

KSW16 to Apr 20

April 14 Su Reading 104 — Jeremiah 23:1-12 — Different Shepherds

¹ *“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD.*

² *Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: “You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. ³ Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD.*

⁵ *“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’*

⁷ *“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ ⁸ but ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he^[m] had driven them.’ Then they shall dwell in their own land.”*

⁹ *Concerning the prophets:*

*My heart is broken within me;
all my bones shake;
I am like a drunken man,
like a man overcome by wine,
because of the LORD
and because of his holy words.*

¹⁰ *For the land is full of adulterers;
because of the curse the land mourns,
and the pastures of the wilderness are dried up.
Their course is evil,
and their might is not right.*

¹¹ *“Both prophet and priest are ungodly;
even in my house I have found their evil,
declares the LORD.*

¹² *Therefore their way shall be to them
like slippery paths in the darkness,
into which they shall be driven and fall,
for I will bring disaster upon them
in the year of their punishment,
declares the LORD.*

ESV Footnote

(23:8) Septuagint; Hebrew /

Holy Words — The shepherds of Israel—the prophets and priests—had strayed from the truth of God’s Word, committing spiritual adultery and leading the people astray with them. They had been given the Torah, written through Moses, the book of Judges, the books of Samuel, most of Kings and

Chronicles—all describing God’s direction and the peoples’ sin. It was God’s Word, “*his holy words*” (v. 9). Those “*holy words*” that Jeremiah mentions, however, were spoken in the context of sorrow, where he said, “*My heart is broken within me...*” This friendless prophet was sent with this message of judgment against the false prophets and wayward leaders before Babylon conquered Jerusalem: “*I will bring disaster upon them in the year of their punishment, declares the LORD*” (v. 12). They were not only “*holy words*” coming from a holy God, but they were also horrifying words of punishment. The covers of our Bibles say, “Holy Bible.” They are holy because of the Source, the Holy God, but they contain both wonderful words of direction and blessing as well as the words of warning that there will be punishing consequences for sin. If we are following the wonderful words, we have no fear of the warning words.

Wonderful Words of Life - YouTube

Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of life;
Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of life;
Words of life and beauty
Teach me faith and duty.

Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of life;
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
Wonderful words of life.

— Philip Bliss (1874)

April 15 M Reading 105 — Micah 2:1-13 — Penalty for Continuing Sin

- 1 *Woe to those who devise wickedness
and work evil on their beds!
When the morning dawns, they perform it,
because it is in the power of their hand.*
- 2 *They covet fields and seize them,
and houses, and take them away;
they oppress a man and his house,
a man and his inheritance.*
- 3 *Therefore thus says the LORD:
behold, against this family I am devising disaster,^[fn]
from which you cannot remove your necks,
and you shall not walk haughtily,
for it will be a time of disaster.*
- 4 *In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you
and moan bitterly,
and say, “We are utterly ruined;
he changes the portion of my people;
how he removes it from me!
To an apostate he allots our fields.”*
- 5 *Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot
in the assembly of the LORD.*
- 6 *“Do not preach”—thus they preach—*

- “one should not preach of such things;
disgrace will not overtake us.”*
- 7 *Should this be said, O house of Jacob?
Has the LORD grown impatient?^[fn]
Are these his deeds?
Do not my words do good
to him who walks uprightly?*
- 8 *But lately my people have risen up as an enemy;
you strip the rich robe from those who pass by trustingly
with no thought of war.^[fn]*
- 9 *The women of my people you drive out
from their delightful houses;
from their young children you take away
my splendor forever.*
- 10 *Arise and go,
for this is no place to rest,
because of uncleanness that destroys
with a grievous destruction.*
- 11 *If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,
saying, “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,”
he would be the preacher for this people!*
- 12 *I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;
I will gather the remnant of Israel;
I will set them together
like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in its pasture,
a noisy multitude of men.*
- 13 *He who opens the breach goes up before them;
they break through and pass the gate,
going out by it.
Their king passes on before them,
the LORD at their head.*

ESV Footnotes

(2:3) The same Hebrew word can mean *evil* or *disaster*, depending on the context

(2:7) Hebrew *Has the spirit of the LORD grown short?*

(2:8) Or *returning from war*

The Nudging, Patient Spirit — The prophet Micah lived in the period before the northern kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians and scattered among many nations. God warned them through Micah, *“I am devising disaster”* (v. 3). Their defeat would be the fulfillment of centuries of prophetic warnings from God about their having turned away from Him to serve other gods. The Holy Spirit is mentioned in this passage, but it is hidden in the footnotes of the ESV and NIV translations of verse 7. The question, *“Has the LORD grown impatient?”* is more literally, *“Is the Spirit of Yahweh impatient?”* (Legacy Standard Bible). That question is in response to Israel’s insistence that *“disgrace will not overtake us”* (v. 6). They were counting on the never-ending grace of God’s Spirit because they were His chosen people. That sounds much like the attitudes of many Christians today, who are continuing in sinful practices with the expectation that God will forgive them. The warning from Micah might be summarized with, *“Don’t push God’s patience!”* God’s discipline will come even to Christians who persist in sin. Punishment and discipline are not God’s preference; He desires to give blessings instead. Verse 7 ends with this: *“Do not my words do good to him who walks uprightly?”* If

we walk in obedience, we walk in safety. The Holy Spirit will nudge us with conviction when we begin to stray from the path of righteousness.

[O Patient, Spotless One! - YouTube](#)

O Patient, spotless One!
Our hearts in meekness train,
To bear Thy yoke, and learn of Thee,
That we may rest obtain.
— Christian Bernstein (b. 1672)

April 16 Tu Reading 106 — Micah 3:5-8 — Profit-seeking Prophets

- ⁵ *Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets
who lead my people astray,
who cry "Peace"
when they have something to eat,
but declare war against him
who puts nothing into their mouths.*
- ⁶ *Therefore it shall be night to you, without vision,
and darkness to you, without divination.
The sun shall go down on the prophets,
and the day shall be black over them;*
- ⁷ *the seers shall be disgraced,
and the diviners put to shame;
they shall all cover their lips,
for there is no answer from God.*
- ⁸ *But as for me, I am filled with power,
with the Spirit of the LORD,
and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression
and to Israel his sin.*

Boldness in the Spirit — The false prophets in Micah’s day had two main faults: they misled others, and they sought profit for themselves by doing it. God said that they “*lead my people astray*” (v. 5a). They were not challenging people about their sin, but they were comforting them in it. They were also making their living by exploiting people, telling them what they wanted to hear, crying the positive message, “*Peace when they have something to eat*” (v. 5b). Where was the cry against Israel’s sin that was leading them to disaster? They were not prophets but profit-seekers. There are many modern preachers on television and in some churches today with the same apparent motive, making no waves about sin but telling people only what is pleasant for them to hear. Micah was much different than the false prophets of his time because he said, “*I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin*” (v. 8). The difference was the Holy Spirit, who gave him boldness and power. He was bold to warn people about sin and its consequences, and he was empowered by words from God. We have the same responsibility and power to stand up against the sinful culture around us, warning them with the powerful words of God that “*the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Rom. 6:23).

[We Have a Gospel to Proclaim - YouTube](#)

Tell of His reign at God's right hand,
By all creation glorified;
He sends His Spirit on His Church
To live for Him, the Lamb who died.
— Edward Burns (1968)

April 17 W Reading 107 — Haggai 2:1-9 — Nothing in Your Eyes

¹ *In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet,* ² *“Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to all the remnant of the people, and say,* ³ *‘Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?’* ⁴ *Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD. Be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the LORD. Work, for I am with you, declares the LORD of hosts,* ⁵ *according to the covenant that I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not.* ⁶ *For thus says the LORD of hosts: Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land.* ⁷ *And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts.* ⁸ *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of hosts.* ⁹ *The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of hosts.”*

Continuing Presence — The Jews had been released to return to Judah from Babylon. Zerubbabel was appointed to be the governor and Joshua was the high priest. They were surrounded by the discouraging sight of the ruins of Solomon's temple and the city of Jerusalem. God had ordered a new temple to be built, but it would be much smaller than the one the older returnees remembered. The people still felt defeated and alone, so God challenged and encouraged them. He gave them three commands: *“Be strong ... Work ... [and] Fear not”* (vv. 4-5). In the middle of these commands were two statements of God's presence: *“I am with you ... [and] My Spirit remains in your midst”* (vv. 4-5). In this context, the meaning seems to be that, whether you see any evidence of God's presence or not, keep on working with energy and confidence. How about you? Do you sometimes feel that God is not around, that the Holy Spirit is not really in your heart? Remember Zerubbabel and Joshua; keep on working and trusting. God is still present, cares about you, and is working for His purpose and for your good. We are living in *“the latter glory”* (v. 9) promised by God, when His people would have His Spirit living within them. We are walking temples of the resident God.

[In His Presence - YouTube](#)

In Your presence there is comfort;
In Your presence there is peace.
When we seek to know Your heart,
We will find such blessed assurance
In Your holy presence Lord.
— Dick and Melody Tunney (1989)

April 18 Th Reading 108 — Zechariah 4:1-10a — Zerubbabel Builds a Temple

¹ *And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep.* ² *And he said to me, “What do you see?” I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold,*

with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. ³ *And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.* ⁴ *And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"* ⁵ *Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord."* ⁶ *Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.* ⁷ *Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"*

⁸ *Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,* ⁹ *"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.* ¹⁰ *For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.*

Effective Power — God had commissioned Judah's new governor, Zerubbabel, through the prophet Haggai, to build a new temple in Jerusalem (Hag. 1:1, 7). Many of the leaders were opposing the building of a temple. The obstacles seemed like a "*great mountain*" to Zerubbabel, but the message of this vision assured the governor that it "*shall become a plain*" (Zech. 4:7). How? "*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts*" (v. 6). The Holy Spirit would make the difference, supplying the wisdom and energy needed to accomplish the task ordered by the Lord. That is true for us, too. Remember that one of the names of the Spirit is "*Helper*." He comes alongside to help us do the things that are beyond our own human ability in controlling circumstances or making our efforts eternally effective. All our might and power are useless in the higher scope of God's work; it takes divine power. We need to recognize our limitations and lean on the Holy Spirit to supply effectiveness in what we attempt to do for the cause of Christ.

[O God, Our Help in Ages Past - YouTube](#)

O God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Be Thou our Guard while life shall last,
And our eternal Home!

— Isaac Watts (1719)

April 19 F Reading 109 — Zechariah 6:1-8 — Chariots of God

¹ *Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four chariots came out from between two mountains. And the mountains were mountains of bronze.* ² *The first chariot had red horses, the second black horses,* ³ *the third white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled horses—all of them strong.*^[fn] ⁴ *Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"* ⁵ *And the angel answered and said to me, "These are going out to the four winds of heaven, after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth.* ⁶ *The chariot with the black horses goes toward the north country, the white ones go after them, and the dappled ones go toward the south country."* ⁷ *When the strong horses came out, they were impatient to go and patrol the earth. And he said, "Go, patrol the earth."* *So they patrolled the earth.* ⁸ *Then he cried to me, "Behold, those who go toward the north country have set my Spirit at rest in the north country."*

ESV Footnote

(6:3) Or *and the fourth chariot strong dappled horses*

Spirit at Rest — Chariots in ancient times were military symbols of power. Since the four chariots in this vision came “*after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth*” (v. 5), they represented God and His action. One chariot was sent to the south toward the military power of Egypt and two chariots were sent north, the direction from which both Assyria had come to defeat Israel and Babylon had come to destroy Judah. The angel who interpreted what Zechariah saw was no ordinary angel because he not only commanded the chariots to go, but he also spoke as God, saying that the two chariots “*have set my Spirit at rest in the north country*” (v. 8). This was likely “*the angel of the LORD,*” the pre-incarnate Christ. The Spirit’s “*rest*” was either a rest from war or a rest from wrath. Both Assyria and Babylon had carried out God’s wrath against His own people because of their sin, but these two nations had also experienced God’s wrath for their own actions. We would probably rather think of the Holy Spirit in connection with rest than wrath, but He was involved in both. His presence in our hearts does involve the negative idea of conviction and discipline, but it primarily provides a condition of rest. Both Jeremiah and Jesus promised that those who sought for God would “*find rest for your souls*” (Jer. 6:16; Matt. 11:29). That rest is peace, and the Holy Spirit provides that for those in whom He dwells.

[It Is Well with My Soul - YouTube](#)

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."
— Horatio Spafford (1873)

April 20 Sa Reading 110 — Jeremiah 25:30-31 — God’s Judgment

³⁰ “*You, therefore, shall prophesy against them all these words, and say to them:*

“*The LORD will roar from on high,
and from his holy habitation utter his voice;
he will roar mightily against his fold,
and shout, like those who tread grapes,
against all the inhabitants of the earth.*

³¹ *The clamor will resound to the ends of the earth,
for the LORD has an indictment against the nations;
he is entering into judgment with all flesh,
and the wicked he will put to the sword,
declares the LORD.’*

Holy Habitation — This prophesy of God’s judgment goes back to the time before Judah’s defeat by Babylon. Almost all of it is negative, judgment not only “*against his fold*” (v. 30) but also “*against the nations*” (v. 31). The wicked will be punished for all generations of people who refuse to follow the Lord. The one positive fact that I got from this passage was the description of heaven as “*his holy habitation*” (v. 30). That picture appears in other OT statements as well. It is the place from which God blesses His people (Deut. 26:15) and from which He serves as “*Father of the fatherless and protector of widows*” (Psa. 68:5). The prayers of the priests and Levites “*came to his holy habitation in heaven*” (2 Chron. 30:27). David said, “*I love the habitation of your house and the place where your glory dwells*” (Psa. 26:8). Another worshipful response from us toward this ultimate dwelling place of God is to “*be silent, all flesh, before the LORD...*” (Zech. 2:13). Since God is holy, His habitation in heaven is holy, and we will be with Him there for eternity.

[Sanctus \(Holy\) - YouTube](#)

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

— Ancient, Anonymous