneaky foxes. They creep in and steal all our confidence, hope, and anything else we give in & allow them to take. In these moments, when everything seems like it’s been stolen from us, we always have our God to turn to! As Jesus spoke so assuredly, “Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.” We must keep walking. We must keep going...and the only way to do it is to let God be our strength! WE WILL RECOVER WHAT WAS LOST IN SOME WAY!

“So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. And David’s two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.”

1 Samuel 30:3-6.

When it seemed hopeless, like all was taken from David & his army, David turned to God for encouragement! Although he was just as distressed as the others, because we are human and that happens, he didn't panic! He didn't let the little foxes steal his hope in God along with everything else that had been taken! And when he decided to turn to God, he found the assurance & stability he was looking for:

“And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.” 1 Samuel 30:8.

THEY WERE GOING TO RECOVER ALL! And not only that, the little fox was going to be defeated! Jesus is our ultimate recovery after a storm of problems...not only because He helps us to recover all in this life...but because He gives us stability in eternity! And because we must be more thankful for The Provider, not the thing provided.

He is our rest. He is our hope. He is our recovery. Turn to Him today!



# Moving Up!

*Saturday, April 17*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 1-2 · LUKE 14:1-24

What kind of lengths do we go to in order to get ahead? What do we sacrifice to get that next position or promotion? While a good work ethic is essential, it's important to remember that our position with God & others matters most! Do we put in the same work to be sure our relationship with God is alive & thriving? Do we burn bridges with others in order to build ourselves up to a higher status? Something to consider!

The good news is, when we stop trying to make ourselves out to be the best, God promotes us to where we need to be in His timing! Let HIM move you up! In our own strength, we might end up in a lower position than God intended, or a higher position which would cost us too much to stay...including selling our humility & purchasing a whole lot of pride!

“But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Luke 14:10-11.

God is the One who gives is a true raise! And not just in our jobs, but at every point in our lives. Sometimes, we dig ditches deeper than we can climb out of ourselves...we get ourselves in situations which could jeopardize our health physically & spiritually...we've all been there! Just more reason to hang onto Jesus-but it's even better to be completely invested in Him before we fall into the ditch!

David was someone who took steps downward, waiting only on God to lift Him up! He restrained himself from killing king Saul, who was always seeking his life, and God allowed David to be raised up as king in his place (without David

having to kill Saul himself!). First, he became king only over Judah...but soon, he would reign over all Israel! His greatest strength was in his humility:

“And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabesh-gilead were they that buried Saul. And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.” 2 Samuel 2:3–6.

He was finally anointed king, a promise made years back with the anointing oil of the prophet Samuel! All because he waited on God for the right timing for his promotion. Afterward, he even extended kindness to those who gave honor & respect to Saul’s dead body. David’s long-awaited position as king didn’t make him prideful or uncaring. It just helped him to further extend compassion to others! God used his position for greater things!

“give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” Luke 6:38.

If we become pressed down, and step down in humility off the “I’m in control” horse (I’m guilty of this much of the time!), then we will receive a pressed down, shaken together amazing blessing from The Lord! It may not be what we want or expect, but God knows what we need and what will make the most sense for our lives...ultimately, it will be better than any position we force ourselves into! When God is in control, get ready to be brought up to higher places!



## A few steps ahead

*Sunday, April 18*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 3-5 · LUKE 14:25-35

*“And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.”*

— LUKE 14:27-30

**I**t's easy to get caught up in everyday life, carrying every care upon ourselves, not sure what to take with us & what to leave behind...but in order to take up a cross and hold on to Jesus, we need to let go of some of those things. Some of those things of our past need to be nailed to the cross & forgotten...but I know what you might be thinking, “It would be harder to carry a cross than all the rest of this stuff!” And you know what? It's not supposed to be easy...but the difference is the God factor! If it's a God journey, carrying a cross instead of cares & worries, HE WILL GET YOU THROUGH! When you count the cost, the best cause is always the cross!

Although there was not a cross to look to yet in David's time, there was still a God! And David always counted the cost & consulted The Lord to be sure he was pleasing God before anyone else. He put aside the care & worry of embarrassment. He didn't care who mocked him, because he knew God would give him favor in the end! He was a few steps ahead of his friends AND enemies, because he chose God first!

“Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know



thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.” 2 Samuel 3:24–25.

Joab argued with David about the decision to be peaceful with Abner. This was the guy that killed Joab’s brother...how could David do such a thing!? While David did kill many Philistines, he knew when it was time to kill and when he should hold himself back because he always sought The Lord first! God kept David a few steps ahead of himself so he wouldn’t make unwise choices (although he wasn’t perfect & did mess up sometimes, he did have a repentant heart & sought The Lord again EVERY TIME!).

“And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother. And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner:” 2 Samuel 3:27–28.

David was not responsible for this death, and in the eyes of The Lord, he was guiltless! And when we come to the cross, being repentant like David, baptized in Jesus’ Name & receive the Holy Ghost, we become guiltless too...but as David still had responsibility for his kingdom, we still have the responsibility of a cross. Have we counted the cost? Will God make it alright in the end? Is the cross worth it? What if people mock us? Are we able to finish what we’ve started??

As with David, God keeps us in favor when we choose Him & His ways. And that way is to carry a cross instead of being distracted by the cares of this life. The cross isn’t easy, but it’s more worth it than anything else we carry around in this life! Remember, after the cross there’s a Resurrection! On that cross was our God! Again, HE WILL GET US THROUGH! As we take those steps toward Calvary, Jesus will keep us steps ahead of the enemy. Steps ahead of those who we thought are our friends who argue with us & mock us. GOD WILL KEEP US... all the way to eternity!



# Lost Sheep Mentality

*Monday, April 19*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 6-8 · LUKE 15:1-10

**T**his world needs to think like a flock of sheep. God is the Creator of each and every one of us, and it's our job to bring people back to Him! Hatred exists. Racism exists. Becoming enemies for no apparent reason exists...but at the end of the day, they're lost sheep. And maybe the ones who are most lost are the ones who don't think of going to find the one who went astray? Something to challenge ourselves with!

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. **2**And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

**3**And he spake this parable unto them, saying, **4**What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? **5**And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. **6**And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. **7**I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Luke 15:1-7.

Jesus put Himself last. He sat with sinners. He placed Himself in the hands of sinners when He was arrested. But the thing to remember is that everywhere He went, He was among sinners...even the Jews! But the Jews did not quite understand that mentality before. They just thought a sinner was an outsider, never to be brought into the company of God's chosen people...but Jesus defined them as "lost." And when there's a lost, there needs to be a found! So they **MUST** be brought to Jesus!

David was similar in heart. He put God first. He brought the lost ark home again, and he celebrated & rejoiced, just as Jesus does for one who repents. David

did not discriminate; he celebrated with everyone! He tended to the needs of all those around him, even before returning to meet the needs of his own household...just as Jesus does for us!

“And he dealt among all the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece *of flesh*, and a flagon *of wine*. So all the people departed every one to his house. **20**Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!” 2 Samuel 6:19–20.

David’s wife Michal did not understand this, just as the Jews had a hard time understanding Jesus’ ministry at first...but honestly, these reactions represent every one of us at times...we are hesitant to get to know other people, or open ourselves up to people who are much different than ourselves...but when we understand that it’s the work of The Lord, and we are just trying to reach all people and bring them back to our Creator, we will realize that we are all just part of the same flock...a flock that needs Jesus, and the Acts 2:38 salvation steps of repentance, water baptism in Jesus’ Name & receiving the Holy Ghost! This way, we can also celebrate & rejoice together in eternity one day. So, who’s more lost? The one who ran away, or the flock that may have rejected them? Let’s keep that lost sheep mentality!



## The Reach of Kindness

*Tuesday, April 20*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 9-11 · LUKE 15:11-32

*“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”*

— LUKE 15:20

When the Prodigal Son came home, his father ran to meet him and embraced him, even though he was still a great way off in the distance. He could have waited for him to shamefully make his way all the way back up to the farm, but instead, he met him a great way off...

But behind that embrace, even when the son was still a greater way off, off the deep end, making poor choices and not even thinking about his father, his father still loved him. That kindness and compassion was bubbling up, just waiting for the moment he would come home...and that's why the overflow happened! He couldn't wait for his son to make the lonely travel up to the house-so he went to the road to meet him!

That's how far the reach of kindness goes. It reaches beyond the faults & failures, even though it doesn't accept the faults & failures. It gives another chance, even when it seems so undeserved...David practiced that with the remnant of the house of king Saul, the man who spent most of his kingship chasing after David to kill him...

“...And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! **7**And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. **8**And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am*?” 2 Samuel 9:6b-8.

Mephibosheth felt so unworthy of this incredible offer. Not only was he from the house of Saul, but he was lame on his feet and did not feel like he looked the part of an honorable man. But just as the father met the prodigal when he was a great way off, David sought out Mephibosheth...that kind of kindness reaches far & makes all the difference...and sometimes people are just waiting to see if we'll go the extra mile...again, that lost sheep mentality! Sometimes, the shame keeps the sheep away. It's no longer the lure of a dangerous, different life...it's just the shame of coming home. We need to invite them back home...and like Mephibosheth's case, back to the kingdom...and in our case, the Kingdom of God! The Lord is waiting for us as the father was with the prodigal and as David was with Mephibosheth...even when David went with Bathsheba, God saw his repentant heart...

If you feel "a great way off," or if you know someone who is, let's be bold. Let's pray for them. Let's reach out to them. Let's let them know The Father is waiting to embrace them in Jesus' Name!



## Distraction Attraction

*Wednesday, April 21*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 12-13 · LUKE 16

It is so easy to sway from our priority lists when something else looks more attractive, more fun, or easier than the task at hand. One thing Ryan & I were just discussing is how we can come up with a better system for the big tasks around the house, like dishes & laundry...seeing it in “piled-up” form draws us into immediate action, but we are not so good at the minimal maintenance it takes to keep it from getting piled up in the first place...but doing the little really helps lighten the load of the big job! And so we shouldn’t be letting it slide down the priority list when it looks little...because it’s just a giant in disguise!

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Luke 16:10.

We need to have our priorities straight. We need to be faithful in everything we do! Yes, sometimes there are more important things than dishes & laundry. Sometimes, other things must come first on the priority list. But sometimes, it’s just a simple de-motivation to stick to a simple goal. We need to do all as unto The Lord! Whether it be household chores, or something as big as being faithful to our spouses, families & our God!

“And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.” 2 Samuel 12:4

Nathan the Prophet came to visit David to prophesy unto him that the affair David had with Bathsheba was known to The Lord. God sees everything; especially our hearts! Nathan used a story of stealing a sheep to show David the evil behind what he did, and even David agreed that this person deserved to be punished...and then he was told that person was himself! David was greatly repentant & forgiven, but his actions did not come without consequences:

“Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. **10**Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. **11**Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. **12**For thou didst *it* secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.” 2 Samuel 12:9–12

All things we do, or avoid, have consequences...whether it be a pile of dishes & laundry, or a pile of family drama, we have to really examine our priority lists and see if we are falling victim to the attraction of distraction! Are we letting our desire for entertainment and fun override the importance of other things in our lives? And how about our relationship with God? Our connection with Him is more important than anything, because the best life maintenance comes from The Lord! When we turn to Him first, He will order our steps & help us to keep our eyes straight ahead, keeping the main thing the main thing!

“Let all things be done decently and in order.” 2 Corinthians 14:40.



## Forgive & Fulfill

Thursday, April 22

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 14–15 · LUKE 17:1–19

*“Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. **4**And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. **5**And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.”*

— LUKE 17:3–5

**D**o we have faith that God will see us to the other side of forgiveness? Forgiving can sometimes be a difficult thing, and sometimes we don't want to free ourselves from the problem or disagreement because we don't want to let that person “off the hook” for what they did. Instead of holding onto the anger, we need to hold onto Jesus and have faith that He will work on the heart of that person & deal with the situation justly & properly. No wonder the apostles' response to forgiving seven times in a day was, “Lord, Increase our faith”! That takes a lot of faith, patience, and so many other things!

“And there came a messenger to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. **14**And David said unto all his servants that *were* with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not *else* escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.” 2 Samuel 15:13–14

Absalom's heart of unforgiveness caused him to not only turn against his brother & kill him, but eventually grew into a beast of anger against David the king, his own father! Absalom was right to be upset at what his brother did in taking advantage of his sister Tamar, but The Lord says that vengeance is His (Hebrews 10:30)! There were many times in the Bible when God said to act, and there were times when He said to stay still. Absalom never consulted The Lord



about any of his actions. Instead of forgiving his brother and being fulfilled with a more peaceful life, Absalom caused his anger to spout out of control. Even after was brought back to the kingdom, he didn't ask for forgiveness for killing his brother. His only aim was to take advantage of his position and try to take the crown for himself. Look what can happen from unforgiveness!

“Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him*, through whom they come! **2**It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.” Luke 17:1–2

It was wrong for Absalom's brother Amnon to rape Tamar. But it doesn't justify the multiple actions that followed in Absalom's life! He wasn't in the right either! He did not have the authority to kill his brother. He did not have the authority to challenge the king's authority either! David did not want to fight against his son, so he fled. David's heart was still full of love toward the son who betrayed him. He could have been outraged at his challenge to the throne, as Saul was in times past, but at that time, position in the kingdom didn't matter. The position in the family mattered more! And that's how it should be with us. Even if the offence or hurt comes from those closest to us, if we take the leap of faith to forgive, we will be fulfilled instead of destroyed in a downward spiral!



## Reliant Relief

*Friday, April 23*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 16–18 · LUKE 17:20–37

*“And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.”*

— 2 SAMUEL 17:27–29

**D**o you feel like you're in a wilderness sometimes? Have you been facing circumstances which make you feel like you're in unfamiliar territory? I think upon the end of 2020, when the world changed significantly, we could all say the world itself became a wilderness, and we are all trying our best to navigate through this new future of 2021. Everything is changing at rapid pace, and it's difficult to keep up with the times, and the new demands it has put on our lives. But as the Scripture says, David's people were provided for when they were hungry, weary & thirsty in the wilderness...and so are we!

God sent plenty of help to David because he not only had a repentant heart as we discussed last post, but he also had a reliant heart upon God! David was blessed because he always recognized where The Lord's Hand was upon his life. The Lord handed many blessings & miracles to David throughout his life, but David also recognized when He allowed the not-so-good to take place:

“And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: the LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath

delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man. Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my Lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him.” 2 Samuel 16:7–11.

David knew that God allowed this for a reason. What patience! It only foreshadows the greatest pain, mocking & crucifixion which Christ took on for all of us...so why does God allow things like this? Why does He allow things like 2020?

Repentance gives us release from sin, but reliance brings us back to God! Sometimes, we need reason to rely. Sometimes, we have to be hungry, weary & thirsty in the wilderness in order to purpose ourselves to seek God’s Hand through it all. All of these things taking place are a loud cry to God’s people, all of us, to seek Him more so He can provide the rest we need! We are living in days like Noah...many people are suffering, yet many hearts are reluctant to rely on God:

“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.”

Luke 17:26–27.

Without Jesus, we are destroyed. We are left hungry, weary, thirsty & mocked...and sometimes God allows these times of suffering to linger a little longer so that we will linger a little longer in His presence, and so He can encourage us a little more...so He can build those reliant hearts...the hearts ready to finally enter the ark & sail away to Heaven, where there will be no more hunger, weariness, thirst or pain! So come on, get on the Acts 2:38 Ark!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.



A P R I L

# The Heart of Humility

*Saturday, April 24*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 19-20 · LUKE 18:1-23

What's at the heart of humility? What kind of heart does a humble person have? Why can it be difficult to be humble? It seems that throughout the Bible, we see so many examples of what humility really is. Through this state of potential weakness comes a stature of actual strength, because in every situation, those who bring themselves low will always be raised up! 2 major things that accompany humility are repentance & unworthiness...directing the attention & affection toward God rather than ourselves:

## 1. Repentance

"...and said unto the king, Let not my Lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my Lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my Lord the king." 2 Samuel 19:19-20.

This was a truly incredible transformation! This heart-felt repentance came from the man we discussed last post, who was mocking & cursing David as he rode along! He exhibited this act of humble apology most likely because of the humble example David showed during the time he was mocking him! David didn't do a thing to him, and God turned the situation around so that the man's heart would change, and he too would be humble! This caused David to raise him out of the point of potential death:

"But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed? And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do

not I know that I am this day king over Israel? Therefore the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And the king sware unto him.” 2 Samuel 19:21–23.

The man’s life was spared, not through fighting hard for it, but by being humble! The next character trait that accompanies humility is unworthiness:

## 2. Unworthiness

“I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my Lord the king? Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?”

2 Samuel 19:35–36.

This man was a man who showed kindness to David in the past, and so no matter how old this man got, David wanted him by his side. David didn’t see him as an inconvenience. In fact, the fact that this man could have slowed him down probably continued to remind David of slowing down & continuing to be humble, putting others before himself. Finally, this man realized he was too old to go on & felt unworthy of the position David gave him, and David let him “retire.” This humble man, feeling so unworthy of being by David’s side, was raised up to match the worthiness of a young, strong soldier in David’s eyes!

These two traits, repentance & unworthiness, can help us to stay humble, and then help us to be raised up in the end! Of course, it’s not about the position. It’s not about being exalted or lifted up. It’s all about lifting up Jesus, and in due time He will give us the uplift we need! Especially in Heaven! David showed this Christ-like character traits. Just as Jesus preferred the needs of everyone over Himself, David did the same in raising up the lowly ones! Repentance is a great thing. Unworthiness in realizing God’s worthiness is a great thing. It creates a humble heart, which helps to lift us up & do great things!

“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every

one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

Luke 18:11, 13–14.





A P R I L

## Stay Awhile

*Sunday, April 25*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 21-22 · LUKE 18:24-43

*"They prevented me in the day of my calamity: But the LORD was my stay."*

2 Samuel 22:19

There is so much in this life we could use a break from. An escape. A breather...but when it comes to God's presence, it's worth staying awhile! In His presence, you'll want more of Him and will see that Jesus IS our Oasis! He is our "in earth as it is in Heaven"(Matthew 6:10)! He is our safe place & refuge, away from the things we are experiencing...but He gives us the strength in our safe place with Him to go back into our battles & win victories! So don't shy away from God's presence! Never deny that more of Him is the answer! Jesus is our stay, our safe place...so stay awhile!

"And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God." Luke 18:38-43.

This man was blind. Searching for answers in his dark world. Unable to see where to go, what to do. But when he heard Jesus was there, he cried out to Him. He didn't say, "Oh, that's nice. Maybe someone will receive a miracle today..." Nope! That blind man decided it was time for HIS miracle! He decided to push it further...he started to face persecution, but he didn't quiet down! HE WANTED

TO STAY AWHILE IN GOD’S PRESENCE! He wanted this to be his moment! He cried MORE! Through Jesus, that persistent faith healed him! And then, just like Jesus’ presence went on finding others to heal, this man went on too! He followed Jesus and did not want to leave His presence! In fact, an atmosphere of praise & glorifying God was created! What a great church service!

Do we chase God back? Or do we wait for Him quietly to find us? Do we cry out? Or do we just hope for the best? Jesus knows where we are at & what we are going through, but how badly do we want Him as much as He wants us? Do we want to stay awhile, or just a little bit? We need to stay long enough for the miracle, and then never want to leave Him!

“When the waves of death compassed me, The floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; The snares of death prevented me; In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried to my God: And he did hear my voice out of his temple, And my cry did enter into his ears.” 2 Samuel 22:5–7.

No matter what tries to prevent us today, let’s stay a little longer in His presence! Let’s call upon the Name of Jesus! Let’s go to church, in that atmosphere of praise! HE WILL HEAR US, HEAL US AND HELP US SO WE CAN BE SAVED...and not just saved from our current calamity, but for ETERNITY!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.



## When the Son is in View

*Monday, April 26*

TODAY'S READING · 2 SAMUEL 23-24 · LUKE 19:1-27

*“And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.”*

— 2 SAMUEL 23:4

David's words spoken here paint a beautiful picture of the sun's magnificence. So much beauty is brought to into light & life when the sun shines upon it. When we can see the sun clearly, without clouds as the Scripture states, shining and reflecting upon the water droplets on the grass, it is such a heart-warming sight as the sun not only lights up our world, but gives us heat, too!

We have recently started planting a garden by starting our plants indoors. We have many pots of plants crowded by one window, and so all of them bow & reach for as much sun as they can get! They all literally look as if they are bent, bowing down!

All of these same attributes, reactions, and need for the sun apply to our Lord, Jesus Christ! When the Son is in view in our lives, things become more clear...not clouded by our own judgments, emotions or confusion. Jesus is the Son, but He is our God, and so we must give Him authority to shine into our lives! We should not bow down and serve any other! Like plants, we can't survive without the Son!

“And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. **2**And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. **3**And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. **4**And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that *way*. **5**And when Jesus came to

the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.” Luke 19:1–5

“And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold. **9**And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. **10**For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:8–10

Zacchaeus was a man who stole money from people, but conviction began to grip his heart, and he felt he really needed to see Jesus. He wanted the Son to be in view! Being short, he had to climb to higher ground, where he could see more clearly. No longer clouded by the things he was struggling with. Finally, he saw Jesus, and Jesus saw him. Not only that, but the Light of the world reached into Zacchaeus’ heart, completely changing him! He ended up restoring money in abundance to those he stole from!

“Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.” 2 Samuel 23:5

David continues on his last song describing his everlasting covenant with God. Although some situations occurred which allowed his sons to become corrupted, this covenant would continue on generations past David, all the way to Jesus Christ! So, even when something looks like it’s not growing yet...a plant, a plan, a goal, a dream, a promise from God...just know that if the Son is in view, our God Jesus Christ, then we can pray & plan for a miracle! He will give us exactly what we need, even if it looks a little different than expected! The sun causes plants to grow, but it takes time! Trust God’s timing. Don’t look at what you’re waiting for, look to the One who will make it grow! Remember, the Son IS God! Jesus IS The Light of this whole world! We may not be able to see the fulfillment of our dreams yet, but when we can see Jesus, we can see fulfillment in greater Light!!



# The King is Here!

*Tuesday, April 27*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 1-2 · LUKE 19:28-48

For any guests, we try our best to prepare our home to be as neat as possible. With 4 kids, the definition of “neat” has definitely fluctuated in meaning over the years! “Neat” can also simply mean “decent” or “we can see the floor.” But what about if royalty was coming over? As a Mom, I honestly don’t think I could be prepared for that...at least, up to their royal standards! One thing is for sure though-if it EVER happened, it would be a time of celebration and excitement!

When king Solomon was named king after his father David, and Adonijah heard the rejoicing, he was terrified. Adonijah was Solomon’s brother from another mother, and he was trying to become king even though the kingdom was already promised to Solomon! The rejoicing he heard for Solomon was so great that all the people he was gathered with fled, because they realized who the REAL king was!

“And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This *is* the noise that ye have heard. **46**And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom. **47**And moreover the king’s servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed. **48**And also thus said the king, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing *it*.

**49**And all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way. **50**And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.” 1 Kings 1:45-50

When the king arrives, you have a celebration! No matter who you are, you give him honor, ESPECIALLY if he is someone God put in that position! Maybe

not everyone was prepared. Maybe they still had some preparation & “cleaning” to do...either way, when the king comes, you just rejoice!

The same is true for our Jesus! Our TRUE KING! Over any other king that is, was, or ever will be, Jesus deserves our highest praises, worship & celebration! He received it at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The disciples helped to create that atmosphere of praise. Some had mixed feelings about it...but that’s because they didn’t clean up yet! This time, I’m not talking about helping decorate the pathway on the street Jesus was travelling. I’m not talking about dusting themselves off to look presentable. I’m talking about their preparation of heart. In King Jesus’ presence, that’s the kind of preparation that matters! Because the rocks would cry out if we don’t! Do the rocks have beautiful attire, or a fancy house to welcome Jesus into? No way! But they know how to do one thing if we don’t: honor THE KING!

“And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

**38**Saying, Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

**39**And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. **40**And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”  
Luke 19:37–40

THE KING IS HERE TODAY! He never left the scene. Every day He should have triumphal entry into our hearts, because He already won the victory for us! Don’t let the rocks cry out in our place! Instead, give up any hardness of heart that may be there. Don’t worry about what the house looks like (at least for the moment!) and just PRAISE THE LORD! All He truly wants is our hearts!!



## Devising Wisely

*Wednesday, April 28*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 3-5 · LUKE 20:1-26

**P**roblem management. Problem-solving. It's the challenge we face on all levels on all days, whether great or small. We have so many of our own problems, and we even extend ourselves to help others with theirs. As it's often said, "You're either going into conflict, in it, or coming out of it." And the only way to devise wisely what to do at each stage is to have the wisdom of God!

"And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing."

1 Kings 3:7-10.

Above everything Solomon could ask God for, he asked for wisdom! He seemed to be wise already to even ask for such a thing! The wisdom & understanding of God is a treasure which can't be stolen, since it dwells within us (especially today, when we receive the Holy Ghost!). Solomon hadn't even received the Holy Ghost since it was not poured out yet in that time, but God gave him INCREDIBLE wisdom, which helped him in seemingly impossible situations. He even figured out which baby belonged to a mother, even before they could be tested for DNA evidence! God's wisdom ALWAYS surpasses that of this world! He helps us make sense of things as the world tries its best to confuse us...

Since Solomon asked for wisdom, God rewarded him for his humble request by letting him have an abundance of blessings in this life:



“And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.”

1 Kings 3:11–13.

Now with the gift of great wisdom, Solomon would have figured out how to obtain those things...but God blessed him for his reliance on Him! When we pray & rely on God’s wisdom to help us problem-solve and accomplish our goals, we get a lot more out of it than just an answer! Pray! Seek God! Wait on Him! Be open to the salvation plan of repentance, water baptism in Jesus’ Name & receiving the Holy Ghost & get ready to be equipped for whatever conflict comes next!

“And they watched him , and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any , but teachest the way of God truly:Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar’s. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s. And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.” Luke 20:20–26

This is the wisdom of God! He is wise beyond our craftiness. When we think we are being “smart,” God is being truly “wise!” God’s wisdom works, while ours tends to fail...especially when we have ill intentions, as these did above...beyond our heads, God knows our hearts. Beyond what seems right for us, God knows

what's best! The fear of The Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).  
Trusting Him is the smartest choice we will EVER make!



A P R I L

# Project to Eternity

*Thursday, April 29*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 6-7 · LUKE 20:27-47

1 Kings 6-7, Luke 20:27-47

Is it easy to lose motivation to complete a project? Are many things in life left undone because of burn-out? I've stared at the laundry & dishes and thought this same exact thing (far too often!). But one reason why we should be able to keep going is reminding ourselves why we started, why we do what we do! No matter how small or great the task, we need to do all we do as unto The Lord! ...and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;" Colossians 3:23. That's where the fire & passion get flowing again!

We work projects in this life, but really, we are projecting toward a greater life-eternity!!

"And for the house he made windows of narrow lights. And against the wall of the house he built chambers round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle: and he made chambers round about: the nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for without in the wall of the house he made narrowed rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house."

1 Kings 6:4-6.

When our purpose is to build a project to please The Lord, it will reach a magnitude of magnificence! In this life, when we are passionate toward Jesus, every work we must complete can be more than just work...it can be a work of art! And that's because we never lose heart! Solomon was determined to pour out

his best to God in creating a temple as a special place for His presence to reside. To the highest pillar or smallest cubit, he strove for perfection. He hired the best builders. He treated them well. He wanted people who respected the work, and who understood the respect needed for The Lord.

As our Youth Leader Karolina Stus always says, “It’s only a show unless God shows up!” If we are just here to do our jobs, live a flashy life & die without any sense of eternity, then our hearts will not be complete, or be able to complete the project to eternity! We will be burnt out-literally!

“Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; which devour widows’ houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.”

Luke 20:46–47.

If we forget God in the process, we won’t ever be able to do our best work or live our best life! That’s because we are not projecting out far enough! Remember as it says in The Lord’s prayer in Matthew, “In earth as it is in Heaven!” Let’s be passionate for The Lord in the work we do here. Ask for His strength & His help to do our best, with a right heart & Spirit. Then, that same passion will translate & project toward eternity with Jesus!!



## Peace in His Presence

*Friday, April 30*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 8-9 · LUKE 21:1-19

**I**t would be so cool to just stop the world for a little while, especially with the magnitude of things going on today! Before more stuff gets out of control, and before our emotions get too explosive, it would be nice to just stop everything so we can call a special maintenance team to work on it before it gets going again...unfortunately, to the naked eye, that's not possible. But, in the supernatural realm, in a way, IT IS POSSIBLE!

"Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

**13**I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever." 1 Kings 8:12-13

God said He would dwell in the thick darkness. Through thick or thin, our God is there for us! And when we turn to Him instead of turning to a comfortable routine, ritual or addiction, we are truly set free from the suffering that this world's craziness brings! In return for The Lord's faithfulness, Solomon returns the favor with his own form of faithfulness! He fulfills the desire that his father David planned for: building a house for The Lord's presence to dwell in. Solomon knew the greatness of God. Solomon understood that God is the One who purposed him to be king in the first place. In His presence, we can push back the darkness of this world-by doing some maintenance on our hearts! God wants our hearts to be that dwelling place where He can bring peace today!

"And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: **23**And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:" 1 Kings 8:22-23

Sometimes, you just have to raise your hands in prayer & praise! Again, push back that darkness! He keeps covenant with us when our heart is in the right place with Him! Have we examined our hearts lately? Are we ready for peace? Are we ready for refuge? Are we ready for an alternative to the ways of this world??

And it was *so*, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. **55**And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

**56**Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. 1 Kings 8:54–56

GOD NEVER FAILS US! HE GIVES US REST!

“Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: **11**And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” Luke 21:10–11

We are seeing so much of the above-listed tragedies today...but if we just think like Solomon thought in his best days...if we just push back the darkness in prayer & praise...then we can truly be settled:

“Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: **15**For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. **16**And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death. **17**And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name’s sake. **18**But there shall not an hair of your head perish. **19**In your patience possess ye your souls.” Luke 21:14–18

No matter who betrays us or who we lose trust with...we can ALWAYS trust in our faithful GOD! In our patience, let’s possess our souls as we stay in His presence!









V

MAY



*“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.”*

JOHN 15:5

DAYS 121 – 151

# A Wandering Heart

*Saturday, May 1*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 10-11 · LUKE 21:20-38

A dog kept on a leash is not seen as abuse to the animal, but respectful control over their instincts. It is also for the protection of the people around them. No matter how trained a dog may be, it is still a good idea to have them on a leash when going on a walk. A “walk” usually has a beginning & ending destination...but a “wander” usually has no strings attached, no leash and no real way to tell if the dog will ever come back. As odd as it seems, this is what happens when we let our hearts wander & break away from the Hand of God upon our lives!

“So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.” 1 Kings 10:23-24

We must remember that Solomon had wisdom because of God! Both God and His wisdom were Solomon’s greatest treasures for a while, but he lost sight of that when he let his heart wander...when the queen of Sheba came to see if it was really true, if God had blessed Solomon so magnificently, she was so impressed...but not soon after, Solomon’s heart was carried away by allowing too many women & wives into his life. He started worshipping their gods. Living according to their earthly wisdom instead of the once-treasured wisdom of God! So, God was going to take 10 tribes and give them to Jeroboam his servant (not his son) and keep 2 tribes to Solomon only for his father David’s sake...

“Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.” 1 Kings 11:40.

...And now we have another “Saul & David” situation! Solomon was more like Saul in this instance, because he decided the chase was on after Jeroboam, who was a little like David, having to run for his life. Solomon was wise enough

to know what he was missing. He knew the dangers of letting his heart wander... but he did it anyways!

“Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

Luke 21:33–34.

How comforting to know that when we make the choice to ground & anchor our hearts in God’s Word, it doesn’t matter the wreckage going on around us! Also, it doesn’t matter what temptations try to confuse or deceive us! We can be sure of the answers we find in God’s Word & in prayer! We don’t want that day The Lord returns to be something that catches us by surprise because our hearts were wandering...stay steady in Acts 2:38, and find true freedom to walk with God...instead of wandering & wondering what will happen to us in eternity!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38.



## Across the Divide

*Sunday, May 2*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 12-13 · LUKE 22:1-30

**W**e don't enjoy separation...some people even claim to have "separation anxiety" in certain cases when the feeling for unity in a divided situation is strongest. On the other side of the spectrum, many people think division is the only way to keep the peace, instead of working to resolve issues & unify. When we side with Jesus, He takes the daring path across the divide to bring people together in Truth & love. We must walk with Jesus across that divide!

"So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them."

1 Kings 12:16-17.

We talked briefly about the divide of the kingdom of Israel before, but now only the tribe of Judah served the king from the house of David, and all the other tribes served Jeroboam! Rehoboam, Solomon's son, decided to make things a lot more difficult on the people, because he listened to the wrong advice...the fact that he even had one tribe still faithful to him was a miracle from God! And God only did that to honor the faithfulness of David! Division is the only route when we take the path which leads away from God! Even the disciples had issues with division!

"And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."

Luke 22:23-24.

Right after they were told someone would betray Jesus, and they started reasoning about that, they immediately began to argue about who should be

greatest—from one extreme conversation to the other! From one end of the divide to the next, not remembering Jesus, the bridge in the gap! So Jesus reminded them that the greatest is a servant. It's not a competition. It's not about taking sides...it's about serving the other side! Even if you don't see "eye to eye," with the eyes of Jesus, you'll be able to have compassion! Now this doesn't mean to stay around bad influences...Judas did have to leave the 12...but it means praying for our enemies as it says in Matthew 5:44. Talking to people about Jesus instead of trying to win an argument. Sharing Truth instead of lies.

When Jesus reminds the disciples of who they are & who they should be, He tells them:

"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 22:28–30.

These disciples would one day judge the 12 tribes across the eternal divide! What an honor! Even though both the 12 tribes and the 12 disciples struggled with division over differences, the disciples took hold of what Jesus said & purposed themselves to obey Jesus' Great Commission & reach the world. The whole world. Different cultures, different people, reaching them with the SAME cause! JESUS!



## Give the Best

*Monday, May 3*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 14-15 · LUKE 22:31-46

**I**t worries us at times to give our best to God. We fear being different. We fear losing out. We fear not being fulfilled. We fear realizing that our best might not be enough...and sometimes, sadly, other things entice us and we are pulled away from God, and we end up giving our best to someone or something else...

“And Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done.”

1 Kings 14:22

Both Judah & Israel, the divided kingdoms, had kings which turned away from God...not only was God not pleased with them, but He was jealous because of the desire they had to worship other things beside Him...God is not only angry when we turn away, He is betrayed, because He loves us. It's a relationship! It's more than serving a King, it's a marriage covenant!

“And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And king Rehoboam made in their stead brasen shields, and committed them unto the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house. And it was so, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard chamber.”

1 Kings 14:25-28

We can't replace our relationship with God! We know that the value of gold will always be greater than the value of brass, yet the Scriptures above say that when the best gold was taken by Egypt, Rehoboam tried to replace it with brasen

forms of the same weaponry. But they knew it wasn't the same. God knew it wasn't the same. In not giving the best, they lost the best!

God never leaves us empty when we give our best! We never lose out! We allow ourselves to lose out when we don't put forth the effort into God's plan & perfect Will for our lives! When we say, "Not my will, but thine be done," we accept a cause more worthy & more great than we could ever imagine!

"...saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Luke 22:42-46

Jesus pushed through His flesh & His pains for us. He gave His best! And being alive forever more, He continues to give His best! We don't want Him to find us sleeping or slacking. We don't want Him to find us giving the brass instead of the gold! Just as Jesus was strengthened by the angel, Jesus will always make sure we are strengthened in the process of giving: if it be money, time or talent, God will always restore us beyond what we've given...as has been said time & time again, and it's so true, "We can't out-give GOD!" God uses our best and turns it into enough. If we do not hold back & give our all, He uses it all for His glory! So...let's give our best!



# The Sound of Rain

*Tuesday, May 4*

1 Kings 16–18, Luke 22:47–71

“And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.” 1 Kings 18:41

For 3 years, there was no rain or dew upon the ground in Israel. The Word of The Lord had spoken this to king Ahab through the prophet Elijah in order to judge Israel for Ahab’s wickedness in causing Israel to sin & serve Baal as his wife Jezebel did. In not allowing there to be rain, would the people thirst for God?

With no rain for that long, it would be a miracle of great magnitude to pray & see rain again...but that’s what Elijah saw constantly! When God restrained the rain, He provided for Elijah by a brook with ravens bringing him food in the morning & evening! When that dried up, God pointed him to a widow woman...not only to help himself, but to help her & her son as well!

“For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.”

1 Kings 17:14

The barrels continued to overflow! They were originally empty...and not only the barrels were empty, but the people too...empty & void of God! But again, through Elijah’s faith & the widow’s obedience, they saw the power of God! When there wasn’t, GOD WAS ENOUGH! He always is enough! He causes things to come to pass when we see no sign or chance of them happening!

“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.”

1 Kings 18:21

This was an easy question for Elijah to ask, because he clearly knew the answer! He saw the times that God made something out of nothing. And it



wasn't because Elijah was perfect, but it was because he chose God!! And God continued to bless him! So, are we thirsting for God, or something else to satisfy? Do we trust God & hear the sound of rain, even when the rain hasn't come yet?

"Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God."

1 Kings 18:37–39

...And The Lord did it again! He provided for Elijah, the widow, and now showed forth His power to all Israel AND the prophets of the false god Baal! From food to fire, God provides! And the sound of rain was still ringing in Elijah's ears...he knew that wasn't far behind now that many hearts were thirsting for God again!

"And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." 1 Kings 18:44

Finally, after 7 times of looking out, Elijah's servant saw the cloud! But remember, before he saw it, Elijah heard it! He saw it in faith! He knew it was coming because he knew his GOD! Peter also knew his God, Jesus, and walked with Him & talked with Him and saw miracles firsthand...but unlike Elijah, he had trouble admitting it sometimes...

"And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." Luke 22:61–62

Elijah didn't have Jesus with him as Peter did, but he was able to have incredible faith! Peter knew what he had done, and it convicted his heart immensely. He knew Who Jesus was...and after this, he gained boldness & faith as he had never had before! Sometimes, we have to be still & listen. We will hear the sound of rain. We will hear Jesus speaking to our hearts if we don't let it get

drowned out by other negative influences. We will build faith getting to know Jesus, because we will then know a miracle is on its way! Most of the time, we are like Peter. We let fear paralyze our faith. But let's strive to be more like Elijah (which Peter did over time), and call things not as though they were:

“(as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” Romans 4:17



MAY

# Take My Life

*Wednesday, May 5*

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 19-20 · LUKE 23:1-25

Unfortunately, it's easiest to give up. To release our responsibilities. To abandon the challenges. To some, it comes to the extent of no longer wanting to live...but this happens only when we're trying to take our lives into our own hands. When we give our lives into God's Hands & allow Him to take over, we find strength to keep going & renewed purpose!

"But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers."

1 Kings 19:4

Elijah was always a man on the run. Running to the people of Israel to give them a prophetic message, then running away because they sought his life. Either way, he always ran toward God & His Will! When he was tired of the chase, he requested that God take his life away...and God did want to take it, but with a different meaning than death...He wanted to take Elijah's life & restore it!

"And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." 1 Kings 19:5-8

The journey is usually too great for us too. It takes the One who created life to tell us how to live it! When we place our lives in His Hands, and take it out of our own control, life happens! When we take our own life, into our own hands,

under our own control, we are literally fulfilling the meaning of “taking our own life,” because death is the final destination. It seems harsh, but when God takes our life, He is able to bring new life, new hope, new refreshing, new purpose... something we cannot give ourselves!

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4

We need to bury ourselves in Jesus to rise to a greater life! When we get beneath ourselves in true repentance & under the waters of baptism, we are ready for the new breath & new life from the Holy Ghost! We need God to take our lives...so He can give us a new one!

“And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.” Luke 23:25

Jesus was placed in the hands of people, instead of people placing their lives in the Hands of Jesus. He’s the One with the scars to prove it. He denied His flesh that we might have a chance to go through a new birth & live a new life! Next time an extreme thought comes to mind about taking life, take it to Jesus. He creates life. He creates purpose. Let Him re-direct you if you’re feeling confused & empty...but don’t give up! Just give it up to Jesus!



## Too Many Voices

Thursday, May 6

TODAY'S READING · 1 KINGS 21-22 · LUKE 23:26-56

*“And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.”*

— 1 KINGS 21:20

Elijah the prophet went to king Ahab to prophesy his death. This seems like a harsh thing to do, but in reality, king Ahab died in his soul already, before Elijah came to speak of his physical death. King Ahab sold himself to the lies of his pride & the world. He spent so much time working against God, and when we work against God, we are ultimately working against ourselves. God holds our best! This world can't create a better version!

“But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.” 1 Kings 21:25

Too many enticing voices. Too many influences. Too many paths for us to take...but how do we find the one God wants for us? Why did Ahab lose himself & give into the negative influences around him? He lost his way because he lost connection with God!

No matter who is speaking into our lives, we need to be sure it lines up with God's Word. We need to keep calling on the Name of Jesus! We need to be bold enough to stand up for what's right in a world that no longer emphasizes the fine line between right & wrong...especially for the sake of our children!

“And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that

which is good. And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.” 1 Kings 22:13–14

We need to speak what The Lord wants us to speak, as Micaiah did! To some, it may not be exactly what they want to hear at the moment...even though it’s the Good News! It may not be the popular opinion...but it’s the Truth!

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:39–43

Jesus was even planted in the gap of 2 opinions on either side of Him on the cross! He was suffering immensely, but even used that suffering as a ministry opportunity! Jesus never stopped! The Truth is always Truth! You may be stuck in the middle of some fights. You may see people sitting on the fence. There are tons of voices & opinions which compete to sway our attention, and win our affection...so it’s very important that we know where we stand in all of this! Do we simply want to choose which side of the mess to stand on, or do we want to let Jesus work in us to start cleaning things up?

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10.

The most important, true & pure words we can let speak into our lives are The Words found in Scripture! God’s Word! Let’s let Him shape us, not the lies of the world & negative influences. Listen to His Word. Seek Him in some personal prayer time. Tune out the other voices for a little while. Let your heart get closer to Jesus & find PEACE! Find BOLDNESS! Share the TRUTH!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



## Go Further

*Friday, May 7*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 1-3 · LUKE 24:1-35 "AND ELIJAH SAID UNTO ELISHA · TARRY HERE · I PRAY THEE; FOR THE LORD HATH SENT ME TO BETH-EL. AND ELISHA SAID UNTO HIM · AS THE LORD LIVETH · AND AS THY SOUL LIVETH · I WILL NOT LEAVE THEE. SO THEY WENT DOWN TO BETH-EL. AND THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS THAT WERE AT BETH-EL CAME FORTH TO ELISHA · AND SAID UNTO HIM · KNOWEST THOU THAT THE LORD WILL TAKE AWAY THY MASTER FROM THY HEAD TO DAY? AND HE SAID · YEA · I KNOW IT; HOLD YE YOUR PEACE." 2 KINGS 2:2-3 WHEN WE REALLY WANT SOMETHING · THAT DESIRE FORCES US TO GO FURTHER. THE DRIVE OF THE HUMAN DESIRE IS ONE OF THE STRONGEST THINGS THERE IS · AND DEFINITELY NEEDS A LOT OF SELF-DISCIPLINE TO CONTROL...BUT HOW OFTEN DO WE FEED INTO THE SOUL'S DESIRES FOR THE THINGS OF GOD? ELISHA WAS A PROPHET WHO ENJOYED THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVING UNDER ELIJAH THE PROPHET. ELISHA KNEW IT WAS ALMOST ELIJAH'S TIME TO BE TAKEN UP BY GOD · BUT HE WANTED TO FOLLOW HIM FURTHER. AS MUCH AS HE COULD GO! HIS SOUL SAID GO · DESPITE WHAT HIS BRAIN DID KNOW. ELISHA DIDN'T LET THE WORDS OF THE OTHERS DISCOURAGE HIM. THEY ALREADY STOPPED THEIR JOURNEY BECAUSE THEIR PHYSICAL DESIRE WAS GREATER THAN THEIR SOUL'S DESIRE...BUT ELISHA WENT FURTHER! "AND ELIJAH SAID UNTO HIM · TARRY · I PRAY THEE · HERE; FOR THE LORD HATH SENT ME TO JORDAN. AND HE SAID · AS THE LORD LIVETH · AND AS THY SOUL LIVETH · I WILL NOT LEAVE THEE. AND THEY TWO WENT ON. AND FIFTY MEN OF THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS WENT · AND STOOD TO VIEW AFAR OFF; AND THEY TWO STOOD BY JORDAN." 2 KINGS 2:6-7 THIS ABOVE DESCRIPTION WAS THE THIRD TIME ELIJAH WAS GOING TO GO ON WITHOUT ELISHA. THE SECOND TIME · THOSE SAME VOICES TOLD ELISHA TO QUIT. THEY REMINDED HIM THAT ELIJAH WOULD BE GOING...SO WHAT WAS THE USE? WHY CONTINUE? THIS THIRD TIME · THE VOICES STOPPED BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T GO AS FAR. THEY STAYED BACK AS ELIJAH & ELISHA STOOD BY THE JORDAN RIVER. DO WE HAVE THAT KIND OF PASSION TO PURSUE OUR SOUL'S DESIRES FOR THE PEOPLE & THINGS OF GOD? OR DO WE STOP SHORT WITH DISCOURAGEMENT & STAY BACK WITH THE FIFTY? HOW STRONG IS OUR DESIRE TO GET CLOSER TO GOD? THIS IS WHY COMING TO CHURCH IS SO IMPORTANT! WHILE DEVELOPING OUR PERSONAL CONNECTIONS IS NEEDED & A MUST · BEING CLOSE TO OTHERS



WHO ARE CLOSE TO GOD ENCOURAGES US & BUILDS OUR FAITH. WHEN WE GO FURTHER WITH GOD'S CHURCH · WE'LL ALL BE ONE BIG CHURCH IN ETERNITY!"AND IT CAME TO PASS · WHEN THEY WERE GONE OVER · THAT ELIJAH SAID UNTO ELISHA · ASK WHAT I SHALL DO FOR THEE · BEFORE I BE TAKEN AWAY FROM THEE. AND ELISHA SAID · I PRAY THEE · LET A DOUBLE PORTION OF THY SPIRIT BE UPON ME." 2 KINGS 2:9...AND THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED! IN FULFILLING THE SOUL'S NEED & DESIRE FOR GOD BY GETTING CLOSE TO THE MAN OF GOD · GOD RAISED ELISHA UP TO HIS NEXT ROLE IN MINISTRY! THE ONE EVERYONE TRIED TO DISCOURAGE WAS THE ONE GOD WOULD USE TO LEAD & ENCOURAGE OTHERS! THAT'S THE POWER OF DETERMINATION! THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GO FURTHER IN FAITH! WHEN JESUS WAS RISEN & APPEARED TO 2 MEN ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS · THEY WERE SAD BECAUSE OF JESUS' DEATH · JUST LIKE ELISHA WAS SADDENED WHEN ELIJAH WAS TAKEN...BUT ELISHA BELIEVED QUICKLY THAT ELIJAH'S LEGACY LIVED ON...THROUGH HIM!BUT IT TOOK THESE 2 MEN JESUS APPEARED TO A LITTLE WHILE TO REALIZE THAT JESUS ACTUALLY WAS RISEN AND THAT HE DID HAVE THE POWER TO DO IT!"AND THEY DREW NIGH UNTO THE VILLAGE · WHITHER THEY WENT; AND HE MADE AS THOUGH HE WOULD HAVE GONE FURTHER. BUT THEY CONSTRAINED HIM · SAYING · ABIDE WITH US; FOR IT IS TOWARD EVENING · AND THE DAY IS FAR SPENT. AND HE WENT IN TO TARRY WITH THEM." LUKE 24:28-29"AND IT CAME TO PASS · AS HE SAT AT MEAT WITH THEM · HE TOOK BREAD · AND BLESSED IT · AND BRAKE · AND GAVE TO THEM. AND THEIR EYES WERE OPENED · AND THEY KNEW HIM; AND HE VANISHED OUT OF THEIR SIGHT. AND THEY SAID ONE TO ANOTHER · DID NOT OUR HEART BURN WITHIN US · WHILE HE TALKED WITH US BY THE WAY · AND WHILE HE OPENED TO US THE SCRIPTURES?" LUKE 24:30-32WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF JESUS WAS NOT CONSTRAINED BY THESE 2? IF HE WOULD HAVE WENT FURTHER INTO THE VILLAGE? WOULD THERE HAVE BEEN PEOPLE WHO RECOGNIZED JESUS RIGHT AWAY · ENCOURAGING THE 2 MEN? OR WOULD THERE HAVE BEEN MORE DISCOURAGERS · TELLING THE 2 MEN TO LEAVE JESUS BEHIND AS THE OTHER MEN DID TO ELISHA? EITHER WAY · THESE MEN KEPT JESUS TO THEMSELVES...AND THEIR HEADS FINALLY GOT THE MESSAGE OF WHO HE WAS AFTER THEIR HEARTS HAD TIME TO PROCESS IT ALL!AGAIN · THIS IS WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A LEADER IN CHURCH YOU CAN RELY ON · LIKE A FAITHFUL PASTOR! WE ALL ENCOURAGE & HELP EACH OTHER TO KEEP GOING FURTHER · EVEN WHEN THE WORLD SAYS TO STOP. WE ARE REMINDED THROUGH SERMONS OF HOW TO RECOGNIZE WHAT GOD'S DOING IN OUR WORLD SO WE DON'T MISS OUT OR GET OFF TRACK. WE STRIVE TO KNOW JESUS PERSONALLY & FOLLOW HIS PERFECT WILL BIBLICALLY. WE ARE NOT PERFECT ·

A YEAR OF DEVOTIONS

BUT GOING THROUGH THE PROCESS TO HEAVEN TOGETHER MAKES IT EASIER TO  
GO FURTHER! COME AND BE A PART OF IT ALL IN JESUS' NAME!



MAY

## Behind the Scenes

*Saturday, May 8*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 4-6 · LUKE 24:36-53

Something is happening...sometimes we don't know how, but something IS happening! God is always at work behind the scenes! Sometimes, we don't see any evidence of it and we get scared & frustrated. Sometimes, a little unfolds at a time...but either way, somehow, something eventually happens that keeps us in awe of Who God is!

“And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.”

2 Kings 4:2-4

It was custom in those days to take sons as servants if payment was not able to be made some other way. This widow woman was desperate to keep her sons, and so Elisha told her to fill vessels with oil, and borrow vessels from her neighbors because there would be an overflow! On the scene, there was one pot of oil. That was it. How could one pot fill so many vessels? Behind the scenes, God had an over-abundance waiting! She ended up having more oil than she needed, and her sons were able to stay with her!

“Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.”

2 Kings 4:35-36

Elisha pulled back the curtain of doubt so many times in his days serving The Lord! Before this above circumstance took place with this son being healed,

Elisha had told a woman that she would have a son because she was so faithful & caring to him whenever he came into town. The child ended up getting sick & dying, but Elisha healed him miraculously! On the surface, there was a dead body. Behind the scenes, a miraculous life awaited!

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD , I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” 2 Kings 6:15–17

Sometimes it looks like there's no evidence. The battle is lost. It's something we weren't prepared for, so why even try? Thankfully, Elisha didn't have that negative mentality...because he had GOD! He emphasized to his doubtful servant that behind the scenes of fear, there is a world of faith...if he would just open his eyes! So Elisha prayed for his servant's eyes to be opened to the massive army of God which was greater than the army of the enemy! Finally, Elisha closed the eyes of the enemy, blinding them, pushing them back behind the curtain & behind the scenes! They had no idea what was going on, but they had no choice but to trust the leading of Elisha...who led them all the way to the king, who could have killed them! Mercifully, Elisha let them go free as prisoners of war, and they were not troubled by them anymore. This was probably more of a lesson to God's people to build their faith, and not so much a lesson on defeating the enemy! Just like when Jesus appeared after He rose from the dead was about building faith!

“But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.”

Luke 24:37–40

Faith is built by trusting God, even when the curtain hasn't been pulled back yet...in this case, Jesus was exposed, but it was hard to believe, even though he was there in front of His disciples. Jesus explained that behind the scars, the flesh, the bones...it's Him! Behind the scenes, it's HIM! Behind our scars & hurting hearts, IT'S HIM we can turn to and trust! Let Him open your eyes! He is there in the pain. He is there as the army greater than the problem we are facing. He might be behind the scenes in fear, but in faith, He is right there!



MAY

## Made a Way

*Sunday, May 9*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 7-9 · JOHN 1:1-28 OPPORTUNITIES ARE RUNNING OUT. WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING. OUR MOST HAS BEEN GIVEN. WHAT NOW? WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE FEEL LIKE WE'RE AT THE END OF OUR ROPE? WE MUST GO TO JESUS! HE ALWAYS MAKES A WAY WHEN THERE SEEMS TO BE NO WAY. WE MUST RISE OUT OF THE RUT & REALIZE RESTORATION IS POSSIBLE IF WE GO! IN THE PASSAGE BELOW · 4 LEPERS WHO WERE SITTING HOPELESS KNEW DEATH WAS POSSIBLE IN EVERY DIRECTION · BUT IF THEY SAT & DID NOTHING · THEN DEATH WOULD BE 99% MORE LIKELY...SO THEY TOOK A CHANCE AND WENT TO THE SYRIAN'S CAMP · AND GOD ALLOWED A MIRACLE TO TAKE PLACE BECAUSE OF THEIR WALK OF FAITH!“AND THEY ROSE UP IN THE TWILIGHT · TO GO UNTO THE CAMP OF THE SYRIANS: AND WHEN THEY WERE COME TO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE CAMP OF SYRIA · BEHOLD · THERE WAS NO MAN THERE. FOR THE LORD HAD MADE THE HOST OF THE SYRIANS TO HEAR A NOISE OF CHARIOTS · AND A NOISE OF HORSES · EVEN THE NOISE OF A GREAT HOST: AND THEY SAID ONE TO ANOTHER · LO · THE KING OF ISRAEL HATH HIRED AGAINST US THE KINGS OF THE HITTITES · AND THE KINGS OF THE EGYPTIANS · TO COME UPON US. WHEREFORE THEY AROSE AND FLED IN THE TWILIGHT · AND LEFT THEIR TENTS · AND THEIR HORSES · AND THEIR ASSES · EVEN THE CAMP AS IT WAS · AND FLED FOR THEIR LIFE.” 2 KINGS 7:5-7A TREASURE TROVE OF SYRIAN SPOIL AWAITED THESE MEN! NOT ONLY HAD THEY FOUND SUSTENANCE FOR THEMSELVES · BUT THEY FOUND OUT THAT THEY ISRAEL HAD WON THE VICTORY AGAINST SYRIA! GOD CAUSED THE SYRIANS TO HEAR A FALSE SOUND OF ATTACK SO HE COULD POUR OUT A BLESSING THROUGH THE ENEMY! BUT WHAT IF THE LEPERS JUST SAT HOPELESS? WHAT IF THEY DIDN'T BOTHER SEEKING OUT ANOTHER CHANCE AT LIFE?“THEN A LORD ON WHOSE HAND THE KING LEANED ANSWERED THE MAN OF GOD · AND SAID · BEHOLD · IF THE LORD WOULD MAKE WINDOWS IN HEAVEN · MIGHT THIS THING BE? AND HE SAID · BEHOLD · THOU SHALT SEE IT WITH THINE EYES · BUT SHALT NOT EAT THEREOF.” 2 KINGS 7:2 EARLIER ON · ELISHA WAS TOLD BY THE LORD THAT THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO OBTAIN MANY RICHES BY SELLING THE STUFF THAT BELONGED TO THE SYRIANS...AND IT'S BECAUSE OF THOSE WINDOWS IN HEAVEN! IT'S BECAUSE OF OUR GOD! AGAIN · HE IS THE ONE WHO MAKES A WAY. HE CAUSES WALLS & GIANTS TO FALL!“IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD



· AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD · AND THE WORD WAS GOD. THE SAME WAS IN  
THE BEGINNING WITH GOD. ALL THINGS WERE MADE BY HIM; AND WITHOUT  
HIM WAS NOT ANY THING MADE THAT WAS MADE.” JOHN 1:1-3 NOT ONLY WERE  
ALL PHYSICAL THINGS MADE BY HIM...BUT SOLUTIONS TO OUR PROBLEMS ARE  
MADE BY HIM TOO! JOY COMES FROM HIM! THE SEEN & THE UNSEEN ARE IN  
THE HANDS OF GOD...AND HE ALWAYS MAKES A WAY BY LEADING US OUT OF  
DARKNESS WITH HIS LIGHT: “IN HIM WAS LIFE; AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF  
MEN. AND THE LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS; AND THE DARKNESS  
COMPREHENDED IT NOT.” JOHN 1:4-5 OUR DARKNESS & OUR PROBLEMS WON’T  
UNDERSTAND WHAT HIT THEM WHEN JESUS STEPS ON THE SCENE! TRUST HIM  
WITH YOUR GOOD & YOUR BAD · AND SEE WHAT HE MAKES OF IT! REMEMBER ·  
THERE ARE WINDOWS IN HEAVEN!



# A Real Zeal

*Monday, May 10*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 10-12 · JOHN 1:29-51

**Z**eal. Passion. Excitement. Enthusiasm. Some things which can be easily lost in translation as we go through each day...because it becomes more about “getting through it” than “going through it.” It’s usually less about victorious celebration and more about just feeling exhausted until the next battle comes our way...but let’s do something different! As much as we try to pray for strength to get through, let’s pray for a zeal to go through it all with a renewed desire, passion & zeal! If we depend on God, we don’t have to lose that!

“And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot.” 2 Kings 10:15-16

Jehu had a boldness, passion & zeal to see God’s plan prevail! He was careful to be around people whose hearts were on the same level he was. It’s always good to be around those that uplift instead of people who try to pull you down into a pit of bitterness, but we must remember to pray for those people as well so they can also rise to the occasion! If you’re seeking a renewed passion for God & for life, seek out those Spiritual influences who will lead you in the right direction! Get planted in a Bible-believing church! A pastor with Spiritual soundness & leadership will help keep you going! The church is a family which helps one another stay encouraged, energized & alive in Christ!

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.” John 1:29-30

John the Baptist was always in awe of Jesus. In keeping his eyes on Jesus, he was able to do the bold. The courageous. To stay active in his ministry...even though he lived in a wilderness. Even though he was thrown into many uncomfortable situations-like calling out the king for his sins! He didn't let even the fear of death steal his zeal! We just need to strive for the true Prize-Jesus Christ! In following closely after Him, we won't lose momentum, we will gain it! All other goals that are against God's Will for our lives will cause us to lose the excitement, but with God, nothing is impossible!!



## The Best for Last

*Tuesday, May 11*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 13-14 · JOHN 2

COMPARISON CAN BE OUR WORST ENEMY...INSTEAD OF LOOKING UP TO THE PEOPLE WE DESIRE TO BE LIKE WITH ADMIRATION · WE TEND TO GET UPSET THINKING · “WHY CAN’T I BE LIKE THAT? WHY DOES IT SEEM LIKE THEY HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER AND I’M FALLING APART?” WELL · THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT GOD CAN DO A LOT WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE WILLING TO COME IN LAST & ADMIT THEY DON’T HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER! HE IS THE ONE WHO CAN TURN US INTO THE BEST VERSION OF OURSELVES! HIS PLAN FOR US MAY LOOK DIFFERENT THAN THE PLAN HE HAS FOR THE PERSON NEXT TO US · BUT THAT’S BECAUSE WE ALL HAVE A DIFFERENT PURPOSE TO SERVE!“AND ELISHA SAID UNTO HIM · TAKE BOW AND ARROWS. AND HE TOOK UNTO HIM BOW AND ARROWS. AND HE SAID TO THE KING OF ISRAEL · PUT THINE HAND UPON THE BOW. AND HE PUT HIS HAND UPON IT: AND ELISHA PUT HIS HANDS UPON THE KING’S HANDS. AND HE SAID · OPEN THE WINDOW EASTWARD. AND HE OPENED IT. THEN ELISHA SAID · SHOOT. AND HE SHOT. AND HE SAID · THE ARROW OF THE LORD’S DELIVERANCE · AND THE ARROW OF DELIVERANCE FROM SYRIA: FOR THOU SHALT SMITE THE SYRIANS IN APHEK · TILL THOU HAVE CONSUMED THEM.” 2 KINGS 13:15-17

JOASH KING OF ISRAEL CAME AND WEPT OVER ELISHA’S FACE. ELISHA WAS DYING · AND JOASH KNEW IT WASN’T LONG BEFORE THE DEATH OF ISRAEL CAME AGAINST THE SYRIAN ARMY. JOASH FELT SO UNEQUIPPED & DEFEATED. BUT GOD USED HIS HUMBLE APPROACH TO THE MAN OF GOD IN ORDER TO TURN THINGS AROUND! INSTEAD OF BEING LAST · ISRAEL WOULD COME IN FIRST & DEFEAT THE SYRIANS! HOWEVER · AFTER SHOOTING THE ARROWS REPRESENTING THE LORD’S DELIVERANCE · ELISHA TOLD JOASH TO SMITE THE GROUND. HE ONLY HIT IT 3 TIMES · SO ELISHA SAID HE WOULD ONLY DEFEAT THE SYRIANS 3 TIMES...THIS GOES TO SHOW THAT JOASH SHOULD HAVE GAINED A LITTLE MORE CONFIDENCE AFTER SHOOTING THOSE ARROWS. WE SHOULDN’T STAY IN A DEFEATIST MENTALITY WHEN WE HAVE A GOD LIKE OUR GOD! GOD SAVES THE BEST FOR THE ONES WHO FEEL LIKE THEY’RE COMING IN LAST! WHEN WE ADMIT WE NEED HIM · HE IS THERE! WE CAN SMITE THE GROUND WITH A LITTLE MORE BOLDNESS!“AND IT CAME TO PASS · AS THEY WERE BURYING A MAN · THAT · BEHOLD · THEY SPIED A BAND OF MEN; AND THEY CAST THE MAN INTO THE SEPULCHRE OF ELISHA: AND WHEN THE MAN WAS LET DOWN · AND TOUCHED

THE BONES OF ELISHA · HE REVIVED · AND STOOD UP ON HIS FEET.” 2 KINGS 13:21 EVEN IN ELISHA’S DEATH · HIS MINISTRY SPOKE VOLUMES FROM HIS GRAVE! JUST ANOTHER INDICATION THAT DEATH IS NOT THE END FOR THOSE WHO PLACE THEIR LIVES IN GOD’S HANDS! DEATH MAY LOOK LIKE DEFEAT · BUT NOT WITH THOSE WHO LIVED A LIFE SERVING THE LORD!“JESUS SAITH UNTO THEM · FILL THE WATERPOTS WITH WATER. AND THEY FILLED THEM UP TO THE BRIM. AND HE SAITH UNTO THEM · DRAW OUT NOW · AND BEAR UNTO THE GOVERNOR OF THE FEAST. AND THEY BARE IT . WHEN THE RULER OF THE FEAST HAD TASTED THE WATER THAT WAS MADE WINE · AND KNEW NOT WHENCE IT WAS: (BUT THE SERVANTS WHICH DREW THE WATER KNEW;) THE GOVERNOR OF THE FEAST CALLED THE BRIDEGROOM · AND SAITH UNTO HIM · EVERY MAN AT THE BEGINNING DOTH SET FORTH GOOD WINE; AND WHEN MEN HAVE WELL DRUNK · THEN THAT WHICH IS WORSE: BUT THOU HAST KEPT THE GOOD WINE UNTIL NOW.” JOHN 2:7–10 THE BEST WINE WAS SAVED FOR LAST · AND IT SURE WASN’T BECAUSE THE HOSTS OF THE WEDDING INTENDED IT TO BE THAT WAY! THEY KNEW THE WORST WAS COMING IF THE GUESTS FOUND OUT THEY RAN OUT OF WINE...AND IN RUNNING OUT OF WINE · THEY RAN OUT OF HOPE FOR THEIR FUTURE IN THE WEDDING BUSINESS...BUT JESUS WAS STANDING THERE AT THE END OF THEIR ROPE! AND HIS MOTHER MARY BROUGHT THE NEED TO HIM · AND HE COMPLIED WITH HER REQUEST TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT...AND WHATEVER JESUS DOES IS GREAT! THE BEST WAS SAVED FOR LAST BECAUSE JESUS CAME ON THE SCENE! IF THEY DIDN’T CALL ON JESUS · THEY WOULD HAVE CAME IN LAST...BUT WITH JESUS · HE MADE A WAY FOR THEM TO NOT ONLY RECOVER · BUT COME OUT ON TOP!“BUT MANY THAT ARE FIRST SHALL BE LAST; AND THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST.” MATTHEW 19:30 THINGS MAY NOT BE GOING EXACTLY AS THEY SHOULD. IT MAY BE A TOUGH ROAD RIGHT NOW. OTHERS MAY LOOK LIKE THEY HAVE IT EASY. BUT JUST REMEMBER · IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU’RE COMING IN LAST · THEN THE FIRST THING YOU SHOULD DO IS CALL ON JESUS...  
HE IS THE BEST!



## Time for a Change

*Wednesday, May 12*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 15-16 · JOHN 3:1-18 "IN THE FIFTIETH YEAR OF AZARIAH KING OF JUDAH PEKAHIAH THE SON OF MENAHEM BEGAN TO REIGN OVER ISRAEL IN SAMARIA · AND REIGNED TWO YEARS. AND HE DID THAT WHICH WAS EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD: HE DEPARTED NOT FROM THE SINS OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT · WHO MADE ISRAEL TO SIN. BUT PEKAH THE SON OF REMALIAH · A CAPTAIN OF HIS · CONSPIRED AGAINST HIM · AND SMOTE HIM IN SAMARIA · IN THE PALACE OF THE KING'S HOUSE · WITH ARGOB AND ARIEH · AND WITH HIM FIFTY MEN OF THE GILEADITES: AND HE KILLED HIM · AND REIGNED IN HIS ROOM." 2 KINGS 15:23-25 THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE LISTED IN THE ABOVE SCRIPTURE...A KING · A CAPTAIN & FIFTY OTHER MEN...NO MATTER THE BACKGROUND OR POSITION · THERE WAS EVIL BEING DONE IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. THERE WAS BLOODSHED. THERE WAS EVIL INTENT. NOT MANY OF THE KINGS LISTED IN THESE CHAPTERS · WHETHER THEY WERE OF ISRAEL OR JUDAH · DID RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. NOT MANY OTHER PEOPLE ROSE UP TO DEFEND GOD...AND IF THEY DID · THEY DID IT HALF-HEARTEDLY · BECAUSE THEY ONLY REMOVED SOME AREAS OF SIN · BUT LET SOME OTHER SINS SLIDE...IT IS CLEAR IN THESE PASSAGES THAT A CHANGE HAD TO BE BORN OUT OF THIS CHAOS! "SO AHAZ SENT MESSENGERS TO TIGLATH-PILESER KING OF ASSYRIA · SAYING · I AM THY SERVANT AND THY SON: COME UP · AND SAVE ME OUT OF THE HAND OF THE KING OF SYRIA · AND OUT OF THE HAND OF THE KING OF ISRAEL · WHICH RISE UP AGAINST ME. AND AHAZ TOOK THE SILVER AND GOLD THAT WAS FOUND IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD · AND IN THE TREASURES OF THE KING'S HOUSE · AND SENT IT FOR A PRESENT TO THE KING OF ASSYRIA." 2 KINGS 16:7-8 AHAZ KING OF JUDAH EVEN TURNED TO HIS ENEMIES FOR HELP INSTEAD OF TURNING TO GOD! IT SAYS EARLIER IN THE CHAPTER THAT HE WALKED IN THE WAYS OF THE KINGS INSTEAD OF THE WAYS OF THE LORD. WHAT STARTED OUT AS A KINGLY POSITION DESIGNATED BY GOD BECAME A KINGLY POSITION DESIGNED TO IMPRESS THE WORLD. THEY LOST THEIR PURPOSE. THEY BEGAN TO LIVE BY THE WORLD'S STANDARDS AND NOT STAND OUT AS AN EXAMPLE · LIVING BY GOD'S WORD! AGAIN · A NEW CHANGE HAD TO BE BORN!...AND THAT'S WHY WE ALL HAVE TO BE BORN AGAIN! WE ALL HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BE LIKE THESE KINGS · CAPTAINS & MEN OF THE BIBLE...WE ALL HAVE THE ABILITY TO FOLLOW OUR HEARTS IN THE WRONG

DIRECTION & FORGET OUR GOD-GIVEN PURPOSE...AND MAYBE WE HAVEN'T EVEN FOUND IT YET? EITHER WAY · WE NEED TO GO THROUGH THE NEW BIRTH TO SIGNIFY A PURPOSEFUL NEW LIFE LIVING FOR CHRIST! “JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HIM · VERILY · VERILY · I SAY UNTO THEE · EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN · HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD. NICODEMUS SAITH UNTO HIM · HOW CAN A MAN BE BORN WHEN HE IS OLD? CAN HE ENTER THE SECOND TIME INTO HIS MOTHER’S WOMB · AND BE BORN? JESUS ANSWERED · VERILY · VERILY · I SAY UNTO THEE · EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT · HE CANNOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE FLESH IS FLESH; AND THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT.” JOHN 3:3-6 PLAIN & SIMPLE! THE FLESH IS A BLINDER UPON OUR EYES. NICODEMUS CAME FROM A HIGH PRIESTLY STATUS · AND EVEN THAT WAS A BLINDER TO HIM. HE WAS SO NEARLY CONVINCED OF WHAT JESUS WAS SAYING · BUT IN THE END HE WAS MORE SECRETIVE ABOUT BELIEVING IN JESUS INSTEAD OF STANDING OUT. HE FEARED WHAT THE OTHER PRIESTS & JEWS WOULD THINK OF HIM. WE NEED TO BE BORN OF THE WATER & SPIRIT! JESUS WAS BORN · ALTHOUGH HE WAS ALREADY GOD & ALREADY ALIVE! HE HUMBLERD HIMSELF IN THAT POSITION INSTEAD OF HIS POSITION IN GLORY · ALTHOUGH HE NEVER STOPPED BEING GOD! WE NEED TO RE-THINK OUR LIVES · AND THE PATHS WE ARE FOLLOWING. WE NEED TO CONSCIOUSLY ASK · ARE WE FOLLOWING GOD’S PLAN? BECAUSE GOD’S PLAN IS THE ONLY ONE WITH ETERNAL LIFE AS THE END RESULT! “THEN PETER SAID UNTO THEM · REPENT · AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS · AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.” ACTS 2:38



# Don't Go Back!

*Thursday, May 13*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 17-18 · JOHN 3:19-36

Looking back on our lives, we see many instances where a “re-do” would have been nice...we see many times that God saved us from terrible circumstances, many of them being our own doing. Unfortunately, there are times when we revert back to old habits & behaviors, and we get ourselves stuck in the same messes as before...but God’s Word constantly reminds us not to go back! The journey is still worth it! Keep looking forward to Jesus!

“but the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods. And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods. But the LORD your God ye shall fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. Howbeit they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.” 2 Kings 17:36-40

We don’t want to get stuck in our former ways! God reminded Israel & Judah many times where they had been & how He brought them out. But somehow, they forgot that Egypt was bondage. They forgot the suffering of those before them. And in a crazy turn of events, God’s people ended up serving other gods and even bringing gifts to So, the king of Egypt! This caused the king of Assyria to get jealous (because Israel was bringing him gifts too), and the king of Assyria put Hoshea the king of Israel in prison & besieged Israel...sounds a lot like bondage again, right? We can’t think that returning to our old negative ways won’t have the same negative consequences!

“And Rab-shakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the



war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?” 2 Kings 18:19–22

Hezekiah was a king of Judah who did trust in The Lord. In all the taunting from the Assyrians (because they were not only going to take Israel, but Judah as well), Hezekiah told the people to hold their peace. They could have fought back. They could have just praised & honored the Assyrians and feared them more than their God...but Rab-shakeh actually reminded them of the reasons why they shouldn't trust anyone but their God! When you lean on Egypt, it comes back to bite ya in the end! He told them that no other god's power was able to stand against the Assyrians...so that leaves our God! The One true God! Rab-shakeh thought that Hezekiah taking down the high places was going to stop God from getting the victory, but Hezekiah was just stopping the worship of false gods so that Judah could only worship our God & be victorious!

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” John 3:19

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” John 3:36

Dark, or Light? Life, or Wrath? It's our choice where we turn, just like Adam & Eve in the garden. We know what we are capable of, on either side...we know our strengths, and we know our weaknesses...Are we going to repeat mistakes we've been delivered from? Are we going to let God make the best of us, or let this world, ourselves, make the worst of us?



## Be on Guard

*Friday, May 14*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 19–21 · JOHN 4:1–30

Sometimes, we need to be careful who we share our lives with. We need to be on guard with the things & people we hold dear to our hearts. In our world today, we need to look both ways before crossing any territory, not just a street! You never know what's around the corner, or what's in the intentions of someone's heart. With our safety constantly in the balance, it's such a relief to find security in Jesus!

“At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.” 2 Kings 20:12–13

King Hezekiah went through a miraculous healing. He wasn't supposed to live an extra 15 years, but God spoke through Isaiah that God would grant him an extension on his life! Also, God turned back time! The reason this miracle happened in Hezekiah's life was because he was one of the few kings who obeyed God & feared Him. However, right after this took place, we see that Hezekiah wasn't careful about who he shared his blessings with. Although he still feared God, he may have started feeling a little invincible after that incredible miracle... whether that was the case or not, he should have been more careful about letting others in to see his treasures from The Lord...especially because he showed all this to the king of Babylon!

“And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD . Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the

LORD . And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good , if peace and truth be in my days?” 2 Kings 20:16–19

It may not be the best idea to leave our houses unlocked as an open invitation...not because we are trying to offend people, but we are just being on guard against the ones who will try to break through & steal the things God has blessed us with. Thankfully, we can always share Jesus with everyone! Even if He is not received well by some, He can never be stolen from us! And receiving Him in our hearts as the Holy Ghost is the best gift & blessing!

“The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.” John 4:28–30

The woman at the well is such a touching occurrence. Jesus met her where she was at that moment, but He knew all she had ever done in her past. He was there to bridge the gap between Jews & Samaritans, but even greater than that, bridge the gap between God & humanity. He was & is God in the flesh, and He shared the treasure with this woman that He was the Messiah. Just like Hezekiah, that was a pretty bold thing to share! However, in Jesus’ case, He knew that He was sharing Truth...something that brought so many others to Him through the woman at the well, but also something that would lead to His death. Thankfully, we know His death only brought new life! The Truth never dies, and when we are fully in the Truth, we can have eternal life! And that’s the greatest treasure we never have to worry about sharing! We just need to guard our hearts, and not allow ourselves to forget that Jesus is the greatest treasure!



## More than we asked for...

*Saturday, May 15*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 22-23 · JOHN 4:31-54

*“And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.”*

**J**ohn 4:36-38

God always exceeds our expectations...but how many times do we strive to even meet His expectations for our lives? Are we sometimes too distracted, or do we fear not measuring up to the mark? Jesus provides more than we ask for constantly, even when we sometimes forget to pray about it...and we have to remember that Jesus will use people that have no experience in the field of ministry/religion in order to help them measure up to the mark He has personally for them. The woman at the well came not only from a background outside the Jewish culture, but she also came from a sinful culture. The disciples described above were working where many prominent men of the Bible worked before them, even though they came from all walks of life. They got to build upon their foundations, and Jesus wanted them to realize how special that was.

When we choose to live for God, and surrender ourselves completely to His perfect will, we will receive more than we ever asked for...we will also have to do more than we'd expected, or at least do things differently...but that's all part of His miraculous plan once we're all in!

“Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to

the doers of the work which is in the house of the LORD , to repair the breaches of the house, unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully. And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD . And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.”

2 Kings 22:4–8

Josiah was only 8 years old when he began to reign...8!!! Look out, Moms! God can use our children to do great things, as long as we’re leading them to The Lord! Josiah wanted to do some good work on the temple. He sent people to repair it...but he definitely got more than He asked for! The temple was great, but it was what was found on the inside that mattered...The Word of God! The kings before him forgot about it, but when brought to him, Josiah wanted to bring it back so he & God’s people could love Him and live by His Word once again! God saw Josiah’s good work & made it a God work! And we all know God works!

“And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el.”

2 Kings 23:4

Josiah went above & beyond. He took down all the idols, places of idol worship, and all the wickedness out of Judah! He held God’s Word dear to his heart. If we want God to bless us with more than we asked for, we must do more than we expect of ourselves...but just remember, it’s not about what we are given...it’s about Who is giving it...when we receive Jesus, we already receive more than we could ever ask for!! So let’s strive to be more than we were yesterday! Let’s strive to meet Jesus right where He wants us, like the woman at the well. Not only positioned to meet Jesus, but ready for the change He was willing to provide. That change & transformation is the greatest gift only God can give! Let’s go for the more in Jesus’ Name!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



MAY

## A Poor Chance

*Sunday, May 16*

TODAY'S READING · 2 KINGS 24-25 · JOHN 15:1-24

*“And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.”*

— 2 KINGS 24:14

“Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.” 2 Kings 25:11-12

Jesus has an interesting way of changing things up...all of the best men in Israel & Judah were carried away to Babylon, but the poor were left in their own cities to be workers. Although the poor had to be workers, and it could be seen as something insignificant, they were still the ones who were preserved in the land! The special ones to God are sometimes the ones who have a poor chance at life...everyone in the world will chase after the people with the best reputation...but it takes a special God to see the special in the poorest places! So we must have eyes like Jesus to see the rich in the poor! They need it most!

As the first Scripture states, Jesus was definitely out to save “the poorest sort of the people of the land.” They were ones who wouldn’t be closed off. They would accept compassion. The only ones who felt they needed someone like Jesus had nothing, and there were some who later realized that they had nothing without Jesus; no riches ever measure up! That’s why He preserved them in this Old Testament passage, and that’s why He found the man at the pool of Bethesda in the New Testament!



“And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.”

John 5:5-9

This man had been trying to get to this pool for 38 years...he watched others receive a healing every time the angel stirred the waters, but he could never get there in time because his legs wouldn't allow it. Jesus saw his desire, sadness, and long suffering. Jesus knew he had a poor chance. Jesus knew He was this man's only chance at a miracle! So, Jesus went & healed him! Sometimes a poor chance in the world's eyes means we have the greatest chance of a miracle! But, we have to say yes...Yes, I will be made whole. Yes, I will follow after Jesus & not take chances & risks in the world. Yes, I will turn my poor chance into a second chance in Jesus' Name!



## Ever-Present Presence

*Monday, May 17*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 1-3 · JOHN 5:25-47

*"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"*

— JOHN 5:46-47

The beauty of the Bible is that Jesus is woven throughout it, since the beginning of time! He is God, and He is His Word, so everything in the Word points to Him, either directly or indirectly. His presence is ever-present! Even though the people of the Old Testament only had Moses' writings, they were written by divine inspiration from God Himself, Jesus Christ! So, if the people did not believe Moses, they would not believe Jesus. Here is one Scripture where Moses wrote of Jesus:

"The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;" Deuteronomy 18:15

He will raise up a Prophet (capital P!) from the midst of thee, of thy brethren! There are lists of lineage found in the books of Chronicles, and as we travel through these lists, we get closer & closer to seeing how Jesus was woven in, all the way back to Moses! Again, His presence is ever-present! We have an undeniable GOD!

"...and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat his firstborn Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, David the seventh;" 1 Chronicles 2:12-15

There were so many important names & people to highlight, but emphasizing the lineage of David emphasizes the lineage of the Kingship of Christ! Some way or another, everyone traces back to Biblical roots, but highlighting the fact that Jesus was also woven into the royal line of David shows how God's plan is so

perfect & intricate! He reigns over all! His presence is ever-present! And when we open our hearts to Him, He is alive in our lives too!



## Step out in Faith!

*Tuesday, May 18*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 4-6 · JOHN 6:1-21

*“And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.”*

— 1 CHRONICLES 4:9-10

Amidst a list of many, many generations of family members, Jabez stood out. He stepped out in faith & made such a bold statement, that the list of genealogies paused to give him some honor for honoring God. Even though he may have been born in sorrow, that doesn't mean he doesn't share the same God & Father of us all! The One who is able to raise us out of that! The question is, will we proclaim our trust, or leave it in the dust?

“The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war. And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab. And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them; because they put their trust in him.” 1 Chronicles 5:18-20

These men above received a special shout-out in The Word as well, and it was because of their shout & cry to The Lord in battle! Just like Jabez, they were desperate. Sorrowful. They were also willing to fight for the cause & do whatever they could do, trusting God to do the rest! As a wise saint has often said, God is

not going to help us until we do all we can do to help ourselves first! That doesn't mean we don't get unexpected blessings every so often, but God created with our abilities for a reason!

“When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.” John 6:5–6

Jesus tested this with the apostle Philip. Jesus asked how they'd feed such a large group of people...but the only way was to trust in Him for a miracle! It couldn't be calculated, bought, or baked right then & there...and Philip said what they had was not sufficient. But Jesus IS sufficient! He is enough! Jabez called it out amidst a family history of sorrow! Those mighty men of valor called it out amidst a dangerous battle! Why should feeding 5,000 be any different!?

“And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.” John 6:11

God worked miraculously in the Old & New Testaments, and He works miraculously now. Will we step out in faith, pushing doubt aside? No matter what rejection we might face from others, God comes to us with open arms!



## The Work that Works

Wednesday, May 19

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 7-9 · JOHN 6:22-44

*“and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiah the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer; and their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.”*

— 1 CHRONICLES 9:12-13

...And the lists go on! The genealogies are quite a lot to take in, but I love the points where they pause & discuss pivotal moments & jobs of certain people & their families. As we discussed last time, it must be an honor for there to be a pause in the listing, highlighting someone who is willing to stand out in the work of The Lord! These listed above were very able men for God's work. Their particular talents & skills were not listed; it just says they were able. Are we able? Are we willing to bring all of our talents & skills forward to see what God will make of them? His work always works! It brings fulfillment!

“All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.” 1 Chronicles 9:22

Again, what an honor to be recognized by God as able...and God recognized them through king David & the prophet Samuel! It's not about the recognition, but rather about being chosen to do such a meaningful work which glorifies God! All of us are able & called to some form of ministry...the question is, will we choose to be chosen? Will we work for the One who works miracles in our lives constantly?

“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” John 6:27–29

God’s work will work us, that’s no doubt...but it will also work the things out of us that are holding us back & causing us to stumble. You are able! And Jesus is the One we labour for. He will use our “able” and turn it into incredible! We don’t have to figure out the plan-because believing in Jesus & obeying His Word IS the plan! He will allow all the other details of our purpose to come into focus the moment we focus on Him. God’s work works. Will we let Him work in our lives?

“Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?” Isaiah 43:13



DAY 140

# Help from Heaven

*Thursday, May 20*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 10–12 · JOHN 6:45–71

*“A man’s gift maketh room for him, And bringeth him before great men.”*

— PROVERBS 18:16

“And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.” 1 Chronicles 11:2

David’s gift of leadership certainly made room for itself, as the above Scriptures state! Even before David became king, he already acted like one...and not in a prideful way, but in a manner in which he humbly relied on God. He was winning Israel’s battles against the Philistines. He was winning over the hearts of so many people, just by having the God-fearing qualities he already possessed. King Saul didn’t make it in his own strength...in fact, it was his own strength that killed him...but David relied on Heavenly help! Through this major character quality, God continued to send help David’s way through many, many loyal & mighty men! God never left David helpless!

“Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.”

1 Chronicles 12:18

David raised these men to a high stature, captains of the band, because they too relied on God’s help! They said “peace be to thine helpers; for thy God help thee.” They basically said, “We are helping you, but the power is not in us...give God the credit! He’s the Heavenly Helper helping through us!”



“As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediahel, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh. And they helped David against the band of the rovers: for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host. For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God.” 1 Chronicles 12:20–22

David had help EVERY DAY! One day may be more challenging than the next for us...some days may seem to go rather smoothly...but there's never a time where we don't need God! God will never disappoint us in a prayer meeting. Just as David and his mighty men cried out to God, we can do the same! We are mightiest when we forget about our strength & power and ask God for His! Remember, His work WORKS! Everything will come together & make sense in His timing. It always worked out for David, as long as he put the most work into his relationship with God over all else!

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.” John 6:63–64

It's the Spirit that is Strength. Our flesh gives out, no matter how much we work out! We may think we have “tough skin” or “thick skin,” and we don't get easily hurt...but even that will break eventually. There's always something out there that will eventually come our way that will knock us down. It may come out of nowhere...so that's why we need to know where we stand with our God! It worked out pretty well for David! And today, we are not only able to be helped by His Spirit, but we can receive His Spirit in order to rely on Him more fully! This is part of our salvation, along with repentance & water baptism in Jesus' Name, but also His Spirit is there to be our every day Helper!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



## Worry to Worship

*Friday, May 21*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 13–15 · JOHN 7:1–27

*“And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.”*

1 Chronicles 15:16

Worship was an important task in David's time-and still is! Worship wasn't only praising God, but praising God with purpose for all that He accomplished through His people. It was a celebration of victory! And if it's a celebration to us, and we truly take joy in the job of worshipping our God, then we have no room for worry! We don't want to be a worrier, we want to be a WARRIOR! And David was a great warrior against the Philistines because he made worship his priority!

“Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.” 1 Chronicles 15:28

David took very seriously whom he would assign to sing, play certain instruments, and to carry the ark of The Lord. In the first attempt to bring the ark home, Uzza put his hand on the cart and God smote him then & there. David did experience some sudden fear, but instead of staying in that place, he was determined to see the ark come home, in the right order & manner. He was very careful about making sure the Levites were the only ones who carried the ark... and after everyone had their assigned work of worship, the second celebration was even greater than the first!

Don't be stuck in a place of worry-break out in worship!

“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he

speake**th** boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?” John 7:24–26

Jesus knew what He was up against when He spoke to the rulers, Pharisees & Sadducees. He knew He faced death for the things He spoke, but He did not worry about that! He did what He was sent to do in order to honor God! David also didn’t care who saw him or judged him for his intense worship—he knew God was worthy of it! His own wife saw him and was angry with him for it, but David reminded her that he works for God and He is worthy of all the worship we’ve got!

The best way to rid ourselves of panic & worry is to get the worship music flowing & set the stage for God to do the miraculous, make some changes & move us in the right direction!



## Preserved & Protected

*Saturday, May 22*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 16–18 · JOHN 7:28–53

*“He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; The word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, And of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, And to Israel for an everlasting covenant,”*

— 1 CHRONICLES 16:14–17

David truly had some beautiful Psalms, and this one was actually found in 1 Chronicles chapter 16! Instead of just talking & speaking a reminder to the people to follow God & keep His commandments, David expresses this reminder through song. He reminds them of the covenant, oath & confirmation of it all through Abraham, Isaac & Jacob. He emphasizes that it's an everlasting covenant, so the people can rest in knowing that God will preserve & protect His people always! We just need to choose to stay under that umbrella shield of protection by following His commandments! David lovingly followed God...it wasn't a chore to him. We must do the same! There's so much beauty in following Jesus!

“Then David put garrisons in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.” 1 Chronicles 18:6

In questionable times, when David either looked like he was gaining an enemy or being conquered by one, God had a way of preserving him & keeping him safe through the whole process-because David kept his faithfulness to God!

“Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of salt eighteen thousand. And he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites

became David's servants. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went."

1 Chronicles 18:12-13

God can bring a soldier down to a servant in an instant...but if we willingly become servants to The Lord, He will raise us up, preserve us & protect us as victorious soldiers for His Kingdom! And that's exactly what David experienced! Don't worry about trying to make it up the status ladder...there is so much room to slip & fall...just stand firm in God, and He will bring you through amazing things, preserving & protecting all along the way!

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John 7:37-38

The ultimate preservation & protection of our soul is God's Spirit within us! When we receive Him, we are directly led by God in a way we have never been able to before! For salvation & celebration of who God is, we need to receive His Spirit with evidence of speaking in new tongues! A new way of thinking & speaking is what we need to fall more closely in love with Jesus! Praise Him for His preservation & protection!



# Abundant Mercy

*Sunday, May 23*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 19–21 · JOHN 8:1–27

*“And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.”*

— 1 CHRONICLES 21:13

David, according to his own will, numbered the people of Israel. He did not consult The Lord to see if this was something he should do, even though that was very outside David's character. David wanted God to judge him, but he did not want to fall into the hands of men. David knew God had abundant mercy and would deal justly with him for his mistake, and he was aware that people can sometimes judge unjustly and take advantage of the situation. We too must always prefer God's nature & His ways over our human nature! When we come repentant, He comes abundantly merciful! This coincides with our focus Scripture from last night's Youth Service in Acts 5:29, that we must obey God rather than men!

“And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.” 1 Chronicles 21:17

Not only did David want God to judge him justly, but he wanted God to have mercy on the people of Israel! David wanted to take the blame fully, since it was his fault, and he wanted to spare the people of Israel from the plague & pestilence. Even in his wrongdoing, David had a merciful mind because he had an abundantly merciful God! God is so patient with us. He overflows with love & mercy, but we must desire to draw from that well! Don't leave God behind as an

untapped resource, relying on society to have compassion & fix the problems! It's God Who has the final say & the most mercy!

“This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not . So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” John 8:6-7

The woman found in adultery found herself in the hands of men, ready to throw stones...but Jesus saw someone who was willing to leave that lifestyle behind her. He knew that forgiveness was the answer here, not death...for she wanted to leave her life of sin & death behind her, and God knew her heart when she was set in the midst of the crowd. Did she deserve punishment? According to the law, yes. But Jesus came and took our sins upon Himself, even before the cross...

If she was someone who was unwilling to repent & wanted to continue that lifestyle, Jesus would still have dealt justly with her, but the outcome may have been different. Our repentance serves as an open wound that Jesus pours His compassion & mercy into! I can keep explaining, but the best way to understand is experiencing! Come open & honest with Jesus and be ready for an abundant mercy overflow!!



## Under Construction

*Monday, May 24*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 22-24 · JOHN 8:28-59

*“Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.”*

— 1 CHRONICLES 22:19

David had all the preparations in place. The construction project for the house of The Lord, headed up by his son Solomon, was about to begin! All of the vessels & supplies were gathered, but the most important tool was a passionate heart! Not only was the sanctuary under construction, but so were the hearts of the people. They weren't only building a building, they were building the house of God! This was the place of honor, worship & dwelling of The King! Even more than we want to work for The Lord, He wants to do a work THROUGH us!

“and to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even; and to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD:” 1 Chronicles 23:30-31

This wasn't just a place to express the people's fine workmanship. This wasn't a project meant to please man. It was a place created for the purpose of thanking, praising, pleasing, sacrificing & celebrating GOD! That's what church is today as well. Many people don't think church is necessary. That it's just a building...but it's only just a building if our hearts don't commit to the purpose of it all! Our bodies are not under construction as temples of God if we allow ourselves to remain hollow, half-hearted & empty! Just like a building needs updates, renovations & touch-ups, so does our relationship with God!



“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31–32

The Jews have a long history of tradition since even before David’s time. They loved God, but their connection only extended as far as their rituals would allow. Jesus had something deeper to offer. Yes, the work of the temple was great, but Jesus wanted to build off of that in order to build a relationship with Him. He wants to do that with us too! He will use what we already have to give, and build a deeper connection. Sometimes, we have to give some things up in order to truly be set free in Truth...but that’s what being under construction is all about! Making the necessary changes so GOD can make us the masterpiece He wants us to be, through a loving relationship with Him!



## Out of Uniform

*Tuesday, May 25*

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 25–27 · JOHN 9:1–23

*“Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the house of the LORD. And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; and whosoever had dedicated any thing, it was under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.”*

— 1 CHRONICLES 26:27–28

Everything was given to God from the spoils won in battles...but also, every effort was given of each tribe of Israel in order to maintain the house of The Lord. The people had it down to a science, down to the very number, of how things should work and what should be done. From groups of 12 to groups of 24,000, everyone had a specific role in serving The Lord...and while it's important to maintain the purpose of serving Him, Jesus shows us it's ok to get a little “out of uniform” sometimes!

“Also Jonathan David’s uncle was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe: and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king’s sons: and Ahithophel was the king’s counsellor: and Hushai the Archite was the king’s companion: and after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king’s army was Joab.” 1 Chronicles 27:32–34

The above listing sounded so important...counselor, wise man, scribe, king’s companion...and while these were very important roles, Jesus shows us that His role as King is most powerful, and we must remember that He is The True King we are ultimately serving. If He is calling us out of tradition to share Truth, then we can’t be afraid to change our role up a bit!

“Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such

miracles? And there was a division among them.” John 9:16

There was division because the things Jesus did were “out of uniform.” And that doesn’t mean immodest or improper, it just means “out of tradition.” We see this vast past lineage in Chronicles of how things were done, and although it wasn’t wrong, things were meant to change for the better when Jesus comes on the scene! He showed them the true heart behind the service...will we be too comfortable to step out in faith?



## Not a halfway God!

Wednesday, May 26

TODAY'S READING · 1 CHRONICLES 28-29 · JOHN 9:24-41

*“And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.”*

1 Chronicles 28:20

God has called each and every one of us to do something. He holds our purpose...He also holds the strength, power, perseverance & endurance to bring us through to finish the work! God will never present an opportunity to us & leave us hanging halfway through! If we seek Him, we will see the project through to the end...but if we stop relying on God, and we leave Him halfway through, then we are blinding ourselves! David used this same encouragement to help his son Solomon be prepared to follow through with building the house of The Lord...he said God would be with him to the end!

“Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.” 1 Chronicles 29:9

The major factor in all of this was the willing heart of Solomon & his people to go along with the plan! We can't respond to God's calling with resistance, hesitation & indifference. The people knew this was something special to be a part of. Even though they were blind to the finished product before it was completed, they saw in faith the magnificence of what it would be, so they gave their all! We must do the same! Everything God does is magnificent & miraculous, and as long as we rely on Him through it all with a willingness of heart, we won't be left stranded!

“Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.” 1 Chronicles 29:12

God is great & He makes greatness happen! If you feel like plain & ordinary is just what life is supposed to be, allow for a deeper trust in God to take you beyond! His purpose overflows with potential for greatness, but we can't blind ourselves by enjoying the lesser things of this world over Him!

“Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?”

John 9:26–27

The Pharisees questioned again and again how this miracle was done, how Jesus opened the eyes of the man born blind...but they didn't question because they were in awe, they questioned because they were angry. They did not want to follow Him, they wanted to fight Him...let us have willing hearts to see these miracles for what they really are! God won't leave you halfway! He won't forget about the journey you're on and where He wants you to go, even if you feel like you're in a wilderness...just don't turn a blind eye to God!



## What we build now...

Thursday, May 27

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 1-3 · JOHN 10:1-23

*“And Solomon determined to build an house for the name of the LORD, and an house for his kingdom. And Solomon told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.”*

### 2 Chronicles 2:1-2

Sometimes we go through so much struggle to work through a project or season of our lives...so much planning, preparation, supplies...and we wonder, is it all worth it? Will this level of difficulty REALLY pay off one day? The Good News is, when it's a work of The Lord, we don't have to question whether or not what we build now will have any meaning or value in the future...when prayer is a part of what we are doing, we will see future fruit! Solomon's temple was a massive project envisioned by his father David. The vision already passed down, and so would the work and the fruit to be born of it.

“And the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods. But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?” 2 Chronicles 2:5-6

We can easily complain about all we do, but when we look at the reason & meaning behind it, that we are doing it for God, then we can take joy even in the times of struggle! The house was a great undertaking because God is great! What we are doing now seems like a great big project because we have a great big God, and when we pray about it, He will give us direction on what to do going forward!

“And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.” John 10:23

Many years later, Jesus was able to walk on what was left of Solomon's temple. It had been destroyed in the past, but this part was left and called "Solomon's Porch." Who would have thought that this place built for God to dwell would be the place where God Himself, Jesus Christ, walked many years later?! Although it was pretty much destroyed, there was still a porch, platform & place which could be remembered and attributed to Solomon's hard work. God sees your hard work. He sees the long hours & tired days...let's keep all that we are doing in prayer, making sure it's a work which pleases & glorifies God. He will strengthen us & bring us through, and we will see that what we build now, especially in the lives of our children, will give them a great foundation to walk upon! And even if we don't see fruit from it now, there's always a Heaven awaiting!



## Full Turnaround!

Friday, May 28

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 4-6 · JOHN 10:24-42

*“it came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever; that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.”*

— 2 CHRONICLES 5:13-14

So much happens when the people of God turn to Him in unison! This temple was a place of worship, but Solomon also made it clear that it was a place to turn back to if they ever lost their way...even the stranger could turn & pray toward the temple, from wherever they were at, and they could be able to connect with God! Now of course, we can communicate to God freely & directly through prayer without facing toward the place where this temple stood, but sometimes it helps to have a place you can see. That actual place of refuge...and that's why church is so important! We can't dismiss the power of gathering as one Body in His presence! All of these Scriptures included today reference groups which become one: Israel, sheep, etc...God wants that individual commitment, but he also wants the FULL turnaround from ALL people!

“yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; if they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their



fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.”

2 Chronicles 6:37–39

The temple was full of the glory of The Lord, and the courts were PACKED with all the tribes of Israel gathered in unison! Such wondrous things happen when we have unity with God’s church & the Body of believers! But again, if we find ourselves captive, lost, alone, or part of the wrong group...we can always turn back with our hearts grounded in Truth once again! And the best way for us to do that is to come to the altar of the church and lay it all down! Yes, we can pray alone, but when we are going through a problem in life, we never want to suffer alone. We don’t usually have the strength to do it ourselves. So, when the church gathers around us to pray with us, we are uplifted immensely!

“Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

John 10:25–28

We need to be sheep! Sheep stay in groups. Sheep have a leader. Sheep will have eternal life because they know how to follow our Great Shepherd! Jesus chased after the lost sheep. Not the lost goat that wanted to stay on the fence. Not the lost wolf that had bad intentions. But the lost sheep, who just wanted to find their way back home. The sheep, who wants that full turnaround, to be with the Shepherd again, but also with the church! Sure, we may have all been wolves or goats at a time, but if our hearts truly desire God, we become sheep of the flock! And He will stop at nothing to bring us into His pasture...so we must stop at nothing to meet Him for that full turnaround!



## Believest thou this?

*Saturday, May 29*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 7-9 · JOHN 11:1-29

*“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”*

**J**ohn 11:25-26

What an incredible question! And an incredible situation! When we believe & follow God's Biblical plan of salvation, we can experience eternal life! Also, restoration can take place in this life on earth—a hopeless situation, sadness, grief, sickness...do we really believe that when Jesus steps on the scene, miracles will happen? Believest thou this? Jesus was everything needed back in this time. He raised Lazarus from the dead, and He is all we need now! And yes, even in a world so developed, the same problems still occur. The same internal incompleteness exists without Jesus!

“if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

This above Scripture is the solution to 2020. The solution to it all! As in our last post, we just need to make that full turnaround to Jesus! When we do, healing happens. Believest thou this!?

“Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.”

2 Chronicles 9:8

The Queen of Sheba went to see if Solomon's magnificence was really true—and she found more than she could ever imagine! Even someone who came from

afar could not deny that it was a work of God. It was so unbelievable, she had to believe it was God!

“And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.” John 11:15

Going back to Lazarus and Jesus raising him from the dead, Jesus was actually glad for His disciples’ sakes that he did not just simply heal him from his sickness. That seems odd, but how much greater of a miracle is raising someone from the dead!? This was so the DISCIPLES would believe more, and the family of Lazarus I’m sure...this situation occurred to glorify God, and it goes to show that if we raise Him up & turn to Him at our lowest, He will raise us up out of those situations! Sometimes it takes the highs to believe, like the Queen of Sheba, and sometimes it takes the lows like Lazarus...but either way the question stands, believest thou this??



# Jesus, The Worthy King!

*Sunday, May 30*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 10–12 · JOHN 11:30–57

Those in leadership & authority roles in our country have big responsibilities to fill, and lots of pressure...but that should never make them lose focus of why they are doing what they are doing—to serve our country & communities! Prestige & power should never replace the purpose of service, but many times we see this happen. We still respect & honor the position they have, but it becomes hard to trust them & their intentions. Thankfully, when all other systems fail, Jesus is always there! He always has dominion! He is the true & worthy King who we can trust and pray to especially when we lose trust with others!

“And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.” 2 Chronicles 10:7–8

King Rehoboam needed a lesson in respecting his elders in Judah. The elders had the patient experience of seeing kindness pay off, but Rehoboam decided to go with the impulsive, harsh alternative of violence & force which the younger generation promoted. He rejected a servant's heart. He surely didn't gain much trust. Remember, even as leaders, submission to the One True King is necessary for a successful reign!

“And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him.” 2 Chronicles 12:1

Rehoboam pretty much completely let go of all that mattered. Once he got his power, he rejected God and the people he was meant to serve. Instead of being invested in God & involved with the people, he only cared about himself. This is not what a king is meant to be...and that's why Jesus stepped onto the scene!

“And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”

John 11:42–44

Jesus helps His people! Jesus frees His people! When we are stuck in what seems like an impossible situation, even death, Jesus has what we need! And He showed that a King SERVES! He knelt down to wash the disciples feet. He took the grave clothes off of Lazarus. And He cares about us today! Even when it feels like we can't trust what's going on around us, even when we don't understand the intentions of some of those who are supposed to lead our country, we have a God we can depend on! HE IS WORTHY!



## A Good Cry

*Monday, May 31*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 13-14 · JOHN 12:1-26

There are sometimes no words to express how we truly feel. Especially for me, when I'm overflowing with emotion & it can't be expressed well with words, it all just turns to tears...I know I can be pretty sensitive at times! How about you?

For this reason, a good cry is sometimes a good solution...it provides a release...but beyond a tearful expression, there is a cry which is THE BEST solution-and that's a cry out to The Lord! When our cry isn't just emotional feeling, but an intentional calling out to God, He intervenes in our time of overwhelm!

"And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah." 2 Chronicles 13:14-15

The battle was before & behind Abijah. They were surrounded! But just like the wall of Jericho, a good cry unto The Lord and a good shout was just the call that God needed to hear! He stepped in and fought the battle for them! Jesus still wants to fight our battles today! We can't hold back a good cry to Him!

"Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers." 2 Chronicles 13:18

The ones who prevail, are victorious, conquer, and see abundant miracles are the ones who rely upon The Lord! The ones who are not afraid to cry out with every ounce of strength they have left! Even if tears come, and it's hard to speak at all, if we purpose ourselves to let our heart cry out to Him, He will answer!

“And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.” 2 Chronicles 14:11

Don't let the fear of the giant paralyze you! God is bigger than any problem we will face! Cry out to God about your problem, and see it turn into a miracle! It may take time, but daily reliance is key!

“On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.” John 12:12–13

After a cry out to The Lord in the midst of our problems & battles, we can then cry out in victory & celebration! HOSANNA! When we profess ourselves to be on The Lord's side with a cry of reliance to Him, we can expect to overcome every overwhelming situation!









V I

JUNE



*"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice  
and be glad in it."*

PSALM 118:24

DAYS 152 – 181

## Seek & Find

*Tuesday, June 1*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 15–16 · JOHN 12:27–50

*“But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel,  
and sought him, he was found of them.”*

— 2 CHRONICLES 15:4

It seems like a simple concept—seek God and He will be found...but how often do we forget to seek Him? We sometimes just sit there and wait for God to calm the sea, or send fire from Heaven, or do some great miracle without us even having to call on His Name...but that's not the way it works! We must purpose ourselves to seek Him so He can be found. It's not hide and seek, because God does not complicate the process...in fact, He is present in His Word if we take the time to seek the Scriptures! We must be intentional, not idle in waiting for Him to act without us doing a thing!

“Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.” 2 Chronicles 15:7

When we bring the addition, all that we can do, God brings the multiplication! When we turn to God to see us through a job, He will bring great reward! King Asa did this for a while and found favor with God. He purposed himself to seek God first & was already following Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars. Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.” 2 Chronicles 16:9–10

Not long after Asa relied on God, he turned away and relied on other kings and made leagues with them. He forgot the covenant he had with his God. He sought out another solution instead of seeking God! We need to be careful that we don't seek after things that disconnect us from God...we need to seek Him alone & He shall be found!

“Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; That they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, And be converted, And I should heal them.”

John 12:39–40

God allows us to believe what we desire to. God allows people to turn away from Him. He allows people to seek after other false hopes, and therefore people try to play hide & seek with God! But remember, God doesn't hide. He is an open Book-if we open that Book! He knows where we are, even when we try to hide ourselves in another place, worshipping other things rather than God. Love requires action on our part, in any relationship, but especially our relationship with God! We must seek, then we SHALL FIND!



## Teaching by Example

*Wednesday, June 2*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 17-18 · JOHN 13:1-20

*“Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asabel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.”*

— 2 CHRONICLES 17:7-9

**K**ing Jehoshaphat of Judah was determined to get The Word & Law of God out there for people to understand & follow. He definitely knew the importance of following God, so he called together all the princes, Levites & priests, and they taught the people. Teachers are very important, and teaching about God's Truth is the most important subject! But we must remember that our example and actions can teach others too! We have to practice what we preach!

“And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.” 2 Chronicles 17:10

Even the foreign countries had the fear of The Lord! The teaching of God's Word has far-reaching effects! Again, our follow-through and our application is the confirmation people need to see if we are really genuine. Our example is so important. The life we live can speak volumes into people lives! Remember,

sometimes actions speak louder than words, and we are supposed to be living epistles: “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:” 2 Corinthians 3:2...just like Jesus is The Word made flesh, we must strive to be the same, allowing Jesus to work & move through us! We can’t just talk about Him, we have to be like Him! Even Jehoshaphat had trouble applying this at times...

“And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD?” 2 Chronicles 18:15

King Ahab of Israel became friends with king Jehoshaphat and asked him to fight alongside him...king Jehoshaphat should not have agreed, but he did anyway, even though God allowed all the surrounding countries to fear The Lord! King Jehoshaphat had good intentions previously, in spreading The Word, but he needed to obey more of The Word by being more like it! Even the prophet told them not to go, and told the Truth, but king Ahab & king Jehoshaphat did not want to hear it. They threw the prophet Michaiah in prison, and fought anyway. King Ahab ended up getting killed, but king Jehoshaphat cried out to God for another chance to rely upon Him. Definitely a lesson learned by the one who wanted to teach people God’s Word!

“After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.” John 13:5

We need to be like Jesus. We need to humble ourselves and obey His Word, along with teaching it...but sometimes, the best way to teach it is to be it. The disciples got to see the beauty behind the principles because Jesus lived them out so perfectly. We must strive to let Him work through us so we can teach by example too!



## The Greatest Defense

Thursday, June 3

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 19–20 · JOHN 13:21–38

*“O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.”*

— 2 CHRONICLES 20:12–13

When we are in a desperate situation, or a dangerous situation, we definitely need to be on guard. While it's good to have some armor & defense against the enemy, we must make sure of one thing first: that we have a loving connection with God! This connection will give us favor in the fight...and sometimes, miraculously, we won't even have to fight at all! The Lord will take care of our problematic situations when we remember that the love of The Lord is our greatest defense! King Jehoshaphat called desperately out to God & knew He alone could conquer the enemy they faced...and God followed through!

“and he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not your's, but God's.” 2 Chronicles 20:15

Although we are soldiers in God's Kingdom, defending His Word, the battle is ultimately not ours! If we forget Who we are fighting for, then we lose! It's not the enemy. It's not the problem. It's the fact that, amidst all our Spiritual armor & weaponry, we forgot that our God is the greatest defense! Again, loving Him allows for favor in the fight...whatever that fight might be!

“Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be

dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.” 2 Chronicles 20:17

Sometimes, God doesn't even want us to put up a fight! He just wants to be glorified and be able to manifest His power! Get ready, get set, stand & see the salvation of The Lord! And through all we face, we need to be sure we as well as others see His salvation. Experience His salvation & love in an eternal way!

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

John 13:34–35

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38

This great defense & commandment of love is shown most powerfully through God's plan of salvation in Acts 2:38! We can see the salvation of The Lord as someone is saved from all the battles and struggles they've been having. Surrounding to God's loving salvation is our greatest defense! Sometimes, we may have to fight. Other times, we may have to watch God do what only He can do. Either way, the battle is The Lord's, and loving Him is the win!



## Another Comforter

*Friday, June 4*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 21-22 · JOHN 14

What comforts us? What makes us feel most calm, at ease & secure? For many people, it can be relaxing & entertainment. For some, it's the opposite-working really hard constantly in order to get to that next level of promotion. But whatever we turn to to calm our nerves, we need to realize that they don't specialize in comfort...or at least, eternal comfort...there is a greater comfort out there that can give us rest even in the stressful times, and that's Jesus Himself! He IS the Comforter! He wants to wrap His arm around us and be that shoulder to lean on/cry on...and while many people can do that for us, they only soothe...but Jesus SOLVES!

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:15-17

When we open ourselves up to Jesus, we are receiving Comfort through His Spirit! We don't just want a touch of Comfort in our lives...we want it to be everlasting! So we must RECEIVE HIM! Remember Acts 2:38-we must repent, and be baptized of water AND Spirit! Of water AND Comfort! With evidence of speaking in NEW tongues...no longer OLD habits of past comforts which were unfulfilling. If we love Him, we will keep His commandments...and this is one of them! He commands us to be comforted...what a great God we serve!

“But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.” 2 Chronicles 22:11



Athaliah was a queen in the Old Testament who went & killed all the royal descendants so she could be queen. Her comfort was found in that prestige & status, doing whatever it took to get to the top...but Jehoshabeath saved one of the royal descendants, Joash, and cared for him...she knew she was preserving the royal bloodline, and could help to do something against the evil going on in Israel and Judah...she was a daughter of the king (king Jehoram), but also a daughter of The King-Jesus Christ, our God! She found comfort in doing what was right, in doing what she could to please God...that's the ultimate comfort! And she shared that comfort with Joash!

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:26–27

The Holy Ghost teaches us, comforts us, helps us to remember what we must do, and gives us peace...it moved upon those in the Old Testament, and today, because of Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, we can RECEIVE HIM! I encourage you to not shy away from this form of Comfort, because Jesus not only soothes, He solves our problems...and He SAVES!



## Be the One

*Saturday, June 5*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 23–24 · JOHN 15

*“And in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehobanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into covenant with him.”*

— 2 CHRONICLES 23:1

Jehoiada the priest knew that Joash was meant to be king, not Athaliah the queen, who had wicked intentions and led everyone astray, away from God. Jehoiada knew something had to be done, so he knew he had to be the one! He strengthened himself. He strengthened all the forces of those willing to be on The Lord's side. The Lord was enough motivation for him to be the one, strengthen himself and do what was right! We must also know that The Lord's Cause is the best cause, and He will give us favor if we take a stand for Him!

“Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that had been king David's, which were in the house of God. And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about. Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, God save the king.” 2 Chronicles 23:9–11

Jehoiada set the defense, then they set the crown upon the king's head! This would have been a bold move if the king had been older, but it was an even bolder move because the new king was just a child! They had to be very careful and have God's Hand of protection on them every step of the way. When we desire to take a stand for God, for Truth, for what's right, He will protect us!

“But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.” 2 Chronicles 24:15–16

Jehoiada was a priest buried among kings! He was full of days because he lived a fruitful life. God has chosen us to boldly go forward and do the same! WE CAN BE THE ONE!

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” John 15:16

Our fruit will remain! What we do for Christ lasts longer than anything! We can ask for strength along the way, and He will provide it! Step out in faith today and BE THE ONE!



## The Full Journey

*Sunday, June 6*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 25–27 · JOHN 16

*“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive,  
that your joy may be full.”*

— JOHN 16:24

Many people are satisfied knowing God’s existence...but the ultimate satisfaction is knowing God’s heart! And how do we get to know a heart? We connect. We ask questions. We spend time. When it comes to God, this comes in the form of prayer! Prayer is a conversation getting to know God’s heart. If we stop at the satisfaction of God’s existence, then we are not taking the full journey! We are not Heaven-bound because we are not heart-bound! Our joy & our journey is completely full when we get to know God personally!

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”  
John 16:33

He has overcome the WHOLE WORLD! Yet for some reason, many people are satisfied stopping at the idea of God and getting to know the world on a deep level...true joy & true cheer comes with knowing this world is not our home, and we are on our way to somewhere better! Full speed ahead on the full journey! Unfortunately, many kings of Israel & Judah did the same...they may have started off having a heart toward God, but they did not continue the full journey in getting to know the awesome plans God had for them!

“And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart.” 2 Chronicles 25:2

“Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be

his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.”

2 Chronicles 25:14

Amaziah is one example where it says directly that he did good things, yet his heart wasn't in the right place. After returning from battle, which was a good thing, he brought idols with him, which was a bad thing! How many times do we have an experience where it affects us more than we realize, and we end up taking unnecessary baggage with us? If we don't guard our hearts, this is bound to happen, and we trip up on the journey! We need to check in with God in daily prayer so our hearts are always in the right place! Then our hearts are ready to go the full journey!



# The Truth about Lies

*Monday, June 7*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 28–29 · JOHN 17

When we know someone is lying to us, we feel a lot of anger building up which is hard to contain. It is something we don't want to accept. But when we hear someone being honest & truthful, we have a more peaceful reaction. This may seem like common sense, but there are many times we take part in lies when we don't even know it! The world is a beautiful place, but it can also be a dangerous place that we can get caught up in, sometimes without realizing it! The Truth about lies is that, if you hear something that doesn't line up with God's Word, DON'T BELIEVE IT! When we take part in those lies, our world is no longer peaceful because we walk off of our sure foundation-JESUS! Stay firm on The Word & find peace in your world!

“Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father: for he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.”

“Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.” 2 Chronicles 28:1–2, 5

When we want to do what other people are doing, getting involved in things that could risk our physical, mental, emotional & Spiritual well-being, it's very similar to what king Ahaz did! He saw other nations worshipping other gods, but forgot the power of His God! There was no power in those idols; he believed a lie! And since he wasn't backed by God any longer, he risked his own life and the lives of those he ruled over. They became captives to the lie!

“Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.” 2 Chronicles 29:10

Thankfully, king Hezekiah turned Jerusalem around back to God. He repaired the temple according to God's Truth, and took out anything which represented a lie. There is so much peace in lining ourselves up with God's Word! We can be ready against anything that would try to point us in the wrong direction!

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John 17:17-21

When we commit to Truth, we commit our lives to Jesus, and our lives are protected from lies! We won't be carried away captive when we stay in The Truth. God's Word is there as a place of peace & safety; don't dismiss it! Without God's Word, we might get involved in something we don't realize is not good for us until it's too late, and we develop regrets...let's always check God's Word and see what He has to say!



## The Good Lord

*Tuesday, June 8*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 30–31 · JOHN 18:1–18

*“For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.”*

— 2 CHRONICLES 30:18–19

God is so good, so merciful, so loving & wanting us to be close to Him. Everything He does is good, and it's all FOR our good...many things we choose to do seem good at first, but then we say, “Maybe I should have chosen something else.” With prayer & direction of God like Hezekiah, we can know what's good for us! When we come to Him, preparing our hearts to seek Him, He brings us through that cleansing process of Acts 2:38 for our souls: Repentance, water baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost! Then, we are ready to live a good life with our Good Lord!

“And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.” 2 Chronicles 30:22

When we live that ultimate good life with Jesus, that one that is after His heart & not chasing after false hopes in this world, we get that good knowledge & direction through His Word, just like Hezekiah re-introduced to the people! They offered offerings. They made confessions. They were no longer chasing unfulfilling idols. They were back in the Hands of The Good Lord! No better place to be!



“Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.” John 18:7–9

The guards sought Jesus too...but they sought to kill Him. When we seek Jesus, we must do it as 2 Chronicles 30:18–19 says: prepare our hearts to seek The Lord! He will pardon us when our hearts have been prepared through repentance. He will cleanse us when we enter the waters of baptism & He will fill us when He gives us His Spirit! The saying is fulfilled, and WE are fulfilled! And when we are fully given over to Him, we will no longer be lost. God is so good, and He never makes a mistake in being control of our lives. When The Good Lord is on the throne of our hearts, a good life is the only possible product of that! No matter the sufferings we may face, God and His goodness will bring us through!



# King of kings

*Wednesday, June 9*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 32–33 · JOHN 18:19–40

Our goal in life is usually to “have it all together,” or at least make it seem like we do! But when we forget God in this process of “making it,” we end up hurting ourselves. No power or strength is higher than our God, no matter how much we practice, study or workout! He is the King above all “kings.” He is King above our own prestige. If we honor Him, He will bring us to the place we need to be, even if it’s not where we were striving to be...but we have to be humble & accept that!

“with him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.” 2 Chronicles 32:8

King Hezekiah was one of the great kings-but he knew that God was greater! The arm of man can only do so much...but God goes forth to fight for us! We can find rest in this, just like the people did in Hezekiah’s time. He is the same King & God today as He was then! No matter how much the “kings” of this world have developed & changed, He is still stronger than man! We must trust Him!

“And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.” 2 Chronicles 33:12–13

King Manasseh came to a humble point after forgetting God and serving idols...no matter if you have a good reputation like Hezekiah or a bad reputation like Manasseh, humility under the authority of God gets you back under the power of the Almighty King! God restored Manasseh in his time of humility & brokenness, and He will restore us as long as we take control out of our hands!

“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” John 18:36–37

The wonders of God cannot be denied! Jesus’ Kingdom is something far greater than this world...Jesus was even shown all the kingdoms of the world when He was tempted...yet He knew that He had something better! Yes, it would have been great to have all those kingdoms...but not for the purpose of prestige, but for the purpose of winning the people to The Lord...but Jesus knew the humble position He had to be put under to be the ultimate King, yet the ultimate Sacrifice...that’s true love, and that’s true Kingship!



## A Young Calling

*Thursday, June 10*

TODAY'S READING · 2 CHRONICLES 34–36 · JOHN 19:1–22

**A**s Moms, it is such a joy to watch our children play, learn & grow together. As they develop, it fulfills something in us to see them reach certain milestones. But even as children, their existence is so much more than something that's fulfilling for us as parents. Even as children, they have a great calling upon their lives! We need to make sure we are pursuing God's Perfect Will not only for our lives, but praying with our children to seek after God's Perfect Will in their lives! King Josiah was only 8 years old when he began to reign as king in Jerusalem, and he actually ended up being a king who followed God!

“Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left.” 2 Chronicles 34:1–2

He didn't look to the right or left to see what the other nations were doing. It would have been easy as a child to seek after the next best existing example to model himself after, but instead, he went back to the old ways even being a young child! He wanted to walk in the ways of David! A good parent must have taught him that! Also, this desire & calling was in him before the book of the Law of The Lord was even recovered! After it was recovered, Josiah's passion to follow God only increased!

“So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah.”

2 Chronicles 35:16

“And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept,

and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” 2 Chronicles 35:18

Josiah made sure the passover was the best one yet! Of course by this time he had grown a little, but his desire to follow the ways of The Lord grew with him! That’s because his calling was a young calling, and he had it in his heart since he was a child! He held onto it and only allowed it to get stronger!

“Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.” John 19:21–22

Jesus knew His calling from a young age, and it was actually determined not only from the infant stage, but from the beginning of time! God knew He would have to be the Ultimate Sacrifice since before Adam & Eve sinned in the garden... and we must thank Him for that every day! He also has specific plans for our lives, and for our children too. We must pray & seek God to see what path we need to start walking down as a family! Our children can do amazing things for The Lord!

“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.” Psalm 8:2



## A New House

Friday, June 11

TODAY'S READING · EZRA 1-2 · JOHN 19:23-42

*“Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.”*

— EZRA 1:2-3

God moved upon king Cyrus to allow a group of God's people to come out from captivity to return to Jerusalem to build the house of The Lord! King Cyrus was the king of Persia, and had nothing to do with God's people, but God gave him a burden to see this house completed! God can use anyone He desires, and this just showed that God had a very urgent plan which was about to unfold...this was leading up to something great!

Years beyond the building of this house & temple, Jesus would come on the scene & be the temple made without hands!

“Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.”

John 19:40-42

“We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.” Mark 14:58

Jesus Himself was more than a building structure-He IS our structure and stability today! When we gather in the house of God at church, we need to

remember that we are His Body, and it's the Body of members that makes the church great, not the building! Jesus changed the world's perspective of greatness...the soul is so much more precious than anything...and now WE can be new houses for The Lord to dwell in! From temple, to God Himself, to God in us, this plan unfolded from the beginning as a pattern of getting close to us & showing us true love. Repent, get baptized & receive the Holy Ghost to be a new house that houses The Lord!

“Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,” Acts 7:48



## A Foundation of Faith

*Saturday, June 12*

TODAY'S READING · EZRA 3-5 · JOHN 20

*“And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.”*

— EZRA 3:11

When the foundation of the house of The Lord was laid, this was reason for celebration! Even though the house was not completed, and even though it was “without form and void,” the foundation was something to get excited about. The foundation holds the building together. It is the most essential piece of the puzzle-without it, the building could not stand, no matter what it would end up looking like. Just like a building, our foundation of faith in God & obedience to His Word is the foundation that should be celebrated in our lives! That is what holds our relationship with God together! In fact, the foundation of faith in God’s people came even before the physical foundation was laid of The Lord’s House!

“Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.” Ezra 5:16

The enemies of this project knew the power of a strong foundation. Although there were some hindrances along the way because of these enemies, God’s people always jumped right back into continuing to build. That strong foundation of faith kept up the building of the physical foundation! Just because we face setbacks in our walk with God, and it might look different than what the world is doing, that doesn’t mean we abandon ship! We should never stop



pursuing and building a relationship with God because of persecution! In fact, that should be motivation to make our relationship structure stronger to protect us against our enemies!

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” John 20:30–31

Everything written in God’s Word is reason to believe Him for Who He is, but especially the things written concerning His Resurrection! Although the disciples relied on Jesus when He was with them, despite hindrances and setbacks, this appearance of Jesus after His Resurrection was the foundation of faith needed for the disciples to soon stand on their own 2 feet, upon everything they’d been taught, and go on after Jesus ascended to preach & teach to others. This was their foundation of faith! This is OUR foundation of faith! Let’s believe Him for Who He is! Thomas didn’t think it was Him at first. He needed to see the handprints and pierce scar in His side. Let’s not let our foundation be shaken by doubt and unbelief! Believe His whole Word! Love His whole Word! Live on a foundation of faith!



## Finding that Place

*Sunday, June 13*

TODAY'S READING · EZRA 6-8 · JOHN 21

It can seem like the world is a place of too many opportunities...we are not sure sometimes quite where to invest our time, or what to commit to. We have endless dreams, endless priorities & endless responsibilities...but God has a place for all of us in His church! That is the place where life makes the most sense. That is the place where we figure out what matters most...and that's our relationship with Jesus! Coming into our place in His Kingdom puts the rest of our lives in the proper perspective!

“and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.” Ezra 6:5

“Every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.” When I saw this statement, it truly reminded me that God has a special place for all of us...even all the vessels and resources, God has a plan for all of it! If anyone is feeling out of place or not sure where they belong, the house of God is that place! Also, if we are sure of ourselves and we don't have a connection to Jesus, we might want to re-examine things a little! God helps to order & structure our lives the minute we find our place in Him!

“Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.”

Ezra 8:31

It was in that place that God's people were protected from the enemy! They were on the journey to the building, but they were still a church on the way! Instead of relying on the favor of other kingdoms to protect them, they relied on

the Spiritual & divine favor of God upon them, and God was right there in that place with them to protect them!

“Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.” John 21:7–8

After Jesus died & rose again, Jesus appeared at different times to His disciples. But in the meantime, they went back to their old place. Their old jobs. Their old missions...instead of following the great commission of telling people about Jesus! When they saw Jesus on the shore, Peter jumped into the sea and remembered his calling & his place in The Lord. God had something far greater planned for Him, for them, and for all of us! Spend time in His presence, and pray into your place!



## Sorrow to Strength

Monday, June 14

TODAY'S READING · EZRA 9-10 · ACTS 1

*“And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God, and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.”*

— EZRA 9:5-6

**W**e have all felt this way before...when we've done something so frustrating or we've experienced something so devastating...it all brings sorrow. It's hard to lift ourselves up after a time like this...especially without God! But thankfully, He makes beauty from ashes. Thankfully, He can pick us up as soon as we humble ourselves to Him, and it's a feeling more freeing than anything in this world!

“and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” Acts 1:4-5

God always has something greater to offer! And the greatest of Himself that had been given is...Himself! The Holy Ghost! The Holy Ghost is the true Comforter...it brings us from a place of sorrow to strength because of the power of God! Nothing beats that! Nothing is stronger than His strength! Trust in Him today if you're finding yourself at a place of loneliness and sorrow. You are in a position for a miracle from God!

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria,

and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

He is our Power. Our Strength. Our Salvation! Seek & receive Him today in  
Jesus’ Name!



## God's Intervention

*Tuesday, June 15*

TODAY'S READING · NEHEMIAH 1-3 · ACTS 2:1-21

*“and a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.”*

— NEHEMIAH 2:8

From the Old to the New Testament, God’s Word is full of His Divine intervention in the lives of His people! Those who chose to listen & follow God were miraculously protected, helped & guided along the way! This is exactly what God wants to do in our lives today! God is real, active & desires a closeness with each one of us. He wants to see us prosper as our souls prosper (3 John 1:2). Nehemiah turned to God every step of the way with his burden to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and he couldn’t help but claim & see God’s good Hand upon it all!

“Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.” Nehemiah 2:18

Nehemiah encouraged those at Jerusalem because he told them of God’s Hand upon all he was doing. God even interfered in the king’s decision to let him go, and not only that...the king also supplied them with all they needed to complete the job! Talk about Divine Intervention!

“Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” Acts 2:11

The greatest act of Divine Intervention is found in...Acts! When God poured out His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, He breathed a new heavenly language into

His people, allowing them to speak in languages which drew in the crowds around them. The people were astonished that, although they were foreigners, they could understand what these Galilaens were saying! They were all speaking of the wonderful works of God in their own languages! God has a mission to reach every soul, and to show how much He loves us & wants to be close to our hearts....no better way to have that connection than receiving the Holy Ghost! When that new language breaks forth, it is a sign of the greatest Divine Intervention, and one which will lead us in the ascension to Heaven one day!



# Unstoppable

Wednesday, June 16

TODAY'S READING · NEHEMIAH 4-6 · ACTS 2:22-47

*“And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.”*

— NEHEMIAH 4:14

In order to be motivated & unstoppable on our walk with God, we have to understand that persecution is reality, especially in a world where we are constantly being told to question everything...it's hard to stand for Truth when it's being torn out of our lives...but someone who is unstoppable doesn't let it get torn out of their hearts! As Nehemiah was building the wall, words from outsiders tried to tear it down. They may have kicked a few bricks. But his dream never fell to the ground! His God meant more to him than the pain of persecution! The dream is STILL worth it!

“And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?” Nehemiah 6:3

Being unstoppable also means that we must pray for the discernment to know who is tricking us. Sometimes, the persecution is direct & recognizable...sometimes, it seems like a help or a comfort that's trying to get us to ease up on our convictions...either way, it's a trap! We need to be on guard, as our first Scripture stated, for our children in this day & hour...and like this above Scripture, we can't come down & compromise just to take a break or have it a little easier. God got Nehemiah through it all and prospered him! Giving in to the enemy will not give us satisfaction in the end...but choosing God is always the path to fulfillment!



“Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.” Acts 2:28

God lets us know how it is. Through prayer, He keeps us on track...and He gives us the joy to continue with a positive attitude, no matter what comes our way! God is always the way to go! Stay unstoppable!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:38–39

The one way to truly stay unstoppable is to enter into that place of safety. Just like Nehemiah had his wall, which he knew would be a strength & defense for his people with God at the forefront, Acts 2:38 is our wall! When we enter in, we live a life more motivated & prepared for eternity! We start fresh, building up that loving relationship with God! It’s essential. It’s vital. It helps us be unstoppable as long as we keep relying on God, and seeking His perfect will!



## God's Loving, Living Word

Thursday, June 17

TODAY'S READING · NEHEMIAH 7-9 · ACTS 3

*"And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law."*

— NEHEMIAH 8:9

It had been so long since God's people heard the Word of God. Many of them were just returning from the surrounding cities. No matter how close or far they were scattered, their hearts were far from God...and hearing this Word wasn't just hearing a letter or decree...it pierced their hearts, like a love letter from God! They were so struck with emotion as they heard the Word read aloud...they heard the things they had forgotten...they had forgotten that God's Word sustained His people through so many trials...but Nehemiah, Ezra & the Levites reminded them that the day was holy, and they should not cry over the past. It was time to turn their hearts back to God & live again, according to His loving & living Word!

"And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness." Nehemiah 8:17

One of the first things they did was honor The Lord's Word to dwell in booths. So, they happily dwelt in booths! Why was this something that brought them gladness, even though it seemed like something of discomfort? This is because this was a people who didn't only let God's Word enter their head, they let it enter their hearts...when something touches our hearts, we tend to pursue after it. Love it. Do anything to achieve it. And so even dwelling in booths made

them glad! When is the last time God's Word made it to the heart? Read a little more closely & see how God has brought our past generations through similar trials we may be facing today...then watch how God's Word is still loving & living in our lives!

"Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments:" Nehemiah 9:13

That's exactly what God's people did! They read every Word from past to present, looking at what God did in order to know that He will still do it today!

"Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies. But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies;" Nehemiah 9:27-28

God's People were saddened at how many times their ancestors drew back from God, but at the same time, they were encouraged how God always turned back to them when they repented. God's Word is full of encouragement! Nehemiah & the people knew they were in a similar position, needing to get back in a relationship with God again...and they found hope in His Word...we can do the same!

"And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go." Acts 3:12-13

Peter did the same thing in reminding the people of God's power. The miracle that Peter performed in making the man walk again was nothing short of letting God work through him. This same God of the ages, this same God in His

Word, was the same God who died for us, rose again & did miracles through disciples like Peter! God never changed, but these things did once again confirm Who He Was, Is, and Will be! The miracles still testify of the same, merciful, loving, living God we read about...and miracles are still happening today...we just have to make sure our hearts are in position, ready to receive them!



JUNE

## Positioned in Power

*Friday, June 18*

TODAY'S READING · NEHEMIAH 10–11 · ACTS 4:1–22

God has the ability to raise up & bring down. He can bless us with a great position at a job, or He can just as easily remove us from that place if it's not the best fit. It's all to protect ourselves & keep us in God's Will. If we are praying & relying on Him, that kind of direction will take place. When we recognize that He has all power & authority, He will keep us positioned in a place where we can see His power in our lives. But if we get raised up, and forget the power of God that got us there, we may still have a position, but not one of power...we will soon see that God will use those of lowly positions to show His power through. If we lose God along the way, we lose the heart, joy & power that came with that position! God may not remove us right away so that we fully understand that, no matter how high we climb, God is always higher!

“Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God; for the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.” Nehemiah 10:32–33

In the beginning, these priests, offerings & sacrifices were all born out of the right idea, out of a pure love & respect for God. They were positioned as servants in a place of humility. There was a willingness to offer themselves to work for The Lord. To leave their comfort zones & to live in the heart of Jerusalem:

“And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities. And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.” Nehemiah 11:1–2

These people were blessed! They recognized God's power & knew He was worth every sacrifice, offering & relocation. However, it got to a point after generations that many of the descendants of priests in Jerusalem lost the significance, sought their comfort zones & thought of the prestige of their positions as higher than the power of God! If they really wanted to be positioned in power, they would have agreed with Peter & the disciples who spoke in the powerful Name of Jesus!

“And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” Acts 4:5–7

What they once revered, they were now offended at! They were blind to the fact that this was God at work...they thought it was just a couple lowly, uneducated guys trying to take their position & authority among the people...but just remember, wherever we are on society's status scale, God gives us the most powerful positions, no matter what it looks like on the outside!



## Going Above

*Saturday, June 19*

TODAY'S READING · NEHEMIAH 12-13 · ACTS 4:23-37

*“And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward.”*

“and from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate. So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me:”

Nehemiah 12:37, 39-40

There's always been something challenging, yet satisfying about a mountain climb. About going above. About going beyond. There is such a sense of accomplishment in going above & looking down below...everything seems so much smaller...people, buildings, even our problems...it makes the word “victory” that much sweeter! Maybe that's why Nehemiah led everyone above? He led them in climbing the wall they had labored to build together & they thanked God! Also, they stopped at the prison gate...this could have been intentional, to show that God's people were finally returning back from captivity into their own city! Climbing gets us to high points, but praising brings us that much further!

“Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.” Nehemiah 13:29

Unfortunately, not long after this celebration, when Nehemiah had to return to king Artaxerxes, the people began to corrupt themselves & even welcomed Tobiah, a traitor, to live in a sacred area! They got out of their place above and went far below the mountainous standard they were at before...and Nehemiah



did all he could to remind the people to keep seeking higher ground! To not let temptation overcome them!

“And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:” Acts 4:24

When the disciples sought the higher ground of praise, going above the fact that the priests & elders cast them away, all those around them began to break through in the Spirit! They were able to bring others up the mountain of the miraculous with them! A little praise goes a long way...you just have to choose to start the climb!



## Out of Bondage

*Sunday, June 20*

TODAY'S READING · ESTHER 1-2 · ACTS 5:1-21

*“Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite; who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle’s daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.”*

— ESTHER 2:5-7

Mordecai was used by God in a great position, even though he was a captive carried away from Jerusalem. Even in that circumstance, God used those who took a stand for Truth & doing the right thing. Although there are times when we feel trapped in a situation, so far away from help and maybe even far away from God, just remember that prayer, mixed with faith & hope, closes the gap! Mordecai took on the responsibility of Esther and cared for his family, and God never forgot his people in captivity! It’s this same family of Jews that God would use to bring His people out of the bondage of the horrible death threat that was to come...because Esther would become queen!

“So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.” Esther 2:16-17

God has an interesting way of working things out! Out of every woman who could be chosen, the king chose Esther, a woman who was secretly a Jew! She found favor in his sight because she found favor in the sight of God first! God has amazing plans for us if we only trust Him to take us out of the bondage of our doubt & fear first!

“Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.” Acts 5:17–20

Just like Mordecai & Esther were raised to high positions, the disciples were taken out of the bondage of prison to speak in the streets about Jesus! Whatever bondage you may be facing, whether it be a slave to fear & doubt or other uncontrollable circumstances, just know impossibility is God’s specialty! If you love God no matter what, and follow His Word, He will take the shackles off!



## Bold Moves

*Monday, June 21*

TODAY'S READING · ESTHER 3-5 · ACTS 5:22-42

*“For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”*

— ESTHER 4:14

Sometimes, we have to step out of something to step into something greater. Living for God is awesome, but it’s not always going to be easy to go with the flow of those around us. It’s going to be a different walk, with bold moves! As God’s lights in this world, we were meant to stand out so we can lead others to Him! To make different choices. To hold the Bible as Absolute Truth. All these things are bold moves today, but if we want Jesus to be seen, it’s so worth it! If Esther “held her peace” and kept it to herself in the castle while her people were suffering, her people would have been killed. But, she boldly went to the king, and in doing so, spread her peace back out to her people & obtained favor in the sight of God!

“And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.” Esther 5:2

If a firefighter is going to save someone’s life if they are stuck in a burning building, they are sure going to have to do some bold moves to get in! If they just tried to “wait it out” or find an easier way, the people inside would surely die. That’s the urgency & boldness we need to have in bringing people out of the fires of their struggles & sins and into a good life living for The Lord!

“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29

Since Heaven is our goal anyway, and God is King overall, we don’t need to fear making bold moves, because “bold” moves us closer to God & closer to Heaven! We can’t be hindered by our fear or indifference! We must be bold according to His standards!

“And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them , they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.” Acts 5:38–40

One particular Pharisee, Gamaliel, stood up in the midst of those wanting to kill Peter & anyone who spoke in the Name of Jesus, and he defended them. He reminded the other priests and Pharisees that if this was of God, it cannot be stopped! So, they beat them & let them go...and of course they kept teaching in His Name! So be encouraged! People recognize God is at work, we just can’t stop being bold enough to proclaim it!



## Rise to the Occasion

*Tuesday, June 22*

TODAY'S READING · ESTHER 6-8 · ACTS 6

When Esther rose to her occasion in revealing to the king the awful plan of Haman to kill her people, the Jews, God brought victory for her and her people! The Jews were able to rise up above their suffering & pain, not only being protected in Shushan, but protected from the attacks of other foreign lands, from India all the way to Ethiopia! In one person rising to the occasion she was called to do, a whole nation of people were able to rise & live a better life!

“wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey,” Esther 8:11

“And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.” Esther 8:15-17

The man who once rose up to his occasion, humbly wearing sackcloth, ashes & mourning for his people finally was able to rise to the higher occasion of royalty! God raised him up because of that humility and truly gave him, Esther and his people beauty for ashes! When we first rise to the hard occasion, to that thing which may be difficult, challenging, exhausting, and everything in between, God then allows us to rise above it all in restoration! God has a transformation for all of us. When we pray and stand on The Lord’s side, as Mordecai and Esther did so boldly, God will bring us through to something greater than the challenge we are experiencing right now!

“And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.” Acts 6:7–8

Years later, God prospered His disciples as well, because they were busy with the work of The Kingdom! They rose to the occasion, laboring in The Word & prayer, and they took on others like Stephen to help with the deacon’s work of servitude, waiting on tables and laboring in that way...but God didn’t leave it at that! He allowed them to do miraculous things, no matter what his “job” or “position” was. If we choose to rise to the occasion for God, even if it first means wearing sackcloth & ashes or waiting on tables, God then allows us to truly rise above to something greater! But are we willing to rise to those little things first? Those little steps lead to big things on the other side! The bitter longsuffering leads to sweet victory!

“The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; And before honour is humility.” Proverbs 15:33



## To Honor & Celebrate

Wednesday, June 23

TODAY'S READING · ESTHER 9-10 · ACTS 7:1-21

*“to stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, as the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.”*

— ESTHER 9:21-22

Mordecai wanted the Jews to celebrate, remember & honor this time of liberation from the wicked plans of their enemies on a yearly basis. We all celebrate birthdays, Christmas and other holidays...but how often do we go back to remember our times of deliverance? Our times when God brought us out of a problem and carried us to the solution? If we don't go back to honor God & celebrate those times of liberation & overcoming, we will be overwhelmed by the next problem & forget God! These times of celebration are just as crucial as any other holiday!

“And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?” Esther 10:2

Mordecai was forever after recognized in God's Word as someone who should have had king status! That's because he stepped into a fatherly/leadership role for Israel when all they had was the favor of a foreign king. This is definitely an honor, and most definitely was worth many celebrations afterward! What if the Jews forgot about Mordecai? What if they forgot how Mordecai relied on God for a miracle in order to save their lives? They would never have had the strength to overcome anything in their future! It is so important to reflect on our bondage



and honor & celebrate the liberation so we understand that with God, anything is possible!

Just before he was stoned, Stephen displayed an amazing example of a memorial sermon...remembering, honoring & celebrating those of the past to show how they led God's people into the present times of Christ. One example of someone he honored was Joseph:

“And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.” Acts 7:9–10

So many examples of God using what was meant for evil & using it for good! In Esther's case, Joseph's, and each & every one of us! The question is, will we go back to remember? Will we continue to thank God for getting us through the hard times, just as much as we celebrate Christmas? Jesus came into the world entering into hard times for us...taking that upon Himself...let us never forget to honor Him for what He has done in our lives, and use those instances as examples as we come to new challenges!



# All Wrong to Alright!

*Thursday, June 24*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 1-2 · ACTS 7:22-43

What happens to our character when everything is going wrong? I have gone through seasons before, even recently, where it just seems like things aren't working out at all. One thing after another just seems to be going wrong. Not so sure if it's just an exaggerated perspective or a reality check that's needed so I can make some changes in my life...but either way, my character does get affected. I feel more negative, and that sometimes spills over to my actions...that's a deep prayer request of mine, to handle conflict/hardships better! And it all starts with drawing nigh to God during those times instead of drawing away!

“Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.” Job 1:10-12

Everything was taken from Job from Satan, with God's approval...why would God do that? Turns out, any time Satan wants to do anything, he has to go through God first! God even monitors what he does so it's not more than we can handle, but definitely enough to test our character and see if we turn to God in the process of things...it's just another way God protects us and has mercy on us! If Satan had had his own way, he probably would have just allowed Job to die a slow, agonizing death...but God allowed Job to go through that struggling season in a way that he would come through victorious! We don't welcome or like traumatizing situations, but praying through them and growing through them makes us stronger in character! God knew Job would not curse him and die! He blessed God and LIVED! All wrong to alright!

“and said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” Job 1:21–22

I pray that God would help me in this area! To allow my circumstances to build my character, not break it down! It’s so easy to get stuck in a depressive whirlwind...but pressing and praying in the powerful presence of God brings a positive report! If not in our situation, in US! And sometimes that change was all God wanted in the first place, not necessarily a situation change, but a heart, mind & perspective change!

“And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.” Acts 7:22, 35–36

Moses could have listened to the negativity of others, saying “who are you to try to rule over us?” He could have backed away from the burning bush. He could have run away in fear from Pharaoh when time after time Pharaoh rejected his plea for his people...but he kept going amidst a series of unfortunate events! He kept going and got to see some of the greatest, wondrous works of God! When it’s all wrong, let’s examine our hearts, not the situations...let God get to the core of our soul, not the problem...maybe, a solution will be revealed to the stuff we’re going through, or maybe just a change in character is enough to get us through...either way, only God can take us from all wrong to alright!



## The Courage to Encourage

*Friday, June 25*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 3-4 · ACTS 7:44-60

*“For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, And that which I was afraid of is come unto me.”*

— JOB 3:25

**A**lthough Job never cursed God, he did curse the day in which he was born. He had his times of strength through the struggle, but he also had his times of outburst. But that's to be expected! And that's the beautiful thing about God's Word (well, one of many!). His Word isn't full of special, perfect people who never were weak. It is full of people who struggled, but held onto God, no matter what! Some even had their times of doubt, fear & everything in between, but that's why we need an encourager. Someone in the faith who is willing to help us along the way. Someone who is willing to speak the Truth in love! Job had a few friends, but they were far from encouragers!

“Thy words have upholden him that was falling, And thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.” Job 4:4-5

Eliphaz, one of Job's friends, basically stated that Job encouraged so many people through their problems, but now he can't find strength in his own problems. He wasn't being the encourager Job needed! Of course it's easier to help others through their issues, and when this all started, Job even blessed the Name of The Lord for what He gives and what He takes away! His friend didn't know the prayers behind the scenes. His friend didn't have compassion in this desperate situation. No matter how strong we might be at times, that doesn't mean we'll never need help in our own times of trouble! Thank God for people who do what Jesus would do!

“Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, And earth is my footstool: What house will ye build me? saith the Lord: Or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?” Acts 7:48–50

Although Stephen did call out what was wrong in the Pharisees’ thinking, he did it in a way that spoke Truth, and again, spoke it in love! He displayed all of the common ground they had between each other, but also tried to show them how Jesus tied into all of it. They did end up stoning him, and even in that time, he called out to God to forgive them. That’s the kind of friend we need! That’s the kind of encourager we need...and that’s the way we need to be to others! Standing firm for Jesus, the ultimate Friend & Encourager who is closer than a brother, and at the same time reaching out to help as best we can. Let God strengthen us to help strengthen others!

“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: And there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24



## Right, or Righteous?

*Saturday, June 26*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 5-7 · ACTS 8:1-25

**E**ver come up with the right thing to say, but at the wrong time? Sometimes, it seems like a debate or conversation is set up for the perfect comment or comeback...and it seems so right to say it...but is it? Instead of just wanting to be right to prove a point, we need to be concerned more with being righteous! And that sometimes means holding our tongue instead of letting it run wild with all the fiery darts of comebacks we have stored up!

“How forcible are right words! But what doth your arguing reprove? Do ye imagine to reprove words, And the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind? Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, And ye dig a pit for your friend.” Job 6:25-27

With saying the “right thing” at the “wrong time,” we are doing nothing but pushing that person further down in the pit they’re already sinking into...they may be fatherless, or just looking for someone to give them some good advice...but instead, we choose to magnify the negativity in their situation rather than doing the righteous thing: praying with them & being patient. Again, instead of wanting to be “right,” we must want to be righteous! As in the last post, an encourager instead of a discourager!

“What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, And try him every moment?” Job 7:17-18

Job was someone who definitely realized how frail his life was in the Hands of God...in a moment or a season, it could easily be taken from him...but he also realized how invested God is in our lives for that very same reason! God sets His heart upon us! He knows there’s people out there who will just speak things thinking they are “right,” but really they are so wrong...He knows people will point out the weaknesses of others and use that against them...but God won’t use

those weaknesses against us! HE IS THE GREATEST RIGHTEOUS ONE! He wants to help us in our WEAKEST moments!

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them:and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city.” Acts 8:5–8

The church was at a weak point when Philip went to Samaria...many Christians were scattered out of Jerusalem because of intense persecution...there were attacks from people who thought they were “right” in what they were doing against these Christians, but really, they were so wrong! So what did Philip do? He kept building the church! The harsh persecution because of people who thought they were “right” didn’t mean that righteousness should cease! And there was great joy in the city of Samaria!

Let there be great joy in our hearts as we let righteousness reign!



## Perfect Weakness

*Sunday, June 27*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 8-10 · ACTS 8:26-40

*"Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life."*

**J**ob 9:21

What would be the point of life if we were perfect? There would really be nothing to accomplish, overcome, or challenge ourselves. Although we must strive for being like Jesus, He knows that it is impossible to not become weak or mess up. That is why weakness is sometimes the perfect place to be! Although in Heaven things will be different, as long as we have earth & all its issues & difficulties to worry about, then we have a God we must humbly surrender to! Again, letting ourselves get to the point of perfect weakness!

"Thine hands have made me and fashioned me Together round about; yet thou dost destroy me. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; And wilt thou bring me into dust again?" Job 10:8-9

God has the power to create & destroy...and usually, the destroying happens in order to create something new! We can't shy away from perfect weakness & brokenness. God uses those moments to bring us to something so much better! We can't avoid the warning signs of God which are there to stop us, slow us down & reconsider the path we are on. Sometimes, it's those lowest points, the points of perfect weakness, where things finally begin to make sense as we fully rely on and trust God!

"And Philip ran thither to him , and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him."

Acts 8:30-31



This Ethiopian Eunuch wasn't afraid to let Philip know he needed help understanding the Scriptures. His point of perfect weakness changed his life completely, because he went through the Acts 2:38 plan of salvation and developed a relationship with Jesus!

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38

Philip taught him that all Scriptures point to Jesus, and Jesus uses our points of weakness to really show us that! He builds us up in our times of brokenness. He creates something beautiful out of a mess. Will our point of perfect weakness be the turning point in our lives?



## All Part of the Plan

*Monday, June 28*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 11–13 · ACTS 9:1–21

*“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: But I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: For an hypocrite shall not come before him.”*

**J**ob 13:15–16

We are quick to automatically think that negative things are not of God. Things that seem unpleasant must certainly be something we were never meant to go through, right? Well, how would we grow if we weren't pushing through some dirt? God definitely had a plan for Job. Something great was coming. He would be restored. But first he had to trust God through the challenge! It's all part of His Master plan! Though He slay us, yet shall we trust in Him! He is the only One Who will do it in a way which helps us grow...remember, the devil has to ask God permission, and Job was wise enough to know that ultimately, it's God in control, not the devil!

“And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”

Acts 9:3–5

Paul had to be knocked down to the ground too! He had to be brought low & humbled before God could use him in the mighty ways He wanted to. Paul automatically asked, “Who art thou, Lord?” So he called him Lord right away! After all the persecuting he had done, Paul was quick to say “Lord.” And after all Job had gone through, he too was quick to keep trusting in God! We sometimes

need to be planted deeper in dirt to get stronger roots in God in order to grow taller and do greater things for His Kingdom!

“And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.” Acts 9:6

Paul certainly did do greater things for God’s Kingdom, from the very first question of, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” And we will see that Job develops a great testimony through all of his trials as well! Are we looking for God in our struggles? Are we looking for what we can learn? Or are we just waiting to grow without getting dirty?



# The Right Bonds

*Tuesday, June 29*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 14-16 · ACTS 9:22-43

Who are we connected with? What do we put our hope in? Sometimes, if we are not careful, the bonds & connections we tie ourselves to will keep us in bondage, unless God divinely intervenes to change the hearts of those involved! Remember, we need to be encouragers! We must speak the Truth in LOVE (Ephesians 4:15)! We must have a bond of friendship that people can trust, because we let God shine through us! We need to point people to Jesus, to have a bond with Him first, so that they will be truly liberated!

“I also could speak as ye do: If your soul were in my soul’s stead, I could heap up words against you, And shake mine head at you. But I would strengthen you with my mouth, And the moving of my lips should assuage your grief. Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: And though I forbear, what am I eased?”

Job 16:4-6

Job seems to no longer trust his friends. He kept hoping they’d speak a Word from The Lord, something which would help to build up his strength instead of tearing him down...but they did not do that. They just beat Job further into his sorrows with the daggers of their words! They were keeping him in the bondage of his circumstances instead of speaking of what the power, love & mercy of God can do! Although (spoiler alert!) God DOES divinely intervene on Job’s behalf and allows his friends to have a change of heart & repent, at this moment in particular, these were the wrong bonds for Job to have!

“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.” Acts 9:26-27

Let's try to be like Barnabas! No one else trusted Paul, at least not in the early stages of Paul's conversion & ministry. But Barnabas saw his work & knew that he wanted to do what was right, and he had a heart to serve The Lord. So, he stood up for him and spoke encouraging words! In fact, Barnabas did the same for John Mark! It was what Barnabas was known for! Barnabas represented the patience, mercy & compassion of Christ which we should all have. His bonds with Christ through prayer & The Word must have been strong in order to stand up for those who didn't seem like the "typical disciple." When our bonds with Christ are strong, building our relationship each day through prayer & His Word, we can develop meaningful bonds & relationships with others. We should always examine ourselves & those around us, seeing whether or not there is discouragement, or encouragement. With the right bonds, we are free!!



## When No One is Listening...

Wednesday, June 30

TODAY'S READING · JOB 17-19 · ACTS 10:1-23

*“And though after my skin worms destroy this body, Yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, And mine eyes shall behold, and not another; Though my reins be consumed within me.”*

**J**ob 19:26-27  
As we've gone through the readings of Job, he continues to realize that his friends are really not helping him. They are not listening to him, they are just speaking whatever they think is right (remember, right vs. righteous!). When we come to this place, where we feel we have no one to turn to, God is there! And even when we have reliable & trustworthy friends, God should still be our first go-to! Job truly held onto God the whole way through, even though sometimes he was a little stronger than other times. No matter if skin worms destroyed him or the words of his friends, he knew he would one day see God! When Cornelius thought he was an outsider, a Gentile and not a Jew, someone who would not fit in with the other believers, God heard his prayers! Cornelius believed in God and prayed anyway!

“a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.” Acts 10:2-4

God then connected him & his household with Peter, and they were all saved through the Acts 2:38 plan of repentance, water baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost! God listened, and brought him people who would listen & help him in his next steps of faith! So, even when it seems like no one is

listening, pray! God is listening. He hears you. He will direct you & connect you with those who will be a positive Spiritual influence upon your life!









V I I

J U L Y



*“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”*

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17

DAYS 182 – 212

## Get on the same level!

*Thursday, July 1*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 20-21 · ACTS 10:24-48

*“His bones are full of the sin of his youth, Which shall lie down with him in the dust.”*

**J**ob 20:11

This is just one statement of many which one of Job's friends spoke to him. Again, as we have seen, all 3 friends have been up in their place of self-righteousness and comfort, unwilling to come down to where Job was at, on his level, and truly minister to him. They are not really worried about helping Job, just making themselves look good. This is why empathy is so important. Jesus didn't let Himself stay at a high, Kingly place in a palace on earth, only using His words to reach into the lives of others...He came here on the level of the suffering, and in that way was able to minister the way He was meant to! We must do the same! We can't fear getting on that level, because that's the only way we can make a difference in this world for His Kingdom's Cause!

“How then comfort ye me in vain, Seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?” Job 21:34

Not only do we need to get on the level of our friends who are suffering, but we need to be sure we have Spiritual influences in our lives who are willing to do that same thing to help us! A Spirit-led church family is the best support system!

“But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.” Acts 10:26

Peter now understood in a vision from God that Gentiles and Jews are all people in God's eyes! They are all on the same level playing field! We all have hearts, and so it's where the heart is that matters! He told Cornelius to stand up instead of kneeling before him, because the only One worthy of that kind of honor is God! We are all people who are precious & loved by Him! Think on

their level. Be around those who wouldn't mind getting on our level once in a while. We need the strength of God to do it, since He did it for us!



## Come Forth as Gold!

Friday, July 2

TODAY'S READING · JOB 22-24 · ACTS 11

*"If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, And the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, And thou shalt have plenty of silver. For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, And shalt lift up thy face unto God."*

— JOB 22:23-26

Job's friends are STILL at it, debating with him...but through these arguments, we see how to be a true, more Christlike friend...and we see that by thinking and doing the opposite of what Job's friends are doing! Eliphaz is begging Job to return to God, and if he does, he will be blessed with gold, and things beyond measure...almost as if he is bribing Job into a relationship with God that he doesn't want to be in! But turns out, Job IS in a relationship with God! Although he doesn't understand why God is allowing this all to happen, he still knows God is in control, and he is not cursing God! Maybe a lot of what his friends are saying is how THEY view God, and maybe God is using Job to correct THEM and teach THEM? Either way, it's not about the gold we receive, but the gold we BECOME as we stick with GOD!

"But he knoweth the way that I take: When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held his steps, His way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

Job 23:10-12

Job has kept The Lord's ways. He has prayed about his situation. He has been willing to make sacrifices, because he knows that a relationship with God is more

valuable than anything in this life, even gold! When God tries us in the fires of this life, will we come forth as gold? Will we be able to rely on God, instead of run from Him? God never gives up on us! He tries us to strengthen our connection and trust in Him! If we run, we won't make it...but if we rely on Him, we will come forth as gold!

“But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” Acts 11:9

We might think that there's no way certain people in our lives, and even ourselves, could come forth like shining gold...too much has happened, too many bad choices, too much distance between us & God...but Good News! God said that if He cleansed it, it's no longer common. It's no longer dirty. It should no longer be despised! GOD cleans. GOD tries. GOD creates the most pure gold out of a life that hasn't been so pure...but will we rely on Him? Will we be baptized in Jesus' Name & receive the Holy Ghost? That's where the true cleansing begins! That's where that pure connection starts! Are you ready to come forth as gold?



# We don't have to lose hope!

*Saturday, July 3*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 25-27 · ACTS 12

**T**he situations around us, even the people close to us, might be giving into the pandemic of hopelessness. While many other problematic pandemics are sweeping through our nation-sickness, depression, confusion, fear...we don't have to stop rejoicing in The Lord! We don't have to give into hopelessness because of all these things! Our world doesn't have to shatter! Easier said than done, I know...but that's why I actually enjoy reading Job. It's not about a guy who falls victim to his circumstances and stays that way. It's about a guy who loves God, even though he has his struggles. He keeps loving God. He keeps speaking about the hope that's in God. He holds onto his integrity & hope:

"All the while my breath is in me, And the spirit of God is in my nostrils; My lips shall not speak wickedness, Nor my tongue utter deceit. God forbid that I should justify you: Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me."

Job 27:3-5

...And then there's Rhoda! Her joy & gladness was received as madness. She and the whole household with her were praying for a miracle for Peter who was taken to prison, but when he came to the door, only Rhoda claimed the miracle by hearing his voice...the others waited to open the door to see. Our joy in The Lord is sometimes considered crazy by others. Others think we are manufacturing this hope ourselves. But just look at these joyful testimonies! There is only REAL hope in Jesus. No other thing in this world, no other person, will give joy, gladness and hope like The Lord!

"And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished."

Acts 12:14–16



## Blind-Sided

*Sunday, July 4*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 28-29 · ACTS 13:1-25

*“God understandeth the way thereof, And he knoweth the place thereof.  
For he looketh to the ends of the earth, And seeth under the whole  
heaven; To make the weight for the winds; And he weigheth the waters  
by measure.”*

— JOB 28:23-25

God sees it all, and knows all we do. We may not think He cares to watch everything, but in reality, HE DOES! HE TOTALLY, FULLY AND TRULY CARES! He understands our ways. He knows the places we go. He looks to the ends of the earth, under all of Heaven! God is not blind, but at times, we just have blind sight of what He is doing! When we are not looking for God's Hand upon all we do, we are blind to His involvement in our lives! We need to open faithful eyes. Spiritual eyes. This way we will not be blind-sided by disaster. Instead, we will really be able to focus in on God & what He is up to!

“And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.” Acts 13:11-12

Elymus the sorcerer tried to turn a deputy's heart away from what Paul & Barnabas were speaking. Elymus was trying to “blind-side” the deputy, only keeping him focused on lies, deceit & witchcraft. Paul caught on to what he was trying to do, and instead of the deputy being led astray, the sorcerer was the one who literally got blind-sided! Now, it was HIM needing someone to lead & guide him, just as the deity was needing someone to show him the Truth! This increased the deputy's faith!



When God opens our eyes to what He is doing, how He is always there, we won't get alarmed by what goes on in the world! We have a greater trust! Just as Paul needed a blind-siding experience to actually help him get closer to God, the deputy needed to see the blindness of this sorcerer in order to see the power of God! If we are blind, we need to see! If we can see, we can't let ourselves get so blind-sided by life that we forget about our loving God, who is always there for us!



## Iniquity, or Integrity?

*Monday, July 5*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 30-31 · ACTS 13:26-52

*“Upon my right hand rise the youth; They push away my feet, And they raise up against me the ways of their destruction. They mar my path, They set forward my calamity, They have no helper.”*

— JOB 30:12-13

Sometimes, every arrow is pointing at us. While we should examine our hearts to see what we can do to improve, sometimes, it's just one unfortunate thing after another that is out of our control. In Job's case, he was right with God, even though circumstances told his friends there might be something wrong about him. They blamed him and said he should be examining himself to figure out what he did wrong...but Job has been living that lifestyle of integrity all along! That doesn't mean he was perfect, but he was constantly keeping himself in check with God. So, his friends were working out of their own iniquity. They needed to be better in check with God and live a life of integrity!

“Is not destruction to the wicked? And a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity? Doth not he see my ways, And count all my steps? If I have walked with vanity, Or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even balance, That God may know mine integrity.” Job 31:3-6

Job is well aware that punishment is deserved if we've done something wrong in iniquity, and he is also prepared to be tried to prove his integrity. Although he is suffering, he knows through examination of his life that this is a trial of his integrity, although his friends would like to convince him that all this has happened because of his iniquities. It's in the discouragement that we need to run to God and find encouragement! We can't sink into a depression because of the words of others. We need to rise up in our Spiritual integrity and not lose it!

“For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Acts 13:47–48

These Jews which were mentioned here turned away from the message of Truth the disciples were bringing them. Instead of letting their integrity in The Lord lead them to complete their Truth, iniquities allowed for them to stay back, only accepting the old ways, and not stepping up to that higher calling. So, the Gentiles (non-Jews), were overjoyed to hear that this message was for them too. Many of their hearts were excited and ready to accept the Truth! That’s how our hearts must always be toward God to keep our integrity, and not fall into iniquity!



## When He Speaks...

*Tuesday, July 6*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 32-33 · ACTS 14

**T**he more we let people have a say & opinion in our lives, the more difficult it becomes to stay focused on our goals, especially Spiritual goals! We start thinking about & asking ourselves, “Why haven’t I done this?” Or, “Why aren’t I putting my time & talents into that? Everybody’s doing it!”

Job certainly had his persuaders, and some seemed very convincing, and maybe even convicting...but Job never really gave in to their opinions! Yes, he got angry & had a lot of emotional responses to their speeches, but rightfully so! He handled those situations as best he could...but above all speakers, when GOD speaks, Truth abounds! And He speaks the Truth in LOVE!

“but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4:15

So it’s not time for us to be opinionated, but educated in Truth! Then, we need to speak it & share it boldly!

“And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.” Acts 14:1

The disciples knew that speaking & expressing the Word of God would touch all who were open-hearted and ready to receive it! It didn’t matter what language they spoke or background they had, when God spoke through the disciples, it drove out the opinions in their hearts & opened them up to Truth! When God speaks, it’s powerful! But then there are those who are resistant...they may know the power of God will override the power of their opinion, so they refuse to receive...the disciples ran into these types of people too...

“But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitely, and to stone them,

they were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: and there they preached the gospel.” Acts 14:4-7

...But they kept preaching to all who would hear! God’s Word is greater than any opinion! Truth brings life...and God IS Truth, so when He speaks, we must listen with intent to obey...because it’s gonna be good!!



## Unity Opportunity

Wednesday, July 7

TODAY'S READING · JOB 34–35 · ACTS 15:1–21

*“And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, And will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; And I will build again the ruins thereof, And I will set it up:”*

— ACTS 15:15–16

While Job’s friends continually sought division between them & Job, trying to show how he was wrong & they were right (remember: right or righteous?), the disciples & the growing church were trying to come together in agreement about certain issues they were facing. They were seeking a unity opportunity! They did not want there to be division, and they knew all things needed to be done God’s way, not their way. Jesus said He would build up the ruins! Whatever problem they were facing, He would put the pieces together in a way which made sense! And He will still do that today!

“Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.”

Acts 15:19–21

Instead of being a hindrance, be a helper! Again, seek out that unity opportunity! That doesn’t mean to accept what’s wrong, but to encourage what’s right! (Again, speaking that Truth in LOVE!). As Jesus was a builder, building relationships, building bridges in the gaps of brokenness, bringing people closer to Him, because He is God (hey, He was a carpenter too, right?), we too must think in that same dimension! Seek how we can connect & ultimately

bring people closer to Jesus! We can't fix every problem, but Jesus can! Just get them to Him!



DAY 189

## One Accord

Thursday, July 8

TODAY'S READING · JOB 36-37 · ACTS 15:22-41

*“it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

— ACTS 15:25-26

Barnabas and Paul were 2 men who did incredible things for God. They allowed God to use them together as a team, but later they went their separate ways...you could say, “Weren’t we just talking about finding a unity opportunity?” And the answer is yes! However, when they separated and teamed up with other people, they were both still committed to the same goal: reaching people for Jesus! Yes, they are human, and this didn’t mean they didn’t argue about it...but their Spiritual integrity didn’t allow their contention to give up their conviction!

“Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still. Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.” Acts 15:34-35

Again, their goal of preaching the Word of The Lord together before separating remained the same after they departed! In the case of Job, his friends thought they were doing right in continuing in a heated debate, trying to win Job over to their side...but in reality, they should have listened to Job side of it all, realizing that he was doing his best to uphold his Spiritual integrity, just like Barnabas and Paul did! They didn’t let their disagreement stop them from continuing in the Will of God!

“And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the



grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.”  
Acts 15:39–41

Thankfully, we will see that John Mark and Barnabas reunite with Paul & Silas later, but for now, the groups went out preaching separately. We, too, must journey on in the way that God desires us to, with the people he wants us to be with. Not forming enemies, but striving for the same goal, in one accord, of reaching people for Jesus, telling of the Acts 2:38 salvation which brings us first in one accord with God!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38

“fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.” Philippians 2:2



## The Nature of Jesus

Friday, July 9

TODAY'S READING · JOB 38-40 · ACTS 16:1-21

*“To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; On the wilderness, wherein there is no man; To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?”*

**J**ob 38:26-27

This is a small portion of God's response to Job. He names many details, large and small, about creation and the things that happen in nature. It's easy to “miss the forest for the trees” when we are focusing on nature, thinking that everything just goes according to its own flow...but we forget, it moves, works & functions according to GOD'S flow! Job definitely came to his debating friends with some understanding, but there were things which God had to show him that he wouldn't understand...and it's in those moments we just simply trust in God! Nature is HIS nature...and not only of the earth physically, but human nature & Spiritual nature, too!

“Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who hath given understanding to the heart?” Job 38:36

Here is where there's a shift from outdoor nature to the nature of our hearts. God knows the ins & outs...He created it! Wisdom. Understanding. Trees. Mountains. Life! God questions Job in order to remind Him of these things. Before we need to figure out the purpose of “why me,” we just need to figure out that our purpose is to trust God, no matter what! Our nature depends on His Divine Nature!

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she

many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.”

Acts 16:16–18

The Nature of Jesus, our God, is just so incredible! His Spirit was able to make this possessed woman speak of the salvation of God! It seems backwards. It seems to defy the laws of nature. It doesn't make sense...but Paul knew he had to cast the bad spirit out so she could truly be free. I'm sure after that, she could freely talk of the wonders of God, without letting that demonic nature overtake her! Jesus even takes authority over the demonic nature! So remember, no matter the nature of things, don't “miss the forest for the trees!” Focus on God!



DAY 191

## The True Foundation

*Saturday, July 10*

TODAY'S READING · JOB 41-42 · ACTS 16:22-40

*“And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.”*

— JOB 42:10

After The Lord spoke to Job, and reminded him of Who He was, The Lord then went to speak to Job's friends, and told them to repent & sacrifice, for they had done wrong to Job...things were starting to take a turn for the better! This is because Job was always founded upon The Lord! Yes, he had HUGE struggles...but he wasn't rooted in them! Whatever we are going through, when we are founded on The Rock, our God, then we will come out victorious on the other side!

“Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.” Job 42:11

Finally, The Lord sent Job comfort and peace...and restored him more than he had before! Imagine if Job didn't make it through the trial? Imagine if he left God because of everything he was going through? Who knows what would have become of him! Remember, if we're going to grow, we have to go through some dirt!

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.” Acts 16:25-26

Job probably felt like his life was a prison cell...but just as Paul & Silas praised their way to broken chains, Job also kept firmly founded upon His God! When we are rooted in Jesus, we can have a celebration, no matter what we are going through! As in this prison, all the false foundations will fail-but founding ourselves in Jesus will forever bring victory!



# The Beauty of Desperation

*Sunday, July 11*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 1-3 · ACTS 17:1-15

*“But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; My glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the LORD with my voice, And he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, That have set themselves against me round about.”*

## P salm 3:3-6

We are in the Book of Psalms! Every single book of the Bible gives us something we need, but the encouragement which flows from Psalms is quite unique! David, and later Jesus, both reference the Book of Psalms! In reading these first few chapters, we can see that immediately David speaks to our reliance on God in desperate times. Yes, some times are urgently requiring some sort of reaction or response from us, but our desperation for God should be even greater! No matter how good or bad the times are, we need to have a beautiful countenance of desperation about us which allows us not to fear even ten thousand people!

“And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.” Acts 17:8-10

As the Psalm says, He is a shield for us! This Psalm rang true in the hearts of Paul, Silas and Jason...God always made a way of escape for them! But right after their escape from one Jewish synagogue, they went and preached in another! This Psalm must have been replaying in their hearts and minds in order to have that kind of strength! They VOLUNTARILY went into desperate situation because

they were first VOLUNTARILY desperate in their reliance on God and their passion to preach! How beautiful is that!

What's our desperation right now? How quick are we to turn away from Our Shield, Our Glory & The Lifter Up of our heads? Let's beautifully and desperately turn to Him today, and not turn away!



## Rejoice: HE IS HERE!

*Monday, July 12*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 4-6 · ACTS 17:16-34

*"But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: Let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee."*

**P**salms 5:11

The presence of God is everywhere. He can be seen in all of His creation! We can always rejoice in knowing that He is close, and that the closer we draw to Him, the more joy will build up in us as we see more & more of God all around us!

"The LORD hath heard my supplication; The LORD will receive my prayer."

Psalm 6:9

We see Him all around us, but we can get even closer in connection with Him in prayer! We can rejoice not only because we see Him, but because we can get to know Him! Many of these Scriptures in Psalms unfold the beauty not only of God's creation, but in the beautiful creation of a relationship with God!

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" Acts 17:24

God is in every land near & far...but He wants to be in our hearts! In the temples of our bodies as we get into the Body of Christ! We can rejoice because He is THERE for us, or we can rejoice because He is HERE for us! When we receive His Spirit with evidence of speaking in new tongues, we develop the closest possible relationship with Jesus until we see Him again!

"that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:"

Acts 17:27



This closeness, this experience, is right in front of us if we go to Jesus in prayer & seek Him with our whole heart. We shouldn't simply want God at a distance. We must rejoice because HE IS HERE IN OUR HEARTS! This is what the Psalms were dreaming of and singing of. It was the desire of the Psalms, and it can be our reality now as stated in Acts! Time to rejoice, because HE IS HERE!



## Our God, Our Peace, Our Refuge

*Tuesday, July 13*

TODAY'S READING · PSALM 7-9 · ACTS 18

*“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.”*

— PSALM 8:2

Our God is our peace & refuge! He even allows children to be able to proclaim it! And even they can still the enemy & avenger by speaking the Truth of God! We need to be sure we study & know the Truth in God's Word, and we must teach it to our children. His Word is our true strength!

“I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High.” Psalm 9:1-2

The words “I WILL” when it comes to serving God are a short, yet powerful statement! As we read through & remind ourselves of these Scriptures, and we proclaim these “I WILL” statements, we will continuously find ourselves in that place of peace & refuge with God! That's because we are approaching God's Word without hesitation! We are confident in knowing that He is there for us through it all!

“The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble.”

Psalm 9:9

The Word of God is clear & profound! He is our refuge when we are oppressed. He is our refuge in times of trouble, and remembering this BEFORE the trouble comes will bring us peace! Paul found this out & practiced it directly from the Mouth of God! God always confirms His Word!

“Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.”

Acts 18:9–10

Paul did exactly this, and when he went before Gallio in court, he was in favor with him & was set free! And that’s because Paul was in favor with GOD FIRST! He had an “I WILL” attitude in serving God, and held onto Him as his peace & refuge! We must do the same!



## His Word Stands Firm!

*Wednesday, July 14*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 10–12 · ACTS 19:1–20

*“Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: The poor committeth himself unto thee; Thou art the helper of the fatherless.”*

**P**salms 10:14

Maybe, the past wasn't the greatest...maybe, a lot of negativity happened or was spoken about, and it's been carried with you for so long. If that's the case today, I'd just encourage you to look at what God's Word has to say! "The poor committeth himself unto thee; Thou art the helper of the fatherless." His Word is a safety net! His Word stands firm! He is His Word, so He will embrace us with it!

"For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; His countenance doth behold the upright." Psalm 11:7

When we decide to follow Jesus instead of negativity, He beholds us as we pursue that upright life! Not one that's knocked down & upside down, but a life that's walking firmly upon His Word!

"The words of the LORD are pure words: As silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."

Psalm 12:6–7

"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."

Acts 19:19–20

The Words of The Lord are pure words! And those who brought their books forward in Paul's time realized that! They had books of curious arts, things that

weren't real & probably based in witchcraft...but again, the Words of The Lord are True & Pure! And as His Word states, "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." And it still will in our lives today! It will help us in our times of sadness, grief & negativity. It will give us a place of safety. And as we pursue a life to become more like Jesus as His Word states, others will also be able to see that there's no other place to put our trust! His Word always stands firm!



## Above & Beyond

Thursday, July 15

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 13–15 · ACTS 19:21–41

*“LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.”*

— PSALM 15:1–3

Who shall be able to be with The Lord? Who will draw near to Him? Those who walk uprightly, work righteousness & speak the Truth in their hearts! God is so awesome! He is The One True God, the God of Holiness, in a Holy hill...a hill is higher ground...something far above & beyond this world! We know that Heaven is His throne, and earth is His footstool: “Heaven is my throne, And earth is my footstool: What house will ye build me? saith the Lord: Or what is the place of my rest?” Acts 7:49. So if we want to go beyond this world, we need to reach for God by living by His Word & His standards!

“Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.” Acts 19:26–27

Paul preached this hard Truth at Ephesus! They believed in a god they created, named Diana. They believed that she was powerful and was worthy of worship...but they never got an answer from her! Paul knew & boldly spoke that our God has the power. There is no one Higher, no one Greater! The people creating the images feared they would go out of business if people started

believing Paul's message. It was all about earthly prosperity, not Heavenly prosperity!

Sometimes, to get above & beyond, we have to GO above and beyond! We have to leave this world's way of thinking in order to obtain a greater calling! If we want Heaven one day, we have to have a little Heaven on earth! We need to be in God's presence, living His life, so when it comes to that day when we REALLY get to go above & beyond, He could say He really knew us, all this time.



## Right Place, Right Time

*Friday, July 16*

**P**salms 16–17, Acts 20:1–16

“Preserve me, O God: For in thee do I put my trust.” Psalm 16:1

Our only Preserver & Protector is God! When we place our lives in His Hands, no matter how difficult things may seem, we will be in the right place at the right time! Whether it be sparing us from a dangerous situation or facing it head-on with the strength of God at our side, it will be the right place in His right timing in order to be used for His glory! If we pray & read through His Word, we will find that direction to keep us on the path God wants us!

“The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; Yea, I have a goodly heritage.”

Psalm 16:6

We need to rejoice & appreciate the lines & lanes God has us walking in! Only by temptation is the grass greener on the other side! God has a fruitful plan for each one of us, and we have to trust the borders & boundaries He sets for us! We need to get into the Body of Christ, His church, and bloom right where we are planted! Paul didn’t build up individuals alone...he built up CHURCHES! We need the Body of Christ to function! We must appreciate those lines that have fallen upon us in pleasant places!

“I have set the LORD always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: My flesh also shall rest in hope.” Psalm 16:8–9

All of our heart, soul, mind & strength will rejoice when we pursue God! Again, we will be in the right place, at the right time, and start to see God’s amazing plans for our lives unfold! We need to set Him before ourselves, and be humble. When we go forward without God, we find ourselves at the wrong place, at the wrong time...so let’s go forward, onward, upward & GODWARD, as it has been put so many times!



“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” Psalm 17:15

Are we satisfied with Jesus? Or do we look for another, as John the Baptist has once questioned. The road isn't going to be easy, but it will be RIGHT! And we will have God's help all along the way, just as Paul did!

“And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.” Acts 20:10

A man fell out of a window, a tragic situation, but for Paul, it was the right place at the right time! He prayed for him & the man was ok! God will use each one of us if we are willing...we just have to be in the right place at the right time with God!



DAY 198

## NO MATTER WHAT!

*Saturday, July 17*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 18–19 · ACTS 20:17–38

*“In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of his temple, And my cry came before him, even into his ears.”*

— PSALM 18:6

God does not ignore His people! God ALWAYS hears, listens & has an answer for us, NO MATTER WHAT! Things may not unfold the way we expect, or as soon as we'd like, but if God brings us to it, He will bring us through it! The hardest thing is waiting for that answer, but it's there in constant prayer & searching the Scriptures. While we wait, we can search! We don't have to wait around doing nothing! When we seek God in prayer and pray His Word and connect with God on a relationship level, for more than just a need, God sees our hearts are ready for something more! Seek God in the waiting time!

“They prevented me in the day of my calamity: But the LORD was my stay.”  
Psalm 18:18

God has our back, NO MATTER WHAT! No matter what tries to hold us back & prevent us from going forward, The Lord is our stay! He is our stability! He is The One we run to! So when we stay in Him, and we don't leave or doubt depending on our mood or the day's circumstances, God sees a genuine heart ready for more of His plan to unfold in our lives!

“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”

Psalm 19:7

His Law is perfect, His testimony is Sure...NO MATTER WHAT! This isn't an “if, then” statement! It's always that way. It's infallible! We can trust Him, NO MATTER WHAT!

“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:22–24

Paul didn’t know what was coming at Jerusalem...but he was going, NO MATTER WHAT! Because GOD mattered MOST!! His Perfect Will was Paul’s heart’s greatest desire! He couldn’t see the future, but in the waiting time he had joy & faith in God! Let that be our journey today! God, I don’t know how...but I’m going forward, NO MATTER WHAT!



## A Must to Trust

*Sunday, July 18*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 20–22 · ACTS 21:1–17

*“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: But we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They are brought down and fallen: But we are risen, and stand upright.”*

— PSALM 20:7–8

It's easy to trust what we see around us. In those days, it was horses & chariots...today, it's mainstream media & government...it all pretty much represents the same thing though: the world, or God? The seen, or the unseen? People's opinion, or God's Truth? We must trust in our God, because He always comes through for us! His Perfect Will has greater purpose & meaning than anything else on earth!

“For the king trusteth in the LORD, And through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved.” Psalm 21:7

We can't trust the world because the world uses our fear against us. We don't have to fear man, we just have to fear God! And this fear of God is not being afraid, but submitting a deep respect to Him...trusting Him with our lives! The world will mishandle our lives, but God will always be on our side!

“Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: So will we sing and praise thy power.” Psalm 21:13

“Our fathers trusted in thee: They trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: They trusted in thee, and were not confounded.”

Psalm 22:4–5

His power & strength have been trusted through the ages! No one ever made a wrong choice by trusting God!

“Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.” Acts 21:13–14

Even in facing death, we can trust in God! This may seem like a situation where the people trying to persuade Paul were thinking, “This must be a wrong choice! Don’t go there if you’ll face death!” But Paul was prayed up & knew God’s Will! He loved God, and knew that even death couldn’t end his relationship with God! Do we have that deep of a must to trust?



DAY 200

## The King of...

*Monday, July 19*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 23-25 · ACTS 21:18-40

*"Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle."*

— PSALM 24:8

Our God is King over all things! He is King over all His creation...but ultimately, He is the King of glory! The strongest, mightiest & most powerful! The One who fights our battles! He is so much more, so far beyond King of the things here on earth...He is King in the Heavens, and He is everlasting!

"Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah."

Psalm 24:10

The list can go on & on to display what He is truly King of...and every day we remind ourselves is a day spent understanding that we don't have to worry, because He is in control! Who is He? He is JESUS! And He wants to be King of our hearts too! Invite Him into that place where you worry. Invite Him into that place where you fear. That's where He truly desires to be on the throne...the throne of our hearts!

"Shew me thy ways, O LORD; Teach me thy paths." Psalm 25:4

"All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth Unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." Psalm 25:10

The King's paths are mercy & Truth, but we must keep His testimonies! Acts 2:38 is that start to the heart of it all! Getting personal with our King overall means allowing His Spirit to dwell in us, and washing away our past without Him!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38

“And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people...”Acts 21:40

Paul was bound in chains, being led to prison, but he pleaded to speak with the crowds of people on his way there! Paul knew what a mighty King He served, and knew that, as in last post, he had to speak up...NO MATTER WHAT! God always has great things ahead, even if this world doesn't! He is King. He is Almighty. And He is awaiting the throne of our hearts!



# Through it All

*Tuesday, July 20*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 26–28 · ACTS 22

*“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear:  
Though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.”*

— PSALM 27:3

Whether it be a host of people we know personally, or war going on in the world around us, God is able to protect us from dangers near & far! Our hearts don't have to fear, and we can be confident in God through it all! But if we are trying to trudge through this world without God, we are missing out on the great favor & protection we have when we find shelter & refuge in Him!

“And now shall mine head be lifted up, Above mine enemies round about me: Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.” Psalm 27:6

Our head is often down when we forget to look to God...our eyes are stuck on the problem, and instead of praising & having joy through it all, we get stuck in a slump. But when we remember that God alone has the power & strength to get us through, all of a sudden, we can look up! We can praise! We can have joy even when we are surrounded by challenges! Of course, it's a process, and that excitement probably won't come automatically...but the faster we make the decision to trust in God through it all, the faster we can start practicing a life of joy and victory instead of depression & defeat!

“And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief



captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.” Acts 22:23–26

If there was anyone who was constantly in the spotlight of his enemies, it was Paul! It wasn't just the common people, but all the authorities had their eyes on him! They all were against his radical message...but through it all, he was able to pass from authority to authority until he spoke to all the crowds and officials God wanted him to speak to! In one instance, right when he was about to get beaten, Paul said he was a Roman, so they decided not to go through with it...because through it all, God was making a way where there seemed to be no way! Paul could be confident & have joy, even through this difficult process! Are we that brave? Are we that confident? How much do we want God to intervene in our lives? God is the only One able to keep us safe, through it all!



## The Voice of The Lord

Wednesday, July 21

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 29–30 · ACTS 23:1–15

*“The voice of the LORD is powerful; The voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; Yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.”*

— PSALM 29:4–5

**W**e have so much sturdy machinery which gets so many laborious jobs done...factory workers, construction workers, medical equipment, you name it! But the voice of The Lord is able to do all the things that different machines are capable of AND MORE! His voice is powerful, full of majesty, and it can even break down trees! His Word created everything into existence, so we know His voice must still be doing all these amazing things today!

“The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire. The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: And in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.”

Psalm 29:7–9

His voice divides the flames of fire, shakes up our world, tells our bodies when to function & even animals to give birth, and so much more! No wonder every other voice speaks of His glory...there's just so much to speak of!

“To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.”

Psalm 30:12

Our voices cannot stay silent!! He is so magnificent, and if we listen, He will speak directly into our lives!

“And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel

hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.” Acts 23:9

“And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”

Acts 23:11

Many voices were screaming against Paul, yet even a Pharisee rose up in defense of him & knew they shouldn't be fighting against God or His anointed! God's voice has the final say, and God was preserving Paul to go to Rome! So even with all the persecution in Jerusalem, Paul was sure he would make his way out because God's Word said He needed to go to Rome! God's Word is always a promise! HE NEVER FAILS US! JUST LISTEN TO HIS VOICE!



## More than an Army

Thursday, July 22

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 31–32 · ACTS 23:16–35

*“For I have heard the slander of many: Fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, They devised to take away my life. But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God.”*

**P** salm 31:13–14

It's easy to look at the numbers & think we've lost...to look at how much is stacked against us, creating a mountain that we don't even want to approach climbing...to think that it will automatically be a loss, so why put in all the time & energy? Even still, we must keep in mind the fact that God alone is more than a mountain of problems! God alone is more than an army of persecutors! God ALONE can get us through, and He even uses His angels on top of that!

“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: But he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: And shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” Psalm 32:10–11

When we feel surrounded by negativity, we have to remember that mercy surrounds us when we call upon His Name, the Name of Jesus! When we practice a life living for The Lord, it is one of victory! Even if we can't see past the problem. Even if there are many sorrows in number...GOD ALONE IS ENOUGH! Paul realized this and found favor in the face of every obstacle!

“But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.”

Acts 23:21

Paul found protection from the Jews by the Roman centurion. Paul was preserved from the Jews' attacks because, being a Roman, he needed to be safely

brought out and tried by the Romans. They covered him on every side! No one could get close to him! It was a miracle they even knew of the Jews' plans against Paul...but as we have read in Psalms, that's how God works! When one army was out to get him, God alone made a way for the Roman army to protect him! It's amazing to think of how God can coordinate all this...but that's why He is our God, and we should never lose trust in Him!



## The Heart of the Matter

Friday, July 23

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 33–34 · ACTS 24

*“The LORD looketh from heaven; he beareth all the sons of men.  
From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of  
the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; He considereth all their  
works.”*

— PSALM 33:13–15

When God looks upon us, He is not only looking at what we say & do...He looks at where these things stem from—the heart! The heart IS the heart of the matter with God, and we must let Him work upon our hearts in order to be sure we are developing into who God wants us to be!

“Our soul waiteth for the LORD: He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, Because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, According as we hope in thee.”

Psalm 33:20–22

Our soul awaits Him & His hand upon our lives, no matter how much we try to ignore Him! When we do open our lives completely to Him, starting with our hearts, then our hearts can rejoice! It all boils down to where our hearts are at. Our hearts determine how far or close we choose to be to God! We can either follow our heart's deceptive desires & ways, or we can open our hearts to God and let Him bring us into that close relationship with Him!

“The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; And saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” Psalm 34:18

The closest our hearts can be to God is through brokenness. Through repentance. And that repentance brings us to water baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking with new tongues! It all starts with a broken heart, willing to be mended by God!

“And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.” Acts 24:24

Paul amazingly touched the heart of one of the officials and his wife in his day & hour! One of the people to sentence & arrest him was interested in hearing his message! That probably took a lot of humility, and a broken heart! He & his wife were still afraid to commit fully, and Felix left Paul bound in order to please the Jews. That still gave a sense of hope...maybe in the future, they'd fully surrender their hearts? Either way, let's not fear the judgment of others...let's give our whole hearts to God to see what He will do!



## Close to God, Far from Trouble

*Saturday, July 24*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 35–36 · ACTS 25

*“This thou hast seen, O LORD: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me.”*

**P**salms 35:22

There is a desperation in the Psalm to be close to God. To hear Him. To not be distant from Him. And this is one of the reasons why:

“For with thee is the fountain of life: In thy light shall we see light. O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; And thy righteousness to the upright in heart.” Psalm 36:9–10

...Because with Him is the fountain of LIFE! We will be in LIGHT & not darkness! When we know Him and are close to Him, we experience His lovingkindness in magnified ways! When we are close to God, we are wrapped up in His goodness, and trouble becomes distant from us! Even if we are in the presence of our enemies, He is there with us:

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.” Psalm 23:5

Paul knew that even planted among persecutors, God was giving Him favor in their sight! Since he walked so close with God, his perspective was not set on the pressure in his situation. His perspective was on Jesus & HIS power! So even amidst trouble, Paul was far from it!

“But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.” Acts 25:25

“For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.” Acts 25:27



Paul was certainly a puzzle to the leaders of his day! He had many enemies, but no one could figure out why! When we are in God's presence, and His light & love are radiating through us, it's hard for people to stay angry with us! Even if they don't agree with us, it's hard for them to really know why...and that's just the way God works! Even if the leaders & officials didn't exactly like or agree with Paul, they were drawn to him because they were being drawn to Jesus THROUGH him! Whether or not they listened, that was on them, but Paul was doing all he could to stay close to Jesus, and in turn, far from trouble!



## Darkness to Delight

*Sunday, July 25*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 37-39 · ACTS 26

*“Delight thyself also in the LORD; And he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”*

**P**salms 37:4

When we are void of God in our lives, and we go about our days solely concerned with achieving & receiving our desires, we don't realize it...but we are in a place of darkness! The Scripture says that when we delight in The Lord, He will give us the desires of thine heart...so when we don't delight in The Lord, we have a much harder time finding what we are looking for (kind of like searching in the dark), because we are not seeking God first & desiring Him above all else! We need to step into The Light of delighting in The Lord!

“But the meek shall inherit the earth; And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Psalm 37:11

The meek will delight themselves in the abundance of peace...so again, if we are prideful & self-seeking, we will not be living the peaceful life we could be living with Jesus at the center! We will be in the dark, confused, and not finding the rest we truly desire...we will be lost without deLIGHT in The Lord!

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: And he delighteth in his way.”

Psalm 37:23

Jesus deLIGHTETH in the way of those whose steps are ordered of Him! He lights our path, and He delights in seeing us follow after the ways of life & not death! Of light and not darkness!

“delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and

inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Acts 26:17–18

We need to do as Paul did, speaking the Truth, seeing blind eyes open, people turning from darkness to light! And when we decide to live in the light, as He is in the light (1 John 1:7), we live in DELIGHT knowing Jesus & knowing His plan for our lives!



## Change of Tune

*Monday, July 26*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 40-42 · ACTS 27:1-26

*“And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God:  
Many shall see it, and fear, And shall trust in the LORD.”*

**P**salms 40:3

What song are we singing? I know I'm guilty at times of singing the wrong song...one with a negative, annoyed tune rather than a joyful, praise-worthy tune...I can too often give into the negative way too easily! Instead, I need to give into God! Now of course, it's hard to do something you don't feel like doing, like singing a joyful tune...but when we keep trying to change our tune, sooner or later we have a new song! And one that gives God the glory for getting us through!

“When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: For I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept holyday.”

Psalm 42:4

In our stressful situations, we need to remember what it feels like to enter the house of God, with the voice of joy & praise! With a multitude of people who were there, going towards the same goal, singing the same song! We have to learn to sing it on our own sometimes, but we never have to worry! The church and our God are always there, and that's something to sing about! We just need to remind ourselves of that!

“Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, And in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.”

Psalm 42:8

We can't forget in the night what God did in the day! We need to sing a tune that exalts Him in the miracle, and keeps Him lifted high after it's all said &

done! In the dark times, pushing through & pouring out a joyful song of worship is worth more than anything else! It may seem difficult at first, but that song is a battle cry which can help us overcome our fears & frustrations! (And it sounds a lot nicer!)

“And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.” Acts 27:22–26

Be of good cheer, like Paul & the sailors! Let that cheer change our tune & put a new song in our hearts! Even if our ship is sinking, God will get us through to dry land! Let’s sing our way to victory in Jesus’ Name!



DAY 208

## Remember

*Tuesday, July 27*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 43-45 · ACTS 27:27-44

*“All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, Neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, Neither have our steps declined from thy way;”*

— PSALM 44:17-18

There are many memories we'd rather not return to, many things we try to forget...regrets, mistakes, traumatic experiences...but let's not let God fall into that same category! All we've gone through is more reason to stick close to God! We have only gotten through because of Him, so this is no time to let our steps decline from the way!

“If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; Shall not God search this out? For he knoweth the secrets of the heart.” Psalm 44:20-21

When we turn away from God and become occupied with other things, God seeks us out! He examines our hearts! He loves us and desperately wants us to come back to Him! When we forget, He knows! We must remember our God. We must desire unity with our God! No idol will chase us down when we walk away. No idol will be sad when we stop our obsession. Remember! We serve a living & loving God!

“Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.” Acts 27:31

We need to abide & dwell with Jesus & stay on the Acts 2:38 ship in order to be saved!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38

We can't forget Jesus' ultimate sacrifice for us! We need to remember what He went through to set us free from the bondage of our old lives! No one fights for us like Jesus! Since the beginning of time, He has loved each of our souls...how amazing is that!? Let's not make that a memory...let's remember & refresh it daily!



## Our Safety & Our Strength

*Wednesday, July 28*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 46–48 · ACTS 28

*“God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.”*

— PSALM 46:1

It's amazing to think about how God is our everything...not only is He our safety & refuge, our protection...but He is also our strength, our ability to fight off attack! He is our safety, our strength, and so much more! He is present in our troubles, and is exactly Who we need in every situation! Nothing is too complex for God!

“The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: For the shields of the earth belong unto God: He is greatly exalted.”

Psalm 47:9

It all belongs to Him! Every place of protection is a place provided by God! When we find shelter, we don't just “happen” upon it...it's not just coincidence!

“God is known in her palaces for a refuge.”

Psalm 48:3

“Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish With an east wind.” Psalm 48:7

The same God who is known as our refuge & safe place can break down ships with an east wind! He builds up, He breaks down, but either way, He is exactly what we need in every situation!

“For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death.”

Psalm 48:14

He will bring us through it all! Even to the other side of death itself! Earth's promises & luxuries stop at the grave; they promise no more fulfillment than that...but God's safety and strength extends beyond the reach of time into eternity! We just have to be willing to trust Him & follow all the way!



“And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.”

Acts 28:30–31

Paul, was given comfort, safety & strength to preach even though he was still a prisoner! He had it pretty good! The people may have not liked that God was more powerful than they were, and they didn't want to accept that...but SINCE they saw all God was capable of, they HAD to experience Him for themselves! The same power that caused people to imprison Paul was the same power which caused people to be attracted to him! When you get a taste of God, and all His amazing attributes & characteristics, you can't help but be drawn closer! He is our refuge, our safety, yet also our strength! He is our offense & defense! He shields & equips us! He not only makes us ready for our daily battles, but ready for Heaven!



## Nothing else will do...

Thursday, July 29

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 49-50 · ROMANS 1

*"They that trust in their wealth, And boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, And it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live for ever, And not see corruption."*

— PSALM 49:6-9

What fills our lives? What do we look to for soothing, easing & comfort? If it's not our God, then we don't have real satisfaction! Real satisfaction extends beyond this world & time itself. Money does not fix everything...in fact, it does not fix anything! It can reach to many areas and many needs, but it cannot fix our hearts! Nothing else will do! We need Jesus!

"Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, When the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: His glory shall not descend after him." Psalm 49:16-17

Being rich isn't always the blessing we should seek after. Although it seems like the answered prayer of a lifetime, it might be the one thing that keeps us farthest from God! If we persist after money, God might just let us have it to see that it doesn't bring true happiness. That doesn't mean God does not bless people financially, because He does, but where are our hearts at? Are we ready to receive the blessing & give back to the Kingdom with it? To invest it wisely?

"Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, Is like the beasts that perish." Psalm 49:20

Again, nothing else but JESUS will do! If we have a great position, but abuse its power and authority & don't realize what we should be doing with that status,

we may as well be like the beasts that perish! Seek meaning and purpose from God!

“For every beast of the forest is mine, And the cattle upon a thousand hills.”

Psalm 50:10

...And even if we became like one of those beasts, we STILL belong to God anyway! He owns it all! He is Creator and Provider! It all comes from God, so we need Him above all else!

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Romans 1:16

How can we be ashamed of the One true God!? How can we fear sacrifice when He is our Provider? Nothing else will do! No one else will do!

“who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” Romans 1:25

Do we serve the creature more than the Creator? Do we almost worship money & our “status”? Remember, things are gifts...but we need to honor the Giver! We need to find our joy & satisfaction in Him!



## Sorrow & Brokenness

*Friday, July 30*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 51-53 · ROMANS 2

*"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."*

— PSALM 51:17

The world despises our weakness & brokenness. Very rarely are we able to function in this world without "putting on our best face" and just doing what we need to do...but God wants us to be real! He actually prefers us to be vulnerable, not prideful! He uses our times of sorrow & brokenness to help us grow & mature!

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: There is none that doeth good." Psalm 53:1

The true fools are the ones who say God does not exist. They claim they have it all together, and avoid that place of brokenness & sorrow, which is the place where we are most open to God!

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Romans 2:4

Remember, nothing else will do! The TRUE riches are in His goodness, forbearance & longsuffering...which leads us to repentance! This leads us to the change we seek in ourselves! It leads us to be the best we can for God! This repentance is the sorrow, brokenness yet first step in making us fresh & new in Christ! It's the first key among 3! Repentance & baptism of water & Spirit!

"to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:" Romans 2:7

...And just look at what's on the other side!! Immortality, eternal life! Let God use your sorrow & brokenness! Don't be afraid to be in that place...it is a place of

humility, yet honor...fear of God, yet bravery to stand out from the world...  
remorse, yet release and freedom from our past...if we avoid it, we could be  
avoiding our purpose and eternal calling!



## Friend or Foe?

*Saturday, July 31*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 54–56 · ROMANS 3

*“For it was not an enemy that reproached me; Then I could have borne it: Neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; Then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, My guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, And walked unto the house of God in company.”*

— PSALM 55:12–14

Unfortunately, betrayal is real. It happens. Sometimes the worst hurts come from the people closest to us. It hurts most because we don't expect it. David went through this very same thing, with many people he loved & respected...but through it all, he found out one thing...GOD NEVER BETRAYS!

“Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” Psalm 55:22

We can trust our God, and He will never abuse that trust! He will just give us more reason to trust in Him (especially because this world gives us more & more reason not to!) That doesn't mean we don't love people, even our enemies, but none can love or help us like our God!

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.” Psalm 56:3–4

Don't fear! Don't be frustrated because of a fleshly friend, who did not have a Spiritual mindset when they hurt you! It also may have been on accident! God's Word holds our recovery! Run into His shelter & embrace. He, of all people, knows how to take our pain away...

“God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, And mightest overcome when thou art judged.”

Romans 3:4

God is true, and all of us are human. We make mistakes. We have faults. We hurt feelings. The more we let God work in us, the more we can turn the other cheek when a friend or foe hurts us. The more we realize...Jesus is all we need! And the more we pray for others, the more we'll see a change for the better!









V I I I

AUGUST



*“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

PSALM 46:10

DAYS 213 – 243

## A Fixed Heart

*Sunday, August 1*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 57–59 · ROMANS 4

*“My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.”*

— PSALM 57:7–8

How firmly fixed are our hearts upon The Lord? Is distraction easy? Is depression easy? Do we let those things seep into our souls on a far-too-regular basis? Our hearts are deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9), so we need to be sure we place them in God's Hands in daily prayer! Our heart has a weak immune system to this world's negative reports...if our hearts aren't fixed on God, where will they end up?

“Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?” Psalm 58:1

We should question & examine ourselves like David questioned above: Do we speak righteousness? Do we judge uprightly? The only way to do that is to study His Word & pray in order to fix our hearts on Jesus!

“But I will sing of thy power; Yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: For thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: For God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.” Psalm 59:16–17

We can sing and celebrate when we declare the goodness of God! We can celebrate and rejoice when we are not wavering & our hearts are fixed firmly upon Him! With a made-up heart & a made-up mind, we don't have to “make-up” or pretend we are ok...because we will have the joy of The Lord!

“he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised,

he was able also to perform.” Romans 4:20–21

Abraham was fully persuaded. Fully fixed. And we are evidence of God’s promises continuing to unfold from Abraham and completed through Jesus Christ! If we are evidence that the Bible is true, how much more evidence do we need before we fix our hearts?



## Climb the Rock!

*Monday, August 2*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 60–62 · ROMANS 5

*“From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, When my heart is overwhelmed: Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”*

**P**salms 61:2

Today we arrive at one of my favorite Scriptures! Anybody else's heart easily overwhelmed? What do we do when this happens? We must be led to the rock that is higher than us! That Rock is Jesus! He is higher! He is greater! He is above all we are going through, all that's making us overwhelmed! And since He is so great & high above, a climb is required! But never fear, He does not make Himself distant or out of reach, just a safe distance from our troubles! So who's ready to climb!?

“He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him. So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, That I may daily perform my vows.” Psalm 61:7–8

Our Rock, our God, gives us so much safety & stability when we begin the wondrous climb of a relationship with Him! We can sing praise FOREVER, not temporarily!

“He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.” Psalm 62:2

A Rock doesn't move easy! Especially our God! He never changes, and never crumbles under pressure! He is our salvation from here to Heaven!

“In God is my salvation and my glory: The rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.” Psalm 62:7

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” Romans 5:9

Salvation, strength & refuge are all found through Him! When we get under the Blood, through the waters of baptism & we receive the Holy Ghost with new tongues, we make our climb that much closer to our Heavenly home!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



## The Lord's Pattern Prevails!

*Tuesday, August 3*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 63–65 · ROMANS 6

*“They encourage themselves in an evil matter: They commune of laying snares privily; They say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.”*

— PSALM 64:5–6

There are people out there who are deeply invested in things contrary to God's plan for them...wanting to do evil instead of good...they encourage themselves in it, they commune with each other, they search out iniquities, they accomplish things...their hearts are so deeply invested...thinking about this though, these are the things we should do for good! For God! For eternal purposes! We should encourage ourselves in The Lord by reading His Word, we should commune with Him in prayer & unite in prayer with the Body of Christ, we should seek God on a daily basis & accomplish great things for His Kingdom! Our hearts should be deeply invested in Him, because The Lord's pattern always prevails, not the ways of wickedness!

“So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: All that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; For they shall wisely consider of his doing.”

Psalm 64:8–9

Evil ways always backfire! Their patterns & ways stand no chance against our good God!

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” Romans 6:12–13

Let's put that first Scripture to good use, not evil use! Let's yield to God and allow Him to work through us, being instruments of righteousness instead of falling victim to the evil things we may not even realize we are getting into!



## Through the Motions

*Wednesday, August 4*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 66–67 · ROMANS 7

*“Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: Sing forth the honour of his name: Make his praise glorious.”*

— PSALM 66:1–2

**M**ake a joyful noise! Make His praise glorious! But how many times do we just make a noise? How many times do we just simply praise? I'm sure there are more times than we would like to admit that we just “go through the motions.” But think about it...does God do anything half-heartedly? No way! So we need to make sure we pour ourselves out to Him in worship with our whole heart! We need to be joyful no matter what, because God is good no matter what!

“O bless our God, ye people, And make the voice of his praise to be heard: Which holdeth our soul in life, And suffereth not our feet to be moved.” Psalm 66:8–9

He holds our soul in life! We need to make our praises heard. We need to bless God, and not just ask for blessings. When we think beyond the surface and we get to the heart of the matter as was in a previous post, God LOVES us as His Bride! As a Father! As a Savior! He IS LOVE! He deserves so much more than just a mumble of a song...He deserves our best!

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, And I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” Psalm 66:16

We can't be afraid to share it!! We can't be afraid to invite others into His presence!

“O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: For thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.” Psalm 67:4

Again, sing for JOY! Even if we feel down, we can always turn our mourning into dancing when we dwell on His everlasting goodness! He never stops loving



us. He never stops being good. So our sorrow can quickly turn to joy, no matter the circumstance!

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” Romans 7:4–5

Are we treating our relationship with God as a marriage? Are we in love, or just going through the motions while our heart is far away? Instead of going through the motions, we need to get through them already! We need to find out that through them, on the other side, is a fruitful, thriving, abundant life as we fall in love with Jesus!



DAY 217

## God, The Giver

*Thursday, August 5*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 68-69 · ROMANS 8:1-21

*"The Lord gave the word: Great was the company of those that published it."*

— PSALM 68:11

God did not just speak His Word...He GAVE it to us! His Word has been the greatest gift to us...it started out as a book, then Jesus coming as The Word made flesh, then His Spirit quickening us in all wisdom of His Word when we receive Him with evidence of speaking in new tongues:

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" Colossians 1:9

God has most definitely always been a Giver! When He spoke The Word, from the very beginning of creation, He gave Himself to us! All His Words are attributes of Himself being expressed to us! When we receive His Spirit for our salvation, we grow to understand this more & more as we read His Word!

"Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah." Psalm 68:19

Even beyond Himself, He provides for us in ways great & small! He has the ultimate benefit package! He is not just a Giver who specializes in one area...He ministers to ALL of our needs!

"O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God." Psalm 68:35

He also equips us with unseen gifts of strength & power, which become seen as we put them into practice working toward the Kingdom's Cause! He does all this so:

“that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4

Our God is the Giver of so much, especially our very lives...so we need to also ensure that He is the God of our eternal lives as well! The way to do this is to be sure we take His salvation plan seriously in Acts 2:38! The Holy Ghost, His Spirit, is the ultimate gift & ultimate revelation of Himself, even since the beginning of time! Let's not just be open to His earthly provision for us, but also His salvation & eternal provision!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



## The Solution to Confusion

*Friday, August 6*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 70-71 · ROMANS 8:22-39

*"In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: Let me never be put to confusion."*

— PSALM 71:1

It's hard to go through hardships, trauma & suffering...but even more so when we are confused in the process! It is one thing to know what's ahead so we can prepare ourselves, but it's another to be completely clueless...but when we trust in God, he calms our confusion! The more we pray, the more His plan unfolds and we become comforted! And even if the way is not completely revealed, having faith & trust in The One who can see it all is enough!

"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: And hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works." Psalm 71:17

God does not only exist...He wants to be present in our lives! He wants to teach us what we need to do, especially in confusing situations! When we seek Him, we seek a solution! But when we place our trust elsewhere, we are not being helped as we should!

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

When we love God & live out our calling, it's all going to work out for the best! It's plainly written; no need for confusion! He IS the Solution to our confusion!

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

None of our fears, doubts, worries, confusion, grief, depression, or anything else is able to stand up against God! None of it stops our God from loving us, so why don't we love Him back by having more faith & more trust in Him?



## For Our Children

*Saturday, August 7*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 72-73 · ROMANS 9:1-15

*“Give the king thy judgments, O God, And thy righteousness unto the king’s son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, And thy poor with judgment.”*

— PSALM 72:1-2

**T**his Psalm is a prayer from David for his son, Solomon, for when Solomon takes David’s place as king. David knows his son has a great calling upon his life, and rather than hope for the best, David PRAYS for the best! Wishing & hoping is one thing, but prayer is quite another! Prayer is the unseen strength & support which will bolster our children and give them exactly what they need, directly from God! Nothing is more powerful. Nothing is stronger. Nothing means more than that! Never doubt the power of prayer!

“Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Psalm 73:25-26

Who else can? Who else will? What else even stands a chance? Our direct connection to God as parents is our lifeline, and it will certainly help impact the lives of our children. Will it control their every move? Probably not. God has His own set of lessons for them to learn too, in which they’ll need to develop their own prayer lives...but our prayers, and praying with them, will no doubt keep them constantly God-conscious, and so much closer to their God-given purpose & that next miracle! We just need to keep up the fight! **THEY WILL BE SAVED IN JESUS’ NAME!**

“(for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)” Romans 9:11

We are not born perfect, but we are already born with purpose! Before we even make the choice to repent, get baptized & receive the Holy Ghost, which are essential to salvation, God has a purpose & plan designed especially for us! In order to fulfill it completely, we must go through that process and purpose ourselves to live for Him! The best we can do for our families is strive to see our prayer requests become victory reports for our children in Jesus' Name!



## Times & Seasons

*Sunday, August 8*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 74-76 · ROMANS 9:16-33

*"The day is thine, the night also is thine: Thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: Thou hast made summer and winter."*

**P** salm 74:16-17

God created great contrast in creation's design. He allowed there to be times & seasons we could recognize in order to be prepared for what was to come...and He does this with the ways of the world as well! He allows us to see the changes and the warning signs so that we, too, can climb aboard a modern-day ark and sail on our way to our Heavenly home! The ark of today is Acts 2:38!

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38

It is the time & season to get on board with God! Rain or shine. Snow or hail. Through thick & thin...let God be God in your life! He makes all our times & seasons more beautiful as He navigates us through every up & down...all the way into eternity!

"And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; There shall they be called the children of the living God."

Romans 9:26

There was a time & season where there was Gentile & Jew. God's people & "the others." But that was never God's plan for humanity! He calls us ALL, and we must choose to be chosen! Yes, the Jews were especially selected as God's chosen to set the example, but even they needed to realize that their being chosen was to show others that they too could be loved & saved by God! And that's what Jesus came to remind them of! God is no respecter of persons: "Then Peter



opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.”

Acts 10:34. Therefore we must all realize the time & season of urgency to walk with God closer than we ever have before! The world easily puts God aside... so let's put Him in remembrance!

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Matthew 22:14

In this season of life, it's time to choose Him!



## Never Alone

*Monday, August 9*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 77-78 · ROMANS 10

*"I have considered the days of old, The years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: And my spirit made diligent search."*

— PSALM 77:5-6

When we feel like we are all alone, and we have no help or no one there to listen, GOD IS THERE! He will give us a song to sing in the night & the dark hours! God doesn't need an army to get His attention...sometimes, He just needs one lonely heart, ready to commune with Him! When we seek Him out, we will most certainly find Him!

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" Matthew 7:7

"He chose David also his servant, And took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him To feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; And guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." Psalm 78:70-72

This lone shepherd, with a small flock of sheep, received an even greater flock, the people of Israel! And it wasn't because he had a team backing him...HE HAD GOD! God showed David it didn't take a team to face Goliath. All it took was a willing heart! That one heart, seemingly so lonely after his brothers went off to war, was later used to fight the giant & gain a new, giant flock when David became king of Israel! He had a heart after God's own heart: "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will." Acts 13:22

In the end, being alone is a very powerful place to be! The power & presence of God can come without the distractions of life. God can use hopelessness. God can use vulnerability. God can turn that around in us if we are willing to give Him one thing alone-our whole heart!



## The Vine & the Branches

*Tuesday, August 10*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 79-80 · ROMANS 11:1-18

*“Turn us again, O God of hosts, And cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved. Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.”*

— PSALM 80:7-8

Jesus IS the Vine! He is strong, sure & secure...rooted & completely invested in His people...but what tree are we branches of? Have we connected ourselves to the tree of the knowledge of good & evil, with sin as the root, or have we pursued a connection to the true, pure vine of Jesus Christ?

“Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: Look down from heaven, And behold, and visit this vine; And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, And the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.”

Psalm 80:14-15

If we have gone through repentance, water baptism in Jesus' Name & received the Holy Ghost, we have been grafted into the true tree, the true Vine! When we are connected, and keeping that connection strong through prayer & His Word, He WILL visit us in our time of need! He WILL be with us! We never have to worry about that!

“I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” Romans 11:1

Through Jesus, our Vine, we are connected to the roots of old! We are connected to Abraham & the prayers he prayed. We are connected to a journey which keeps us on the true path, seeing the past fulfilled behind us & the future of eternity bright in front of us! The Vine was brought out of Egypt, went to Calvary & comes to us RIGHT NOW!

“For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” Romans 11:16

When we are connected to Jesus, we are connected to holiness...our lives change...we hunger & thirst for Spiritual sustenance when we connect ourselves to His Vine & tree, not the tree with sinful roots...we must be like Jesus & branch out to others, inviting them to connect with the Vine!



## Take a Psalm!

*Wednesday, August 11*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 81-83 · ROMANS 11:19-36

*"Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, The pleasant harp with  
the psaltery."*

— PSALM 81:2

**W**ant to make a troubling situation a celebration? Take a Psalm! And don't just read it, act upon it! That's what this Scripture says! We can apply music & worship & singing to God's Word and allow it to really come alive around us in a powerful way! God's Word is already the Living Word, so we can't keep bottled up what we read! We have to live it, and lead our lives with it! A Psalm is the greatest instrument! God's whole Word is the greatest tool & weapon! Take HIM with you!

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Romans 11:29

Everything we read, learn & pray about in terms of our purpose & calling for God is without repentance. This means that they are always there to take hold of, no matter what! If we have strayed, we can always come back to stay! Our gifts & calling will be there to put into practice once again (as long as we are willing to stay committed & work at it!). So take hold of a Psalm in your heart! Sing for joy! Praise God! Then, you can start taking those joyful steps forward into a relationship with God, pursuing your purpose & calling He has in store for you!

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Romans 11:36

Just remember, it's all for Jesus! He is the reason we take a Psalm! He is the reason we praise! And He is also the reason we live! So let's live out our lives putting Scriptures into action! Let God's Word be the soundtrack to our lives!



AUGUST

## No Place I'd Rather Be!

Thursday, August 12

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 84-86 · ROMANS 12

*"For a day in thy courts Is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."*

— PSALM 84:10

Being present in God's presence is the best present we can give ourselves! That's because our God, Jesus Christ, is the answer to all of our problems! Have a sickness? He's a Healer. Have a fear? He's the Comforter. Have an emergency? He's the Miracle-Worker! Need love? He is the LOVER OF OUR SOUL! He cares for us more deeply than anyone else. Come into His presence and find out!

"All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; And shall glorify thy name. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: Thou art God alone." Psalm 86:9-10

God's presence is for EVERYONE! All people can enter in and rejoice! Getting into the presence of God should definitely happen in our own devotion times at home, but when we gather in unity as a Body, we also feel the power & presence of God in an amazing, encouraging way! When we are around others in His courts, we are surrounded by more members of the Body of Christ!

"not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." Romans 12:11-13

God's presence motivates us to do the true work of a saint-reaching out to others! When His presence reaches into our lives, we can't help but let the love overflow to others, bringing others into the presence of God with us! Bring them out of the tents of wickedness, and when they approach the entrance of the door



to His courts, it will already be better than anything in the past! No place we'd rather be!!



## Dark Times

*Friday, August 13*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 87-88 · ROMANS 13

*“For my soul is full of troubles; And my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength:”*

**P**salms 88:3-4

There are those of us that have “dark times.” We suffer emotional pain & trauma from a specific situation, where our soul is, as the Scripture states, full of troubles, as if the grave is calling us...sure, they are grave, dark times...but that doesn't mean we have to become like the dark! That doesn't mean we have to have a deathly, dark, dim & depressing personality! We don't have to forget God in the process and be “in the dark,” away from His light! There is still hope, if we do allow ourselves to find it...

“Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, And mine acquaintance into darkness.” Psalm 88:18

We usually suffer our dark times alone. Our friends are lost beyond the darkness, out of reach for us...since we are also in darkness...we cannot see anything...but that's when we need to know God is there! He is there in the seen & unseen, and He ALWAYS sees us...we just have to call out and reach for the light, not taking on more ways of darkness & sin because we don't want to cry out to God!

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” Romans 13:11-12

We have to awake out of sleep! We can't stay in the dark! We've spent way too much time in the night season. The unknown season. The dark season...it's time

to put on the armor of light and where it boldly, reaching back into the darkness  
to rescue others by reminding them of the God who SAVES!



## The Source of the Storm

*Saturday, August 14*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 89–90 · ROMANS 14

*“Thou rulest the raging of the sea: When the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.”*

— PSALM 89:9

I am so thankful to have a God who calms our storms! Even before Jesus walked on water & calmed the raging seas, the Psalmists were claiming it! But how quick are we to create our own storms? God might get us out of an uncontrollable storm, but then we go and conjure up our own storm by delving into some drama we shouldn't be in! Life happens, storms come, that's true...but we don't have to be the source of the storms!

“I will set his hand also in the sea, And his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.” Psalm 89:25–26

When we are in a storm, all we have to do is cry out to Him! We don't have to busy ourselves with coming up with our own solution...that usually causes more drama & adds more waves to the storm! We must trust in God! We must pray our way out! We must take a hard look at ourselves and see if we are the source of the storm! It won't stop until we get to the source!

“For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.” Romans 14:8

Our life is His! When we take control, that's usually when we become the source of our storms!

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” Romans 14:10

“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” Romans 14:19

Let's not partake of the drama which brings a stressful storm upon our lives!  
Let's rather follow after peace & encouragement! Let's not stir up a storm as the  
source of our problems, but let's seek to humble ourselves in prayer to God &  
bring peace upon ourselves & others!



## Truth, a Shield & Shelter

*Sunday, August 15*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 91-93 · ROMANS 15:1-13

*“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”*

**P**salms 91:4

Our God is Truth. He is the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ! He is our shelter, and in Truth, He is our shield! He is there in the most gentle ways, and the most secure ways! He is peaceful, yet our strongest defense! From one end of the spectrum to the other, Jesus is able to meet every need we have!

“Those that be planted in the house of the LORD Shall flourish in the courts of our God.” Psalm 92:13

He is our everything, our Truth, Shelter & Shield, so we must be firmly established in His Truth & planted in His church! If we do so, we will truly flourish! We will have a safe place to dwell while also having the strongest defense!

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” Romans 15:4

God's Word is here for a reason, and the most important reason being LIFE, earthly & eternally! It has been written for our learning, even all these years later! God is still God. He is still Truth. And through patience & comfort of the Scriptures we may have hope! His Word is the Handbook we seek. He is our greatest weapon against the enemy & our softest place to lay our head at night. Keeping Jesus in our hearts means keeping all of His Word in our hearts & actions as well. We must live out His Word to the fullest if we want to live life (and eternal life) to the fullest!



AUGUST

## Deep Roots

*Monday, August 16*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 94-96 · ROMANS 15:14-33

God's creation is so magnificent! Even just one pocket of the earth has so much depth, history & life to discover! One could most definitely get lost in the wildernesses of jungles and other places that exist...but what about the jungle of the mind? It can be a deep, dark place sometimes, with a lot of wandering and not a lot of direction...so instead of getting lost in the depths of the mind, we need to have deep roots in God & His Word!

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul."  
Psalm 94:19

The comforts of Jesus, especially through the comfort of the His Holy Ghost, will delight us...no matter how many multitudes of thoughts are within us! When we turn to Him instead of running further into the abyss of our own mind, we find peace!

"In his hand are the deep places of the earth: The strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: And his hands formed the dry land." Psalm 95:4-5

All these deep places are familiar to God! He created them! He can rescue us if we get lost in them...and again, that goes for the mind, too! He can rescue us from hurtful & traumatic thoughts, fears & worries. He can put our mind at ease when we are deeply rooted in Him instead of deep down in a ditch of depression & darkness!

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Psalm 42:7

If the world & our thoughts are gone over us, we lose...but if Jesus overwhelms our soul, we are filled with peace! Let's let our depths be in God, not in the jungle of our mind!



AUGUST

DAY 229

## The God You KNOW!

*Tuesday, August 17*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 97-99 · ROMANS 16

*“The LORD hath made known his salvation: His righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.”*

— PSALM 98:2

Our God is a God (the ONLY God!) Who wants to be known & loved among ALL people! He created us all, and so He has created a plan of salvation for us which allows us to know Him now and in eternity: Repentance, Baptism by immersion in water in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking in new tongues (Acts 2:38)! He hath made KNOWN His salvation! His righteousness hath He showed openly in the sight of the heathen! This isn't just for them to change their ways, but to get to know them! He loves us all!

“He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.” Psalm 98:3

All the ends of the earth have seen it!! But we all have to BELIEVE IT! We must pray for all to want to know God and become close with Him!

“Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: Make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.” Psalm 98:4

We aren't meant to keep His love a secret! We aren't meant to silence His Truth! We are meant to celebrate it and let others know!

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. Written to the Romans from

Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.” Romans 16:25–27

When Christ came, died & rose again forevermore, God was fully & completely revealed to us! Throughout Scripture, God was leading up to this... and now we know Him as the God who is willing to go to the most extreme lengths to know and love us personally...how can we deny the God we know!?



## A Perfect Connection

*Wednesday, August 18*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 100–102 · 1 CORINTHIANS 1

*“I will behave myself wisely In a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.”*

— PSALM 101:2

How is this possible? Walking around our home wisely & perfectly, as if we didn't have anything testing our patience, stressing us out, or worrying us?? Turns out, this declaration CAN be true! But not because we are perfect, it's because we have a perfect connection with the One who is! That makes us imperfectly perfect, the way God intended it. A perfect reliance on Him can truly make all the difference!

“My days are like a shadow that declineth; And I am withered like grass. But thou, O LORD , shalt endure for ever; And thy remembrance unto all generations.”

Psalm 102:11–12

One Psalm later, and imperfection has set in! Like a shadow declining, withering like grass...a world apart from the perfection of that last Psalm! But why? Because there is a raw honesty taking place here. A desperation for The Lord which is present in the good & bad! In the bad times, keep the perfect connection strong! Claim that The Lord shall endure forever, and that He will help you endure whatever you're facing today!

“He will regard the prayer of the destitute, And not despise their prayer.”

Psalm 102:17

ALL PRAYERS ARE HEARD! THAT'S WHAT I CALL A PERFECT CONNECTION!

“that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.” 1 Corinthians

1:5-6

We are enriched by Jesus. In everything we think, say & do! He enriches us & helps us to endure!

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10

Perfectly joined in connection with the Body of Christ. Perfectly joined in connection with God. That’s where we become perfect, like our Father in Heaven is perfect...because we are connected to The Father & are extensions of His image in the earth! We don’t have to get it right every time, but we have to seek the One who is righteous to help us through!

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Matthew 5:48



## Who is The Lord?

*Thursday, August 19*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 103–104 · 1 CORINTHIANS 2

Who is The Lord? What are His attributes? The more we pray & search the Scriptures, the more we find out not only by Word who He is, but by experience! The more we live a life which invites God to be the center of it all, the more we experience His attributes first-hand! Psalm 103 has been on our hearts lately, and so it is so fitting as today's reading, complemented by Psalm 104 & 1 Corinthians 2!

“Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.” Psalm 103:3–5

So many beautiful benefits are found within a life dedicated to The Lord! We lack nothing when we have Jesus! He is the Forgiver. The Healer. Redeemer. Lover. Satisfier. Life-Giver!!

“Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: Who maketh the clouds his chariot: Who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh his angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire: Who laid the foundations of the earth, That it should not be removed for ever.” Psalm 104:2–5

He touches down in our lives & into His creation which surrounds us! He gets personal, yet He goes so far beyond that! We never have to worry about any internal storm, or the storms happening in the world around us. He is our all in all!!

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:4–5

Never place your faith in anyone or anything else but God! When you find out Who He is through reading and especially through experience, you find out that He loves us more than we could ever fathom! What an incredible God we serve! So Who is The Lord? Well...when we read of Him & seek Him, we experience Him by receiving His Spirit...and as one of the other recent posts...He becomes the God you KNOW!



## Lanterns Away!

*Friday, August 20*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 105–106 · 1 CORINTHIANS 3

*“He spread a cloud for a covering; And fire to give light in the night.”*

— PSALM 105:39

In this Psalm, there is much remembrance of God's past protection & provision. Not only was He a cloud covering by day, but a fire to guide by night! It reminded me of those lantern festivals where the lights float up to the sky...the flame is not exposed! There is a covering around it, and the end result is beautiful! We can be like those covered lanterns, going up & away to Heaven someday! We need to embrace the beauty not only of the flame, but of the covering!

“And he brought forth his people with joy, And his chosen with gladness: And gave them the lands of the heathen: And they inherited the labour of the people; That they might observe his statutes, And keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.” Psalm 105:43–45

Between Psalms 105–106, there is a lot of back & forth with God's people. The minute they are safe, they don't want the covering & guidance anymore. But the minute they are without it, trouble comes & they want to be those covered flames once again. God is the covering! God is the fire! If we force Him out of our lives, we are in darkness, and no longer lanterns on a mission to Heaven! We can't extinguish God! We can't allow other things to lead us in the wrong direction! But yet, through all the back & forth, God brings forth His people with joy...how merciful is He to recover & rekindle the fire!

“Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, When he heard their cry: And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies. He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.”



Psalm 106:44–46

Nevertheless, He makes us lanterns again! Fueled by His fire & covered by His cloud of protection! Day or night, He gives us hope. He makes a way where there seems to be none! Until we become lanterns, we will never see the way...

Let's light up the sky, letting His light shine through us, and His covering protect us! We can't be an exposed flame, or a covering without a light! We need all of God in our lives!

“but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7



## A Standing Spring

*Saturday, August 21*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 107–109 · 1 CORINTHIANS 4

*“He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, And dry ground into watersprings.”*

**P**salms 107:35

The wilderness can be a maze...just think of the Amazon rainforest (or Amazon.com, one can probably get lost on there just as easily searching for different items!). In our own times of wilderness & wandering through life, we may feel as though our head is spinning...where it stops, nobody knows! We may also feel dry & worn out...and this is where God comes to the rescue! When we call upon His Name, the Name of Jesus, He causes us to stand still instead of spin, and spring forth water instead of dry out!

“Give us help from trouble: For vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly: For he it is that shall tread down our enemies.” Psalm 108:12–13

He will ALWAYS give us help from trouble if we ALWAYS call upon His Name! He helps us in our situations, whether it be a wilderness, a dry season or an enemy! Man cannot help like God can! We will do VALIANTLY when we reach out to Him...we will become a standing spring instead of a wilted dream! Something WILL become of us when we dedicate our lives to God!

“For my love they are my adversaries: But I give myself unto prayer. And they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love.” Psalm 109:4–5

We may try all we want to show love to the world, but it may not return it, and may also be offended by the love we try to show...but God never turns away our love & affection to Him! He shows it right back! And when we feel lost, dry & we don't have much more we can give, God takes that and creates a beautiful fountain, a standing spring, and restores us!

“For I am poor and needy, And my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.” Psalm 109:22–23

In our up & down rollercoaster life, God is the Stability. He is the Life-Giver. He is ALWAYS ENOUGH! In admitting weakness to God, we are not admitting defeat!

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9



## Unleavened & Upright

*Sunday, August 22*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 110–112 · 1 CORINTHIANS 5

*“The works of his hands are verity and judgment; All his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, And are done in truth and uprightness.”*

**P**salms 111:7–8

The world can sometimes feed our brains with garbage; things that we just don't need to focus on, or shouldn't focus on...after they enter our brains, the thoughts which stem from those things can stir up fear & all other kinds of emotions...soon, we are affected more than we ever thought we could be...but instead of the media & current events doing that to us, let's allow God's Word of Truth, unfiltered & unleavened, enter into our minds, nourish us, give us peace in our emotions, and allow us to be upright in heart!

“Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.” Psalm 112:4

Not only is God True, but He is so loving & compassionate to the upright! Those who follow His Word find comfort because His Word is sure, and beyond that, He loves us beyond measure! The media usually just gives us information, drops those thoughts in our minds, and is not there to show us any compassion or comfort after the fact...but God is ALWAYS there for us!

“Surely he shall not be moved for ever: The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.” Psalm 112:6

Nothing can move Him away from His upright! He does not abandon us!

“therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

1 Corinthians 5:8

Let's not consume the leaven that leaves us dry, disturbed & depressed! Let's consume the nourishing, unleavened Truth of God's Word, which helps us stay upright, uplifting & up to Heaven one day!



## Empty to Enough

*Monday, August 23*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 113–115 · 1 CORINTHIANS 6

*“He maketh the barren woman to keep house, And to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.”*

**P**salm 113:9

How can this be true? Many women are unable to have children and stay that way...Well, I think if we look deeper into this Scripture, we can see that this could mean so much more than physical children! A Mother has a motherly instinct, whether she has children or not. There is a caring, loving & tender attribute that's waiting to manifest itself in some way, for some purpose...it could mean adoption, and it very well could mean Spiritual children, meaning people you bring with you to the house of God who (along with us), repent, get baptized & get the Holy Ghost...it could mean caring for your church family...your community...or just pouring your heart into your home & your life as best you can, taking joy in it all & doing it to glorify God! He has a way of helping mothers, and all people, go from empty to enough, even it that doesn't mean bearing natural children...but just remember, prayer is the key to finding out what “enough” God has in store for you! A miracle is right around the corner!

“The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great. The LORD shall increase you more and more, You and your children. Ye are blessed of the LORD Which made heaven and earth.”

Psalm 115:12–15

We have to claim and remember what God has promised us! WE ARE ALL BLESSED OF THE LORD! If we are still standing today, then we are blessed...because it's been a rough couple of years for all of us! And also...He WILL bless! He never leaves us empty or barren. He gives us just enough! Sometimes, we need

less than we thought, and sometimes, God gives us more than we thought! But we can never say it's not enough! It may also look different than we thought (again, what type of "child" he or she will be...adopted, natural, a loving commitment to our church family, etc.). But when we remember that God is worthy of all our hearts, then we can gladly pour ourselves into whoever or whatever task we are blessed to have as "mothers"!

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:20

We are to glorify God in all we do! In the end, it's all for Him, He is our enough, and He never leaves us empty! Seek the deeper meaning behind the barrenness, if that's the season you're experiencing. God will use that instinct in some way! God always has somewhere for us to pour our hearts, and when we pour, He restores!



## The Rested Soul

*Tuesday, August 24*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 116–118 · 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1–19

*“Return unto thy rest, O my soul; For the LORD hath dealt  
bountifully with thee.”*

**P**salm 116:7

The Lord cares for & provides for us beyond measure! As we read the Scriptures during a sleepless, restless night, we can see a reassurance of how much God loves us! He will bring us back to a place of rest, not only physically at night, but rest for the soul even as we go through our daily life! It's one thing to experience the rejuvenation of our physical body, but a rejuvenation of the soul gives true rest, and not worry!

“This is the LORD's doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:23–24

Everyday we can rejoice, because He has given us that rest along the way! We can look each new day in the face knowing that, with Jesus, we are well-equipped to handle it! As the Scripture states, THIS IS THE LORD'S DOING! All credit, glory & honor goes to Him! He will make sure we are physically, mentally, emotionally & Spiritually well-rested & calm in order to take on the days that lay ahead! But we must choose to study! To learn of His ways! To let the Scriptures grip our hearts! To pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)!

“But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.”

1 Corinthians 7:17

Let us walk! Let us keep going! A well-rested soul in The Lord is able to continue on, regardless of circumstances...and that's because we always know where to run to find rest again! The Lord is not arrested or restrained in the amount of rest & restoration He can give! He is always our hiding place & safe



refuge...kind of like tag when we were a kid, when you run onto glue and no one can get you (if no one changes the rules, that is!). But God never changes the rules! He will always be our rest & refreshing!



## The Wonder of The Word

*Wednesday, August 25*

TODAY'S READING · PSALM 119:1-88 · 1 CORINTHIANS 7:20-40

*“Open thou mine eyes, That I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. I am a stranger in the earth: Hide not thy commandments from me.”*

— PSALM 119:18-19

Has the spark been doused in life? Feeling drained? Has stress & strain been at the forefront, while the beauty, peace & wonder of life have faded to the background? It seems as though many people are feeling this way I've noticed, but there's no tracing it, no explanation as to why...I can speak from experience that is one of the most obvious signs of God trying to get your attention! When I gave up trying to find magnificence in the world, I finally found it...in Jesus! Soon, it will be realized that we're all strangers in this world, and fulfillment truly isn't found here...His Word holds the wonder & awe we seek!

“Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: So shall I talk of thy wondrous works. My soul melteth for heaviness: Strengthen thou me according unto thy word.” Psalm 119:27-28

We must talk of His Word AND His works to all we know! People are out there seeking something greater than they have...so let's give them the greatest God we know...the only ONE TRUE GOD, JESUS CHRIST!

“Remember the word unto thy servant, Upon which thou hast caused me to hope.” Psalm 119:49

There is no hope in the media. Recent events have emptied the world of its wonder...and we are only left with questions...confusion...depression...and so much worse...find that wonder & awe in Jesus by reading all the hopeful, helpful & life-giving Scriptures in His Word!

“This is my comfort in my affliction: For thy word hath quickened me.” Psalm 119:50

The pain & suffering will be soothed with a Word from The Lord! His Word is capable of doing what this world cannot achieve!

“For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ’s servant.” 1 Corinthians 7:22

Serving God is liberating, while slavery to the world & depression is pure bondage! Serve The Lord. Search His Word. See the wonder again!



## Enemy, or Friend of Me?

Thursday, August 26

TODAY'S READING · PSALM 119:89–176 · 1 CORINTHIANS

*“Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; Yet do I not decline from thy testimonies. I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; Because they kept not thy word. Consider how I love thy precepts: Quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.”*

— PSALM 119:157–159

No matter the persecutors, or the transgressors, or anybody that may try to convince us against our faith, we cannot let go of Truth! We have something so much greater, something which exceeds time into eternity-as it has been so well put-“His Word is TIMELESS!” So we can’t trip up because of temporary strife & struggles...the Psalmist even mentions here that he is grieved not because of the attacks of the enemy, but because they don’t follow the Truth! That takes a lot of faith! God’s Word never changes, so we can have the same faith in His Word today, and we can pray that those who do not believe get ahold of God’s Word!

“Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him.”

1 Corinthians 8:1–3

We could have “knowledge competitions” all day. We could compete with those who speak against us & try to “one up” them...but in the end, it’s about knowing God & being known of Him! That’s when we are satisfied, not in winning a “know it all” battle...but that doesn’t mean being on The Lord’s side won’t bring us victories! We just have to think, what is the victory for? For our own pride? Or to be a message for the doubtful onlookers to fully believe? Think

of the battle of Jericho with Joshua! An enemy, Rahab, believed in the power of God & she and her household were saved from the overtaking of the city! Rahab became part of God's people! The victory wasn't just for Israel to gain more points against the enemy, but to gain more believers! Rahab was an enemy, but she knew the things God could do & switched sides! We have to believe that there will be a lot of people coming to stand on The Lord's side today if we have genuine hearts & send them the right message!

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;” Matthew 5:44



## A Better Hope

*Friday, August 27*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 120–122 · 1 CORINTHIANS 9

*“The LORD is thy keeper: The LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.”*

— PSALM 121:5

This is such a comforting Scripture. The Lord will KEEP US! He will keep us safe. He will keep us protected. He will keep us preserved...and the list goes on! Why should we linger outside of His love? Why should we entrust the world with our very beings, when we were created by God? He is the shade upon our right hand...He is that shadow that follows us as a reminder that He's still God, and He's still there! We are in no better hands than the Hands of God!

“The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in From this time forth, and even for evermore.” Psalm 121:7–8

It is for our souls, not just the protection & preservation of our physical bodies! The path The Lord leads us on takes us all the way to Heaven! The Lord never misguides or misdirects our steps...His preservation is a shelter & shield of safety surrounding us!

“For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.” 1 Corinthians 9:9–10

...So let's plow in hope! Let's work & serve The Lord in hope! His Word promises us that He will bring us through to the promise land-to Heaven-to eternal life! Does He care for the oxen? Of course! Does He care for us? More than we could ever imagine...but at least His Word gives us a glimpse of that!

AUGUST

## If it had not been The Lord...

*Saturday, August 28*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 123–125 · 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1–18

*“If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;  
If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up  
against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, When their wrath  
was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, The  
stream had gone over our soul:”*

— PSALM 124:1–4

**M**any times we look back over our lives & say “If it had not been The Lord, I wouldn’t be standing here today...” Even before getting more committed on my walk with God, I can see many times God protected me & helped me get to the path I’m on today! For example, when I was about 2 or 3 years old, I was climbing on a dresser and it fell. Somehow, I remember myself being on the other side of the room, unharmed, and my Mom ran in and was astonished that I wasn’t crushed! Thank you Jesus...hopefully I was at least a LITTLE more careful since then! God’s Hand is everywhere if we look!

“Our help is in the name of the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.” Psalm 124:8

No one is capable of doing what Jesus can do! He made Heaven & earth, so of course He can help us in our time of need!

“As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, So the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.”

Psalm 125:2

He is all around us! Jonah figured out he could not hide from God-and neither can we! Our troubles are not a secret to Him...there are many times God intervenes without us praying about it...so think about how much He will intervene when we purposefully pray!



“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

1 Corinthians 10:12–13

God never gives us more than we can handle...and His way of escape is getting closer to Him through the process of it all! Some of our greatest struggles become our greatest triumphs if, as we grow, we get closer to God and recognize His Hand upon us in every situation! So let's keep thinking, “If it had not been The Lord, then who?” And, “If it will not be The Lord the next time, then who?” JESUS IS THE ONLY ANSWER!



## Beyond our Dreams

*Sunday, August 29*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 126–128 · 1 CORINTHIANS 10:19–33

*“When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, We were like them that dream.”*

**P**salm 126:1

Some people dream to escape a prison they might be going through, whether it be trapped in an addiction, or just a difficult situation of any kind... but the reality of it is, it doesn't have to stay a dream! God can break the chains & make freedom a reality for us!

“They that sow in tears Shall reap in joy.”

Psalm 126:5

When we cry unto The Lord, when we pour ourselves out in prayer, when we speak His Scriptures & promises over our lives, we will be joyful as we see God work in our lives! That commitment to God is really a dream come true!

“The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.” Psalm 128:5

We can claim the blessings because we know God's goodness! We have read our way into it through His Scriptures! We have prayed our way into it by seeking His face! Every day we can be “living the dream” if we make a commitment to God our reality!

“for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.” 1 Corinthians 10:26

God brought this earth into existence! God made His dream a reality! And He desires to do the same for us. He will make a way out when there seems to be no way. He will bring us from slaves to being free to serve Him with joy! Live for God & live the dream!



AUGUST

## From the Deepest Wounds

*Monday, August 30*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 129–131 · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1–16

*“Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, May Israel now say: Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: Yet they have not prevailed against me.”*

— PSALM 129:1–2

Sometimes, even from childhood, we experience traumatic occurrences which leave us scarred & wounded. Many a time, as the Psalmist says, has he felt this affliction from his youth, as well as that of Israel. While we still carry memories, we have to also remember that “memories” are all those afflictions have become! God has truly brought each one of us through so much...and the Psalmist goes to claim that those past afflictions have not prevailed! We can't let our past prevail over us! We have to let God help us grow to the highest heights out of the deepest wounds!

“The LORD is righteous: He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.”  
Psalm 129:4

Let God cut the cords which attach us to the past! If you haven't let God be your Solution by being your Savior, then there is no better reason to repent, get baptized in Jesus' Name & receive the wonderful, refreshing & needful gift of the Holy Ghost! Our past can be the greatest prison...Jesus can free us from the grips of the deepest wounds!

“Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice: Let thine ears be attentive To the voice of my supplications.” Psalm 130:1–2

Out of the depths! Out of the deepest wounds! Out of our lowest of lows, God hears us!! He IS attentive to the voice of our supplications. He wants us to call upon His Name in order to be uprooted out of our wounds & re-rooted in The Word of God!

“I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, And in his word do I hope.” Psalm 130:5

We hope in His Word, and we can pray these Scriptures over ourselves in order to finally pull off the bandaid covering our past, in which we finally get to the root cause of the issue, letting God take the pain away completely instead of covering it up! There IS hope in Jesus! If your past is still prevailing over your present, abide in the presence of God!



## United, or Untied?

*Tuesday, August 31*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 132-134 · 1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34

*"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together  
in unity!"*

**P**salm 133:1

This may have been a concept I touched on in a previous blog post, but I just think it's so appropriate that these two words, "united" and "untied", are compared! The difference in the division of letters truly makes all the difference! And, the unity of the letters in a certain way makes all the difference as well! Being united, without argument or division, is so good & pleasant, and we should strive for that especially in the Body of Christ! We should not want to be loosely connected, divided or untied!

"Behold, bless ye the LORD, All ye servants of the LORD, Which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, And bless the LORD ." Psalm 134:1-2

The Word speaks to the group as a whole! That the saints together, the servants of The Lord, should stand together, lift up their hands & bless The Lord. The power behind a united church is so great, because God sees all the members of His Body committed! Imagine if many members of our bodies just started to fail us out of nowhere...we would fight for unity again, wanting to fix it in any way possible! That's what God wants for His church!

"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it." 1 Corinthians 11:18

Let us not give into rumors or lies from unreliable, untied sources! Let us not become divided if we have issues, but come together to talk & seek reconciliation! If there's some type of misunderstanding, seek understanding! If there's some type of unforgiveness, seek forgiveness! But first & foremost, seek The Lord in

prayer & His Word, and He will help you to tie up the loose ends & become united once again!









I X

# S E P T E M B E R



*“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my  
path.”*

P S A L M 119:105

D A Y S 244 – 273

## A Merciful Plan

*Wednesday, September 1*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 135–136 · 1 CORINTHIANS 12

*“To him which led his people through the wilderness: For his mercy endureth for ever.”*

— PSALM 136:16

Through the many Scriptures weaved throughout the Bible, especially in Psalms, we see the verse, “for His mercy endureth forever.” God’s intricate plan is sewn together tightly by His mercy. It’s because of His mercy that He brings us through our wildernesses. It’s because of His mercy that He brings us out of the miry clay! His mercy stems from a deep love for us which allows for longsuffering—no matter what we’ve been through, we can always return!

“Who remembered us in our low estate: For his mercy endureth for ever.”  
Psalm 136:23

Wouldn’t it have been easier for God to forget? To say, “Oh, here they go again! Back to rock bottom!” But He doesn’t! He uses rock bottom, our low estate, to bring us back to The Rock, Himself! Of course there are many places where God has wrath. Where He is frustrated with His people’s choices. But His whole plan of mercy endures & prevails, even through those challenging times!

“O give thanks unto the God of heaven: For his mercy endureth for ever.”  
Psalm 136:26

We need to give thanks for this mercy! We need to remember our God and His high estate as He remembers us in our low estate! We always have a Rock to cling to at rock bottom...because we have a merciful God!

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” 1 Corinthians 12:28

“But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.”

1 Corinthians 12:31

When we receive God’s full plan of salvation, repenting, getting baptized in Jesus’ Name & receiving the Holy Ghost, we partake of the most important part of God’s merciful plan! The Holy Ghost is the gift that keeps on giving! His Spirit helps us go from a low estate to growing as a member of the church! Jesus is the more excellent way, and His merciful plan will bring us all the way to Heaven!



## Giving Up

Thursday, September 2

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 137–139 · 1 CORINTHIANS 13

*“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, When we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps Upon the willows in the midst thereof.”*

**P**salms 137:1–2

Sometimes, we feel so low we just want to give up & start over. We don't even want to look for a solution anymore; we just want to “hang up the harp” & be done with it! We don't want to surround ourselves with responsibilities, or even things which used to bring us joy...in times like these especially, we don't need to give up...we need to give in to the restoration of God!

“In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, And strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.” Psalm 138:3

God's strength is stronger than our physical body! It reaches to the soul! It reaches to that place in our emotions where we feel most defeated! God hears our cry, and He WILL answer!

“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.” Psalm 138:7

We will be restored, and more than that, we will be REVIVED! Repenting & baptism of water & Spirit truly brings us to a better state than we ever thought possible! I encourage you to experience this for yourself-it's vital for salvation & crucial to survive the lows & ruts of the world!

“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” 1 Corinthians 13:8

The world may trick us into thinking it loves us, but the love of God is the only force capable of truly picking us up, brushing us off & keeping us going, especially when we want to give up & accept failure & defeat!



## The Voice of The Church

*Friday, September 3*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 140–142 · 1 CORINTHIANS 14:1–20

**W**e've all heard the phrase, "sticks & stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." I don't know about you, but for me, it's sometimes easier to get over a physical pain than an emotional pain...I feel like hurtful words can linger, and the wound doesn't heal fast...but that's something I've had to put in the Hands of God, and I keep having to do it, because I haven't perfected the art of "just getting over it." God helps us to do that in a way no one else can!

"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; Adders' poison is under their lips. Selah." Psalm 140:3

The poke of words is sometimes sharper than a physical poke...so we need to sharpen ourselves in the encouraging Word of God in order to not just "get over it," but overcome it & fix the problem with that person! The power to release unforgiveness & forgive is only in Jesus!

"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; And the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; Keep the door of my lips." Psalm 141:2–3

Our pattern of prayer & praise to God is similar to that of the tabernacle! Our prayer is the incense, our praise is the sacrifice! Our lips are the door where many things can enter and come out...we want to keep all pure, clean & of a good report! All of us practicing this pattern together become the voice of the church Body of Christ!

"There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification." 1 Corinthians 14:10

We can normally identify the type of person by the tone of voice they use...it's easy to see the place they're coming from...that's why, as the voice of the church, we must be bold enough to speak over the lies of the sharpened tongues of this world...we must speak in that Heavenly language when we receive the Holy

Ghost speaking with new tongues, but we must also be able to speak to people in a way which invites them to have that experience. Sticks and stones may do a lot, but the Sword of The Lord, the Word of God, can do so much more as the voice of His Church!



## Equipped for Battle

*Saturday, September 4*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 143-145 · 1 CORINTHIANS 14:21-40

*"Blessed be the LORD my strength, Which teacheth my hands to war,  
and my fingers to fight:"*

— PSALM 144:1

It is relieving to know that we serve a God who prepares us for the things we will face in life. Any battle, any challenge, any trauma...every mountain is climbable with God! His Word has all the tools we need to get through our struggles! Through His Word, He teaches our hands to war & fingers to fight! He equips us with a strength that's no match for this world's drama!

"Happy is that people, that is in such a case: Yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD." Psalm 144:15

We can be happy knowing we serve a victorious God! We are on the winning side with Jesus! While He does fight our battles for us, He also prepares us to do our part as well! There's no way we can lose with Him!

"The LORD upholdeth all that fall, And raiseth up all those that be bowed down."

Psalm 145:14

We don't have to raise the white flag to the enemy if we surrender fully to God! When we serve The Lord with our whole heart, following His whole Word, then even death doesn't mean defeat!

"Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Corinthians 14:40

Let Jesus order our steps toward the next battle to come! Let us be open to His Spiritual strength & Spiritual weaponry to face that next challenge. We don't have to dread the future...we can look forward to it as God equips us for the next battle, where we can confidently say we will win!





## Atmosphere of Praise

*Sunday, September 5*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 146–147 · 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1–28

In church, we talk about creating an atmosphere of praise. Scripture also says, “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” Psalm 22:3. God inhabits the praise of His people! When we truly think about the atmosphere of the earth itself, and how God created every last inch of it, it should not be hard to get into the mode of worshipping & praising God in our church atmosphere! Scripture gives us so many beautiful examples which paint a picture of earth’s atmosphere of praise!

“He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite.” Psalm 147:4–5

He has created each star & knows them by name! His understanding is infinite! How incredible is that! That Scripture alone should cause His saints to shine like stars of praise! If He knows each star by name, how much more does He know each one of us?

“He casteth forth his ice like morsels: Who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.” Psalm 147:17–18

From freezing to melting, from hot to cold, any climate in any atmosphere, He is God! He can melt any ice cap, so why not let Him melt our hearts? Allow these Scriptures to place us in a place of praise to Him for all He has done, and all He continues to do!

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” 1 Corinthians 15:20–22

Beyond creation, God has power over any type of destruction...even death! He has risen, and is alive today! This is why we need to seek & receive the Holy

Ghost! His Spirit in us is the fulfillment of the beautiful symphony of praise, and helps us further know & love our Creator Who has given each star a name! Repentance & baptism of water & Spirit truly brings the whole atmosphere of Heaven & earth together as we go from earthly creatures only to Spiritual creatures of praise!



## What's your instrument?

*Monday, September 6*

TODAY'S READING · PSALMS 148–150 · 1 CORINTHIANS 15:29–58

Many of these Psalms are about praising The Lord, and last post was all about the importance of that atmosphere of praise! Creation praises, and so will we! But in reading these chapters, there are so many instruments of praise...so which one do we choose?

“Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: Praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: Praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath Praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.” Psalm 150:3–6

There are so many instruments, including dancing in the presence of The Lord, and using all our breath to sing to Him! We don't have to be good musicians to praise The Lord! It really seems like God wants us to use whatever we have, all of our skills, to praise Him! In our daily lives, we can praise The Lord by living according to His Word. By sharing His Word with others. By doing good & showing the love of God! In everything we do, we can give Him honor & glory! We can still sing & worship, of course, no matter what skills we have...but it's so great to know we can honor Him in many other ways! God wants us to dedicate our lives, not just beautiful singing voices!

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:58

Our labor is not in vain! Our “sound” might be different than someone else's, but that's because we are using different instruments! But if our intention is to praise The Lord, He hears us! Each one of us can abound in the work of The Lord without comparing ourselves to others! All we really have to do is compare

ourselves to His Word to know if what we are doing is really glorifying Him! So...  
what's your instrument? How do you give Him daily praise?



## Still Learning

*Tuesday, September 7*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 1-2 · 1 CORINTHIANS 16

*“A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; And a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:”*

— PROVERBS 1:5

**L**earning is not just for kids! Learning is for those who have already learned... for those who have already had some experience gaining wisdom in certain areas...so...that does not mean we are experts in every area! Life is learning, and allowing God to expand our understanding through His wisdom, and give us the patience to practice, will only make us stronger! Only fools stop learning!

“For the LORD giveth wisdom: Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.” Proverbs 2:6-7

The Lord gives us wisdom, but if we don't go to Him, we will never receive it! The hardest part about daily life is admitting there are areas we need help in. For example, I've been through school, but that doesn't make me an expert at teaching. Only The Lord's help will get us successfully through these years of homeschool! Thankfully, God gives us godly counsellors, like pastors, to go to and discuss these things with...and nothing will change unless we also practice a life of prayer & living out His Word! I encourage you all to read through these Proverbs with me over these next weeks to help us through our hardest life subjects!

“When wisdom entereth into thine heart, And knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, Understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, From the man that speaketh froward things;”

Proverbs 2:10-12

If we don't look to the right counsel, we are sure to receive the wrong one! We need to let knowledge of the Truth first be pleasant to our soul...that will then help us out to receive knowledge in the various other areas of our lives! Understanding will KEEP us...probably from going insane!

"I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied. For they have refreshed my spirit and your's: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such." 1 Corinthians 16:17-18

Paul wasn't afraid to admit when he needed a refreshing...and many accepted his counsel and learned from Paul too! Every single one of us is living & learning...and when we put God first, we learn the most!



## Standing Corrected

*Wednesday, September 8*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 3-5 · 2 CORINTHIANS 1

*“My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; Neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”*

— PROVERBS 3:11-12

Going off of our past post, we are always learning...and this also means we must be willing to be changed & corrected. When we add knowledge, we are changing the way we think about something...or just adding to what we already know...but most often, we have to be willing to stand corrected & change our mindsets to that which pleases God. It may be different than the world thinks, but God's ways are higher!

“When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. Be not afraid of sudden fear, Neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the LORD shall be thy confidence, And shall keep thy foot from being taken.” Proverbs 3:24-26

When we are open to getting to know The Lord, without worry of being corrected, we find ourselves in a place of safety! Correction does bring us out of our current comfort zone, but thankfully the comfort zone of The Lord is the best place to be! It lasts into eternity!

“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, And attend to know understanding.” Proverbs 4:1

“And say, How have I hated instruction, And my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!” Proverbs 5:12-13

As adults, it's hard sometimes to get back to that place where we let our Father correct us...but we have to remind ourselves that God is our Heavenly



Father! He is our Creator! He knows us because He created us, and being higher above all, He already has the best perspective to see into our lives & know the big picture. So, we need to get to that place where we once again are open to humble correction as we keep learning. We can stand corrected, or we can crumble under the pressure!



## 7 rules NOT to live by...

Thursday, September 9

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 6-7 · 2 CORINTHIANS 2

*"These six things doth the LORD hate: Yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, Feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, And he that soweth discord among brethren."*

— PROVERBS 6:16-19

Listed above are 7 things that God hates as abominations to Him. Honestly, this blog could easily end right here! Although these things should strike us as obvious, we as humans tend to let emotions and impulses get the best of us sometimes, and some of these things do happen in our world, far more often than we'd like them to...it's as if the world's conscience is broken when look up the latest news...how could we ever sink to these levels? We need something, actually Someone, stronger than our conscience & stronger than our hearts...we need the Truth of our God!

"My son, keep my words, And lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; And my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, Write them upon the table of thine heart." Proverbs 7:1-3

If we write God's Word upon our hearts daily, then our hearts will be strong against the temptation to act out of anger & do something we regret! More God=more control over our reactions to things. That's why we must not only have them, but BIND them as the Scripture states! Our flesh is bound to us pretty tightly, but acting upon it's requests usually cause us to commit something on that list of abominations! So we must act on the Word of God!

"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have

more abundantly unto you.” 2 Corinthians 2:4

These were the words of Paul, pleading with church at Corinth to stay on the righteous path...not to grieve them, but to show them how much he loves & cares for them...because in the end, if we don't follow God's ways, the world will cause US to be grieved! Let's stay on the righteous path, because God loves us & knows what's best for us!



## To Compliment, or Complain?

*Friday, September 10*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 8-9 · 2 CORINTHIANS 3

To compliment or complain, that is the question! Which is usually easier? Unfortunately, it seems as though pride & anger have a much bigger mouth than kindness & compassion...it's those intense emotions & impulses of pride & anger which tend to bubble up out of our mouths and into some form of words, long before we ever give any thought to what the positive could be in the situation...but instead, let's let Proverbs 8:6-8 be our description:

“Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; And the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; And wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; There is nothing froward or perverse in them.” Proverbs 8:6-8

Seems a little too good to be true! But remember, with God, nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37)! Honestly, we just add fuel to the fire when our negative words match our negative situation...in removing ourselves to a time of prayer & encouragement in His Word, we will experience that change of tune! Like a lion tamer in the lion's den, God silences anger & pride and allows our kindness & compassion to speak!

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” 2 Corinthians 3:4-6

God is our sufficiency! It may be hard to get it right every time, but practice makes perfect, and consistency creates habit! As humans, it's not in us to do it alone...but when God's Spirit of the New Testament compliments everything written in the Old Testament, like the Proverbs above, there's a happy marriage of positivity & a greater understanding of what God is really wanting to say to us!

More than anything, we need His Spirit to lead & guide us into all Truth (John 16:13) & all joy!

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:” 2 Corinthians 3:12

Just speaking about the hope of Jesus, no matter the situation, will make a positive change! We will start to feel better just knowing He is there for us, even if the problem hasn't yet been solved! Instead of being complainers, let's be complimenters in Jesus' Name!



## The Value of Silence

*Saturday, September 11*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 10-12 · 2 CORINTHIANS 4

*"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: But he that  
restraineth his lips is wise."*

— PROVERBS 10:19

"The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: But the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness." Proverbs 10:32

Discretion is such an undervalued treasure! It seems like we are always trying to come up with the perfect thing to say, knowing full well that there are plenty of perfect things we should NOT say, even though they would totally fit in the moment! The value of silence is so great, and we need to be more patient in waiting on The Lord for that thing which will encourage instead of discourage!

"An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: But through knowledge shall the just be delivered." Proverbs 11:9

...Especially knowledge of the Word of God! That's the best dictionary to go by in looking forward to the perfect thing to say...just speak God's Word! Spend some time in the silence with Jesus, praying and searching the Scriptures, and that right & needful thing will come up! We don't want to destroy; we want to speak life!

"He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: But a man of understanding holdeth his peace." Proverbs 11:12

"A talebearer revealeth secrets: But he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter." Proverbs 11:13

If we truly love our neighbor, we will realize that holding our tongue holds the friendship together more than speaking many things to them! Our faithfulness can truly be proven in the silence! We can't trip over our words when

we are saying nothing! Again, let's spend time with The Lord developing our thoughts, especially in times where our friends are going through crises!



## Rich in Poor Things

*Sunday, September 12*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 13–15 · 2 CORINTHIANS 5

*“There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.”*

**P**roverbs 13:7

Turns out, stuff is not fulfilling. Worldly status is not fulfilling. We could be sitting on top of the world, surrounded by things obtained over time, but at the same time, we can feel the lowest of the low in a pile of nothingness. This is just a constant reminder that a lowly, poor & humble spirit is one that will always feel rich, because everything worked for & received is seen as a blessing, not just another thing in the pile...

“Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: But he that gathereth by labour shall increase.” Proverbs 13:11

Are we intentional about what we gather? Do we work hard with a goal to give glory to God instead of a goal to gain? When God is our goal, we can be rich in poor things! The world may give us a “below average” rating, but we are just here for the temporary, waiting on our mansion with Jesus in Heaven!

“In the house of the righteous is much treasure: But in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.” Proverbs 15:6

What could look like a heap of wonderful things could actually be a whole lot of cumbersome trouble...each thing we obtain needs to then be cared for, stored & used...and sometimes, if we are not careful, we can become hoarders of vain objects rather than receivers of blessings from God! Those blessings can sometimes come in the form of materialistic things we need or desire, but Spiritual treasure stretches far beyond that! We have treasures of God's love, peace, joy, safety & so much more! It may look like nothing, it may look like we are poor, but our hearts are very rich!



“He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; But he that hateth gifts shall live.” Proverbs 15:27

This doesn’t mean we don’t have to accept gifts, but our goal in life should not be to gain!

“but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” Matthew 6:20

It is quite possible to be rich in “poor” things!



## Compassion over Conflict

*Monday, September 13*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 16–18 · 2 CORINTHIANS 6

*“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”*

— PROVERBS 16:32

Building off of the “Complain or Compliment” post, these few chapters really highlighted a similar importance of having compassion over stirring up conflict. It’s always hard to restrain ourselves from making our anger tower of Babel any bigger, but we have to build relationships with others instead of building an argument & putting up a good fight. It looks even better than someone who is able to take a whole city!

“The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: Therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.”

Proverbs 17:14

Our angry tones may cause more of an explosion than we think! What an overflowing mess we make when we unleash the beast of anger that’s just waiting for the perfect time with the perfect comeback! Compassion is key!

“Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: And he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.”

Proverbs 17:28

Again, the value of silence, as was discussed previously, is also key! It could mean the preserving of a friendship!

“The words of a talebearer are as wounds, And they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.” Proverbs 18:8

Our conflicts may hurt people way deeper than we know...so we must show the compassion & love of God to them! We must love our enemies!

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.” Proverbs 18:21

“Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:” 2 Corinthians 6:3

What kind of image are we putting out there? How are we making ourselves look? How are we making our God look? Are we being Christ-like, or conflict-driven? Let’s pray for that self-control & restraint which chooses compassion over conflict in Jesus’ Name!



## The Nocturnal Soul

*Tuesday, September 14*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 19–21 · 2 CORINTHIANS 7

*“Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; And an idle soul shall suffer hunger.”*

**P**roverbs 19:15

If we are slothful, we will end up doing so much “nothingness” that we will just sleep through the daytime...the productive time...the most important times of our lives! We will become numb to the urgency & importance of certain events & essential tasks which need to get done...we will hunger and starve ourselves of the greatest things in life which God has to offer! We can't afford to be nocturnal souls, living backwards & missing out on opportunities!!

“There are many devices in a man's heart; Nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.” Proverbs 19:21

We can use all the “common sense” we have, but in the end, it's God's Word which has the final say! We can make tons of excuses for why we “can't,” while God is saying “nothing is impossible!” (Luke 1:37). Are we going to be a part of the “can'ts” or the “cans”? Are we going to hide under the covers, or cover ourselves in the armor of God & get out there and be victorious!?

“Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; And a false balance is not good.” Proverbs 20:23

Again, we can't live a backwards life! We can't think that we can sleep away responsibility, or pretend it doesn't exist...the best way to escape it is to bring it to God in prayer! We can feel peace as we await the next step in the process...but we can't stay still when God says go! We have to be ready to put the work in to see the results!

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2

Corinthians 7:1

God has such great promises in store for us...let's not waste His precious time living against His perfect Will for our lives. Let's not sleep when we are supposed to be awake, alert & active in His Kingdom! Let's set some goals & see God's goodness at work when we get to work too!



## The Landmark of Truth

*Wednesday, September 15*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 22-24 · 2 CORINTHIANS 8

*“Remove not the ancient landmark, Which thy fathers have set.”*

— PROVERBS 22:28

God gave us His Word from the beginning, and His Word has stood through the test of time; however, there have always been people (and still are today) who desire to tear down what was and replace it with something new...while renovations are necessary in some areas, the landmark of Truth must never be removed! God's Word will still be a landmark to those who love Him, no matter who tries to bring it down or take it away! In a world of great change, let's keep the Word of God consistent!

“Remove not the old landmark; And enter not into the fields of the fatherless: For their redeemer is mighty; He shall plead their cause with thee.” Proverbs 23:10-11

Those who try to remove God's Word from society are trying to weaken those who place their trust in Him, especially those who call Him Father! God IS our Father & Protector, and He shall stand with us as we stand with Him, defending His Word!

“Buy the truth, and sell it not; Also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.” Proverbs 23:23

If we remove Truth, we are freely giving away wisdom, instruction, understanding, and all the goodness of God! The only thing that awaits us when we give up on God is a lie—we must stay true to God & His landmark of Truth!

“providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.” 2 Corinthians 8:21

Let's stay honest. Let's stay in the Truth. Let's share His Word with others in order to see this landmark built once again throughout our entire nation, not just

in our hearts!



## Right Word, Right Time

Thursday, September 16

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 25–26 · 2 CORINTHIANS 9

*“A word fitly spoken Is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”*

— PROVERBS 25:11

Has there ever been a time when you were looking for an answer, and you weren't sure when it was going to come, and all of a sudden, “There it is! That's it! That's what I've been waiting for!”

It's such a great feeling when something just makes sense after a long time of wondering...as Scripture says, like apples of gold in pictures of silver! Like a word of encouragement for example, the right word at the right time is as beautiful as a work of art, lifting our spirits and letting us feel so much better!

“A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; And a flattering mouth worketh ruin.” Proverbs 26:28

On the opposite end, a wrong word at the wrong time feels terrible...a lie doesn't protect anyone; its only intention is to hurt others! Also, flattering and encouraging are two different things! Flattering is a lie painted positively, but encouragement is the pure Truth, beautifully given, like those apples of gold in pictures of silver!

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6

We should be as bountiful with encouragement to others as we can, especially in this day & hour! We should be holding our tongue & sparing with our words (not daring!) if we are unsure if what we are saying is speaking positively or negatively. Are we glorifying God? Are we lifting up others? Or are we putting others down & lifting ourselves up? We need to speak the Scriptures, giving that right word at the right time!





## Hear it like it is

*Friday, September 17*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 27-29 · 2 CORINTHIANS 10

*"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."*

— PROVERBS 27:6

**D**o we need counterfeit comfort when we are going through a struggle, or constructive criticism? I heard the term "counterfeit comfort" in a song recently, and it was really brought back to me while reading this verse. Sure, it's nice to hear a soothing word, but it's sometimes what we want, not what we need. True comfort comes when we endure brief the discomfort of a hard Truth & we come out stronger because of it! It may not feel good to hear what we need, but it will be 10 times better than just hearing what we want!

"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: So doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel." Proverbs 27:9

We need the hearty stuff! We can't have just the broth! We need the whole Truth & nothing but the Truth, so help us God! We need what's going to fix us, not just tend to our feelings. We need to be brave enough to hear it like it is!

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer shall be abomination." Proverbs 28:9

When we turn a deaf ear to God's Word of Truth, our prayers are deafened in His ears! Of course God is loving & merciful, but we can't have the living God without living according to the living Word!

"casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" 2 Corinthians 10:5

Let's release ourselves of the imaginations we put in place to replace the Truth in our lives. Let's not shy away from hearing it like it is, and humbly changing

who we are for the better!



## A Labor of Love

*Saturday, September 18*

TODAY'S READING · PROVERBS 30-31 · 2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15

*"She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: Her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, And her hands hold the distaff."*

— PROVERBS 31:18-19

A Mother's work is never quite complete. This is true for Fathers too, but being a Mom myself & speaking to many other Moms, I can speak to what I know of Motherhood & compare it to that of Proverbs 31. The candle doesn't really go out. In sleep, we still wonder & dream if all is well, and have constant conversations in our own mind of how we can improve. God has designed Mothers to be lifesavers, not only to birthing children, but to giving the best of our lives to them. It's a labor of love!

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." Proverbs 31:20

There is a constant spirit of sacrifice in many aspects of life, not just for our children...but having children increases the importance & awareness of all those in need. Moms desire to reach further until the problem is solved. It's all driven by a Christ-like love that knows true sacrifice!

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, And eateth not the bread of idleness." Proverbs 31:27

There's never a dull moment in Motherhood, and that's ok! God keeps things interesting. He keeps us going. Our goal is to see our whole family make it to Heaven, and we must stop at nothing to see that accomplished! Thankfully, The Lord knows how to give us a little rest in between battles, although, again, sometimes sleep can be a challenge & rare commodity!

“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: But a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.” Proverbs 31:30

We don't need to worry about the worldly needs of women as godly Mothers. If we fear The Lord, we will be praised! But more than us being praised, we will earn a humility that just wants to see Jesus praised, and so all else just becomes a bonus! So thankful for this labor of love!



# The Good, the Bad & the Godly

*Sunday, September 19*

TODAY'S READING · ECCLESIASTES 1-3 · 2 CORINTHIANS 11:16-33

*"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."*

**E**cclesiastes 3:1

So many situations, ebbs & flows, and ups & downs happen to us in life...we try to judge everything on how it makes us feel-good or bad. Under these circumstances, our happiness doesn't last. We are just looking for the next good thing instead of our good God! Good & bad happen to all, but in those times, we can have a godly perspective which allows us to have joy, no matter the outcome!

"a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;" Ecclesiastes 3:2

Things start & things end...we can hold bitterness, or we can hold onto the promises of God! We can understand that God has a precious timing & reasoning for everything, yet prayer makes the difference! Prayer intercedes in tough situations! Prayer changes things! But joy comes only by accepting the Will of God, and seeking the Will of God! That's one thing which can never be changed, but if we pray our way into His Will, we will have a greater understanding of our circumstances & a greater sense of joy through it all!

"in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;" 2 Corinthians 11:26

In all the different perils of Paul, he still had faith & joy on his journeys! He faced the good, the bad & had a godly outlook through it all! In all his near-death experiences, he had a love for God that overwhelmed him more than his current situations! I pray I develop that kind of depth of faith, love & trust to the point

where I find that joy & peace! I pray it for us all in Jesus' Name! Through the good & the bad, let's stay godly, holy & Spiritual through it all!



# Help!

*Monday, September 20*

TODAY'S READING · ECCLESIASTES 4-6 · 2 CORINTHIANS 12

*“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.”*

**E**cclesiastes 4:9-10

God does not want us to rely on ourselves to make it through this life. I am so thankful to have a church family that helps us up when we are down! This weekend was truly a reflection of that. It was our 39th Anniversary service, and we were able to remember all those who have been there for us over the years...it was a truly emotional time, but in the best of ways! Sometimes “Help!” is the best thing you can say!

“Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:11-12

The church never leaves you out in the cold...there is always warmth, comfort & peace as we gather as The Body of Christ. And the reason they are such special people is because we have a special God, Who uses His church mightily to come to the aid of others!

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9

When we resist help, we are resisting God! We are proclaiming that “We got this” instead of “I am alone, hurting & need a Friend!” Jesus is the friend closer than a brother, and He uses His church as a family to show us that!

“And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.” 2 Corinthians 12:15



We must be willing to not only let our guard down & accept help (and change), but we must also be willing to be bold enough to give it! In the end, it's better to be spent on people than riches! It's better to invest ourselves in the Kingdom of God than anything else!



## The Prize of the Wise

*Tuesday, September 21*

TODAY'S READING · ECCLESIASTES 7-9 · 2 CORINTHIANS 13

*“Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.”*

**E**cclesiastes 7:19

So much more is gained through wisdom & discretion than physical strength & ability...when we have the ability to use wise judgment in a situation, we don't waste our efforts in any way! According to the above Scripture, wisdom strengthens us more than mighty men! The wisdom of God is more precious than anything, and it's the greatest personal trainer we can have!

“I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:” Ecclesiastes 7:25

We can't have the reception of wisdom without the intentional application of wisdom! If we are not seeking for it through prayer & the Word of God, then we do not care enough to have it! We need to be diligent in seeking out the wisest solutions. We need to wait on The Lord for His answer! The prize of the wise is wisdom itself-the wisdom of God!

“The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.” Ecclesiastes 9:17

When we speak with wisdom, we are heard even when it seems like no one is listening...people actually listen more when we take the time to give a wise response...even though those debating & shouting, especially over social media, seem to be loud with their opinions, a word of wisdom still holds more strength than that! Especially today, we need God's help to speak what is true & right. We need to know when to speak, and when to stay silent. The peace that wisdom brings is also a true prize!

“Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” 2 Corinthians 13:11

Wisdom helps us to live in peace & not in contention with others. I pray we all seek out & wait upon the wisdom of The Lord! In Jesus' Name!



## When we know Jesus...

*Wednesday, September 22*

TODAY'S READING · ECCLESIASTES 10-12 · GALATIANS 1

*"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."*

— ECCLESIASTES 11:5

Our God is Jesus Christ, and we may not always understand the way He does things, or even why...but when we get to know HIM, we no longer worry or stress about the "why"! We only have more trust that, even if the process doesn't make sense, Jesus always brings us to the best conclusion & solution!

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Ecclesiastes 11:6

This passage then encourages us to keep going anyway! After describing what we don't know, we are encouraged to just keep doing what we know to do! To keep working. To keep moving. To keep going! God will work out what we don't know! Remember, when we know HIM, that's all we need! Of course, as we pray & seek Him, things are revealed to us...but if God chooses not to reveal certain things, then we just have to be faithful & trust that He is the same God in the known as the unknown! He sees all! He knows all! We can't be God, but we can love God!!

"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."

Galatians 1:13-14

When didn't know Jesus, he trusted in his traditions to lead him through life... while it was a building block & stepping stone, it wasn't quite the relationship Jesus was wanting to have with him. Thankfully, Paul responded quickly when Jesus made Himself known to Paul, wanting to take him from the known to the unknown!

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:” Galatians 1:15–16

Paul immediately knew who he must serve! His conversion didn't make sense to many, but it did to him! Remember, Jesus was first revealed to Paul, and so immediate trust developed! We first need to get to know Jesus more & more, then we can watch our trust build, right alongside that relationship with Him! We will soon have no fear of the unknown, and only have faith that God will work it out!



## The Beauty of His Love

Thursday, September 23

TODAY'S READING · SONG OF SOLOMON 1-3 · GALATIANS 2

*"Behold, thou art fair, my love; Behold, thou art fair; Thou hast doves' eyes. Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, Yea, pleasant: Also our bed is green."*

— SONG OF SOLOMON 1:15-16

**T**he book of Song of Solomon shows us the beauty of God's love toward us. It emphasizes the fact that He doesn't love us from afar. He doesn't just want to watch over us. He wants an intimate Spiritual relationship with each and every one of us! He wants to be not just around us, but in us as the Holy Ghost!

"He brought me to the banqueting house, And his banner over me was love." Song of Solomon 2:4

He brings us from glory to glory, from greater things to greater things! He will also one day bring us to the banqueting house of the marriage supper of The Lamb when we are raptured up with Him! But we need to be ready! We need to repent, be baptized and receive His Spirit in order to be recognized as His beloved! His beautiful banner over us is LOVE!

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away." Song of Solomon 2:10

Let's be just as in love with Him as He is with us! Let's follow those salvational steps & live a life in love with Jesus!

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

He gave His LIFE because of His LOVE! Our life is most beautiful when we let Jesus shine through us...because this life is just preparing us for a loving eternity with Him!



## His Loving Attributes

*Friday, September 24*

TODAY'S READING · SONG OF SOLOMON 4-5 · GALATIANS 3

*"Thou art all fair, my love; There is no spot in thee."*

— SONG OF SOLOMON 4:7

Even the Old Testament can paint a picture of Jesus...so many things spoken in these couple chapters of Song of Solomon describe attributes of Jesus which we see when He comes on the scene in the New Testament! That's because Jesus is God, He doesn't change, and He always loves us! He is fair...not only in purity and beauty, but in His judgments!

"A fountain of gardens, A well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."

Song of Solomon 4:15

This is comparable to John 7:38 in the New Testament which speaks of rivers of living water flowing from the belly! When we receive His Spirit, that's exactly what happens! He is the well which makes us never thirst again, because with His Spirit, that well flows from within us, with evidence of speaking in new tongues! It Scriptural, salvational & simply beautiful!

"His mouth is most sweet: Yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." Song of Solomon 5:16

Jesus doesn't speak bitter things to us. He speaks life & hope! Even if the Truth may hurt at times, but "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Proverbs 27:6. So thankful for His faithful, Truthful & loving attributes!

"that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Galatians 3:14

Here is a beautiful description of the marriage between Old & New Testament, and between us & Jesus: when we have faith to take the steps



necessary for our salvation, just as Abraham did what was required of him, we will receive that same promise of all our generations being saved!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:38–39



# Adopted

*Saturday, September 25*

TODAY'S READING · SONG OF SOLOMON 6-8 · GALATIANS 4

*"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, As a seal upon thine arm: For love is strong as death; Jealousy is cruel as the grave: The coals thereof are coals of fire, Which hath a most vehement flame."*

— SONG OF SOLOMON 8:6

Jesus loves us so much! He wants all to be a part of His family...even if we didn't grow up that way, even if we've made mistakes, He wants us to make things right & come to Him! He has a love for us which is beyond anything this world can provide. He has set us upon His heart, so let's set Him fully upon ours! Human love might be strong as death, but His goes beyond the grave! He is willing to run after us & adopt us...how great is our God!

"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4:3-5

We all belonged to the world for a time...we all ran away with a false idea of love & hope, while God always had something true & pure to offer...but He redeemed us that we might receive that adoption! GOD IS LOVE! But where are we placing our love? Are we more in love with the ways of the world, or are we longing to be adopted & born into His family through repentance, water baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost?

"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." Galatians 4:31

It is our adoption into Jesus which will truly set us free. This world has so many uncertainties. So many unsafe things which can cause us to worry...but in Jesus, we find safety & hope!



## Open Wounds

*Sunday, September 26*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 1-2 · GALATIANS 5

*“From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.”*

— ISAIAH 1:6

Are there any unresolved issues still bugging you? It could be those very things which keep us bound in a place of negativity, rather than positivity and productivity. We could have been wounded in the past, but if those wounds are left open & untreated, infection happens. We can think we are fine by just carrying open wounds with us, but whether they be physical, emotional, spiritual or mental, they will be always be a problem to us unless we get the right treatment!

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isaiah 1:18

The scarlet red of our sins is an open wound. It may not look that way to us, but Jesus is just waiting to cleanse, purge and heal those hurtful places in our lives! We need to allow Him to provide us with the true treatment! The washing of the Blood of Jesus in water baptism & receiving the refreshing life which the Holy Ghost brings...but we can't even start treatment without a repentant heart! The heart is the first open wound which needs to be healed by Jesus!

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Galatians 5:22-24

When we go through this treatment process for our sinful, open wounds...when we let the past go...when we ask for forgiveness and forgive those who have hurt us...when this becomes our lifestyle...then we can experience the full benefits & fruit of the Spirit listed above! When we receive the Holy Ghost, we realize that there's no better therapy for open wounds than Jesus!



## Restore, or Ignore?

*Monday, September 27*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 3-4 · GALATIANS 6

*“when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.”*

**I** saiah 4:4

We must remember, as was stated in the last post, Jesus is the Cleanser of our open wounds. He washes the filth out of our lives & allows us to live fresh & new! When we choose this process of restoring instead of ignoring our wounds, we are healed! We then must go to others and tell them it's time to restore, rather than ignore!

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” Galatians 6:1

When we have built back up Spiritual strength through the Holy Ghost in our healing process, we must go out in hopes to see others restored! We cannot ignore the needs of our fellow strugglers! We need to restore in the spirit of meekness, but also watching out to not re-open our old wounds while trying to help others recover from their hurts!

“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2

Jesus took the sin of the entire world upon Himself...the least we can do is reach one or two! The burdens we bear can see others repaired! We can help to introduce people to The One who loves us so much to be our Savior & Sacrifice. We may have to carry some baggage along the way, but the journey to see a soul saved is worth it! We must not ignore our wounds or the wounds of others if we ever want to be truly healed & fulfilled!



## Forward, or Backward?

*Tuesday, September 28*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 5-6 · EPHESIANS 1

*“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”*

— ISAIAH 5:20

Isaiah is lamenting to Israel of the backwards way they were living...how they'd turned back from following God, and turned toward the ways of the world. Isaiah's words speak to us today as well! There are many who call evil good, enjoy darkness instead of light, and take bitterness instead of sweetness! Let's be sure our hearts are turned in the right direction, going forward with God, making progress toward our Heavenly home...not backwards toward the temporary pleasures of this life!

“according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:” Ephesians 1:4

Jumping into the New Testament, we see that in following after God's pattern, we become a part of a love that started before the foundation of the world! Before there was evil, there was God...and there was always a light able to shine in the darkness! We were always meant to follow Jesus...He is our Father & Savior; this world is not our home, our father or our savior! We cannot choose this world over eternity with Jesus! We must go forward, not backward!

“far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:21-23



Do we want greatness? Let's seek Jesus! Do we want hope? Let's seek Jesus! Do we want Heaven? Let's seek Jesus! Let's keep our eyes looking forward to Him, not allowing the wandering eye to be tempted by the unfulfillment & backward ways of the world!



## Don't be afraid to ASK!

*Wednesday, September 29*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 7-8 · EPHESIANS 2

*"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."*

— ISAIAH 7:14

The Lord told Ahaz king of Judah to ask a sign of The Lord when they were in desperate times...but he wouldn't ask! God then said that if you ask & depend upon men for things, you should do the same with The Lord! In fact, how much MORE should we rely on the answer of God than the answer of men!? Therefore, God told Ahaz through Isaiah that He Himself would give a sign...and that Sign is Jesus! He would give Himself to us to be relied upon. To answer our questions face-to-face. To get on our level so people would want to get close to God again!

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"

Ephesians 2:4-6

God is so rich in many things...He has so many abundant blessings, if we only ask...but the main things He is rich in are love, mercy, peace, and all things that cannot be touched or corrupted by this world, and those are the true treasures we can take with us to Heaven one day! We need only ask Him in prayer, and we can be ready to receive of His abundance! We should not fear asking The Lord, or treat Him like a last resort...He wants us to come unto Him! It's part of the beautiful relationship we begin with Him when we repent & get baptized by water & Spirit! Don't be afraid to ASK!



DAY 273

## The Birth of Love

Thursday, September 30

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 9-10 · EPHESIANS 3

*“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”*

— ISAIAH 9:6

When Jesus' birth was prophesied in Isaiah, there was so much more to it than just a physical birth which would one day take place, of someone who was of the lineage of David...this birth was a birth of love! True, pure love would be entering the world through Jesus, as our Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace! By His great love for us, He would be born in this world for us, die for us, and be all these things & more to us! HE IS LOVE!

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.” Isaiah 10:27

He didn't come to place a heavy burden upon us, as takes place so frequently in the demands of every day life...He came that we may put the strife of this life aside in order to take on a life lived for Him! The question is, are we allowing the birth of a more serious love for Jesus to take place in our hearts? He was birthed by an everlasting love for us...are we going to birth & manifest the same love toward Him?

“and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 3:9

He has loved us all since the beginning-“all men” does not exclude anyone! We need to dedicate ourselves more fully to Him, the One Who holds back nothing for us, the One Who leaves the 99 to chase after one like us...

“and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” Ephesians 3:19

We can know and be filled with the greatest form of His love when we receive His Spirit, the Holy Ghost! When we receive Him & are baptized in Jesus’ Name with a truly repentant heart, we not only claim His love for us, but we proclaim our love back to Him!

The people we love, we go to great lengths for. How about Jesus Christ? Through this process described above, the greatest length we will reach is Heaven!







X

# OCTOBER



*“O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy  
endureth for ever.”*

PSALM 107:1

DAYS 274 – 304

## Speak The Name

*Friday, October 1*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 11–13 · EPHESIANS 4

*“And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.”*

— ISAIAH 12:4

**T**he Name of Jesus is so powerful...we must not be afraid to proclaim Him & speak of Him in this day & hour! There are many bold statements being thrown around in society today, and many cause fear, doubt & hatred to flow rapidly through the heart of each citizen...but the Name of Jesus is what truly needs to be spoken, praised, called upon & declared among everyone! Even just speaking His Name with boldness and confidence can spark a change in this world...from hopelessness to hope! Every heart will be changed for the right reasons!

“Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.” Isaiah 12:5–6

He is Great in the midst of us! Just simply singing to Him does wonders... Paul & Silas sang & encouraged themselves in The Lord in prison, and the bars of the prison were shaken down! How many people are caught up in their own prisons today, trapped by their past, or mindsets which don't allow them to live freely as Christ intended? We must speak of Jesus to them, and let them know there is a way out, even when there seems to be no way!

“but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4:15

Speaking Truth, which is Jesus Himself (because He is The Word) is the only way we will see a growth in our nation which reaches all the way to Heaven! We



will grow up into Him all things...not temporary highs, but reaching eternal heights! Some people don't know or comprehend that there's anything greater than the "now." We have to speak of Jesus, the One who went to the lowest lows & the highest heights for us, even to places we cannot see!

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."  
Ephesians 4:29

We cannot give in to the temptation to exalt the negative reports we hear surrounding us...it is so easy to go along with that, but my Jesus tells me there's more to live for! The Word of God builds people up! He causes unity, not division! When we speak His Name, there's power...when we speak His Word, there's power...when we receive His Spirit and are baptized with a truly repentant heart...there is ultimate power to overcome our challenges! Start speaking His Name & start a greater journey!



## Not as scary as you think...

*Saturday, October 2*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 14-16 · EPHESIANS 5:1-16

*"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?"*

— ISAIAH 14:16-17

**T**his Scripture is referring to the devil, evil himself! When we one day see him for who he is, we will ask ourselves these questions...is this REALLY the guy who made us fear? That caused kingdoms to shake!? This is such a powerful thing to keep in mind...that the devil has no power at all against our God! This is what we should not only keep in mind when we see him, but we should keep this in mind RIGHT NOW! Without God, we will live in fear of the devil & be overpowered. But with God, the devil can't prevail-not now, not then, not ever! The devil isn't as scary as we think! It's more our own sinful nature we have to worry about...

"And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness." Isaiah 16:5

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." Ephesians 5:1-2

Jesus alone is on the throne! Therefore, we must only follow Him! We must put all control in His hands so that we don't submit our human nature to the devil's evil nature...remember, the devil is not as scary or powerful as we think he is...we give him too much credit! All the credit, all the glory and all the worship belongs to God! Why serve the devil out of fear? We need to serve God with a fear

& reverence that's beautiful, pure, good & holy. Don't submit to the weaker one! Submit to God alone!

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:15-16

Do we sit paralyzed in fear of evil & the unknown? Do we think the devil is out to get us? We must realize that our flesh is more scary than anything! It's only our own selfish will that will lead us down the devil's path...but if we submit our will to God's Will, then the devil has no power over us!



## No Strangers

*Sunday, October 3*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 17-19 · EPHESIANS 5:17-33

*“And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform it.”*

— ISAIAH 19:21

God does not want us to be distant from Him. He created us, and He knows all things, but we can be considered strangers to Him if we don't desire to know & love Him back on a personal level. The Scripture says that The Lord shall be known to Egypt. Egypt was the most distant land to God, so far away in worship, practice & culture...so if God desires to be known of them & connect with them, how much more should we strive to know Him more! We have to be engaged, not estranged as the Bride of Christ!

“In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.”

Isaiah 19:24-25

In knowing The Lord, we become a truly blessed people. How far are we away from The Lord? Are we as much of a stranger as Egypt & Assyria were, or are we near the door, hearing Him knock, just needing to finally let Him in?

“that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

Ephesians 5:27

We want to be His children, not strangers! We want Him to know that we KNOW Him, not just that we know OF HIM! Again, God created our existence, but it's up to us to create that relationship with Him!

OCTOBER

## Watch Out!

*Monday, October 4*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 20–22 · EPHESIANS 6

*“and he cried, A lion: My Lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights:”*

— ISAIAH 21:8

A watchman had a very important job...they were protectors of cities against any form of trouble...but what about the downtime? There must have been lots of things that DIDN'T happen...it must have been easy to slack at times...but that's when a true watchman is proven! “Watching” can be related to “praying.” Do we stop praying when there's no tragedy? Or, are we faithful in prayer no matter what, in order to prepare us for the hard times-we have to watch out!

“The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.” Isaiah 21:11–12

There are people out there relying on us to watch & pray...we may not know it, but even the people who seem the most dismissive of God feel secure knowing that someone is praying for them! Soon, they may ask us, “Watchmen, what of the night?” “Watchman, how's it looking?” “Prayer warrior, is everything ok?” Are we prepared to give an answer of encouragement to them?

“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;” Ephesians 6:18

When we repent, get baptized & receive God's Spirit within us, our time of watching & praying becomes strengthened. It becomes more powerful than any trouble that could come against our watchtower! We become more equipped & ready for the downtime too, when nothing seems to be happening...just remember, in the nothingness, the next strategy of attack from the enemy is being

planned, ready to jump at the chance when we are unprepared...so let's watch out  
& seek to pray in the Spirit!



## Our Lifesaver

*Tuesday, October 5*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 23–25 · PHILIPPIANS 1

*“For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.”*

— ISAIAH 25:4

**I**t's important to remember, from Old to New Testament, God has not only wanted to help us, but SAVE us! We are not only to rely on God “just to get by” in this present world...we are to rely on Him to “get us through” to Heaven! He is our Lifesaver, and we must follow His salvational plan! This passage of Isaiah talks of what God HAS BEEN up to that point-strength to the poor & distressed, our refuge, so many things...but it's important to remember what He WILL BE, now & forever-our Savior!

“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” Isaiah 25:9

Are we waiting on God? Are we looking for Him, and will we recognize Him when He comes again? The only way to know this is if we are seeking Him NOW! When we get to know God through studying His Word, repenting & opening ourselves up to His Spirit & getting baptized, we get as close as we can be to Jesus before He comes again-and when He returns, we will recognize Him as our Heavenly Husbandman because we first recognized Him as our Savior!

“What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,” Philippians 1:18–19



Prayer & the unlimited supply of His Spirit is all part of His beautiful salvational plan for us! Along with repentance & baptism, we begin a beautiful relationship with Jesus which time cannot steal from us! It's an eternal relationship! He is not only our Lifesaver, but our Eternal Lifesaver as well!



## The Master's Peace

*Wednesday, October 6*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 26-27 · PHILIPPIANS 2

*"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:  
because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the  
LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:"*

— ISAIAH 26:3-4

When we simply keep our minds on The Master, our God, we can be in perfect peace! Some go to great lengths to try to attain peace, comfort & joy in their lives...and while it can be FOUND elsewhere, it cannot be FULFILLED elsewhere! All we have to do is keep our minds on Jesus by rehearsing His Word, and we receive a sense of peace greater than anything else!

"LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Isaiah 26:12

God will ordain peace in our lives! This is the same God Who walked on water, cast out demons & healed the sick! So, even if things aren't quite going right, He can make a masterpiece by being the Master of Peace in any given situation! We just have to be willing to call upon His Name in prayer!

"fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Philippians 2:2

Again, we can be FULFILLED! We don't just get a glimpse or a touch...God knows how to fill the gaps & voids that other people or things do not...that's ultimate peace!

"that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" Philippians 2:15

We are given The Master's Peace to share it as lights in this world! We cannot pour it out unless it's been poured in! Think on His Word. Call on His Name.

See a more peaceful life develop, no matter the storm!



## That's The Spirit!

Thursday, October 7

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 28–29 · PHILIPPIANS 3

*“for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.”*

**I**saiah 28:11–12

We are usually told, “That’s the spirit!” when we cheer up, encourage ourselves & do something that may not be easy. A somewhat similar type of scenario takes place when we seek to receive The Holy Ghost, The Spirit of God! When we seek after His Spirit, we don’t only cheer up & become encouraged, we have a joy unspeakable! Even though it may not be easy to look different than the world’s way of doing things, our whole perspective on the world changes when we receive Him & are able to say, That’s The Spirit of God! As Isaiah stated so profoundly & prophetically, “for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.” We know that’s The Spirit when that Heavenly language emerges from us!

“They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.” Isaiah 29:24

When we have the wrong spirit about us, one that’s negative & in disagreement, we cannot be in unity with God & His church! We are not in a place where we can receive His Holy Spirit! But once we do humble ourselves to receive Him, we come to a greater understanding, and The Doctrine of His Word replaces any misunderstanding we might have had. That doesn’t mean we don’t have our challenging days even when we have God’s Spirit, but with His Spirit, we are more equipped for the things we will face!

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Philippians 3:3

When we decide to live a Spiritual life, we can worship & rejoice, knowing the things which once afflicted us no longer affect us! We only have confidence in Jesus! Instead of saying, “That’s the flesh.” We now say, “That’s His Spirit working in us!”

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:14

When those we love to see us continuing to press forward for Jesus, breaking away from the flesh & the world, they will surely say, “That’s The Spirit!” Not only will our encouraging words minister unto them, but our very lifestyle will speak volumes! We can’t give up this journey with Jesus! Keep going, “That’s The Spirit!”



## Can't believe my eyes!

Friday, October 8

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 30–31 · PHILIPPIANS 4

*“Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.”*

— ISAIAH 31:3

**M**ore now than ever, the world has become an unpredictable place... unfortunately, what we see scares us instead of keeping us safe...we have to remember what this verse says, not only about the Egyptians in this case, but the world as a whole in our case...the world is human, and not God! The world's ways are driven by flesh, not Spirit! As we see the things taking place, and we can't believe our eyes any longer, we have to remember the ONE we CAN believe is GOD! He is stronger than our flesh! When we walk by faith & not by sight, our vision becomes more clear, and our safety more secure!

“As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it. Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted.” Isaiah 31:5–6

As Israel had many times went back & forth rejecting God for the world, we too must remember to turn back! Have we found ourselves trusting in the world more than God? Have we been let down for that reason? It's time to lean a little more on The Lord! Not only can we not believe our eyes at what's taking place, we don't want to believe our eyes!

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Philippians 4:6

With God, we won't have to worry about where this world is headed, because we are choosing a different direction-we are Heaven-bound! God hears our

prayers, and that's more powerful than the ways of this world any day!

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

Philippians 4:8

Now of course, we don't want to leave this world without hope either...we must remind them to think on the things above! It's been a long time since anything true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of a good report made the top news story...so let's get the world moving in a different direction! Instead of the unbelievable ways of the world, let's remind them to believe in our God!



## The Uplift in the Uproar

Saturday, October 9

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 32-33 · COLOSSIANS 1

*“And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of  
righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall  
dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet  
resting places;”*

— ISAIAH 32:17-18

Chaos is caused by continuous conflict, contention & the “cons” instead of the “pros”...when division is the goal, there is no resolution...there’s just “agree to disagree,” and there isn’t any unity. This is bound to eventually bring angry uproar for various reasons, but thankfully, God is the peace in the storm, and the Uplift in the uproar! When we want to live righteously instead of unrighteously, we have the work of peace & the effect of quietness & assurance forever! When we give up the goal of division for the goal of spreading the peace of God, we become calm, no matter how high the waves get!

“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.” Isaiah 33:20

A quiet habitation. A sure place which never falls down. Sounds too good to be true, right? If you’re looking in the ends of the earth, then yes, it’s too good to be true...but if you’re looking to The Word of God & praying, then that place can surely be found! This world has a lot of noise, but God’s Word has a sweet melody about it which brings the uplift in the uproar!

“and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” Colossians 1:20



Instead of closing your ears to drown out the negativity, how about opening them up to Jesus! Seek Him. Listen for Him. He died so we could have new life through repentance, water baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost! He is alive & ready to be our Uplift in the uproar!



## Restore the Refreshing

*Sunday, October 10*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 34–36 · COLOSSIANS 2

*“Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.”*

**I**saiah 35:6–7

Are you experiencing a dry & parched season? Sometimes, we let ourselves go through it so long, we forget that there’s a way out! We forget that through Jesus, we can have a fruitful life, flowing abundantly, instead of a still, dry, uneventful existence. We must rely on Jesus, our River of Living Water, to restore the “refresh” button in our lives-but only a commitment to change will do it!

“and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35:10

When we repent of the past & get baptized in the refreshing water, receiving His Spirit & speaking in that new Heavenly language, we truly unlock an abundant life! But resistance to that change halts the refreshing! Our old routines don’t allow us to be restored! We want that everlasting joy! We want sorrow & sighing to flee away! So, we need this beautiful change...to remember that in Jesus, we can live a saturated life of The Word & Spirit, rather than a still & dull life with no sense of refreshing!

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6–7

Even if we've already received, we can sometimes forget to press "refresh!" We can forget that we have His Spirit, rivers of living water, abounding up inside of us... through His Word & prayer, we can remind ourselves to restore that refresh! To find streams in the desert. To drink of the cup which never runs dry!



## A Shift of Focus

*Monday, October 11*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 37–38 · COLOSSIANS 3

*“Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.”*

— ISAIAH 38:5

King Hezekiah was sick, and not given much time to live...so his response in this chapter was turning toward the wall to pray desperately unto God. I've heard it preached before that in turning to the wall, Hezekiah drowned out all other noises, voices & influences in order to have a focused moment with God. As a Mom, this might be hard to do, but we all need a wall! We all need a moment in time, as much as we can get, to shift our focus away from everything else & just soak up some time with God! God saw Hezekiah's desperation & willingness to turn away from the world for his answers, and so God spoke through Isaiah and gave Hezekiah 15 more years to live!

“O Lord, by these things men live, And in all these things is the life of my spirit: So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.” Isaiah 38:16–17

Amazingly, Hezekiah's song of thanks to God goes deeper than the healing of the disease in his physical body...it goes down to the core healing of any sin or corruption of the soul! Hezekiah's deep relationship with God allowed him to care more about his soul & eternity than this temporary life...in seeing that genuine love for God, He healed Hezekiah, knowing his values were in the right place! And he developed that relationship by having those focused, intentional moments with God, shifting his focus off of the world and onto The Lord!

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3:2

This Scripture is the overall theme for this section! Sometimes, we just have to stop seeking out options online, sinking deeper into a pit than finding a plan. Sometimes, we just have to simply face a wall! The only One who can fit between you & that wall is Jesus Christ! When the focus shifts to Him, the perspective becomes more positive!



## A Treasure Revealed

*Tuesday, October 12*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 39-40 · COLOSSIANS 4

*"Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them."*

— ISAIAH 39:4

Hezekiah's miracle healing was probably a top news story of his day...and the king of Babylon sent messengers & a gift to king Hezekiah after hearing about it! Hezekiah showed them every treasure in his house & hid nothing from them...not knowing that they were there for the wrong reasons! It was a subtle way for Babylon to have more knowledge & access in order to soon overtake God's people!

We have to be careful of who we reveal our treasures to...not just personal items, but personal information we wouldn't want leaked out for the world to know! Hezekiah was probably caught up in the moment, thinking he could trust them...but that's why we have to remember to keep our trust in God & allow Him to protect our treasures...especially the treasure of our families!

"and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." Isaiah 40:5

The Treasure we DO want to reveal is Jesus! The safest thing we can do, especially to protect others in this day & hour, is to show them that there is safety & security in Jesus! When we hold Jesus in our hearts as The Holy Ghost, we have a Treasure which could only be shared, not stolen! The glory of The Lord SHALL be revealed in Jesus' Name!

"withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:" Colossians 4:3

When the door of utterance is opened from our mouths when we receive The Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking in new tongues, we then will see more doors of utterance to speak the Truth to others, that they may not only be safe in this world, but saved for eternity! Some treasures should remain hidden, but Jesus should always be revealed!



## A Helping Hand

Wednesday, October 13

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 41-42 · 1 THESSALONIANS 1

*“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”*

— ISAIAH 41:10

**S**trengthen. Help. Uphold with the right Hand of His righteousness...these are the Words of our God! God spoke through Isaiah so many reminders of Who He was, and Who He continues to be! He is ALWAYS there with a helping hand for us, and it's a Hand of righteousness which can do us no wrong! Why choose any other route?

“For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” Isaiah 41:13

His helping Hand holds OURS! He not only has an ear to listen to our prayers, but He answers our prayers by direct intervention into our lives! HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE DISTANT FROM US! We need to hold His Hand & walk forward, knowing confidently that God's got this! He IS a prayer-answering God!

“I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.” Isaiah 42:6-7

“remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;” 1 Thessalonians 1:3

The work of faith & labor of love which Jesus started needs to be completed in us! We need to let God work through us so that others can be helped too! We



need to be prison-breakers of those locked up by depression! We need to bring light to those stuck in dark times! Jesus is our helping Hand, and as He helps us, we need to extend our hands to others! Also, we can always extend our hands in praise & thanks, because He ALWAYS has the victory!



## The Answer Key

Thursday, October 14

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 43-44 · 1 THESSALONIANS 2

*“Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.”*

— ISAIAH 43:26

How great would it be to be able to utilize an answer key for each problem we face, all found in 1 book? Turns out, that 1 book of Truth is God's Word, The Word made flesh, Jesus our God Himself! He IS our Answer Key! We may think that we cannot relate to His Word because we are going through an issue that His Word speaks nothing about...but that's not true! Every Word read, and every Word prayed, leads us to the answer we need! God pleads through Isaiah to put Him in remembrance! There were people so desperate to steal the power & glory from God that they scooped up ashes to form a god...forgetting that The Answer Key was only a prayer away, or a Word away!

“and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshipping it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand.” Isaiah 44:17-18

How long have we been holding onto the residue? How long have we been focusing on what hasn't been working...formulating our own answers instead of turning to God to actually solve the problem? Just like a false god created in Isaiah's time, we also find ourselves talking to a brick wall when we seek answers outside of God's Will for our lives! We need to turn toward Jesus again! He DOES hear. He DOES see. He WILL answer!

“Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.” Isaiah

44:21

God reassures us time & time again that we will not be forgotten of Him...but has He been forgotten of us? Have we put aside His Word because we refuse to wait on His answer? Pray His Word! You will receive encouragement even in the waiting period, even without having an answer...then soon enough, the answer WILL come! While the Answer Key of His Word has many keys that unlock the doors of problems to our lives, there are 3 major keys which will get us from this life to Heaven: Repentance, baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving the Holy Ghost! If we start with those, all other things will follow as we take these steps of faith! FOLLOW THE ANSWER KEY!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



## Special Delivery!

*Friday, October 15*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 45-46 · 1 THESSALONIANS 3

*“Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?”*

— ISAIAH 45:9-10

When we bring a child into this world, they don't even realize how special they are to us...they don't understand the miracle it is that they've been born! As Moms, we can all remember our delivery dates...and we know the pain is well worth it! Ever think of how God feels as our Creator? There are some people who think they are not a miracle. That they are not that special. That the fact that God created us in the womb is “no big deal.” But we can't have that outlook on life! Each one of us was a special delivery, created for more of a purpose than we could ever imagine!

“and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.” Isaiah 46:4

When reading this passage, we know that “deliver” means “save.” But again, we also know that “deliver” means to give birth to! He brought us forth out of our mother's wombs, and now He wants to bear & carry us Himself, bringing us forth into NEW BIRTH! A SPIRITUAL SPECIAL DELIVERY! We are always His creation, no matter our age, and He wants each & every one of us to be born again as His child, through repentance & baptism of water & His Spirit!

“for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;” 1 Thessalonians 3:8-9

We can't live this life without standing fast in The Lord! We can't have true joy without recognizing how special & precious life really is...earthly and eternally! Let's remind someone today that being created in the Hands of God is a big deal & a special delivery...and let's also remind them that another special delivery is waiting...one that delivers us from our past & allows us to enter into a brighter future with Jesus!



## Dead End

*Saturday, October 16*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 47-49 · 1 THESSALONIANS 4

*"I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and  
he shall make his way prosperous."*

— ISAIAH 48:15

In the emptiness & weariness we sometimes feel, we have to remember that it's not "game over." Maybe we've hit a wall. Maybe we are talking & no one is listening. But remember, when Hezekiah faced a wall of death literally, it was not a dead end! It was a prayer opportunity! On the other side of prayer & the other side of the wall is our greatest miracle if only we don't forget God in the process... and He will make our way prosperous! The only thing we should lose at the wall are our dead ways which prove to fail every time-and take on God's ways!

"Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." Isaiah 48:17

If you see no way, God will make one! In fact, the Way is already there because GOD is already waiting for us at our miracle! He TEACHES us to profit! He doesn't only get us from point A to point B, but He shows us HOW to do it next time we find ourselves at a "dead end."

"And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted." Isaiah 49:11

God has so many answers to our questions, and solutions to our problems, if only we turn to Him! He has paths in the mountains, and highways which will take us beyond our dead ends!

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in

the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18

Relief in this life is great, and God surely provides it...but complete eternal release is even greater! When we die out to our sins & self-will at our dead ends, we let God do the salvational work which will get us to Heaven one day! We must repent, get baptized & get the Holy Ghost to go from dead end to life everlasting!



DAY 290

## Look Up!

*Sunday, October 17*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 50-52 · 1 THESSALONIANS 5

*"Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."*

— ISAIAH 51:2

Without even noticing it, we can spend a lot of time in "give up" mode. Looking down & not looking up...maybe we just need someone like Isaiah to say, "Look! It's going to be ok!" God has blessed us before. He has cared for us before. And He will do it again! Isaiah gives the example of Abraham & Sarah. Abraham was called, blessed & increased by God because he had great faith. And he looked & listened to God! We must look up again!

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Isaiah 51:6

Look up to the heavens & not down toward the problems & struggles of the moment! If we lift it all up to God first, then we realize how much bigger God is than our problems & struggles! All of that will fade away...but when we are saved through repentance & baptism of water & Spirit, then that will last forever! Keep looking UP!

"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion." Isaiah 52:8

"let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thessalonians 5:6

We must be as watchmen & watch women! Watching & waiting in prayer, not allowing for a "give up" mode, but a "give it up to God" mode! Our eyes fixed &



focused on God will bring more joy than this world will ever bring...so keep looking up!



## Enduring the Battle

*Monday, October 18*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 53-55 · 2 THESSALONIANS 1

*“And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.”*

— ISAIAH 54:13-14

Sometimes, when things are hard, we automatically think they were not meant for us...we try to look for an escape route rather than a battle strategy! But when we are taught of The Lord, we can endure the battle! That doesn't mean danger does not exist for us, it just means we will be victorious whenever we face it! God wants us to grow, and that can't happen if we don't face our battles!

“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.”

Isaiah 54:17

God never said there wouldn't be weapons, but He does tell us that His side is the winning side! So why look for an escape when you can experience a victory? Our righteousness is of HIM, not anyone else! Run to Jesus, endure the battle & win the victory!

“and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,”

2 Thessalonians 1:7

While enduring the battle, God also gives us rest & peace! We don't have to wait until it's all over...but we know that when it IS all over, He will be there, because He was already there through it all! Jesus is with us in the trial and in the

triumph. He never leaves. He never forsakes. So why should we escape? Endure the battle. Keep going. With Jesus, we'll make it!



## A Guiding Light

*Tuesday, October 19*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 56-58 · 2 THESSALONIANS 2

*“and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day:”*

— ISAIAH 58:10

Sadly, darkness and depression have been the driving force of many lives. People look in the wrong direction to try to find light & hope, and sometimes, they just stop looking altogether. This is why it's imperative to remember that Jesus is Light, and a Guiding Light at that! He doesn't just glow in magnificence; He is LEADING us somewhere...somewhere far greater than this world! We need to speak Jesus, speak life & receive the Holy Ghost in order to be lights in our community!

“and the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” Isaiah 58:11

If we don't stop relying on Him, He will never stop guiding! We will be watered & saturated by God instead of dry & empty from this world & our own efforts! There is still Light! There is still Hope! We know His Name! We need to share it in a world which fears tomorrow...

“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.” 2 Thessalonians 2:15

Hold on tight to God & the traditions in His Word, not the traditions of this world! While we may find temporary comfort in our past routines & traditions, we are still left in the dark...we need Jesus as our Guiding Light!



OCTOBER

## Suitable for The Cause

*Wednesday, October 20*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 59-61 · 2 THESSALONIANS 3

*“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:”*

— ISAIAH 59:1

God is prepared for our worst. His Hand is ready to reach out & reach into our circumstance, and His ear is listening into our every prayer! He created us, so He is MORE than equipped to help us! But sometimes, we forget that. We look to the next best “suitable” person for the job, but no one is a doctor of the soul! That is Jesus Christ! He is suitable, because He suited up & to bed Himself in flesh to die for us & make a way that we may have eternal life with Him!

“And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.” Isaiah 59:16-17

When it seems like we’re not getting much help elsewhere, and there’s no one to tend to the deep issues we’re having, there is GOD! He is dressed. He is equipped. He is prepared. He is ready. And...He has ALREADY paid the ultimate price! He fights for us. The battle is His! Don’t drag the battle around as a lost cause...face The Cause with Jesus, and put on the Spiritual armor as you become suitable in putting on Christ & reflecting Him into our lost world!

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” Isaiah 61:1

“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.” 2 Thessalonians 3:1–2

These are tough times. So many people are bound. God’s Word is being shut out of many places, starving people of hope & Truth...and love...we need to suit up! There IS an eternal cause! He suited up for us, let’s suit up for Him!



## The other side of “yes”

Thursday, October 21

TODAY’S READING · ISAIAH 62–64 · 1 TIMOTHY 1

*“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.”*

— ISAIAH 64:4

Sometimes, it’s easier to deny, refuse, ignore, or just say no. But when we say no to God in this life & ignore His plan & perfect Will, we do not guarantee an eternal life with Him! Even if what we are called to do is hard, we have no idea what amazingness waits on the other side of just saying yes!

“But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.” Isaiah 64:8

God has formed us in the womb, but when we say yes to Him as we continue to grow & live our lives, He molds and shapes us even further! God’s not done with us yet! All throughout our lives, God still has perfecting to do! We are not born perfect! But it’s all wrapped up in saying yes to our Creator & Potter, Jesus Christ!

“And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 1:14

Exceedingness! Abundance! Faith! Love! So much is on the other side of yes... we need to remind ourselves of these Scriptures when we feel like giving up & walking away...something good may not be wrapped in the best wrapping paper, but when we say yes to opening it, it’s much better than that thing which deceptively caught our eye! Let’s keep our eyes on Jesus & say yes to Him!

“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;



holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:" 1 Timothy 1:18-19

Like Timothy, we have been charged to war a good warfare & hold faith & a good conscience. When we forget what we're fighting for, and Who we are fighting for, and we lose faith, we are like shipwrecks! Our lives get messy, with clay flying off the wheel, and we become in desperate need for a miracle. We need our Potter to come in and put the pieces back in order, or rearrange them completely...let's be open & say yes to Jesus BEFORE the disaster strikes!



DAY 295

## A Hidden Prayer

*Friday, October 22*

TODAY'S READING · ISAIAH 65-66 · 1 TIMOTHY 2

*“And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”*

— ISAIAH 65:24

**H**ave you ever had a prayer that you were scared to pray, yet you knew it needed to be done? Or a prayer you thought was too insignificant to pray? In these instances, we have to remind ourselves that God hears our prayers & needs, even before we ask! Just like He knows us before forming us in the womb, He knows our prayers before they are birthed as well! He knows our hearts & desires. He doesn't think a prayer is too big or too small! Just PRAY THAT PRAYER! The connection with God through prayer is so strong & powerful, and it MATTERS!

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” 1 Timothy 2:1-2

While we must pray for those we know & love, God also gives us authority to pray for those IN authority in our community! Prayer is the only hope of changing this world...we can't keep our prayers hidden! Even though God knows it before we pray it, we can't cut off our connection to God! We have to pray that prayer! We have to give birth to that prayer! That's how we give birth to the victory & miracle! It's all because of God, but we have to do our part in prayer!

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:3-4

We can't expect hearts to turn to Jesus without prayer! We have The Truth, and so it's up to us to share it & not keep it hidden! We can't refrain from speaking Scriptures or praying Scriptures in this day & hour! The world needs our prayers to be born! The world needs our witness to be born, in Jesus' Name!



## Give Birth to Deliverance

*Saturday, October 23*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 1-2 · 1 TIMOTHY 3

*“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”*

— JEREMIAH 1:5

Before our birth & deliverance, God had a purpose in mind for us! Jeremiah was born to be a prophet. God has a perfect will for us, and we must pursue that in our lifetime. God not only cares about our lives through physical protection, making sure we make it through our physical birthing process to deliverance...but to a Spiritual deliverance & purpose!

“And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.”

Jeremiah 1:19

We don't realize what God does behind the scenes to give birth to deliverance in our lives! The birth is one thing, but the deliverance is another! The travail we go through in birth all leads to an entering in, or deliverance, to something greater! God fights for us & does so much to help us achieve His designed purpose, but do we want to give birth to deliverance? Do we want to pursue our Creator's vision, or try to find a purpose with blind eyes?

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” 1 Timothy 3:16

We need to be delivered of God, and in a Spiritual sense, that means being saved from this world! When we are physically born, we go through a process which leads us out of a womb into the world. When we are Spiritually born, we go through a process which leads us out of this world & into eternity! God has

our earthly purpose & Heavenly goal in mind from the start! Why do we hesitate to trust Him sometimes!? God has a deliverance in this life from any fear, doubt & pain...and He has a deliverance into eternal life with Him one day!

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38



## Deviation, or Desperation?

*Sunday, October 24*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 3-5 · I TIMOTHY 4

*“Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.”*

— JEREMIAH 5:1

How common is it today for people to dismiss God? To be indifferent about Truth? God told Jeremiah he'd have to run around to & fro to see if there was anyone who was desperate for Truth. That's kind of how it is today too! Many people are comfortable deviating from Truth, and creating their own version of it. But no matter what we WANT to believe, there's only one TRUTH which fulfills & satisfies our soul! That's God's Word!

“For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.” 1 Timothy 4:4-6

Anyone is able to become part of the Body of believers! The Body of Christ is open to all-the door is wide open! God doesn't make it difficult, but we complicate things when we want God, but we don't want Truth...God's Word has the final say! Anyone can be His child, and there's a special birthing process to make that happen which changes and transforms our lifestyles! When we repent, get baptized & receive the Holy Ghost, we become those people Jeremiah was running around looking for in the Old Testament! Those who are desperate, willing to do what it takes, rather than those who deviated, not caring enough about their God, or their eternity...

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12

It doesn't matter how young, or how old! When God sees a willing desperation, He will use it! As an example to others, we can't deviate from the faith-because who knows how many others we are leading astray! People see. People follow...are we leading them closer to Jesus?

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” 1 Timothy 4:16

Continue & endure! Keep pushing forward on your walk with God! Don't leave, don't give up, don't deviate!! It doesn't always sound good to be desperate...but it's much worse to deviate! When we allow ourselves to be desperate & vulnerable in the Hands of God, beautiful things can happen in our lives. But when we deviate & place ourselves in the hands of this world, then there's no telling what will become of us...nothing & no one is more secure than Jesus!



## More than a Bandaid

*Monday, October 25*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 6-8 · I TIMOTHY 5

*"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."*

**J**eremiah 6:14

If the world is really great at one thing, it's putting bandaids on problems. Pacifying temporarily is easier than finding solutions. Now that's not to say that's all bad in the meantime, but if no solution is being sought out, and bandaids keep being layered on top of each other, then all we're really doing is securing our problems more firmly in place, with no way of escape! We have only slightly healed the hurt when we say, "Peace" "It's ok" when things are really NOT ok. There is no peace. The world is hurting, and it needs more than our words to fix it!

"Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these."

Jeremiah 7:4

Don't give in to lies! Don't give into false senses of hope & security! A bandaid can be a mask or disguise! It can make us think we are healing, when we're really not. Praying will allow God to lead us to His temple of Truth. His true Body & church. Many people will try to re-define God, His Truth, and what His church is supposed to look like, all to make our lives seem "easier." Again, we don't need anymore bandaids! We need JESUS!

"Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit." Jeremiah 7:8

"but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor



inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.” Jeremiah 7:23–24

False peace, hope & love presented to us through temporary worldly satisfaction does not allow us to be well again. Obeying the Voice of The Lord allows us to be well again! Instead of covering up our problems, they get solved! We go forward, not backward, buried under band-aids! Keep Jesus first, and you’ll never be last!



## No Match for God!

*Tuesday, October 26*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 9-11 · 1 TIMOTHY 6

*“but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.”*

— JEREMIAH 9:24

God wants us to understand & know Who He truly is! By searching the Scriptures, we only get MORE encouraged by realizing God's amazing attributes. Many people refuse God's Word because of resistance to understand, claiming that each reading is irrelevant to real life...but as this Scripture states, He has lovingkindness, judgment & righteousness...and that never goes out of style! There is no match for God on this earth! The God of the ages is the answer to the problems of our current world!

“Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might.” Jeremiah 10:6

“He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.” Jeremiah 10:12

There is none like our God! No human can claim that they've created the universe. No scientist can claim even the understanding of how it all works. God is the only answer!

“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” Jeremiah 10:23

It's not in us! The ways of the world are far too vast & out of reach...not just in a physical sense, but there are depths of society & evil agendas that are way beyond our comprehension...so where do we find safety? Where do we find rest? No one can comfort us like God speaking through His Word! We need to

encourage others to give The Word of God a chance. How many chances have we been given by God? He deserves our best, because He gives His best to us! There is no match for Him



## Lay it to Heart

Wednesday, October 27

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 12-14 · 2 TIMOTHY 1

*"They have made it desolate, and being desolate it mourneth unto me;  
the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart."*

— JEREMIAH 12:11

Many people claim to fall victim to taking things too personally. While this can be true in some instances, I fear that many "lay things to rest" instead of "laying things to heart" as it states in the above Scripture. We sometimes don't take things personally enough. We sometimes don't care enough. I pray that God helps us to lay a little more to heart, me included in that group of course! Our lives move so fast, it's easy to let the desolate stay desolate...but then what do we become?

"O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?" Jeremiah 14:8

We don't want Jesus to just pass through! We want to have DAILY experiences with Him. We want to live in His love. We want others to experience the love of Jesus as well...but if we don't lay Jesus to heart, and we don't lay others to heart, we are not going to see much love going around! We can't fall victim to the bystander effect, expecting others to always be the first to reach out!

"Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? Art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things." Jeremiah 14:22

No one else can do what God can! We can do our part. We can lay people upon our hearts...but ultimately, it's a work of love only God can provide! That's why we need His Spirit living within us, being repentant, baptized & ready to follow the heartfelt pattern & passion of Jesus to reach a desolate world!

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.”

2 Timothy 1:13–14

Keep it up! Hold on tight! Lay Him to heart & find true rest in your souls!



## Attention!

*Thursday, October 28*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 15–17 · 2 TIMOTHY 2

*“For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face,  
neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.”*

**J**eremiah 16:17

God doesn't only pay attention to us when we are doing good things...our good works are not a signal flare to Him...it's important to note that He sees us ALL the time, no matter what! We want our good things to be noticed, but we cannot hide the bad either...so let's focus our attention upon God, upon His ways, upon His desires for our lives, so when He looks upon our everyday lives, we are pleasing Him & not displeasing Him!

“Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods?” Jeremiah 16:20

We really have to pay attention to what we pay attention to! Are we glorifying things that should not be glorified? Do we spend more time in the presence of others & not the presence of God? Do we give in too easily to the attention-grabbers & not the One worthy of our attention? In giving our most to God, we see our lives turn out the best!

“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”

Jeremiah 17:7–8

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” 2 Timothy 2:4

Let's be a tree with roots planted in God, freely flowing & freely growing, not tangled in the roots which are planted in the affairs of this life! Distractions take

up so much of our attention-so let's examine our priorities daily to be sure we are putting God first!



## The Divine Influencer

*Friday, October 29*

**B**ased on Jeremiah 18–19, 2 Timothy 3

“And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.” Jeremiah 18:4

Many people who make online videos for vlogging, tutorials or other various purposes, have been called “Influencers.” And rightfully so! Their content influences us in many ways. They teach things. They inspire us. Sometimes, we might admire them so much, we want to be just like them...but we have to be careful! The true Potter, our God, our Divine Influencer, should have the final say in how we are molded & shaped! Even the most innocent looking things could have bad intentions behind them, or they could simply just become an obsession or idol to us.

“And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.” Jeremiah 18:12

We all have our own devices-most commonly known today as our phones! These can open up a world of influence every time we click “search.” If we look at ourselves, how much are we following the trends? How much do we reflect what our devices say & not what The Word of God says? God’s image is pure, holy, beautiful & divine. He is far beyond this world, yet He wants to dwell here with us to see the world saved! We must welcome Him. We must humbly welcome the changes He wants to make so we can better reflect Him. We must willingly place ourselves upon The Potter’s wheel, in His Hands, not be a slave to the device in ours!

“Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee,”  
Jeremiah 19:10

Without brokenness, we will not be changed! Repentance breaks our current vessel. Baptism makes it fresh, new & ready to be used again. The Holy Ghost in-



filling is the break-through after the initial break! It's all the process of The Potter, and the results are eternally special, greater than any other "Influencer."

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:14–15

Remember Jesus. Remember His plan. Remember that The Potter's wheel is better than a video. Jesus is our Divine Influencer-and the only One Who will bring us to Heaven one day! His Word must influence our lives DAILY!



## His Word, Our Wildfire

*Saturday, October 30*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 20-21 · 2 TIMOTHY 4

*"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."*

**J**eremiah 20:9

Jeremiah's need to preach The Word of God was uncontrollable! He couldn't stop, even if he wanted to! It was a wildfire that needed to keep on spreading, because there was a world so close to being quenched by the fires of hell. We can relate so much to Jeremiah's time! We need to get The Word out there quick!

"O house of David, thus saith the LORD; Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."

Jeremiah 21:12

The fury of God can spread like a fire as well, and while we don't like to think about it, it's a true reality...but that's because, more than anything, we serve a God with a fiery passion to love us & to save us! He feels such heartbrokenness when we turn toward the world, and so must become those who live His Word & spread it like a good wildfire, with an unquenchable Spirit & fire stirring within us!

"preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

2 Timothy 4:2

We need to keep on spreading The Word like wildfire! We need to teach the 3 keys which keep us from experiencing the fires of hell, or any other fires of fury:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



# Inspiration, not Intimidation!

*Sunday, October 31*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 22-23 · TITUS 1

*“and say, Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates:”*

**J**eremiah 22:2

When God inspires us to spread His Word & speak it into the lives of others, we don't have to be intimidated (even if that person is a king, like in Jeremiah's case!). We can just keep boldly sharing The Word, because no matter what happens to us, God's Word will have the final say & prevail!

“And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.” Jeremiah 23:3-4

There will always be a remnant that will listen. God will inspire us. He will lead us to them. When we receive & rely on His Spirit, we will have a deeper inspiration which allows us to overcome the intimidation of others! We will be even more able to build faith upon faith instead of fear upon fear! That doesn't mean we will never struggle, but we will have more supernatural strength!

“holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” Titus 1:9

Hold to His Word! Not just for a moment. Not just for a thought or reflection...but as an inspiration to speak boldly to those who need to hear it! Even if it's a king, government official, or our neighbor...we don't have to be intimidated! The giant fell for David, and we can expect the same results! God's Word has the most power!



X I

# NOVEMBER



*"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in  
Christ Jesus concerning you."*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

DAYS 305 – 334

## Re-Position

*Monday, November 1*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 24-26 · TITUS 2

*“Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.”*

— JEREMIAH 24:5

There are good figs & bad figs as it states in this chapter of Jeremiah, but both needed a repositioning! All God's people would be cast out of the land due to the Babylonians, but some would die & not return, while others needed a re-focus & refresh of their godly priorities & value systems!

“For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.” Jeremiah 24:6-7

There were some “faithful figs” who loved God, but maybe needed to enhance their walk with God a bit...again, they needed some time to freshen things up & enliven their relationship with God a bit! For those people, God had a promise! God still has a promise for us too, but each day we must see what we can freshen up, and understand that God re-positioning us isn't always a bad thing-in fact, the first above Scripture states it was for their good!

“teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;” Titus 2:12

If we are living a more dedicated life to the world & the rotten figs instead of the good, we need to get re-positioned urgently! God is ultimate satisfaction & ultimate fulfillment. We need Him to direct our path, and our good God can

always make a good fig, even with a rotten past! We all have had some rotten things take place-but God can position us for greater things, even if it hurts in the moment!



DAY 306

## Make the best of it.

*Tuesday, November 2*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 27-29 · TITUS 3

*“Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.”*

— JEREMIAH 28:13

Hananiah was a false prophet, telling people that the wooden yoke which Jeremiah wore as a sign would be broken. The yoke was a sign from God that His people would be subject to the Babylonians, but Hananiah didn't listen. He broke the yoke off of Jeremiah, and so the above Scripture was stated in response. Instead of accepting the captivity under Babylonian rule, he made it that much more difficult & wore the iron yoke of death! We should never reject God's plan, even if it seems challenging...because God's yoke is easy & His burden is so much lighter than the iron yoke of the world! And God always makes a way for us to make the best of any season of life-even captivity-if we just surrender to Him!

“Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;”

Jeremiah 29:5

If Hananiah had listened to the Truth, even if it was hard, he would have been taken care of in captivity! God would have allowed him to build houses, plant gardens and eat the fruit of his faithfulness...just like the others who listened & obeyed! There would have been a way to make the best of it by following God's plan FIRST!

“For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the



LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”  
Jeremiah 29:10–11

God’s plans for us are always beautiful! There’s something special on the other side of that struggle-but only if we let God lead! When we think we have it all together, we make the worst of it, iron yoke & all. But when we trust God’s Word & pray, He makes the best of it & sees us through to the other side!

“And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.” Jeremiah 29:14

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.” Titus 3:1–2

When we are obedient to God & respectful of those in authority over us, like in our nation for example, we make the best of things. It may be very challenging considering the state of things lately, but God is in control!



## Refreshing Restoration

*Wednesday, November 3*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 30–31 · PHILEMON

*“For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.”*

— JEREMIAH 30:17

After their time of captivity, God promises to restore His people. In every way, God wants to show us He will be there to pick us up when the world knocks us down! Even though God put them in that place of captivity, it wasn't where they belonged...they were still outcasts there...no one cared for them like God! God would restore their health & heal the wounds! He can make us whole again physically, mentally, Spiritually, emotionally...in every way!

“Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.”

Jeremiah 31:12

Joyous singing flows from the refreshing restoration of God! Not only does He heal our bodies, but this above Scripture states that He waters our soul like a garden, with no more sorrow! This is not a one-time thing, but it's intended to be a daily benefit of walking with The Lord! All the way until we reach eternity!

“that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.” Philemon 1:6

Paul was happy about the encouragement that Philemon was giving others in the faith. Our communication must speak of the same encouraging, refreshing & restoring power God has! So many people suffer in a desert of emptiness. A

wandering wilderness of confusion. But just as God used the captivity to restore His people, He can use those experiences to instill an urgency to come unto Him! We can be those people who speak into the deserts & wildernesses of others! We can speak of the wonderful things God has done to refresh & restore us!



## The Voice above the Noise

*Thursday, November 4*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 32–33 · HEBREWS 1

**W**e live in a loud world of competitive opinions & voices. Some of those voices may be our own! All chiming in together, but not really sounding like chimes at all-but more like noise! The true music to our ears is the Voice of our God!

“the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at first, saith the LORD.” Jeremiah 33:11

When we focus on Jesus & use our voices to praise & worship Him, we can easily drown out the negative voices of this world. He IS the Voice above the noise! Just like a call & response song, His voice should be the call, and ours should be a response which is in tune with Him. Instead of a noisy world of competitive opinions, the praising response to God’s call creates beautiful music to His ears & to those around us!

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;” Hebrews 1:1–2

God spoke through Jeremiah the prophet by His voice, and then it was the voice of God Himself speaking as Jesus! Jesus IS our God! He has spoken! He is alive! Are we listening? Are we taking in His Word as a call, and our prayer & praise as a loving response? Let’s make Him the Voice above the Noise!





## The Final Say

*Friday, November 5*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 34–36 · HEBREWS 2

*“Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.”*

**J**eremiah 36:32

Jeremiah spoke to Baruch all the words of the prophecies of God...then the scroll was brought to the king, and the king burned it in the fire! What a cruel form of rejection...but God never bows to rebellion! His Word has the final say, no matter what the world & those in authority think! After this happened, Jeremiah & Baruch went through the same process, and even MORE words were added! God always has a plan. His Word is never destroyed, and never returns void! Seeing the strength of His Word, we must apply it to our lives every day!

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” Hebrews 2:1

“Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.” Hebrews 2:8

God is in control! We can't let His Word slip, because He has exalted His Word above His Name! His Word is strong enough to get us through any trial. He loves us enough to let His Word be our protection & be spoken into our lives...He will have the final say in eternity, so we must let His Word reign now! No fire can stop The Word of God!





## A House United

*Saturday, November 6*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 37-39 · HEBREWS 3

*“And the Chaldeans burned the king’s house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.”*

— JEREMIAH 39:8

Jeremiah was preaching & prophesying Truth to God’s people, as much as they didn’t want to hear it...Jerusalem WOULD fall. Jerusalem WOULD be taken captive. The walls WERE broken down, and the people WERE divided...those who were not prepared, pridefully perished...but those who surrendered humbly & peacefully would one day return. The house that was divided would one day be reunited. There is always a promise to God’s people! But is there always a pledge from God’s people back to Him? Not from all, but from a faithful few... we need to be the faithful few in this day & hour! Just like we pledge allegiance to the flag of our United country, we too have to pledge to be a United people to Our God, inviting all we know like Jeremiah faithfully did, from the king to the common people!

“Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.” Jeremiah 39:11-12

Jeremiah was given good treatment by those taking Jerusalem captive-and it was no coincidence! It was a work of God! When we dedicate ourselves to our Lord, we don’t have to worry about what’s to come. Isn’t that a soothing thought, especially today? When it seems like we have no say in who is control, we can know that when Jesus takes the wheel of our lives, all is well! We can even say yes to captivity knowing it won’t be the end of our story! Let’s make that our United battle cry! All for ONE GOD, JESUS CHRIST!



“For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Hebrews 3:4–6

When we are God’s United church, repentant, baptized in His Name & filled with His Spirit, we are His house & family. We belong to Him, not anyone else! We must stand firm until the end. When we are United with God’s purpose for our lives, we can’t go wrong!



# Undoing Unbelief

*Sunday, November 7*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 40–42 · HEBREWS 4

*“and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the LORD thy God, even for all this remnant; (for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:) that the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.”*

— JEREMIAH 42:2–3

There was a remnant left in Judah at the time of the captivity, and they wanted direction from Jeremiah from The Lord. When Jeremiah told them that they should not enter into Egypt & stay in Judah, they did not listen—they were in a state of disbelief because they only wanted to believe in their OWN desires...they wanted to HEAR The Lord, not HEED to The Lord! They believed they were right for inquiring, but that following was not required. Do we do that sometimes? We find confidence in praying about something, but ultimately don't wait on an answer from God...we think that simply praying alone is obedience, but the answer is optional...

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:11–12

We must labor to enter into the rest of The Lord so we can undo unbelief! We must do what God requires of us, even if His Perfect Will does not match our self-will...His Word is more powerful than anything else we may subject our desires to...so in order truly undo unbelief, we must say:

“saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” Luke 22:42

When we submit to His Will, we see His miracles more present than ever! We will see a plan much greater than our own! But first, we must undo unbelief by ridding ourselves of believing that our self-will is greater than God!



## Making the Cut

*Monday, November 8*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 43-45 · HEBREWS 5

*"Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah."*

— JEREMIAH 44:11

Although there would later be a remnant left, God had to cut off much of the house of Judah for not only entering into Egypt, but turning to & worshipping their gods. They chose to be included in the wrath that Egypt already had coming to them...they were cut off...they did not "make the cut" of sticking together as a united people for The Lord! Our goal should be to "make the cut" instead of getting "cut off." We should be determined to serve God with our whole heart, not a heart that's ready to run toward every new trend that makes its way to our line of sight...

"and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;" Hebrews 5:9

Jesus allows us to make the cut into eternal life! By going through the pattern of repentance, baptism & receiving the Holy Ghost, we take the necessary steps into a relationship & walk with Jesus. We then must be sure to purpose ourselves to live out His living Word, growing more each & every day!

"For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Hebrews 5:13-14

This enhanced discernment comes through exercising our use & application of God's Word! With the application of His Way of salvation, His Word & Prayer, we have the ability to make the cut! We will easily know the difference between good & evil-that discernment being the key to fight off deception!



## From a Distance

*Tuesday, November 9*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 46–47 · HEBREWS 6

*“But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid.”*

— JEREMIAH 46:27

Are we ok with loving God from a distance? Do we have a desire to only get so close, but yet so far? What do we fear of the full investment into God's Kingdom? The above Scripture states that Israel will be saved from being afar off, during the time of their captivity. Being afar off from God IS a big deal! It's worth saving us from. God doesn't want to just look on and say, "My people are managing quite well on their own." He wants to see eye to eye in a loving relationship, not from a distance!

“that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Hebrews 6:18

We must FLEE for refuge! We must RUN to God! A relationship doesn't happen overnight...we don't just say, "Wow, without doing a thing, I know everything about this person." There is a thing that must be done! In running to God in prayer & reading His Word, we lay hold on the hope set before us. We secure an eternal relationship as well, following through with obedience to His Will & His Ways. God created our heartbeats, but He wants to connect our heartbeats with His!

“which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;” Hebrews 6:19

Again, He is sure! He is secure! We don't have to wonder about Him...we can wait on Him. We can count on Him. We can be free to tear down the barriers which keep us distanced from our Savior! There probably won't be a fence around Heaven to sit on...there's only One Way there! His Name is JESUS!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38



## The Next Chapter

Wednesday, November 10

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 48-49 · HEBREWS 7

*“And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.”*

**H**ebrews 7:15-16

Coming through the book of Jeremiah, there is an emphasis on judgment upon those who have disobeyed God, or those who attacked the people of God. But with those displays of judgment were always remnants of a promise, which was never completely broken or forgotten...there is always another chapter of the Bible, and through Jesus, the Highest Priest & Eternal King, the Book & our story never has to end in judgment. But are we willing to move on to the next chapter? Or stand fixed where we are at?

“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.” Hebrews 7:22

God has so much patience with us! He allows us to go our own way until we submit to Him & find out He has a better Testament & a new chapter! Man's ways will always crumble, but God's ways will always win! We can repeat the same chapter, or leave each chapter unfulfilled...or we can be uplifted by His Word & see how we are beautifully woven and written in on each page...through the judgment, to the valleys, to the mountaintops, God loves us & wants us to proclaim our stance on His side of the story!

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;” Hebrews 7:26

The only way we can live a holy, harmless, undefined life, separate from sinners, is through the One who is higher than the heavens-our Jesus! He has a new chapter for you. He has a new plan & a new way that has maybe been



neglected, or just not considered...our story will never be history when it's HIS story!



## Ask the Way

Thursday, November 11

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 50 · HEBREWS 8

*“They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.”*

— JEREMIAH 50:5

“They shall ask the way to Zion...” God spoke through Jeremiah many things, and there was a beautiful yet heart-wrenching depiction of Israel & Judah walking & weeping, wanting to come back to God...but they had to ask the way! They needed guidance, instruction & direction...asking the way was THE ONLY WAY! We might think of it as a hassle to ask for directions (if the GPS was wrong, for example), but it's more of a hassle to be lost! We LOSE so much being LOST! Especially our precious time! Everyone especially wants to know the way to Heaven, but many fear to ask the way...they make it up as they go, hoping they can make up their own version of Heaven too...

“My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.” Jeremiah 50:6

We can't make-believe reality. We can't re-create Truth. Some might be listening to the wrong voices. False doctrines. False senses of reality...but God's Word has been tried in the fire! His Word stands sure! He IS The Word! He IS the Way!

“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.” Jeremiah 50:20

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, And write them in their

hearts: And I will be to them a God, And they shall be to me a people:" Hebrews 8:10

When His Law is in our minds & hearts, and we live it out completely, God will not see our iniquity any longer. He will not see us walking aimlessly in the wrong direction...He will see His Blood upon us as we take on His Name in repentance & baptism of water and Spirit! When we have found Jesus, we have found The Way! Bible study & prayer is the best way to know Him more!



## Carried Away

*Friday, November 12*

TODAY'S READING · JEREMIAH 51-52 · HEBREWS 9

*"The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God."*

— JEREMIAH 51:10

Although these chapters of Jeremiah proclaim the carrying away of God's people & the declaring of the wrath against Babylon after the captivity, we see glimpses of a different type of "carrying away." While there was a time appointed for carrying away God's people out of their land (because of them being carried away by their own lusts), there would be a time of carrying away Israel from their enemies back to their land one day...but obedience would be the deciding factor!

"how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Hebrews 9:14

Instead of being carried away in this life, getting caught up in things which steal our joy, energy, motivation & most of all our relationship with God, let's let God carry us away in His Word! He can take us beyond the everyday stress & into a loving & joyful relationship with Him...all while awaiting the day we get carried away to Heaven with Him! How much MORE Jesus? How much MORE the things of God instead of the cares of this life?



NOVEMBER

## Full of Emptiness

*Saturday, November 13*

TODAY'S READING · LAMENTATIONS 1-2 · HEBREWS 10:1-18

*“How doth the city sit solitary, That was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, And princess among the provinces, How is she become tributary!”*

Lamentations 1:1

Jeremiah laments for Israel, once a thriving city, now (in his time) so broken down & desolate...in recent years, it's seemed this way to us as well...either eerie quietness in the streets, or extreme lashing out & rioting...either way, there is emptiness...one is emptiness of the earth, void of people, and the other is emptiness in the hearts of people, which cause the riots & attacks. In both cases, there's starvation & hunger for God!

“Her gates are sunk into the ground; He hath destroyed and broken her bars: Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: The law is no more; Her prophets also find No vision from the LORD.” Lamentations 2:9

Sinking. Sulking. Destruction. Brokenness. The law no more...our country is no stranger to lawlessness today. It's hard to find a vision for a better world today...but if we seek that vision in a world full of emptiness, we will never find it. We need to seek fulfillment in Jesus! He is everlasting! Never-ending! And if we come to Him in emptiness, He will pour into us the refreshing new life we need!

“This is the covenant that I will make with them After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, And in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” Hebrews 10:16-17

Instead of being full of emptiness of God, we will be full of emptiness of the world! The world will no longer hold us captive to trouble! Our faith & trust will be placed in God. When we repent, we empty. When we are baptized, we are

washed. When we receive the Holy Ghost, we are renewed & REVIVED! Empty out the world & fill up on GOD!



## From Fail to Faith

*Sunday, November 14*

TODAY'S READING · LAMENTATIONS 3-5 · HEBREWS 10:19-39

*"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, Because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: Great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; Therefore will I hope in him."*

— LAMENTATIONS 3:22-24

**W**e can think of many reasons that we need The Lord's help...but what's more difficult is understanding the faith & love He gives us, even when we don't deserve it. We never really DESERVE it, but some times we fail Him more than others. Sometimes, we get OURSELVES in a rut or bad situation, and we need His help to get out...it wasn't something out of our control...we could have prevented it...and here we are, dragging our feet to pray once again, ashamed at that fail...

"Let us search and try our ways, And turn again to the LORD." Lamentations 3:40

Thankfully, the Bible encourages us to examine the situation. Search & try our ways. FACE IT. OWN UP TO IT...and turn AGAIN to The Lord! Be REAL with God about what happened (because we know He already knows!). He just wants us to turn again to HIM. Don't turn to the bad habits or unprofitable advice...turn to JESUS, again & again!

"I called upon thy name, O LORD, Out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice: Hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry." Lamentations 3:55-56

Even at our lowest, we can go from fail to FAITH! We can recognize His hand has been upon us so many times, and we can ask for it again! GREAT is His faithfulness!



“As for us, our eyes as yet failed For our vain help: In our watching we have watched For a nation that could not save us.” Lamentations 4:17

Our nation is an unreliable, scary place right now. We are entering into uncertain territory. But God changes not! He is faithful even through the debris of a crumbling world. He is our ONLY Hope & Solution!

“let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:22

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)” Hebrews 10:23

Hold onto the profession of faith without wavering! Be cleansed inside & out through a purging repentance process & a beautiful baptism, immersed beneath the waters & Blood of Jesus, rising again in faith instead of failure! Then, we receive His refreshing Spirit, which allows us to be even more equipped to make faithful, victorious decisions!



## Things not Seen

*Monday, November 15*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 1-2 · HEBREWS 11:1-19

*"And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house."*

— EZEKIEL 2:6

Ezekiel is yet another prophet sent to speak to Israel after the book of Jeremiah ends...and he knew he had quite a task before him! This is what he DID see: harsh people speaking harsh words, comparable to briers, thorns & scorpions! Ouch! We've all been "bitten" by a few harsh words before. Usually, our response is to just go away and forget about them, or fight back in some cases...but this prophet of God was told to keep on speaking in faith, not in fear, just like Jeremiah! When good is not seen, we cannot just flee the scene! We need to keep speaking faith, hoping & praying it sticks somewhere!

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1

If we don't have faith & show it to the world, they can't see God like we can! They can't understand how God is with us every step of the way if we choose to abandon the cause too. If they want any evidence, we've gotta show it by speaking Truth! The things of God are the "things not seen" today. As in Ezekiel, we DO see harsh people with harsh words & opinions! We need to combat that not by an argument, but by an arm reaching out & sharing the Word of God!

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Hebrews 11:6

When we seek, we will find! Or, we can choose to turn a blind eye to the things of God, keeping Him on the list of the “unseen.” Not only to ourselves, but to those around us! Do we really want to be a closed door to The Lord??

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Hebrews 11:13

The prophets & people of old mentioned in the Bible died in strong faith... these not only died with a faith for their present time, but also died knowing the promises prophesied would outlive them! They were content with “afar off,” and that’s because, by faith, these things were still in their vision! They were not “unseen,” just “far away.” Let’s not be near-sighted in faith! Let’s be speakers of God’s Word, bringing life to things not (normally) seen!



## God can do it AGAIN!

*Tuesday, November 16*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 3-4 · HEBREWS 11:20-40

*“Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and bear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.”*

**E**zekiel 3:10-11

This Scripture above is our goal-to go to those held captive by a painful life without God & speak to them all the wondrous things of God. We must tell them not only about Heaven, but about the here & now! God has done SO MUCH for us here on this earth in our everyday lives, but sometimes we have a clouded perspective because of that day's stresses & frustrations. We have to then encourage others & say, “Remember the time when God...” because there are SO MANY times when GOD! God CAN and WILL do the miraculous again, but we can't get consumed by our dry seasons, and we have to encourage others of the same! Just as Ezekiel consumed a whole roll of God's Word in a vision, we too must be nourished & energized back to good Spiritual health so we can remind the world about the times when God:

“...through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”

Hebrews 11:33-34

These were times when God moved through mighty people of the Bible & did wondrous miracles! But it all happened BY FAITH that HE WILL DO IT... and He will do it AGAIN & AGAIN if we don't let our faith fall by the wayside!

Keep speaking it. Keep reading it. Keep praying it. Keep pressing deeper into a relationship with God!



## A Beautiful Battle

*Wednesday, November 17*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 5-7 · HEBREWS 12

*“As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations and of their detestable things therein: therefore have I set it far from them.”*

— EZEKIEL 7:20

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, as they say...but it's also in the “I” of the beholder too. “I” have to be careful of what “I” find beautiful. If I focus too much on what I look upon, the things I see, the newest trends...”I” might get wrapped up in a one-person world, not caring much for God or anyone else! We have to be so careful of this! God has given us precious things, many blessings, and if we are not careful, we could focus too much on the blessing & not The Blessor! While it can be tough to keep focused on the priorities, that battle of keeping ourselves on track is more beautiful than the things we hold in our hands!

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,” Hebrews 12:1

It's hard to run with too much stuff in our hands! We need to lay it down. The physical possessions affect our minds in more ways than we can realize. Obsessions over possessions are not beautiful, but the battle & race we run to win IS beautiful! That's because it serves a Heavenly, Spiritual & God-given purpose which extends into eternity! We can have it FOREVER!

“but ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,” Hebrews 12:22

Letting go is sometimes more beautiful than hanging on. We can't forget that the definition of true beauty is God! He created all things here, but there's a place

more beautiful and majestic than this present world...so often we rest & find comfort in what we can see...but we forget the promises of God are real and are described to us vividly in His precious Word! Connect with God, win the battle & be TRULY beautiful in Jesus' Name!



# A Heavenly Sight

*Thursday, November 18*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 8–10 · HEBREWS 13

The visions of Ezekiel are amazing in many ways. There is so much depth & detail, it's hard to pick out certain passages to post about! But looking at the overall picture, Ezekiel certainly saw Heavenly sights! Even if they were signs of judgment, they were things so far beyond this world...but God brought those visions to earth for a reason, and now they are in His Word for us all to read & study! We have to think beyond sometimes. What we do in this life not only affects the here & now, but there's a Spiritual application too!

“Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Hebrews 13:1–2

We might just be in the presence of angels! Someone in our life might be sent by God at a certain moment to encourage us to move a little closer to The Lord. We dismiss a lot nowadays with our busy schedules, but we just might need some guidance & direction we don't want to miss out on! Church services are Heavenly sights! We get our sights set straight on our way to Heaven, and for that, we can be truly grateful!

“For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Hebrews 13:14–16

We are looking toward a better life & better home! The sacrifices we give now are not earthly, but Spiritual in our thanks & praise to God! Again, we've got Heavenly sights! Our sights are set on Jesus! Imagine if Ezekiel's sights were elsewhere...the incredible things he would have missed! Let's keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, knowing He has more to show us than we can even imagine!



NOVEMBER

## A Little Sanctuary

*Friday, November 19*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 11-13 · JAMES 1

*"Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city: which say, It is not near: let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh."*

— EZEKIEL 11:2-3

"Everything is fine." This can be one of the greatest cover-ups used. Is everything REALLY fine? Individually, locally or globally? I'm not trying to question ALL aspects of life, but when we really examine things, there's LOTS of room for improvement! Just like the men above said, "It is not near." Talking about the fact that impending judgment & wrath was not coming, and they could keep on building up & making their city something spectacularly comfortable...at least, for the time being..."The world is our oyster!" I'm sure they thought..."The sky's the limit!" A real "tower-of-Babel" mentality repeat...but what's better than a big city is a little sanctuary! Or, a little sanctuary IN a big city...however small, it can make a BIG difference!

"This city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; but I will judge you in the border of Israel." Ezekiel 11:11

He'll judge in the border...we won't get very far! Without God, we are doing many things, but we are absent of purpose! We are not living up to our TRUE potential when we decide to build our own kingdom instead of God's! The best thing we can build is a little sanctuary in our homes, and attend the church sanctuary with the family of God! When we build upon self-interest, we are building in the dark...but when we build upon God's direction in His Word, we shine a LOT of light into a lost community!

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet

will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.”  
Ezekiel 11:16

After the promise of a little sanctuary for the remnant, God promises in this chapter that He will also bring them back to their homeland! If we stay in our little sanctuaries & purpose ourselves to have that place of peace here in His presence on earth, then we will also get to go back to our TRUE homeland of HEAVEN with HIM! The NEW JERUSALEM!

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

James 1:17

He is the Father of lights! He shines brighter than any city skyline, and His light is one that always leads us in the right direction! A little sanctuary goes a LONG way!



## Judging by the Cover...

*Sunday, November 21*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 14-15 · JAMES 2

*"Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?"*

— EZEKIEL 14:1-3

Judging others is all based on expectations—we can look on those, like the elders of Israel in Ezekiel's time, who look like they have it all together. But really, in their hearts, they were setting up idols which manifested in stumbling blocks of iniquity in their lives. Also, we can look on those who seem like the poorest people, with the most messed up situations, yet their heart is genuinely seeking a relationship with God. We really can't judge a book by its cover!

"are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?"

James 2:4

We can't be hypocritical! We know that, no matter what someone's life looks like, none of us are perfect & our hearts are in need of constant examination. We can't judge a book, or people, by their covers...the only thing we can do is open up THE BOOK, the Bible, for ourselves and see how WE can change for the better. God is the ultimate Judge. We should uphold values & standards for our lifestyles, and abstain from things that we judge to be not up to God's standards for ourselves based on His Word, but it's not up to us to force change upon others. We have to pray, share The Word & share the love! GOD is the Changer of hearts!

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love

him?”

James 2:5

Perfect lives don't equal lives rich in faith! Sometimes, we're poor. Sometimes, we have bad days. But is our faith strong on those days, or is it wavering? We don't have to put up a fake picture of perfection, we just have to have faith no matter what's going on in our lives!



## Don't Revoke the Rescue!

*Sunday, November 21*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 16–17 · JAMES 3

*“And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.”*

— EZEKIEL 16:6

Jesus saw us in the worst of the worst situations...He has seen our blood, and wants to cover us with His...but how quick are we to revoke our rescue? To release our chance at restoration? How quick are we to call & complain to a friend instead of calling on the Name of Jesus & pleading His Blood upon our lives? I know we've all done these types of things, for some reason avoiding our Source of Life. The One Who said “Live” in the first place wants us to live again, fresh & new! Repentance, baptism in Jesus' Name & receiving His Spirit will let us keep on living a revived life! Let's not push Him away! Let's not revoke our rescue!

“and tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour: and thus it was, saith the Lord GOD.” Ezekiel 16:18–19

Have we pushed away blessings because we push God away at times? Have a rejected what He has presented to us in order to settle for less? That's what is explained above...Jerusalem was created by God, as we all are. They were meant to be taken care of by Him, as we all are. And they revoked the rescue from evil & danger. They abused their godly gifts & defiled them. Where have we left our relationship with God? What state is it in?

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one,

and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.” Ezekiel 17:22–23

Again, as God always does, He re-plants, re-grounds & re-roots the ones who want to turn back to Him. When we make that new birth commitment, God comes in once again to rescue us...this time with the promise of not only a better, more holy life here on earth...but a better one in eternity!

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

James 3:17

Let’s reject partiality & hypocrisy! Let’s put aside the things which separate us from God & allow us to revoke our rescue! Let’s go with God all the way to eternity!



## Press Through the Plunge

*Monday, November 22*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 18–19 · JAMES 4

*“And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.”*

— EZEKIEL 19:13–14

Dry. Thirsty. Spent. Fruitless. No drive or motivation left...we sing this song, or lamentation, more often as Moms than we'd like to admit. Right now especially I'm feeling this, and “God help me & strengthen me” has been my #1 prayer lately! We love our children, as God loves us, and He sees us at our emptiest & weakest. This simple prayer has gotten me through so much, and I know it can help anyone who feels out of breath & out of hope. This prayer can also be a base to expand your prayer time into something greater & more meaningful, as you start to feel that joy & motivation restored!

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4:10

If we really hold to our time of prayer, and humble ourselves, admitting we need every moment we can savour, the Jesus will lift us up! Through prayer, He will help us press through the plunge! He will help us dig out of our downward spiral! More of God=best version of ourselves!





NOVEMBER

## A Helping Hand

Tuesday, November 23

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 20–21 · JAMES 5

*“and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the LORD your God;”*

— EZEKIEL 20:5

“in the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands: then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.” Ezekiel 20:6–7

Many times in this chapter, it is mentioned that God “lifts up His Hand” unto His people. In lifting up His Hand, He brought the Israelites out of Egypt, on their way to the land of promise. The only thing God asked of them was to rid themselves of abominations & evil things...but unfortunately, this story is filled with back & forth, serving God or serving themselves. God then had to lift His same loving Hand against His people. God doesn’t ask much of us! We want His helping Hand upon us instead of His Hand of judgment!

“Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth.” Ezekiel 20:22

God withdrew His Hand of help, and the people were delivered to their own ways, which honestly were a judgment upon them, because helping ourselves is never as promising as humbling ourselves & accepting The Lord’s help! Babylon would ultimately end up being their master, instead of the gentle helping Hand

of The Lord...we must pray & ask God to help us put aside our ways for His! Best trade-off ever!

“and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.” Ezekiel 20:34

There is a beautiful part of the passage where God speaks to Ezekiel about how He will, after a period of time, come back for His people with that mighty Hand of help again...He will still have fury. He will still be stirred up about the process...yet He is so long-suffering! He always reaches back into our lives, seeing if we will reach back...will we?

“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

James 5:8

He is always knocking on our hearts, but there will be a day He comes for the final time. Will we accept His Hand of help, or accept the wrath that will be to follow later because of our selfish ways? God knows us better than we know ourselves! We need His helping Hand!



## When Betrayal Prevails

*Friday, November 26*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 22-23 · 1 PETER 1

*“And the names of them were Abolah the elder, and Abolibah her sister: and they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Abolah, and Jerusalem Abolibah.”*

— EZEKIEL 23:4

These 2 sisters, representing Samaria & Jerusalem, WERE The Lord's, as this Scripture states. This chapter then goes into detail about the sad betrayal of these 2 sisters against God. They go out & commit adultery with other Nations, finding the world more enticing than the pure & holy love of God. We all understand, in some form or another, how betrayal feels...but how much more does our Father & Creator feel it when we give Him the least of our attention? I definitely need to keep this in mind myself-my life has lots of scattered & distracted moments, so I need to make sure I find a focused moment with God somewhere!

“that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:” 1 Peter 1:7

We are going to be tried. We are going to be tempted. There are going to be situations where we feel the need to compromise...but we can't let go of God! We can't let betrayal prevail! If we stand for nothing, we will fall for anything...if we don't like betrayal, we can't be hypocrites and turn our backs on God! When the urge comes to turn to something or someone else who promotes a bad habit in us, let's dive into prayer for the strength to stay committed! Remember, GOD LOVES US MOST!

“whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of

your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:8–9

We can’t betray God just because of the challenge or temptation which lies before us. We see many things which can draw our attention away from God, and so we need to remember the joy, glory & salvation which is all a part of a beautiful relationship with Him!



## Be a Sign

Friday, November 26

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 24-26 · 1 PETER 2

*"Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD."*

— EZEKIEL 24:24

**O**f the many signs & visions given to Ezekiel, the most profound thing spoken to him, at least to me, was that he HIMSELF was a sign to the people! Just as God used miraculous visions to speak to Ezekiel, God wanted to use Ezekiel as a special sign to the people as a warning of what was to come! What an incredible job & burden to bear...but so needful in his time AND ours! Are we up for that challenge? Can we be a sign to people today, pointing them in the direction of God & showing them His love?

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

1 Peter 2:9

In order to be a sign, you have to stand out! God's people have to be set apart, a little on the peculiar side, in order to reach our world...it took the same strategy in Ezekiel's day! God's people were never made to blend...we were meant to be a shining sign, pointing to Jesus! The way we can do that is reflecting His Word to our world!

"having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." 1 Peter 2:12

Are we doing anything for God that people will notice? Not for our recognition of course, but for the glory of God? Is it hard for people to tell we are

God's people? We need to make sure we step away from our past in repentance, get baptized in water & Spirit, and be an obvious sign for The Lord in these last days!

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:” 1 Peter 2:21

Let's be an example! Let's be a sign!



## Treasured

Friday, November 26

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 27-29 · 1 PETER 3

*“These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in blue clothes, and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise. The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas.”*

— EZEKIEL 27:24-25

What does it mean to be treasured? Does it mean to be spoiled by our significant other? Does it mean to be “decked out” in the latest trends? As we start decking the halls & entering into the Christmas season, let’s remember that “treasured” means a lot more than the “treasures” we receive as gifts!

“Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin.”

Ezekiel 27:27

All of the things we own will wear & tear over time. Those things will not last! Heaven & earth will pass, but God’s Word stands FOREVER! No matter how much went into building an earthly kingdom, or how much goes into making us feel “treasured,” we can never feel more treasured than when we are in the arms of God! That’s because “treasured” means “loved!” And since God is love (1 John 4:8), He knows how to treasure us most! And He IS the ultimate Treasure to be treasured!

“by thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; behold, therefore I will



bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.”  
Ezekiel 28:5–7

We can try to “shine” with the gold & flashiness of self-adornment, but honestly, it’s all just self-absorption compared to the way we can feel treasured by Jesus! When we take the attention off of us & treasure our God, we will be truly beautiful, and most importantly, be loved!

“but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

1 Peter 3:4

True treasure shines from within! If we’re flashy & flaunting on the outside, we are just covering up that beautiful, godly glow!!



## Sin & “No”

*Sunday, November 28*

TODAY’S READING · EZEKIEL 30–32 · 1 PETER 4

*“And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No.”*

— EZEKIEL 30:15

“Sin” and “No” were areas of Egypt that God poured great judgment & wrath upon...but is it a wonder that God would do that in areas with such definitive names? We know of Egypt’s harsh attacks upon God’s people, we’ve studied many of the stories...and could it be because such Sinful places existed which always said No to God? “Sin” and “No” are the greatest things which separate us from God too! When we sin, we say no to God! When we say no to God, we sin!

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.” 1 Peter 4:1–2

Instead of sinning & denying God, let’s do works of righteousness, denying our flesh & saying yes to God! A “no” to God can help us avoid responsibility for a season, but a “no” lifestyle could cause us to say “no” to an eternity with Jesus in Heaven! Why would we want to risk our eternity for sin for a season?

“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” 1 Peter 4:19

He is our faithful Creator! We must keep our souls safe in Him, away from Sin & No and committed to God & Yes!





## Restoring the Pledge

Sunday, November 28

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 33-34 · 1 PETER 5

*“if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.”*

— EZEKIEL 33:15-16

Way back in the Old Testament, God had restoration in mind & designed for us. He knew we would have times of desolation, and so we would need a time of restoration! God is able to do that for us, and at this time of year, it is important to reflect & be thankful for all the times He has already restored us and brought us through. But will we restore our pledge to God? Will we follow through with some things we've been putting off? If you haven't yet repented, been baptized in Jesus' Name & received The Holy Ghost, then I would say to start there! That is the most needful way to start a meaningful commitment to God, for now & for eternity!

“And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.” Ezekiel 33:32

How quick are we to hear the preached Word at church, and allow it to fade as we leave & “reality” sets in? Do we hear God as a sweet song, but become disconnected quickly, not allowing Him to have any say or impact upon our behavior? As we have been encouraged to put into practice, we need to do our best to intentionally have an attitude of thankfulness! Every time we complain & criticize, we are breaking down our pledge to God instead of restoring & refreshing it!

“I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.” Ezekiel 34:16

Jesus will seek us, bring us, bind us & strengthen us...HE WILL RESTORE US! So let's restore our relationship with Him by pledging our very best! But don't worry-He sees us in the hard times, and He will do His restoring work then...but we can't fulfill our pledge to Him by doing an “ignoring” work!

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” 1 Peter 5:10



## God is where we are not.

*Monday, November 29*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 35-36 · 2 PETER 1

*“Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there:”*

— EZEKIEL 35:10

We always know that God is aware of where we are at all times...but we forget that the problems we are praying about have solutions that we are not a part of yet...but God is already there too! Just because we are not in the victory report yet, doesn't mean we can't praise Him in the prayer request! The above Scripture talks about plans of attack against God's people, and even in that moment, God was there! He knew what was to come. He is where we are not. If He is present in the problem and present in the prayer, we don't have to doubt that He will bring that victory!

“and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” Ezekiel 36:11

He will do better for us than our beginnings! Or do we want to stay stuck in the past? God is where we are not! God has moved on from our past & wants us to live in a brighter, more productive future...so let's go there with God!

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

Ezekiel 36:26

“And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”

Ezekiel 36:27

A new heart, a new Spirit, a new self! We become new creatures in Him when we repent, get baptized in Jesus' Name & receive the Holy Ghost! This is a reminder that God has so much better planned for us; we just have to be willing to go beyond ourselves and press into His perfect will...so we CAN be where He is!

"Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it." Ezekiel 36:36

"whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4

He will build us up from brokenness. He takes us out of desolation and into precious promises! He gives us new life! But we must trust Him! We must remember that His field of vision is wider than ours. He is where we are not, and He knows the way to bring us where He is!



## Drying out, or Dying out?

*Tuesday, November 30*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 37-39 · 2 PETER 2

*“Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.”*

— EZEKIEL 37:4-6

There are times when we feel so worn, entirely in need of a rejuvenation...all we can do is lay there, untested, thinking of all the things we want to change, but not knowing where to start...thankfully, at that point, we are drying out, but not dying out yet! We may be dry. We may be empty. But if we turn to Jesus, it's not over! The only way we die out is if we give up on God...but He hasn't given up on us!

“Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.” Ezekiel 37:26

God doesn't just “fix” us...He transforms us! He leaves things better than He found it...just as He brought Ezekiel to a valley of dry bones...He didn't do that to show Ezekiel death & doom; He did that to show that even in a heap of a dry old mess like that, there was STILL potential! So are we dried out, or have we already died out? Are we willing to look for a solution, or have we completely given up?

“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.”

2 Peter 2:17



These words from 2 Peter refer to the false prophets who did not speak from The Lord. They were the ones who were dry, wells without water, and they did nothing to change their ways...only on a road to death & destruction...but we can have a different future! It may be dry, but that doesn't mean there can't be a chance of rain! Look to Jesus! Even if all we can do is lay & pray sometimes, we can look up! Even if you're drying out, don't let your light die out!







X I I

# DECEMBER



*“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a  
Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”*

LUKE 2:11

DAYS 335 – 365

# Wresting, or Resting?

*Wednesday, December 1*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 40-41 · 2 PETER 3

These 2 chapters of Ezekiel reference the measurements of the temple buildings and inner courts of the Holy City. Every detail was considered, and nothing was left out (or left up to human decision). This vision of all the exact measurements was a God thing! How do we measure up in God's Kingdom? Are we wresting, meaning pulling, yanking or prodding at the world to try to make something of ourselves, being our own creator? Or are we resting, meaning resting in The Lord & allowing Him to make the best of us?

“as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” 2 Peter 3:16

Those who choose not to study the Scriptures are unstable, only standing upon the temporary false foundations of the world. They wrest (wrestle) with themselves, other people, other things, and even God...continuing on a path of resistance instead of rest! We can rest on Scripture! Scripture is stable! And we can then measure up to God's Perfect Will for our lives! We just have to stop fighting it sometimes!

“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.”

2 Peter 3:17

We know God is there. We have studied many Scriptures together this past year! It is now time to reflect on where God wants us to go from here...the experiences He wants to have with us at church...a life of repentance, getting baptized in Jesus' Name & seeking to receive The Holy Ghost with evidence of speaking in new tongues is the best place to start & kick off 2022! Who's ready to measure up to a higher calling!? Excited for what God's going to do!



## Separation Initiation

*Thursday, December 2*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 42-44 · 1 JOHN 1

*“Then said he unto me, The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they be holy chambers, where the priests that approach unto the LORD shall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the most holy things, and the meat offering, and the sin offering, and the trespass offering; for the place is holy.”*

— EZEKIEL 42:13

A holy place is always a separate place. It's a little get-away. It's a sanctuary. It's a church...and it also should be our hearts! We need to be holy, separate people, just as the priests of old had to enter into a separate place in order to complete this holy process of sacrifice & offering. Even the garments that the priests wore needed to only be used inside the holy place! Maybe it's time we had an official separation initiation? Maybe we need to re-dedicate ourselves, or even find that special place for the first time? Remember, just as the garments were new, WE need to be new creatures too!

“He measured it by the four sides: it had a wall round about, five hundred reeds long, and five hundred broad, to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.” Ezekiel 42:20

The only way to have holiness is to receive His Holy Spirit, while also being repentant of heart & getting baptized in Jesus' Name! Then His Spirit & our new Spiritual nature leads us into a new, holy life separate from corruption! Nothing better!

“This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.” Ezekiel 43:12

Is this the law of our house, or the suggestion of our house? Are we quick to impose & apply God's ways, or ways that may not be God's plan for us? Let's pray & seek God in His Word daily to get direction in order to move more toward God & separate from sin!

"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." 1 John 1:4-5

These things are all written to make life BETTER, not more difficult! Are we light, or darkness? Holy, or unholy? God created a fine line. There's no gray, just light & dark! Let's follow His holy pattern presented to us so we can have a true separation initiation!



DAY 337

## Season of Light

Friday, December 3

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 45-46 · 1 JOHN 2

*“But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”*

— 1 JOHN 2:5-6

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105

If His Word is a lamp & light, and if we keep His Word, then the love of God is perfected in us, then the light of His Word brings love! Light & love are some of the most popular themes of the Christmas season...and this light of love has been shining into hearts since the beginning of time! Even before the first Christmas, there were seasons of light as people followed The Word of God! Ever since God said, “Let there be light” in Genesis, His Word became the brightest light and greatest form of love ever! Let’s remember that during this Christ-time season!

“Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.” 1 John 2:7

Way back in Ezekiel, through all of his visions and encounters with God and the supernatural, “light” was a great theme! This is not a new light, just a light that has never gone out! Eventually, the holiday season will fade, and the Christmas lights will be put away...but let’s not hide the light of His Word under a bushel!

“He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.” 1 John 2:10

Let the love of God light the way as we let His Word guide us this Christ-time season!





## Drawing Water

*Saturday, December 4*

TODAY'S READING · EZEKIEL 47-48 · 1 JOHN 3

*“And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.”*

— EZEKIEL 47:9

Although going to a river to draw water seems like a thing of the past, we know many countries still get water this way and are not as fortunate as we are. But then, who sees the true value in the water? Do we take water for granted? What about Jesus, our Living Water? Do we blame our dry seasons on our circumstances alone, or have we simply stopped drawing water?

“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” 1 John 3:3

Even if we're going through a rough time, we can't expect hope & refreshing to just “appear.” A connection to our Living Water Source, Jesus Christ, is essential! We have to do something about it! Again, as fortunate as we are, we can acquire water in our country without much effort...but if we think about it, hope has been pretty hard to come by in our country lately, even though we have many luxuries. As the above Scripture states, “...every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure...” Our hope bucket needs to be deep in the pure, Living Water of Jesus, just as Ezekiel was shown a vision, brought deeper & deeper into this River of Life!

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” 1 John 3:22

As we keep His commandments and keep asking and drawing water, we will receive what we need! We will be able to see the value of the Water as we continue

to make an effort to draw from Him, not taking it for granted. Keep drawing from The Living Water Source, and soon you'll be walking upon water in your own life!



## Still waiting?

*Sunday, December 5*

TODAY'S READING · DANIEL 1-2 · 1 JOHN 4

*“that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.”*

— DANIEL 2:18-19

**A**re you still waiting on an answer? On an approval? Waiting for a change that seems LONG overdue? It's hard to be in the “still waiting” phase...but that's why the best thing we can do while we are “still waiting” is wait on The Lord! Have we asked God directly for an answer? Have we sought Him in prayer? The right answer will come if we seek The One Who is righteous! Instead of going into hiding, fearing he may be killed along with the other wise men, Daniel waited on The Lord in deep prayer. He didn't sit there and await his fate of death! And Daniel DID get the answer!

“Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his.” Daniel 2:20

“he revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.” Daniel 2:22

Daniel didn't stop short in waiting on The Lord after the prayer stage was over & he got his answer...after he prayed, he praised! He thanked God for not letting him down & revealing the secret things to him which no man on earth could reveal. Just remember, when we wait on The Lord, a good pattern to follow is to wait, pray & praise our way through! Only God has the answers we seek (because HE is the ANSWER!).

“The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst

reveal this secret.” Daniel 2:47

We then need to share our victory with someone else! This revelation to Daniel was an answer meant for the king. Is our answer only meant for us? Or will it also help someone else? Let’s think about that going forward!

Are you still waiting...on The Lord?



# When the heat turns up!

*Monday, December 6*

TODAY'S READING · DANIEL 3-4 · 1 JOHN 5

There are times when we want to turn up the heat-especially as winter sets in! But there are other times where the heat & pressure becomes too much... situations overwhelm us, and we need a little cool-down time! Just think about the 3 Hebrew children about to be thrown in the fiery furnace:

“Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?” Daniel 3:15

This wasn't the “cozy up by the fire” heat from all the Christmas songs-this was being immersed IN the fire! And what did they do when the heat turned up? They stood their ground with God! They did not bow or break their commitment! They knew that, if they lived or died, God would honor them for honoring Him!

“Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.” Daniel 3:19

Then, the heat turned up EVEN MORE! How quick are we to lose our cool when the heat turns up? Do we lose our commitment to God in the process? Do we remember that He is our rescue? Nothing & no one can keep us safe like our God! In times of high stress & high heat, trust God in the process! The 3 Hebrew children made it out, and that's because they stood for God when times got tough, and God stood with THEM in the fire!

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3

Many things in life are grievous to us-but God's Word brings life, hope & love as we hold to it!



## Dissolving Doubts

*Tuesday, December 7*

TODAY'S READING · DANIEL 5-7 · 2 JOHN

*“forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.”*

— DANIEL 5:12

Daniel was used in many mighty ways by God in order to show, without a shadow of a doubt, that God is GOD! He was given the ability to interpret many dreams, visions & writings, all because he relied on God. He was used in the highest of positions to reach the people with the most earthly power, and the most doubt about God! Daniel dissolved doubt, especially in the highest of authorities! Are we bold enough to be used by God to dissolve doubt in our nation?

“And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?” Daniel 6:20

Not only did his words dissolve doubt, but his actions did as well! He proved to everyone that he was able to make it out of the lions’ den with God’s help! Do our words & actions show strong faith in God, or strong doubt? Something to think about!

“I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.” 2 John 1:4

It is such a celebration to see people walking in Truth-so we need to speak it in order to dissolve doubt in our world! Our actions also must show that we believe



& obey God's Word and live in His promises!

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought,  
but that we receive a full reward.” 2 John 1:8



## Telling Ourselves the Truth

Wednesday, December 8

TODAY'S READING · DANIEL 8-10 · 3 JOHN

*“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.”*

— DANIEL 9:19

Daniel was always quick to humble himself before God. He seemed bold & fearless in the face of his enemies when he went into the lion's den, but that's because he had this immense sense of humility before God. He lived on every Word God spoke to him. He was strengthened physically by a supernatural encounter with God! He held to God's Word as Truth. When we hold The Word in our hands, are we holding it in our hearts? Do we tell ourselves The Truth, or believe lies that take away our strength?

“Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.”

Daniel 10:12

Daniel was also quick to chasten himself before God. He admitted his faults, and in humility confessed his weaknesses as a part of humanity...knowing God is greater than us all...do we quickly admit when we are wrong & repent, or is it hard to break down & bring ourselves down to that level? Do we build up a story that makes us look better (which may not be the Truth)? I know this is a difficult one, but I pray I'd be more quick to tell myself the Truth & admit my faults!

“We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.”

3 John 1:8

We are all fellowhelpers of The Truth! Each one of us is accountable to God & His Word; no one person is better than another. This should be an encouragement to us!

“Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.” 3 John 1:11

We need to keep doing the good work of telling the Truth-to others and to ourselves-in a loving way! We can’t be too prideful to accept it for what it is. As hard as accepting The Truth may be, we just have to understand that God’s plan ultimately works for our good!



DAY 343

## Is it “good,” or God?

Thursday, December 9

TODAY'S READING · DANIEL 11–12 · JUDE

*“And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”*

— DANIEL 11:32

**W**e know according to Scripture that God is the only good, true & pure One...yet there are many seemingly “good” words out there...many people who try to encourage us, but are really trying to get into our heads & change the way we think about God. That’s not to say that many people don’t have good intentions, but we have to be careful about the “flatteries” which flutter our way, making us stray away from God’s path toward something that is too good to be true—which means it’s a lie! With God, we will be strong & do exploits!

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

Daniel 12:3–4

Many people think they have The Truth, but it is just “good” inspiration. Many people are running frantically in this ever-changing world, looking for something stable...we need more than “good,” we need GOD! Because ultimately, He is ONLY good! If what is being spoken to us by someone disagrees with God’s Word & His ways, then it is not the good word we are looking for!

“Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” Daniel 12:10

Do we want to be wise, or wicked? Good in The Truth, or stuck in the error of our evil ways, believing a lie? Always have a prayerful conversation with God, search the Scriptures & seek godly counsel from a pastor in order to truly confirm how “good” something really is! So thankful God gives us many ways to get direction!

“These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.” Jude 1:16

We never know what people are trying to gain by speaking “good” of us & flattering us. I’m not saying people should be putting us down, but we should think about what we would have to compromise to listen to those people!

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” Jude 1:20–21



# The Blessing of Going Without

Friday, December 10

TODAY'S READING · HOSEA 1-4 · REVELATION 1

*“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.”*

— HOSEA 3:4-5

Although this is a time of year when lists are made, and we think about the desires of our hearts, it's also a time to realize that it's truly impossible to for each person on earth to obtain each thing they truly desire...that is, unless we become content with going without and making our lists short & simple! The more minimal, the merrier! Jesus is the reason for the season (and every season) anyway! The above Scripture says Israel would have to go without many things in order to make God the center focus again-so why don't we do the same, especially at this time of year? Let's remember that going without & saying yes to simple is the way to put Jesus as our focus again!

“I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 1:9

John was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos. There were many things he was going without...but he had the greatest treasure of all! Jesus Christ and his visions! Without these beautiful things, we would not be able to catch a glimpse of the glorious things to come! John got the closest to God not at a time where he was prospering in earthly things & possessions, but at a time where he was imprisoned and lacking many things. So what is suffering? Is it separation from this world, or suffocation from too much of the world?



## Have we forgotten?

*Tuesday, December 14*

TODAY'S READING · HOSEA 5-8 · REVELATION 2

*"Israel hath cast off the thing that is good: the enemy shall pursue him."*

— HOSEA 8:3

When we break a routine or habit that benefits us, it's sometimes hard to "snap back in" after the fact! Some things need to be broken & replaced with better habits & behaviors, and those are things to think about as we turn the corner & enter a new year...but how about bringing some things back? I would just like to say I'm glad to be back again! I definitely don't want to let this year end without finishing a whole year of devotions with all of you! Nonetheless, sometimes it's hard to re-gain the same momentum & keep growing & building off of it! Please pray for me as we go, and I will do the same for all of you...and remember to let me know any prayer requests! As the above Scripture states, Israel had cast off that which was good-so let's not do the same! Let's keep pursuing after our good God together as we enter 2022!

"I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." Hosea 8:12

I truly pray that we have not become strangers! Also, I pray we never become strangers to God's Word! He has great things in store for us! Don't take the Light of the world lightly!

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

Revelation 2:4

Let's return to our first love! We have been & will be around many loved ones this season...but let's return to Jesus, get grounded again, and make each moment with them more meaningful!



“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Revelation 2:29



## Birth & Growth

*Wednesday, December 15*

TODAY'S READING · HOSEA 9-11 · REVELATION 3

*“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.”*

— HOSEA 10:12

In order to grow up, we must first be born...this is an obvious fact, but how quick are we to sometimes want to skip the “birth” or “breaking up our fallow ground”? We want to jump right to prosperity & growth! But God knows, as His children, everything is a delicate process...and He is willing to take us through that process of new birth, just like the physical birth we went through! In order to change our ways, we need a broken, repentant heart. One willing to break with our past, then we need the good washing of baptism & receiving the refreshing of His Holy Ghost! Then we can be ready for some REAL growth!

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.”  
Hosea 11:1

God loves us as children & wants to see us grow, out of Egypt, sin & sorrow & into His greater calling! We can't just have a “break through moment” where we have a great experience with God, but our lives don't change or develop Spiritual meaning...we must have the growth too!

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” Revelation 3:12

There are birthing pains. There are growing pains...but through the pain comes being a pillar, tried & true for The Lord! It's all worth it to see His plan for us unfold...on earth & in eternity!



## Taken with the Wind

Thursday, December 16

TODAY'S READING · HOSEA 12-14 · REVELATION 4

*“Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt.”*

— HOSEA 12:1

It's been super blustery and windy lately! There have also been tornados in other states with intense levels of wind! But can wind be trusted? Can it lead us anywhere? Does it have any direction, or does wind lead us down a winding path? Honestly, to me, it seems to have a mind of its own!

“Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.” Hosea 13:3

Do we want to be so off-set and so un-grounded that we become driven away with the whirlwinds of life? The “winds” of life and the “winds” of the cities (which are more than just the wind outdoors, but also the words of politicians and other influencers!) tend to drive us to & fro...and soon, we don't know where to go! Thankfully, God's Word is a Word of Life, Hope & Direction! We can trust Him. We can be grounded in Him. He doesn't change to only please certain people. He is always the same, and loves each & every one of us!

“Yet I am the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me.”

Hosea 13:4

Everyone else may leave us winded, exhausted, not knowing where to turn next...but God's Word gives us new life & energy to keep going!

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Revelation

4:11



# JOY TO THE WORLD!

*Friday, December 17*

TODAY'S READING · JOEL 1-3 · REVELATION 5

*"Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children,  
and their children another generation."*

— JOEL 1:3

It's so awesome when we find the perfect gift-when we see something in the store, and it literally reminds us of a specific person...we think, "That gift will bring them so much joy!" And so, if the point of each gift is to bring someone joy, then what is the real gift? The joy, or the item? We need to pass on joy to our family & children, and it doesn't always need to come in the form of a gift! Kind words, a text, a call, a visit...all show we care, and all bring joy to the world-without the stress or spending!

"The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men." Joel 1:12

Now that's not to say we don't have to buy things for people, especially if they're needful, but we have to think of what will really bring a long joy supply! Many people are dry & withered because of the past couple years of hardships...of course a good meal might help, but how about sharing that meal WITH them? One thing we reflected on at a ladies night was that we don't always remember the gifts we get-but we do have fond memories of who we spend our time with!

"Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things." Joel 2:21

God has great things in store for 2022! We just have to restore some joy to the world with Jesus! Telling people about Him is a joy that never runs dry!

"And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I

sent among you.” Joel 2:25

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:” Joel 2:28

The restoration of dreams & visions is one thing missing today-many people are dreading tomorrow. Not sure what curve ball life will toss them next...but God’s Spirit living in us, accompanied with repentance & baptism in Jesus’ Name, is the best gift which keeps joy flowing, even through the tough times!

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Revelation 5:13



## PEACE ON EARTH!

*Friday, December 17*

TODAY'S READING · AMOS 1-3 · REVELATION 6

*"Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four,  
I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the  
righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;"*

— AMOS 2:6

Just as people need the joy of Jesus, which is greater than any gift (silver, gold, or a pair of shoes as the Scripture states!), people also need peace! And sometimes the material things of this life clutter, cloud & crowd out the peace we truly desire (not only at Christmastime, but year-round!). We need joy right now. We need peace right now. We need it more than we ever have before...

"For they know not to do right, saith the LORD, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces." Amos 3:10

What plans have we got stored up? Some people plan to be violent, rob or riot in order to make sense of their lives, or they do it in the name of, oddly enough, PEACE! But how can one side's anger bring peace to both sides? It's not about winning. It's not about getting even. It's about finding ourselves in Jesus! He is true JOY! He is true PEACE! His pattern & plan suits every soul!

"And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Revelation 6:4

We haven't seen the worst yet...but we haven't seen the best yet, either! The question is, how do we get there? The only answer? JESUS!





DECEMBER

## To Run, or to Return?

Tuesday, December 21

TODAY'S READING · AMOS 4-6 · REVELATION 7

*“And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.”*

— AMOS 4:7-8

In this fourth chapter of Amos, we see many examples of God using very urgent signs and situations in order to be warning signs for His people to seek Him & return to Him once again...yet they did not return...just as the raindrops came down running, the people were running from their God. The question arises, “What will it take?” Can we ask this to ourselves? Does it take a lot for us to seek God? I truly plan to seek God in prayer & His Word on a much deeper level in this coming year; I know I need it & pray you’ll join me once again for a year of exploring the Bible together! I want to pray more “preventative” prayers instead of “panic” prayers, where I am more “prayed up” going into situations instead of trying to desperately pray my way out! Let’s not be on the run, let’s return!

“For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:”

Amos 5:4

What a simple command! But why so easily avoided? If we seek God, we live...so who would want the alternative!? I am not worthy of His greatness. I am not worthy of how much He loves us...but He STILL desires us to seek Him and give us life! Return, don’t run!

“Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken.” Amos 5:14

He shall be with us, but we need to choose HIM, not a temporary fix. Not a false sense of security. Not something which will corrupt us in the end...we need to return to Jesus & reject anything which distracts us from His Perfect Will in our lives!

“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”

Revelation 7:4

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;”

Revelation 7:9

Many people will be saved. Many people will make the choice to return here on earth, which will cause an eternal return to Jesus later...will we keep up the good fight of faith? Will we be those chosen ones? Let's encourage one another daily as we continue to build a strong relationship with God!



DAY 351

## Do you hear what I hear?

*Tuesday, December 21*

TODAY'S READING · AMOS 7-9 · REVELATION 8

*“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine  
in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of  
hearing the words of the LORD:”*

— AMOS 8:11

“Do you hear what I hear?” is a song we all hear around this time of year...we usually don’t hear it until Christmastime...sadly, many people also don’t hear much about Jesus until this special time of year. There is a true famine going on, and some people don’t understand that the only way to fill that void is with Jesus! We have many things...we give & receive many things...but how about the precious Word of God? That’s definitely worth sharing! Are we willing to listen to the preached Word at church? Are we willing to have some quiet time to reflect on Him?

“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:” Amos 9:11

We can build ourselves firmly upon His Word! Jesus will raise up our ruins! But will we hear Him? Will we receive Him? Will we obey Him? Will we love Him?

“And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.” Amos 9:15

If we are planted in The Word of God, willing to listen & learn, then we can’t be stolen away! God won’t let that happen! He will protect us with the love, stability & structure of His eternal Word!





## God's Will Toward Men

Thursday, December 23

TODAY'S READING · OBADIAH · REVELATION 9

*"But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress."*

— OBADIAH 1:12

I am really enjoying finding a Christmas theme in our readings throughout December. Today, I was reminded to have good will toward others. The people of Edom (Esau) were reminded that they rejoiced when their brother, Judah & Jacob's people, were in distress. While I'm sure we see certain people and are reminded of the times we've been wronged, let's try to look at people a little more in the light of God's love!

"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:" Revelation 9:20

Sometimes, those very same people who we see negatively could actually help us see what we can change in ourselves. How many "hints" have we been sent by God to make some changes in our lives, but we only focus on the frustrating things we want others to change? No matter how many beams we have protruding from ourselves, or how many "plagues" are sent our way, we are blind to them! We usually only see the motes in others, and we don't always "hope for the best" for them...

"Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own

eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." Luke 6:42

This Christ-Time season, let's make it a goal to have a Christ-Time year! One filled with showing the love of God to others, and ourselves, even when it's not deserved...God's love will bring the change we need! And not just good will toward men...but God's Will toward men!



## On this very Christmas Night

*Friday, December 24*

TODAY'S READING · JONAH 1-4 · REVELATION 10

*"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, And he heard me; Out of the belly of hell cried I, And thou heardest my voice."*

— JONAH 2:1-2

What were those 3 days & nights like in the belly of the big fish? All we know is, Jonah had a prayer in Jonah Chapter 2. He had a prayer which claimed God had heard his voice, and knew that this fish was prepared by God to spare him somehow. Something must come of this. Something must be born out of the depths of this fish's belly-could it be Jonah? Could he live with a greater understanding that God is the Savior of all, even Nineveh? That is the same perspective we have on this very Christmas, holy night...that through a miraculous birth, we have miraculous hope through our Miraculous Savior, Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, GOD WITH US!

"And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth," Revelation 10:1-2

God has dominion over both the sea & the land. He can cause storms, and cause the calm of the storms. He wants to save us! But His birth wasn't the only part of the salvation process-it was His death & Resurrection! We must first die to our old, sinful life in repentance, be re-born under water in Jesus' Name, & Resurrect & Rise up in newness of life when we pray & receive the Holy Ghost! Jonah came up from the depths of the sea, but unfortunately did not seem to gain that life-changing perspective that God wants to save ALL & give EVERYONE a chance at newness of life...but we can be different, especially on



this very Christmas night! NEW LIFE is what HE came for! Let's keep that in reflection, and understand that Jesus is our greatest gift of all!



# God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

*Monday, December 27*

TODAY'S READING · MICAH 1-3 · REVELATION 11

*“Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.”*

— MICAH 2:10

...and the random posting continues! Don't worry-I promise we WILL finish our readings & posts by the end of this year! I pray you had a joyful & restful Christmas time with your loved ones. In keeping with the Christmas themes once again, today “rest” stood out to me, and so of course, “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” came to mind! This scripture states to arise & depart, for this is not our rest...how long have we stayed in a difficult position we weren't (or aren't) supposed to be in? Are you in a place of rest right now, or restlessness?

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15

God can easily take every kingdom, every position, every situation, and make it subject to Him...but will we surrender it? Will we allow God to take away the things which are causing us stress, or will we continue to restlessly fight in our own power to find a solution? God is true rest for us, not only as we gaze upon the nativity scene at Christmastime, but as we gaze & look ahead to the new year...it may seem like a scary place, but with our Lord Jesus, we WILL find rest in the year to come! We CAN keep Christmas in our hearts by keeping Christ at the center of our lives!





## Mary, Did You Know?

*Monday, December 27*

TODAY'S READING · MICAH 4-5 · REVELATION 12

*“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.”*

— MICAH 4:1

Mary, did you know that because of Jesus, many people would make going to the house of God the top priority amidst the mountain of things to do? Did you know that people would be going to “tell it on the mountain” for centuries to come? Thank God for His plan to be delivered of Mary! Thank God for His plan to be the Deliverer of Mary! Thank God for His plan to deliver US!

“Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.”

Micah 4:10

Mary, did you know God’s plan for deliverance came long before He came in the flesh? Did you know that we, along with Mary, are a part of a story so much greater than we could ever imagine? It’s a saving story of deliverance of ALL PEOPLE! As we focus on this miraculous birth, I am all too aware that my time is also coming soon...to all the Moms out there reading who may be pregnant, I feel your pain! Literally! Thankfully, there is so much more joy than sorrow.

“But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrath, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2

Mary, did you know the little town of Bethlehem was always the plan for your little child? That His humble beginnings would bring forth the strongest end for

ALL who commit to His plan of salvation? When we repent, get baptized in Jesus' Name & receive His Spirit, we join the story just as Mary did!

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” Revelation 12:1–2

Signs of deliverance will continue to shine forth until the end of time...how long will we stay in pain before we choose to be delivered? How long will we hold back Jesus instead of allowing Him to be born in us? Something to think about!



# Oh, Holy Night

*Monday, December 27*

TODAY'S READING · MICAH 6-7 · REVELATION 13

*“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”*

**M**icah 6:8  
Justice. Mercy. Humility...and ultimately, Holiness...God doesn't require us to be like anyone or anything else but Him! He provides us with these ways to live because this is how HE lives! The beasts presented in Revelation were worshipped by those who didn't get to know Jesus personally...and they didn't bring anything promising or good...but God doesn't require us to do anything or be anything which He wouldn't, although we know He is able to do so much more for us than we could ever imagine! Even when He came as a Babe, it was a HOLY night. Not just a beautiful night. Not just a miraculous night. But a night filled with the realization of Who this child was—Just. Merciful. Humble. Holy...

“Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.” Micah 7:8

He still IS the Light of the world. He is still the solution to every unjust thing, every inconsiderate thing, every prideful thing...Jesus is the Answer! He is Justice. He is Mercy. He is Humility. He is HOPE...and HE IS HOLINESS!!! We can bring that same Light into this world as we let Him shine through us with these key attributes. When we receive The Holy Ghost, we receive a conviction to live a Holy Life, set apart for Him, ready to reach into the darkness and help others out of it! Let's not forget that first holy night. Let's not forget that all of these wonderful things were swaddled up in this tiny child, Our Savior, Jesus Christ—and now He wants to be swaddled up in our hearts!



## Let it Snow!

*Tuesday, December 28*

TODAY'S READING · NAHUM 1-3 · REVELATION 14

*“The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.”*

— NAHUM 1:7-8

**W**e’ve all heard the saying that when it rains, it pours. When one thing goes wrong, it just seems to “snowball” from there! (Hence the theme-SNOW!). Even though it may seem like one thing after another sometimes, we have to just say, “Let it rain!” Or “Let it snow!” And “Let God handle it!” He is a stronghold in the day of trouble as the Scripture states, but those who make themselves enemies of God expose themselves willingly to those storms of life, uncovered & unprotected! I don’t know about you, but I’d definitely enjoy being under God’s umbrella instead of under the pressures of this life!

“And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” Revelation 14:2

God created the world, the way it works, and the Heavens! Even certain sounds of Heaven can be so powerful that they sound like storms! We have to remember who is in control when it rains, pours or snows on our “parade.” We have to remember that we can have joy, peace & calmness on the ride because He will get us to our destination safely! And Heaven IS that great destination!

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12

Be patient. Have faith, ESPECIALLY in the storms! The darkness is where Jesus can really shine! So...LET IT SNOW!





## Silent Night

*Tuesday, December 28*

TODAY'S READING · HABAKKUK 1-3 · REVELATION 15

*“O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.”*

— HABAKKUK 1:2-3

We all long for a silent, non-stressful night. Normally, when we think of this song, we think “peace.” But what about the silent, longing nights? The lonely nights? The nights spent waiting for an answer which never comes? God sees you in those moments too. He sees us & hears us even in the times we think He doesn’t, as Habakkuk was lamenting about. Habakkuk asks why, in what seems like the absence of His presence, he must see such undesirable things take place...but while God is the ultimate Lover of our souls, He is also the only just Judge. He brings both our answer and His judgment when the time is right, and we must know that when we stand on The Lord’s side, we will be on the right side of judgment! We will be right in a wrong world! We will be okay on those silent, lonely, sometimes scary nights.

“For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Habakkuk 2:3

There is an appointed time for the answers we seek & for the help we need. God won’t abandon us! Even in a world where we’d rather not see some of the things that are out there, we can have that silent, peaceful night instead of that silent, restless night!

“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” Habakkuk 2:14

Everyone will know of our God! He has a plan in place! He won't ever leave us confused...just seek Him, and you'll find all you need!

“But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.” Habakkuk 2:20

The Lord is in His temple! But are we turning a deaf ear to Him? Are we creating the loneliness in our silent night by “turning up this world” too loudly, and not listening to the voice of God? Let's not be afraid of silence...let's await with anticipation, knowing an answer is on its way!

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, Neither shall fruit be in the vines; The labour of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall yield no meat; The flock shall be cut off from the fold, And there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” Habakkuk 3:17–18



# Hark now hear the angels sing!

*Wednesday, December 29*

TODAY'S READING · ZEPHANIAH 1-3 · REVELATION 16

*“For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.”*

— ZEPHANIAH 3:9

What a beautiful sound it must be when angels sing, as the song suggests! When they rejoiced over Jesus being born, that must have been the most beautiful Christmas...Zephaniah prophesies a beautiful language too, but this is a Heavenly, pure language of His saints, which angels also rejoice over! This is the sound of The Holy Ghost, a divine language we receive when we diligently repent, pray & seek God with all our heart...something only GOD understands, because it's HIM in US! And it's not just a gift, it's ESSENTIAL for our salvation, for Christ to be born in us like He was born in the flesh that first Christmas night! Now that's something to sing about!

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.” Zephaniah 3:14-15

When The Lord is in the midst of us, in the core of our being, in our heart, we have nothing to fear! When our heart is repentant, we are forgiven, and gladness and rejoicing are restored! So, why not receive The Holy Ghost? We can't let our human spirit guide us through a world created by God...we need HIS SPIRIT! Then we can all rejoice as we speak in tongues...HARK NOW HEAR THE SAINTS SING!!!





# Oh Come, All Ye Faithful!

Thursday, December 30

TODAY'S READING · HAGGAI 1-2 · REVELATION 17

*“Then spake Haggai the LORD’s messenger in the LORD’s message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD. And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,”*

**H**aggai 1:13-14

The book of Haggai starts off talking about how the House of The Lord is laid waste. The houses of the people are tended to, but the House of The Lord was left behind...but God spoke through Haggai to remind the people of what (and Who) they had forgotten! God even stirred up the spirit of His people, and they came to work together on the House of God once again. Do we need a good stirring this time of year? We’ve all heard the saying, “Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse...” but how about those church mice!? We CAN be those faithful few who come back to the pew! Let’s come BACK, all ye faithful!

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Revelation 17:14

When we want the calling, and we want the choosing, we must show ourselves faithful! “Oh come ye, o come ye, to Bethlehem...” the song sings...but we should be able to faithfully say, “Oh come ye, oh come ye to church!” If you are sick, or far away, and need to watch online, that’s understood, but if you can be there, that’s the best! It’s the most moving experience as the Body of Christ gathers together. This time of gathering builds faith, just like the people spoken of in Haggai gathered to build The House of God back up!

DECEMBER

## Tidings of Comfort & Joy

*Thursday, December 30*

TODAY'S READING · ZECHARIAH 1-4 · REVELATION 18

*“Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.”*

— ZECHARIAH 1:17

God still comforts & visits His people today! He wasn't just Emmanuel in the manger...He is God with us, even NOW! That's the reason He came! Not to dwell & tabernacle with us temporarily, but to make a way for us to be with Him ETERNALLY! That's why He died, rose again & gave His Spirit to us, which we must pray to receive! We know we receive His Spirit by speaking in new tongues-a heavenly language! What more comfort or joy is there to be found than Christ in us!?

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.” Zechariah 2:10-11

We will know He dwells in the midst of our being when we let Him flow freely, speaking that heavenly language! As the Scripture states, we can sing & rejoice! We can celebrate! His Spirit is The Comforter. His Spirit brings true joy... and it will all last well beyond Christmastime!

“Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6

It's not might! It's not power! It's His Spirit which is the greatest gift this world can receive! When we receive Jesus, we have all we need to face each day & find comfort & joy in the process!





## Keeping Christmas

Thursday, December 30

TODAY'S READING · ZECHARIAH 5-8 · REVELATION 19

*“Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.”*

— ZECHARIAH 7:9-10

Reading this verse reminded me of another classic theme of Christmas: the spirit of giving. Who couldn't relate that to the story of A Christmas Carol with Ebenezer Scrooge!? This is one of my favorites, not only at Christmastime, but year-round...because the end of the story is not really an end, but the beginning of a new life...that's because Scrooge learned how to keep Christmas in his heart. Instead of “imagining evil against his brother in his heart” as the Scripture says, and wanting to “decrease the surplus population” as it says in the story, Scrooge learns not to oppress any longer, and to have mercy & compassion. I long to keep Christmas by keeping Christ at the center of my heart & life, and by having a more giving heart this coming year!

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts.” Zechariah 8:4-6

The old and the young, together, filling the streets & cities...playing & having fun...again, reminds me of a scene right out of A Christmas Carol...and reminds me of a kind of peace that's hard to find nowadays...sadly, in our world, it's hard to keep Christmas...the peace & joy fades with each new tragedy...but that's only

if we are depending on this world for happiness! If we depend on Jesus with a “God bless us, everyone!” mentality like Tiny Tim, then we surely can keep Christmas...because Christ is on the throne of our hearts!

“And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.” Revelation 19:5



DAY 363

## The Flock by Night

Thursday, December 30

TODAY'S READING · ZECARIAH 9–12 · REVELATION 20

*“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field,  
keeping watch over their flock by night.”*

— LUKE 2:8

I know I’m “intro-ing” with a Scripture outside of this particular reading, but with God, there are correlations all over His Word! Zechariah also talks of the shepherds which were around during his time (before the birth of Jesus), and many of them were idol shepherds who weren’t caring for their flocks! He also talks about the King coming for the salvation of his people...The Great Shepherd coming for the salvation of the shepherds! The Lamb of God redeeming us, His TRUE flock of sheep! How beautiful a scene it must have been to see the shepherds beholding their Shepherd on that first Christmas night...

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”

Zechariah 9:9

Zechariah talks of exactly what would happen when Jesus would come riding a donkey into Jerusalem, with people celebrating & rejoicing! He came lowly unto us, yet as our Great Shepherd, has given us the greatest gift-HIMSELF. HIS PLAN OF SALVATION. THE WAY FOR ETERNAL LIFE! Repent & get baptized of water & Spirit! That’s His plan, and through it we are forever His flock!

“Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.” Zechariah 11:17

Let's be loyal to our Shepherd! Let's be loyal to our flock & our church! Let's see Jesus coming in all His glory, just like He showed by the light of a twinkling star in a stable.



## A Wash & Refreshing

*Friday, December 31*

TODAY'S READING · ZECHARIAH 13-14 · REVELATION 21

*“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”*

— ZECHARIAH 13:1

“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.” Zechariah 14:8

Many of the Scriptures today pointed to cleansing water-which I think is very needful for looking toward the new year! We all talk about a “clean slate,” but how do we get there? How do we accomplish that & feel ready to enter into 2022? Well...getting washed in the water is what we’ve got to do!

“And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.” Zechariah 14:9

His Name is JESUS! He alone is our Provision, our River of Living Water... and when we are cleansed in the waters of baptism, we reflect Him & take on His Name! We experience that washing & cleansing both outwardly & inwardly as we also breathe that new breath of life by the Holy Ghost filling us! Just like we have to sometimes wash out the bitter tastes from our mouths, we have to rid ourselves of things this past year which have brought us down, and then we must take on those things which help us to stand for Jesus!

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4

In that great day, when we are finally with Jesus forever, there will be no more pain! Our Living Water, our Saviour, will then dry out our crying! When we are saturated by Him in His presence, we will no longer need to have tears springing

up! That's the only "drying up" we will need! Again, the way into that place, to have that earthly preparation for the year to come & for eternity, is to repent, & wash, cleanse & refresh ourselves in baptism of water & Spirit!

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Revelation 21:5

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

Revelation 21:6



## Remember Then, Restore Now

*Friday, December 31*

TODAY'S READING · MALACHI 1-4 · REVELATION 22

*“For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”*

— MALACHI 3:6

Before we move on to a brand-new year, and the washing & refreshing which will be to come...the baptisms, tonight's New Years foot-washing ceremony & so much more...we must remember. We must reflect. We must enter it all knowing that amidst every change & improvement we want to make, it's only possible because GOD CHANGES NOT! He is our constant. He has been the same every past year of our lives...and it's up to us to face our changes resting in that hope! HE will carry us through 2022! When we remember that, He will restore us now & ready us for what's to come...

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Malachi 3:10

Let's also remember, honestly, the areas this past year when we haven't given our best-and let's strive for better this year (with the help of God's restoration!). There are so many blessings in store-so many things God wants to give-but how about us? We know what we'd like to receive at times...but what are WE willing to give for God?

“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.” Malachi 3:16



God remembers. God sees. God prepares things for us as we prepare His way in our lives...let's make 2022 our best memory when it's all said & done!

“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 22:5

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Revelation 22:7

The joy that's coming doesn't compare to what we've been through, or what we're going through right now...it may seem like trudging through mud at times-but through the trudge, there WILL BE A TRIUMPH! We just have to keep going. Keep improving. Keep growing in our relationship with God, knowing that when the world keeps changing, He doesn't. When we pray, HE CAN CHANGE OUR WORLD! Let's give Him the glory this coming year. Let's be sure we are repentant, baptized in Jesus' Name in full immersion in water, and let's be sure to receive His Spirit through evidence of speaking in new tongues, living a new life of holiness, one ready for eternity...

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38





# SOLI DEO GLORIA

*To God alone be the glory.*

*Amen.*