

July 2nd Readings

EXODUS 13:17-15:18

MATTHEW 21:23-46

PSALM 26:1-12

PROVERBS 6:16-19

PSALM 26:1-2 - The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. It's with the converted heart, the people of God are confident of the Lord vindicating them from adversaries and spiritual foes. The Psalmist understood his life with the Lord and sought the Lord earnestly for His deliverance and protection. We desire the same in our lives, it is through the great boundaries given to us by God that gives us great comfort of mind, serenity of heart and solace of the soul.

The Lord's goodness is seen in His willingness to position us to petition Him to test us, to see if we're true or not, what a blessing. However, this requires great courage and strength to perform and endure. Those whom the Lord loves, He chastens as sons. So knowing God will avenge us, and being confident of His great provision and protection, our feet will not slide or slip. We can become and remain faithful to the point of death, if we would keep our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Therefore, allow Him to test your mind and heart, that He may find you faithful in the final analysis.

July 3rd Readings

EXODUS 15:19-17:7

MATTHEW 22:1-33

PSALM 27:1-6

PROVERBS 6:20-26

MATTHEW 22:1-33 - When considering the great wedding feast, we should think of great preparation, enormous expense and high expectations for those who are serving and those who are being served. The King wanted his servants to invite as many as they could to the wedding feast to dine with him. Who are we inviting to the feast? Are we picking and choosing who we want to come? Shouldn't we have the attitude of Jesus, "come unto Me, all you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest"? (Matthew 11:28-30). As we invite many to the feast, let's make sure they are aware of the garments necessary to be at the feast (Galatians 3:26-29). The last thing someone wants is to be at the wedding feast, and not properly attired. Do we have on the proper wedding attire today?

July 4th Readings

EXODUS 17:8-19:15

MATTHEW 22:34-23:12

PSALM 27:7-14

PROVERBS 6:27-35

PROVERBS 6:27-35 - True freedom and independence is living within the confines of God's standard, His holy and divine word. In 1776, the United States declared independence from Great Britain, thus making America free indeed. The same holds true for those who remain faithful to their marriage vows before God and their spouse.

To live a life of adultery IS to live a life of bondage and misery. One cannot take fire into their bosom and not get burned. Unfortunately, this life of unfaithfulness begins with a wandering eye, which Job made a covenant not to engage in (Job 31:1).

The people of God should seek to be examples to society on how to live happily within the framework God has given. When these are heeded, then one will not be concerned with being guilty (29), lacking understanding (32), having a wound of dishonor or bad reputation (33), the rage of an angry spouse (34) and hurting the innocent because of bad choices. True freedom is being happily married with the Lord at the center of your commitment.

July 5th Readings

EXODUS 19:16-21:21

MATTHEW 23:13-39

PSALM 28:1-9

PROVERBS 7:1-5

EXODUS 19:16 - 21:21 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom... one must have a great reverence for the Lord if they're going to respond properly to the will and standards of God. Therefore the Lord gave commands for His people to abide by, that they may be proven, to know He was before them and they sin not. Interestingly, the scriptures give great commentary on Exodus 20:20. Jesus, born of a woman, born under the Law, never sinned against God (Galatians 4:4; 1 Peter 2:22). John exhorted the brethren to heed to the word of God, that they sin not (1 John 2:1-2). With these finer points being found in the text, God gave His law (Old and New) to instruct man on what pleases Him. With His standard of truth, we shall have confidence on our approach to Jehovah.

July 6th Readings

EXODUS 21:22-23:13

MATTHEW 24:1-28

PSALM 29:1-11

PROVERBS 7:6-23

PSALM 29:1-11 - The scriptures surely demonstrate the power and majesty of God. For this reason He is worthy to be praised and worshiped with all we have to offer. A few words and a phrase in these eleven verses are worthy of consideration. Terms like: give, glory, and the phrase, "the voice of the Lord".

We must be reminded of the beauty of God and His Holiness, His sanctity. God is definitely One who is set apart from sin and all else (1 John 1:5). It is our need for being set apart from sin that we are able to see His holiness, according to Matthew 5:8.

The voice of the Lord, according to the Psalmist, is amazing. For we notice in Genesis 1 that He spoke all things into existence. The very fact He spoke all things, it stands to reason for all things to heed His voice.

Unfortunately man is the only created thing/being that fails to heed the magnificent voice of the Lord. Are we heeding the voice/words of God today in all manner of living? Let's hear Him. Let's praise Him. Let's adore Him to the highest.

July 7th Readings

EXODUS 23:14-25:40

MATTHEW 24:29-51

PSALM 30:1-12

PROVERBS 7:24-27

PSALM 30:1-12 - Great thoughts are produced in this short section of scripture. Great imagery is gleaned from the King and sweet singer of Israel, David. Nine times the magnificent term Lord is used. The Psalmist understood who he was to extol and exalt to the Highest, for His namesake alone. Wonderful encouragement is lifted from the text, which should provide direction, deliverance and duty.

David said God had lifted him up, meaning He drew him up as one draws up water from a deep well. As the bucket is coming up, one notices it being removed from the source. In this case, trouble. The Lord healed him in the midst of his turmoil. He would console those who may weep at night because of the trouble of an enemy, the Lord would cause joy to be brought forth in morning.

We can take great comfort knowing the Lord is all-sufficient for our needs and disturbances in life. We have to be a grateful people in the midst of trouble and allow God to extend His mercy upon us. The end result is God being praised with singing as thanksgiving flows from the heart and lips.

July 8th Readings

EXODUS 26:1-27:21

MATTHEW 25:1-30

PSALM 31:1-8

PROVERBS 8:1-11

MATTHEW 25:1-30 - Parables have a way of conveying rich meanings when we consider their truths. The Lord was good at giving contrasting illustrations to express His point. As members of the church, we will fit in one of two categories, prepared or unprepared. Those who are prepared will diligently keep their lamps full and trimmed

as they wait on the bridegroom. Those who are not prepared will find themselves wanting and shut out of the blessings. Let's strive for excellence and seek to please the Lord in spiritual awareness and aptitude.

Are you using your talents and gifts given to you by the Lord? Are you developing new talents, that God may get more glory from your life? Are you settling for those talents that come easy, or cultivating those that are challenging? Well the kingdom of God is about producing. Everyone should produce something for the Lord. There is no such thing as a **NO** talent individual. So when the final analysis occurs, let's make sure we have cultivated Christ in our lives. Let's do our best to make sure the Lord can say, "well done...". He expects interest and He deserves it as well.