

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law. – Psalm 119:18

Through the Bible in a year reading guide – Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church

December – Week 49

Completed

3 - Hebrews	11-13	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 - Hosea	1-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 - Hosea	8-14	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 - Joel	1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 - Amos	1-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 - Amos 6-9, Obadiah 1		<input type="checkbox"/>
9 - James	1-5	<input type="checkbox"/>

We read God's Word:

To know Him better

To love Him more

To walk in His ways

To be conformed to the image of His Son

This week's reading: begins with the "Hall of Faith". **Some** define faith using 11:1. The words "believe" and "faith" have become watered down in English usage. A better English word would be "trust". As we read Hebrews 11, and see the words, "By Faith", we should understand them to mean, "Because of his/her trust in the character of God, His mighty power, and His great faithfulness...". **We** have to trust Him to be pleasing to Him (v.6). When anxiety says, "I don't know what is going to happen; what am I to do?", trust Jesus, the One shepherding us. He is faithful to lead us; we simply need to trust that He will lead us. Faith, in a nutshell, is a proper understanding of God - His faithfulness, goodness, and love. Trust Him. Keep your eyes on Him (12:2). **Do** not take God's discipline lightly (12:5-6). He is working His holiness in us (v.10), and without holiness/sanctification, we will not see the Lord (v.14). **Do** not give up the blessing for temporary relief (12:15-17). **Hosea** means, "Save". God reveals Himself, again, (as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel), as the husband of an unfaithful wife. God repeatedly expresses His love for His people. **Regathered** Israel will return to seek Yahweh their God and David their King (3:4-5). **Why** did they lack knowledge? (Hos. 4:6) Because they rejected it! Read God's Word, don't reject it. **The** words, "O come, let us return to Yahweh" are followed by a promise that was never claimed (6:1-2). They never got away from the sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who caused Israel to sin (not even in Elijah's victory on Mount Carmel, nor in Jehu's purge of Baal worship). "**Let** us know, let us press on to know Yahweh;" (6:3) is good encouragement for continuing to read through the Bible. "**They** made kings, but not through me" (8:4); except for a couple of exceptions, most kings in the northern kingdom of Israel were appointed by men. **Joel** ("Yahweh is God") doesn't mention who was king in his day, but his message was directed to Jerusalem (mentioned six times, plus references to "House of God", "Zion", "Holy Mountain", etc. for a total of over a dozen references). **Amos** was from Tekoa, a city in Judah (2 Chron. 11:6). Beware of the famine (8:11-12). **Obadiah** is the shortest book in the Old Testament, with prophesy against Edom, possibly written after the exile of Judah and Jerusalem. **James** was not written by the brother of John, but by the half-brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55-56; Gal. 1:19), who also gave leadership over the Church Council in Acts 15:13-21. **James'** letter of 108 verses has 54 commands.

Insights from the Original Biblical Languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic):

Amos 8:2 has a Hebrew "word play", lost to us in English: "summer fruit" (קִיץ "kites") and "end" (קֵץ "kates") sound similar. **The** "cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) is sometimes misunderstood as "observers", watching us run our race. However, the Greek word μάρτυς ("mar-toos") means, "witness" in the sense of "one who testifies" in court. This is a cloud of ones testifying to the faithfulness of God (as given in chapter 11). **Heb.** 12:2 "looking to Jesus" - the Greek word ἀφορώω ("ah-fah-rah'-oh") means "to view with undivided attention by looking away from every other object". In weeks 42 & 48 we saw οὐ and μή used to make the strongest possible negative statement in Greek. Heb. 13:5 (a quote of Deut. 32:6,8) says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." A paraphrase of the weightiness of the Greek text would be, "There is no possible way I will leave you" and "there is no possible way I will forsake you." In English, "Let" is often understood "to allow", but in James, it is often an imperative: 1:2 "you all must consider"; v.4 "it must have its perfect work"; v.5 and 6 "he must ask"; v.7 "he must not suppose"; v.9 "he must glory". **James** 5:4 mentions, "Lord Sabaoth", which comes from the Hebrew word סָבָאֹת ("tsa-bah-oat") meaning, "hosts" (as in a large army).

How has God revealed Himself in this week's reading? What has He shown me this week?

God wants us to know Him (Hosea 6:1-6). His compassions grow warm and tender (11:8). He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness (Joel 2:13). He does nothing without revealing His counsel to His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). He gives every good and perfect gift and does not change (James 1:17).