

Pleasant Valley  
Church of Christ

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## Schedule of Services

### Sunday

Classes . . . . . 9:30 am  
Worship . . . . . 10:30 am  
Evening . . . . . 6:00 pm

### Wednesday

Classes . . . . . 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

# Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

May 9, 2010

## Reading the scriptures

by David King

"At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, you shall **read** this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may **hear** and that they may **learn** to fear the Lord your God and carefully **observe** all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess" (Deut. 31:10-13).

Notice the process of education outlined by Moses here: **Read . . . hear . . . learn . . . observe**. In an age when people had no direct access to the written word for their own personal use, these public readings would expose them directly to God's word, unfiltered by human interpretation. If the people listened carefully, they would learn how God wanted them to live, and be motivated to obey it.

Throughout Israel's history, the nation's fortunes were linked to their knowledge of their Scriptures. When the people drifted into idolatry and immorality, it was usually because these readings were neglected and the people were ignorant of God's word. "I have written for him the great things of My law, but they were considered a strange thing" (Hos. 8:12). On the other hand, spiritual revivals were often accompanied by marathon Scripture readings (2 Chron. 34:18-21, 29-31; Neh. 8:1-8).

Public Scripture reading also played an important role in the early church. Paul's letters were to be read to the churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27). Timothy was to "give attention to reading" among his duties as an evangelist (1 Tim. 4:13)—more likely a function of his public teaching, rather than personal study.

There is certainly a place for preaching that expands on the sacred message and helps people make personal application of Biblical principles. But the public reading of the Biblical text allows God to address the people directly. It is the purest form of teaching God's word.

There are two important lessons here for God's people today.

First, the reading of Scripture should be a regular part of our worship. It need not be a formal act of worship, but can be woven into other elements. Preachers should rely heavily on readings as the foundation of their sermons. Those who preside over the Lord's Table can educate the congregation on the meaning of the Supper by reading appropriate Scriptures. Even song services can be enhanced with carefully chosen texts from the Bible. Worship services that are not immersed in Scripture are little more than empty rituals.

Second, we are fortunate to live in an age when technology, education, and democracy have placed God's word directly in our hands. We have the ability and the opportunity to read it ourselves, without having to depend on someone else to read it to us. We should take full advantage of this opportunity, and make Scripture reading part of our daily routine.