

## ST. JAMES UMC LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

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### **Wednesday, February 26- Sunday, April 5**

The Bible text used for Lenten devotionals is the Easy-to-Read Version (ERV). It is an accurate translation of the Bible. New readers sometimes struggle with reading older standardized translations of Bible text because of their unfamiliarity with the Bible. The ERV uses simpler vocabulary and shorter sentences while maintaining the integrity of the original texts. One of the basic ideas that guided the work was that good translation is good communication.

For those who grew up in the church, the King James version would have been heard more frequently during Scripture reading and sermons. In 1604, King James I of England authorized that a new translation of the Bible into English be started. It was finished in 1611, just 85 years after the first translation of the New Testament into English. The Authorized Version, or King James Version, quickly became the standard for English-speaking Protestants. Its flowing language and prose rhythm has had a profound influence on the literature of the past 400 years.

God desires our whole heart this Lent. Let us offer our hearts freely to God

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Joel 2:12-18 ERV**

The Lord Tells the People to Change

12 This is the Lord's message:

“Now come back to me with all your heart.

Cry and mourn, and don't eat anything!

Show that you are sad for doing wrong.

13 Tear your hearts,

not your clothes.”

Come back to the Lord your God.

He is kind and merciful.

He does not become angry quickly.

He has great love.

Maybe he will change his mind

about the bad punishment he planned.

14 Who knows, maybe he will change his mind

and leave behind a blessing for you.

Then you can give grain and drink offerings

to the Lord your God.

Pray to the Lord

15 Blow the trumpet at Zion.

Call for a special meeting.

Call for a special time of fasting.

16 Bring the people together.

Call for a special meeting.

Bring together the old men,

the children, and the small babies still at their mothers' breasts.

Let the bride and her new husband

come from their bedroom.

17 Let the priests, the Lord's servants,

cry between the porch[b] and the altar.

All of them should say this: "Lord, have mercy on your people.

Don't let your people be put to shame.

Don't let other people tell jokes about your people.

Don't let the other nations laugh at us and say,

'Where is their God?'"

The Lord Will Restore the Land

18 Then the Lord cared very much about his land.

He felt sorry for his people.

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HOPE

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Jesus promises his followers that they will move through suffering to new life. This is the hope of the cross.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Luke 9:22-25 ERV**

Jesus Says He Must Die

22 Then Jesus said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things. He will be rejected by the older Jewish leaders, the leading priests, and teachers of the law. And he will be killed. But after three days he will be raised from death."

23 Jesus continued to say to all of them, "Any of you who want to be my follower must stop thinking about yourself and what you want. You must be willing to carry the cross that is given to you every day for following me. 24 Any of you who try to save the life you have will lose it. But you who give up your life for me will save it. 25 It is worth nothing for you to have the whole world if you yourself are destroyed or lost.

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THE FAST GOD DESIRES

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Our sincere repentance will be expressed in action. We will find healing and help from God.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Isaiah 58:1-9**

People Must Be Told to Follow God

Shout as loud as you can and don't stop.

Shout like a trumpet!

Tell the people what they did wrong.

Tell the family of Jacob about their sins.

2 They still come every day to worship me,  
acting as if they want to learn my ways.

They pretend to be a nation that lives right  
and obeys the commands of their God.

They ask me to judge them fairly.

They want their God to be near them.

3 They say, "We fast to show honor to you. Why don't you see us? We starve our bodies to show honor to you. Why don't you notice us?"

But God says, "You do things to please yourselves on those special days of fasting. And you punish your servants, not your own bodies. 4 You are hungry, but not for food. You are hungry for arguing and fighting, not for bread. You are hungry to hit people with your evil hands. This is not the way to fast if you want your prayers to be heard in heaven! 5 Do you think I want to see people punish their bodies on those days of fasting? Do you think I want people to look sad and bow their heads like dead plants? Do you think I want people to wear mourning clothes and sit in ashes to show their sadness? That is what you do on your days of fasting. Do you think that is what the Lord wants?

6 “I will tell you the kind of day I want—a day to set people free. I want a day that you take the burdens off others. I want a day when you set troubled people free and you take the burdens from their shoulders. 7 I want you to share your food with the hungry. I want you to find the poor who don’t have homes and bring them into your own homes. When you see people who have no clothes, give them your clothes! Don’t hide from your relatives when they need help.”

8 If you do these things, your light will begin to shine like the light of dawn. Then your wounds will heal. Your “Goodness” will walk in front of you, and the Glory of the Lord will come following behind you. 9 Then you will call to the Lord, and he will answer you. You will cry out to him, and he will say, “Here I am.”

Stop causing trouble and putting burdens on people. Stop saying things to hurt people or accusing them of things they didn’t do.

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TRUST IN THE LORD

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When you ask God for help, trust that you will receive it. You may have to wait, but you will receive it.

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**Psalms 86**

I am a poor, helpless man.

Lord, please listen to me and answer my prayer!

2 I am your follower, so please protect me.

I am your servant, and you are my God.

I trust in you, so save me.

3 My Lord, be kind to me.

I have been praying to you all day.

4 My Lord, I put my life in your hands.

I am your servant, so make me happy.

5 My Lord, you are good and merciful.

You love all those who call to you for help.

6 Lord, hear my prayer.

Listen to my cry for mercy.

7 I am praying to you in my time of trouble.

I know you will answer me.

8 My Lord, there is no God like you.

No one can do what you have done.

9 My Lord, you made everyone.

I wish they all would come worship you and honor your name.

10 You are great and do amazing things.

You and you alone are God.

11 Lord, teach me your ways,

and I will live and obey your truths.

Help me make worshiping your name

the most important thing in my life.

12 My Lord God, I praise you with all my heart.

I will honor your name forever!

13 You have such great love for me.

You save me from the place of death.

14 Proud people are attacking me, God.

A gang of cruel men is trying to kill me.

They don't respect you.

15 My Lord, you are a kind and merciful God.

You are patient, loyal, and full of love.

16 Show that you hear me and be kind to me.

I am your servant, so give me strength.

I am your slave, as my mother was, so save me!

17 Lord, show me a sign that you care for me.

My enemies will see it and be disappointed,

because you helped and comforted me.

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ASSURED

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What a great assurance we have when we put our faith in Jesus Christ! All who believe in Him will be saved.

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**Romans 10:8-13**

8 This is what the Scripture says: "God's teaching is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart." It is the teaching of faith that we tell people. 9 If you openly say, "Jesus is Lord" and believe in your heart that God raised him from death, you will be saved. 10 Yes, we believe in Jesus deep in our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we openly say that we believe in him, and so we are saved.

11 Yes, the Scriptures say, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disappointed." 12 It says this because there is no difference between those who are Jews and those who are not. The same Lord is the Lord of all people. And he richly blesses everyone who looks to him for help. 13 Yes, "everyone who trusts in the Lord will be saved."

RESPOND

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Jesus identifies with the poor and the needy of our world. Our response to the, He says, is our response to Him as well.

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**Matthew 25: 31-46**

31 "The Son of Man will come again with divine greatness, and all his angels will come with him. He will sit as king on his great and glorious throne. 32 All the people of the world will be gathered before him. Then he will separate everyone into two groups. It will be like a shepherd separating his sheep from his goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34 "Then the king will say to the godly people on his right, 'Come, my Father has great blessings for you. The kingdom he promised is now yours. It has been prepared for you since the world was made. 35 It is yours because when I was hungry, you gave me food to eat. When I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I had no place to stay, you welcomed me into your home. 36 When I was without clothes, you gave me something to wear. When I was sick, you cared for me. When I was in prison, you came to visit me.'

37 "Then the godly people will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food? When did we see you thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you with no place to stay and welcome you into our home? When did we see you without clothes and give you something to wear? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and care for you?'

40 "Then the king will answer, 'The truth is, anything you did for any of my people here, you also did for me.'

41 "Then the king will say to the evil people on his left, 'Get away from me. God has already decided that you will be punished. Go into the fire that burns forever—the fire that was prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 You must go away because when I was hungry, you gave me nothing to eat. When I was thirsty, you gave me nothing to drink. 43 When I had no place to stay, you did not welcome me into your home. When I was without clothes, you gave me nothing to wear. When I was sick and in prison, you did not care for me.'

44 "Then those people will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty? When did we see you without a place to stay? Or when did we see you without clothes or sick or in prison? When did we see any of this and not help you?'

45 “The king will answer, ‘The truth is, anything you refused to do for any of my people here, you refused to do for me.’

46 “Then these evil people will go away to be punished forever. But the godly people will go and enjoy eternal life.”

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GOD'S WORD

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Scripture is meant to nourish our souls just as bread nourishes our bodies. Take can eat.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Isaiah 55:10-11**

"Rain and snow fall from the sky

and don't return until they have watered the ground.

Then the ground causes the plants to sprout and grow,

and they produce seeds for the farmer and food for people to eat.

11

In the same way, my words leave my mouth,

and they don't come back without results.

My words make the things happen that I want to happen.

They succeed in doing what I send them to do.

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REPENT

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God is touched by sorrow for sin and a genuine desire to change. We grow closer to God through repentance.

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**Jonah 3:1-10**

God Calls and Jonah Obeys

3 Then the Lord spoke to Jonah again and said, 2 "Go to that big city Nineveh, and say what I tell you."

3 So Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to Nineveh. It was a very large city. A person had to walk for three days to travel through it.

4 Jonah went to the center of the city and began speaking to the people. He said, "After 40 days, Nineveh will be destroyed!"

5 The people of Nineveh believed God. They decided to stop eating for a time to think about their sins. They put on special clothes to show they were sorry. All the people in the city did this, from the most important to the least important.

6 When the king of Nineveh heard about this, he left his throne, removed his robe, put on special clothes to show that he was sorry, and sat in ashes. 7 The king wrote a special message and sent it throughout the city:

A command from the king and his great rulers:

For a short time no person or animal should eat anything. No herd or flock will be allowed in the fields. Nothing living in Nineveh will eat or drink water. 8 But every person and every animal must be covered with a special cloth to show they are sad. People must cry loudly to God. Everyone must change their life and stop doing bad things. 9 Who knows? Maybe God will stop being angry and change his mind, and we will not be punished.

10 God saw what the people did. He saw that they stopped doing evil. So God changed his mind and did not do what he planned. He did not punish the people.

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THE GOLDEN RULE

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Following Jesus is simple, but not always easy. Turn to the Father for the help you need.

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**Matthew 7:7-12**

Ask God for What You Need

7 "Continue to ask, and God will give to you. Continue to search, and you will find. Continue to knock, and the door will open for you. 8 Yes, whoever continues to ask will receive. Whoever continues to look will find. And whoever continues to knock will have the door opened for them.

9 "Do any of you have a son? If he asked for bread, would you give him a rock? 10 Or if he asked for a fish, would you give him a snake? Of course not! 11 You people are so bad, but you still know how to give good things to your children. So surely your heavenly Father will give good things to those who ask him.

A Very Important Rule

12 "Do for others what you would want them to do for you. This is the meaning of the Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets.

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HOPE IN THE LORD

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No matter how discouraged we become, our God is there to lift us up to new life and hope.

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**Psalms 130**

A song for going up to the Temple.

Lord, I am in deep trouble,  
so I am calling to you for help.

2 My Lord, listen to me.

Listen to my cry for help.

3 Lord, if you punished people for all their sins,  
no one would be left alive.

4 But you forgive people,  
so they fear and respect you.

5 I am waiting for the Lord to help me.  
My soul waits for him.  
I trust what he says.

6 I am waiting for my Lord,  
like a guard waiting and waiting for the morning to come.

7 Israel, trust in the Lord.  
The Lord is the one who is faithful and true.

He saves us again and again,

8 and he is the one who will save the people of Israel from all their sins.

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WALK IN GOD'S WAYS

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We are to become God's people, not merely as individuals, but as a living body of faith.

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**Deuteronomy 26:16-19**

Obey the Lord's Commands

16 "Today the Lord your God commands you to obey all these laws and rules. Be careful to follow them with all your heart and soul. 17 Today you have said that the Lord is your God. You have promised to live the way he wants. You promised to follow his teachings and to obey his laws and commands. You said you would do everything he tells you to do. 18 And today the Lord has accepted you to be his own people. He has promised you this. The Lord also said that you must obey all his commands. 19 The Lord will make you greater than all the nations he made. He will give you praise, fame, and honor. And you will be his own special people, as he promised."

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LISTEN TO HIM

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The glory of Jesus is shown to His disciples so that we might listen to His word and believe in Him.

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**Luke 9:28-36**

Jesus Is Seen With Moses and Elijah

28 About eight days after Jesus said these things, he took Peter, John, and James and went up on a mountain to pray. 29 While Jesus was praying, his face began to change. His clothes became shining white. 30 Then two men were there, talking with him. They were Moses and Elijah. 31 They also looked bright and glorious. They were talking with Jesus about his death that would happen in Jerusalem. 32 Peter and the others were asleep. But they woke up and saw the glory of Jesus. They also saw the two men who were standing with him. 33 When Moses and Elijah were leaving, Peter said, "Master, it is good that we are here. We will put three tents here—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (He did not know what he was saying.)

34 While Peter was saying these things, a cloud came all around them. Peter, John, and James were afraid when the cloud covered them. 35 A voice came from the cloud and said, "This is my Son. He is the one I have chosen. Obey him."

36 When the voice stopped, only Jesus was there. Peter, John, and James said nothing. And for a long time after that, they told no one about what they had seen.

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MERCY

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When we come to see and admit our own sinfulness, we can begin to embrace the full measure of God's mercy.

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**Daniel 9:4-10**

4 I prayed to the Lord my God and told him about all my sins. I said,

"Lord, you are a great and awesome God. You keep your agreement of love and kindness with people who love you. You keep your agreement with the people who obey your commands.

5 "But we have sinned. We have done wrong. We have done evil things. We turned against you. We turned away from your commands and good decisions. 6 The prophets were your servants. They spoke for you to our kings, to our leaders, to our fathers, and to the common people in our country. But we did not listen to them.

7 "Lord, you are innocent, and the shame belongs to us, even now. Shame belongs to the people from Judah and Jerusalem, and to all the people of Israel, to those who are near and to those you scattered among many nations. They should be ashamed of all the evil things they did against you.

8 "Lord, we should all be ashamed. All our kings and leaders should be ashamed. Our ancestors should be ashamed, because we sinned against you.

9 "But, Lord our God, you are kind and forgiving, even though we rebelled against you. 10 We have not obeyed the Lord our God. He used his servants, the prophets, and gave us laws, but we have not obeyed his laws.

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SET THINGS RIGHT

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No sin is so great that it cannot be wiped away, so great is the power and mercy of God.

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**Isaiah 1:10, 16-20**

10 You officers of Sodom, listen to the Lord's message. You people of Gomorrah, listen to God's teaching.

16 "Wash yourselves and make yourselves clean. Stop doing the evil things I see you do. Stop doing wrong. 17 Learn to do good. Treat people fairly. Punish those who hurt others. Speak up for the widows and orphans. Argue their cases for them in court.

18 "I, the Lord, am the one speaking to you. Come, let's discuss this. Even if your sins are as dark as red dye, that stain can be removed and you will be as pure as wool that is as white as snow.

19 "If you listen to what I say, you will get the good things from this land. 20 But if you refuse to listen and rebel against me, your enemies will destroy you."

The Lord himself said this.

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THE GIFT

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Those who desire the new life promised by Jesus must live as He did: giving of Himself in love and service.

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**Matthew 20:17-28**

Jesus Talks Again About His Death

17 Jesus was going to Jerusalem. His twelve followers were with him. While they were walking, he gathered the followers together and spoke to them privately. He said to them, 18 "We are going to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be handed over to the leading priests and the teachers of the law, and they will say he must die. 19 They will hand him over to the foreigners, who will laugh at him and beat him with whips, and then they will kill him on a cross. But on the third day after his death, he will be raised to life again."

A Mother Asks a Special Favor

20 Then Zebedee's wife came to Jesus and brought her sons. She bowed before Jesus and asked him to do something for her.

21 Jesus said, "What do you want?"

She said, "Promise that one of my sons will sit at your right side in your kingdom and the other at your left."

22 So Jesus said to the sons, "You don't understand what you are asking. Can you drink from the cup[a] that I must drink from?"

The sons answered, "Yes, we can!"

23 Jesus said to them, "It is true that you will drink from the cup that I drink from. But it is not for me to say who will sit at my right or my left. My Father has decided who will do that. He has prepared those places for them."

24 The other ten followers heard this and were angry with the two brothers. 25 So Jesus called the followers together. He said, "You know that the rulers of the non-Jewish people love to show their power over the people. And their important leaders love to use all their authority over the people. 26 But it should not be that way with you. Whoever wants to be your leader must be your servant. 27 Whoever wants to be first must serve the rest of you like a slave. 28

Do as I did: The Son of Man did not come for people to serve him. He came to serve others and to give his life to save many people.”

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RENEWAL

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The Lord refreshes the human heart and gives us what we need. Let us remember that in difficult times.

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**Jeremiah 17:5-10**

Trusting in People and Trusting in God

5 This is what the Lord says:

“Bad things will happen to those who put their trust in people.

Bad things will happen to those who depend on human strength.

That is because they have stopped trusting the Lord.

6 They are like a bush in a desert where no one lives.

It is in a hot and dry land.

It is in bad soil.

That bush does not know about the good things that God can give.

7 “But those who trust in the Lord will be blessed.

They know that the Lord will do what he says.

8 They will be strong like trees planted near a stream

that send out roots to the water.

They have nothing to fear when the days get hot.

Their leaves are always green.

They never worry, even in a year that has no rain.

They always produce fruit.

9 “Nothing can hide its evil as well as the human mind.

It can be very sick,

and no one really understands it.

10 But I am the Lord,

and I can look into a person's heart.

I can test a person's mind and decide what each one should have.

I can give each person the right payment for what they do.

THE FOUNDATION

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Jesus Christ is the keystone, the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life for us.

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**Matthew 21:33-46**

God Sends His Son

33 "Listen to this story: There was a man who owned a vineyard. He put a wall around the field and dug a hole for a winepress. Then he built a tower. He leased the land to some farmers and then left on a trip. 34 Later, it was time for the grapes to be picked. So the man sent his servants to the farmers to get his share of the grapes.

35 "But the farmers grabbed the servants and beat one. They killed another one and then stoned to death a third servant. 36 So the man sent some other servants to the farmers. He sent more servants than he sent the first time. But the farmers did the same thing to them that they did the first time. 37 So the man decided to send his son to the farmers. He said, 'The farmers will respect my son.'

38 "But when the farmers saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the owner's son. This vineyard will be his. If we kill him, it will be ours.' 39 So the farmers took the son, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

40 "So what will the owner of the vineyard do to these farmers when he comes?"

41 The Jewish priests and leaders said, "He will surely kill those evil men. Then he will lease the land to other farmers, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

42 Jesus said to them, "Surely you have read this in the Scriptures:

'The stone that the builders refused to accept

became the cornerstone.

The Lord did this,

and it is wonderful to us.'

43 "So I tell you that God's kingdom will be taken away from you. It will be given to people who do what God wants in his kingdom. 44 Whoever falls on this stone will be broken. And it will crush anyone it falls on."

45 When the leading priests and the Pharisees heard these stories, they knew that Jesus was talking about them. 46 They wanted to find a way to arrest Jesus. But they were afraid to do anything, because the people believed that Jesus was a prophet.

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GOD'S DELIGHT

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With a marvelous mercy that is hard to comprehend, God actually enjoys forgiving our sins.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Micah 7:14-20**

14 So rule your people with your rod.

Rule the flock of people who belong to you.

That flock lives alone in the woods

and up on Mount Carmel.

That flock lives in Bashan and Gilead

as they did in the past.

Israel Will Defeat Its Enemies

15 I did many miracles when I took you out of Egypt.

I will let you see more miracles like that.

16 The nations will see those miracles,

and they will be ashamed.

They will see that their "power"

is nothing compared to mine.

They will be amazed

and put their hands over their mouths.

They will cover their ears

and refuse to listen.

17 They will crawl in the dust like a snake.

They will shake with fear.

They will be like insects crawling  
from their holes in the ground  
and coming to the Lord our God.

God, they will fear and respect you!

Praise for the Lord

18 There is no God like you.

You take away people's guilt.

God will forgive his people who survive.

He will not stay angry with them forever,

because he enjoys being kind.

19 He will come back and comfort us again.

He will throw all our sins into the deep sea.

20 God, please be true to Jacob.

Be kind and loyal to Abraham, as you promised our ancestors long ago.

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REFORM

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We bear fruit in our lives only with effort. The first step is to listen to the words of Jesus and believe in them.

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**Luke 13:1-9**

Change Your Hearts

13 Some people there with Jesus at that time told him about what had happened to some worshipers from Galilee. Pilate had them killed. Their blood was mixed with the blood of the animals they had brought for sacrificing. 2 Jesus answered, "Do you think this happened to those people because they were more sinful than all other people from Galilee? 3 No, they were not. But if you don't decide now to change your lives, you will all be destroyed like those people! 4 And what about those 18 people who died when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think they were more sinful than everyone else in Jerusalem? 5 They were not. But I tell you if you don't decide now to change your lives, you will all be destroyed too!"

The Useless Tree

6 Jesus told this story: "A man had a fig tree. He planted it in his garden. He came looking for some fruit on it, but he found none. 7 He had a servant who took care of his garden. So he said to his servant, 'I have been looking for fruit on this tree for three years, but I never find any. Cut it down! Why should it waste the ground?' 8 But the servant answered, 'Master, let the tree have one more year to produce fruit. Let me dig up the dirt around it and fertilize it. 9 Maybe the tree will have fruit on it next year. If it still does not produce, then you can cut it down.'"

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JOSEPH

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Like Joseph may we be willing to change our plans when the will of God becomes clear.

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**Matthew 1:16-24**

16 Jacob was the father of Joseph.

Joseph was the husband of Mary,

and Mary was the mother of Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

17 So there were fourteen generations from Abraham to David. There were also fourteen generations from David until the people were taken away to Babylon. And there were fourteen more from the time the people were taken to Babylon until the Messiah was born.

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah happened. His mother Mary was engaged to marry Joseph. But before they married, he learned that she was expecting a baby. (She was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit.) 19 Mary's husband, Joseph, was a good man. He did not want to cause her public disgrace, so he planned to divorce her secretly.

20 But after Joseph thought about this, an angel from the Lord came to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to accept Mary to be your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son. You will name him Jesus. Give him that name because he will save his people from their sins."

22 All this happened to make clear the full meaning of what the Lord said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will be pregnant and will give birth to a son. They will name him Immanuel." (Immanuel means "God with us.")

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the Lord's angel told him to do. He married Mary.

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A READY HEART

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God will surely teach us the right path for our lives, but we must make our hearts ready to learn.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Psalm 25**

A song of David

Lord, I put my life in your hands.

2 I trust in you, my God,

and I will not be disappointed.

My enemies will not laugh at me.

3 No one who trusts in you will be disappointed.

But disappointment will come to those who try to deceive others.

They will get nothing.

4 Lord, help me learn your ways.

Show me how you want me to live.

5 Guide me and teach me your truths.

You are my God, my Savior.

You are the one I have been waiting for.

6 Remember to be kind to me, Lord.

Show me the tender love that you have always had.

7 Don't remember the sinful things I did when I was young.

Because you are good, Lord, remember me with your faithful love.

8 The Lord is good and does what is right.

He shows sinners the right way to live.

9 He teaches his ways to humble people.

He leads them with fairness.

10 The Lord is kind and true to those

who obey what he said in his agreement.

11 Lord, I have done many wrong things.

But I ask you to forgive them all to show your goodness.

12 When people choose to follow the Lord,

he shows them the best way to live.

13 They will enjoy good things,

and their children will get the land God promised.

14 The Lord tells his secrets to his followers.

He teaches them about his agreement.

15 I always look to the Lord for help.

Only he can free me from my troubles.[c]

16 I am hurt and lonely.

Turn to me, and show me mercy.

17 Free me from my troubles.

Help me solve my problems.

18 Look at my trials and troubles.

Forgive me for all the sins I have done.

19 Look at all the enemies I have.

They hate me and want to hurt me.

20 Protect me! Save me from them!

I come to you for protection, so don't let me be disappointed.

21 You are good and do what is right.

I trust you to protect me.

22 God, save the people of Israel

from all their enemies.

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FULFILLED

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Jesus in His life, death and resurrection fulfilled the law. To obey God's law, learn from Jesus and follow His ways.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Matthew 5:17-19**

Jesus and the Old Testament Writings

17 "Don't think that I have come to destroy the Law of Moses or the teaching of the prophets. I have come not to destroy their teachings but to give full meaning to them. 18 I assure you that nothing will disappear from the law until heaven and earth are gone. The law will not lose even the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter until it has all been done.

19 "A person should obey every command in the law, even one that does not seem important. Whoever refuses to obey any command and teaches others not to obey it will be the least important in God's kingdom. But whoever obeys the law and teaches others to obey it will be great in God's kingdom.

UNITED

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Jesus draws together all people who believe in Him and continue His mission of spreading the Good News.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Luke 11:14-23**

Jesus' Power Is From God

14 One time Jesus was sending a demon out of a man who could not talk. When the demon came out, the man was able to speak. The crowds were amazed. 15 But some of the people said, "He uses the power of Satan to force demons out of people. Satan is the ruler of demons."

16 Some others there wanted to test Jesus. They asked him to do a miracle as a sign from God. 17 But he knew what they were thinking. So he said to them, "Every kingdom that fights against itself will be destroyed. And a family that fights against itself will break apart. 18 So if Satan is fighting against himself, how will his kingdom survive? You say that I use the power of Satan to force out demons. 19 But if I use Satan's power to force out demons, then what power do your people use when they force out demons? So your own people will prove that you are wrong. 20 But I use the power of God to force out demons. This shows that God's kingdom has now come to you.

21 "When a strong man with many weapons guards his own house, the things in his house are safe. 22 But suppose a stronger man comes and defeats him. The stronger man will take away the weapons that the first man trusted to keep his house safe. Then the stronger man will do what he wants with the other man's things.

23 "Whoever is not with me is against me. And anyone who does not work with me is working against me.

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RESPOND

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Above all else, God wants our wholehearted love, a freely given response to the One who loved us first.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Mark 12:28-34**

Which Command Is the Most Important?

28 One of the teachers of the law came to Jesus. He heard Jesus arguing with the Sadducees and the Pharisees. He saw that Jesus gave good answers to their questions. So he asked him, "Which of the commands is the most important?"

29 Jesus answered, "The most important command is this: 'People of Israel, listen! The Lord our God is the only Lord. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' 31 The second most important command is this: 'Love your neighbor the same as you love yourself.' These two commands are the most important."

32 The man answered, "That was a good answer, Teacher. You are right in saying that God is the only Lord and that there is no other God. 33 And you must love God with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength. And you must love others the same as you love yourself. These commands are more important than all the animals and sacrifices we offer to God."

34 Jesus saw that the man answered him wisely. So he said to him, "You are close to God's kingdom." And after that time, no one was brave enough to ask Jesus any more questions.

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THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LORD

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Jesus embraced the will of God. God's will was that we should be set free from sin and death.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Hebrews 10:4-10**

4 because it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5 So when Christ came into the world he said,

“You don't want sacrifices and offerings,

but you have prepared a body for me.

6 You are not pleased with the sacrifices of animals killed and burned

or with offerings to take away sins.

7 Then I said, ‘Here I am, God.

It is written about me in the book of the law.

I have come to do what you want.’”

8 Christ first said, “You don't want sacrifices and offerings. You are not pleased with animals killed and burned or with sacrifices to take away sin.” (These are all sacrifices that the law commands.) 9 Then he said, “Here I am, God. I have come to do what you want.” So God ends that first system of sacrifices and starts his new way. 10 Jesus Christ did the things God wanted him to do. And because of that, we are made holy through the sacrifice of Christ's body. Christ made that sacrifice one time—enough for all time.

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COME TO LIFE

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We can rejoice when others receive forgiveness if we remember how much we have been forgiven.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

### **Luke 15:11-32**

#### **Story About Two Sons**

11 Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger son said to his father, 'Give me now the part of your property that I am supposed to receive someday.' So the father divided his wealth between his two sons.

13 "A few days later the younger son gathered up all that he had and left. He traveled far away to another country, and there he wasted his money living like a fool. 14 After he spent everything he had, there was a terrible famine throughout the country. He was hungry and needed money. 15 So he went and got a job with one of the people who lived there. The man sent him into the fields to feed pigs. 16 He was so hungry that he wanted to eat the food the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything.

17 "The son realized that he had been very foolish. He thought, 'All my father's hired workers have plenty of food. But here I am, almost dead because I have nothing to eat. 18 I will leave and go to my father. I will say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and have done wrong to you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. But let me be like one of your hired workers.' 20 So he left and went to his father.

#### **The Younger Son Returns**

"While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him coming and felt sorry for him. So he ran to him and hugged and kissed him. 21 The son said, 'Father, I have sinned against God and have done wrong to you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put them on him. Also, put a ring on his finger and good sandals on his feet. 23 And bring our best calf and kill it so that we can celebrate with plenty to eat. 24 My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!' So they began to have a party.

#### **The Older Son Complains**

25 "The older son had been out in the field. When he came near the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. 26 So he called to one of the servant boys and asked, 'What does all this

mean?’ 27 The boy said, ‘Your brother has come back, and your father killed the best calf to eat. He is happy because he has his son back safe and sound.’

28 “The older son was angry and would not go in to the party. So his father went out and begged him to come in. 29 But he said to his father, ‘Look, for all these years I have worked like a slave for you. I have always done what you told me to do, and you never gave me even a young goat for a party with my friends. 30 But then this son of yours comes home after wasting your money on prostitutes, and you kill the best calf for him!’

31 “His father said to him, ‘Oh, my son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But this was a day to be happy and celebrate. Your brother was dead, but now he is alive. He was lost, but now he is found.’”

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FAITH IN PROMISES

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Try to have faith in Jesus even before you have evidence that what he has promised will come to pass.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 4:43-54**

Jesus Heals an Official's Son

43 Two days later Jesus left and went to Galilee. 44 (Jesus had said before that a prophet is not respected in his own country.) 45 When he arrived in Galilee, the people there welcomed him. They had been at the Passover festival in Jerusalem and had seen everything he did there.

46 Jesus went to visit Cana in Galilee again. Cana is where he had changed the water into wine. One of the king's important officials lived in the city of Capernaum. This man's son was sick. 47 The man heard that Jesus had come from Judea and was now in Galilee. So he went to Jesus and begged him to come to Capernaum and heal his son, who was almost dead. 48 Jesus said to him, "You people must see miraculous signs and wonders before you will believe in me."

49 The king's official said, "Sir, come before my little son dies."

50 Jesus answered, "Go. Your son will live."

The man believed what Jesus told him and went home. 51 On the way home, the man's servants came and met him. They said, "Your son is well."

52 The man asked, "What time did my son begin to get well?"

They answered, "It was about one o'clock yesterday when the fever left him."

53 The father knew that one o'clock was the same time that Jesus had said, "Your son will live." So the man and everyone in his house believed in Jesus.

54 That was the second miraculous sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

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EVER-PRESENT HELP

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God is truly our refuge and strength if we offer thanks in the good times and ask for help in the bad.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Psalm 46**

God is our protection and source of strength.

He is always ready to help us in times of trouble.

2 So we are not afraid when the earth quakes

and the mountains fall into the sea.

3 We are not afraid when the seas become rough and dark

and the mountains tremble. Selah

4 There is a river whose streams bring happiness to God's city,

to the holy city of God Most High.

5 God is in that city, so it will never be destroyed.

He is there to help even before sunrise.

6 Nations will shake with fear and kingdoms will fall

when God shouts and makes the earth move.

7 The Lord All-Powerful is with us.

The God of Jacob is our place of safety. Selah

8 Look at the powerful things the Lord has done.

See the awesome things he has done on earth.

9 He stops wars all over the world.

He breaks the soldiers' bows, shatters their spears, and burns their shields.

10 God says, "Stop fighting and know that I am God!"

I am the one who defeats the nations;

I am the one who controls the world.”

11 The Lord All-Powerful is with us.

The God of Jacob is our place of safety.

MERCY

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By His deeds and the way He lived, Jesus revealed the love the Father who sent Him has for each one of us.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 5:17-30**

17 But he said to them, "My Father never stops working, and so I work too."

18 This made them even more determined to kill him. They thought it was bad enough that he was breaking the law about the Sabbath day. And now he was saying that God is his Father, making himself equal with God!

Jesus Has God's Authority

19 But Jesus answered, "I assure you that the Son can do nothing alone. He does only what he sees his Father doing. The Son does the same things that the Father does. 20 The Father loves the Son and shows him everything he does. This man was healed. But the Father will show the Son greater things than this to do. Then you will all be amazed. 21 The Father raises the dead and gives them life. In the same way, the Son gives life to those he wants to.

22 "Also, the Father judges no one. He has given the Son power to do all the judging. 23 God did this so that all people will respect the Son the same as they respect the Father. Anyone who does not respect the Son does not respect the Father. He is the one who sent the Son.

24 "I assure you, anyone who hears what I say and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life. They will not be judged guilty. They have already left death and have entered into life. 25 Believe me, an important time is coming. That time is already here. People who are dead will hear the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live. 26 Life comes from the Father himself. So the Father has also allowed the Son to give life. 27 And the Father has given him the power to judge all people because he is the Son of Man.

28 "Don't be surprised at this. A time is coming when all people who are dead and in their graves will hear his voice. 29 Then they will come out of their graves. Those who did good in this life will rise and have eternal life. But those who did evil will rise to be judged guilty.

30 "I can do nothing alone. I judge only the way I am told. And my judgment is right, because I am not trying to please myself. I want only to please the one who sent me.



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KEY TO PEACE

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Happiness will come if we seek to please God rather than depend on the approval of other people.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 5:31-47**

Jesus Says More to the Jewish Leaders

31 "If I tell people about myself, they cannot be sure that what I say is true. 32 But there is someone else who tells people about me, and I know that what he says about me is true.

33 "You sent men to John, and he told you what is true. 34 I don't need anyone to tell people about me, but I remind you of what John said so that you can be saved. 35 John was like a lamp that burned and gave light, and you were happy to enjoy his light for a while.

36 "But I have a proof about myself that is greater than anything John said. The things I do are my proof. These are what my Father gave me to do. They show that the Father sent me. 37 And the Father who sent me has given proof about me himself. But you have never heard his voice. You have never seen what he looks like. 38 The Father's teaching does not live in you, because you don't believe in the one the Father sent. 39 You carefully study the Scriptures. You think that they give you eternal life. These same Scriptures tell about me! 40 But you refuse to come to me to have that life.

41 "I don't want praise from you or any other human. 42 But I know you—I know that you have no love for God. 43 I have come from my Father and speak for him, but you don't accept me. But when other people come speaking only for themselves, you accept them. 44 You like to have praise from each other. But you never try to get the praise that comes from the only God. So how can you believe? 45 Don't think that I will be the one to stand before the Father and accuse you. Moses is the one to accuse you. And he is the one you hoped would save you. 46 If you really believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me. 47 But you don't believe what he wrote, so you can't believe what I say."

LOVE

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God is near to us at all times, but especially when our hearts are broken and our spirits weighed down.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Psalms 34**

A song of David when he pretended to be crazy so that Abimelech would send him away, which he did.

34 I will praise the Lord at all times.

I will never stop singing his praises.

2 Humble people, listen and be happy,

while I brag about the Lord.

3 Praise the Lord with me.

Let us honor his name.

4 I went to the Lord for help, and he listened.

He saved me from all that I fear.

5 If you look to him for help,

he will put a smile on your face.

You will have no need to be ashamed.

6 As a poor, helpless man I prayed to the Lord,

and he heard me.

He saved me from all my troubles.

7 The Lord's angel builds a camp around his followers,

and he protects them.

8 Give the Lord a chance to show you how good he is.

Great blessings belong to those who depend on him!

9 The Lord's holy people should fear and respect him.

Those who respect him will always have what they need.

10 Even strong lions get weak and hungry,

but those who go to the Lord for help will have every good thing.

11 Children, come and listen to me;

I will teach you to respect the Lord.

12 Do you want to enjoy life?

Do you want to have many happy days?

13 Then avoid saying anything hurtful,

and never let a lie come out of your mouth.

14 Stop doing anything evil, and do good.

Look for peace, and do all you can to help people live peacefully.

15 The Lord watches over those who do what is right,

and he hears their prayers.

16 But the Lord is against those who do evil,

so they are forgotten soon after they die.

17 Pray to the Lord, and he will hear you.

He will save you from all your troubles.

18 The Lord is close to those who have suffered disappointment.

He saves those who are discouraged.

19 Good people might have many problems,

but the Lord will take them all away.

20 He will protect them completely.

Not one of their bones will be broken.

21 But troubles will kill the wicked.

The enemies of those who live right will all be punished.

22 The Lord saves his servants.

All who go to him for protection will escape punishment.

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OUR DEFENDER

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The Lord searches our hearts and minds. God is our defense against those who condemn us.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Jeremiah 11:18-20**

Evil Plans Against Jeremiah

18 The Lord showed me that the men of Anathoth were making plans against me. He showed me what they were doing, so I knew they were against me. 19 Before he showed me this, I was like a gentle lamb waiting to be butchered. I did not understand that they were against me. They were saying this about me: "Let us destroy the tree and its fruit! Let us kill him! Then people will forget him." 20 So I prayed, "Lord All-Powerful, you are a fair judge. You know how to test people's hearts and minds. I will tell you my arguments, and I will let you give them the punishment they deserve."

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CREATION

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God's creative power is still at work, not only in the natural world, but in the hearts and minds of human beings.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Isaiah 43:16-21**

God Will Save His People Again

16 The Lord is making roads through the sea. He is making a path for his people, even through rough waters. The Lord says, 17 "Those who fight against me with their chariots, horses, and armies will be defeated. They will never rise again. They will be destroyed. They will be put out like the flame in a lamp. 18 So don't remember what happened in earlier times. Don't think about what happened a long time ago, 19 because I am doing something new! Now you will grow like a new plant. Surely you know this is true. I will even make a road in the desert, and rivers will flow through that dry land. 20 The wild animals will thank me. The large animals and birds will honor me when I put water in the desert and make rivers flow through that dry land. I will do this to give water to my chosen people. 21 I made them, and they will sing songs of praise to me.

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LED BY THE SHEPHERD

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As a shepherd, Jesus will guide us along the right path, even when we are not aware of being led.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Psalms 23**

The Lord is my shepherd.

I will always have everything I need.

2 He gives me green pastures to lie in.

He leads me by calm pools of water.

3 He restores my strength.

He leads me on right paths to show that he is good.

4 Even if I walk through a valley as dark as the grave,

I will not be afraid of any danger, because you are with me.

Your rod and staff comfort me.

5 You prepared a meal for me in front of my enemies.

You welcomed me as an honored guest.

My cup is full and spilling over.

6 Your goodness and mercy will be with me all my life,

and I will live in the Lord's house a long, long time.

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A SIGN FOR ALL

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Jesus is a sign of God's love, not only to those who believe but to an unfaithful world as well.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 8:21-30**

Some Jews Don't Understand Jesus

21 Again, Jesus said to the people, "I will leave you. You will look for me, but you will die in your sin. You cannot come where I am going."

22 So the Jewish leaders asked themselves, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he said, 'You cannot come where I am going'?"

23 But Jesus said to them, "You people are from here below, but I am from above. You belong to this world, but I don't belong to this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins. Yes, if you don't believe that I Am,[a] you will die in your sins."

25 They asked, "Then who are you?"

Jesus answered, "I am what I have told you from the beginning. 26 I have much more I could say to judge you. But I tell people only what I have heard from the one who sent me, and he speaks the truth."

27 They did not understand who he was talking about. He was telling them about the Father. 28 So he said to them, "You will lift up the Son of Man. Then you will know that I Am. You will know that whatever I do is not by my own authority. You will know that I say only what the Father has taught me. 29 The one who sent me is with me. I always do what pleases him. So he has not left me alone." 30 While he was saying these things, many people believed in him.

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FAITH

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The strength of our faith may be measured by our willingness to believe even when we may have to suffer for it.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Daniel 3:14-20**

14 And Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is it true that you don't worship my gods? And is it true that you didn't bow down and worship the gold idol I have set up? 15 Now when you hear the sound of the horns, flutes, lyres, sambucas, harps, bagpipes, and all the other musical instruments, you must bow down and worship the gold idol. If you are ready to worship the idol I have made, that is good. But if you don't worship it, you will be thrown very quickly into the hot furnace. Then no god will be able to save you from my power!"

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "Nebuchadnezzar, we don't need to explain these things to you. 17 If you throw us into the hot furnace, the God we serve can save us. And if he wants to, he can save us from your power. 18 But even if God does not save us, we want you to know, King, that we refuse to serve your gods. We will not worship the gold idol you have set up."

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar became very angry with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He gave an order for the oven to be heated seven times hotter than it usually was. 20 Then he commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He told the soldiers to throw them into the hot furnace.

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WAY TO HOPE

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Hope comes more easily if we can remember the blessings God has bestowed on us in the past

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Psalms 105:4-9**

Depend on the Lord for strength.

Always go to him for help.

5 Remember the amazing things he has done.

Remember his miracles and his fair decisions.

6 You belong to the family of his servant Abraham.

You are descendants of Jacob, the people God chose.

7 The Lord is our God.

He rules the whole world.

8 He will remember his agreement forever.

He will always keep the promises he made to his people.

9 He will keep the agreement he made with Abraham

and the promise he made to Isaac.

GOOD WORKS

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Our good works are one sure sign that our hearts have been moved by the love of God

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 10:31-42**

31 Again the Jews there picked up stones to kill Jesus. 32 But he said to them, "The many wonderful things you have seen me do are from the Father. Which of these good things are you killing me for?"

33 They answered, "We are not killing you for any good thing you did. But you say things that insult God. You are only a man, but you say you are the same as God! That is why we are trying to kill you!"

34 Jesus answered, "It is written in your law that God said, 'I said you are gods.' 35 This Scripture called those people gods—the people who received God's message. And Scripture is always true. 36 So why do you accuse me of insulting God for saying, 'I am God's Son'? I am the one God chose and sent into the world. 37 If I don't do what my Father does, then don't believe what I say. 38 But if I do what my Father does, you should believe in what I do. You might not believe in me, but you should believe in the things I do. Then you will know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

39 They tried to get Jesus again, but he escaped from them.

40 Then he went back across the Jordan River to the place where John began his work of baptizing people. Jesus stayed there, 41 and many people came to him. They said, "John never did any miraculous signs, but everything John said about this man is true." 42 And many people there believed in Jesus.

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LASTING COVENANT

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God takes back all who repent and sets them free from all their sins. God's love will make us holy.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Ezekiel 37:21-28**

21 Tell the people that this is what the Lord God says: 'I will gather the people of Israel from among the nations. I will gather them from all around and bring them back to their own land. 22 I will make them one nation in their land among the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over them all. They will no longer be two nations. They will not be split into two kingdoms anymore. 23 And they will no longer continue to make themselves filthy with their idols and horrible statues or with any of their other crimes. Instead, I will save them from all the places where they have sinned, and I will wash them and make them pure. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

24 "'And my servant David will be the king over them. There will be only one shepherd over all of them. They will live by my rules and obey my laws. They will do the things I tell them. 25 They will live on the land that I gave to my servant Jacob. Your ancestors lived in that place, and my people will live there. They and their children and their grandchildren will live there forever. My servant David will be their leader forever. 26 And I will make a peace agreement with them. This agreement will continue forever. I agree to give them their land. I agree to make them numerous and to put my holy place among them forever. 27 My Holy Tent will be with them. Yes, I will be their God and they will be my people. 28 The other nations will know that I am the Lord, and they will know that I make Israel my special people by putting my holy place there among them forever.'"

FINAL DAY OF LENT - DAY 40 SUNDAY, APRIL 5 PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF  
THE LORD

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PALM SUNDAY

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As we recall Christ's Passion this week, let us praise God for the power that we, too, have seen.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Luke 19:28-40**

Jesus Enters Jerusalem Like a King

28 After Jesus said these things, he continued traveling toward Jerusalem. 29 He came near Bethphage and Bethany, towns near the hill called the Mount of Olives. He sent out two of his followers. 30 He said, "Go into the town you can see there. When you enter the town, you will find a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it, and bring it here to me. 31 If anyone asks you why you are taking the donkey, you should say, 'The Master needs it.'"

32 The two followers went into town. They found the donkey exactly like Jesus told them. 33 They untied it, but its owners came out. They said to the followers, "Why are you untying our donkey?"

34 The followers answered, "The Master needs it." 35 So the followers brought the donkey to Jesus. They put their coats on its back. Then they put Jesus on the donkey. 36 He rode along the road toward Jerusalem. The followers spread their coats on the road before him.

37 Jesus was coming close to Jerusalem. He was already near the bottom of the Mount of Olives. The whole group of followers was happy. They were very excited and praised God. They thanked God for all the powerful things they had seen. 38 They said,

"'Welcome! God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord.'

Peace in heaven and glory to God!"

39 Some of the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell your followers not to say these things."

40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if my followers didn't say them, these stones would shout them."

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FORMED

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God has formed a people to carry on the redemptive work of Jesus by proclaiming the Gospel with their lives.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Isaiah 42:1-7**

The Lord's Special Servant

"Here is my servant,

the one I support.

He is the one I have chosen,

and I am very pleased with him.

I have filled him with my Spirit,

and he will bring justice to the nations.

2 He will not cry out or shout

or try to make himself heard in the streets.

3 He will not break even a crushed reed.[a]

He will not put out even the weakest flame.

He will bring true justice.

4 He will not grow weak or give up

until he has brought justice to the world.

And people in faraway places will hope to receive his teachings."

The Lord Is Ruler and Maker of the World

5 The Lord, the true God, said these things. (He created the sky and spread it out over the earth. He formed the earth and everything it produced. He breathes life into all the people on earth. He gives a spirit to everyone who walks on the earth.)

6 "I, the Lord, was right to call you.

I will hold your hand and protect you.

You will be the sign of my agreement with the people.

You will be a light for the other nations.

7 You will make the blind able to see.

You will free those who are held as captives.

You will lead those who live in darkness out of their prison.

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GOD'S GRACE

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We need the grace of God, not just our own strength of character, in order to follow Jesus.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 13: 31-38**

Jesus Talks About His Death

31 When Judas was gone, Jesus said, "Now is the time for the Son of Man to receive his glory. And God will receive glory through him. 32 If God receives glory through him, he will give glory to the Son through himself. And that will happen very soon."

33 Jesus said, "My children, I will be with you only a short time more. You will look for me, but I tell you now what I told the Jewish leaders: Where I am going you cannot come.

34 "I give you a new command: Love each other. You must love each other just as I loved you. 35 All people will know that you are my followers if you love each other."

Jesus Says Peter Will Deny Him

36 Simon Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus answered, "Where I am going you cannot follow now. But you will follow later."

37 Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I am ready to die for you!"

38 Jesus answered, "Will you really give your life for me? The truth is, before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you don't know me."

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TRUST

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Jesus put up with misunderstanding, insults, and betrayal in order to fulfill the will of the Father.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Isaiah 50:4-9**

**God's Servant Depends on God**

4 The Lord God gave me the ability to teach, so now I teach these sad people. Every morning he wakes me and teaches me like a student. 5 The Lord God helps me learn, and I have not turned against him. I will not stop following him. 6 I will let those people beat me and pull the hair from my beard. I will not hide my face when they say bad things to me and spit at me. 7 The Lord God will help me, so the bad things they say will not hurt me. I will be strong. I know I will not be disappointed.

8 God is with me, and he is the one who shows that I am innocent. So no one can say I am guilty. If anyone wants to try to prove me wrong, they should come here, and we will have a trial. 9 But look, the Lord God helps me, so no one can prove me guilty. As for them, they will all be like worthless old clothes, eaten by moths.

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SACRIFICE

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When He washed the feet of the disciples, Jesus gave us an example of how we are to treat each other: with love expressed in action.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**John 13:1-15**

Jesus Washes His Followers' Feet

13 It was almost time for the Jewish Passover festival. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go back to the Father. Jesus had always loved the people in the world who were his. Now was the time he showed them his love the most.

2 Jesus and his followers were at the evening meal. The devil had already persuaded Judas Iscariot to hand Jesus over to his enemies. (Judas was the son of Simon.) 3 The Father had given Jesus power over everything. Jesus knew this. He also knew that he had come from God. And he knew that he was going back to God. 4 So while they were eating, Jesus stood up and took off his robe. He got a towel and wrapped it around his waist. 5 Then he poured water into a bowl and began to wash the followers' feet.[a] He dried their feet with the towel that was wrapped around his waist.

6 He came to Simon Peter. But Peter said to him, "Lord, you should not wash my feet."

7 Jesus answered, "You don't know what I am doing now. But later you will understand."

8 Peter said, "No! You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "If I don't wash your feet, you are not one of my people."

9 Simon Peter said, "Lord, after you wash my feet, wash my hands and my head too!"

10 Jesus said, "After a person has a bath, his whole body is clean. He needs only to wash his feet. And you are clean, but not all of you." 11 Jesus knew who would hand him over to his enemies. That is why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

12 When Jesus finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and went back to the table. He asked, "Do you understand what I did for you? 13 You call me 'Teacher.' And you call me 'Lord.' And this is right, because that is what I am. 14 I am your Lord and Teacher. But I washed your feet. So you also should wash each other's feet. 15 I did this as an example for you. So you should serve each other just as I served you.



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BURIAL

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All human suffering is a reflection of the suffering of Jesus Christ. He knows what we endure because He went through it. We can pray in confidence.

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

**Hebrews 4:14-16**

Jesus Christ Is Our High Priest

14 We have a great high priest who has gone to live with God in heaven. He is Jesus the Son of God. So let us continue to express our faith in him. 15 Jesus, our high priest, is able to understand our weaknesses. When Jesus lived on earth, he was tempted in every way. He was tempted in the same ways we are tempted, but he never sinned. 16 With Jesus as our high priest, we can feel free to come before God's throne where there is grace. There we receive mercy and kindness to help us when we need it.



When it's Saturday in your life, how do you react? When you are somewhere between yesterday's tragedy and tomorrow's triumph, what do you do? Do you leave God—or do you linger near him? John chose to linger. And because he lingered on Saturday, he was around on Sunday to see the miracle.

Can you imagine the thoughts of Jesus' disciples the day after He was crucified? Certainly, their minds were filled with questions. Their hearts must have been anxious. They were a hunted people. They felt alone, facing the hostility of the Jewish leadership. As Jesus had prophesied, His "sheep" had been scattered. These were the moments that inspired Swiss painter Eugene Burnand (born in 1850) to paint "Holy Saturday." Three of the disciples sit, while the other eight stand nearby. All of their faces are serious, even grim. Much of the focus seems to be on Peter, pictured on the far right, who has buried his face in his hands, overcome with emotion, pondering the sad reality that he had denied even knowing Jesus just a few hours earlier. These men could not have known that everything would change again within a matter of days—that Jesus would rise from the grave, that they would be imbued with power when the Holy Spirit was poured out on them, that this feeling of hopelessness would be replaced by triumph.

The images in Burnand's painting, symbolize life for every Believer—the moments when we recognize our human nature and just how helpless we are without Jesus; when we realize the impact of sin; when we consider the mistakes we've made; when we see how unworthy we are. Then, just as it did for the disciples, the miracle of Jesus' Resurrection can change everything for us!

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

John 20:9

9 (These followers did not yet understand from the Scriptures that Jesus must rise from death.)

## **Sunday, April 12 Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord**

### **Resurrection**

If we are willing to unite our suffering with the suffering and death of Christ, we will come to new life with Him. That is God's promise; that is our hope!

We encourage you to experience a side by side reading of both ERV and King James versions of today's scripture. Click [here](#)

Romans 6:3-11

3 Did you forget that all of us became part of Christ Jesus when we were baptized? In our baptism we shared in his death. 4 So when we were baptized, we were buried with Christ and took part in his death. And just as Christ was raised from death by the wonderful power of the Father, so we can now live a new life.

5 Christ died, and we have been joined with him by dying too. So we will also be joined with him by rising from death as he did. 6 We know that our old life was put to death on the cross with Christ. This happened so that our sinful selves would have no power over us. Then we would not be slaves to sin. 7 Anyone who has died is made free from sin's control.

8 If we died with Christ, we know that we will also live with him. 9 Christ was raised from death. And we know that he cannot die again. Death has no power over him now. 10 Yes, when Christ died, he died to defeat the power of sin one time—enough for all time. He now has a new life, and his new life is with God. 11 In the same way, you should see yourselves as being dead to the power of sin and alive for God through Christ Jesus.