November 17

Ezra

The Exiles Return

Persia took over the city of Babylon and – Read: Ezra 1:1-4.

The Jews did return and the Temple was rebuilt but not without opposition from Samaria and Darius the succeeding emperor of Persia. The Temple was dedicated and Passover once again celebrated - Read: Ezra 6:22.

Ezra was related to Aaron and was an expert in the Law of Moses. Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, reorganized the Levites, lead the people in prayer and rituals he also ended intermarriages between Jews and foreigners.

We may exile ourselves from the throne of God but we need only to see forgiveness to return, God is always there and always will love and forgive us, it is up to us to remain constant in our love and faith.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Ezra 10:11

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to keep my body, your Temple, cleansed and dedicated to what pleases you, O Lord.

November 18

Job

The Suffering Faithful

Job was a very righteous man, he served God – Read: Job 1:11, 12.

All of Job’s children were killed; most of his servants and all the animals were either killed or stolen. Job grieved but – Read: Job 1:21.

Satan was allowed to have sores break out on Job’s body but Job remained faithful his friends even his wife wanted him to curse God and die.

Job, after much grief and suffering was finally restored to his original health and was blessed more in the last part of his life than he was in the first part!

That seems to be the way in our lives, we have many blessings but when disaster strikes we’re down but if we don’t lose faith we can bounce back and find our lives even more blessed than before and our faith stronger.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Job 1:22

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to know that you are Lord in both good and bad times, remembering to always praise your name.

November 19

Psalms

The Psalmist

All the religious poems, known as Psalms, were not written by David, but many were written by him as he looked after his father’s sheep. The Psalms deal with prayer, worship and praise of all kinds.

David did write one to the most beloved Psalms: Psalm 23: Two person reading:

1The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (*When the Lord is our keeper we have all our needs)*

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. *(The Lord gives us rest and peace.)*

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. *(The Lord forgives and guides us through our lives if we call on his name.)*

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. *(With the Lord no evil can hurt us, we need not be afraid of anything not even death)*

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. *(The Lord gives us success in front of evil people, we are accepted has His people and we are blessed.)*

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. *(Goodness and mercy will be ours if we follow the Lord and we will spend eternity with Him.)* Psalm 23 KJV Italics and () added.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Psalm 119:105.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, to always know there is strength and comfort in your Word and guide me to the selection that will help me in each time of need.

November 20

Proverbs

Everyday Living

The Proverbs were written by many writers, but Solomon in his God given wisdom wrote many proverbs for everyday living:

Love, hate and honesty – Read: Proverbs 10:12, 29

Kindness, cruelty and generosity – Read: Proverbs 11:17, 25.

Rewards and truth – Read: Proverbs 12:14, 17

Child Discipline – Read: Proverbs 13:24

Plans – Read: Proverbs 19:21

Nagging wife – Read: Proverbs 21:9

Reward for humility and fear of the Lord – Read: Proverbs 22:4

Success with confession– Read: Proverbs 28:13

Trust in God – Read: Proverbs 29:25

VERSE FOR TODAY: Proverbs 14:34

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank-you, O Lord, for Solomon’s wisdom and the Holy Bible so I can make use of his wisdom in my life.

November 21

Isaiah

What a Prophet!

Isaiah recalls when he saw the Lord – Read: Isaiah 6:1, 5.

One of the winged creatures that surrounded the Lord took a glowing coal from the altar and touched Isaiah’s lips – Read: Isaiah 6:7b.

Isaiah prophesied for Israel through the pre-destruction, the exile and the reconstruction of Jerusalem with warnings, encouragement, promises and hope.

Isaiah brought the sign to King Ahaz, a hope that there was a brighter future for Israel – Read: Isaiah 7:14.

Isaiah went beyond the birth of Christ in his prophesy, he even went into our future – Read: Isaiah 65:17.

God gave Isaiah great divine insight to span many centuries; we don’t seem to have that kind of insight but we can be secure in the fact that God keeps his promises, Immanuel was born!

VERSE FOR TODAY: Isaiah 6:8

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, help me to be as eager as Isaiah to serve you.

November 22

Thanksgiving

Only Once a Year?

How often do we really give thanks to the Lord? Not just for food a plenty but for everything: Home, clothes, and above all life itself. We need to be in daily even hourly thankful prayer to God for everything in our lives – Read: Ephesians 5:20. As you sit down to your Thanksgiving meal make a resolution to be thankful throughout the year.

We so often forget who makes the job, the money, food and every facet of life possible; we forget it is God, if these things were not in his will for us they would not be. We have to work and earn but God gives us healthy bodies to provide a living. On the other hand there are many people who are not healthy but God still provides in some way or takes them home to be with him.

Sometimes a simple thank-you is the hardest thing to say, we must say it with a sincere heart, a heart in tune with god’s love.

Remember- Read: I Thessalonians 5:17 and Colossians 4:2.

We are not to be selfish in our praying and pray only for ourselves but to thank the Lord for friends and pray for them as well. We must never forget to thank God for his Son, who died on Calvary and rose again to give us our eternal hope of heaven.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Psalm 106:1

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I always be thankful to you for everything, all the time and especially for your Son.

November 23

Jeremiah

God’s Chosen Person

Jeremiah was one of the prophets that God sent to warn Israel and Judah of impending fate if they did not change their ways.

Jeremiah recalls his calling – Read: Jeremiah 1:4, 5.

We are chosen before our birth too as children of God, but yet we have the free choice to reject or accept Christ, the call is there if we only accept it!

Jeremiah answered that he was too young for such a calling, but the Lord disagreed and promised to be with him – Read Jeremiah 1:9.

Jeremiah was given the words to speak and the protection of the Lord to withstand the rejection and hatred of all the people.

When witnessing to others we must depend on the Holy Spirit to guide us to the right choice of words and many times silence and radiating live is the best witness.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Jeremiah 1:8

PRAYER THOUGHT: What peace you have given me, O Lord, just to know you are always there to protect and guide me. Help me to plant the seeds of your love and salvation so that people will accept and not reject your salvation.

November 24

Lamentations

Sorrow and Hope

The book of Lamentations is the mourning of a nation after the destruction of Jerusalem, its cultural and religious capital – Read: Lamentations 2:13.

The people remember – Read: Lamentations 3:25-27.

Through the despair, death and disgrace the people pray for mercy- Read: Lamentations 5:1 and 21.

The course of this nation can be quiet like our own lives in Christ; God chooses us, we accept him, not without shortcomings but basically we stay with God. Then our lives prosper and good things start to happen, we think we can do it all on our own and abandon God. All hope is not lost; the Lord is patiently waiting for our prayer to be forgiven.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Lamentations 3:24

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to stay on a steady course and not to stray from your protective love.