

April 15th Readings

[EZEKIEL 31:1-32:32](#)

[HEBREWS 12:14-29](#)

[PSALM 113:1-114:8](#)

[PROVERBS 27:18-20](#)

*Why was it, sea, that you fled? Why, Jordan, did you turn back? Why, mountains, did you leap like rams, you hills, like lambs? Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of water.*

Psalm 114:5-8 NIV

“Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord.” How powerful is our God that even the Earth will tremble at His presence. This passage starts out with asking questions of the sea, Jordan and the mountains. Wondering why these massive and prominent objects are fleeing, turning back or leaping. The answer is...God. I often joke that when in doubt the answer is God. But is that not true? God is the answer. His presence is so powerful that the earth trembles and the mountains leap. I do not know of anything or anyone else that has this type of presence!

April 16th Readings

[EZEKIEL 33:1-34:31](#)

[HEBREWS 13:1-25](#)

[PSALM 115:1-18](#)

[PROVERBS 27:21-22](#)

*Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

## Hebrews 13:1-3 NIV

It is interesting to me that in the same passage God tells us to show hospitality to strangers as well as to not forget those in prison. Oftentimes, as Christians, we are kinder to strangers than we are to our brothers or sisters that have made mistakes. I know that when this was written that people were being put in prison for following God. But God did not put limitations on who “to remember ... in prison,” He merely said to remember them. It is easy for us to forget those that are not with us every day or every worship service, whether by their choices or not. I implore you to never forget and to always pray.

### April 17th Readings

[EZEKIEL 35:1-36:38](#)

[JAMES 1:1-18](#)

[PSALM 116:1-19](#)

[PROVERBS 27:23-27](#)

Pure joy is the last thing that comes to mind when we think of the trials in our lives. In the midst of trials in our lives, we are blinded by and consumed with the issues that ***we*** are trying to fix. He says we should “consider it pure joy” when we are facing trials because they will “produce perseverance.” This will allow us to “not lack anything.” But how do we do it? How do we have pure joy in the midst of our trials? We ask! He says that if we ask, He will give it to us. But we must not doubt when we ask! God will help you through the trials. He doesn't say He will take it away but He will give us wisdom to understand and be joyful in the midst of our trial.

April 18th Readings

[EZEKIEL 37:1-38:23](#)

[JAMES 1:19-2:17](#)

[PSALM 117:1-2](#)

[PROVERBS 28:1](#)

*My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.*

James 1:19-21 NIV

Anger is not the way that God wants us to live. “Slow to speak and slow to become angry” is how we should live our lives. Oftentimes when we are not listening and we are just speaking, anger takes root in our hearts. Once it has taken up a place in our heart it is very difficult to uproot. God says to “humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.” Studying God’s word and letting it take root in your heart is the only way to uproot the anger that we let take hold. Let us surround ourselves with people and things that will help us on our mission to put out the “human anger (that) does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

April 19th Readings

[EZEKIEL 39:1-40:27](#)

[JAMES 2:18-3:18](#)

[PSALM 118:1-18](#)

[PROVERBS 28:2](#)

*You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. You see that a*

*person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.*

James 2:22-26 NIV

Many people have heard “faith without works is dead.” They may have even said it at some point in their life. What does that mean? If you look at the examples that were given it will shed some light on this meaning. The first example is that of Abraham, the father of faith. It says that “his faith and his actions were working together... and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God’s friend.” Wow, God’s friend! How many people can say that their faith and deeds worked together and now they are God’s friend? The next example is Rahab the prostitute. Let that sink in, the prostitute! It says she was “considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies.” How powerful are our actions? That was one moment of Rahab’s life, but she made the right choice and helped people that, without her, may have died. Just saying that we have faith is not enough, we have to live out our faith every day. The best way to do that is by being kind and loving, even to those who do not want kindness and love. Be the feet and hands of Jesus even when it might be hard or unpopular.

April 20th Readings

[EZEKIEL 40:28-41:26](#)

[JAMES 4:1-17](#)

[PSALM 118:19-29](#)

[PROVERBS 28:3-5](#)

*Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen*

*tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.*

James 4:13-17 NIV

How many times a day do we spend thinking about our future and making plans? We are constantly told that we need to plan for the future or bad things will happen. This passage of scripture speaks to the exact opposite of this concept. God is the only person who knows what is going to happen tomorrow. "We are a mist that appears only for a little while" and during that time we are always looking ahead to our next step. We often "boast in our arrogant schemes" making sure people know the great things that we have planned. God says that "such boasting is evil." Planning, as long as we know that "if it is the Lord's will" is not a bad thing.

April 21st Readings

[EZEKIEL 42:1-43:27](#)

[JAMES 5:1-20](#)

[PSALM 119:1-16](#)

[PROVERBS 28:6-7](#)

*I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, LORD; teach me your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*

Psalm 119:10-16 NIV

Why is studying God's word so important? This passage discusses that if we "have hidden (God's) word in our heart that we might not sin against you." If we fill our lives with God's word, then the evil of the world will have a harder time taking hold. That does not mean that we will not sin. Asking God to "teach us His decrees" will allow Him to live in us instead of the devil. The devil is just waiting for a foothold that he can latch onto to drag us away from God. "Meditate on God's precepts" so that the footholds are not as easy for the devil to see.