

## August 6th Readings

[NUMBERS 10:1-11:23](#)

[MARK 14:1-21](#)

[PSALM 51:1-19](#)

[PROVERBS 10:31-32](#)

Psalm 51:1-19 - There is something inherent in people that make them want to be clean. Maybe it was our mothers telling us that “cleanliness is next to godliness.” Although this is not a quote from the bible, we recognize there is a deep-seated truth in this old adage. As children, this quote was used to get us to bathe; now we understand that physical cleanliness is not at the heart of the matter.

King David knew this as well. After he was confronted by Nathan the prophet about his terrible sin with Bathsheba, David goes to the only place where he can once more become clean in heart and spirit and conscience. He goes to the one true source of cleanliness.

Psalm 51 is King David’s prayer. In it, he confesses his sins, asks God to forgive him, and begs to be washed clean again. David realizes that only through God’s mercy can this washing be accomplished—he has no cleansing power of his own.

God has also given us a way to be clean. Through baptism, God can cleanse us in heart, spirit, and conscience. Have you been washed in the blood? See 1 Peter 3:21.

## August 7th Readings

[NUMBERS 11:24-13:33](#)

[MARK 14:22-52](#)

[PSALM 52:1-9](#)

[PROVERBS 11:1-3](#)

Numbers 11:24-13:33 - In today’s reading in Numbers 13, we are first introduced to Caleb, son of Jephunneh. Sent by God’s command, he was one of the men chosen to spy out the land. Caleb was called a chief among his tribe of Judah. That means he was a leader.

We like Caleb, don’t we? We say he was “a stand up guy”. He was the first to stand up against the other spies when they gave their bad report about the land. He knew that with

God on their side, the people could overcome whatever obstacles were before them. Caleb knew that going forward was part of God's plan and he wanted to be a part of it! That day he stood with Moses and Joshua. That day and through his life, Caleb stood with God.

There are lots of instructions in the New Testament about how we, too, are to stand. God's word tells us to stand in grace; to stand in faith; to stand in the gospel; to stand against the devil's schemes; to stand with the belt of truth; to stand firm in one spirit; and to stand firm in the Lord. How are you standing today?

### August 8th Readings

[NUMBERS 14:1-15:16](#)

[MARK 14:53-72](#)

[PSALM 53:1-6](#)

[PROVERBS 11:4](#)

Numbers 14:1-15:16 - Rebellion! What an ugly word! That's what we see in Numbers 14. What a sad story! It's hard to understand why God's people would rebel against Him. How does this even happen?

The answer may be found in Hebrews 3. There, God's word tells us that an evil, unbelieving heart leads you to fall away from the living God—a heart that has been hardened by the deceitfulness of sin!

The people in that story of rebellion were God's chosen people. They heard God's word frequently. They experienced God's care for them daily. God, Himself, lived among them. Of all the people on the planet then, they were closest to God. What happened to them?

Something got in their way. Something came between them and their trust in God. That something was sin. It probably didn't happen to them overnight. Hebrews tells us that they went astray in their hearts. A heart led away by their sin and disobedience kept them from entering the Promised Land.

As sad as this story is, I'm thankful it was written down for us as a warning. We don't want our hearts to be led astray from God by sin. The results are too costly.

## August 9th Readings

[NUMBERS 15:17-16:40](#)

[MARK 15:1-47](#)

[PSALM 54:1-7](#)

[PROVERBS 11:5-6](#)

Mark 15:1-47 - In Mark 15, we see a man called Barabbas. As a prisoner of the Roman government, he was convicted of insurrection and murder; he's also called a robber (John 18:40). Pilate released Barabbas to the crowd in accordance with the tradition of releasing a condemned prisoner for the Passover. We don't know what happened to Barabbas after his release, even though fictional accounts say otherwise.

One thing we can be certain of is that Barabbas was condemned to die for his sins—until he received a pardon. Although Barabbas was guilty and condemned, he was pardoned and set free. Instead of Barabbas dying for his sins, an innocent man was convicted and brutally executed. The sinless one died in place of the guilty. Jesus took Barabbas' place.

Like Barabbas, I'm guilty of sin. Because of my sins I was condemned to die; but then, I too, received a pardon—I have been justified. The book of Romans tells me that I have been justified by grace, by faith, and by His blood. Thank you, Jesus, for loving me enough to die in my place.

## August 10th Readings

[NUMBERS 16:41-18:32](#)

[MARK 16:1-20](#)

[PSALM 55:1-23](#)

[PROVERBS 11:7](#)

Numbers 16:41-18:32 - In Numbers 18 specific instructions are given concerning the duties of the priests (and Levites). One responsibility of the priests under Aaron was to gather and oversee the contributions given by the nation of Israel for sacrifices to God. The people had been told to give only the best for their sacrifices to the LORD.

From this contribution of the nation's best, God gave the priests a portion as a perpetual due for their service. Additionally, God instructed them to take the best from what they had been

given and return it back for their own sacrifices to Him. In other words, God's priests were to give only "the best of the best" in sacrifice—nothing else would be accepted.

1 Peter 2:9 tells us that Christians are a royal priesthood so that "we may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." Although we certainly understand that our holy priesthood doesn't serve in the same way that the priesthood of Aaron served, we are "to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5)

As we offer our sacrifices to God, are we giving Him "the best of the best"?

### August 11th Readings

[NUMBERS 19:1-20:29](#)

[LUKE 1:1-25](#)

[PSALM 56:1-13](#)

[PROVERBS 11:8](#)

Psalms 56:1-13 - Have you ever felt like the whole world was against you? Maybe you've come home after a bad day at work and had a disagreement with your spouse; your kids aren't on their best behavior either. Money is tight (as usual) and you know there are bills to pay. You're not exactly seeing eye-to-eye with your boss, or your friend, or someone at church. You just received some bad news about something important and your car has broken down. Most of us have "been there, done that." It may seem like we're attacked on all sides.

King David felt this way, too. However, David reminds us to whom we can turn. He put his trust in God. <sup>3</sup>"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. <sup>4</sup>In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?"

David tells us that God "keeps our tears in a bottle and counts our tossings." Even though King David was besieged with problems, he never stops giving thanks to God.

Our Father also knows our situation. Let us put our trust in God, He will never let us down!

August 12th Readings

[NUMBERS 21:1-22:20](#)

[LUKE 1:26-56](#)

[PSALM 57:1-11](#)

[PROVERBS 11:9-11](#)

Proverbs 11:9-11 - In our reading today in Proverbs, two different kinds of people are contrasted by the way they live their lives and the effect this has on those around them.

The character of the first group is godless and wicked. The wicked destroy their neighbors with their hypocrisy, deceit and schemes; by doing so they bring down their own cities. When they perish, it only brings relief to those around them.

Conversely are those that are righteous and upright. Their knowledge (of God) not only delivers them from evildoers, but also brings blessings to those around them. The people of their cities rejoice when the godly do well because they know it benefits everyone.

We don't live in a vacuum, do we? How we live affects those that live around us. "Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor." (1 Corinthians 10:24)