

FAITH BIBLE READING

Dec 3-9, 2018

At Faith Baptist Fellowship, we ***Love God's Word and Prayer*** (Ephesians 6:17-18)! Take the 'sword of the Spirit' (God's Word) and persevere in prayer! In this year, ask God each day to speak directly to you from the Scripture portions you read.

Our plan for 2018 will be taken from the Discipleship Journal Bible Reading Plan. Monday-Saturday we will focus on one main devotional passage; the additional readings will keep you on track to finish the entire Bible in one year. On Sunday, we will have a passage from the upcoming Sunday sermon along with questions for Faith Group discussion.

We suggest having a notebook and pen for answering questions and recording your thoughts/insights. Bring this notebook with you to Faith Group for discussions and prayer times. Select a quiet place and consistent time to read and pray.

Abbreviations: **TAI** – Think About It | **PP** – Prayer Points

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3

Read Hosea 7-8

TAI: The report of Israel's sin and "adultery" against God continues. Various images are used to describe this: what are they? Instead of turning to God for help, they turn to Egypt and Assyria (7:10-11). God offers help and redemption to his people; how do they respond? Chapter 8:4-6 vividly describes the sin of idolatry and how it offends God, and v. 7a offers a timeless turn of phrase used to this day. The sad truth is that judgement from God awaits the people of God, who have become proud and empty in worship.

PP: Confess to God the sin of pride. Ask God to help you discern when idolatry is harming your walk with him (anything that usurps his place of preeminence in your life). Confess to God the pride and sin of idolatry in our own nation. Ask him to revive his church and send spiritual awakening to our needy nation. Pray that our worship would be deeply heartfelt and center on Jesus Christ and the gospel.

The past few weeks have been a hard season of loss and grief for so many. Pray for Sharon Hunt and her family, for Kay Odle and her family, and for the family of Harald Gruber. God grant peace!

Additional readings: John 14:22-32; Revelation 2:1-17; Job 25-26

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4

Read Hosea 9-12

TAI: The painful poetry of Hosea continues, with God's unfaithful people portrayed as a whore. The previous themes are stated again and again, with idolatry and conspiracy with nations portrayed as harlotry. Note the extensive use of metaphors and images, used to strike at the heart of the reader. Do you see any glimmers of hope? The only hope is in true repentance (see 10:12) and the prophetic hope of a son who will come out of Egypt (11:1, cf Matthew 2:15). How and why is Jacob's story woven into the drama in ch. 12?

PP: There is hope for those who defy God and disobey him. That hope is repentance and faith, turning back to God and trusting him. Tell God that you desire to be fully restored to him today. Let him know that you desire nothing short of his full blessing and grace. Hosea describes a sad scene of a people out of fellowship with their God; tell God that you desire just the opposite; that through Jesus Christ you want to live the faithful life of a committed disciple.

Additional readings: John 15:1-8; Revelation 2:18-29; Job 27

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5

Read Hosea 13-14

TAI: As the theme of idolatry and rebellion against God continues, we read the stark warnings of vv. 4 and 6: "besides me there is no savior" and "therefore they forgot me." What a tragedy to forget your only savior! Yet again slight glimmers of hope shine through, including the familiar words of 13:14. Where are these words used later in the New Testament to grant us hope in Christ? The wise are those who turn from idols and trust only in the Lord (14:8-9) and walk with him—echoes of the NT gospel of Jesus Christ!

PP: Daily we have been reading about the troubles of Israel when they forget their true God and embrace worldly idols. Rejoice in great hope for a faithful God who will deliver, and ultimately does so by sending his Son "out of Egypt" to save us! Rejoice that in Christ for the believer death has lost its sting and the grave cannot hold us (I Cor. 15). Pray for loved ones or friends who are not walking with God, who remain for now in the grip of idolatry. Ask God to deliver!

Additional Readings: John 15:9-17; Revelation 3:1-13; Job 28

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

Read Joel 1

TAI: Elders are to teach the truth of this book to their children, indicating that this book is a form of wisdom literature (Sailhamer). The heartache of a devastating locust plague is symbolic of great need for the people to forsake their sin and turn for help and hope to God. What are the “elders” to do in light of this plague (v. 14)? What is a solemn assembly? The “day of the Lord” is near, and now is the time for God’s people to humble themselves and seek him.

PP: When is the time for God’s people to humble themselves, pray, even fast and pray and seek the help and hope of the living God? Now is the time! Anytime! Read James 4:6-10 and pray the truths of that classic passage back to God. Tell God that now we have a famine of the Bible in our land, and we are in need of his Holy Spirit to convict and move and bring awakening! How we need in our nation an awakening to the truth of God’s word. How we need to pray!

Additional Readings: John 15:18-27; Revelation 3:14-22; Job 29

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

Read Joel 2-3

TAI: The day of the Lord in Joel “would soon come as an invasion that overtook the land by surprise” (Sailhamer). It is God sending an invading force to bring judgement upon his people. As v. 11 says, who can endure it? Yet, repentance is possible! Rend your hearts and turn to God. Note the character of God as described in v. 13—memorize it! Our great hope in the coming judgment of God is his mercy and his promise to pour out his Holy Spirit (vv. 28-29), which he did at Pentecost (Acts 2). Ultimately, God will judge the nations which have troubled Israel (Joel 3).

PP: And so, we have hope, for we have seen our Savior and Messiah—Jesus Christ! And we have received the Holy Spirit God promised. So, we do not fear the Day of the Lord, but long for it, for then we shall be with the Lord forever. “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Pray a prayer of thanks and praise to God!

Additional Readings: John 16:1-11; Revelation 4; Job 30

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

Read Amos 1-2

TAI: The shepherd from Tekoa was called by God to prophesy “fearful words of impending doom” concerning King Jeroboam and the soon to be exiled people of God (Sailhamer). “Within the book itself, Amos stressed the moral ruin of God’s people and their mistaken assumption that since they were the elect, nothing bad could happen to them.” In these first two chapters, God delivers a series of consequences to both their neighbors, then to Judah and Israel. What iniquities of Israel are condemned by the writer? What can we learn from God’s judgement on these sins?

PP: Presumption is a terribly dangerous thing. For Judah and Israel to presume that God would not touch them was mistaken and led to disaster. Ask the Father to keep you from presumption, assuming blessing in spite of sin and abundance no matter what. Thank God for his grace in Christ and for the presence and daily help of the Holy Spirit. Tell God of your desire to walk in a manner worthy of your calling in Jesus Christ and to be filled with the Holy Spirit. What’s on your agenda today? Tell the Father, and ask for his divine help.

Additional Readings: John 16:12-24; Revelation 5; Job 31:1-23

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

Read John 1:1-13

TAI & PP: We continue our Advent focus on the LIGHT. Last Sunday Dave V and Jayson proclaimed the prophetic promise of the LIGHT from Isaiah, and today we will announce the coming of the LIGHT, the incarnation of Jesus Christ as the LIGHT of the world. Who came as a witness but was not the LIGHT? What amazing fact about the LIGHT is stated in v. 10? Verses 12-14 are wonderful truths to memorize and hold in your heart this Christmas season.

Pray the truth of this marvelous passage, a prayer of praise to God for sending Jesus his Son as the LIGHT, and a prayer of thanks to God for your salvation through faith in Christ. Hallelujah, what a Savior!