

OLD TESTAMENT CHALLENGE

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Ps. 119:105

Week of October 05, 2009

MONDAY Genesis 32-34; Psalm 9
 TUESDAY Genesis 35-36
 WEDNESDAY Genesis 37-39; Psalm 10
 THURSDAY Genesis 40-41
 FRIDAY Genesis 42-44; Psalm 11
 WEEKEND Genesis 45-50; Psalm 12

Comments & Questions For Reflection

- **Monday – Jacob Wrestles with God**
 - The "man" Jacob wrestles with is clearly a supernatural being, who reminds Jacob that his ultimate struggle isn't with Laban or Esau but with God.
 - If you were to "wrestle with God," what would be the issue?
- **Tuesday – Safe Return Home**
 - How does today's reading – with its long list of names – highlight God at work fulfilling his promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2; 13:16; and 15:5?
- **Wednesday – Joseph**
 - Do you think Joseph's sense of destiny came from God or himself?
 - Joseph receives two "demotions"; yet how does God work even in those injustices (Gen 37:2-7 and 20-23)?
- **Thursday – Joseph – the Interpreter**
 - What do you think is the difference between what a so-called psychic gives and the interpretation of dreams Joseph offered (Gen 40:8 & 41:16)?
 - What other leadership qualities did Joseph exhibit (Gen: 41:33-40)?
- **Friday – The Famine**
 - It has been almost twenty years since Joseph left his brothers. How does his test of the loyalty to their younger brother, Benjamin, compare and contrast to how they treated Joseph years earlier?
 - In what ways has Gen 37:5-11 come true at this point?
- **Weekend – Joseph and Jacob Reunited; Final Blessings**
 - What conclusions can you draw from Gen 45:5-8 and 50:19-20 about God's abilities to use evil people's actions?
 - Joseph provides blessings to his sons (Gen 49:1-28), how can parents "bless" their children in similar fashion today?

Week of October 12, 2009

MONDAY Exodus 1-3; Psalms 13-14
 TUESDAY Exodus 4-6
 WEDNESDAY Exodus 5-9; Psalm 15
 THURSDAY Exodus 10-12
 FRIDAY Exodus 13-14; Psalm 16
 WEEKEND Exodus 15-20; Psalm 17

Comments & Questions For Reflection

- **Monday – God's Covenant**
 - What do you think it means to "fear" God as in Exodus 1:17, 21?
 - God defines himself as "I AM WHO I AM"; what is the implication when Jesus defines himself as he does in John 8:56-59?
- **Tuesday – God Promises Deliverance**
 - What similarities exist between how God uses miracles in Exodus 4:1-9 (to authenticate Moses' message) and how Jesus uses miracles in John 2:18-23; 10:25-26?
 - In Exodus 6:1-8, the statement "I am the Lord" is repeated four times; What does God reveal to Moses about himself in response to Moses' complaints?
- **Wednesday – Knowing God Leads to Obedience**
 - How did God show His faithfulness to the Israelites in Exodus 8:23 and 9:4, 26?
- **Thursday – Pharaoh's Hardened Heart; the Passover**
 - Did God *force* Pharaoh's heart – against Pharaoh's will – to become hard (See Exodus 7:13, 22-23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34)?
 - What was the Passover and why was it to be remembered (Exodus 12:26-27)?
- **Friday –**
 - How do you think your life would change if you saw God part the Red Sea (Exodus 14:31)? Would you ever doubt God again?
- **Weekend –**
 - After some initial excitement about God's power (Exodus 15:3-11), The Israelites soon grumble about their adversity in the desert; do you think you'd behave in the same way in such circumstances?
 - Is there a situation in your life, work, ministry where Jethro's advice to Moses in Exodus 18:17-23 could be applicable?
 - The people were afraid of God's power, but in Exodus 20:18-20 Moses said they shouldn't be; how should God's power affect us today? What about times when we *don't* see it?

Week of October 19, 2009

MONDAY Exodus 21-23; Psalm 18
TUESDAY Exodus 24-26
WEDNESDAY Exodus 27-29
THURSDAY Exodus 30-32; Psalm 19
FRIDAY Exodus 33-34
WEEKEND Exodus 35-40

Comments & Questions For Reflection

- **Monday – Various Laws**
 - While these laws may seem harsh by modern standards, what compassionate aspects do you see in Exodus 21:1; 23:1-3, 6, 9?
 - The law of retribution (“eye for eye, tooth for tooth, etc.”) sets limits; it puts a cap on liabilities, thus restraining vengeance or greed. How do Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:38-42 reinforce this attitude?
- **Tuesday – The Ark and the Tabernacle**
 - All of the elements in the tabernacle had two important features: portability and stunning beauty. What might God be teaching the Israelites about his nature through these symbols?
- **Wednesday – The Priests**
 - What spiritual lessons might God be teaching through the worship symbols in Exodus 27:21 and 28:29?
 - What is the ultimate purpose of the priesthood and the elaborate rituals according to Exodus 29:44-46?
- **Thursday – Craftsmanship; The Golden Calf**
 - What is the implication about where the gifts of craftsmanship came from in Exodus 31:1-6?
 - What lessons about the importance – and limits – of prayer might be learned from Moses’ intercession in Exodus 32:11-14 and 30-35?
- **Friday – God’s Presence; New Tablets**
 - What do you think the difference is between insecure, selfish “jealousy” and what God has in Exodus 34:14? (Note that the Hebrew word for “zealous” and “jealous” is identical; compare also John 2:13-17 and 2 Corinthians 11:2.)
- **Weekend – Work on the Tabernacle and the Ark**
 - Read Exodus 35:20-29. How do you think the experience of community and worship was affected by the widespread participation of individuals?
 - What timeless principle can you derive from the Israelites’ workmanship and zeal as summed up in Exodus 39:42-43?
 - What lesson did the Israelites learn from Exodus 40:36-38? Why do you suppose God stopped leading His people with those sensational means after they entered Canaan? Why do you think He typically doesn’t use such dramatic means in our day either?

Week of October 26, 2009

MONDAY Leviticus 1-5; Psalm 20
TUESDAY Leviticus 6-9
WEDNESDAY Leviticus 10-13; Psalm 21
THURSDAY Leviticus 14-15
FRIDAY Leviticus 16-19
WEEKEND Leviticus 20-27

Comments & Questions For Reflection

- **Monday – Offerings**
 - What insight does Hebrews 7:11 give on the temporary nature of the Levites’ priestly line?
 - How do Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 and Hebrews 4:16 compare and contrast with the basic emphasis of the book of Leviticus (which is that God’s chosen people need to approach him in a holy manner)?
- **Tuesday – Offerings and the Priesthood**
 - What is the purpose of the anointing oil in Leviticus 8:10-12 and in 1 Samuel 16:13?
 - In Leviticus 9:6, God gives a command and promise that He will appear to the Israelites; notice the results in 9:23-24. Why do you think God’s presence was so powerful at the time?
- **Wednesday – Nadab, Abihu, and Holiness**
 - God tells his people that they are to be holy as He is holy (Lev. 10:3; 11:44-45; 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15-16). What does it mean to live a holy life in our day?
 - Do you think much about being holy? Why or Why not?
- **Thursday – Purification**
 - What might a person living in those days conclude about God’s concern for the community?
- **Friday – Day of Atonement**
 - God set forth one day each year for the high priest to represent the whole nation of Israel in a ceremony of atonement (called *Yom Kippur*). What does Hebrews 9 say about this event?
 - God expected obedience (Lev. 18:1-5); yet how is forgiveness – *grace* – provided for? (Hint: notice who “gives” the blood in Leviticus 17:11; also compare Romans 12:1).
- **Weekend – More Laws and Feasts; Final Tabernacle Preparation**
 - A feast is an appointed time to remember a particular event or spiritual lesson; one of the elements of the feasts is a Sabbath, or a day of rest, dedicated to the Lord. How can you incorporate “remembering” and taking Sabbaths into your rhythm of life?
 - What are some examples of God’s grace shown in Leviticus 26?
 - What provision is made for a person who sins in Leviticus 26: 40-45?