

BIBLE READING NOTES FOR APRIL 2022
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You will find reading the Bible rewarding and encouraging,
but reading the Bible is not always easy!

These guidelines may help you.

Before you read each passage, ask God to speak to you through His Word.

Set aside a special time each day to read the Bible, and stick to it!

Make use of your Bible index to find readings – every Bible has a contents page.

Pray that what you have read will help you live according to God's wishes.

April 1st 2 Samuel 5:17-25

The description of the battles in the Old Testament helps us to grasp some of the political turmoil in the Middle East today. For as the present day Jews claim their ancestry back to the Israelites so the present day Palestinians can claim their origins back to the Philistines. And both of these peoples claim descent way back to Abraham. In a kind of family feud that has been raging for as long as anyone cares to remember it is Christ who is an answer to bring these feuding groups together through his teaching.

April 2nd 2 Samuel 6:1-15

In the context of dancing and singing the Israelites were getting a bit carried away with themselves and it was Uzzah who became too familiar with the Covenant Box (the box holding the ten commandments and symbolizing the presence of God). Uzzah's sudden death was a warning to them that God requires respect and is not to be treated disrespectfully.

April 3rd 2 Samuel 7:1-17

God inspires the prophet Nathan to tell King David that his dynasty will never end. We discover in the lineage of Jesus that through Mary and Joseph, Jesus was descended from King David and that Nathan's prophecy was fulfilled to this very day. But Nathan had another message. It was to say that one of David's sons was to build a temple where God would be worshipped.

April 4th Luke 18:1-8

Jesus saw that the rulers of his time were lacking the faith and commitment that David had possessed. Jesus teaching was to encourage the faithful to see that God is just even when we struggle to see that justice. There seemed no point in the Son of Man being put to death on a cross and yet after the crucifixion the believers began to see the justice in God's plan.

April 5th Luke 18:9-14

Taken at a superficial level the Pharisee and not the Tax Collector was the model citizen. He was the one who paid all his dues, he fasted and did all that the law required. And yet the point of Jesus teaching is not that we should be judging but that we need to look into our own hearts to examine the quality of our relationship with God. In God's sight it was the Tax Collector and not the Pharisee that was right in God's sight.

April 6th Luke 18:15-17

Before his death Jesus encountered many respectable people who were trying their best to do what was right, particularly when it came to pleasing God. The problem was that many were trying very hard but trying to do it all on their own, without God. They were living life without seeing their need of God. Jesus death and resurrection provided them and us with a way of seeing our total dependence upon God for our salvation.

April 7th Luke 18:31-34

Jesus confides in his disciples for a third time of his impending death. The disciples are unaware of what was about to happen. In this little story we can begin to feel the agony of Christ as he went on to Jerusalem with only God his Father to accompany him. There is sense of isolation here as no one around him understood the situation.

April 8th Luke 19:28-40

Before entering the city of Jerusalem Jesus was contemplating upon the Word of God and he remembers the words of the prophet Zechariah. The prophet speaks of a future day when the king would enter Jerusalem humble and riding upon a donkey. Jesus deliberately acts out the prophecy of Zechariah in order that the believers should see for themselves the words of the prophet come true.

April 9th Luke 19:41-44

As Jesus weeps for Jerusalem there is increased sense of his humanity shining through. His sadness was for the people who were ignoring the will of God and choosing their own will instead. How Jesus must weep for us today!

April 10th Luke 19:45-48 Palm Sunday

Jesus takes the temple by storm and the authorities who wanted to get rid of him because of him causing an uproar could not do anything because of the power of his teaching. It is only the children who had the courage to speak (or rather sing) the song about Hosanna to the Son of David. For they recognized the symbolic action of Jesus and equated them with the words of the prophet.

April 11th Luke 22:1-23

The authorities become desperate and are prepared to do anything to get rid of the teacher who was capturing the imagination of the people. The middle class Scribes were largely politically motivated and had done a deal with the Romans to be able to retain their wealth in exchange for keeping good law and order. Jesus was being seen as a threat to this deal. The Pharisees wanted rid of him because he was behaving like he was the Son of God and to them this was blasphemy and punishable by death.

April 12th Luke 22:31-46

After the celebration of the Passover meal they retire to the garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Today that garden still exists and it contains seven ancient olive trees that date over two thousand years. It was here that the isolation of Jesus is

readily expressed as his disciples keep falling asleep simply unaware of what was about to happen.

April 13th Luke 22:47-71

Jesus was denied all justice. It was a foregone conclusion as far as the authorities were concerned. They were determined to get rid of him as a troublemaker and blasphemer. The problem with their argument was that they did not consider what would happen if they were wrong. What if this man was the Son of God, the Messiah? What if this man was not a cheat and blasphemer?

April 14th Luke 23:1-25

The Jews were determined to follow the letter of the law and put Jesus through the system so that they could not be accused of malpractice. There was no sense of the spirit of the law being applied. Whilst Jesus was being accused of being the 'Son of the Father' the name Barabbas means 'the son of his Father'. It was a fix. Even if the crowd had called out for Jesus' life to be spared the authorities would have only heard what they wanted to hear.

April 15th Luke 23:44-49 Good Friday

Today we call 'Good Friday' because from this black situation in the life of Jesus God was about to shine the brightest of all light. From the depths of despair our God was about to bring eternal hope and change the course of history for all time to come. Hallelujah!

April 16th Luke 23:50-56

Burial could not take place because the Sabbath was about to begin at sundown. It would be the Sunday morning at sunrise before the burial proper could take place. Joseph of Arimathea is said to have been a distant relation of Jesus and therefore naturally offers his unused family tomb for storage of the body. Arimathea is about six miles outside present day Tel Aviv.

April 17th Luke 24:1-12 Easter Sunday

It was the duty of the women to prepare the body for burial by anointing it with perfumed oils to take away the smell of decay. (Remember the gift of myrrh given by the wise men to the baby Jesus). It is the discovery of this small group of women that was to be the start of the most amazing story that anyone could tell and yet it was entrusted by God to the women. It is the women who were first to tell the world of the risen Christ.

April 18th Matthew 28:1-10

Matthew's account of the story talks of heavenly messengers. This emphasizes the divine nature of what had happened. The women meet with the risen Christ and hold on to him such is their devotion to him. Jesus' first words are to reassure them and secondly to give them a task. The task of telling others of the good news about God.

April 19th Mark 16:1-8

Mark's account of the resurrection is one of the earliest that we have. Mark uses a clever literary technique in this passage because he states that a young man dressed in white directs the women to Galilee if they are looking for the risen Jesus. Mark's gospel begins in Galilee. It is written to say, "look, if having read this gospel you still have not found Jesus then go back to Galilee (the beginning of the gospel) again and read it a second time!"

April 20th Matthew 28:11-15

Even after the resurrection the authorities are still unable to recognize what had happened. And so they continue their underhanded ways to try and deny the truth. There are still those who today will deny the truth and deliberately go out of their way to decry the living God and pull apart the Church. Our God has the final say, the final victory.

April 21st Mathew 28:16-20

As with the women, when Jesus meets with his disciples he reassures them and then commands them with what is described as the 'great commission'. Each of the followers is given a task and that is to share with others the love of God through he teachings of Jesus and by incorporating them into the Body of Christ through baptism.

April 22nd Luke 24:13-35

This is the wonderful story of two followers of Jesus who did not recognize him in his risen state. Perhaps they were too grief stricken to even contemplate what was seemingly impossible. But the seemingly impossible becomes possible for our God, through the simple action of the braking of bread at a meal.

April 23rd Luke 24:36-49

Jesus' resurrection had been foretold many hundreds of years before through the teachings of the prophets in the Old Testament. When it happened many still found it hard to believe. Many today, when they receive good news, still sometimes find it difficult to take in and need time to reflect and to be sure that the good news is real. It is no wonder then that the disciples needed time to reflect. But in addition Jesus promises them a helper, the Holy Spirit.

April 24th Luke 24:50-53

The response from the followers of Jesus to all that had happened was to get back into Jerusalem, filled with great joy and to spend their time at worship giving thanks to God.

April 25th 2 Samuel 7:18-28

In this prayer of David we see what made David such a great leader. His political skills are unquestioned. But it is David's faith in God that made him truly a worthy leader of his people. His priorities are seen in this prayer together with his humbleness and love for God and his people.

April 26th 2 Samuel 19:24-30

Another example of the way David deals with individuals is seen in this story of Mephibosheth, the grandson of David's predecessor. David takes pity on this unfortunate soul and grants him a royal pardon. David's mercy was widely recognized as his fairness.

April 27th 2 Samuel 19:31-39

Barzillai is described as a very old man. He was eighty years old. He had supported David's military campaigns. David never forgot this and wants to show his appreciation by inviting Barzillai to live in the royal palace in Jerusalem. David again shows us his compassion in this example of dealing with the elderly. He gives them respect and whilst recognizing that they are not as fit as they once were the aged require our respect.

April 28th 2 Samuel 22:1-7

David is credited with being a harp player and great composer and singer of songs. Throughout the story of David we encounter his musical ability which he used in the main to glorify God. He is credited with writing most of the Psalms and here is a song of victory.

April 29th 2 Samuel 22: 36-51

The notion of a sense of 'justice' is dealing with people fairly. It is not just for God to love those who do wrong. We say today that we must love the sinner but hate the sin. But if the sinner goes on sinning and flaunting the love of God then we must expect the wrath of God to be also present, if God is just. David's prayer reflects God's justice in that we see a balance between those who follow the ways of God contrasted with those who obstruct the ways of God.

April 30th 2 Samuel 23:1-7

Until his death, David was faithful unto God. David recognized God's promises and he believed them to be true. David sought to worship God in the way that he lived his life. Even although he did make mistakes God still was able to use his faithfulness to bring the kingdom of God ever closer to the people of God.