



PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH

Unite to Build a Discipling Community

365 DAY DEVOTIONAL - 2026
JAN - MAR



Foreword

*"So they said, 'Let us rise up and build.' Then they set their hands to this good work."
Nehemiah 2:18*

These words from Nehemiah echo God's heart for His people in every generation, a call to rise together, to build together, and to set our hands to the work He has entrusted to us. In a time marked by challenges, uncertainties, and differing perspectives, God continues to call His Church to unity, not uniformity, but a Spirit-led togetherness rooted in His Word and His purposes.

This theme is born out of prayer, discernment, and months of seeking the Lord as the Parish of Christ pastoral team. As we waited on God, He impressed upon us a clear direction, to lead the church into a deeper, more intentional walk with Him, one that moves us beyond our comfort zones and unites us to build His Kingdom.

The theme of this devotional, **United to Build**, reflects our calling to be united amid challenges and problems, to learn to understand one another, and even to agree to disagree, while allowing God's Word to shape us, mold us, and guide us. True unity is not the absence of differences, but the submission of every perspective to the truth of Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

At the heart of this journey are the three P's the Lord has placed before us:

Unity in Purpose

A shared commitment to build God's Kingdom for His glory, honour, and praise.

Unity in Problems

Walking together through personal, professional, and spiritual challenges, allowing God's Word to speak into our situations with wisdom, hope, and faith.

Unity in Passion

Rekindling our first love for the Lord, deepening our devotion through prayer and the Word, and growing together in true discipleship.

This 365-day devotional is designed to be a daily companion, inviting individuals, families, and the entire church body into a consistent rhythm of time with God. It calls us to slow down, to listen, to pray, and to allow the Holy Spirit to ignite afresh our love for Christ and His mission.

As we journey through these daily readings, may we be reminded that discipleship is not a solo pursuit. The Church is called to be discipled and to disciple others, together. Reaching the lost, serving our community, and fulfilling the Great Commission must be at the heart of every believer and every church.

May this devotional stir us to rise up with faith, to set our hands to the good work before us, and to walk forward united in purpose, in challenges, and in passion as we build God's Kingdom together. To God be all glory, honour, and praise.

Parish of Christ Church Pastoral Team





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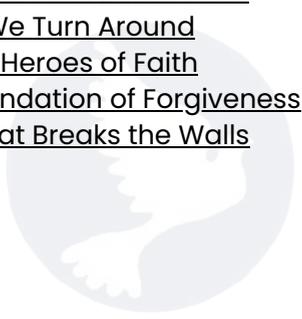
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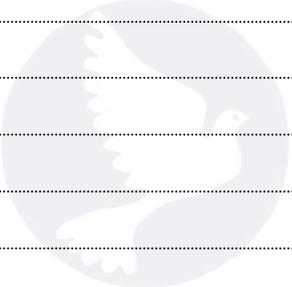
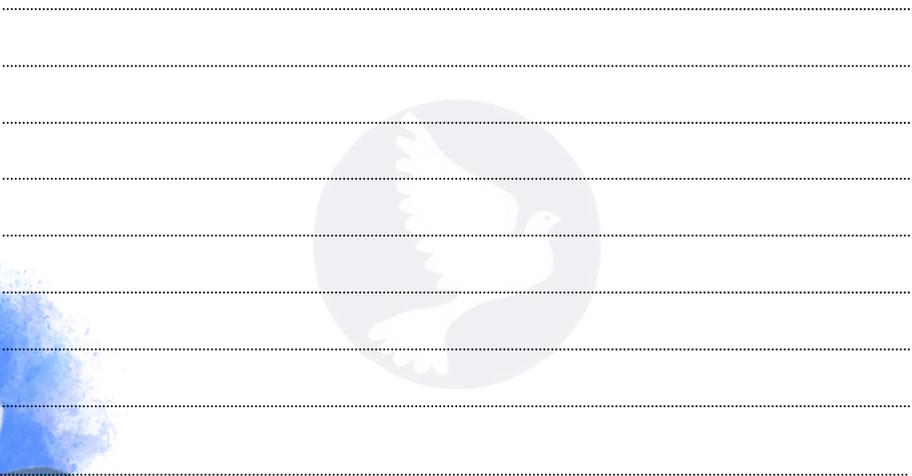
Jan-1 The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

Readings: Numbers 6 : 22-end |
Psalm 8 | Galatians 4 : 4-7 | Luke 2 : 15-21

Reflection:

A young father once carved his newborn's name into the wet cement outside their house. Years later, the child traced the letters with his fingers and said, "Dad, you made space for me before I could even walk." That is what God did for us. Long before we spoke His name, He placed His on us. When Mary and Joseph named the baby Jesus – God saves, heaven signed its promise. Numbers 6 calls it a blessing; Paul says it makes us sons and daughters. We do not build from nothing – we build from belonging. A new year begins not with resolutions but with identity: we are loved, named, and sent to bear that name well.

Question: What name or fear have I allowed to shape me more than the one God has spoken?



Prayer: Lord Jesus, write Your name deep in my heart. Let every plan I make this year rise from being Yours. Amen.



Jan-1 The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

Numbers 6:22–27

22 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
23 "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,
24 The LORD bless you and keep you;
25 the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
26 the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
27 "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

Psalms 8

1 O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.
3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
4 what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?
5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.
6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,
7 all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
9 O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Galatians 4:4–7

4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,
5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Luke 2:15–21

15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."
16 And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.
17 And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.
18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.
19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.
20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.
21 And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.



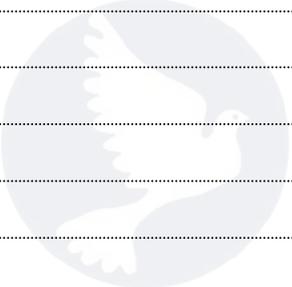
Jan-2 Faithful in the Shadows

Readings: 1 John 2 : 22-28 |
Psalm 98 : 1-4 | John 1 : 19-28

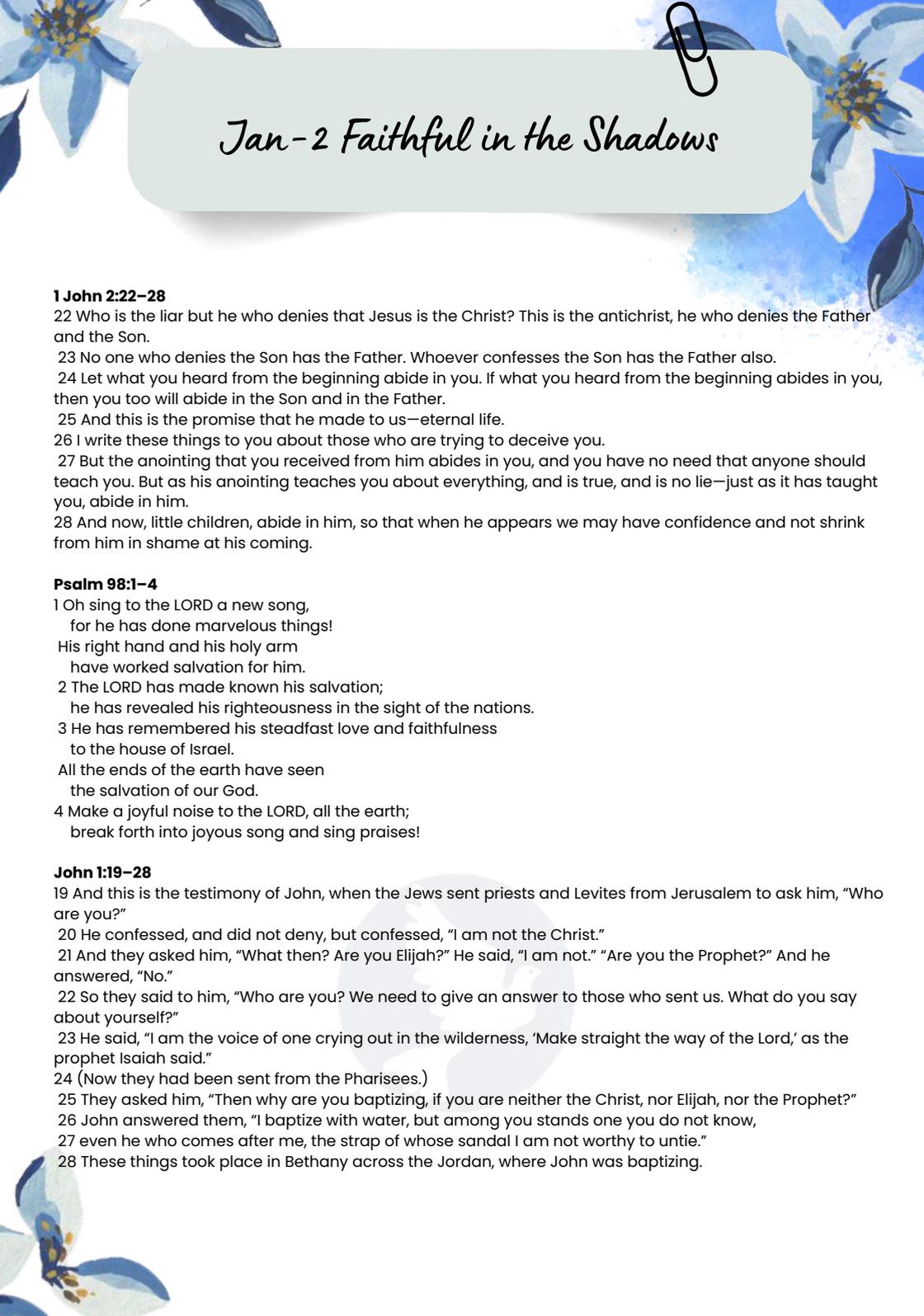
Reflection:

There's a mason in a small village who signs none of his work. Every church wall he's repaired stands firm, yet no one knows his name. When asked why, he smiled: "If the stones stay strong, that's enough." John the Baptist was like that craftsman. Crowds came asking, Who are you? He simply said, "I'm a voice." His joy was to point beyond himself. Unity grows when people stop needing credit and start loving the work. In every family and ministry, God still looks for those quiet builders who strengthen others and fade into the background of His glory.

Question: Where is God inviting me to serve without needing to be seen?



Prayer: Lord, make me steady in the shadows. Let my faithfulness be the mortar that holds others strong. Amen.



Jan-2 Faithful in the Shadows

1 John 2:22–28

22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.

23 No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.

24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.

25 And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.

26 I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.

27 But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears, little may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

Psalms 98:1–4

1 Oh sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!

His right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.

2 The LORD has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

John 1:19–28

19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

22 So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

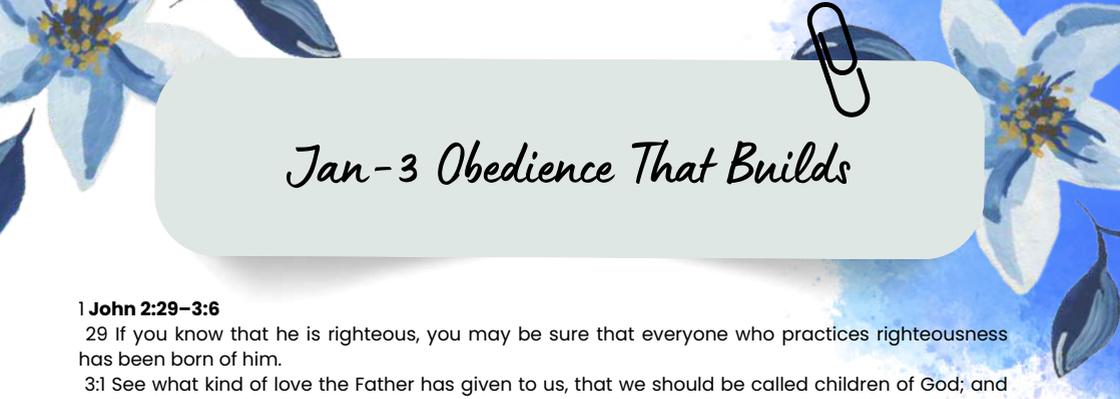
24 (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.)

25 They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know,

27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.



Jan-3 Obedience That Builds

1 John 2:29-3:6

29 If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

4 Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.

5 You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.

6 No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Psalms 98:2-7

2 The LORD has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

John 1:29-34

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

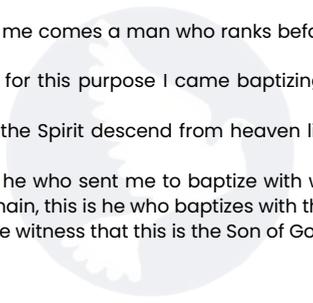
30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'

31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel."

32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."



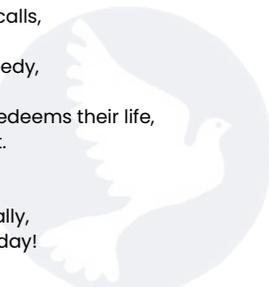


Jan-4 Epiphany Sunday – The Light That Unites

Isaiah 60:1–6

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
2 For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
3 And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
4 Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from afar,
and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.
5 Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and exult,^[a]
because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
6 A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord.

Psalms 72:10–15



10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands
render him tribute;
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts!
11 May all kings fall down before him,
all nations serve him!
12 For he delivers the needy when he calls,
the poor and him who has no helper.
13 He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
14 From oppression and violence he redeems their life,
and precious is their blood in his sight.
15 Long may he live;
may gold of Sheba be given to him!
May prayer be made for him continually,
and blessings invoked for him all the day!





Jan-4 Epiphany Sunday – The Light That Unites

Ephesians 3:1–12

1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—

2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you,

3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.

4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ,

5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,

10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

Matthew 2:1–12

1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,

2 saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;

4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them





Jan-5 Ordinary Hands, Sacred Work

1 John 3:22-4:6

22 and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.

23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another just as he has commanded us.

24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.

6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Psalms 2:7-12 (end)

7 I will tell of the decree:

The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25 (end)

12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.

13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

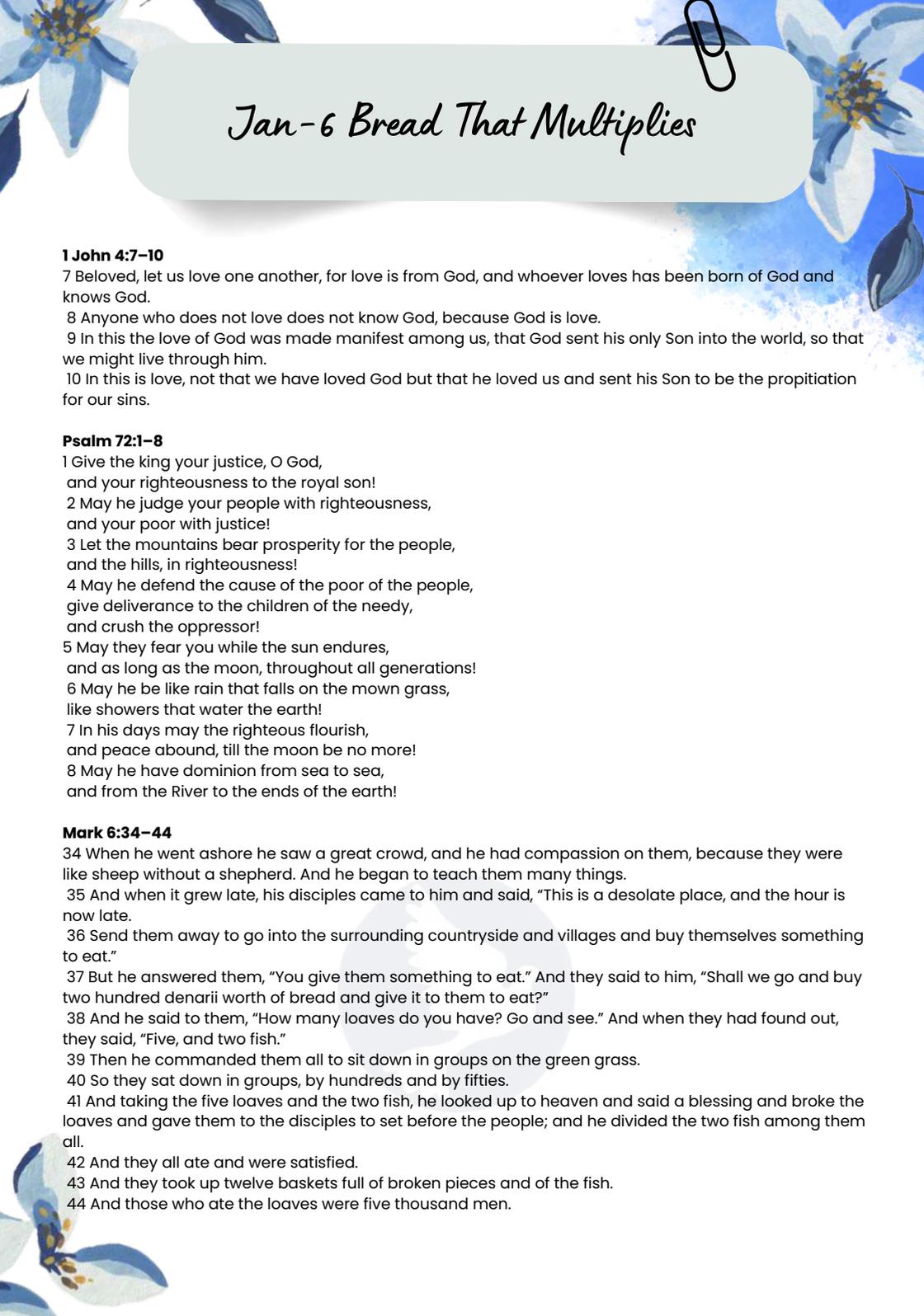
16 the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned."

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.

25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.



Jan-6 Bread That Multiplies

1 John 4:7-10

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Psalm 72:1-8

1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the royal son!

2 May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice!

3 Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness!

4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the children of the needy,
and crush the oppressor!

5 May they fear you while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!

6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth!

7 In his days may the righteous flourish,
and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

8 May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth!

Mark 6:34-44

34 When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things.

35 And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late.

36 Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

37 But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?"

38 And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish."

39 Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass.

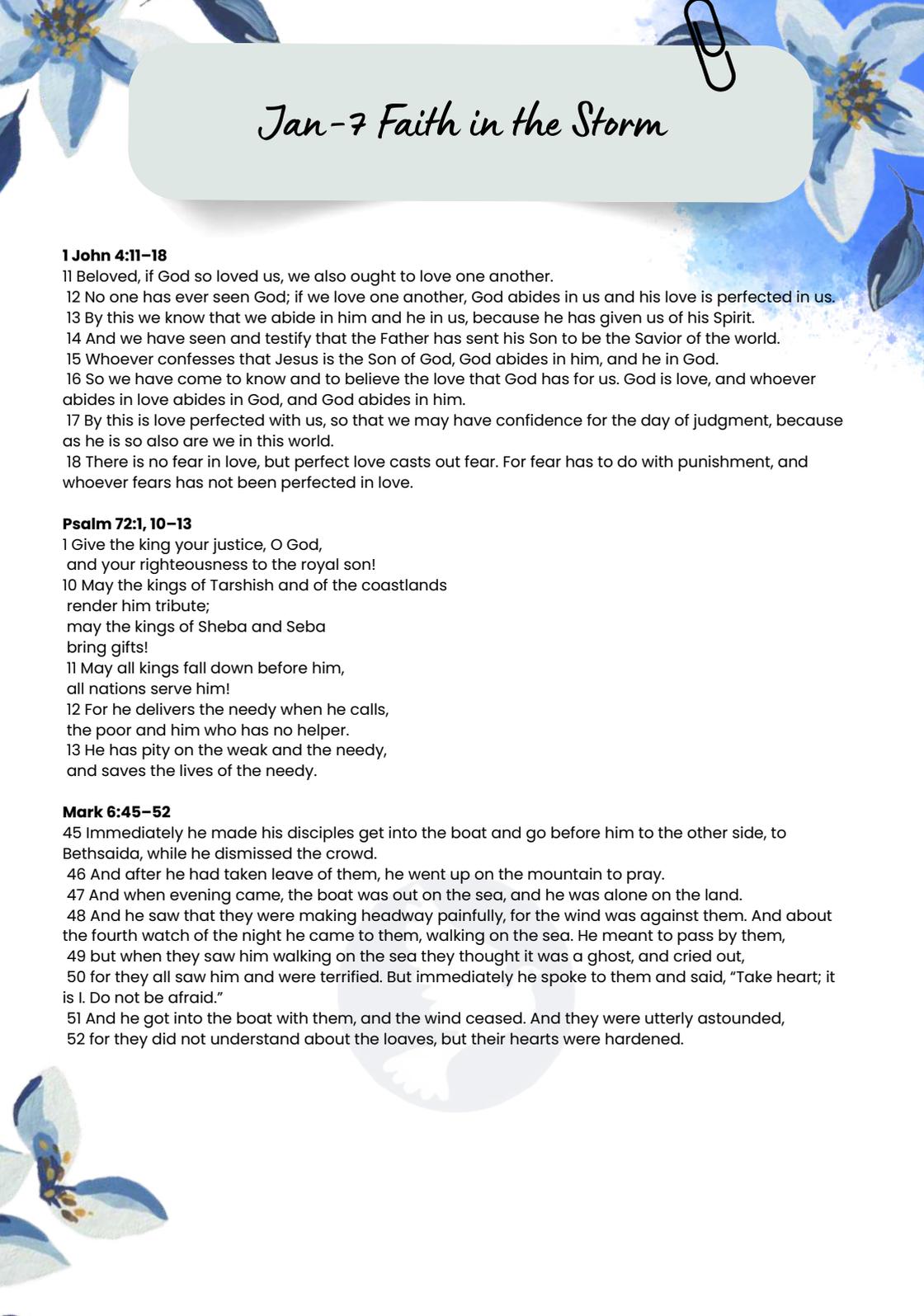
40 So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties.

41 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all.

42 And they all ate and were satisfied.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish.

44 And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.



Jan-7 Faith in the Storm

1 John 4:11–18

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

17 By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

Psalms 72:1, 10–13

1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the royal son!

10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands
render him tribute;
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts!

11 May all kings fall down before him,
all nations serve him!

12 For he delivers the needy when he calls,
the poor and him who has no helper.

13 He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.

Mark 6:45–52

45 Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd.

46 And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

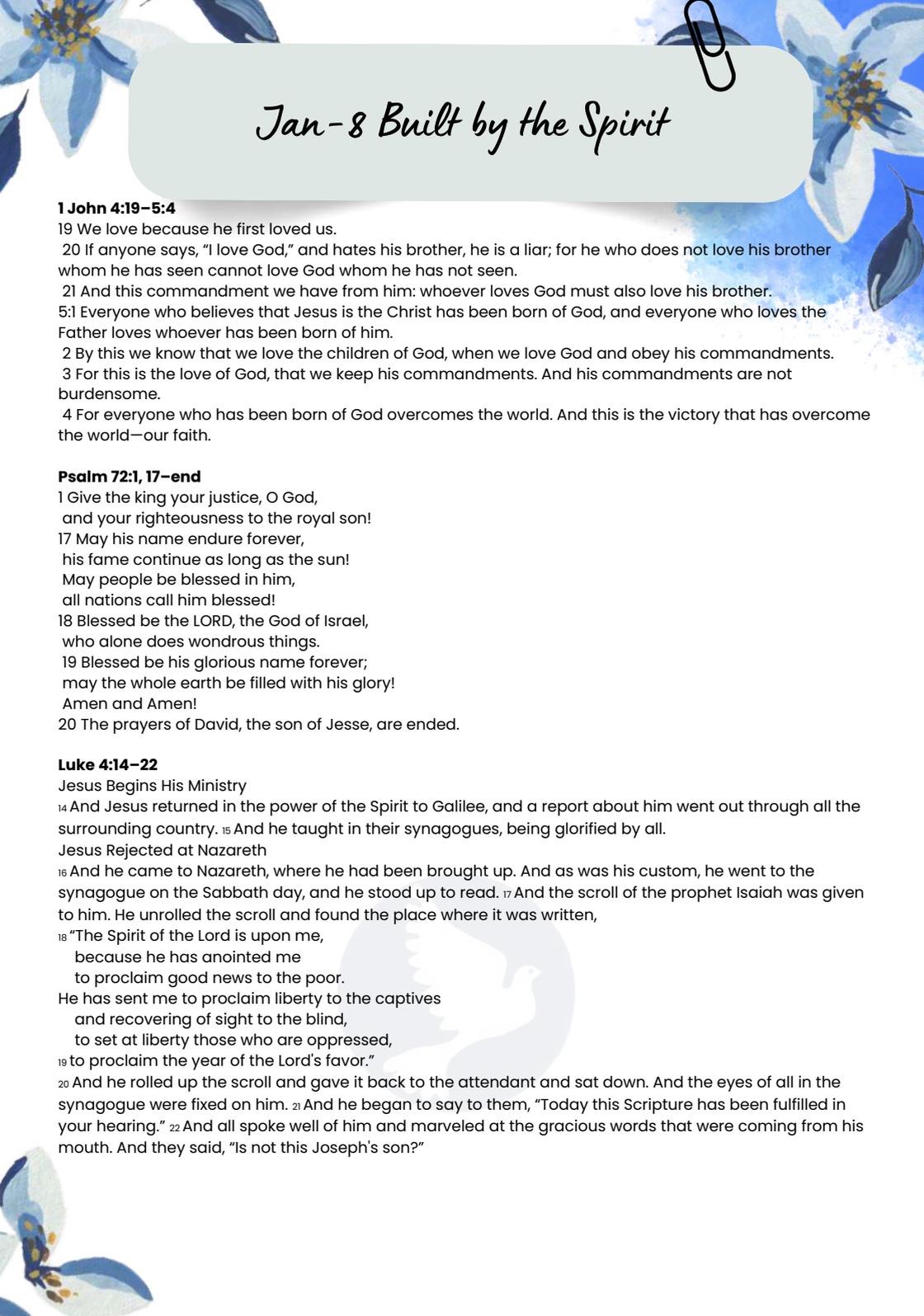
47 And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land.

48 And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them,

49 but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out,

50 for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

51 And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded,
52 for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.



Jan-8 Built by the Spirit

1 John 4:19–5:4

19 We love because he first loved us.

20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Psalms 72:1, 17–end

1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the royal son!

17 May his name endure forever,
his fame continue as long as the sun!
May people be blessed in him,
all nations call him blessed!

18 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

19 Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory!
Amen and Amen!

20 The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.

Luke 4:14–22

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. 17 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

20 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." 22 And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"



Jan-9 When Healing Begins

1 John 5:5-13

5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

7 For there are three that testify:

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.

10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.

11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

Psalm 147:13-20 (end)

13 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

14 For he strengthens the bars of your gates;

he blesses your children within you.

15 He makes peace in your borders;

he fills you with the finest of the wheat.

16 He sends out his command to the earth;

his word runs swiftly.

17 He gives snow like wool;

he scatters frost like ashes.

18 He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs;

who can stand before his cold?

19 He sends out his word, and melts them;

he makes his wind blow and the waters flow.

20 He declares his word to Jacob,

his statutes and rules to Israel.

He has not dealt thus with any other nation;

they do not know his rules.

Praise the LORD!

Luke 5:12-16

12 While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

13 And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.

14 And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

15 But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.

16 But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.



Jan-10 Joy in Another's Success

1 John 5:14–21 (end)

14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that.

17 All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.

18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Psalm 149:1–5

1 Praise the LORD!

Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the godly!

2 Let Israel be glad in his Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!

3 Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!

4 For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;
he adorns the humble with salvation.

5 Let the godly exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their beds.

John 3:22–30

22 After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing.

23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized

24 (for John had not yet been put in prison).

25 Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification.

26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him."

27 John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.

28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.'

29 The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.



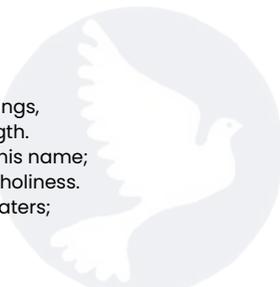


Jan-11 Baptism of Christ - Foundations in the River

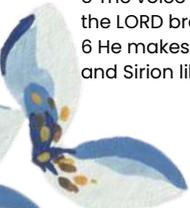
Isaiah 42:1-9

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
3 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.
5 Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
6 "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,
7 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
8 I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to carved idols.
9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them."

Psalms 29



1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.
3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over many waters.
4 The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.
5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
6 He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.





Jan-11 Baptism of Christ - Foundations in the River

17 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth
and strips the forests bare,
and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

11 May the LORD give strength to his people!
May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Acts 10:34-43

34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,
35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

36 As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord
of all),

37 you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism
that John proclaimed:

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good
and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put
him to death by hanging him on a tree,

40 but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear,

41 not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with
him after he rose from the dead.

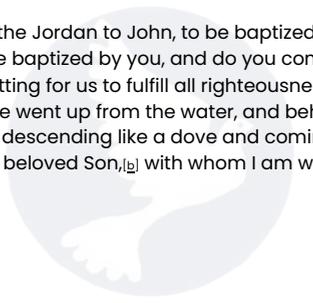
42 And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to
be judge of the living and the dead.

43 To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins
through his name."

Matthew 3:13-17 (end)

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have
prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ But Jesus answered
him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when
Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to
him,¹⁷ and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a
voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son,¹⁸ with whom I am well pleased."





Jan-12 Faith in Waiting

1 Samuel 1:1 – 8

The Birth of Samuel

1 There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. 2 He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the Lord. 4 On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the Lord had closed her womb.^[a] 6 And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb. 7 So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. 8 And Elkanah, her husband, said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

Psalm 116:10-15

10 I believed, even when I spoke:

"I am greatly afflicted";

11 I said in my alarm,

"All mankind are liars."

12 What shall I render to the LORD
for all his benefits to me?

13 I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD,

14 I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.

15 Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his saints.

Mark 1:14-20

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God,

15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

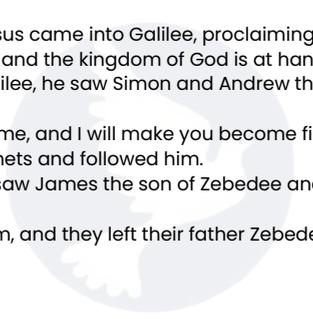
16 Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

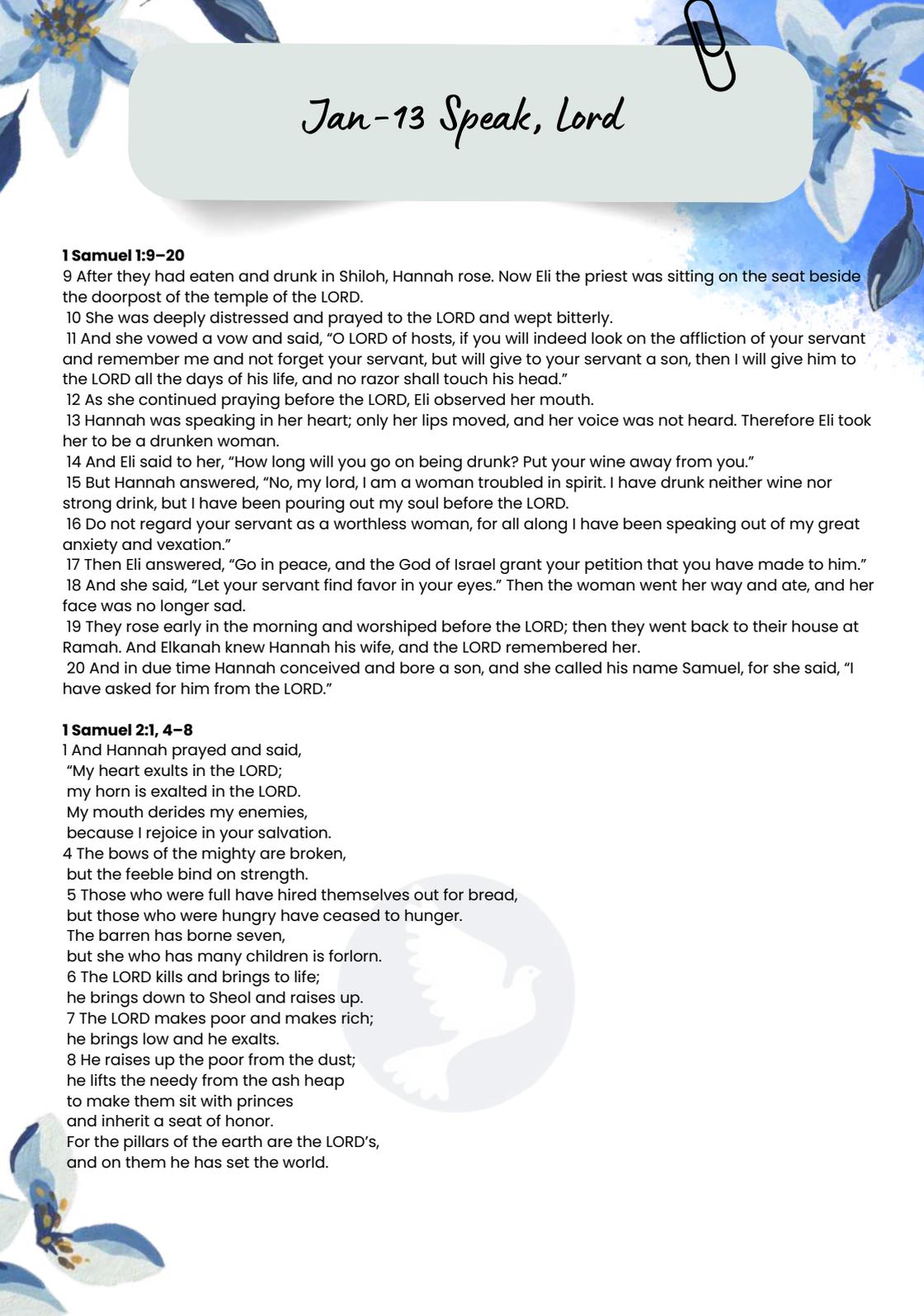
17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

19 And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets.

20 And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.





Jan-13 Speak, Lord

1 Samuel 1:9-20

9 After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the LORD.

10 She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly.

11 And she vowed a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head."

12 As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli observed her mouth.

13 Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman.

14 And Eli said to her, "How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you."

15 But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD.

16 Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation."

17 Then Eli answered, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him."

18 And she said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

19 They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her.

20 And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, "I have asked for him from the LORD."

1 Samuel 2:1, 4-8

1 And Hannah prayed and said,

"My heart exults in the LORD;

my horn is exalted in the LORD.

My mouth derides my enemies,

because I rejoice in your salvation.

4 The bows of the mighty are broken,

but the feeble bind on strength.

5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread,

but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger.

The barren has borne seven,

but she who has many children is forlorn.

6 The LORD kills and brings to life;

he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

7 The LORD makes poor and makes rich;

he brings low and he exalts.

8 He raises up the poor from the dust;

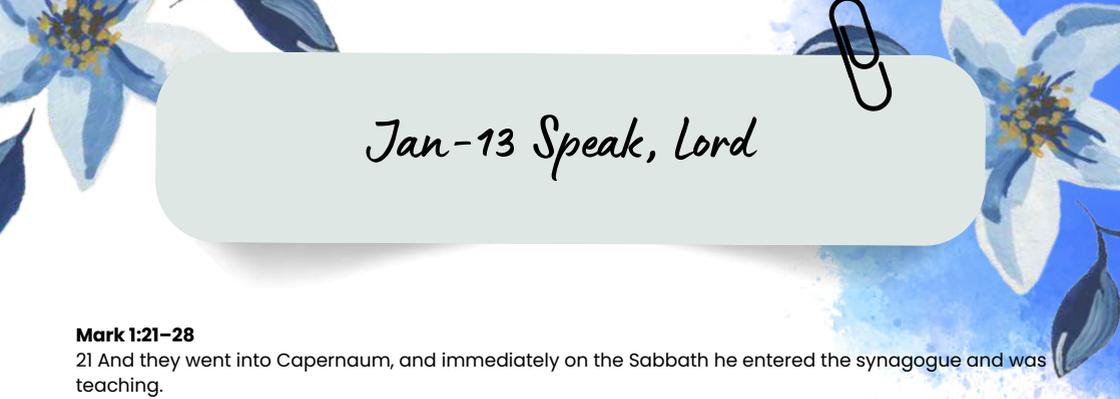
he lifts the needy from the ash heap

to make them sit with princes

and inherit a seat of honor.

For the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S,

and on them he has set the world.



Jan-13 Speak, Lord

Mark 1:21-28

21 And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching.

22 And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out,

24 "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God."

25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"

26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

28 And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.





Jan-14 Rest That Renews

Readings: 1 Samuel 3 : 1 – 10, 19 – 20 |
Psalm 40 : 1 – 4, 7 – 10 | Mark 1 : 29 – 39

Reflection:

A builder once paused halfway through a project. When asked why, he said, “You rest the timber so it won’t warp later.”

Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law, then at dawn went to a lonely place to pray. Even He paused. He knew that renewal keeps the structure from cracking.

God calls His workers not to burnout but to balance — prayer and service, silence and song. In that rhythm, He builds endurance and unity.

Question: Do I give God enough stillness to restore what work and worry drain?

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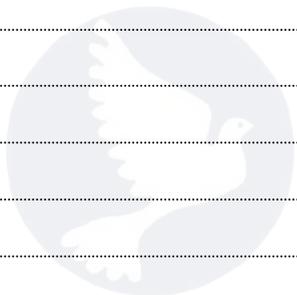
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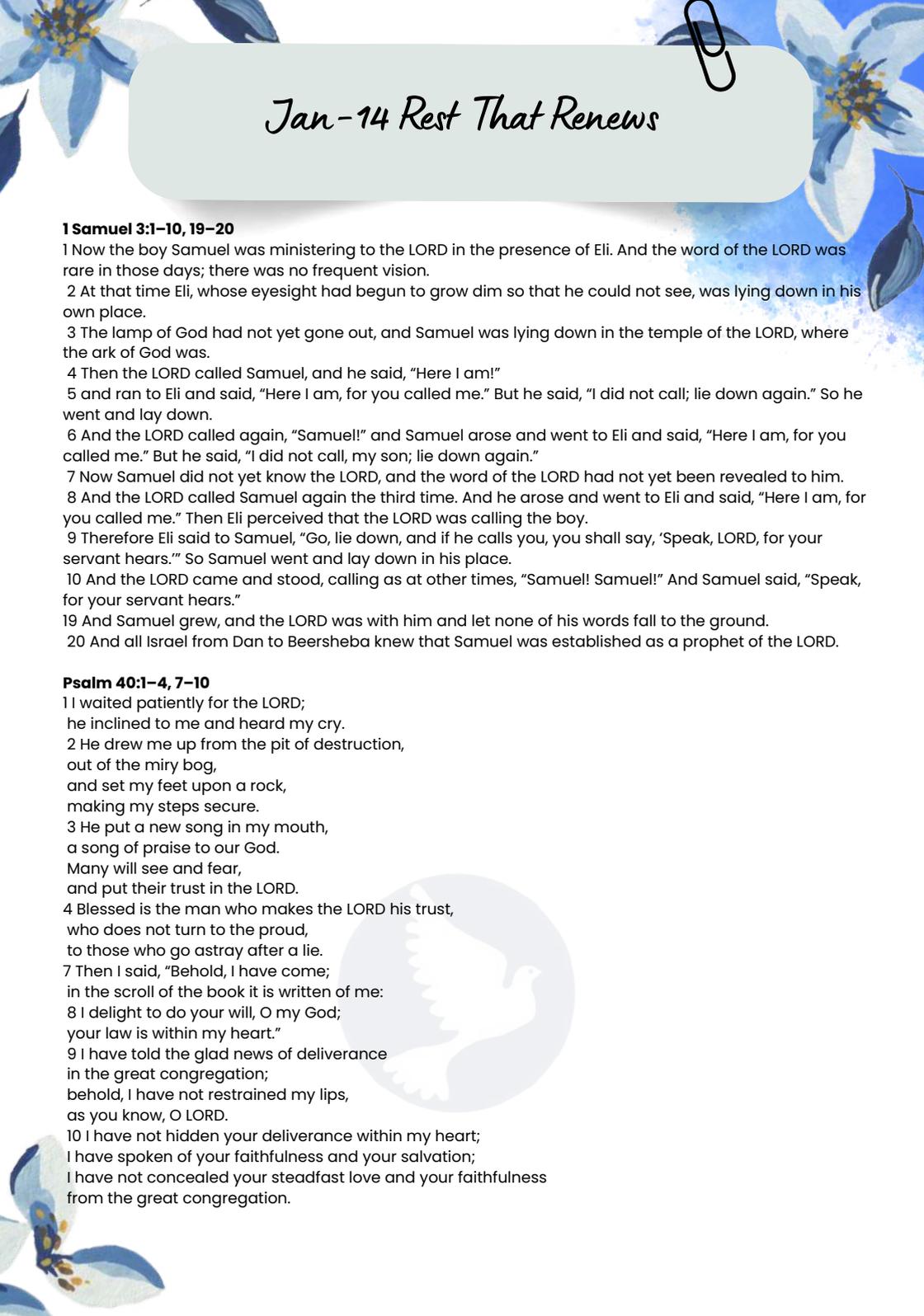
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Prayer: Lord, teach me to rest in You. Build quiet strength in me for tomorrow’s work. Amen.



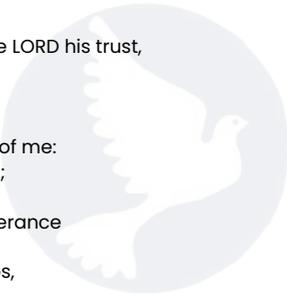
Jan-14 Rest That Renews

1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20

- 1 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.
- 2 At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place.
- 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.
- 4 Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!"
- 5 and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down.
- 6 And the LORD called again, "Samuel!" and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."
- 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.
- 8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy.
- 9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.
- 10 And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears."
- 19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.
- 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD.

Psalms 40:1-4, 7-10

- 1 I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
- 2 He drew me up from the pit of destruction,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
- 3 He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the LORD.
- 4 Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust,
who does not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after a lie.
- 7 Then I said, "Behold, I have come;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me:
8 I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."
9 I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
behold, I have not restrained my lips,
as you know, O LORD.
- 10 I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.





Jan-14 Rest That Renews

Mark 1:29-39

29 And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

32 That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons.

33 And the whole city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

35 And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

36 And Simon and those who were with him searched for him,

37 and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you."

38 And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out."

39 And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.





Jan-15 Building through Failure and Renewal

1 Samuel 4:1-11

1 And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek.

2 The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated before the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle.

3 And when the people came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies."

4 So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 As soon as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp,

7 the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "A god has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before.

8 Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness.

9 Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight."

10 So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for thirty thousand foot soldiers of Israel fell.

11 And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

Psalms 44:10-15, 24-26

10 You have made us turn back from the foe,
and those who hate us have gotten spoil.

11 You have made us like sheep for slaughter
and have scattered us among the nations.

12 You have sold your people for a trifle,
demanding no high price for them.

13 You have made us the taunt of our neighbors,
the derision and scorn of those around us.

14 You have made us a byword among the nations,
a laughingstock among the peoples.

15 All day long my disgrace is before me,
and shame has covered my face

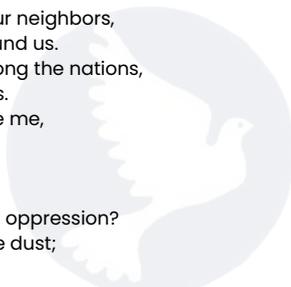
24 Why do you hide your face?

Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?

25 For our soul is bowed down to the dust;
our belly clings to the ground.

26 Rise up; come to our help!

Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!





Jan-15 Building through Failure and Renewal

Mark 1:40-45 (end)

40 And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean."

41 Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean."

42 And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

43 And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once,

44 and said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

45 But he went out and began to talk freely about it and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.





Jan-16 *Listening before Leading*

1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22 (end)

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah

5 and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations."

6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD.

7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.

10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him.

11 He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots.

12 And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots.

13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.

14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants.

15 He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants.

16 He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves.

18 And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

19 But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, "No! but there shall be a king over us,

20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

21 And when Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD.

22 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey their voice and make them a king." Samuel then said to the men of Israel, "Go every man to his city."

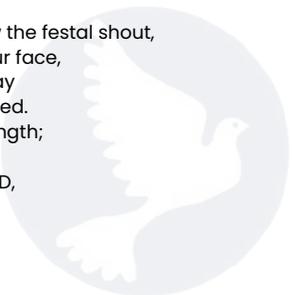
Psalms 89:15-18

15 Blessed are the people who know the festal shout,
who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face,

16 who exult in your name all the day
and in your righteousness are exalted.

17 For you are the glory of their strength;
by your favor our horn is exalted.

18 For our shield belongs to the LORD,
our king to the Holy One of Israel.





Jan-16 *Listening before Leading*

Mark 2:1-12

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

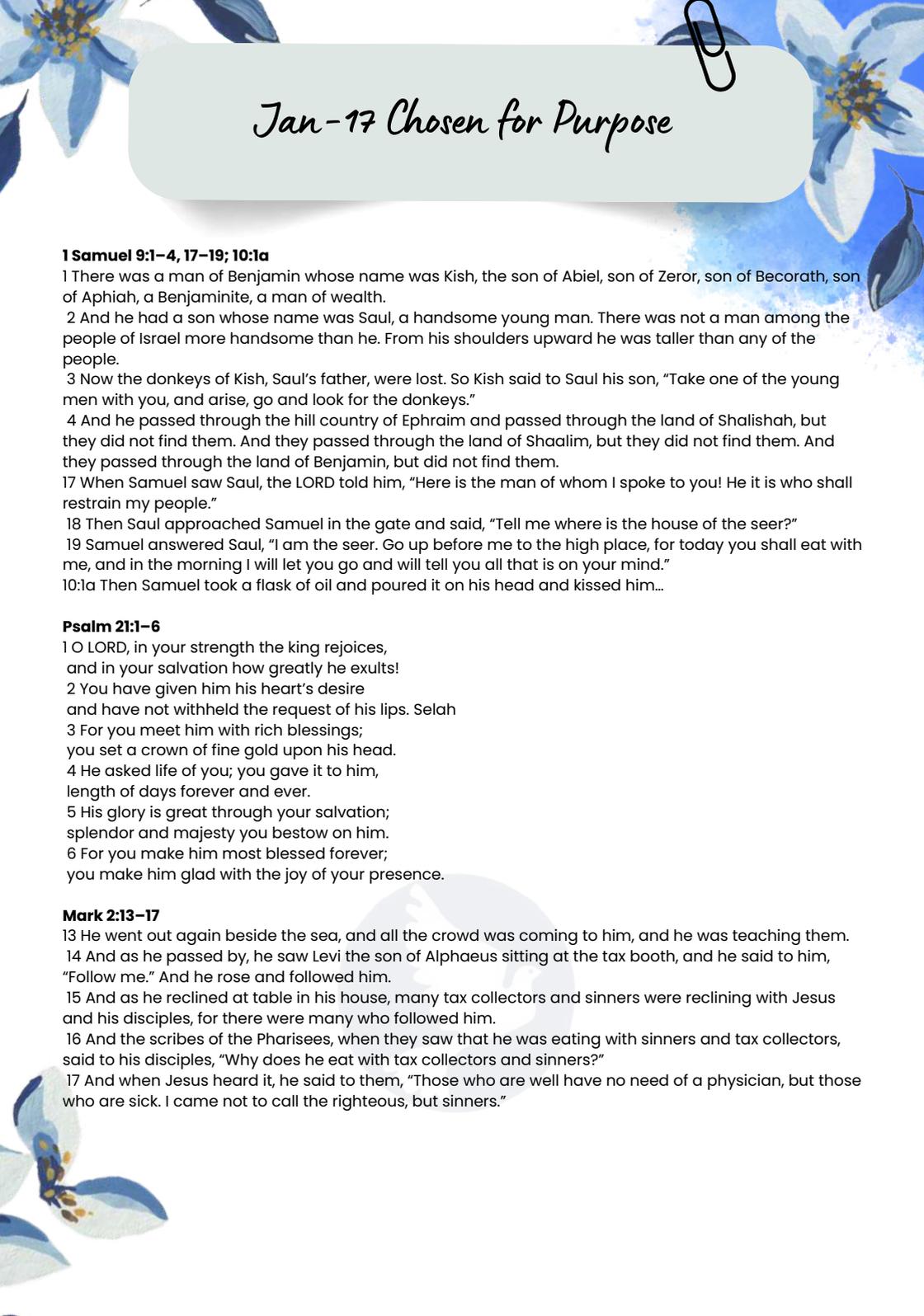
2 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?" 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"





Jan-17 Chosen for Purpose

1 Samuel 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a

1 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth.

2 And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

3 Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the young men with you, and arise, go and look for the donkeys."

4 And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Benjamin, but did not find them.

17 When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "Here is the man of whom I spoke to you! He it is who shall restrain my people."

18 Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate and said, "Tell me where is the house of the seer?"

19 Samuel answered Saul, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind."

10:1a Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him...

Psalms 21:1-6

1 O LORD, in your strength the king rejoices,
and in your salvation how greatly he exults!

2 You have given him his heart's desire
and have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah

3 For you meet him with rich blessings;
you set a crown of fine gold upon his head.

4 He asked life of you; you gave it to him,
length of days forever and ever.

5 His glory is great through your salvation;
splendor and majesty you bestow on him.

6 For you make him most blessed forever;
you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

Mark 2:13-17

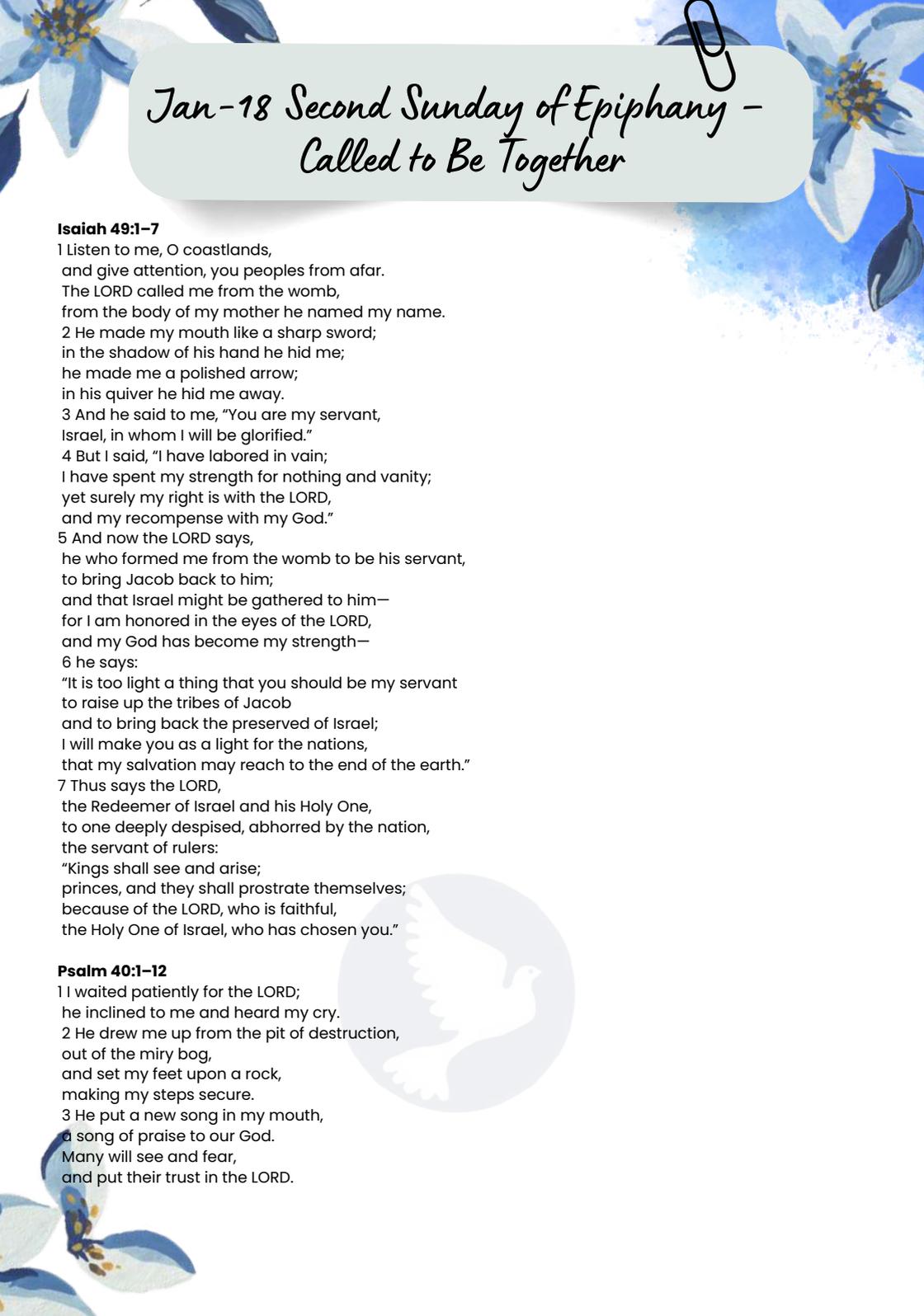
13 He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was coming to him, and he was teaching them.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.

15 And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

17 And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

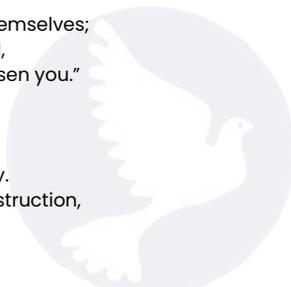


Jan-18 Second Sunday of Epiphany - Called to Be Together

Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.
2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.
3 And he said to me, "You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified."
4 But I said, "I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God."
5 And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
6 he says:
"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."
7 Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:
"Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

Psalms 40:1-12



1 I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
2 He drew me up from the pit of destruction,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
3 He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the LORD.



Jan-18 Second Sunday of Epiphany - Called to Be Together

John 1:29-42

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'

31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel."

32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.

33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples,

36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

38 Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

39 He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ).

42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).





Jan-19 Faithfulness over Fame

1 Samuel 15:16–23

16 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Stop! I will tell you what the LORD said to me this night.” And he said to him, “Speak.”

17 And Samuel said, “Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel.

18 And the LORD sent you on a mission and said, ‘Go, devote to destruction the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.’

19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?”

20 And Saul said to Samuel, “I have obeyed the voice of the LORD. I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me. I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have devoted the Amalekites to destruction.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.”

22 And Samuel said,

“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD?

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king.”

Psalms 50:8–10, 16–17, 23

8 Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me.

9 I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds.

10 For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.

16 But to the wicked God says:

“What right have you to recite my statutes or take my covenant on your lips?

17 For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you.”

23 The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me; to one who orders his way rightly I will show the salvation of God!

Mark 2:18–22

18 Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?”

19 And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made.

22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins.”

Jan-20 Anointed to Serve

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Samuel Anoints David

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

² But Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me."

The Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

⁴ Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

⁵ Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either." ⁹ Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the Lord chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these." ¹¹ So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

¹² So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."

¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

Psalms 89:19-27

¹⁹ Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and said:

"I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

²⁰ I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,
²¹ so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

²² The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.

²³ I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

²⁴ My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

²⁵ I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶ He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'

²⁷ And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.



Jan-20 Anointed to Serve

Mark 2:23-28 (end)

23 One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain.

24 And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"
25 And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him:

26 how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?"

27 And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

28 So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."





Jan-21 Victory Through Trust

1 Samuel 17:32–33, 37, 40–51

32 And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

33 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth."

37 And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you."

40 Then he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine moved forward and came near David, with his shield-bearer in front of him.

42 And when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance.

43 And the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44 The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field."

45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,

47 and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand."

48 When the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. There was no sword in the hand of David.

51 Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

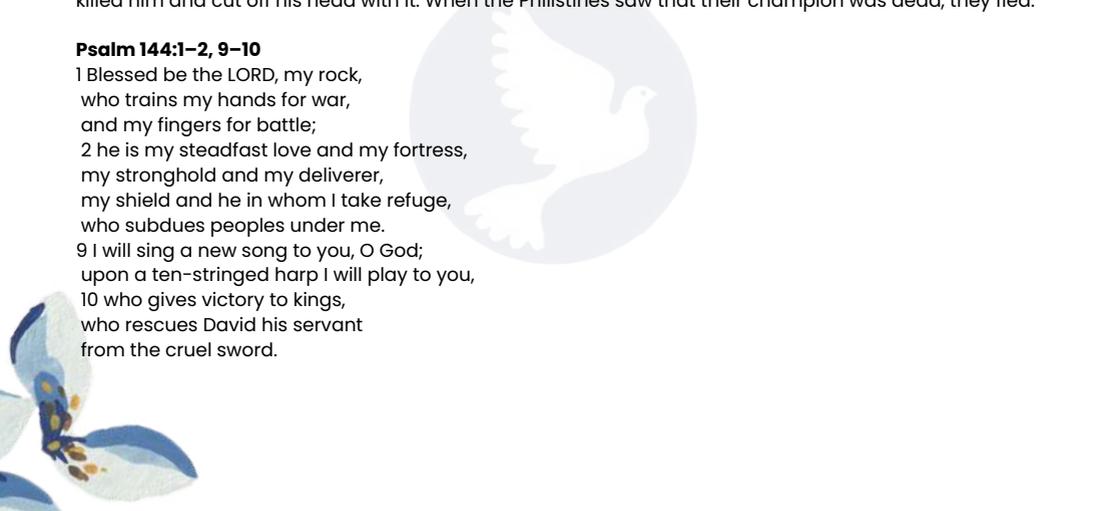
Psalms 144:1–2, 9–10

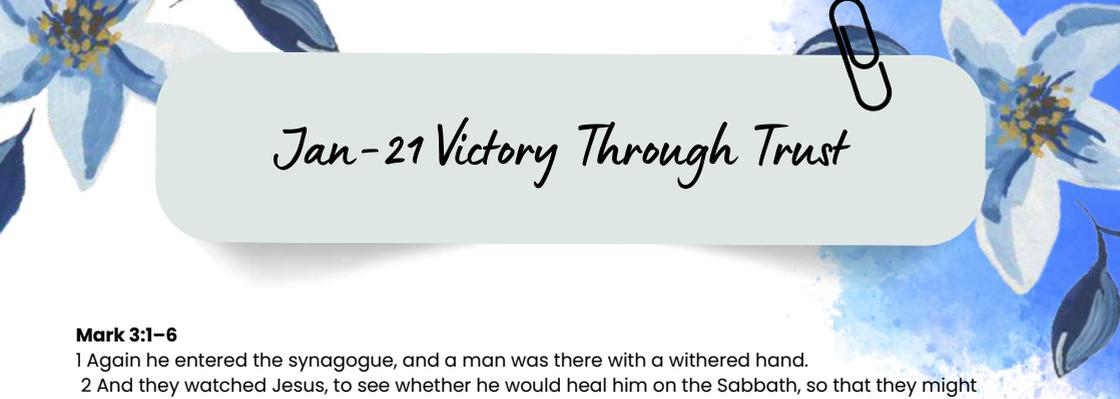
1 Blessed be the LORD, my rock,
who trains my hands for war,
and my fingers for battle;

2 he is my steadfast love and my fortress,
my stronghold and my deliverer,
my shield and he in whom I take refuge,
who subdues peoples under me.

9 I will sing a new song to you, O God;
upon a ten-stringed harp I will play to you,

10 who gives victory to kings,
who rescues David his servant
from the cruel sword.





Jan-21 Victory Through Trust

Mark 3:1-6

1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand.

2 And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

3 And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here."

4 And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

5 And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

6 The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.





Jan-22 Peace Makers

1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7

6 As they were coming home, when David returned from striking down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments.

7 And the women sang to one another as they celebrated,
"Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his ten thousands."

8 And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?"
9 And Saul eyed David from that day on.

19:1 And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David.

2 And Jonathan told David, "Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be on your guard in the morning. Stay in a secret place and hide yourself.

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak to my father about you. And if I learn anything I will tell you."

4 And Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Let not the king sin against his servant David, because he has not sinned against you, and because his deeds have brought good to you.

5 For he took his life in his hand and he struck down the Philistine, and the LORD worked a great salvation for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced. Why then will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?"

6 And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan. Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan reported to him all these things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

Psalm 56:1-2, 8-13

1 Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples on me;
all day long an attacker oppresses me;

2 my enemies trample on me all day long,
for many attack me proudly.

8 You have kept count of my tossings;
put my tears in your bottle.

Are they not in your book?

9 Then my enemies will turn back
in the day when I call.

This I know, that God is for me.

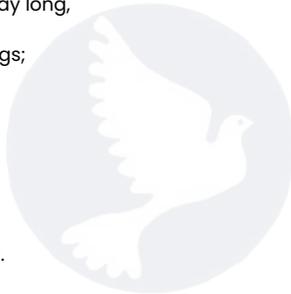
10 In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I praise,

11 in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.

What can man do to me?

12 I must perform my vows to you, O God;
I will render thank offerings to you.

13 For you have delivered my soul from death,
yes, my feet from falling,
that I may walk before God
in the light of life.





Jan-22 Peace Makers

Mark 3:7-12

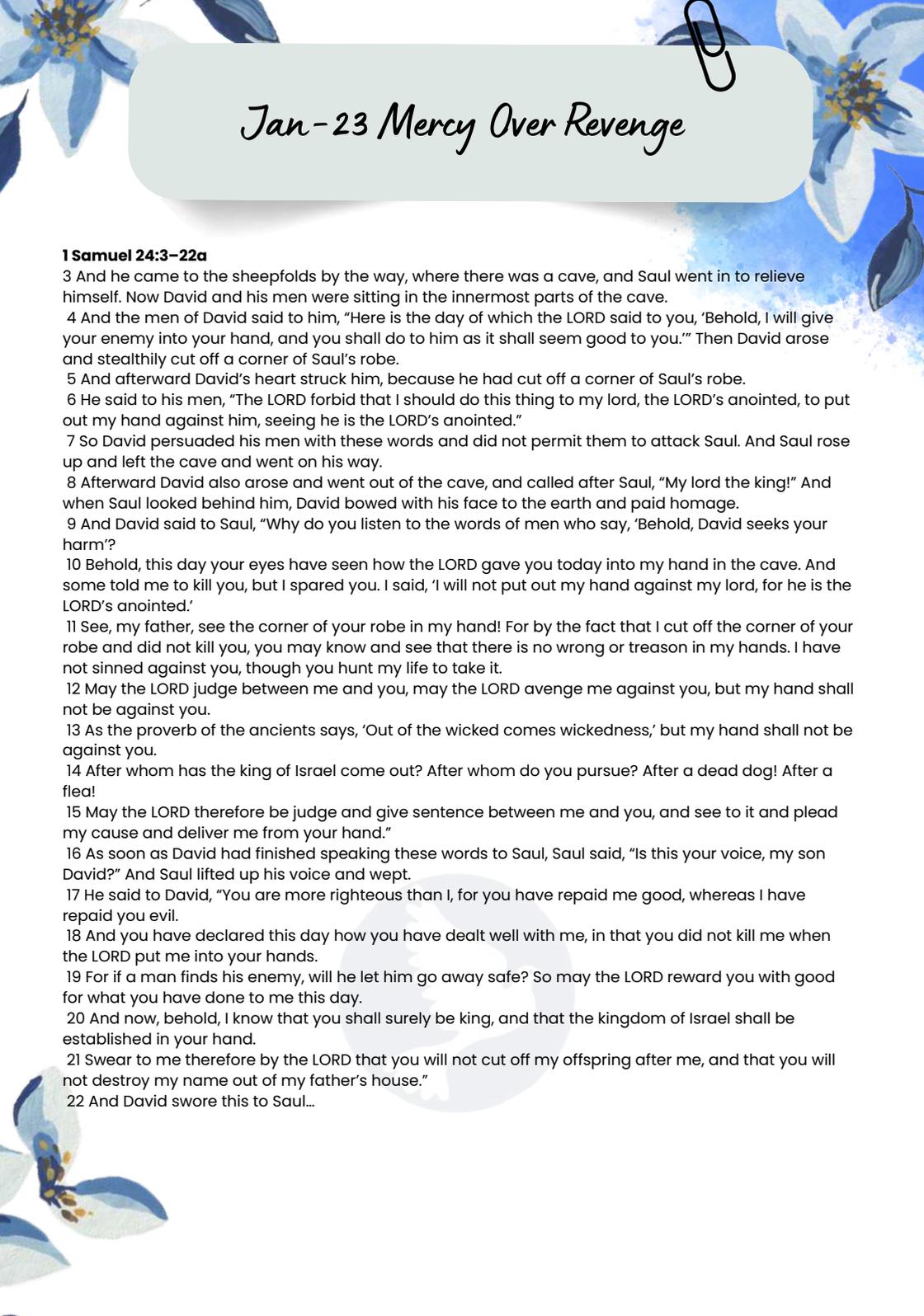
7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea
8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When
the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him.

9 And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him,
10 for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him.

11 And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the
Son of God."

12 And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.





Jan-23 Mercy Over Revenge

1 Samuel 24:3-22a

3 And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave.

4 And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'" Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

5 And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

6 He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's anointed."

7 So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.

8 Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage.

9 And David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Behold, David seeks your harm'?"

10 Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.'

11 See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand! For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it.

12 May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.

13 As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness,' but my hand shall not be against you.

14 After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea!

15 May the LORD therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."

16 As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice and wept.

17 He said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil.

18 And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands.

19 For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day.

20 And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand.

21 Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house."

22 And David swore this to Saul...



Jan-23 Mercy Over Revenge

Psalm 57:1-2, 8-11

1 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me,
for in you my soul takes refuge;
in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge,
till the storms of destruction pass by.

2 I cry out to God Most High,
to God who fulfills his purpose for me.

8 Awake, my glory!
Awake, O harp and lyre!
I will awake the dawn!

9 I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among the nations.

10 For your steadfast love is great to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

11 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!
Let your glory be over all the earth!

Mark 3:13-19

13 And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.

14 And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach

15 and have authority to cast out demons.

16 He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);

17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder);

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

19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.





Jan-24 Lament and Hope

2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 17-19, 23-27

1 After the death of Saul, when David had returned from striking down the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag.

2 And on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid homage.

3 David said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel."

4 And David said to him, "How did it go? Tell me." And he answered, "The people fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead, and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead."

11 Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him.

12 And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

17 And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan his son,

18 and he said it should be taught to the people of Judah; behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar.

19 "Your glory, O Israel, is slain on your high places!

How the mighty have fallen!

23 Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely!

In life and in death they were not divided;

they were swifter than eagles;

they were stronger than lions.

24 You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,

who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet,

who put ornaments of gold on your apparel.

25 How the mighty have fallen

in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan lies slain on your high places.

26 I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan;

very pleasant have you been to me;

your love to me was extraordinary,

surpassing the love of women.

27 How the mighty have fallen,

and the weapons of war perished!"

Psalms 80:1-6

1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.

2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your might
and come to save us!

3 Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!

4 O LORD God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

6 You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh among themselves.

Mark 3:20-21

20 Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat.

21 And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

Jan-25 Conversion of Paul - A New Blueprint

Acts 9:1-22

The Conversion of Saul

9 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.³ Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him.⁴ And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"⁵ And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."⁶ But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.⁸ Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.⁹ And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

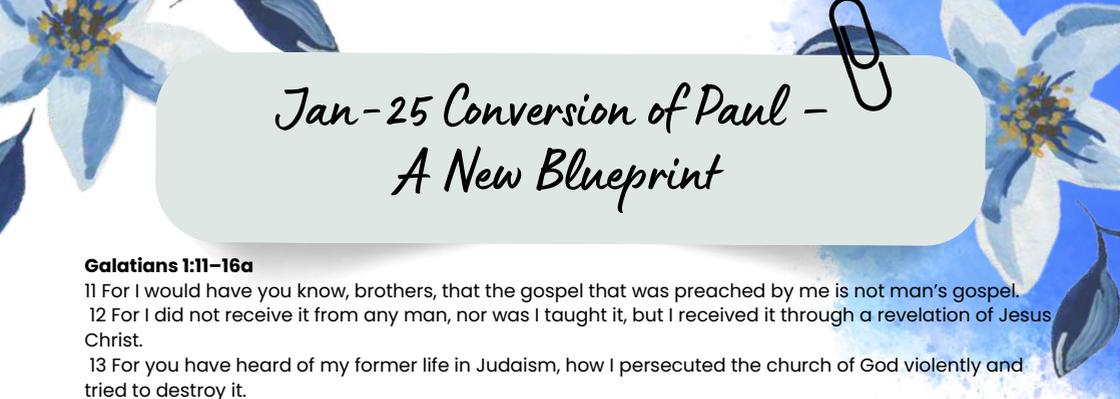
¹⁰ Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."¹¹ And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying,¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."¹³ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem.¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name."¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."¹⁷ So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;¹⁹ and taking food, he was strengthened.

Saul Proclaims Jesus in Synagogues

For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus.²⁰ And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."²¹ And all who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?"²² But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

Psalm 67

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah
² that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.
³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah
⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
⁶ The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
⁷ God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him!



Jan-25 Conversion of Paul - A New Blueprint

Galatians 1:11-16a

11 For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.
12 For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.

14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,
16a was pleased to reveal his Son to me...

Matthew 19:27-30 (end)

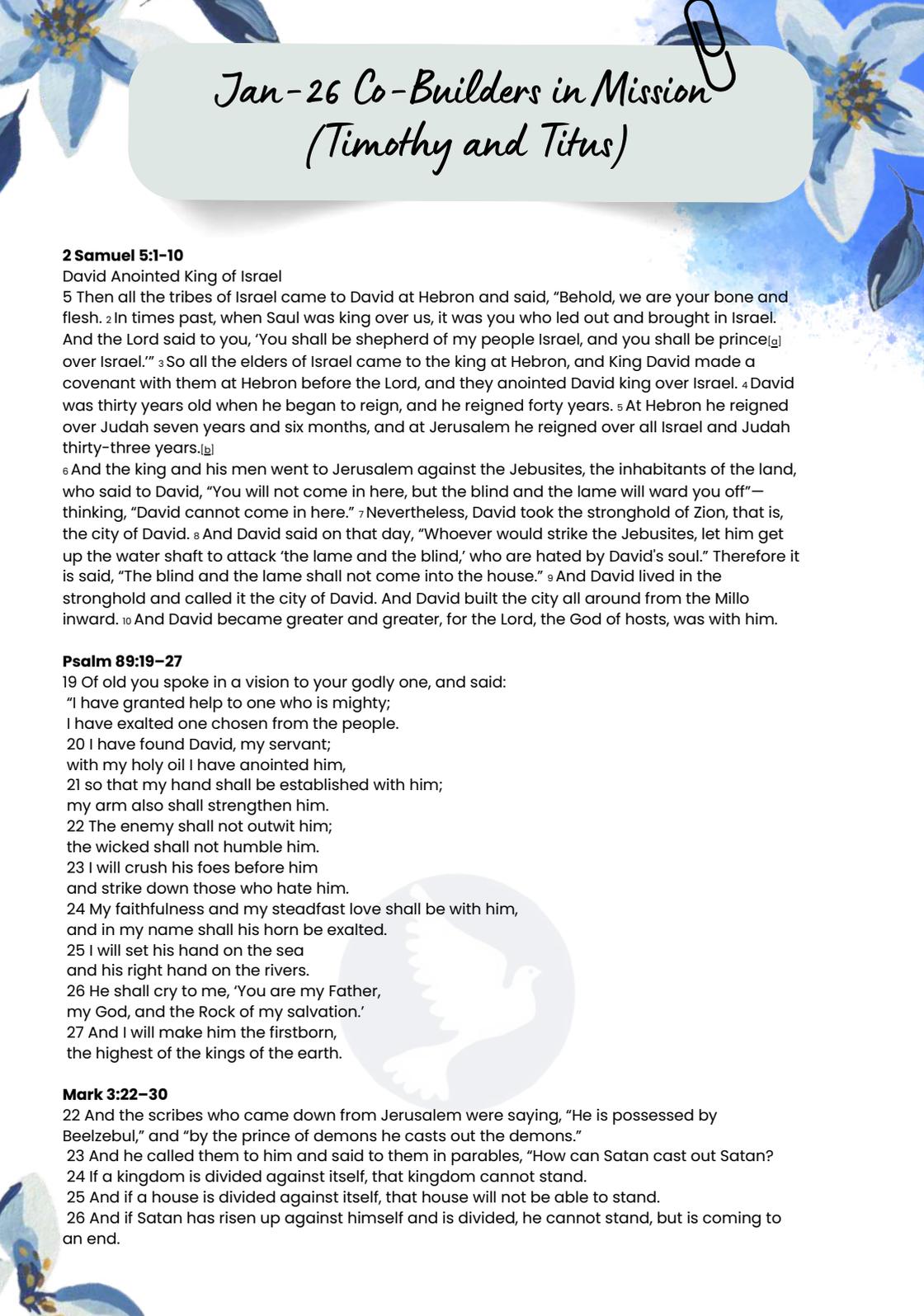
27 Then Peter said in reply, "See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?"

28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.

30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.





Jan-26 Co-Builders in Mission (Timothy and Titus)

2 Samuel 5:1-10

David Anointed King of Israel

5 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. 2 In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the Lord said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince^[g] over Israel.'" 3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.^[h]

6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will ward you off"—thinking, "David cannot come in here." 7 Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. 8 And David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack 'the lame and the blind,' who are hated by David's soul." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." 9 And David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built the city all around from the Millo inward. 10 And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.

Psalm 89:19-27

19 Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and said:

"I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

20 I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,
21 so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

22 The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.

23 I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

24 My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

25 I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

26 He shall cry to me, "You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation."

27 And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.

Mark 3:22-30

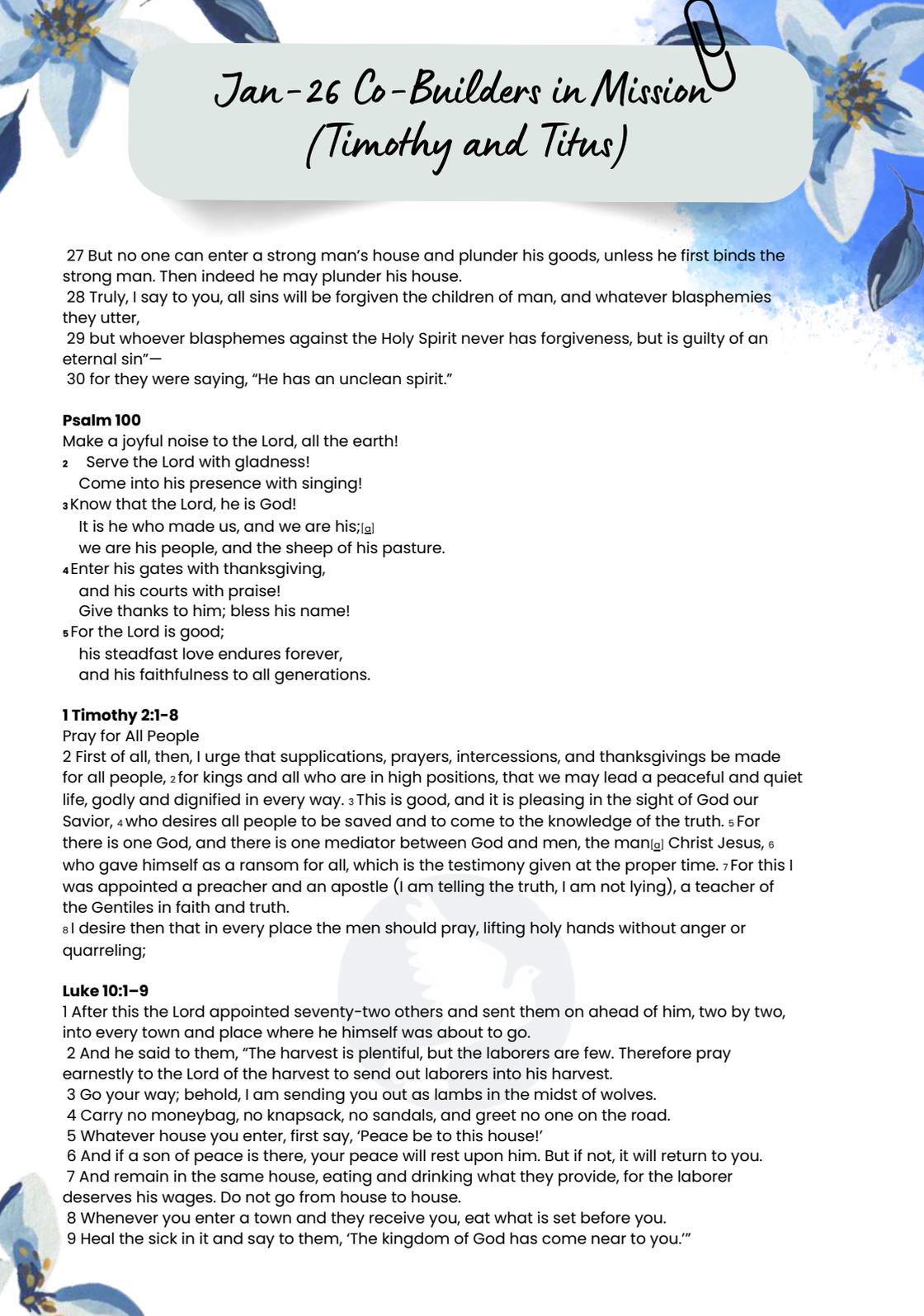
22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons."

23 And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.



Jan-26 Co-Builders in Mission (Timothy and Titus)

27 But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

28 Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter,

29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—

30 for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

2 Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

3 Know that the Lord, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;^[a]

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,

and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him; bless his name!

5 For the Lord is good;

his steadfast love endures forever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Pray for All People

2 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. ³This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man^[a] Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. ⁷For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;

Luke 10:1-9

1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go.

2 And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

3 Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

4 Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road.

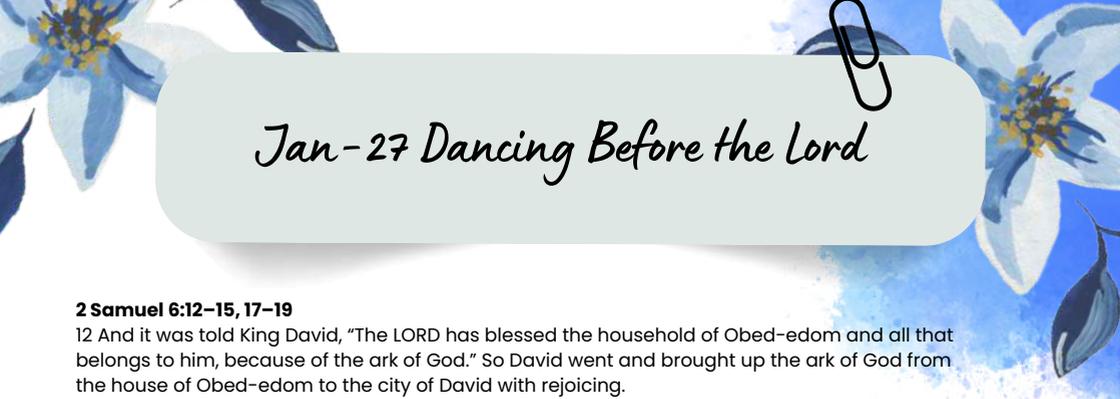
5 Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace be to this house!"

6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you.

7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house.

8 Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you.

9 Heal the sick in it and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."



Jan-27 Dancing Before the Lord

2 Samuel 6:12-15, 17-19

12 And it was told King David, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing.

13 And when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal.

14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod.

15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn.

17 And they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

18 And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts

19 and distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed, each to his house.

Psalms 24:7-10 (end)

7 Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

8 Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!

9 Lift up your heads, O gates!
and lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

10 Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory! Selah

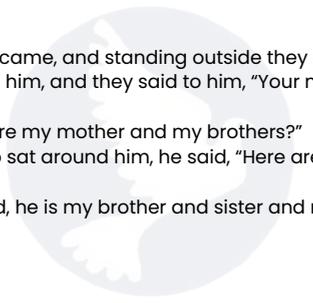
Mark 3:31-35 (end)

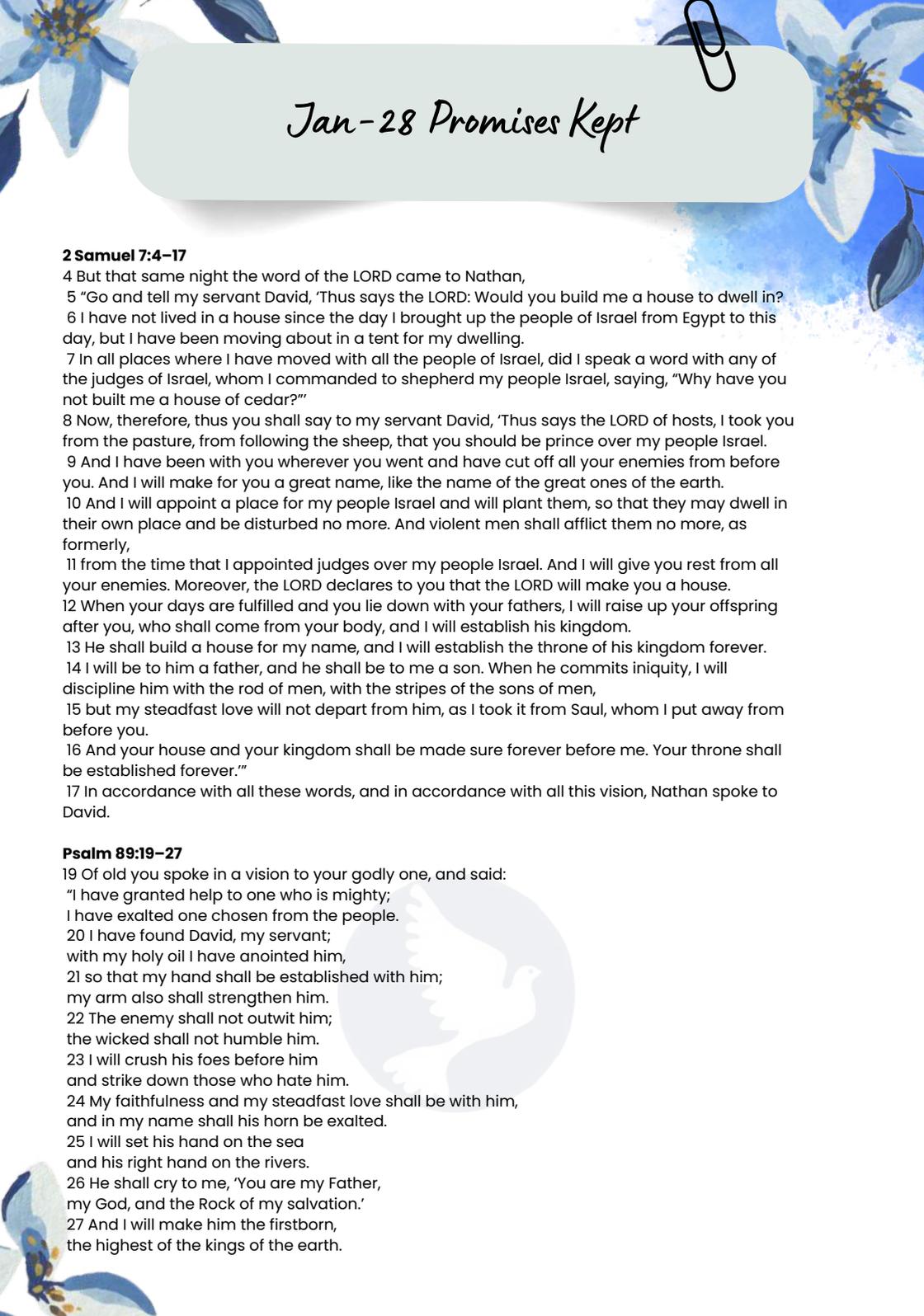
31 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him.
32 And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you."

33 And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

34 And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!

35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."





Jan-28 Promises Kept

2 Samuel 7:4-17

4 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan,

5 "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in?

6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling.

7 In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"

8 Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel.

9 And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,

11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

14 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men,

15 but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.

16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever."

17 In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

Psalms 89:19-27

19 Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and said:

"I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

20 I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,

21 so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

22 The enemy shall not outwit him;
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23 I will crush his foes before him
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25 I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

26 He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'

27 And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.



Jan-28 Promises Kept

Mark 4:1-20

1 Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land.

2 And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:

3 "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow.

4 And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.

5 Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil.

6 And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.

7 Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

8 And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

9 And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

10 And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.

11 And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables,

12 so that

"they may indeed see but not perceive,
and may indeed hear but not understand,
lest they should turn and be forgiven."

13 And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

14 The sower sows the word.

15 And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.

16 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy.

17 And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

18 And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word,

19 but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

20 But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."





Jan-29 God's House in Our Hearts

2 Samuel 7:18-19, 24-29 (end)

18 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?"

19 And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD. You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come, and this is instruction for mankind, O Lord GOD!

24 And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever, and you, O LORD, became their God.

25 And now, O LORD God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken.

26 And your name will be magnified forever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over Israel,' and the house of your servant David will be established before you.

27 For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you.

28 And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant.

29 Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

Psalms 132:1-5, 11-15

1 Remember, O LORD, in David's favor,
all the hardships he endured,

2 how he swore to the LORD
and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,

3 "I will not enter my house
or get into my bed,

4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,

5 until I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

11 The LORD swore to David a sure oath
from which he will not turn back:

"One of the sons of your body
I will set on your throne.

12 If your sons keep my covenant
and my testimonies that I shall teach them,
their sons also forever
shall sit on your throne."

13 For the LORD has chosen Zion;
he has desired it for his dwelling place:

14 "This is my resting place forever;
here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

15 I will abundantly bless her provisions;
I will satisfy her poor with bread."

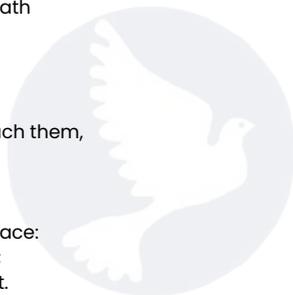
Mark 4:21-25

21 And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand?"

22 For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light.

23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

24 And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be





Jan-29 God's House in Our Hearts

2 Samuel 7:18-19, 24-29 (end)

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14 "This is my resting place forever;
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15 I will abundantly bless her provisions;
I will satisfy her poor with bread."

Mark 4:21-25

21 And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand?"

22 For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light.

23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

24 And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you.

25 For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Jan-30 Owing Our Mistakes, Finding His Mercy

2 Samuel 11:1-10, 13-17

1 In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2 It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful.

3 And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

4 So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness. Then she returned to her house.

5 And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

6 So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab was doing and how the people were doing and how the war was going.

8 Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house.

10 When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"

13 And David invited him, and he ate in his presence and drank, so that he made him drunk. And in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 In the letter he wrote, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, that he may be struck down, and die."

16 And as Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant men.

17 And the men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite also died.

Psalm 51:1-6, 9

Have mercy on me, ^[ג]O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

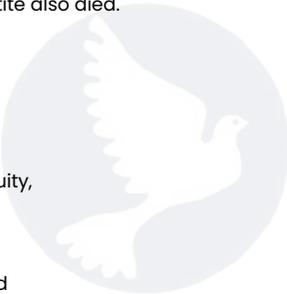
3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.





Jan-30 Owing Our Mistakes, Finding His Mercy

Mark 4:26-34

26 And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground.

27 He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how.

28 The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

30 And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it?

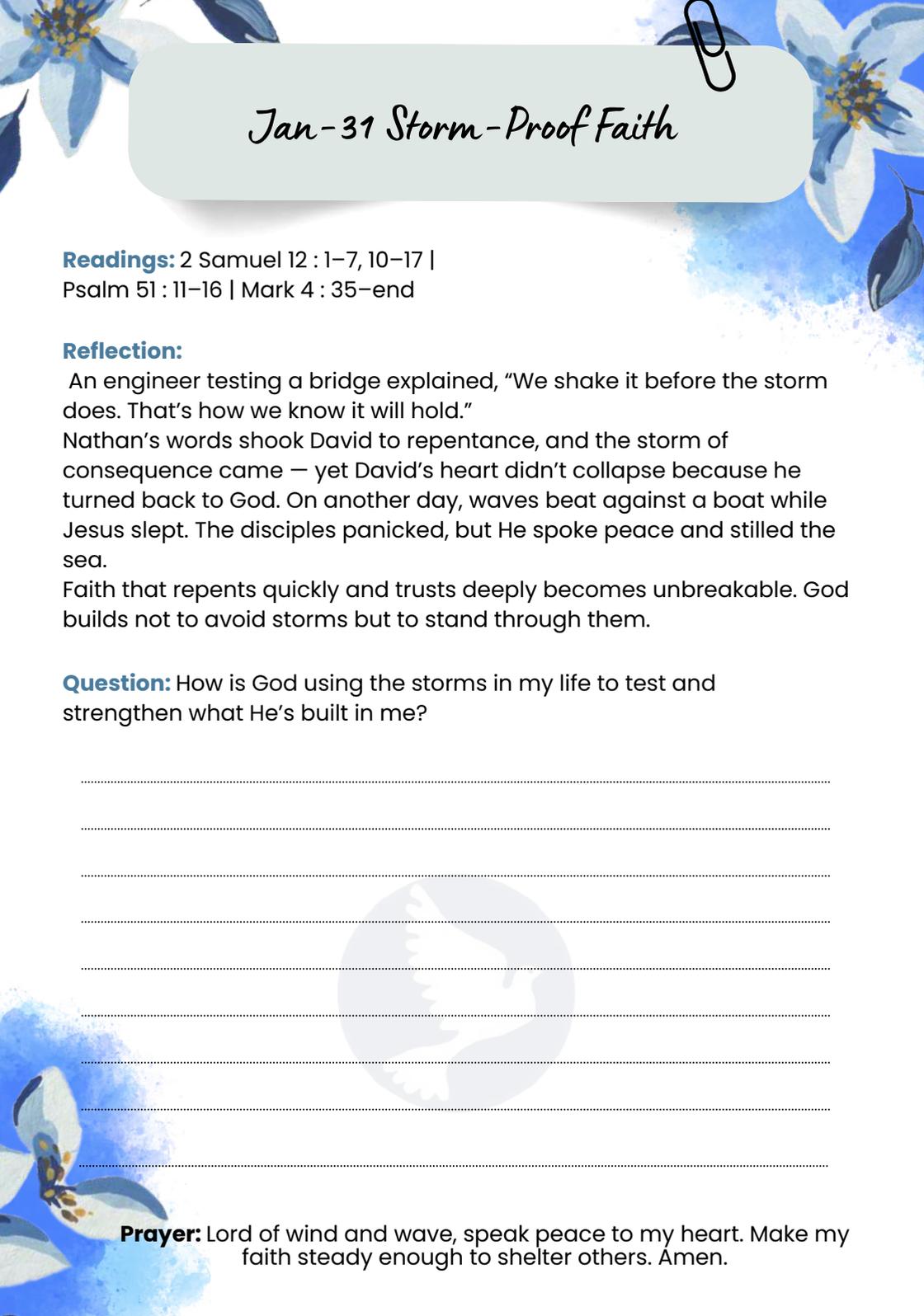
31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth,

32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

33 With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it.

34 He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.





Jan-31 Storm-Proof Faith

Readings: 2 Samuel 12 : 1-7, 10-17 |
Psalm 51 : 11-16 | Mark 4 : 35-end

Reflection:

An engineer testing a bridge explained, “We shake it before the storm does. That’s how we know it will hold.”

Nathan’s words shook David to repentance, and the storm of consequence came — yet David’s heart didn’t collapse because he turned back to God. On another day, waves beat against a boat while Jesus slept. The disciples panicked, but He spoke peace and stilled the sea.

Faith that repents quickly and trusts deeply becomes unbreakable. God builds not to avoid storms but to stand through them.

Question: How is God using the storms in my life to test and strengthen what He’s built in me?

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Prayer: Lord of wind and wave, speak peace to my heart. Make my faith steady enough to shelter others. Amen.



Jan-31 Storm-Proof Faith

2 Samuel 12:1-7, 10-17

1 And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor.

2 The rich man had very many flocks and herds,

3 but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him.

4 Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

5 Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die,

6 and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

11 Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.

12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun."

13 David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

14 Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die."

15 Then Nathan went to his house.

And the LORD afflicted the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he became sick.

16 David therefore sought God on behalf of the child. And David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground.

17 And the elders of his house stood beside him, to raise him from the ground, but he would not, nor did he eat food with them.

Psalm 51:11-16

11 Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

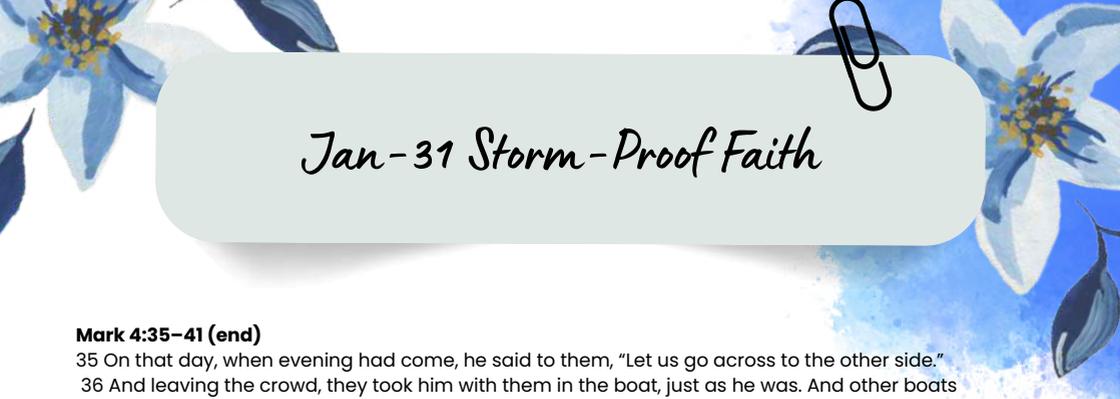
12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.



Jan-31 Storm-Proof Faith

Mark 4:35-41 (end)

35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."

36 And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.

38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

39 And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"

41 And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"



Feb-1 The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

Malachi 3:1-5

1 "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

2 But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.

3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD.

4 Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

5 "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

Psalms 24:1-6, 7-10 (end)

1 The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,

2 for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

3 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

5 He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

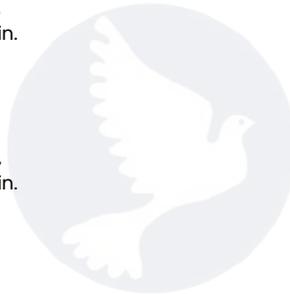
6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Selah

7 Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!

9 Lift up your heads, O gates! and lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory! Selah



Hebrews 2:14-end

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Feb-1 The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)

Luke 2:22-40

22 And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord

23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord")

24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,

28 he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

29 "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;

30 for my eyes have seen your salvation

31 that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory to your people Israel."

33 And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed

35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

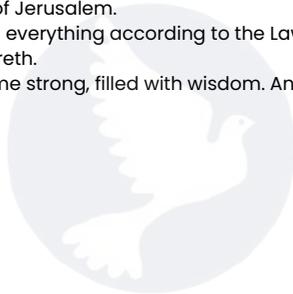
36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin,

37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.

38 And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

40 And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.



Feb - 2 When the King Walks Through Tears

2 Samuel 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13

15:13 And a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom."

14 Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly and bring down ruin on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

30 But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went.

16:5 When King David came to Bahurim, there came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera, and as he came he cursed continually.

6 And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David, and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left.

7 And Shimei said as he cursed, "Get out, get out, you man of blood, you worthless man!

8 The LORD has avenged on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned, and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, your evil is on you, for you are a man of blood."

9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head."

10 But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David,' who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?'"

11 And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Behold, my own son seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjaminite! Leave him alone, and let him curse, for the LORD has told him to.

12 It may be that the LORD will look on the wrong done to me, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing today."

13 So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust.

Psalm 3

1 O LORD, how many are my foes!

Many are rising against me;

2 many are saying of my soul,

"There is no salvation for him in God." Selah

3 But you, O LORD, are a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter of my head.

4 I cried aloud to the LORD,
and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah

5 I lay down and slept;
I woke again, for the LORD sustained me.

6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people
who have set themselves against me all around.

7 Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God!

For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
you break the teeth of the wicked.

8 Salvation belongs to the LORD;
your blessing be on your people! Selah

Feb - 2 When the King Walks Through Tears

Mark 5:1-20

1 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.

2 And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.

3 He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him.

5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.

6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him.

7 And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."

8 For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"

9 And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many."

10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country.

11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside,

12 and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them."

13 So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

14 The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened.

15 And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.

16 And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs.

17 And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.

18 As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him.

19 And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."²⁰ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.



Feb - 3 Strength for the Battle

2 Samuel 18:9–10, 14, 24–25, 30–19:3

9 And Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak, and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on.

10 And a certain man saw it and told Joab, "Behold, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak."

14 Joab said, "I will not waste time like this with you." And he took three javelins in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the oak.

24 Now David was sitting between the two gates. And the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he lifted up his eyes and looked, he saw a man running alone.

25 The watchman called out and told the king. And the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." And he drew nearer and nearer.

30 And the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So he turned aside and stood still.

19:1 And it was told Joab, "Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom."

2 So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people, for the people heard that day, "The king is grieving for his son."

3 And the people stole into the city that day as people steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle.

Psalm 86:1–6

1 Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

2 Preserve my life, for I am godly;
save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God.

3 Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all the day.

4 Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.

6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
listen to my plea for grace.

Mark 5:21–43

21 And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea.

22 Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live."

24 And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him.

25 And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years,

26 and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse.

27 She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.

28 For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well."

29 And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

Feb - 3 Strength for the Battle

30 And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"

31 And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'"

32 And he looked around to see who had done it.

33 But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.

34 And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

35 While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

36 But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

37 And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James.

38 They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly.

39 And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping."

40 And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was.

41 Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

42 And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.

43 And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.



Feb-4 The Gift of Mercy

2 Samuel 24:2, 9-17

2 So the king said to Joab and the commanders of the army who were with him, "Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and number the people, that I may know the number of the people."

9 And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king: in Israel there were eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand.

10 But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

11 And when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

12 "Go and say to David, 'Thus says the LORD, Three things I offer you. Choose one of them, that I may do it to you.'"

13 So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him, "Shall three years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to him who sent me."

14 Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man."

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand." And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people and said, "Behold, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand be against me and against my father's house."

Psalms 32:1-8

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up^{as} by the heat of summer. *Selah*

5 I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah*

6 Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not reach him.

7 You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance. *Selah*

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

Feb-4 The Gift of Mercy

Mark 6:1-6a

1 He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.

2 And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands?"

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

4 And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household."

5 And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them.

6a And he marveled because of their unbelief.



Feb-5 Laying Treasures at His Feet

1 Kings 2: 1-4, 10-12

David's Instructions to Solomon

2 When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, ²"I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man, ³and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, ⁴that the Lord may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack ^{4a}a man on the throne of Israel.'

¹⁰ Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David.¹² So Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

1 Chronicles 29:10-12

¹⁰ Therefore David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said:

"Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever.

¹¹ Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.

¹² Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all."

Psalms 145:1-5

¹ I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.

² Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.

³ Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

⁴ One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.

⁵ On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

Mark 6:7-13

⁷ And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

⁸ He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—

⁹ but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.

¹⁰ And he said to them, "Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there.

¹¹ And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them."

¹² So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent.

¹³ And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

Feb-6 Faith in the Fire

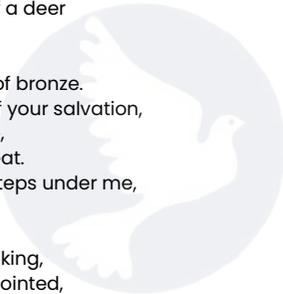
Ecclesiastes 4:2-11

2 Do not grieve those who are crushed,
and do not anger those who are in need.
3 Do not add to the troubles of an angry mind,
nor delay your gift to one who is in distress.
4 Do not reject the supplication of the afflicted,
nor turn your face away from the poor.
5 Do not avert your eye from the needy,
and do not give anyone reason to curse you;
6 for if in bitterness of soul one should curse you,
his Creator will hear his prayer.
7 Make yourself beloved in the congregation;
bow your head low to a great man.
8 Incline your ear to the poor,
and answer him peaceably and gently.
9 Deliver him who suffers wrong from the hand of the oppressor,
and do not be fainthearted in judging a case.
10 Be like a father to orphans,
and instead of a husband to their mother;
you will then be like a son of the Most High,
and he will love you more than does your mother.
11 Wisdom teaches her children
and gives help to those who seek her.

Psalm 18:31-36, 50-end

31 For who is God, but the LORD?
And who is a rock, except our God?—
32 the God who equipped me with strength
and made my way blameless.
33 He made my feet like the feet of a deer
and set me secure on the heights.
34 He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35 You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your right hand supported me,
and your gentleness made me great.
36 You gave a wide place for my steps under me,
and my feet did not slip.

50 Great salvation he brings to his king,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his offspring forever.



Feb-6 Faith in the Fire

Mark 6:14-29

14 King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him."

15 But others said, "He is Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old."

16 But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

17 For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her.

18 For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

19 And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

21 But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee.

22 For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you."

23 And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom."

24 And she went out and said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist."

25 And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

26 And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her.

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison

28 and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother.

29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.



Feb - 7 Rest for the Faithful

1 Kings 3:4-13

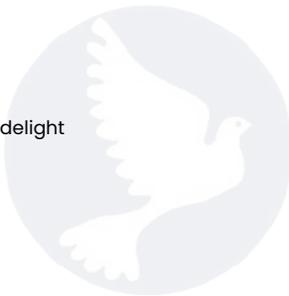
⁴ And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day." ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?"

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴ And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

¹⁵ And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Psalms 119:9-16

9 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By guarding it according to your word.
10 With my whole heart I seek you;
let me not wander from your commandments!
11 I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.
12 Blessed are you, O LORD;
teach me your statutes!
13 With my lips I declare
all the rules of your mouth.
14 In the way of your testimonies I delight
as much as in all riches.
15 I will meditate on your precepts
and fix my eyes on your ways.
16 I will delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.



Mark 6:30-34

³⁰ The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught.
³¹ And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.
³² And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.
³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.
³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things.

Feb - 8 2nd Sunday before Lent

Genesis 1:1 – 2:3

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."

7 And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so.

8 And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so.

10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind

Psalm 136

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

2 Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

4 to him who alone does great wonders,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

5 to him who by understanding made the heavens,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

6 to him who spread out the earth above the waters,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

7 to him who made the great lights,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

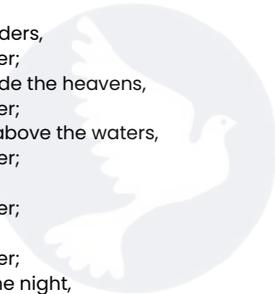
8 the sun to rule over the day,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

9 the moon and stars to rule over the night,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

10 to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

11 and brought Israel out from among them,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

12 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,
for his steadfast love endures forever;



Feb-8 2nd Sunday before Lent

13 to him who divided the Red Sea in two,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
14 and made Israel pass through the midst of it,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
16 to him who led his people through the wilderness,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
17 to him who struck down great kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
18 and killed mighty kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
19 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

20 and Og, king of Bashan,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
21 and gave their land as a heritage,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
22 a heritage to Israel his servant,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
23 It is he who remembered us in our
low estate,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
24 and rescued us from our foes,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
25 he who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
26 Give thanks to the God of heaven,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Romans 8:18-25

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.
20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope
21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.
23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?
25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Matthew 6:25-end

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?
26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?
28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin,
29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?
31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'
32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.
33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Feb-9 Faith That Fills the House

1 Kings 8:1-7, 9-13

1 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

3 And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up.

5 And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered.

6 Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim.

7 For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles.

9 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

10 And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD,

11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

12 Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in thick darkness.

13 I have indeed built you an exalted house, a place for you to dwell in forever."

Psalm 132:1-9

1 Remember, O LORD, in David's favor,
all the hardships he endured,

2 how he swore to the LORD
and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,

3 "I will not enter my house
or get into my bed,

4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,

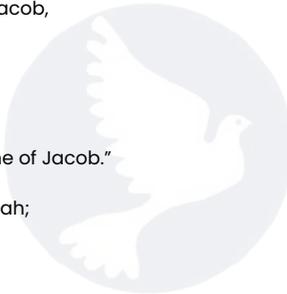
5 until I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah;
we found it in the fields of Jaar.

7 "Let us go to his dwelling place;
let us worship at his footstool!"

8 Arise, O LORD, and go to your resting place,
you and the ark of your might.

9 Let your priests be clothed with righteousness,
and let your saints shout for joy.



Feb-9 Faith That Fills the House

Mark 6:53-56 (end)

53 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore.

54 And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him

55 and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was.

56 And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.



Feb-10 Faith in the Hidden Work

1 Kings 8:22-23, 27-30

22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven,
23 and said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart,

27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!

28 Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O LORD my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays before you this day,

29 that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you have said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place.

30 And listen to the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. And listen in heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive."

Psalms 84:1-10

1 How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD of hosts!

2 My soul longs, yes, faints
for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

3 Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O LORD of hosts,
my King and my God.

4 Blessed are those who dwell in your house,
ever singing your praise! Selah

5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

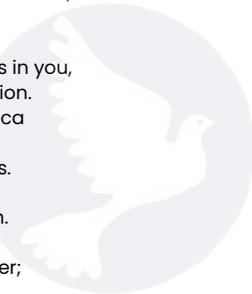
6 As they go through the Valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.

7 They go from strength to strength;
each one appears before God in Zion.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah

9 Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed!

10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of wickedness.



Feb-10 Faith in the Hidden Work

Mark 7:1-13

1 Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem,

2 they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed.

3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders,

4 and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.)

5 And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?"

6 And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

'This people honors me with their lips,

but their heart is far from me;

7 in vain do they worship me,

teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!

10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.'

11 But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban" (that is, given to God)'—

12 then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother,

13 thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."



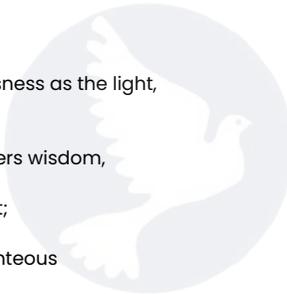
Feb-11 Wisdom Before Action

1 Kings 10:1-10

1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.
2 She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind.
3 And Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her.
4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5 the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her.
6 And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom,
7 but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard.
8 Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!
9 Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness."
10 Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

Psalm 37:3-6, 30-32

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.
4 Delight yourself in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
5 Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.
6 He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,
and your justice as the noonday.
30 The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,
and his tongue speaks justice.
31 The law of his God is in his heart;
his steps do not slip.
32 The wicked watches for the righteous
and seeks to put him to death.



Feb - 11 Wisdom Before Action

Mark 7:14-23

14 And he called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand:

15 There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him."

16 (If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.)

17 And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable.

18 And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him,

19 since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

20 And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him.

21 For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,

22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.

23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."



Feb-12 Faith That Repents Quickly

1 Kings 11:4-13

4 For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done.

7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem.

8 And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

9 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice

10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded.

11 Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.

12 Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son.

13 However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen."

Psalms 106:3, 35-41

3 Blessed are they who observe justice,
who do righteousness at all times!

35 But they mixed with the nations
and learned to do as they did.

36 They served their idols,
which became a snare to them.

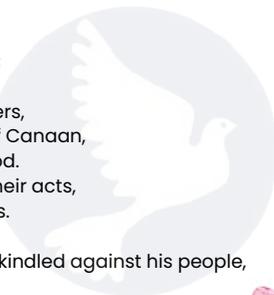
37 They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons;

38 they poured out innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan,
and the land was polluted with blood.

39 Thus they became unclean by their acts,
and played the whore in their deeds.

40 Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people,
and he abhorred his heritage;

41 he gave them into the hand of the nations,
so that those who hated them ruled over them.



Feb-12 Faith That Repents Quickly

Mark 7:24–30

24 And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden.

25 But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet.

26 Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter.

27 And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

28 But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

29 And he said to her, "For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter."

30 And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

February 13 – Friday

1 Kings 11:29–32; 12:19

29 And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed himself in a new garment, and the two of them were alone in the open country.

30 Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces.

31 And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes.

32 (But he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.)

12:19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

Psalm 81:8–14

8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!

O Israel, if you would but listen to me!

9 There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.

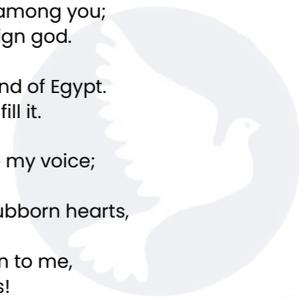
10 I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 "But my people did not listen to my voice;
Israel would not submit to me.

12 So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts,
to follow their own counsels.

13 Oh, that my people would listen to me,
that Israel would walk in my ways!

14 I would soon subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their foes."



Feb-12 Faith That Repents Quickly

Mark 7:31-37 (end)

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis.

32 And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him.

33 And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue.

34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

35 And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

36 And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it.

37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."



Feb-13 Faith That Listens

1 Kings 11:29–32; 12:19

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Feb-14 Faith That Feeds

1 Kings 12:26–32; 13:33–34 (end)

26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David
27 if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of
this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to
Rehoboam king of Judah."

28 So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone
up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of
Egypt."

29 And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

30 Then this thing became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one.

31 He also made temples on high places and appointed priests from among all the people, who
were not of the Levites.

32 And Jeroboam appointed a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was
in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he
made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made.

33 After this thing Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places
again from among all the people. Any who would, he ordained to be priests of the high places.

34 And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the
face of the earth.

Psalms 106:6–7, 20–23

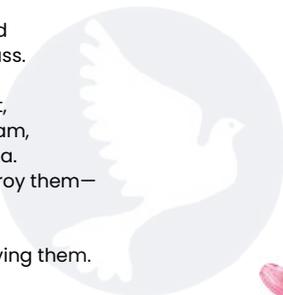
6 Both we and our fathers have sinned;
we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness.

7 Our fathers, when they were in Egypt,
did not consider your wondrous works;
they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love,
but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.

20 They exchanged the glory of God
for the image of an ox that eats grass.

21 They forgot God, their Savior,
who had done great things in Egypt,
22 wondrous works in the land of Ham,
and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

23 Therefore he said he would destroy them—
had not Moses, his chosen one,
stood in the breach before him,
to turn away his wrath from destroying them.



Feb-14 Faith That Feeds

1Mark 8:1-10

1 In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them,

2 "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat.

3 And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away."

4 And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?"

5 And he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven."

6 And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd.

7 And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them.

8 And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full.

9 And there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away.

10 And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.



Feb-15 Sunday Next Before Lent

Exodus 24:12-18 (end)

12 The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction."

13 So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God.

14 And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them."

15 Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain.

16 The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

17 Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel.

18 Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Psalms 2

1 Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,

3 "Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us."

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.

5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,

6 "As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill."

7 I will tell of the decree:
The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.

8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.

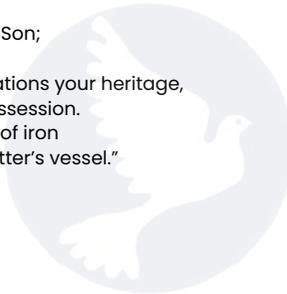
9 You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.



Feb-15 Sunday Next Before Lent

2 Peter 1:16-21 (end)

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 17:1-9

1 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

3 And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.

4 And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah."

5 He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified.

7 But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear."

8 And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

9 And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."



Feb-16 Tested Faith

James 1:1-11

James, a servant[a] of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:
Greetings.

Testing of Your Faith

2 Count it all joy, my brothers,[b] when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, 10 and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass[c] he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.
Psalm 119:65-72

65 You have dealt well with your servant,
O LORD, according to your word.
66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge,
for I believe in your commandments.
67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I keep your word.
68 You are good and do good;
teach me your statutes.
69 The insolent smear me with lies,
but with my whole heart I keep your precepts;
70 their heart is unfeeling like fat,
but I delight in your law.
71 It is good for me that I was afflicted,
that I might learn your statutes.
72 The law of your mouth is better to me
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Mark 8:11-13

11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven, to test him.
12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation."
13 And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side.



Feb-17 Faith Over Temptation (Chinese New Year)

12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. [a] 18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Psalm 94:12-18

12 Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O LORD,
and whom you teach out of your law,
13 to give him rest from days of trouble,
until a pit is dug for the wicked.
14 For the LORD will not forsake his people;
he will not abandon his heritage;
15 for justice will return to the righteous,
and all the upright in heart will follow it.
16 Who rises up for me against the wicked?
Who stands up for me against evildoers?
17 If the LORD had not been my help,
my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.
18 When I thought, "My foot slips,"
your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.

Mark 8:14-21

14 Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat.
15 And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."
16 And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread.
17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?
18 Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?
19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve."
20 "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven."
21 And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"



Feb - 18 Ash Wednesday – The Dust that Builds Again

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

1 Blow a trumpet in Zion;
sound an alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near,
2 a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains
a great and powerful people;
their like has never been before,
nor will be again after them
through the years of all generations.

12 “Yet even now,” declares the LORD,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
13 and rend your hearts and not your garments.”
Return to the LORD your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
and he relents over disaster.

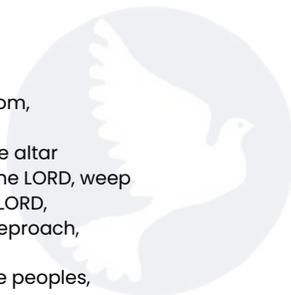
14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the LORD your God?

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
16 gather the people.

Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

17 Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep
and say, “Spare your people, O LORD,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
a byword among the nations.
Why should they say among the peoples,
‘Where is their God?’”



Feb - 18 Ash Wednesday – The Dust that Builds Again

OR

Isaiah 58:1–12

1 Cry aloud; do not hold back;
lift up your voice like a trumpet;
declare to my people their transgression,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek me daily
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that did righteousness
and did not forsake the judgment of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
they delight to draw near to God.

3 “Why have we fasted, and you see it not?
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?”
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,
and oppress all your workers.

4 Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to hit with a wicked fist.

Fasting like yours this day
will not make your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is such the fast that I choose,
a day for a person to humble himself?
Is it to bow down his head like a reed,
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Will you call this a fast,
and a day acceptable to the LORD?

6 “Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?”

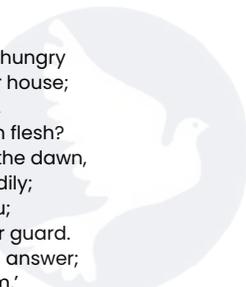
7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?”

8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you;
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

If you take away the yoke from your midst,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,

10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noonday.



Feb - 18 Ash Wednesday – The Dust that Builds Again

11 And the LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your desire in scorched places
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters do not fail.

12 And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to dwell in.

Psalm 51:1–18

Have mercy on me, o God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

2Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

3For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

4Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.

5Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

7Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

9Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

10Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

11Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

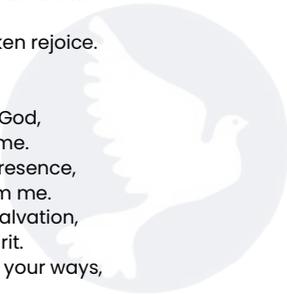
12Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

13Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.

14Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

15O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

16For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.



Feb - 18 Ash Wednesday – The Dust that Builds Again

17The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;

19then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will
be offered on your altar.

2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10

20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you
on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin,
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. **2** For
he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. **3** We put no obstacle in
anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, **4** but as servants of God we
commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, **5**
beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; **6** by purity, knowledge, patience,
kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; **7** by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the
weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; **8** through honor and dishonor,
through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; **9** as unknown, and yet
well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; **10** as sorrowful, yet
always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

1 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for
then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

2 “Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the
synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have
received their reward.

3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

5 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the
synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they
have received their reward.

6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.
And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

16 “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that
their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father
who sees in secret will reward you.



*Feb - 18 Ash Wednesday –
The Dust that Builds Again*

19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,

20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.



Feb-19 Faith That Chooses Life

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 (end)

15 "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.

16 If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

17 But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them,

18 I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.

19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,

20 loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Psalm 1

1 Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

3 He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
6 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Luke 9:22-25

22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?"

Feb-20 The Fast That Builds Freedom

Isaiah 58:1-9a

1 Cry aloud; do not hold back;
lift up your voice like a trumpet;
declare to my people their transgression,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek me daily
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that did righteousness
and did not forsake the judgment of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
they delight to draw near to God.

3 "Why have we fasted, and you see it not?
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?"
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,
and oppress all your workers.

4 Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to hit with a wicked fist.
Fasting like yours this day
will not make your voice to be heard on high.

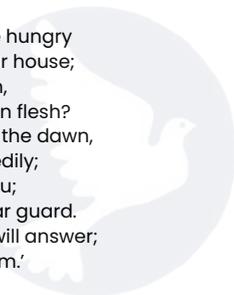
5 Is such the fast that I choose,
a day for a person to humble himself?
Is it to bow down his head like a reed,
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Will you call this a fast,
and a day acceptable to the LORD?

6 "Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you;
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

9a Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'



Feb-20 The Fast That Builds Freedom

Psalm 51:1-5, 17-18

Have mercy on me, 1 O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

2Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

3For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

4Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.

5Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

17The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;

19then will you delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Matthew 9:14-15

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."





*Feb - 21 Compassion That Builds
the Church*

Readings: Isaiah 58 : 9b - end |
Psalm 86 : 1 - 7 | Luke 5 : 27 - 32





Feb-21 Compassion That Builds the Church

Isaiah 58:9b-14 (end)

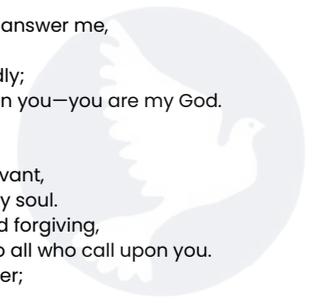
9b If you take away the yoke from your midst,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noonday.

11 And the LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your desire in scorched places
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters do not fail.

12 And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to dwell in.

13 If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the LORD honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;
14 then you shall take delight in the LORD,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Psalms 86:1-7



1 Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.
2 Preserve my life, for I am godly;
save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God.
3 Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all the day.
4 Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.
5 For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.
6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
listen to my plea for grace.
7 In the day of my trouble I call upon you,
for you answer me.



Feb - 21 Compassion That Builds the Church

Luke 5:27-32

27 After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me."

28 And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.

30 And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31 And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

32 I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."



Feb-22 1st Sunday of Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.
16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,
17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You[a] shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"
2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, [b] she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was

Psalms 32

1 Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

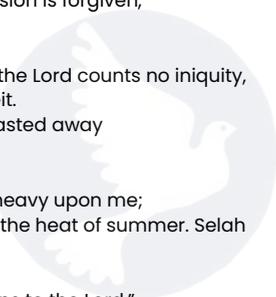
3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up[b] as by the heat of summer. Selah

5 I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

6 Therefore let everyone who is godly
offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;
surely in the rush of great waters,
they shall not reach him.



Feb-22 1st Sunday of Lent

7 You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah
8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

9 Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
which must be curbed with bit and bridle,
or it will not stay near you.
10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Romans 5 : 12 – 19

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men[a] because all sinned— 13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore, as one trespass[b] led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness[c] leads to justification and life for all men. 19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.



Feb-22 1st Sunday of Lent

Matthew 4:1-11

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

4 But he answered, "It is written,

'Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple

6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,'

and

'On their hands they will bear you up,

lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"

7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

'You shall worship the Lord your God

and him only shall you serve.'"

11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.



Feb-23 Building Through Kindness

Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

2 "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

11 "You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another.

12 You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

13 You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning.

14 You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

15 You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.

16 You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

17 You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him.

18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

Psalms 19:7-14 (end)

7 The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;

the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;

8 the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;

the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;

9 the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;

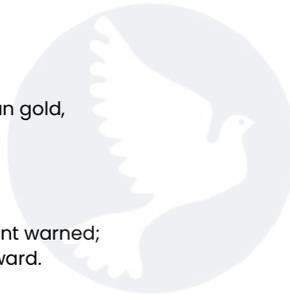
the rules of the LORD are true,
and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.

11 Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can discern his errors?
Declare me innocent from hidden faults.

13 Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins;
let them not have dominion over me!
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.



Feb-23 Building Through Kindness

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Matthew 25:31-46 (end)

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.

34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?

38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?

39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

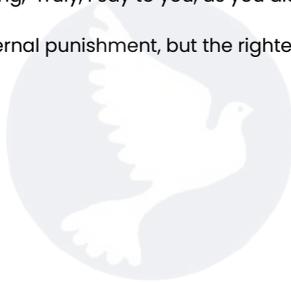
42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,

43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?'

45 Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."



Feb-24 The Word That Builds Faith

Isaiah 55:10-11

10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

Psalms 34:4-6, 21-22

4 I sought the LORD, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.

5 Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces shall never be ashamed.

6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him
and saved him out of all his troubles.

21 Affliction will slay the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Matthew 6:7-15

7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that
they will be heard for their many words.

8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9 Pray then like this:

'Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

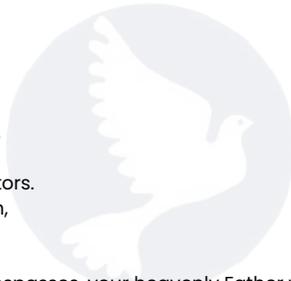
10 Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.'

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,
15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your
trespasses.



Feb-25 When We Turn Around

Jonah 3

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, [a] three days' journey in breadth. [b] 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

The People of Nineveh Repent

6 The word reached [c] the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, 8 but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish."

10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Psalms 51:1-5, 17-18

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;

19 then will you delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Feb-25 When We Turn Around

Luke 11:29-32

29 When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, "This generation is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.

30 For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.

31 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

32 The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.



Feb-26 Hidden Heroes of Faith

Esther 14:1-5, 12-14

1 Queen Esther, seized with mortal anguish, fled to the Lord.

2 She took off her splendid royal robes and put on garments of distress and mourning, and instead of her costly perfumes she covered her head with ashes and dung.

She utterly humbled her body and filled every place she delighted in with her tangled hair.

3 And she prayed to the Lord God of Israel, and said:

"O my Lord, you alone are our King.

Help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, for my danger is in my hand.

4 Ever since I was born I have heard in the tribe of my family that you, O Lord, took Israel out of all the nations, and our fathers from among all their ancestors, for an everlasting inheritance, and that you did for them all that you promised.

5 And now we have sinned before you, and you have given us into the hands of our enemies, because we glorified their gods.

You are righteous, O Lord!

12 Remember us, O Lord; make yourself known in this time of our affliction, and give me courage, O King of the gods and Master of all dominion!

13 Put eloquent speech in my mouth before the lion, and turn his heart to hate the man who is fighting against us, so that there may be an end of him and of those who agree with him.

14 But save us by your hand, and help me, who am alone and have no helper but you, O Lord.

OR

Isaiah 55:6-9

6 "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Feb-26 Hidden Heroes of Faith

Psalm 138

I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;

2 I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness,
for you have exalted above all things
your name and your word.[a]

3 On the day I called, you answered me;
my strength of soul you increased.[b]

4 All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O Lord,
for they have heard the words of your mouth,

5 and they shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of the Lord.

6 For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly,
but the haughty he knows from afar.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve my life;
you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies,
and your right hand delivers me.

8 The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.

Matthew 7:7-12

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?

11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

12 "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Feb-27 The Foundation of Forgiveness

Ezekiel 18:21-28

21 "But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

22 None of the transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done he shall live.

23 Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?

24 But when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice and does the same abominations that the wicked person does, shall he live? None of the righteous deeds that he has done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which he is guilty and the sin he has committed, for them he shall die.

25 "Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

26 When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die.

27 Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life.

28 Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

Psalms 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD!

2 O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

3 If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,

O Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,

that you may be feared.

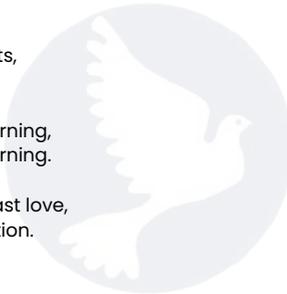
5 I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

6 my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the LORD!

For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.

8 And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.



Feb-27 The Foundation of Forgiveness

Matthew 5:20-26

20 "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.'

22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.

23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,

24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison.

26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.



Feb-28 Love That Breaks the Walls

Deuteronomy 26:16–19 (end)

16 "This day the LORD your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.

17 You have declared today that the LORD is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice.

18 And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments,

19 and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised."

Psalms 119:1–8

1 Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the LORD!

2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies,
who seek him with their whole heart,

3 who also do no wrong,
but walk in his ways!

4 You have commanded your precepts
to be kept diligently.

5 Oh that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes!

6 Then I shall not be put to shame,
having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.

7 I will praise you with an upright heart,
when I learn your righteous rules.

8 I will keep your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me!

Matthew 5:43–48 (end)

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Mar-1 2nd Sunday of Lent

Genesis 12:1–4a

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.

2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

4a So Abram went, as the LORD had told him.

Psalms 121

1 I lift up my eyes to wthe hills.

From where does my help come?

2 YMy help comes from the Lord,
who ymade heaven and earth.

3 He will not zlet your foot be moved;
he who akeeps you will not slumber.

4 Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your bshade on your right hand.

6 dThe sun shall not estrike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord will akeep you from all evil;
he will akeep your life.

8 The Lord will keep
your fgoing out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.

Romans 4:1–5, 13–17

What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” 4

Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in [a] him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,

13 For ethe promise to Abraham and his offspring fthat he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14 gFor if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15 For hthe law brings wrath, but iwhere there is no law jthere is no transgression.

16 That is why it depends on faith, kin order that the promise may rest on grace and lbe guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, mwho is the father of us all, 17 as it is written, n“I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, owho gives life to the dead and calls into existence pthe things that do not exist.

Mar-1 2nd Sunday of Lent

John 3: 1-17

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus[a] by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again[b] he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.[c] 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You[d] must be born again.' 8 The wind[e] blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you[f] do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.[g] 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.[h]

For God So Loved the World

16 "For God so loved the world,[i] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.



Mar-2 Eyes Lifted Up

Daniel 9:4-10

4 I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying,
"O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,
5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.
6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.
7 To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you.
8 To us, O LORD, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you.
9 To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him
10 and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

Psalms 79:8-13

8 Do not remember against us our former iniquities;
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,
for we are brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us, and atone for our sins,
for your name's sake!
10 Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?"
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants
be known among the nations before our eyes!
11 Let the groans of the prisoners come before you;
according to your great power, preserve those doomed to die!
12 Return sevenfold into the lap of our neighbors
the taunts with which they have taunted you, O Lord!
13 But we your people, the sheep of your pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

Luke 6:36-38

36 "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.
37 Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven;
38 give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Mar - 3 Choosing the Higher Road

Isaiah 1:10, 16-20

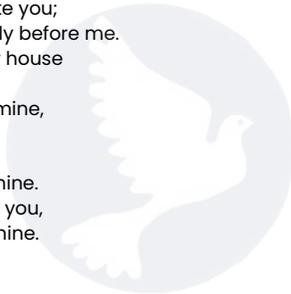
10 Hear the word of the LORD,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!

16 "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
17 learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;
bring justice to the fatherless,
plead the widow's cause.

18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.
19 If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land;
20 but if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be eaten by the sword;
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Psalms 50:7-15, 22-24

7 "Hear, O my people, and I will speak;
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.
8 Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.
9 I will not accept a bull from your house
or goats from your folds.
10 For every beast of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.
11 I know all the birds of the hills,
and all that moves in the field is mine.
12 "If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and its fullness are mine.
13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?
14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and perform your vows to the Most High,
15 and call upon me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."



Mar-3 Choosing the Higher Road

22 "Mark this, then, you who forget God,
lest I tear you apart, and there be none to deliver!
23 The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me;
to one who orders his way rightly
I will show the salvation of God!"
24 (end)

Matthew 23:1-12

1 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples,
2 "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat,
3 so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.
4 They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.
5 They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long,
6 and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues
7 and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others.
8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers.
9 And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.
10 Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ.
11 The greatest among you shall be your servant.
12 Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

18 Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words."

19 Give heed to me, O LORD,
and listen to the voice of my adversaries!
20 Should good be repaid with evil?
Yet they have dug a pit for my life.
Remember how I stood before you
to speak good for them,
to turn away your wrath from them.



Mar-4 Forgiven to Forgive

Jeremiah 18:18–20

¹⁸ Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words."

¹⁹ Hear me, O Lord,

and listen to the voice of my adversaries.

²⁰ Should good be repaid with evil?

Yet they have dug a pit for my life.

Remember how I stood before you

to speak good for them,

to turn away your wrath from them.

Psalms 31:5–16

5 Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

6 I hate those who pay regard to worthless idols,
but I trust in the LORD.

7 I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love,
because you have seen my affliction;

you have known the distress of my soul,

8 and you have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy;

you have set my feet in a broad place.

9 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;

my eye is wasted from grief;

my soul and my body also.

10 For my life is spent with sorrow,

and my years with sighing;

my strength fails because of my iniquity,

and my bones waste away.

11 Because of all my adversaries I have become a reproach,

especially to my neighbors,



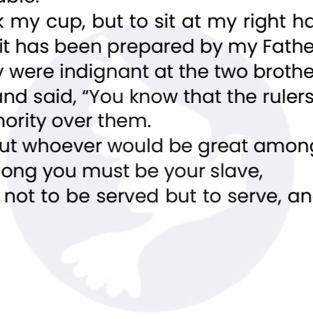


Mar-4 Forgiven to Forgive

and an object of dread to my acquaintances;
those who see me in the street flee from me.
12 I have been forgotten like one who is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.
13 For I hear the whispering of many—
terror on every side!—
as they scheme together against me,
as they plot to take my life.
14 But I trust in you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my God."
15 My times are in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from my persecutors!
16 Make your face shine on your servant;
save me in your steadfast love!

Matthew 20:17–28

17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them,
18 "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death
19 and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."
20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something.
21 And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom."
22 Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able."
23 He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."
24 And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers.
25 But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.
26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,
27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave,
28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."



Mar-5 Hearing the Heart of God

Jeremiah 17:5-10

⁵ Thus says the Lord:

"Cursed is the man ^awho trusts in man
and makes flesh his strength,¹
whose heart turns away from the Lord.

⁶ ^aHe is like a shrub in the desert,
^aand shall not see any good come.

He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness,
in ^aan uninhabited salt land.

⁷ ^b"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
^awhose trust is the Lord.

⁸ ^bHe is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit."

⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately sick;
who can understand it?

¹⁰ ⁱ"¹ the Lord search the heart
^jand test the mind,²

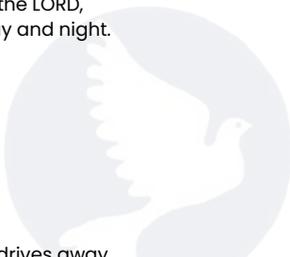
^kto give every man according to his ways,
according to the fruit of his deeds."

Psalms 1

1 Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

3 He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
6 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.



Mar-5 Hearing the Heart of God

Luke 16:19-31

19 "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.

20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,

21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried,

23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

24 And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.

26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in o



Mar-6 The Joy of Reconciliation

Micah 7:14-20

14 Shepherd your people with your staff,
the flock of your inheritance,
who dwell alone in a forest
in the midst of a garden land;
let them graze in Bashan and Gilead
as in the days of old.

15 As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt,
I will show them marvelous things.

16 The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might;
they shall lay their hands on their mouths;
their ears shall be deaf;

17 they shall lick the dust like a serpent,
like the crawling things of the earth;
they shall come trembling out of their strongholds;
they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God,
and they shall be in fear of you.

18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in steadfast love.

19 He will again have compassion on us;
he will tread our iniquities underfoot.

You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.

20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and steadfast love to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our fathers
from the days of old.

Psalms 103:1-12

1 ¹Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

2 ²Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and ³forget not all his benefits,

3 who ⁴forgives all your iniquity,
who ⁵heals all your diseases,

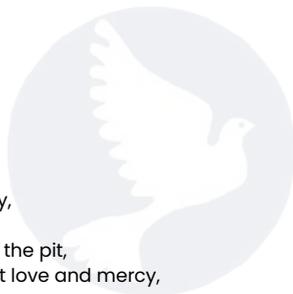
4 who ⁶redeems your life from the pit,
who ⁷crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

5 who ⁸satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like ⁹the eagle's.

6 The Lord works ¹⁰righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.

7 He made known his ¹¹ways to Moses,
his ¹²acts to the people of Israel.

8 The Lord is ¹³merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.



Mar-6 The Joy of Reconciliation

9 ^hHe will not always chide,

nor will he ^kkeep his anger forever.

10 He does not deal with us ^maccording to our sins,

nor repay us according to our iniquities.

11 For ^aas high as the heavens are above the earth,

so great is his ^ssteadfast love toward ^tthose who fear him;

12 as far as the east is from the west,

so far does he ^rremove our transgressions from us.

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 (end)

1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

3 So he told them this parable:

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

11 And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to [a] one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.'" 20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' [b] 22 But the father said to his servants, [c] 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' 28 But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, 29 but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' 31 And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'" "



Mar-7 When Love Overcomes Fear

Deuteronomy 26:16–19

16 "This day the LORD your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.

17 You have declared today that the LORD is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice.

18 And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments,

19 and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised."

Psalm 119:1–8

1 Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the LORD!

2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies,
who seek him with their whole heart,

3 who also do no wrong,
but walk in his ways!

4 You have commanded your precepts
to be kept diligently.

5 Oh that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes!

6 Then I shall not be put to shame,
having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.

7 I will praise you with an upright heart,
when I learn your righteous rules.

8 I will keep your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me!

Matthew 5:43–48

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

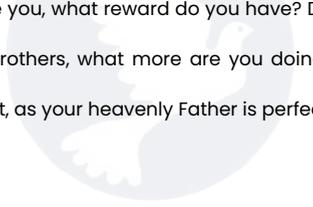
44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil
and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do
the same?

47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the
Gentiles do the same?

48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.



Mar-8 3rd Sunday of Lent

Exodus 17:1-7

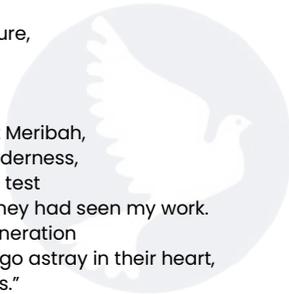
1 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.
2 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?"
3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"
4 So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."
5 And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.
6 Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.
7 And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Psalms 95

1 Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
3 For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you hear his voice,
8 do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
9 when your fathers put me to the test
and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.
10 For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,
and they have not known my ways."
11 Therefore I swore in my wrath,
"They shall not enter my rest."



Mar-8 3rd Sunday of Lent

Romans 5:1-11

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we[b] boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we[c] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

John 4:5-42

5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

6 Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"

12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';

18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

Mar-8 3rd Sunday of Lent

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."

26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

27 Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"

28 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people,

29 "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"

30 They went out of the town and were coming to him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

33 So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?"

34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

35 Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

37 For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.'

38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

39 Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."

40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.

41 And many more believed because of his word.

42 They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

Mar-9 Trusting in God's Wisdom

2 Kings 5:1-15

1 Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and in high favor, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper.

2 Now the Syrians on one of their raids had carried off a little girl from the land of Israel, and she worked in the service of Naaman's wife.

3 She said to her mistress, "Would that my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

4 So Naaman went in and told his lord, "Thus and so spoke the girl from the land of Israel."

5 And the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, "When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you Naaman my servant, that you may cure him of his leprosy."

7 And when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? Only consider, and see how he is seeking a quarrel with me."

8 But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come now to me, that he may know that there is a prophet in Israel."

9 So Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house.

10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean."

11 But Naaman was angry and went away, saying, "Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.

12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

13 But his servants came near and said to him, "My father, it is a great word the prophet has spoken to you; will you not do it? Has he actually said to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'"

14 So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

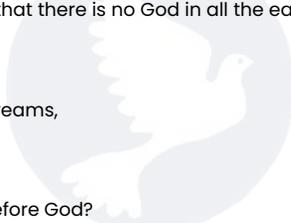
15 Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he came and stood before him. And he said, "Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant."

Psalm 42:1-2; 43:3-4

42:1 As a deer pants for flowing streams,
so pants my soul for you, O God.

2 My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God?



Mar-9 Trusting in God's Wisdom

43:3 Send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling!
4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy,
and I will praise you with the lyre,
O God, my God.

Luke 4:24-30

24 And he said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. 25 But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, 26 and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 And there were many lepers [a] in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." 28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. 29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, he went away.



Mar-10 Mercy Over Measure

Daniel 3:25, 34-43

25 He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

34 "Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers,
and worthy of praise; and your name is glorified forever.

35 For you are just in all that you have done to us,
and all your works are true and your ways right,
and all your judgments are true.

36 For you have executed true judgments
in all that you have brought upon us and upon Jerusalem,
the holy city of our fathers,
for in truth and justice you have brought all this upon us
because of our sins.

37 For we have sinned and lawlessly departed from you,
and have sinned in all things,

38 and have not obeyed your commandments,
nor kept them,
nor done what you have commanded us.

39 Yet do not withdraw your mercy from us,
for the sake of Abraham your beloved
and for the sake of Isaac your servant
and Israel your holy one,

40 to whom you promised
to make their offspring as many as the stars of heaven
and as the sand on the shore of the sea.

41 For we, O Lord, have become fewer than any nation,
and are brought low this day in all the world
because of our sins.

42 And at this time there is no prince, or prophet, or leader,
no burnt offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense,
no place to make an offering before you and to find mercy.

43 Yet with a contrite heart and a humble spirit
may we be accepted,
as though it were with burnt offerings of rams and bulls,
and with tens of thousands of fat lambs;
so let our sacrifice be in your sight this day,
and may we fully follow you,
for those who trust in you shall not be put to shame.

Mar-10 Mercy Over Measure

Psalm 25:3-10

3 Indeed, none who wait for you
shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed
who are wantonly treacherous.

4 Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.

5 Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all the day long.

6 Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

8 Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

9 He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.

10 All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?"

22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.

24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'

27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.'

29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'

30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.

31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place.

32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?'

34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.

35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Mar-11 Listening Beyond the Noise

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9

1 "Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

5 See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

6 Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him?

8 And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

9 "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children—

Psalms 147:12-20

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

13 For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.

14 He makes peace in your borders;
he fills you with the finest of the wheat.

15 He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.

16 He gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes.

17 He hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs;
who can stand before his cold?

18 He sends out his word, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow and the waters flow.

19 He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and rules to Israel.

20 He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his rules.

Praise the LORD!

Matthew 5:17-19

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

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Mar-12 A Faith That Learns to Yield

Jeremiah 7:23-28

23 But this command I gave them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.'

24 But they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward.

25 From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day.

26 Yet they did not listen to me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

27 "So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you.

28 And you shall say to them, 'This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their lips.'

Psalms 95:1-2, 6-11

1 Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

Today, if you hear his voice,

8 do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
9 when your fathers put me to the test
and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.
10 For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,
and they have not known my ways."
11 Therefore I swore in my wrath,
"They shall not enter my rest."

Luke 11:14-23

14 Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled.

15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,"

16 while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls.

Mar-12 A Faith That Learns to Yield

18 And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

19 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.

20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe;

22 but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.

23 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.”



Mar-13 *The Courage to Face the Cross*

Hosea 14:2-10

2 Take with you words
and return to the LORD;
say to him,

“Take away all iniquity;
accept what is good,
and we will pay with bulls
the vows of our lips.

3 Assyria shall not save us;
we will not ride on horses;
and we will say no more, ‘Our God,’
to the work of our hands.
In you the orphan finds mercy.”

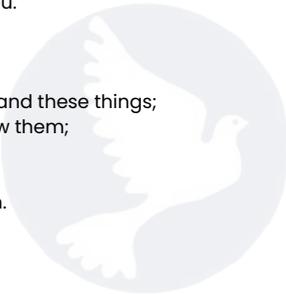
4 I will heal their apostasy;
I will love them freely,
for my anger has turned from them.

5 I will be like the dew to Israel;
he shall blossom like the lily;
he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon;
6 his shoots shall spread out;
his beauty shall be like the olive,
and his fragrance like Lebanon.

7 They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow;
they shall flourish like the grain;
they shall blossom like the vine;
their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

8 O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols?
It is I who answer and look after you.
I am like an evergreen cypress;
from me comes your fruit.

9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things;
whoever is discerning, let him know them;
for the ways of the LORD are right,
and the upright walk in them,
but transgressors stumble in them.





Mar-13 The Courage to Face the Cross

Psalm 81:6-11, 14-16

6 "I relieved your shoulder of the burden;
your hands were freed from the basket.
7 In distress you called, and I delivered you;
I answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah
8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!
9 There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.
10 I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 "But my people did not listen to my voice;
Israel would not submit to me.

14 "Oh, that my people would listen to me,
that Israel would walk in my ways!
15 I would soon subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their foes.
16 Those who hate the LORD would cringe toward him,
and their fate would last forever.
But he would feed you with the finest of the wheat,
and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you."

Mark 12:28-34

28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"
29 Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.'
30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'
31 The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."
32 And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him.
33 And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."
34 And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.



Mar-14 The Builder's Patience

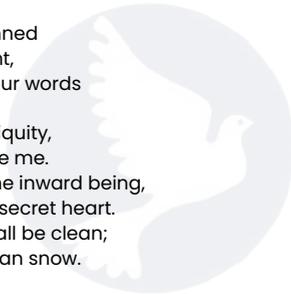
Hosea 6:1-6

1 "Come, let us return to the LORD;
for he has torn us, that he may heal us;
he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.
2 After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.
3 Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD;
his going out is sure as the dawn;
he will come to us as the showers,
as the spring rains that water the earth."

4 What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes early away.
5 Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets;
I have slain them by the words of my mouth,
and my judgment goes forth as the light.
6 For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Psalms 51

¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your ²abundant mercy
³blot out my transgressions.
² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and ³cleanse me from my sin!
³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil ⁴in your sight,
⁵so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in ⁶the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
⁷ Purge me ⁷with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
⁸wash me, and I shall be ⁸whiter than snow.
⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
⁹let the bones ⁹that you have broken rejoice.



Mar-14 The Builder's Patience

⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.
¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
¹⁶ For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
¹⁸ Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;
¹⁹ then will you delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Luke 18:9-14

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:
10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.
11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.
12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.'
13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'
14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Mar-15 4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare / Mothering Sunday)

1 Samuel 16:1-13

David Anointed King

16 The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." 2 And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' 3 And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you." 4 Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" 5 And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." 7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." 8 Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." 9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." 10 And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." 11 Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, [a] but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him, for we will not sit down till he comes here." 12 And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he." 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

Psalm 23

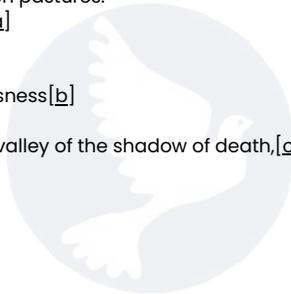
1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters. [a]

3 He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness [b]
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, [c]
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.





Mar-15 4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare / Mothering Sunday)

6 Surely [d] goodness and mercy [e] shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell [f] in the house of the Lord
forever. [g]
Ephesians 5:8-14

8 For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light
9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),
10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.
11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.
12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.
13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,
14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,
"Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

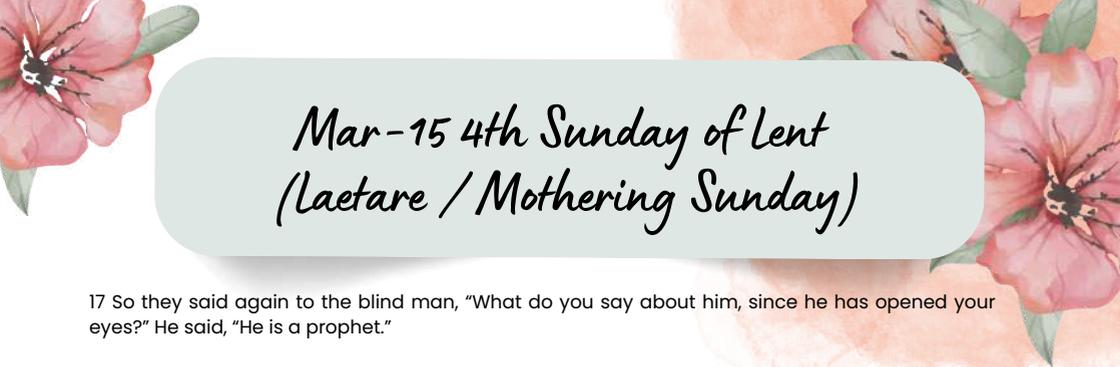
John 9:1-41

1 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.
2 And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
3 Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.
4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.
5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."
6 Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud
7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?"
9 Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."
10 So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?"
11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight."
12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.
14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.
15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."
16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.





Mar-15 4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare / Mothering Sunday)

17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight

19 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

20 His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

21 But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

22 (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)

23 Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

25 He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

26 They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

27 He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

28 And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from."

30 The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.

32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

34 They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

36 He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"

37 Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you."

38 He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

39 Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."

40 Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?"

41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."



Mar-16 Hope That Brings Healing

Isaiah 65:17-21

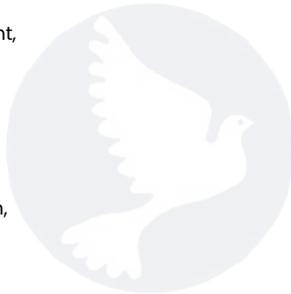
17 "For behold, I create new heavens
and a new earth,
and the former things shall not be remembered
or come into mind.
18 But be glad and rejoice forever
in that which I create;
for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy,
and her people to be a gladness.
19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem
and be glad in my people;
no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping
and the cry of distress.
20 No more shall there be in it
an infant who lives but a few days,
or an old man who does not fill out his days,
for the young man shall die a hundred years old,
and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.
21 They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

Psalms 30:1-5, 8-12 (end)

1 I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.
2 O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.
3 O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

4 Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.
5 For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

8 To you, O LORD, I cry,
and to the Lord I plead for mercy:
9 "What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?
10 Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me!
O LORD, be my helper!"
11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
you have loosed my sackcloth
and clothed me with gladness,
12 that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!



Mar-16 Hope That Brings Healing

John 4:43-54

43 After the two days he departed for Galilee.

44 (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.)

45 So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast, for they too had gone to the feast.

46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill.

47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

48 So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe."

49 The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."

50 Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way.

51 As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering.

52 So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

53 The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household.

54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.



Mar-17 Mercy Beyond Measure

Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12

1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar.

2 Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side.

3 Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep.

4 Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep.

5 Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through.

6 And he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he led me back along the bank of the river.

7 As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other.

8 And he said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh.

9 And wherever the river goes every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes.

12 And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.

Psalms 46

1 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth give way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,

3 though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.

6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.

Mar-17 Mercy Beyond Measure

7 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah
8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,
how he has brought desolations on the earth.

9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the chariots with fire.

10 "Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!"

11 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

John 5:1-16

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five
roofed colonnades.
3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.
5 One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.
6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to
him, "Do you want to be healed?"
7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up,
and while I am going another steps down before me."
8 Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk."
9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath.

10 So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to
take up your bed."
11 But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and
walk.'"
12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'"
13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was
a crowd in the place.
14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that
nothing worse may happen to you."
15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.
16 And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the
Sabbath.



Mar-18 Strength in Waiting

Isaiah 49:8-15

8 Thus says the LORD:

"In a time of favor I have answered you;
in a day of salvation I have helped you;

I will keep you and give you
as a covenant to the people,
to establish the land,

to apportion the desolate heritages,
9 saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,'
to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.'

They shall feed along the ways;
on all bare heights shall be their pasture;
10 they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.

11 And I will make all my mountains a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.

12 Behold, these shall come from afar,
and behold, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene."

13 Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the LORD has comforted his people
and will have compassion on his afflicted.

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me."

15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child,
that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you."

Psalms 145:8-19

8 The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

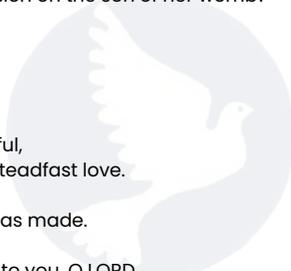
9 The LORD is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.

10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,
and all your saints shall bless you!

11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power,

12 to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations





Mar-18 Strength in Waiting

14 The LORD upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.
15 The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
16 You open your hand;
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways
and kind in all his works.
18 The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
19 He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;
he also hears their cry and saves them.

John 5:17–30

17 But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”

Jesus Is Equal with God

18 This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

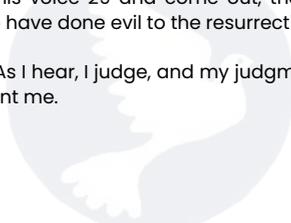
The Authority of the Son

19 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father [a] does, that the Son does likewise. 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. 21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

25 “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Witnesses to Jesus

30 “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.



Mar-19 St Joseph, the Builder of Trust

2 Samuel 7:4-16

4 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan,

5 "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in?

6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling.

7 In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

8 Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel.

9 And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,

11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

14 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men,

15 but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.

16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.'

Psalms 89:26-36

26 He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'

27 And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

28 My steadfast love I will keep for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.

29 I will establish his offspring forever and his throne as the days of the heavens.

30 If his children forsake my law and do not walk according to my rules,

31 if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments,

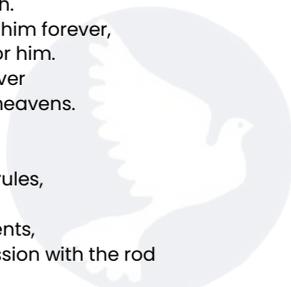
32 then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes,

33 but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness.

34 I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips.

35 Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David.

36 His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me.



Mar-19 St Joseph, the Builder of Trust

Romans 4:13–18

The Promise Realized Through Faith

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18 In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”

Matthew 1:16, 18–21, 24

16 and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ^[e] took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed^[f] to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,





Mar-20 Compassion That Costs Something

Jeremiah 26:8-11

8 And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die! 9 Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, "This house shall be glike Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, gwithout inhabitant?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

10 When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the Lord and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the Lord. 11 Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death, because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears."

Psalms 34:15-22

15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.

16 The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

1 After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand.

10 But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private.

25 Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, "Is not this the man whom they seek to kill?"

26 And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ?

27 But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from."

28 So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, "You know me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know.

29 I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me."

30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.





Mar-21 Returning to Joy

Jeremiah 11:18-20

18 The LORD made it known to me and I knew;
then you showed me their deeds.

19 But I was like a gentle lamb
led to the slaughter.

I did not know it was against me
they devised schemes, saying,
"Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
let us cut him off from the land of the living,
that his name be remembered no more."

20 But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously,
who tests the heart and the mind,
let me see your vengeance upon them,
for to you have I committed my cause.

Psalms 7:1-2, 8-11

1 O LORD my God, in you do I take refuge;
save me from all my pursuers and deliver me,
2 lest like a lion they tear my soul apart,
rending it in pieces, with none to deliver.

8 The LORD judges the peoples;
judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness
and according to the integrity that is in me.

9 Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
and may you establish the righteous—

you who test the minds and hearts,
O righteous God!

10 My shield is with God,
who saves the upright in heart.

11 God is a righteous judge,
and a God who feels indignation every day.

John 7:40-52

40 When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This really is the Prophet."

41 Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee?"

42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from
Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

43 So there was a division among the people over him.

44 Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not
bring him?"

46 The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!"

47 The Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived?"

48 Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him?"

49 But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

50 Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them,

51 "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?"

52 They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee."



Mar-22 5th Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday)

Ezekiel 37:1-14

1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones.

2 And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.

3 And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know."

4 Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

5 Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.

6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

8 And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them.

9 Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live."

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

11 Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.'

12 Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.

13 And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.

14 And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.

Psalms 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD!

2 O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

3 If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,

O Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,

that you may be feared.

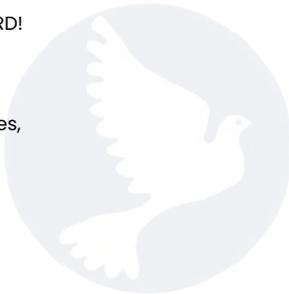
5 I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

6 my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the LORD!

For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.

8 And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.





Mar-22 5th Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday)

Romans 8:6-11

6 For the mind that is set on the flesh is death, but the mind that is set on the Spirit is life and peace.

7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

John 11:1-45

1 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.

3 So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

4 But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6 So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

7 Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?"

9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

11 After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.

14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died,

15 and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

16 So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

17 Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

18 Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off,

19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.

20 So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.

21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."



Mar-22 5th Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday)

24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

29 And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him.

30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him.

31 When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

35 Jesus wept.

36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

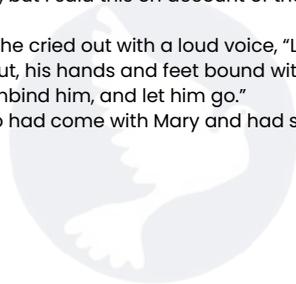
41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me."

43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out."

44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him.



Mar-23 A Heart That Yields

Susanna 1:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62

(Daniel 13)

1 There was a man living in Babylon whose name was Joakim.

2 And he took a wife named Susanna, the daughter of Hilkiah, a very beautiful woman and one who feared the Lord.

3 Her parents were righteous and had taught their daughter according to the law of Moses.

4 Joakim was very rich, and had a spacious garden adjoining his house; and the Jews used to come to him because he was the most honored of them all.

5 That year two elders from the people were appointed as judges. Of them the Lord said, "Wickedness came out of Babylon from elders who were judges, who were supposed to govern the people."

6 These men were frequently at Joakim's house, and all who had a case to be tried came to them there.

7 When the people departed at noon, Susanna would go into her husband's garden to walk.

8 The two elders used to see her going in every day and walking about, and they began to desire her.

9 They suppressed their consciences and turned away their eyes from looking to Heaven or remembering righteous judgments.

15 Once, while they were watching for an opportune day, she went in as before with only two maids.

16 She wished to bathe in the garden, for it was hot.

17 And no one was there except the two elders, who had hidden themselves and were watching her.

19 When the maids had gone out, the two elders rose and ran to her.

20 They said, "Look, the garden gates are shut, and no one can see us. We desire you, so give your consent and lie with us.

21 If you refuse, we will testify against you that a young man was with you, and this was why you sent your maids away."

22 Susanna sighed deeply and said, "I am hemmed in on every side. If I do this, it is death for me; if I do not, I cannot escape your hands.

23 But it is better for me to fall into your hands than to sin in the sight of the Lord."

24 Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and the two elders shouted against her.

25 One of them ran and opened the garden gate.

26 When the household servants heard the shouting in the garden, they rushed in at the side gate to see what had happened.

27 When the elders told their tale, the servants were greatly ashamed, for nothing like this had ever been said about Susanna.

28 The next day, when the people gathered at the house of her husband Joakim, the two elders came, full of their wicked plot to put Susanna to death.

29 They said before the people, "Send for Susanna, the daughter of Hilkiah, the wife of Joakim."

30 So they sent for her. And she came with her parents, her children, and all her relatives.

33 Now Susanna was exceedingly delicate and beautiful.

34 As she was veiled, the wicked men ordered her to be unveiled, that they might feast their eyes on her beauty.



Mar-23 A Heart That Yields

35 But her family and friends and all who saw her wept.

36 Then the two elders stood up in the midst of the people and laid their hands upon her head.

37 And she, weeping, looked up toward heaven, for her heart trusted in the Lord.

38 The elders said, "As we were walking in the garden alone, this woman came in with two maids, shut the garden gates, and dismissed the maids.

39 Then a young man who was hidden there came and lay with her.

40 We saw them embracing each other, but when we rushed toward them, he left her and escaped.

41 But we seized this woman and asked her who the young man was, and she would not tell us.

42 These things we testify." Because they were elders of the people and judges, the assembly believed them.

43 And Susanna was condemned to death.

44 Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice and said, "O eternal God, who discern what is secret, who are aware of all things before they come to be,

45 you know that these men have borne false witness against me. And now I am to die, even though I have done none of the things that these men have wickedly invented against me."

46 The Lord heard her cry.

47 And as she was being led away to be put to death, God stirred up the holy spirit of a young lad named Daniel,

48 and he cried out with a loud voice, "I am innocent of the blood of this woman."

49 All the people turned to him and said, "What is this that you have said?"

50 Taking his stand among them, he said, "Are you such fools, you sons of Israel, to condemn a daughter of Israel without examination and without learning the facts?

51 Return to the place of judgment, for these men have borne false witness against her."

52 Then all the people hurried back, and the elders said to him, "Come, sit among us and inform us, for God has given you the standing of an elder."

53 And Daniel said to them, "Separate them far from each other, and I will examine them."

54 When they were separated, he summoned one of them and said to him, "You old relic of wicked days, your sins have now come home,

55 which you have committed in the past, pronouncing unjust judgments, condemning the innocent and acquitting the guilty, though the Lord said, 'You shall not put to death an innocent and righteous person.'

56 Now then, if you really saw her, tell me this: Under what tree did you see them being intimate with each other?"

He answered, "Under a mastic tree."

57 And Daniel said, "Very well! You have lied against your own head, for the angel of God has received the sentence from God and will immediately cut you in two."

58 Then he put him aside and commanded them to bring the other.

59 And he said to him, "You offspring of Canaan and not of Judah, beauty has deceived you and lust has perverted your heart.

Mar-23 A Heart That Yields

60 This is how you have been dealing with the daughters of Israel, and they were intimate with you through fear; but a daughter of Judah did not tolerate your wickedness.

61 Now then, tell me: Under what tree did you catch them being intimate with each other?" He answered, "Under an evergreen oak."

62 And Daniel said to him, "Very well! You have also lied against your own head, for the angel of God is waiting with a sword to split you in two, so as to destroy you both."

63 Then the whole assembly shouted loudly and blessed God, who saves those who hope in him.

64 And they rose against the two elders, for Daniel had convicted them of false witness out of their own mouths.

65 According to the law of Moses they did to them as they had wickedly planned to do to their neighbor; they put them to death.

66 Thus innocent blood was saved that day.

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.[a]

3 He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness[b]
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,[c]
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

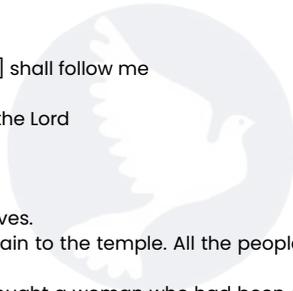
6 Surely[d] goodness and mercy[e] shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell[f] in the house of the Lord
forever.[g]

John 8:1-11

1 but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them.

3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst



Mar-23 A Heart That Yields

4 they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery.

5 Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?"

6 This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.

7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her."

8 And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground.

9 But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.

10 Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."



Mar-24 Trusting God in the Furnace

Daniel 3:14–20, 24–25, 28

14 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up?"

15 Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?"

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.

17 If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

18 But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated.

20 And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

25 He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

28 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God."

Psalms 25:3–9

3 Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

4 Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.

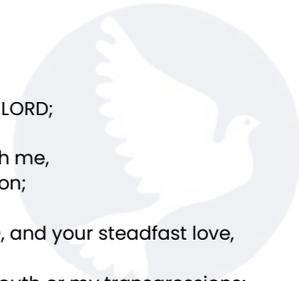
5 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.

6 Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

7 Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

8 Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

9 He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.





Mar-24 Trusting God in the Furnace

John 8:31-42

The Truth Will Set You Free

31 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." 33 They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave[a] to sin. 35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. 37 I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. 38 I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father."

You Are of Your Father the Devil

39 They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, 40 but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. 41 You are doing the works your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me.





Mar-25 The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Isaiah 7:10-14

10 Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz:

11 "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven."

12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test."

13 And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also?"

14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Psalms 40:5-10

5 You have multiplied, O LORD my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;
none can compare with you!

I will proclaim and tell of them,
yet they are more than can be told.

6 In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted,
but you have given me an open ear.
Burnt offering and sin offering
you have not required.

7 Then I said, "Behold, I have come;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me:

8 I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."

9 I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
behold, I have not restrained my lips,
as you know, O LORD.

10 I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

Hebrews 10:4-10

4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,
"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;

6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

7 Then I said, "Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book."

8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law),
9 then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will."

He does away with the first in order to establish the second.

10 And by that will we have been sanctified
through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.



Mar-25 The Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Luke 1:26-38

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,
27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"

29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,

33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

34 And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

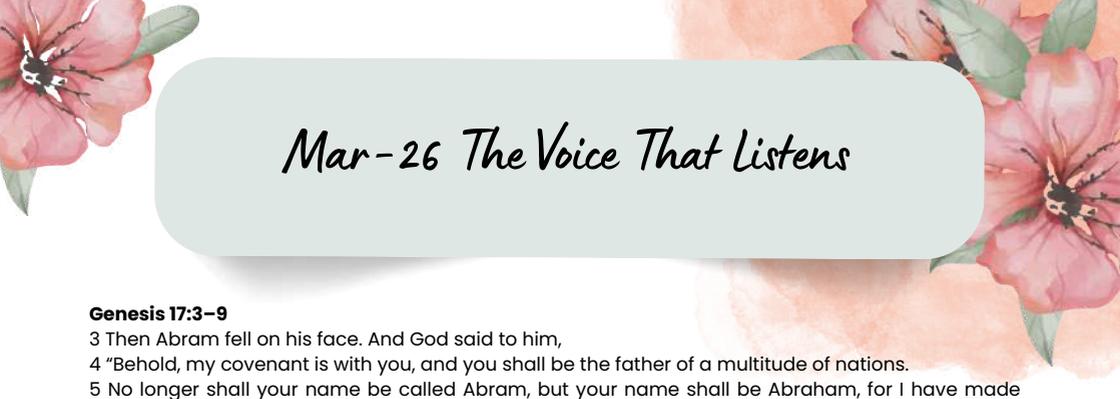
35 And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

36 And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.

37 For nothing will be impossible with God."

38 And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.





Mar-26 The Voice That Listens

Genesis 17:3-9

3 Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him,

4 "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

8 And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

9 And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations."

Psalms 105:4-9

4 Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually!

5 Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

6 O offspring of Abraham, his servant,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

7 He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

8 He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

9 the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,

John 8:51-59

51 "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

52 The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, 'If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.'"

53 Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?"

54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'"

55 But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad."

57 So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?"

58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.



Mar-27 The Cost of Obedience

Jeremiah 20:10-13

10 For I hear many whispering,
Terror is on every side!
"Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"
say all my close friends,
watching for my fall.
"Perhaps he will be deceived;
then we can overcome him
and take our revenge on him."

11 But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble;
they will not overcome me.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.

12 O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous,
who sees the heart and the mind,
let me see your vengeance upon them,
for to you have I committed my cause.

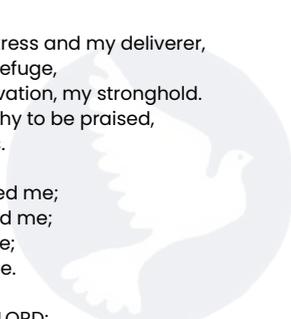
13 Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hand of evildoers.

Psalms 18:1-7

1 I love you, O LORD, my strength.
2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
3 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.

4 The cords of death encompassed me;
the torrents of destruction assailed me;
5 The cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD;
to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears



Mar-27 The Cost of Obedience

7 Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations also of the mountains trembled
and quaked, because he was angry.

John 10:31-42

31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?"

33 The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."

34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'?"

35 If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—

36 do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

37 If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me;

38 but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

39 Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

40 He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained.

41 And many came to him. And they said, "John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true."

42 And many believed in him there.





Mar-28 The Seed That Dies to Multiply

Ezekiel 37:21-end

21 Then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them into their own land.

22 And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms.

23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

24 My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.

25 They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever.

26 I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore.

27 My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

28 Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.

Psalms 85:8-13

8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to folly.

9 Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

11 Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

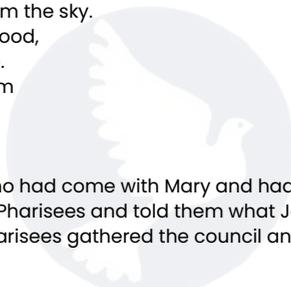
12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

13 Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way.

John 11:45-56

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him,
46 but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we to do? For this man performs many signs.



Mar-28 The Seed That Dies to Multiply

48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”

49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all. 50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.”

51 He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

52 and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

53 So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

54 Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples.

55 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.

56 They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that he will not come to the feast at all?”



Mar-29 Palm Sunday

(Liturgy of the Palms)

Matthew 21:1-11

1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.

3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."

4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 "Say to the daughter of Zion,
'Behold, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them.

7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them.

8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting,
"Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?"

11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-end

1 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

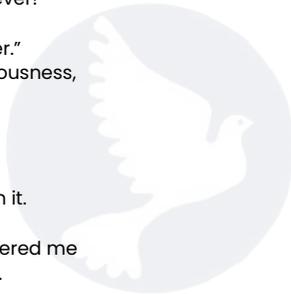
2 Let Israel say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.[b]





Mar-29 Palm Sunday

23 This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save us, we pray, O Lord!

O Lord, we pray, give us success!

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We bless you from the house of the Lord.

27 The Lord is God,
and he has made his light to shine upon us.
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God; I will extol you.

29 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!



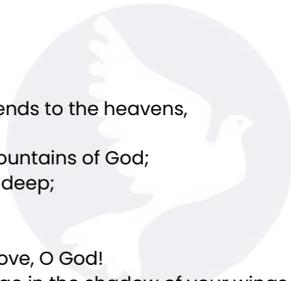
Mar-30 Monday of Holy Week

Isaiah 42:1-9

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
3 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.
5 Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
6 "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
a light for the nations,
7 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
8 I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to carved idols.
9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them."

Psalms 36:5-11

5 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
your judgments are like the great deep;
man and beast you save, O LORD.
7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
8 They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light do we see light.





Mar-30 Monday of Holy Week

10 Oh, continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your righteousness to the upright of heart!
11 Let not the foot of arrogance come upon me,
nor the hand of the wicked drive me away.

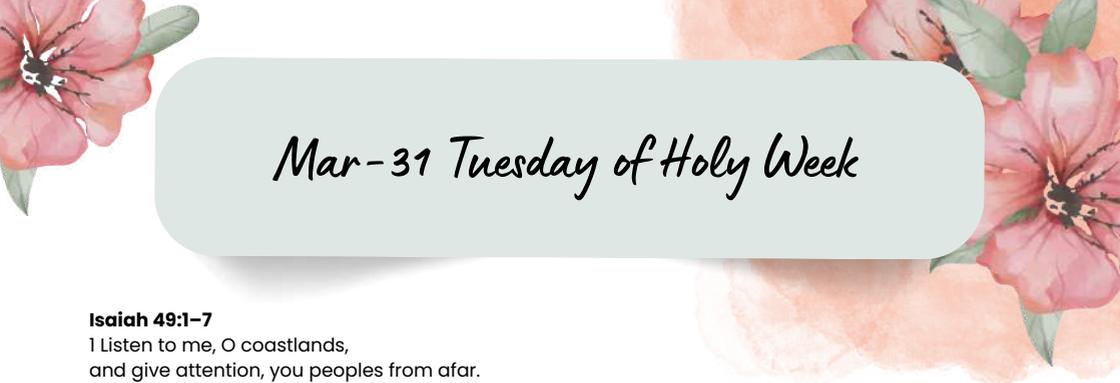
Hebrews 9:11–15

11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation)
12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.
13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh,
14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.
15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

John 12:1–11

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.
2 So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.
3 Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.
4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said,
5 “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?”
6 He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.
7 Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial.
8 For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”
9 When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.
10 So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well,
11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.





Mar-31 Tuesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Listen to me, O coastlands,
and give attention, you peoples from afar.
The LORD called me from the womb,
from the body of my mother he named my name.

2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow;
in his quiver he hid me away.

3 And he said to me, "You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

4 But I said, "I have labored in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my right is with the LORD,
and my recompense with my God."

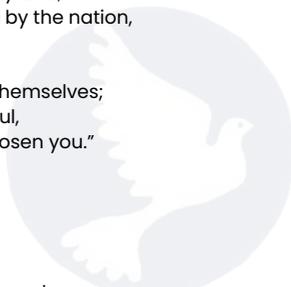
5 And now the LORD says,
he who formed me from the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him;
and that Israel might be gathered to him—
for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
6 he says:

"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

7 Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation,
the servant of rulers:

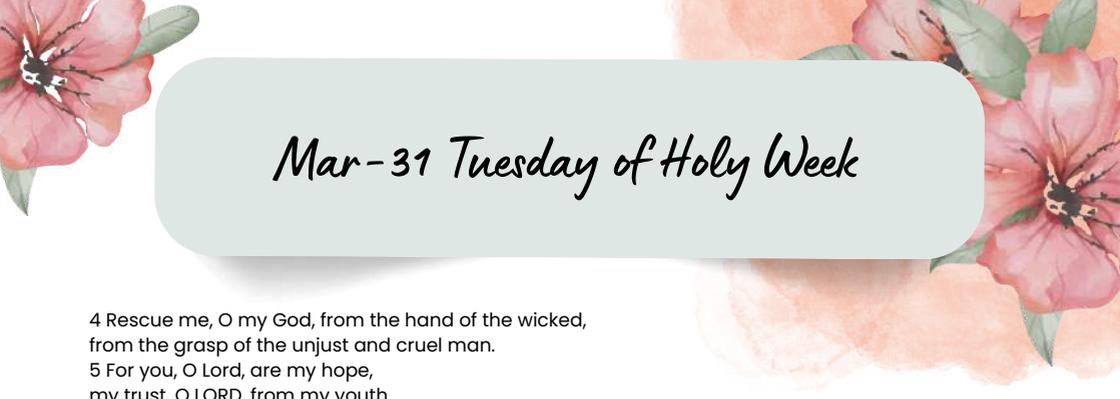
"Kings shall see and arise;
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves;
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

Psalms 71:1-14



1 In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame!
2 In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;
incline your ear to me, and save me!
3 Be to me a rock of refuge,
to which I may continually come;
you have given the command to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.





Mar-31 Tuesday of Holy Week

4 Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.

5 For you, O Lord, are my hope,
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

6 Upon you I have leaned from before my birth;
you are he who took me from my mother's womb.
My praise is continually of you.

7 I have been as a portent to many,
but you are my strong refuge.

8 My mouth is filled with your praise,
and with your glory all the day.

9 Do not cast me off in the time of old age;
forsake me not when my strength is spent.

10 For my enemies speak concerning me;
those who watch for my life consult together

11 and say, "God has forsaken him;
pursue and seize him,
for there is none to deliver him."

12 O God, be not far from me;
O my God, make haste to help me!

13 May my accusers be put to shame and consumed;
with scorn and disgrace may they be covered
who seek my hurt.

14 But I will hope continually
and will praise you yet more and more.

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Christ the Wisdom and Power of God

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach [a] to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.



Mar-31 Tuesday of Holy Week

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, [b] not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being [c] might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him [d] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."
John 12:20-36

Some Greeks Seek Jesus

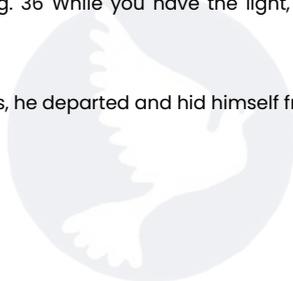
20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. 21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22 Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23 And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up

27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 29 The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 30 Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. 32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." 33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. 34 So the crowd answered him, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" 35 So Jesus said to them, "The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

The Unbelief of the People

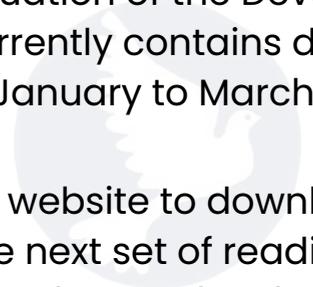
When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.





Continuation of the Devotional

This devotional currently contains daily readings from
January to March.



Please visit the POCC website to download the continuation
of this devotional. The next set of readings will be uploaded
in subsequent batches as they become available.

