

April 22nd Readings

[EZEKIEL 44:1-45:12](#)

[1 PETER 1:1-12](#)

[PSALM 119:17-32](#)

[PROVERBS 28:8-10](#)

1 Peter 1:1-12

Peter has described several glorious things, among which is “being born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

He goes on to talk about glory, honor, trials, loving Jesus, faith, and salvation of our souls. He writes about the prophets having looked carefully into the time of the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. He ends this section with, “things into which angels long to look.”

I tend to think of the angels in heaven as powerful beings in the presence of God. Yet, Peter says even the angels long to look into these things. What else has God kept from even the angels that He has not completely revealed to us about eternity in heaven? O, I long to find out!

April 23rd Readings

[EZEKIEL 45:13-46:24](#)

[1 PETER 1:13-2:10](#)

[PSALM 119:33-48](#)

[PROVERBS 28:11](#)

As Obedient Children

I like adjectives. There is a big difference between 'children' and 'obedient children'. My kids were fairly well behaved most of the time growing up. Occasionally, I had to remind them to be obedient. That put them on alert that: 1 – I was watching a little more closely. 2 – The

environment (visitors, certain public places, the police are approaching the car, etc.) demanded a higher standard. Or, 3 – Their behavior has been slipping or is borderline acceptable.

An admonishment to 'Behave' almost always resulted in a more disciplined behavior - for at least three minutes.

For a few minutes, my children stopped thinking about themselves and thought about what might get them a conversation with Mister Paddle. Once they had decided what was 'worth it', they went back to their 'normal' behavior.

God says, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy.""

Surely, I can discipline myself to 'behave' just a little bit better because God tells me to. Well, for at least three minutes.

April 24th Readings

[EZEKIEL 47:1-48:35](#)

[1 PETER 2:11-3:7](#)

[PSALM 119:49-64](#)

[PROVERBS 28:12-13](#)

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

1 Peter 2:11

When I served in the military overseas, there was a constant reminder to all the servicemembers that we were visitors to the country where we were stationed. Whether we were fighting a war, allies of the host country, or victors from the past, we were not native to that country. Our commanders expected each of us to behave better than we would back

home. There were usually specific rules limiting or forbidding alcohol, rules on how to communicate with the local people, rules on how to go among the populace. Of course, some of these rules were to protect us, to keep us as safe as possible, but they were also there to preserve the 'moral high ground.' The 'moral high ground' is acting in accordance with the accepted norm so that false accusations cannot be easily made. Of course, being a group of humans, someone is bound to violate the rules, sometimes grievously.

We are sojourners here on earth. Through Christ's example we are shown how to behave, how to live like exiles while on this earth. We should act in such a way so that when valid accusations are brought, they will see it as an aberration and can still see the good that was generally done.

April 25th Readings

[DANIEL 1:1-2:23](#)

[1 PETER 3:8-4:6](#)

[PSALM 119:65-80](#)

[PROVERBS 28:14](#)

In the reading today from 1 Peter, we see that God acknowledges we will suffer for righteousness' sake. When we sin, of course we suffer the punishment. When we disobey our boss or violate society's laws, we suffer for that. So why does God expect us to suffer when we do what is right? Because His Son did! Jesus lived on this earth without sinning even once. He did lots of good, healed many who were afflicted with physical maladies. But in the end, he was falsely accused, judged unfairly, and punished unjustly – all so that when He shed his blood and died, God could accept that holy, pure sacrifice for all of the sins of all who chose to follow God.

So, when we do good and are treated unfairly, we are only following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is to be expected.

April 26th Readings

[DANIEL 2:24-3:30](#)

[1 PETER 4:7-5:14](#)

[PSALM 119:81-96](#)

[PROVERBS 28:15-16](#)

This passage of Psalm 119 continues the lament of the author. He seems resigned to persecution, but refuses to give up on God. He asks for salvation and that his enemies be judged.

We know it is common to turn to God during times of trouble and distress. But, when these times of trouble continue for years, when distressed living moves into decades, it becomes very difficult to find the good. We must, as the author reminds us, remember God's precepts, His statutes. Then we will remember that we live not for what we can obtain on this earth, but for everlasting life with God. Whatever we must endure here will be worth it.

April 27th Readings

[DANIEL 4:1-37](#)

[2 PETER 1:1-21](#)

[PSALM 119:97-112](#)

[PROVERBS 28:17-18](#)

In 2 Peter 1:3-4, it is clear that faith has saved the recipients of this letter, not becoming sinless by their own effort. But, just like Jesus said in Matthew 28, we are to make disciples in all the nations, baptize them, then continue to teach them all that Jesus commanded.

So, to the faithful, Peter says in verses 5-7 - make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and

brotherly affection with love.

Living obedient to God is not a single event that we can participate in then sit back and reap the rewards for the rest of our days on earth. We must continue to strive to be *more* like Jesus.

Continually working through this process helps us to be more fulfilled in this life on earth. It helps us to stay focused on God and his laws, not on the hardships we must endure.

Certainly, faith saves us. But given time we must strive to actually become more like Jesus.

April 28th Readings

[DANIEL 5:1-31](#)

[2 PETER 2:1-22](#)

[PSALM 119:113-128](#)

[PROVERBS 28:19-20](#)

The book of Daniel has long been one of my favorites. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were not kept out of the fiery furnace, but were kept from all harm while there. Daniel was not kept out of the lions' den, but God shut their mouths so that he was safe. These four and many other Jewish people were carried off into captivity, they weren't saved from it.

The book of Daniel puts into practical terms what God says in other places – He won't keep us from experiencing hardship, but He will provide a way through it. If we are faithful to God, He will never allow more to come upon us than we can endure.