

April 1

2 Kings 2:1-18

This passage tells of Elijah's final conversations with his successor Elisha, and then of Elijah being taken up into heaven.

Question to Consider:

Elisha asked for "a double portion" of Elijah's spirit. What is your reaction to his request?

Prayer:

Loving God, I pray that the requests I make of you will always be in accord with your will, and I pray I have the courage to turn to you in faith. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

April 2

2 Kings 5:1-14

These verses tell of the healing of Naaman, a powerful man from a neighboring land.

Question to Consider:

Naaman initially rejected what Elisha told him to do, but then he gave in and did it, and was healed. Can you think of a time when you were sick and someone suggested a strange-sounding remedy? Did you try it? Why, or why not? If you tried it, did it work?

Prayer:

Gracious God, you know the healing that I need better than I know it myself. I pray that my heart and spirit will always be open to your direction, even if your direction seems hard to understand. I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

April 3

2 Kings 22:1-20

This passage tells of the discovery of the Book of the Law (the first 5 books of the Bible, also known as the Law of Moses).

Question to Consider:

How do you react to God's decision to punish Israel for years of disobedience, but to delay it until after the death of Josiah?

Prayer:

Merciful God, I know that you take sin seriously and I pray that I will, too. I know that through Jesus you offer forgiveness, but still I must do my best to do you will, and take it seriously when I do not. When I sin, Lord, please forgive me. In the name of my Savior Jesus, Amen.

April 4

2 Kings 23:36-24:17

This passage tells of the beginning of a critically important time in the history of God's people – the exile.

Question to Consider:

Why do you suppose God allowed the Babylonian king to conquer Jerusalem and take so many of its people captive?

Prayer:

Almighty God, this passage is another reminder that there are consequences for the choices that I make and when I make bad choices – as the people in Jerusalem had done for so long – there are painful consequences. But even so, I also know that in the end I can find forgiveness in you. In the name of my Savior Jesus, Amen.

April 5

Ezra 1:1-11

The exile lasted 70 years and during that time the Babylonians were conquered by the Persians. After 70 years in exile, the king of Persia began to allow the captives from Judah (Jerusalem) to return to their homeland and his proclamation of that is described in this passage.

Question to Consider:

The punishment was over and it was time for the captives to return to Jerusalem. Think of a time when you were punished over an extended period of time (grounded as a child, for example). How did it feel when the punishment was over?

Prayer:

Loving God, even when I am being punished, please help me to maintain my faith and to persevere. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.