

FAITH BIBLE READING

Dec 24-30, 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 24

Read Haggai 1-2

TAI: *ESV SB:* "After the exile, the Lord is renewing his promises to his people and calls on them to finish rebuilding the temple so that he might be with them and fulfill his promises to bless the whole world through them (2:9), particularly through the Messiah from the house of David (2:23)." Take particular note of 2:9; how is this grand promise fulfilled? Why is this so appropriate on our Christmas Eve? Again *ESV SB:* "a relevant and timeless book on the need to put God's work first in one's life."

PP: In an ultimate sense, the promise and declaration of this book is fulfilled in the passage our pastors preached yesterday from John's Revelation book: in the new heavens and new earth there will be no need of a temple or an outside source of light because God himself will be our temple and our light! Praise God! The coming of Jesus Christ makes all this possible—Merry Christmas! On this Christmas Eve, thank God for the greatest gift ever, the gift of his Son. Praise him for drawing you into his forever family. Pray for today's special Christmas Eve services—4 pm at South and 7 pm at West.

Additional readings: John 20:10-18; Revelation 18; Job 39

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

Read Luke 2:1-40

TAI: Why was the call for a universal registration by Caesar actually a fulfillment of prophecy? Why would God send his angelic host to announce Messiah's birth to shepherds, of all people? How would Luke know that Mary treasured these things and pondered them? What details stand out in the description of Simeon? What is remarkable about Simeon's statement? How is v. 35 a word of prophecy? How was Anna similar to Simeon? Are you as devoted to worship as Simeon and Anna? Do you long for our final consolation?

PP: Join the angels in declaring praise to God for sending his Son to be our Savior and Messiah. Thank God for the incredible track record in Scripture of fulfilled prophecy. Thank God that this marvelous salvation is for all people, without restriction as to race, gender, language, education or economics. Thank God for saving you! Pray for your family and friends on this blessed Christmas day.

Additional readings: No additional readings today

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26

Read Zechariah 1-6:8

TAI: Linked to Haggai, Zechariah "shows that the references to the coming Messiah are not to be understood in a political, historical sense, but rather in the eschatological, future sense. The messianic promises are still intact and look toward the future." (Sailhamer) Identify the eight night visions with a summary phrase or sentence.

Vision 1:

Vision 2:

Vision 3:

Vision 4:

Vision 5:

Vision 6:

Vision 7:

Vision 8:

PP: Pray through the night visions, with thoughts regarding their fulfillment in Jesus Christ and his coming victory and judgement. You may not grasp every detail, but keep Christ at the forefront.

Additional Readings: John 20:19-23; Revelation 19; Job 40

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

Read Zechariah 6:9—9

TAI: The symbolic crowning of Joshua (not the Joshua previously known for the Promised Land) looks ahead to another prophetic fulfillment. What is his special title? (See Jeremiah 33:15) Who is the ultimate fulfillment of this “crowning”? What was the problem with the people’s religious rituals (ch. 7)? What prophetic promise does God yet give his people (ch. 8)? What will the “faithful city” (8:3) be like? What will befall the enemies of God’s people (ch. 9)? Take to heart the precious prophecy of 9:9, fulfilled by Jesus Christ!

PP: Pray a prayer of praise to God for the gift of the righteous Branch Jesus Christ, who came riding on the colt into Jerusalem, on his way to the cross on which he died in our place. Ask God to keep your worship from being empty ritual, but rather a rich experience of his divine grace, mercy, and love. Thank God for his iron-clad promise to fulfill every prophetic word he has spoken, including the ultimate restoration of his people through Jesus Christ in a future perfect city.

Additional Readings: John 20:24-31, Revelation 20; Job 41:1-11

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28

Read Zechariah 10-14

TAI: What is the problem with Judah’s “shepherds”—that is, their leaders? What were *Favor* and *Union*? Who wielded them? How was this special shepherd treated? Who replaces that good shepherd? Can you outline the final three chapters of Zechariah?

12:1-9

12:10-13:1

13:2-9

14:1-15

14:16-21

PP: Perhaps the greatest need of our own day is for “shepherds” (leaders) who will speak the truth of God and lead the people of God in a Christ-centered and God-honoring way. Pray for this in churches and in our communities and nations as well. *Pray for Christ’s return.*

Additional Readings: John 21:1-14; Revelation 21; Job 41:12-34

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

Read Malachi 1-2:16

TAI: Malachi means “my messenger.” The book is a wake-up call (ESV SB) to renewed fidelity to God, in the form of 6 disputations. Today we will read the first 3 of them. Write a brief description of each, with a thoughtful response to each:

Disputation 1.

Disputation 2.

Disputation 3.

PP: What of our own fidelity (faithfulness!) toward God? How is your walk with him? The end of the year is a good time to pause, ponder, and pray. Do you thank him for his gracious work of saving love in your life through Christ? Do it now! Is your worship and walk empty ritual or full of fervent life and love for him? Are you committed to fidelity in your marriage and personal relationships? Talk to your Heavenly Father about these things. Express your trust in him!

Additional Readings: John 21:15-25; Revelation 22, Job 42

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

Read I John 2:7-11

TAI & PP: As we return next week to Mark’s gospel, let’s transition from our Advent series The Light by reflecting at year end on the relationship between light and love. To walk in the light is to walk in love. To hate is to walk in darkness. This is a rather stark commentary on our present situation nationally and globally.

Ask God to do a deep and abiding work of grace in you, and in us as a church, to walk in the light of Christ’s love by loving one another and our enemies. Ask God to make us more like Jesus Christ! Is there anyone who comes to mind because you find it so hard to love them? Tell it to God.

May 2019 be a year of walking in the LIGHT of LOVE in CHRIST!