



KINGDOM PROSPERITY

PART 1

Forty Daily Devotions
from Various Passages in the Bible
(Based on the NKJV)

Introduction

Much is being said today from church pulpits and radio preachers regarding prosperity. Pastors tend to preach on topics about which they think people most want to hear. There is a place for teaching on Scriptural prosperity, but we must be careful to keep it to that prosperity which is truly based on the Scriptures. Over the next 40 days, we will cover passages from various places in the Bible that deal with true prosperity. Some of these passages will discuss money and other financial principles. Some will deal with possessions. However, all of the passages will deal with our heart's attitude toward all of those things.

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Proverbs 15:13-27	05/18/22
2	Proverbs 16:1-9	05/19/22
3	Deuteronomy 15:1-6	05/20/22
4	Deuteronomy 15:7-11	05/21/22
5	1 Timothy 5:3-13	05/22/22
6	1 Timothy 5:14-21	05/23/22
7	1 Corinthians 16:1-9	05/24/22
8	2 Corinthians 9:1-8	05/25/22
9	Job 29:1-13	05/26/22
10	Job 31:13-28	05/27/22
11	Job 31:29-40	05/28/22
12	Acts 5:1-11	05/29/22
13	Habakkuk 1:1-12	05/30/22
14	Habakkuk 3:12-19	05/31/22
15	Philippians 4:1-17	06/01/22
16	Philippians 3:1-14	06/02/22
17	Jeremiah 22:13-21	06/03/22
18	Nehemiah 5:1-13	06/04/22
19	Galatians 6:1-10	06/05/22
20	James 2:5-17	06/06/22

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	1 Chronicles 29:1-9	06/07/22
22	1 Chronicles 29:10-20	06/08/22
23	Deuteronomy 8:1-10	06/09/22
24	Deuteronomy 8:11-20	06/10/22
25	Psalms 127:1-5	06/11/22
26	Psalms 128:1-6	06/12/22
27	Luke 6:17-26	06/13/22
28	Luke 6:27-38	06/14/22
29	Hosea 4:1-12	06/15/22
30	Hosea 13:1-10	06/16/22
31	Ecclesiastes 7:1-12	06/17/22
32	Ecclesiastes 7:13-26	06/18/22
33	Genesis 33:1-9	06/19/22
34	Genesis 33:10-20	06/20/22
35	Haggai 1:1-13	06/21/22
36	Haggai 2:1-9	06/22/22
37	Luke 4:1-13	06/23/22
38	Luke 12:22-34	06/24/22
39	1 Samuel 2:1-10	06/25/22
40	1 Samuel 2:12-21	06/26/22

Day 1: Proverbs 15:13-27

“Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure with trouble. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a fatted calf with hatred.” (Proverbs 15:16-17)

When a Little Becomes a Lot

We all want to experience joy in life and to have the “merry heart” that is promised in the Scriptures (v. 13). However, few of us truly understand how affordable such a blessed life really is! We live in times when happiness is based on what happens and what we have. The writer here tells us that the person who learns the secret of a merry heart will feast on it continually. The resources available to those who learn this secret are endless. God promises that it is better to have a little in life when it is accompanied by a reverential respect for Him than it is to have what the world might consider great worldly treasure that brings with it worldly troubles and concerns. Furthermore, we are promised that it is better to have our meals consist of beans or vegetables only when they are eaten in an environment of love than it would be to have a freezer full of meat and no blessings of family and friendship. Other valuable assets are mentioned in these verses: Patience, hard work, family, heavenly wisdom, joy, protection, and contentment. The same God that promises these blessing warns us of the burdens that accompany greed. Greed brings trouble to our lives that can spill over into the lives of those we love. He that refuses to measure his happiness by how much wealth he has truly has more treasure than many people will ever imagine. When we enjoy Kingdom Prosperity, we live every day giving thanks to God!

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to show you the true meaning of wealth and prosperity. Take some time to **thank** him, among other things, for your health, family, career, and friends. **Remember** that there are millions of Americans who would love to drive to your job tomorrow or live in a home like yours!

Day 2: Proverbs 16:1-9

“In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity; and by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.” (Proverbs 16:6)

“The Fear of the LORD”

The “fear of the LORD” was mentioned in yesterday’s text as well. To “fear” the LORD is to hold God in a reverential awe – to respect Him for who He is! This kind of attitude toward God lives in the hearts of those that God has prepared to serve Him. It is born, not of the will of the flesh, but of the Spirit. It is found in those who have committed their works unto the Lord and who have allowed Him to be the foundation for all their thinking and beliefs. It is this fear/respect for God that helps us to avoid throwing our lives away on evil, selfish things. It is this same respect for God that is noticeable by all who know us and causes even our enemies to speak only good of us and the way that we live out our Christian life before them. We may think that the life we desire can only be purchased with money. However, God tells us that this life has been purchased for us by His own mercy and truth. It is better to have fewer material possessions than to not have the righteousness that comes from a right relationship with God.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to use this study to help you see the true riches that are available to God’s people today. **Learn** to seek God and His Kingdom first and you will find true happiness! **Read** Matthew 6:33 and **meditate** on it today.

Day 3: Deuteronomy 15:1-6

“...for the LORD will greatly bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance—” (Deuteronomy 15:4b)

Blessed

Who among us, even in the most uncertain of times, can say that we are not a people blessed of Almighty God? The Bible contains many promises, and we are careful to claim as many of them as we can find. But many of those *promises* come with *provisions*. Such is the case with the verses we read this morning. Verse four contains a strong promise of blessing. As a matter of fact, it promises great blessings. And since these great blessings come in the land, “which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance”, then these are blessings upon blessings. However, there is a proviso for these great blessings found in the following verse. There we are told that these great blessings are conditioned on our obedience to the voice of God. This obedience is evidenced in our willingness to observe the commandments that are given to us from Him. When we remain obedient to God, we become a source of blessings to other nations and servant to none. When we fail to obey God, we soon lose the promised blessings and look to other sources for our material needs. When we borrow from others, we place our lives under their control and the work of our hands begins to benefit them more than our God and even our own nation or families.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that God’s promises of blessing are for His people today just as much so as they were to His people during Bible times. **Expect** God to provide when we obey His commands. **Exercise** faith and become obedient to God in all areas of your life.

Day 4: Deuteronomy 15:7-11

“Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,’ and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin among you.” (Deuteronomy 15:9)

Close the Loopholes

Deuteronomy 15 contains information and instructions regarding the Sabbatical Year, or the Year of Release. Leviticus 25 is a companion chapter to this portion of Scripture and may add a little more understanding to what is taught here. Part of the observation of the Sabbatical Year was a release of debts owed from one Israelite to another. There were obviously some who tried to manipulate the system by avoiding lending to those in need because the Year of Release was drawing near. You only have to read verse nine of our Scripture lesson this morning to see this is a practice that was to be avoided. People still find creative reasons for not being generous. We find many reasons for holding on to our wealth as long as we can and avoid using it to meet the many needs with which we are confronted on a daily basis. This is not to say that every believer has to give to every cause or person that stands in need. But it does indicate that it should be a “red flag” to our spirit when we find ourselves making excuses for not being obedient in the matter of giving when we are being prompted by the Spirit. Just as it is for the New Testament believer today, so it was with those who lived in Old Testament times. God was interested in the intent and condition of the heart.

Prayer Emphasis: Listen carefully and prayerfully when the Spirit speaks to you about being generous. **Realize** that it is easy to rationalize and find reasons not to give. Good stewardship demands that we be cautious in some situations. **Make sure** that your decisions are based on God and not greed.

Day 5: 1 Timothy 5:3-13

“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Timothy 5:8)

Meeting Needs

Today’s Scripture addresses the needs of widows. In both Old and New Testament teaching, widows were viewed as special people by God and His people. One of the first orders of business for the church in the Book of Acts addresses the issue of meeting the needs of widows within the fellowship. First, Paul says that widows should be honored and given proper recognition in the church. Second, he states that widows who have no family to assist them should be identified. If they have family, then the assisting of that widow should fall to family first. These family members should see this as an opportunity to put their faith into practice. Note carefully the stern warning contained in verse eight of our lesson. If we cannot find it in our hearts to be generous to our own parents, how shall we ever become the people that God desires us to be? Next, Paul helped the church to better understand how to qualify widows for assistance through the church. Beyond the age qualification, the widow’s need must be determined as genuine. Notice that, even though they were widows, some still lived for pleasure, or, still had funds to do things that they enjoyed. Need was not to be based on poor management but on genuine need.

Prayer Emphasis: Look closely to the needs of your family. Beyond that, make sure that no one within our own flock is being left desolate while we have so much to share. **Recognize** those who have been a blessing to you and now take advantage of the opportunity to be a blessing to them.

Day 6: 1 Timothy 5:14-21

“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.” (1 Timothy 5:17)

Worthy Labor

Verse 16 serves as a second reminder to the responsibility of family. Note the emphasis that is placed on the fact that our relatives are to be cared for financially by the family. This is not just because of our relationship to them, but because of our relationship with God. Underscore the words, “believing man or woman” in this verse and understand the standard by which God’s family is to live. Notice that both male and female believers share in the responsibility of providing for family widows. Besides the widows, the Elders (Pastors) who bore teaching responsibilities within the church were to be cared for as well. Deuteronomy 25:4 is quoted here and refers to the Israelite custom of allowing the ox to feed from the grain that it was grinding. Since the life of the ox was committed to servicing the grain, it made sense that it could also be sustained by the grain. The reference to workers deserving their wages refers to passages like Deuteronomy 24:15 and Leviticus 19:13. In 1 Timothy 5:18, the word “wages” refers to compensation. A great responsibility falls to those who shepherd God’s flocks to make sure that their work is found worthy of the investment that God’s people make into their ministry.

Prayer Emphasis: Pray for our pastors as they lead God’s churches. **Recognize** the time and energy that it takes to prepare and preach messages that are true to God’s Word. **Accept** nothing less than the truth from the pulpit and allow for what it takes to have it available every time the church meets.

Day 7: 1 Corinthians 16:1-9

“On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” (1 Corinthians 16:2)

God’s Finance Plan

Throughout the earlier portion of his letter, Paul dealt with doctrinal issues. Now, as he begins to close his letter, he deals with the practical matter of church finances. Note that the teaching on giving was to be consistent among all of the churches. Since the churches of Galatia were the earliest planted by the apostle, he points to their practices as an example of how other churches should respond to the need for giving. Although Paul never used the word “tithing” in these instructions, he gives specific instructions on how believers are to give on a regular, systematic basis to provide for the needs encountered by the church. Giving was to be proportionate to each believer’s income. This does seem to indicate that a percentage might be appropriate. Each believer was to be involved in giving to the ministry. We may differ in our individual spiritual gifts, but we do not differ in our individual responsibilities to provide for the needs of ministry. Regular, faithful, proportionate giving on the part of all of God’s children would eliminate the need for so many special offerings that are required to meet immediate and specific needs. One thing is certain, if every believer were faithful in giving, then ministries would never be without funds to do the work of God.

Prayer Emphasis: **Pray** about becoming a regular giver to the work of God. **Review** your giving history and see if you have placed other things over and before God. **Practice** tithing and **prove** God’s promises of provision to be true.

Day 8: 2 Corinthians 9:1-8

“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” (2 Corinthians 9:6)

A Gentle Reminder

It is sometimes easy to forget some of our promises about giving. In 2 Corinthians 8:10, Paul noted that the church at Corinth had begun giving to the needs of other churches. He commended them for having done so. He even mentioned to them that he boasted of their generosity to the believers at Macedonia. But now, it seems that he needs to remind them of their good beginning and to encourage them to continue to be faithful in their commitment to giving. This should not have come as a surprise to Paul since he had been forced to address so many spiritual issues with the church at Corinth. If they had not been careful to discipline the flesh from wrong activities, then it would probably be even more difficult to discipline the flesh in the matter of doing good. Note that Paul emphasizes the law of sowing and reaping in verse six. Also, note the words, “each one” in verse seven. Again, the Scriptures clearly indicate that giving is a responsibility of every saved individual. Note the promise of verse eight. God is surely able to provide what we need in order to be able to be regular and faithful in the matter of giving. Notice that verse three indicates that Paul sent teachers to help instruct the church in the matter of financial faithfulness.

Prayer Emphasis: **Review** some of your past promises to God, especially in the matter of giving faithfully to the work of the ministry. **Develop** an attitude of faith when it comes to money and financial matters. **Trust** God to supply your needs as you obediently supply the needs of the church. When you do these things, you will soon be in the place where you can “reap bountifully”.

Day 9: Job 29:1-13

“The blessing of a perishing man came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.” (Job 29:13)

Better Days

While experiencing some *bitter* days, Job could clearly recall some *better* days. It is evident that these better days were not so long past since Job measures the time by “months” and not years (v. 2). Job recalled brighter days where his path had been clearly lit and more easily travelled. He could well remember days where he felt young, strong, and vibrant; blessed with his children around him. But, most importantly, Job recalled when he sensed the presence of God in his life in a very powerful way. He mentioned the respect he had received from others as he communed with the people of his city. He could also clearly recall the times that God had used him to deliver the poor that cried out for alms as he and others passed by. He remembered well the times he had been blessed with the ability to assist the fatherless and others who had no one to help them. In verse 13, Job was reminded of the blessings he received from those with whom he shared and helped financially. Perhaps, above all, he recalled the obvious joy that came upon the faces of the many widows who received help from a mortal man and then sang praises to an infinite God.

Prayer Emphasis: Recall times that God has used someone to help you in a special time of need. However small that gift might have been, it brought joy to your heart because it served as a reminder that God had not forgotten you. **Be** a blessing to someone today. **Bring joy** to someone’s heart by sharing some of what God has given you.

Day 10: Job 31:13-28

“If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, ‘You are my confidence’; if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gained much:” (Job 31:24-25)

Evidence

Throughout his trials, Job maintained he was innocent of any sin that would merit the kind of chastisement that some believed God was sending into his life. As he reviewed his life, he mentioned some things he considered to be evidence of a right relationship with God. Most of the good deeds he had done proved to be very simple, ordinary acts of kindness. He referenced his fair treatment of his servants and his faithful support of the poor and widowed. His stated that his own food was often shared with others who had none. The fact that he had sufficient clothing while others had none had not escaped his notice, and he, obviously, made sure no one had gone without proper clothing. He knew that he had never done anything to harm or take advantage of the needy around him. But more than anything, he had the evidence of his own personal knowledge that he had never put money before God! His hope had never been in gold or his worldly possessions. His joy had never been founded on his abundance of wealth or his success in financial matters. When Job’s material possessions vanished, his confidence in his right relationship with God remained strong. Clearly, his evidence was based on what God had done *within* him spiritually and not on just what God had done *for* him materially.

Prayer Emphasis: Inventory your life and **look** for evidence that money has not become too important to you. If you had to present evidence of your faith in God, would your financial life be a witness for the defense or the prosecution?

Day 11: Job 31:29-40

“Oh, that I had one to hear me! Here is my mark. Oh, that the Almighty would answer me, that my Prosecutor had written a book!” (Job 31:35)

The Closing Argument

Job presents his closing argument before his critics and continues to denounce any thought that his unfortunate circumstances could be because of some evil in his own life. He knew he had not been a proud, boastful man in regard to the good works he had done for others. He knew he had not limited his kindness to his friends and family alone. He had been honest and kind to those who others might have considered to be his enemies. Even homeless strangers were not left to lodge in the streets. He had been faithful to show hospitality to all people and not just to those who might have opportunity to give to him in return. He believed that even the report of his enemies would be a “crown” in his life (v. 36). He closes his argument by stating that he had been a good citizen and honest in his business dealings. If he had not, then let the blessings of God be discontinued upon his work and let the thistles grow instead of the barley. Then, note the final statement of Job in this section of the Scriptures. Isn't it interesting to note how much evidence of Job's right relationship with God is based on what he did with all that God had provided him? At the last, he stated, “The words of Job are ended” (v. 40). You might say it like this, “And that's all I have to say about that!”

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that our every act bears witness. It may not be a good witness, but it is a witness, nonetheless. **Strive** to live in such a way that your record says it all. **Do good** even to those who might consider themselves your enemies. That sounds a whole lot like what Jesus would do, doesn't it?

Day 12: Acts 5:1-11

“...Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.” (Acts 5:1-2)

Ananias and Sapphira

Have you ever wondered if the names of these two individuals might have even been mentioned in the Scriptures had it not been for this sad story contained in Acts 5? This man and wife watched as Barnabas sold a parcel of land and then donated the full proceeds of the sale to the church. No doubt, there was much talk about this act of generosity. Ananias and Sapphira then sold some property of their own and conspired to make the church believe that they, too, were donating the full proceeds to the Lord's work. One at a time they are questioned by Peter, and they both lie before God and then die for their sinful actions. Pride can be a terrible thing among God's people. Unlike Job, about whom we read yesterday, these two church members, Ananias and Sapphira, gave in such a way that their giving became a witness *against* them rather than *for* them. God was not honored in their actions, and he responded accordingly. Our money is just one way that we can honor God and help the church. God does not expect us all to give the same amounts, but he does expect us to all give with the same intent. Only God is to receive honor and glory from our giving.

Prayer Emphasis: Be careful to give only to God's glory! **Remember** that what is given to be “seen of men” is seen by God as well! **Give** in such a way that God would be pleased. **Allow** your giving to be a witness of your right relationship with God.

Day 13: Habakkuk 1:1-12

“*Look among the nations and watch—Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you.*” (Habakkuk 1:5)

Correction, Please!

We know very little about the man Habakkuk. We do know that his name means, “The wrestler.” We can clearly see that he wrestled with questions about some of the financial situations faced by God’s people during his life and ministry. The prophet complained to God that the law was not being honored and injustice often seemed to prevail. It seemed that wicked, godless men controlled the fate of those who had once believed themselves to be the children of God. Verse six indicates that the enemy had come in and prevailed to the extent that Habakkuk’s people were losing much more than their freedom. The enemy had marched in and took possession of their lands and personal homes. We speak much of the pride of home ownership. If so, then we should also speak much of the shame that hangs over those who can no longer provide safe shelter for their family. But note the words of verses five and six. God stated that he was going to do something the people “would not believe”. He was going to “raise up” one of their enemies against them. Why would God allow the enemy to prosper against His own people? And much more, why would He assist them in doing so? He allowed these horrible reverses of fortune to solicit some corrected attitudes and actions from His own people! We know this about God: He is always at work on our behalf, even if it means humbling us financially so that we can learn to change our attitudes and actions.

Prayer Emphasis: **Pray** for the many unemployed and homeless people in America and around the world today. **Be thankful** for your job and **praise God** for providing a home in which you and your family can live. **Remember** that, even during these difficult times, we are a people who are very blessed of God!

Day 14: Habakkuk 3:12-19

“*Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls - Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*” (Habakkuk 3:17-18)

“Rejoice in the LORD”!

The worst of times seemed to have brought Habakkuk to the best of places! Look closely at verses 12 through 15 and notice how many times the writer uses the word “You” in reference to God and all that He did for His people! A little bit of adversity quickly moved this man and nation from a dangerous “me” attitude to an attitude of praise for God and His mighty works. Habakkuk goes on to state that even in what might seem to be the worst of times: when the fig trees do not blossom and the fruit does not appear on the vines; even when all of the work in the olive groves and gardens produce no crops; even when there are no flocks or herds in the pens, he will still rejoice in the Lord and find joy in God alone! He goes on to state that his strength is now known to be found in his right relationship with God and not in material possessions, no matter how abundant they might be. He could finally see beyond all that God had provided and see the God that had provided it all! If we can praise God in uncertain times, then we know that we can praise God, period!

Prayer Emphasis: **Commit** to praise God no matter the circumstances in your life. **Recognize** that God sometimes chastens and corrects those He loves. **See** God at work in your life in every circumstance and situation. Take some time to **praise Him** today for all that He has done for you!

Day 15: Philippians 4:1-17

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;” (Philippians 4:6)

“With Thanksgiving”

Paul places great emphasis on believers experiencing true, Christian joy in their lives. Two things seem evident: 1) Joy is more important than being right or wrong in our Christian family disputes, and 2) Joy is to be dependent on our attitude about the Lord’s soon return. If we can be truly convinced of how short this stay on earth may be, then we can more easily avoid becoming too attached to it. Paul explains that we can help overcome worry by the process of continued prayer and thanksgiving. A peace that is beyond human explanation is promised to those who will place their hope and trust in Christ. Real joy sustains us in good times and bad. When joy is not based on possessions or circumstances, then joy can be constant. The apostle thanks these fellow Christians for their sharing with him in the matter of giving. But note that he mentions both giving and receiving. There is no circumventing the law of sowing and reaping. When we give we will surely receive. Imagine how their hearts must have surged with joy when they learned they had been faithful to give to Paul’s ministry when other more mature churches had apparently chosen not to do so. It looks like these saints understood Kingdom Prosperity from the very beginning.

Prayer Emphasis: Reflect on the many ways God has met your needs. Take some extra time to **recall** those situations and **thank Him** again for his faithfulness. **Ask** God to reveal to you some needs that others may have and to show you how you might be able to assist someone else. **Recognize** that God most often uses one saint to supply the needs of another. **Remember** that those who give can rest assured that they will someday receive.

Day 16: Philippians 3:1-14

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.” (Philippians 3:7)

Keeping All Things in Perspective

Rejoicing is one of the primary themes of the letter to the Philippians. However, we would do well to notice that the kind of rejoicing that Paul desires for these believers is the kind of rejoicing that is done, “in the Lord” (v. 1). The preacher is about to warn against believers placing too much confidence in the flesh, but he gives them something better in which to be confident before he asks them to put their present self-confidence away. Note that Paul speaks of “gain” (v. 7) and states that any gain in social status or personal value was a “loss” when compared to what we can gain in Christ and our relationship with him (v. 8). As a matter of fact, Paul stated that he considered everything a “loss” when compared to what he had found in Christ. One of the greatest blessings that we have is the joy that we have in and from Christ. May we never be tempted to trade what we have in him for all the wealth in the world. There is a prize to be won by those who will not be distracted by the temptations of this temporary world. Besides, wouldn’t you really rather have the things that are permanent?

Prayer Emphasis: Consider your choices daily and choose wisely. We all are tempted to take the path of least resistance sometimes. **Remember**, the joy that is found in obedience is one of the greatest assets obtained when we pursue Kingdom Prosperity. **Make** a commitment to obedience in an area where God has been speaking to your heart lately.

Day 17: Jeremiah 22:13-21

“Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice, who uses his neighbor’s service without wages and gives him nothing for his work,” (Jeremiah 22:13)

A Stern Warning

The prophecy spoken in today’s verses was spoken against Shallum, the third son of King Josiah who became king after his father had been slain. Shallum is the same man as Jehoahaz in the books of Kings and Chronicles. He was only 23 years old when this great responsibility was thrust upon him, and he reigned for a very brief three months before self and sin got the best of him and caused him to lose his throne to his brother. The prophet stated that this young man would die in a place where he lived as a captive. That prophecy came true after Shallum was eventually taken to Syria and then Egypt before he died in the latter place while in captivity. Verse 19 clearly implies that there is to be no honor given to this king’s life and service. His problems centered in the fact that he did not know how to handle all that God had given him. God said he had spoken to him in his “prosperity” (v. 21), but Shallum refused to hear. This was nothing new for this young man as we see God stating that this had been the man’s habit since his youth. It is not uncommon for prosperity to dull our senses toward God. Sometimes we think that we have all that we need when we are materially blessed. However, true prosperity must be measured by more than money, possessions, or position. How wise we would be to teach our children such things while they are young.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that true prosperity is not always measured by material gain or possessions. **Teach** your children to be faithful to God while they are young and impressionable. **Be** an example of true prosperity to them in every way possible.

Day 18: Nehemiah 5:1-13

“Then I said, ‘What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?’” (Nehemiah 5:9)

Difficult Times

When we read these words written by Nehemiah over 2,500 years ago, it may seem as though we are reading from a local newspaper written in our own times. People were forced to put their homes at risk just to have enough money to provide the most basic needs for their families. They were also being taxed so heavily that they were losing their lands and businesses. When they looked to their own people for help, they found that these people were only interested in taking advantage of their bad situations. The key to being the right kind of person in any situation is found in verse nine. When we walk “in the fear of our God” we are walking with a constant consciousness that God is observing all that we do. As we see the many needs around us, we are often saddened that we cannot do more to help. At the least, we can make sure that we do nothing to hurt anyone by taking advantage of them and their situation because of our own greed or selfishness. These times are good times to do for others what we would have them to do for us. This rule was “Golden” when it was first spoken, and it is just as “Golden” today!

Prayer Emphasis: Practice honesty and integrity in all your dealings with others. **Avoid** taking advantage of anyone during what are already difficult times. **Be** part of the solution and not part of the problem. **Give** when and what you can, even if it is only a kind word of encouragement or the simplest gesture of understanding. **Remember** that *you* may be the one in need at some time in the future.

Day 19: Galatians 6:1-10

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10)

“Brotherly” Love

The first word in our reading today clearly identifies Christians as the target of Paul’s appeal for kindness to others. In these verses God teaches us the way we should be toward our faith family. It is clearly God’s desire that we carry one another’s burdens (physical and spiritual); remember our own faults and weaknesses as we observe the same among others; carry our own load as much as is humanly possible; and share the good things we have with one another. Immediately following this teaching is yet another reminder of the law of sowing and reaping. We are again reminded that we reap exactly what we sow (v.7). These verses teach that this law is one to be applied positively and not just negatively. It is true that we will reap what we have sown when we do sinful things. However, we should also realize that we will reap good things as a result of our doing good things to and for others. Note that this practice of doing good should be magnified within our family of faith. We should be aggressively pursuing ways that we can do encouraging things for one another. These deeds should not be performed just so that we might reap a blessing, but there may be many times in our lives where we will be extremely thankful that we made the most of our opportunities to be helpful to others.

Prayer Emphasis: Be observant as you live among God’s family and watch for opportunities to be a blessing to someone in need. Remember that all needs are not monetary and that it might only a kind word or act of friendship that God is calling us to share. Do something kind for someone today.

Day 20: James 2:5-17

“If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well;” (James 2:8)

Playing Favorites

James gives some strong warnings against showing favoritism within our family of faith. He begins by reminding us that we are all rich as a result of having placed our faith in Christ Jesus and we are now heirs to the Kingdom of God! And why has God been so good to us? There is only one answer: He loves us! Since we have been loved with such a wonderful love, we are expected to express love to others. James was led of the Holy Spirit to warn the church against being different in the way that they treat people when that difference is based on their possessions or their position in life. He reminds his fellow Christians that the royal law of the Scripture is that we, “love your neighbor as yourself,” and treat them as we would want them to treat us. In this case, James is clearly saying that words of encouragement alone are sometimes insufficient to fulfill our personal responsibilities toward one another. He clearly considers meeting the physical needs of others as an expression of our true faith in God. When we learn to give unselfishly, we will have learned the true meaning of Kingdom Prosperity.

Prayer Emphasis: Love and appreciate others for who they are and not what they have. Realize that those who might appear to be less fortunate than others may be the very ones who are truly blessed with the kind of prosperity that only God can give.

Day 21: 1 Chronicles 29:1-9

“Now for the house of my God I have prepared with all my might: gold for things to be made of gold, silver for things of silver, bronze for things of bronze, iron for things of iron, wood for things of wood...glistening stones of various colors, all kinds of precious stones...” (1 Chronicles 29:2)

Who is Willing?

We sometimes hear people say something like, “I’m not gossiping, I’m just stating the facts!” Well, in the words that we have read this morning, we do not find David bragging, but simply stating the facts. This short section of Scripture discloses David’s personal, monetary contribution for the building of the temple. These gifts involved his sharing of his gold, silver, and other precious materials. But it also involved the sharing of wood and stone. The latter gifts serve to remind us that some things may hold a lesser monetary value than others but remain necessary for a work for God to be completed. In verse three, we read where David even gave “over and above” what he had originally planned to give. He also issued a challenge to others within God’s kingdom to give sacrificially to this great cause. In verse five, he asks a simple question: “Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the Lord?” The term “consecrate” suggests that one of the ways that we give ourselves to God is by giving to him from what we possess. Notice that generosity toward God began with the leaders and that they did indeed give willingly. Verse nine clearly indicates the impact that the faithfulness of the leaders had upon the people.

Prayer Emphasis: How would you feel if God asked you to let your personal giving become an example to others within the Kingdom? Would they have cause to rejoice or would they have cause for concern? **Give** to God willingly and wholeheartedly and you will begin to **see** the full meaning of Kingdom Prosperity!

Day 22: 1 Chronicles 29:10-20

“Both riches and honor come from You, and You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.” (1 Chronicles 29:12)

“Riches and Honor”

Just as the people were inspired by the generosity of the leaders, King David was inspired to offer a prayer of praise and thanksgiving after seeing the generosity of the people. Everyone within the family of God understood that they were only able to give to God so abundantly because He had first given so abundantly to them. They readily acknowledged that everything in heaven and earth already belonged to God. They knew that their riches and honor had come from Him, so they, without hesitation, returned as much of it as possible to Him. We would do well to remember that God alone is the source of all things and that when we give *to* noble causes it is really God giving to that cause *through* us. As we share our wealth with God, He shares more of His wealth with us. Thus begins a wonderful cycle of giving and receiving which results in God being glorified to the highest extent possible by human hearts and hands. Notice that David does not pray that the people’s *wealth* would always be turned to God but that their *hearts* would be always turned to Him (v. 18). When our hearts are right, what we do with our hands will be right as well.

Prayer Emphasis: **Examine** your personal giving habits and see if there is cause for rejoicing or remorse. We should rejoice when we see God providing for his kingdom work via our personal lives. Those who are not faithful to God in material things will someday experience great remorse when they stand before our Lord.

Day 23: Deuteronomy 8:1-10

“When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.” (Deuteronomy 8:10)

Dangers of Prosperity

God provides some excellent advice for us in the Scriptures we read today! He first required that His children obey every command given to them so that He, in turn, could bless and increase them and allow them to possess the land promised to them. He then asked them to remember how He had led them and provided for them all the way through the desert for 40 years! He reminded them of the manna and the lessons it provided. Jesus quoted these very words during His preaching ministry on earth. He, like his Father, wanted people to know that “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” The people were told to revere God by walking in His ways. They were to be mindful that He was bringing them into a good land that would abound with blessings and harvests. It was a land where bread would not be scarce and where they would lack nothing. But the last verse we read today reminds us of the greatest danger of material prosperity. When we are living in times of plenty, we are sometimes too “full” (satisfied) and less faithful to prayer and thanksgiving. Kingdom Prosperity demands thankful hearts and obedient lives.

Prayer Emphasis: **Listen** carefully to what God is saying to us today. **Seek** to obey Him as fully as possible in your personal life. **Walk** in harmony with His commands. **Be** appreciative of all that He has given you. **Brag** on God to someone with whom you come in contact today.

Day 24: Deuteronomy 8:11-20

“Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today...then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.’” (Deuteronomy 8:11 & 17)

A Solemn Warning

In some translations, the word that is translated “beware” in verse 11 reads “Be careful!” One cannot help but see the sense of urgency that the Holy Spirit places on our obedience to God. Obedience is the key to receiving God’s fullest blessing. When we forget the source of our blessing, we soon forget the purpose for our living! We have been created to serve God. When we partake of his blessings and walk away to serve our own desires until confronted with our next need, we begin to live as if God was created to serve us! Material blessings become a curse when we become proud and forget from whence our God has brought us. We, like the people of Israel, may become tempted to say to ourselves, “My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.” Therefore, we must continually remind ourselves that Kingdom Prosperity is a gift from God, and it is He who gives us the ability to produce wealth. Note the sad end that God says awaits those who forsake Him to follow and worship false gods. May it never be so among us! Let us always remember that God is our source!

Prayer Emphasis: **Read** again the solemn warning given in verses 19 and 20 in today’s reading. **Serve** God with complete loyalty and **believe** that He will provide all that you need to experience Kingdom Prosperity in this world as well as in the world to come!

Day 25: Psalm 127:1-5

“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.” (Psalm 127:1)

The Very Necessities

In the first three verses of this Psalm, Solomon reminds us of some of the basic necessities in life. Shelter, security, and food may sometimes be taken for granted, but we are reminded here that they are to be regarded as blessings from the LORD. If our homes are not founded on Him, then they are not well founded at all. If our security is not found in Him, then we have no security at all. We may begin work early and work to the late hours of the night so that we might be able to provide food for our families, but it will all be in vain if we see ourselves as self-reliant people with no need for God. True peace does not come to those who build strong houses, make large incomes, and have full pantries. True peace comes to those who sleep soundly while resting on the knowledge that God is always at work on their behalf and that He is ever able to meet their every necessity. So, rather than focus on the kind of home in which we live, let us focus on those who live within its walls and be ever thankful for them. Kingdom Prosperity can be found in right relationships with those who will follow us as we walk with God through this life. We are truly blessed when God chooses to entrust us with the raising of children. Teach them to be strong in Christ so that they will not be put to shame when it is their time to lead.

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for your children this morning. **Speak** to them and **tell** them that you love them and that you are praying for them. **Volunteer** to assist in our church’s children’s ministries and be a blessing to as many children as you can.

Day 26: Psalm 128:1-6

“Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways.” (Psalm 128:1)

A Song of Degrees

Many of you will see in your Bibles the title “A Song of Degrees” or “A Song of Ascents” above this psalm. If so, you will probably see the same title for Psalm 120 through Psalm 134. The Hebrews referred to these Psalms as “Songs of the Stairs” or “Songs of Steps” and often sang them as they journeyed toward their times of worship in the temple or during their feasts in Jerusalem. These songs were a way for God’s people to praise Him for their spiritual blessings as they walked with Him. Notice that the first blessing mentioned is for “every one who fears the LORD”. To fear the Lord simply means to have a reverential respect for our holy God. When we have that kind of fear, or respect, for God, we are surer to walk in His ways. However, there are more blessings described as the psalm continues. The people sang of the blessings of food and prosperity. They sang of the blessings of family. The vine was a symbol of fruitfulness. Olive trees are symbols of productivity and blessing. These walkers sang from their hearts because they knew that one did not have to walk far to experience Kingdom Prosperity. However far their journey might be, they knew they had been fully blessed before they ever left their homes. Perhaps they willingly made their journey to visit God’s house because they knew He had been faithful to make a visit to theirs.

Prayer Emphasis: Sing as you go about your business at home tonight. **Praise** God for your home and family. **Give** appreciation to the God who would leave heaven and dwell among men on earth so that they might be saved.

Day 27: Luke 6:17-26

“Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: ‘Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.’” (Luke 6:20)

A Stark Contrast

The sermon recorded in Luke 6: 17–49 is a shorter version of the Sermon on the Mount found in the Gospel of Matthew. This sermon is given at a time when Jesus had become extremely popular with the multitudes (v. 17) and after he captured the attention of the people through the performance of many wonderful miracles. Both Matthew and Luke’s records include the beatitudes, the same parables, and contain much the same information. And it is clear to the careful reader that both recorded sermons are addressed to “His disciples”. Some of these listening disciples must have smiled broadly as they learned of the blessings that are available to God’s people despite such obstacles such as hunger, sorrow, and persecution. They were reminded to rejoice and remember that their true reward is not found in this life but in the one to come. Note the woes that are then pronounced on others that are listening to Jesus preach and see the sharp contrast between those who had given up everything to follow Jesus and those who had held tightly to their personal wealth and riches. Remember, these very words are being spoken to disciples and clearly indicate that even some followers of Jesus will be rich on earth and receive limited rewards in heaven. If you have found the true meaning of Kingdom Prosperity, then you have reason to be thankful indeed!

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to help you to be the “blessed” Christian who realizes that success in life is not about what we accumulate on earth! **Rejoice** more in your relationship with Jesus than your personal riches! **Encourage** someone who may be experiencing difficult times and **share** with them if the opportunity arises.

Day 28: Luke 6:27-38

“But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.” (Luke 6:27-28)

Love

Jesus spoke of six difficult responsibilities of the believer. We are to: Do good to those who hate us (v. 27), Bless those who curse us (v. 28a), Pray for those who use and abuse us (v. 28b), Refuse to retaliate against those who do us wrong (v. 29), Give freely to those who are in need (v. 30), And treat others the way that we would want to be treated (v. 31). How in the world are we going to be able to do that? It all starts with love! Jesus said, “Love your enemies” and you will be empowered to do good for them as well! Notice that one of the things that love does for the believer is to create an unselfish attitude within us. This unselfish attitude is magnified even more by the fact that none of the above is given with the motivation of our receiving anything in return. But note, again, the reference to the law of sowing and reaping in verse 38. Jesus makes it clear that we receive in direct proportion to what we ourselves are willing to give! Perhaps the greatest thing about Kingdom Prosperity is that it allows us to return something good even when what we receive is less than desirable.

Prayer Emphasis: Defeat that seed of selfishness that lives somewhere within all of us! **Choose** to love first and then you will surely learn to give. **Remember** that God first loved the world and then He gave His only begotten Son.

Day 29: Hosea 4:1-12

“Therefore the land will mourn; And everyone who dwells there will waste away with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air; even the fish of the sea will be taken away.” (Hosea 4:3)

A “Bad News” Letter

One would have to consider the words we read today to be difficult to hear and receive. God begins by stating that He has a charge to bring against His people. He states that there is no faithfulness, no love, and no acknowledgment of Him in the land. At the same time, He states that there is only cursing, lying, murder, stealing, adultery, and bloodshed being exhibited by His own people. All of this leads to a time when the entire nation is brought to mourning. One of the reasons for such desperate conditions in the nation is the fact that God’s people were not being faithful in their walk with Him and their treatment of one another. Even the priests seem to have chosen material things over the things of God to the extent that they made a very bad decision. They exchanged their glory for something disgraceful. A life well lived is a wonderful offering to God. God has Hosea tell the people that they will eat but not have enough. He adds that they will work but have no increase. Why would anyone not respond appropriately to such a warning? It might be a good question for us to ask one another today. Kingdom Prosperity comes in many forms. One of those is the glory that is found in an obedient lifestyle.

Prayer Emphasis: Listen carefully to what God is trying to say to you. **Remind** others to do the same. **Prioritize** your life to where God is not in second place to anything or anyone.

Day 30: Hosea 13:1-10

“Now they sin more and more, and have made for themselves molded images, idols of their silver, according to their skill; all of it is the work of craftsmen. They say of them, ‘Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves!’” (Hosea 13:2)

A Bad Reaction

God often reminds His people of the many blessings He has bestowed upon them. Such is the case with God’s people during the ministry of Hosea. Beginning at verse four, the LORD reminds them that He brought them out of Egypt, cared for them, and fed them. Notice that He had not forced them to barely survive as they followed Him. He had fed them until they were “filled” (v. 6). And how did they react to Him? The first verses of our text tell us the sad story of how God’s own people turned to the worship of idols – even the worship of Baal. Notice that this worship involved images fashioned out of silver. We may not create many idols from our silver today, but we often trade our hard-earned currency for things that distract us from loyal service to God. God’s response is devastating. His wrath was to punish His people like a wild animal might tear apart its prey. There was nothing that could save them short of their turning their hearts back to God. Notice that government was no answer to their problems and was of no help in protecting the people from the chastising hand of God. Kingdom Prosperity is found in reacting to God’s goodness in ways that bring Him honor and glory and allow Him to continually bless us as a people.

Prayer Emphasis: Think again about how good God has been to you and your family. **Remind** yourself of how good God has been to our church. **React** to God’s blessings in a positive way. Never take the blessings of God for granted. There is not enough money or things in this world to replace God in our lives.

Day 31: Ecclesiastes 7:1-12

*“The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.”
(Ecclesiastes 7:4)*

Some Words to the Wise

Although no name is given for the writer of Ecclesiastes, there are several passages in the book that indicate Solomon, the son of David, was the author. The writer of Ecclesiastes reviews his entire life and seeks to understand the purpose of his existence. He soon learns that Kingdom Prosperity is more easily achieved when we make God’s purposes a priority over our own. In today’s first verse (7:1), the writer speaks of a good name being better than “precious ointment” (NKJV) or “perfume” (NIV). The fragrant mixture to which Solomon was referring was used as a symbol of joy and prosperity in the Bible. He suggests that one might have lived a life of Kingdom Prosperity if, when they come to the end of their life, they have maintained a good name (reputation). Solomon goes on to say that we often learn less from our *happy* times than we do our *hard* times. That is why he says it is “better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting” (v. 2), and that “sorrow” is sometimes “better than laughter” (v. 3). Verse 12 reminds us that there are some things that money cannot buy. Our possessions will soon possess us if we lack the kind of wisdom that only God and His Word can supply.

Prayer Emphasis: **Refuse** to allow things to own you! **Remember** that it is better to have less than it is to live life with less integrity. **Forsake** the things that so easily distract you before they are used to lead you to forsake the path to which you have been called.

Day 32: Ecclesiastes 7:13-26

“In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other...” (Ecclesiastes 7:14)

Consider

How blessed we could be and how advanced we would be in our pursuit of Kingdom Prosperity if we would heed the wisdom offered to us in today’s reading. Both the NKJV and NIV include the word “consider” in Ecclesiastes 7:14. The Hebrew word employed here is one that means “to learn, see, perceive or understand through life experience.” That is exactly what the writer is speaking of in verse 14. He reminds us that it is fine to be joyful or happy in the days of our “prosperity” but to never forget that the same loving God who designs our *better* days is the same God who also designs the *bitter* ones as well. How inconsiderate we would be if we could only praise God during the mountain top experiences in life. We learn so little while in those “peak” times while we seem to gain so much while in the valley of trial. The richest soil is always found in the valley. That is where we will grow strong in and for the Lord. The writer recalls seeing the righteous sometimes perishing early while seeing a wicked man living what appeared to be a long and prosperous life. Remember, Kingdom Prosperity requires a King and a Kingdom. We have been promised both. Consider that the next time trouble comes for a little visit.

Prayer Emphasis: **Avail** yourself to all the joy and blessing that God desires to give you. **Consider** the words of Solomon and **ask** God to give you wisdom enough to apply them to your heart and life. **Seek** out someone in the valley and be a true friend to them today or at your very next opportunity.

Day 33: Genesis 33:1-9

“But Esau said, ‘I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.’” (Genesis 33:9)

Esau

One might have to visit many churches or read many commentaries to find Esau being used as an example of Kingdom Prosperity. However, how much more prosperous can one be than to be fully satisfied with that which they already possess? Jacob had returned to his homeland, and he was soon to confront his elder brother Esau. This is the same man that Jacob had earlier deceived and conned out of his birthright. Now Jacob is seeking to pacify what he believes to be a very angry welcoming party. Imagine Jacob’s amazement at the response of Esau. His brother runs to meet him, embraces, and kisses him, and weeps with him as they experience a very glad reunion. After this initial meeting, Esau asked Jacob about the droves of animals that had been sent ahead of him (see Genesis 32: 13 – 15) and is told by Jacob that they were a gift to him, given in hope of his finding grace at his older brother’s hand. Then the shocker! Esau, a man from whom Jacob had taken so much, tells his younger brother to keep his gifts. Even though he did not have all that he might have expected as a first-born son among God’s people, what he did have was “enough.” Sometimes we discount Esau and fail to see that God does not throw anyone away when they do not meet every expectation.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to help you be satisfied with enough. Like any other man, Esau had his faults, but coveting was obviously not one of them! How many of us would have taken the gift anyway? **Pray** that we will all dethrone that selfish spirit that desires to control our every thought and action.

Day 34: Genesis 33:10-20

“And Jacob said, ‘No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me.’” (Genesis 33:10)

A Restored Relationship

In today’s reading we find two brothers rejoicing in a restored relationship. Both are trying very hard to give something of material value to the other while both are fully satisfied just to celebrate in the joy that comes when people love each other as God intended. Jacob pressed Esau to accept his peace offerings, but Esau had obviously already received a blessed peace from God. Time allowed God to work miracles in the lives of both men. Jacob’s heart was one that now desired to be humble, fair, and generous. Esau’s heart was one that had been emptied of the desire for revenge and filled with a desire to forgive and be reconciled to his brother. Imagine the blessings that would have been missed by both parties if they had not allowed God to do this wonderful work in their lives. Our family relationships should be some of our greatest blessings and our children and grandchildren should be valued as our most precious assets. Our reading ends with Jacob building an altar to God and naming it El Elohe Israel, or God is the God of Israel. There is no time where God seems more like God than when God’s people act and react more like God’s people!

Prayer Emphasis: Make the first move toward restoring a relationship with a friend or family member. **Know** that there is nothing more precious than the fellowship that God desires His people share with one another. **Ask** God to provide an opportunity to build a bridge to someone today.

Day 35: Haggai 1:1-13

“You have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but do not have enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes.” (Haggai 1:6)

“A Bag with Holes”

Today we find Haggai repeatedly asking God’s people to consider their actions in order for them to determine what kind of message their deeds are sending to God. It seems that Haggai lived and preached in a time where God’s people began to pay more attention to their own needs than those of God because they had somehow allowed the things of God to become a lower priority in their lives. At a time when God’s house remained unfinished, the people lived in houses that were finished and furnished. How did God react to their careless actions? He removed His blessing from the work of their hands and diminished the return on their investments. He spoke of their sowing much but harvesting little. He said that they had food to eat, but never enough. They had beverages to drink but they never seemed to be filled. No matter how much clothing they put on, they never seemed to get warm. But, most importantly, they earned their wages, but they never seemed to have any money! It was as if they were putting their money in a bag with holes. It is time for all of us to ask if God has cut holes in our pockets! Our circumstances are crying out to us and asking us to return to proper priorities. It must begin somewhere, and it might as well begin with us!

Prayer Emphasis: **Examine** your check register today and see how many things might be a higher priority than giving to God. Many people spend more money on leisure and entertainment than they give to God’s work. Kingdom Prosperity comes when we **realize** that God must be first in our financial lives.

Day 36: Haggai 2:1-9

“The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts.” (Haggai 2:8)

The First Priority

The first priority of every believer should be that God be glorified. This should be a desire that is evident in the lives of all of God’s children. It is not a coincidence that Haggai is delivering this message on the 21st day of the 7th month of the year. That day would be the last day of the Feast of the Tabernacles, a time when God’s people celebrated God’s blessings on their harvests. However, we learned yesterday that the harvests now paled in comparison to the times when God’s people had honored Him first in their lives. Notice that, just as their harvests were smaller, so was the temple that they were constructing for God. Some of these same people were alive to see and remember Solomon’s magnificent temple that was destroyed 66 years earlier. When they viewed the foundation for the new temple, they realized that it was much smaller than the one that they were replacing. This resulted in some tearful moments for some of God’s people. Back in Ezra 3:12 we read where, upon viewing the foundation of the new temple, some wept for sorrow and some shouted for joy. What made the difference? Experience! Some, the older Jewish people, had a standard to which the new could be compared. We need more people to remind us of how it used to be in America so that we can humble ourselves before God and see those blessed times once more!

Prayer Emphasis: Kingdom Prosperity requires that God be first and foremost in our lives. **Commit** to seeking first the Kingdom of God and watch as He adds to us everything that we need to succeed in this life. **Realize** that it is time to put God first!

Day 37: Luke 4:1-13

“Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil...” (Luke 4:1-2a)

Temptation

It may seem odd to us to read that Jesus was “filled with the Holy Spirit” and “led by the Spirit” and yet be “tempted...by the devil.” Many of us have lived under the false assumption that one might someday grow to be spiritual enough that you would not struggle with temptation. We need to think again! Jesus was tempted to *doubt* as Satan repeatedly used the word “if” in each one of his assaults. He was tempted to *deny* as the enemy tried to get him to do things contrary to the Word of God. He was tempted to *destruction* when the evil one tried to persuade Him to leap from the highest point of the temple. Every temptation had something to do with personal gain. The first was for the physical man – food. The second was for the mental or emotional man – power and authority. The third temptation was to the spiritual man – spiritual pride and arrogance. All three temptations were met with the Word from God. Kingdom Prosperity will always align itself with God’s Word. We will never have to violate the commands of God to prosper.

Prayer Emphasis: **Commit** to daily Bible reading and prayer. **Recognize** that temptation may increase as we begin to grow in grace and our commitment to God and that it may often be attached to physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. **Defeat** the enemy with the weapons that God desires to put at your disposal. **Encourage** a fellow believer today.

Day 38: Luke 12:22-34

“Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?” (Luke 12:24)

“Consider the Ravens”

Earlier Jesus spoke to His disciples and referenced sparrows (Luke 12:6). He stated that five sparrows sold for “copper coins” (NKJV) or “two pennies” (NIV). Whatever term you use, it is apparent that two sparrows were of little value in the economy of Jesus’ time. In the same verse in which Jesus spoke of their small value, He added, “And not one of them is forgotten before God.” Now Jesus went even further. He used “ravens” as an illustration of God’s love, care, and provision. Sparrows had little value to people at that time, but ravens had no value at all! They were scavengers and could not be eaten since such creatures were unclean. However, the raven is the first bird mentioned in the Scriptures (Gen. 8:7). Jesus clearly wants us to understand that there are no social strata in the Kingdom of God. God provides for all who choose to follow Him. Therefore, we are being most like unbelievers when we fail to trust God to provide our needs. One of the sins that can overtake those who do not understand the depth and width of God’s love is that they think they must make their own way through life. Because of that, they hold on to everything as long as they can. Jesus said that we can have the kind of faith that will allow us to give freely and willingly to others because we know that God is going to continually care for even the least of His creatures. Kingdom Prosperity is taking God at His Word and investing in His Kingdom now.

Prayer Emphasis: **Refuse** to worry about matters that are covered under the promises of God. **Trust** God to keep His word and bless those who invest in His Kingdom. Open an account in the Bank of Heaven today by giving to the ministry. **Look** at your checkbook register and see where it says your heart belongs.

Day 39: 1 Samuel 2:1-10

“And Hannah prayed and said: ‘My heart rejoices in the LORD; My horn is exalted in the LORD. I smile at my enemies, because I rejoice in Your salvation.’” (1 Samuel 2:1)

VIP Seating

Hannah’s song of praise to God is one of the earliest poems in the Bible. It became such a staple in the Jewish faith that Mary used portions of it in her own song of praise after learning that God had chosen her to be the human mother of Jesus. Note two things about Hannah’s joy: 1) It is *from* the heart, and 2) It is *in* the LORD. The “horn” was a symbol of strength and protection. Her reference to God as a “rock” was to praise God for his unchanging, foundational love for her (v. 2). Hannah says it all when she states, “The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the beggar from the ash heap, to set them among princes and make them inherit the throne of glory” (vs. 7-8). It is clear that Hannah had no desire to rob God of any of the glory and praise that was due Him. She saw the gift of her precious son, Samuel, as something God had entrusted to her for a purpose. Kingdom Prosperity is available to all who will turn to God in prayer and seek their most basic needs from Him. Hannah was married to a man who had two wives. The other wife had children and Hannah was barren. But now she had taken a backseat long enough. She humbled herself before the LORD and soon found herself sitting on a throne of honor. Wow! Talk about special, reserved seating!

Prayer Emphasis: Persist in prayer! Do not give up simply because you do not get what you want the very first time that you ask. 1 Samuel 1:12 states that Hannah, “continued praying before the LORD.” **Follow** that example and you will soon better understand Kingdom Prosperity.

Day 40: 1 Samuel 2:12-21

“Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the LORD.” (1 Samuel 2:12)

Sons

Samuel was a son given to God and he “ministered to the LORD before Eli the priest” (1 Sam. 2:11). Eli, the priest, had two sons who were said to be wicked men who had no respect for the LORD. Their lives were marked by greed and selfishness. Rather than get their provisions after the accustomed manner, they wanted their portion of the offerings even before they had been fully given to God! And, if that were not sin enough, they wanted the choicest parts of the offerings for themselves (see v. 29). When they did that, they were putting themselves before God. This “Me first” attitude proved to be a fatal mistake (v. 34) and a source of continual sorrow for Eli. At the same time, Samuel was growing in the LORD (v. 21). Those who truly understand Kingdom Prosperity know that there are things our children need that money cannot buy. We would do well to see to the spiritual needs of our children first and understand that children are really a gift to us and entrusted to us for God’s divine purposes. Note that God rewarded Hannah with three additional sons and two daughters. You simply cannot out give God!

Prayer Emphasis: Be the best parent that you can possibly be! **Realize** that parenting is the most important calling upon your life. **Believe** that the time and energy you invest into the lives of your children will bring a far greater return than anything else. **Tell** your children that you love them and that you are praying for them. Thank you for reading with us about Kingdom Prosperity. Contact us at gary@seminolebc.com if we can minister to you in any way.