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**Daily Manna: Editor's Choice**  
**Archive for 2018**

**Daily Old and New Testament teachings**  
**as requested by the late Fred Morris, author and founder of Manna**  
**Publications (USA)**

See: <http://manna-publications.org.uk/Daily-Weekly-Devotionals.shtml>

**Bible quotations used by Fred Morris are mainly from the NIRV New International Readers Version (1998) published at that time by Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., London. Used with permission.**

**Type "CTRL F" to search for key words or phrases**

**Day 1. Deuteronomy 25:17-19.** When God gives us "rest from all our enemies around us" we must "blot them out of our memories". *Lord, enable me to heed your warning to blot out every memory and spirit that corrupts and hinders Your God-fearing "rest". Amen.* **Acts 10:48 to 11:3.** At Caesarea, early in Peter's ministry, he was asked by the Gentiles to remain with them for a few days. When Peter returned to Jerusalem he was criticised for eating with the uncircumcised. However, through his testimony, the objections were dropped, God was praised and the purpose of God was recognised to bring repentance and salvation to eternal life for all (11:18). *Lord, help me to see Your salvation plan for all and testify against every critical spirit that hinders or restricts Kingdom growth. Amen.*

**Day 2. Psalm 24.** King David enquires about who is worthy to ascend "the hill of the Lord to stand in His holy place" (v.3). His answer is, "he who has clean hands and a pure heart" who worships no-one or nothing else (v.4). He will receive blessing from the Lord God Almighty and forgiveness from Him who is our Saviour (v.5). David also invites the ancient gates of Jerusalem to be raised up in readiness to let the King of Glory come in (v.7,9). This looked forward to the time when the Son of God rode into Jerusalem joined by those who believed He was the Messiah. Forty years after this event, the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and no-one has been able to worship God "in His holy place" since. The world now awaits the second fulfilment of this prophecy when Messiah's return in glory to meet with all who believe in Him for their salvation. *Come, Lord Jesus, and purify Your Church as we wait for Your return. Amen.*

**Day 3. Isaiah 29:13-24.** Isaiah is given a fuller understanding of the heart of man (v.13-16) and the heart of God (v.17-24). We read here what is so true today of how mankind honours God with their mouths but not their hearts (v.13), who plan evil, believing that no-one knows (v.15), who turn truth upside down as if the clay can tell the potter what is true (v.16). But the day will come when the deaf will hear and the blind will see the words of life that are written down (v.18), the humble and needy will rejoice in God Almighty (v.19), the ruthless, the mockers and "all who have an eye for evil" will disappear (v.20), including those who deprive the innocent of justice in court (v.21). Then the people "will stand in awe of God", the "wayward in spirit will gain understanding" and "those who complain will accept instruction" (v.23-24). *Lord, open the eyes of believers today to speak out against the distortion and destruction of Your truth. Reveal what is in Your heart so that everyone will stand in awe of You and Your purposes for this generation. Amen.*

**Day 4. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.** The body is not made up of one part but of many (v.14), just as God arranged it (v.18), with the humbler parts equally honoured (v.24), working together in unity (v.25), with no division and with equal concern for each other part of the body (v.25). The whole body suffers if one part suffers and the whole body is honoured when one part is honoured (v.26). So, too, in the Church, the Body of Christ, we do not have the same gifts or calling but we should work together in unity, encouraging the use of the greater gifts (v.27-31). *Help us Lord to be thankful for the privilege of playing a small part in Your Church for the greater good in our Father's Kingdom. Amen.*

**Day 5. Hebrews 2:10-11.** The purpose of God in offering salvation through Christ is clearly upheld in verse 10. It was His plan from the outset to 'bring many sons to glory' that we can enjoy the privilege of being brought into the family of our Almighty God and Creator, 'for whom and through whom everything exists'. And 'it was fitting that God ... should make the Author of their salvation perfect through suffering' in that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should suffer and die for our redemption, paying the price for our sins. His spotless body was the perfect sacrifice acceptable to God. Through His suffering, our salvation is made complete and we are therefore part of the same family as our Lord Himself (v.11). *Praise God for making unworthy people worthy of being adopted as a brother or sister of Jesus and as a son or daughter of God. Let these profound words sink into every part of our being!*

**Day 6. 2 Samuel 19.** David laments the deaths of King Saul and his son Jonathan. Even though they had disobeyed Almighty God, David recognised that 'the mighty had fallen' since they had been the chosen people of God. David was careful not to criticise other believers even when they had done wrong. He knew what it was to fail God and live with sad memories (2:2) and yet know the forgiveness of God and His anointing in service (2:4). *Lord, help us to see Your bigger picture and pray for those whom you love who go the wrong way in life, to know Your forgiveness. Help us to stay true to Your calling and put behind us our own past failings. Thank you Father for Your mercy and forgiveness in Christ. Amen.*

**Day 7. Ezekiel 48:35.** Ezekiel is told that the name of the new city of Jerusalem will be 'The Lord is there'. This clearly reveals what was in the heart of Almighty God 2600 years ago when the remnant of Jews were still in exile in Babylon. It was fulfilled approximately 130 years later in the time of Nehemiah and remained so for the next 500 years until the Christian era. There is a spiritual sense in which this remains true to this day. *Come again Lord Jesus, soon, and fulfil the desire of our Father for the city of David and the people of Israel and all who are grafted into the family of father Abraham. Amen.*

**Day 8. 1 Samuel 13.** King Saul fails to please God. The people of Israel quickly regretted asking God for a king (12:19). The first thing that King Saul and his son Jonathan did was to foolishly attack the Philistines without seeking God (13:2-3). The outcome soon became critical and the people hid for fear (13:6-7). Then Saul offered up burnt sacrifices to worship the Lord without waiting for Samuel the priest/prophet (13:8). Samuel arrived and told Saul he had acted foolishly (13:13) and said that his kingdom would not endure. God had found another "man after His own heart" who would take Saul's place "because you have not kept the Lord's command" (13:14). **Romans 12:1-2.** Paul defines here the basics for knowing God's perfect will. He urges us to be 'holy and pleasing to God' as an act of worship and avoid doing things in 'the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind'. *Father God, forgive us when we run ahead of You and do foolish things without seeking You first, lest others take our place. May our desire be to obey and please You as a form of worship which will transform our behaviour and thinking in this world. Amen.*

**Day 9. Judges 4.** The role of women among God's people. After nearly 100 years of blessing, Israel again sinned and came under the control of the Canaanites and their military leader Sisera (4:1-2). The people cried to Almighty God for help (4:3) and the prophetess Deborah gave them God's word to raise up a mighty army under Barak to defeat their enemies (4:6-7). Barak declined to go into battle without Deborah so she agreed to go with him with the warning that "the honour will not be yours, for the Lord will hand Sisera over to a

woman" (4:9). *Thank God for the role of women down the years in the purposes of God for His people. May we readily pray for all whom God chooses to lead our nation in times of trouble and enable us to see clearly God's purpose and provision so we can pray with much conviction in line with His will. Amen.* **Philippians 2:12-15 (NIrV).** Paul advises, "Continue to work out your own salvation. Do it with fear and trembling. God is working in you. He wants your plans and your acts to be in keeping with His good purpose. Do everything without finding fault or arguing. Then you will be pure and without blame. You will be children of God without fault in a sinful and evil world [in which] you shine like stars in the heavens." *May we see clearly God's purpose and provision so we can pray and act with much conviction in line with His will. Amen.*

**Day 10. Psalm 147.** The psalmist declares it is good to worship our God through the singing of praises (v.1) and with thanksgiving whilst making music to Him (v.7). He describes the ongoing wonder of God's creation and His delight in all who put their hope in His unfailing love (v.11). The psalmist values the righteousness of His laws and decrees revealed to His special people (v.19) which at that time had not been done for any other nation (v.20). *Father God, open our eyes to the wonders of Your creation, and Your delight in those who worship You and put their trust in You. Thank you for revealing your truth and offering Your salvation to the whole world through Jesus, Your Son and our Saviour. Amen.* **Acts 1:12-14.** After the amazing events of the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, the disciples and some women plus the mother and brothers of Jesus, met in an upper room in Jerusalem to "join together constantly in prayer". In so doing, these faithful few prepared the way for God's Holy Spirit to commence a worldwide ministry that has changed the lives of billions of people who put their trust in God's salvation plan through Jesus Christ His Son. *May we, too, prove faithful in prayer to prepare the way for the salvation of others whilst there is time before Jesus returns. Amen.*

**Day 11. Ezekiel 16:59-63.** God said through Ezekiel, "I will deal with you as you deserve... I will remember the covenant I made with you (see 16:43) and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you" (16:59-60). Then "you will remember your ways and be ashamed... When I make atonement for you, you will remember and be ashamed and never again open your mouth because of your humiliation" (16:62-63). *Lord, forgive my lack of concern for the poor and needy and for the arrogance that causes me to speak out of turn, passing judgement, acting selfishly, uttering unholy words and thinking unholy thoughts as well as indulging in shameful behaviour. May this allegory be declared to all Your people today, for the sake of Your Son, our Saviour, who suffered and died to atone for our sins. So may Your everlasting covenant be fulfilled through all true believers. And help us to cope with any shameful memories of the past whilst experiencing your forgiveness and your faithfulness. Amen.* **Acts 17:30.** Paul spoke these words to the people of Athens: "In the past, God overlooked our ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent." Some sneered, some asked to hear more, some believed (v.32-34). *Father, help us to speak boldly the truth that will bring repentance and salvation in Jesus, that some might be saved. Amen.*

**Day 12. Jeremiah 30:8-11.** In the days of the captivity of Israel and Judah, God spoke to Jeremiah saying "no longer will foreigners enslave them" (30:8). Instead they will serve Almighty God and He will raise up a new David as their king (30:9). "So do not fear... do not be dismayed. I will surely save you" (30:10). God also said, "I will discipline you but only with justice. I will not let you go entirely unpunished" (30:11). We live in the days of a second fulfilment of these words awaiting the return of Israel's Messiah. *May we be keen to repent and preach and live the Good News of Jesus who came 2000 years ago in the first fulfilment of this prophecy that many will be saved before Messiah returns. Amen.* **Acts 8:26-39.** Philip was instructed by an "angel of the Lord" to go to the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza to seek out an Ethiopian official who had been worshipping at the Temple. (8:26-28). He was studying the book of Isaiah which Philip offered to explain to him and then told him the Good News about Jesus (8:35). The official asked for baptism and went on his way rejoicing (8:36-39). *May we be keen to preach the Good News of Jesus so that individuals will be saved and in turn extend the Kingdom of God. Amen.*

**Day 13. Jeremiah 27:16-17.** An exhortation from Jeremiah to ignore the false sayings of godly people who declare their personal wishes as if they are the desire of God. "They are prophesying lies to you. Do not listen to them." At that time Jeremiah and the people of God were in exile in Babylon and he told them to "serve the king of Babylon and you will live." *Father God, help us to interpret and understand what is Your righteous truth and guidance for the age and circumstances we live in, wherever we are. May we live godly and righteous lives, speaking spiritual truths that are in line with Your perfect will. Amen.* **Matthew 21:12-17.** In the final week of Jesus before His crucifixion he entered the Temple and threw out the market traders and money exchangers. "My house will be called a house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves" (v.13). He was welcomed by excited children who saw how the blind and the lame were healed by Him (v.14) but the Temple leaders were indignant about His actions (v.15). *Lord, help us to make a stand for You by engaging in church-based ministries that reflect Your own ministry whilst on earth – in caring for the needy and also in using the premises for Your glory in prayer & worship and preaching & teaching. Amen.*

**Day 14. 2 Samuel 23:1-4.** The last words of King David are recorded here. He describes himself as the man exalted and anointed by the Most High God and also Israel's beloved singer of songs (v.1). He also acknowledged that the Spirit of the Lord God Almighty spoke through him (v.2) and when such a person rules over men in righteousness and in the fear of God, he is like the morning light at sunrise (v.3-4). *May our lives reflect the light and glory of God and may we see clearly His purpose and calling for ourselves, whatever our unique giftings. Amen.* **Romans 12:2.** An outcome of putting aside the "pattern of this world" and allowing God to renew our minds is that we will be able to test and approve what is God's perfect will. *Lord, reveal any worldly ways that hinder our calling and our ministry to others. Amen.*

**Day 15. 2 Chronicles 34.** When the Book of the Law of God was rediscovered in the Temple, King Josiah was shocked when he listened to its words (34:14-19). He instructed Hilkiah the high priest to enquire of God what he and the remnant of Israel should do for he knew that their fathers had disobeyed God Almighty (v.21). The prophetess Huldah confirmed that God would go ahead with the disaster he planned to bring on Israel "because they have forsaken me and provoked my anger" but Josiah would not live to see it because he had humbled himself before God (34:22-28). Josiah made everyone pledge themselves to the covenant of God (v.32). *Lord God, in Your mercy, save all remnants of believers and bring peace and revival in our time through obedience to Your word. Amen.* **James 5.** James encourages patience in suffering, reminding us that the Lord is "full of compassion and mercy", mindful of the blessings Job entered into after years of perseverance (5:10-11). He also encourages us in prayer, praise and penitence, expecting miracles as did Elijah (5:13-18). Finally, he tells us to seek to save sinners from eternal death (5:19-20) *Lord, help us to be obedient to these words of the Apostle James who personally knew the teachings of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Son of God Almighty. Amen.*

**Day 16. 1 Kings 11.** The writer of 1 Kings records how King Solomon yielded to worshipping the gods of his many foreign wives, despite two personal warnings from the one true and Almighty God of Israel (11:9). God vowed to destroy the kingdom of Solomon but would save the tribe of Judah and its region Judea and its capital Jerusalem for the sake of Solomon's father David (11:11-13). *Lord God, forgive us for compromising Your truth and failing to obey Your teaching and in Your mercy spare the remnant of believers in each and every region of the world that we may bring glory to Your name and the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and His Church. Amen.* **1 Thessalonians 5:4-11 (NIRV).** Paul writes: "Brothers and sisters, you are not in darkness... All of you are children of light... So let us not be like the others... Let us put the armour of faith and love on our chest. Let us put on the hope of salvation like a helmet. God did not choose us to receive his anger. He chose us to receive salvation because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done. Jesus died for us... So cheer each other up with the hope you have. Build each other up." *Father, in Your mercy spare the remnant of believers in each and every region of the world that we may bring glory to Your name and the name of our Lord and Saviour and His Church. Amen.*

**Day 17. Joshua 18:3-4.** Joshua asked the Israelites, "The Lord God Almighty has given you this land. How long will you wait before you begin to take it over?" Often we are taught to "wait upon the Lord" but there are also many times when He waits upon us. Joshua appointed three men from each tribe to survey the land of Canaan so that the unfinished task of taking over this Promised Land could be completed. *Lord, forgive us if there is much work still to do to extend the influence of Your people. Renew the vision you give to us and raise up spiritual leaders among us to take us forward when the time is right to extend your Kingdom. Amen.*

**1 Peter 2:13-17 (NIrV).** "Follow the lead of every human authority. Do it because the Lord wants you to... Live like free people. But don't use your freedom to cover up evil. Live like people who serve God. Show proper respect to everyone. Love the community of believers. Have respect for God. Honour the king." *Father God, help us at all times to show respect to You and to those who are in authority in our land. Also, help us to live godly lives, showing respect to all people and love for fellow believers. Amen.*

**Day 18. Jeremiah 30:10-22.** Words of encouragement and chastisement from God for His people. "Do not fear... do not be afraid... I will surely save you (v.10). I will discipline you but only with justice; I will not let you go entirely unpunished (v.11) ...because your guilt is so great and your sins are so many (v.14). But I will restore you (v.17) ...and there will be songs of thanksgiving and the sound of rejoicing (v.19). So you will be My people and I will be your God" (v.22). *May God have mercy and fulfil these words from 2600 years ago in our time for God's people everywhere, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**James 5:13-20.** The Apostle James knew personally our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Here he encourages fellow believers in prayer, praise and penitence, expecting miracles as in the time of Elijah (5:13-18). He ends by telling us to petition God to save sinners from eternal death (5:19-20). *Lord, help us to be obedient to these words of James in prayer, praise, penitence and petitioning and may we see miracles and repentance and conversions and much rejoicing in our time. Amen.*

**Day 19. Numbers 10:11-36.** In the journey from Egypt to Canaan, the twelve tribes of Israel followed the cloudy pillar of fire through the Sinai desert (10:11-12). The tribe of Judah went first under their banner, taking the Tabernacle and the ark of the covenant of God with them (10:13-17;33-34). Moses requested his father-in-law, a local Midianite, to go with them across the desert "for you can be our eyes" (10:29-32). Each morning when they moved on, Moses said, "Rise up, O Lord God Almighty! May Your enemies be scattered!" Each evening when they rested, Moses said, "Return, O Lord God Almighty, to be with the countless thousands of Israel" (10:35-36). In this way, Moses had the pillar of fire to guide them and the help of his father-in-law in desert knowledge and the protection of God Almighty from the surrounding tribes and he asked God to be with them as they set out each morning and as they settled down each night. *Lord, may we remember to daily seek Your guidance and protection from Your enemies plus the wisdom of others who journey with us in life. Amen.*

**Luke 9:1-7.** Jesus sent out the twelve disciples with power and authority to drive out demons and to cure diseases and to preach the Kingdom of God. This worried King Herod. *Lord, may we remember to daily seek Your guidance and protection from Your enemies plus the wisdom of others in ministering to the needy and extending Your Kingdom on Earth with the power and authority of Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 20. Ezekiel 17.** Ezekiel describes God's parable of the eagle which broke off the tip of one of the giant cedars of Lebanon and planted it amongst "city traders". But it produced only leafy growth (v.6). However, another great eagle did the same thing and the new tree became like a vine bearing much fruit (v.8). Then God told Ezekiel the He Himself would take a cedar shoot and plant it in Israel and it will become "splendid" and bear fruit. "I the Lord God Almighty will bring down the tall tree and make the low tree grow tall. I dry up the leafy [unfruitful] tree and make the dry tree flourish" (v.22-24). *So help us Father God to learn from this parable that You can revive old trees and plant much good wood among the traders to prosper a nation materially and spiritually. May this happen in our time. Amen.*

**Luke 2:9-19.** The parable of the vineyard tenants. Jesus spoke this parable to illustrate how the fruitfulness of the nation was not being shared with the One who bought and planted the vineyard. The tenants of the vineyard sent the Owner's servants away

empty-handed at harvest time and even killed His Son. In caring for our God-given vineyard we must be ready to share the fruits of our labours with those whom God sends us. *Lord Jesus, thank you for helping us to understand how Father God wants us to be fruitful and be quick to bless those He sends to us in case we, too, are guilty of rejecting You in our midst. Amen.*

**Day 21. 2 Chronicles 34:21 (NIRV).** King Josiah instructed his secretary and attendant to enquire of the prophetess Huldah in Jerusalem: "Go. Ask the Lord for advice. Ask him about what is written in this scroll that has been found. Do it for me. Also do it for those [the remnant] who remain in Israel and Judah. The Lord has poured out his burning anger on us. That is because our people before us did not obey what the Lord had said. They did not do everything that is written in this scroll." Josiah valued the word of God written in the Old Testament scrolls and sought to live by their righteous guidelines and to seek forgiveness for the failings of previous generations of God's people. *May we follow his example, daily, and be a source of much encouragement to other believers on behalf of our nation.* **Romans 14:19-21.** Paul said, "Let us make every effort to do what leads to peace... Do not destroy the work of God... It is better not ... to do anything that will cause your brother to fall." *Lord, help me not to do or say the things that would cause You or Your people to turn their backs on me. Help me always to be an inspiration and encouragement to my God and to His people. Amen.*

**Day 22. 2 Chronicles 36:22-23.** In the closing words of the Chronicles of Israel, it is recorded that "God Almighty moved the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia, to make a proclamation..." Even though God's people had been largely destroyed or exiled in Babylon, God still fulfilled His promise to rebuild a Temple for His worship in Jerusalem. The king was moved to permit the rebuilding and also to ask God's blessing on each of the remnant of God's people who would travel to Jerusalem to help in the rebuilding. *Lord, in this day, raise up leaders who will be inspired to lay down a new foundation for honouring You and blessing Your people. Amen.* **James 5:13-20.** James advises his readers: to pray in times of trouble, to sing songs of praise in good times, to ask for prayers for healing from the church elders, to forgive each other's sins, to believe "the prayer of the righteous person is powerful and effective" and to counsel sinners to repent. *May we continue to read and apply these words from the brother of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in good times and in bad. Amen.*

**Day 23. Joshua 20:4.** God told Joshua to provide safe refuges for believers who had done wrong to provide people who will listen to their stories and offer fellowship and accommodation without judging them until their problems were properly dealt with in court. *Lord, may we be slow to judge and quick to help people in trouble. Amen.* **Galatians 3:26-29 (NIRV Bible 1998).** Paul gives us his understanding of baptised believers in Christ, whatever their background. "You are all children of God by believing in Christ Jesus. All of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ as if He were your clothes. There is no Jew or Greek [Gentile]. There is no slave or free person. There is no male or female. Because you belong to Christ Jesus, you are all one. You who belong to Christ are Abraham's seed. You will [therefore] receive what God has promised." *Lord, help us to value other believers whatever their background. Forgive us for the times we judge others in Your church and help us to bond with others in unity and in love and resist the temptation to control them. Amen.*

**Day 24. 1 Samuel 1.** Hannah lived at a time when it was a great shame if she was unable to have children. She was very sad and prayed to God for mercy to give her a son. Once she had done this, she felt at peace and believed her prayer would be answered. Sometimes we may feel we do not have what society or customs expect in life and are filled with fears and resentment and envy that life is difficult compared to the blessings that others enjoy. *May we be free of envy, judgement and resentment and instead enter into the joy of knowing God's will for us through much prayer and supplication and then walk in peace, offering our lives fully to serving Him and trusting Him. Amen.* **Luke 6:37-38 (NIRV).** Jesus said, "If you do not judge others, then you will not be judged. If you do not find others guilty, then you will not be found guilty. Forgive, and

you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good amount will be poured into your lap. It will be pressed down, shaken together and running over. The same amount you give will be measured out to you." *Help us, Lord Jesus, to find your peace and provision in life and not be tempted to look at others to judge them but instead forgive them and so open up Your channels of blessing. Amen.*

**Day 25. Genesis 48.** When Jacob was close to death, Joseph visited his father and took his two sons with him who were born in Egypt (v.1). Jacob reminded Joseph (v.4) how God told him the land of Canaan would be given as an "everlasting possession" to the whole family of Jacob (called Israel) – as promised to his grandfather Abraham years before. Jacob blessed the two boys and told Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children, too" (v.11). *Thank you Father God for the times you surprise us with Your loving mercy by blessing us and our families. Help us to know what is in Your heart for us and trust and praise You with much joy and peace in good times and bad. Amen.* **Galatians 3:26-29.** Paul again reminds us that we are all part of God's family through faith in Christ Jesus, adopted into the family of Abraham "according to the promise". *Thank you Jesus, and help us to be a blessing not only to our relatives but also to reach out in love to the whole family of God. Amen.*

**Day 26. Psalm 150.** "Praise the LORD" is not just a statement but a command to worship Yahweh, our God Almighty and Creator of the Universe. Where? In Heaven and on Earth (v.1). Why? For His merciful acts of power (v.2). How? With much noise using many instruments and with dancing (v.3-5). Who? Every living creature (v.6). *May God enjoy enthusiastic and heartfelt worship from all of His creation. Amen.* **Romans 8:26-28.** Paul wrote, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose" (v.28). Paul believed this was true despite our "weakness" (v.26) because of the interceding of the Holy Spirit "for the saints in accordance with God's will" (v.27). *Thank You heavenly Father, that when we repent in our moments of weakness, and the Holy Spirit sees our love for You and intercedes on our behalf, You are ready to forgive us to enable good to triumph over evil for Your eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 27. John 21:17-19.** Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him, followed by the instruction, "Feed My sheep" (21:17). He then told Peter that when he was young he was free to do what he wanted or to go where he wanted but "when you are old ... someone else will ... lead you where you do not want to go" (21:18). Finally, He added the command, "Follow Me!" (21:19). Peter already knew that he was called to encourage the new believers and to be a 'rock' to them on which to build up the church. But he must also learn that he must put a stop to the thoughts, words and deeds of a young person and be ready for the discipline and sacrifice of an older, more mature, person, obedient to the Lord's command. *Lord, help me to learn these instructions well and fulfil Your calling through the enabling power and wisdom of Your Spirit. Help me to be disciplined and ready for sacrifice in serving You. Amen.*

**Day 28. Romans 12:1-2.** After his doxology in the closing verses of Chapter 11, Paul starts up again in chapters 12 to 16 with much good advice on Christian living. He begins by urging his readers to offer their lives as 'living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God' as an 'act of worship' (v.1). Paul goes on to urge us not to conform to 'the pattern of this world' but to allow our minds to be renewed and our lives transformed by God's 'good and pleasing and perfect will' (v.2). *Lord, help me to learn these instructions well and fulfil Your calling through the enabling power and wisdom of Your Spirit. Help me to be disciplined and ready for sacrifice in serving You to the bitter end. Renew our minds and open our eyes to the living sacrifice that is both pleasing to You and is in Your perfect will. Amen.*

**Day 29. 2 Corinthians 4:15-18.** Paul tells us not to lose heart even if our bodies are "wasting away" (v.16). Our troubles are temporary but result in eternal glory. We should therefore fix our eyes on the eternal things that we cannot see (v.18). Why? "So that the [divine] grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God" (v.15). *Heavenly Father, open my eyes to see the wonderful things you are doing and not to lose heart as I get weary. Help me always to give You the glory. Amen.*

**Day 30. Revelation 21:10-27.** John's vision of the New Jerusalem connects the twelve tribes of Israel (v.12) with the twelve "Apostles of the Lamb" (v.14) (signifying the importance of Old and New covenants). It contained no Temple since "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its Temple" (v.22) with their light radiating out day and night (v.23). It's twelve gates are guided by twelve angels and will never be closed (v.12, 25). Those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life from all the nations will be invited in; the impure, shameful and deceitful will not be allowed in (v.26-27). *Lord Jesus, through Your Spirit, keep this vision ever before me that I will never again risk being rejected by You. Amen.*

**Day 31. 2 Corinthians 10:15.** Paul longed to see the faith of the believers continue to grow so that their influence in the region "will greatly expand" so that he would be free to minister in other regions. *Lord, as we reach out in faith to You, encourage us in the influence you give us with our friends and families and neighbours. May Your church be increasingly effective in its work, worship and witness, preparing the way for the Messiah. Amen.*

**Day 32. Romans 9.** Paul knew that our salvation depends on God's mercy, not through our own desires or efforts (9:16) nor what we were born into (v.4). "God has mercy on whom He wants to have mercy, and hardens whom He wants to harden" (9:18). *Lord, thank you for your mercy towards me, an unworthy sinner, and help me to welcome and work with those whom You choose to call "My people". Show me how to handle those who harden their hearts to Your righteousness. Amen. (Hosea 1:10; 2:23)*

**Day 33. Luke 17:5-6.** The disciples said to Jesus, "Increase our faith!" He replied that we need only a little faith the size of a mustard seed to do great miracles, for example, moving mulberry trees. *Lord, increase my faith!*

**Day 34. 1 Corinthians 10:31-33.** Paul warns us that whatever we do, we must do it all for the glory of God. We must not cause anyone to stumble, whether outside the church of God or inside the church of God. Why? "For the good of many so that they may be saved." *Lord, show me how to behave in attitude, articulation and action for Your glory, realising that I can easily hinder or help those You are seeking to reach in order to save or encourage them. Amen.*

**Day 35. Revelation 4.** In a vision, John was welcomed through an open door into heaven (v.1) and saw the amazing sight of thrones and creatures where God Almighty is worshipped day and night (v.8). Their worship prompts even more worship for the Creator from the twenty-four elders (v.10-11). *Heavenly Father, help me to believe that my worship is important and welcome and adds to the glory that is given to You in Heaven. Amen.*

**Day 36. Psalm 63:2-4.** "I have seen you... and beheld your glory. Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise You as long as I live, and in Your name I will lift up my hands." *Lord, encourage me to open my eyes and praise You above all else I do. Amen.* **Luke 6:10-11.** Jesus said, "Stretch out your hand" to the man with the shrivelled hand. He did so and his hand was completely restored. But the scribes and the Pharisees were angry because Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath day. *Lord, help me to do Your will rather than the will of myself or others, so that Your blessings are not hindered. Amen.*

**Day 37. Acts 8:8.** The instruction of Jesus to preach the Good News in Samaria as well as in Jerusalem caused much rejoicing because of the miracles performed by Philip in the name of Jesus. Peter and John heard about this and came to Samaria from Jerusalem to lay hands on the believers to receive the power of the Holy Spirit (8:17). *Lord, help us to be obedient to Your calling and open the way for others to fulfil Your purpose and provision in extending Your Kingdom. Help us to see this bigger picture whilst doing our part in its fulfilment. Amen.* Note how a false spirit was trying to deceive potential believers (8:9-11) and later establish false teaching (8:18-19) which Philip rebuked (8:20-23), leading to confession (8:24) which was followed by successful ministry in that region (8:25). *Lord, save us from deceiving and seducing spirits that lead to false teaching and wrong motives and behaviour and ultimately distract from and hinder the ministry and extension of Your church.*

**Day 38. Hebrews 2:9-10.** Jesus Christ, the Creator of the world, has brought many to salvation through His suffering on the cross (v.10) during which He was made, for a little while, to be 'lower than the angels' in order to, by the grace of God, 'taste death for everyone' and through which He is now crowned with glory and



honour (v.9). *Lord, help me to take it in! The all-powerful Creator of the world, willingly submitted to being born as a helpless babe (whose birth the angels recognised and testified) so that, by the grace of Almighty God, His horrific taste of suffering and death would pay the price for my sins before being restored to glory through resurrection on the third day. Wow! This is the true meaning of Easter.*

**Day 39. John 5:18-21 (NIrV).** Jesus, who claimed to be 'equal with Almighty God' (v.18), fully submitted Himself whilst on Earth to His Heavenly Father by doing only His Father's will. "What the Father does, the Son also does... He shows Him everything He does... The Father raises the dead and gives life. In the same way, the Son gives life." (v.19-21). The followers of Jesus will also bring new life to others. *Lord Jesus, prepare us to follow You and to submit to our Father's will whilst on Earth, to bring new life to others in Your name. Amen.*

**Day 40. Luke 4:20-22 (NIrV).** Jesus read aloud from the book of Isaiah. Then 'the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were staring at Him. He began by saying to them, "Today this passage of Scripture is coming true as you listen." Everyone said good things about Him. They were amazed at the gracious words they heard from His lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.' The followers of Jesus will also read and interpret Scripture that is 'coming true' today. Some who listen will be glad; many will reject the truth (v.28). *Whether we are children of carpenters or great scholars, Father God, inspire and anoint us through Your Holy Spirit to follow the example of Jesus by daily reading and interpreting the Bible to all who will listen, that some might be saved whilst there is time. Amen.*

**Day 41. Matthew 16:12-14.** Jesus told this story of the lost sheep to show God's love for ALL who call Him Father. His love is so great for each of us that He will go near and far to seek ANY who lose their way. If and when a lost believer is found, He rejoices more than for those who do not go astray. Such love means that it is God's will that NONE of His flock should suffer through wandering away from Him. *Thank you Father that EACH ONE of us is so very special to you. Amen.*

**Day 42. Luke 1:19:** The angel told Zechariah, "I am Gabriel. I serve God. I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news." But Zechariah doubted what the angel said – that he would have a son who would prepare the people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah and Saviour. *Heavenly Father, help us to believe in angels and what they tell us, so that we may be used, unhindered by our doubts and disobedience, to give birth to the new ministries You have chosen that will help prepare the hearts of those You seek to save. Amen.*

**Day 43. Luke 15:22-24.** In the parable of the prodigal son, the father was quick to rejoice when his sinful son repented. He ordered everyone to welcome him back home and rejoice. Not everyone found this easy to do (v.28-30) but the loyal servants knew the forgiving heart of the father and gladly prepared a celebration feast. *Heavenly Father, help us to celebrate repentance in the way that Jesus described. May we, like true servants, understand what is in Your heart – as Jesus did – and rejoice with You. May we be quick to forgive, as You forgive, those who have caused sadness in the past for the family of believers, especially those closest to us. Amen.*

**Day 44. Hebrews 1:14 (NIrV).** The writer of Hebrews gives much evidence in Chapter 1 about ministering angels and their role in supporting those who brought salvation to others, especially through our Lord Jesus Himself. He says to us "All angels are spirits who serve. God sends them to serve those who will receive salvation." That applies to the saved and to those whom God is calling into salvation. *As followers of our Lord, we live under the ongoing care of these same ministering angels who safeguard not only our own salvation and that of other brethren but also those yet to be saved. Thank you Father.*

**Day 45. Matthew 18:1-7 (NASB).** Jesus was asked about who is the greatest in God's Kingdom. His answer is still true today: "Unless you are converted and become like children you shall not enter the Kingdom." He explained that those who are humble will be the greatest. And to emphasis the point, He said that whoever welcomes child-like believers, welcomes Jesus Himself. *Lord, help me to take on humility and also change how I treat those You love whom I dismiss or disrespect. Help me never to be a stumbling block to other believers by, first seeing You in them. Amen.*

**Day 46. Hebrews 12:5-6.** As children of God, the writer reminds us to take seriously our Heavenly Father's discipline without being discouraged by it, for discipline is a necessary process to experience from the One who loves us. *Lord Jesus, help us to open our spiritual eyes to see and understand our Father's discipline and to recognise both its source and its intended application. Thank You and Amen.*

**Day 47. Matthew 26:63-64.** Jesus at His trial was ordered to testify who He believed He was – the Christ, the Son of God, destined to sit beside the throne of God Almighty. Without that declaration of divine truth, God's purpose for His sacrifice for our salvation could not and would not take place later that day. *Lord Jesus, help us to be brave like you when our faith is challenged or ridiculed, that our Father's will shall be done through what we declare, without fear of the consequences. For Your glory and for the extension of the Kingdom of God. Amen.*

**Day 48. Matthew 26:59-62.** At the trial of Jesus, many people gave false witness to what He had said or what He meant by destroying and rebuilding the Temple in three days. Jesus kept silent when asked to explain what His accusers said. He refused to debate lies or justify Himself to people who did not believe in Him nor wanted to hear the truth from God His Father. *Lord Jesus, enable us to keep silent like You if invited to debate the lies of hostile unbelievers who reject the truth of God. Help us instead to know the prompting of Your Holy Spirit to speak the truth boldly with conviction at the right time. Amen.*

**Day 49. 2 Chronicles 32:9-23.** Bible history reveals that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, boasted that no god of any nation could deliver Israel from his hand (v.15). He even sent letters to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem, insulting God Almighty (v.17) which prompted Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah to "cry out in prayer to heaven" (v.20). God answered by sending an angel to destroy the Assyrian army and Sennacherib withdrew in disgrace (v.21) after which the Lord God gave rest to Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem and respect from other nations (v.22-24). *Father God, in times of aggression may our leaders cry out to You for mercy to save our nation, shame our enemies and gain respect from other nations. In the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 50. Acts 28:1-6.** The people who lived on the island of Malta showed "unusual kindness" to the Apostle Paul when he and the other prisoners were shipwrecked on the way to court in Rome (v.1). A poisonous snake attached itself to Paul but he freed himself without being bitten (v.3-5). Later, Malta's governor cared for the shipwrecked men and Paul healed the governor's father (v.7-8). Quickly the sick came to Paul from all over the island to be healed (v.9). *May God protect and bless us this and every day when our freedom or life is in danger, with miracles large and small that glorify the name of Jesus. And may we be quick to welcome and bless strangers with "unusual kindness". Amen.*

**Day 51. Job 5:17 (NIrV).** "Blessed is the person God corrects. So do not hate the Mighty One's training." Job's friend Eliphaz explained the truth of God to Job without sharing with him the love of God. **1**

**Thessalonians 2:7-8.** The apostles Paul, Silas and Timothy wrote to the church in Thessalonica (Greece). They not only shared the Good News of Jesus Christ to the believers but they were gentle and kind and caring. *Lord Jesus, help us to show others the love of our Father God in our lives as well as His truth and purpose. Amen.*

**Day 52. 1 Kings 8:25 to 9:13.** These Bible verses show how God refused to bless the reigns of certain ungodly kings and instead appointed and anointed another king to reign through His prophet Elisha. **James 2:20-26.** James concludes that even the godly are unwise if their faith in God does not lead to good works. "Faith is justified by the works a person does." James says this applies equally to the great (Abraham) and to the least (Rahab). *So let us pray for godly leaders to bless our nation through following good words with good works and may we ourselves set good examples to seek God's anointing in being a blessing to others.*

**Day 53. Ecclesiastes 1:3 (NIrV).** The writer questions the purpose of life and what we gain from all our hard work. At the end of twelve chapters he answers his own questions: "Respect God and obey His commandments. That is what everyone should do" (12:13). **2 Thessalonians 3:10-13.** The apostles Paul, Silas and Timothy warned their readers, "If anyone will not work, he shall not eat." Also, "Never tire of doing what is right." *Dear God, help us not to grow weary of hard work or feel sorry for ourselves. May we move on*

*in faith and be a blessing to all. And may everything we do be founded in Your love for us and our love for You and for all whom You love. Amen.*

**Day 54. 1 Samuel 28:8.** King Saul was desperate to hear good news about his fight against the Philistines and consulted with a medium which proved to be his downfall. **Acts 7:39-53.** The Apostle Stephen also said how God deserted those who refused to obey Him years before for worshipping idols and other gods and how the people remained "stiff-necked" in resisting the Holy Spirit right up to the time of Christ, whom they rejected and crucified. *Lord Jesus, forgive my acts of sin and disobedience that made it necessary for you to die on a cross, taking the punishment that I deserve so that I could be changed and forgiven and live with You in eternity. Amen.*

**Day 55. Judges 4-5.** God's people did evil in the eyes of the Lord God Almighty, and they were cruelly oppressed by the Canaanite king Sisera for 20 years and cried to the Lord for help. God's prophetess Deborah gave instructions to Barak for 10,000 men to defeat Sisera. Deborah sang a song after the battle, "May all Your enemies perish, O Lord!" and the land had peace for 40 years. **Luke 19:41-44 (NIV).** Thirteen hundred years later, Jesus wept over Jerusalem and He said "If you had only known this day what would bring you peace ... but you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you." *Lord, open our eyes to what you seek to do in our nation this day and to repent and invite Your help against Your enemies and raise up both women and men who will bring peace in our time. Amen.*

**Day 56. Joel (NIV).** The prophet Joel asked if anything like this had ever happened before (1:2). Whatever it was, it warranted a call to prayer and fasting (1:14) with repentance and weeping (2:12). "Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love" (2:13). **Revelation 22:12,14,16 (NIV).** Eight hundred years later, Jesus Himself warned, "I am coming soon... Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they might have the right to the tree of life... I, Jesus, have sent you My angel to give you this testimony for the churches." *Come Lord Jesus, and bring glory to Yourself and Your church in our land at this time, as things happen that have never happened before! Amen.*

**Day 57. Psalm 22:25-26 (NIrV).** "Because of what You have done, I will praise You in the whole community of those who worship You. In front of those who respect You, I will keep my promises. Those who are poor will eat and be satisfied. Those who look to the Lord will praise Him. May their hearts be filled with new hope!" **1 Timothy 3:16.** "There is no doubt that godliness is a great mystery. [God] appeared in a body. The Holy Spirit proved that He was the Son of God. He was seen by angels. He was preached among the nations. People in the world believed in Him. He was taken up to heaven in glory." *May this great mystery of the Good News of Jesus Christ, Son of God, encourage us to praise and witness to our Lord and Provider who gives His people hope. Amen.*

**Day 58. Psalm 65:9,11,13.** The psalmist acknowledges, "The streams of God are filled... You crown the year with Your bounty... the fruitful valleys shout for joy and sing." While in heaven, a vision is given of a rainbow encircling the throne of God (Revelation 4:3). **Ezekiel 28:1-5.** The prophet warns of pride in this life and failure to remember we are people, not gods, as we gain wealth from our own understanding and learn skills in trading. But our hearts have grown cold so he further warns that our wisdom and abundance (v.12-13) tends to lead to sinful dealings in business (v.16). *Lord, may our nation's thoughts be on praising our Provider who sits in majesty over all His creation awaiting our warmth and humble gratitude for His provision, that we may be blessed with integrity and divine righteousness, not self-righteousness. Amen.*

**Day 59. Numbers 20:27-29.** The Bible records here the death of the priest Aaron, whom we easily forget. Unlike his brother Moses, he was a willing and faithful mouthpiece for the commands and wise judgements of God Almighty. **1 Timothy 15-16 (NIrV).** Paul said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners... And I am the worst of sinners. For that very reason, God showed me mercy... I was an example for those who would come to believe in Him." Paul readily acknowledged that he was unworthy to meet His Saviour and be called to lead God's people. Like Moses, like Paul, God calls the worst of sinners who need faithful people like

Aaron or Ananias to bring into fulfilment His eternal purposes to raise up leaders to lead many into His Kingdom. *May we be quick to acknowledge our doubts and disobedience and readily trust those whom God brings into our lives for His eternal purpose to help extend His Kingdom. Amen.*

**Day 60. Isaiah 34:8; 35:1,10 (NIV).** The prophet foresees that the Lord God Almighty has "a day of vengeance, a year of retribution"... also a time when "the desert will be glad and the wilderness will rejoice with blossom"... and also "everlasting joy will crown their heads; gladness and joy will overtake them and sorrow and sighing will flee away." **James 5:7-11 (NIV).** James writes, "Be patient until the Lord comes ... You must stand firm ... The people who don't give up are blessed ... The Lord is full of tender mercy and loving concern." *So, heavenly Father, establish us with a righteous discipline in our worship, witness and work, so that our understanding of daily events in patience and joy will be a reflection of Your mercy and provision midst Your righteous judgement. Amen.*

**Day 61. Deuteronomy 20:1-5.** Our spiritual battles in life are the Lord's battles. "Do not be afraid of your enemies, because the Lord your God will be with you... He is the one who goes with you ... to give you victory." **Hebrews 3:1,6:** The writer tells us as brothers and sisters to "fix your thoughts on Jesus ... He is faithful as the Son over God's house, whom we are." We are children of God, though tossed around by the enemies of God, and our battles are His battles and He sees us as His children in the "house" of believers under Christ. *Help us Father to remember as a family of believers in Jesus, You see us as Your children and are always "on our side" in life's battles. Amen.*

**Day 62. Jeremiah 44.** Some of God's chosen people had sinned and found new gods to worship, provoking His anger (v.3) such that He vowed not even a remnant would survive (v.7) other than a few fugitives (v.14). But the people rejected what the prophet Jeremiah said (v.16) so he had no words of encouragement to tell them. **Romans 15:14.** On the other hand, the apostle Paul encouraged the believers in Rome: they were good people, full of God's truth and so competent to teach one another. *May we this day resolve to put aside any new interests that detract from our worship of God and gain a good reputation for sound teaching of His truth. Amen.*

**Day 63. 1 Kings 10.** The Queen of Sheba visited King Solomon and was amazed at his wealth, wisdom and work (v.4-5) and declared "Praise be to your Lord God Almighty who delights in you and loves your people and made you king to maintain justice and righteousness." (v.9). **Luke 28.** The followers of Jesus did not recognise Him on the road to Emmaus but invited Him to stay with them and they were amazed by the revelation of God's truth when He "opened the Scriptures" to them. *Lord Jesus, may we follow Your example and regularly study the Scriptures to know more and more of the mind and truth of God so that we become established in His love and righteousness and not destroy our witness by wrongly exploiting the blessings You bring as Solomon did later in life. Amen.*

**Day 64. Isaiah 18-19.** Isaiah prophesies how the nations will respond differently to God's mighty will. Here, the "aggressive attitude" of the people of the Upper Nile region would submit and worship God (18:7) while the "heathen desires" of the people of the Lower Nile region would "come to nothing" after worshiping idols and consulting spirits of the dead (19:3). **1 Corinthians 11.** Here, Paul warns that sound teaching and unity must prevail when believers meet together for worship and observing the Lord's Supper, otherwise their meetings will "do more harm than good" (11:17). *Lord, may we learn from the Old Testament prophets and seek Your forgiveness for any "aggressive attitudes" or any "heathen desires" to seek the spirit world that would hinder the teaching of the New Testament apostles today and the unity in the Holy Spirit within our church meetings. May we submit to Your will, aware that our own plans will "come to nothing" and "do more harm than good". Amen.*

**Day 65. Exodus 2:15-25.** Moses ran away from his adopted father in Egypt and ended up marrying in the land of Midian (v15,21). He was not happy and felt like an alien away from his home (v.22). At the same time, the Israelites cried out to God to deliver them from slavery in Egypt (v.23) which God heard and remembered His promise to Abraham with concern for his family (v.24-25). The scene was now set for Moses to be called back to Egypt to deliver the Israelites and lead them out to Midian to stay with his father-in-law Jethro. This took forty years to achieve and a further 40 years for them to move into God's Promised Land of

Canaan. **Acts 28:30-31 (NIV)**. "For two whole years Paul stayed in his own rented house and... without hindrance, he preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ." *God has His own ways and timings to bring about world-changing events to His glory.*

**Day 66. Joshua 5:10 to 6:27.** After preparation in holiness and the celebration of the Passover (5:10), this story of the destruction of Jericho began with Joshua meeting a "commander of the army of the Lord God Almighty" (5:14) and ended with the rescue of Rahab who earlier had sheltered the spies of Israel (6:17). Rahab became the great-grandmother of King David and an ancestor to Joseph, whose wife gave birth to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. **Acts 2:42-47.** One thousand years after this dramatic entry into the Promised Land, the followers of Jesus prepared themselves for the celebration of Pentecost and the dramatic coming of the Holy Spirit. The early church then met for teaching, fellowship, "breaking of bread" and prayer, with signs and wonders (2:42-44), praising God, finding favour and with much growth in the number of believers (2:47). *Praise God for the amazing details given in the Bible to read, learn and understand His eternal provision, purpose and power over the centuries and for His encouragement and salvation today through the churches of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 67. 1 Samuel 31:11-13.** Friends of King Saul cremated his body after he was killed in battle along with the bodies of his sons, then they declared seven days of mourning and fasting. Saul was anointed by God as king to defeat the enemies of Israel but he had disobeyed Him on several occasions during his life. Despite this, these friends honoured him and remembered the good things he had done for the people of Israel. **Acts 4:25-31.** The early Christian believers asked God why the "nations and the kings of the earth take their stand... against His Anointed One", meaning His obedient servant, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Despite the opposition, they believed that this happened because of what God had decided beforehand for good (v.28) so they asked Him for more boldness with signs and wonders in the name of Jesus. *Father God, may we remember the good things and believe You remain in control, despite times of difficulty and persecution, and so receive your power in the ministry You have called us to do in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 68. 2 Kings 21-22.** Manasseh, one of the sinful kings of Israel, placed idols in the Temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem (21:7-8). After Manasseh and his son reigned for 57 years, Josiah came to the throne who "did what was right in the sight of the Lord God Almighty" (22:2). During his reign, the Book of the Law was found, and Josiah ordered it to be read aloud and he restored the worship of God in Israel. God blessed the nation under Josiah's rule. It was during the time of the faithful servants of God, Hilkiah the priest and Huldah the prophetess (22:14), who warned that God would fulfil everything He said in the Book of the Law. **Acts 12.** An angel set the Apostle Peter free from prison (v.7-11). The faithful followers of Jesus, who were praying for his safe-keeping under the wicked king Herod, were "astonished" (v.16). The Lord struck down Herod and "the word of God continued to increase and spread" (v.23-24). *Praise God for the inspiration of His word! Praise God for the faithful few who pray, preach, prophesy and practise the word of God! Amen.*

**Day 69. Proverbs 24:10-12.** The wisdom of the writer establishes the need to be selfless in helping others. Therefore, we must be strong in our own faith in times of trouble (v.10) for the sake of those who suffer more than we do, that they may be saved (v.11). We cannot say to ourselves that we know nothing of their needs, for God knows and wants us to be a blessing to them as He blesses us (v.12). **John 7:6.** Jesus separated himself from non-believers who wanted Him to do miracles all the time. He said "The right time for me has not yet come." He knew that His selfless sacrifice in saving others must be in line with His Father's will. *Dear Heavenly Father, encourage us to save others without counting the cost, but only as Your Spirit prompts, lest we are pushed by worldly people to "do miracles" that distract from our main calling in the ministry of Jesus today. Amen.*

**Day 70. 1 Samuel 25:39-42.** God's provision for King David in marriage to Abigail is clear. Later he sinned in contriving to obtain Bathsheba as his wife (2 Samuel 11&12). **Romans 10:11.** The apostle Paul (as well as Peter) quotes the prophet Isaiah, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame" (Isaiah 28:16) meaning the Messiah, Jesus Christ. *Lord Jesus, spare us the shame of deliberate sin by strengthening our faith in You and our Father's provision. Enable us to glorify Your name and be satisfied in God's love which is beyond all human love. Amen.*

**Day 71. Exodus 1&2.** The persecution is recorded of the Israelites (Hebrews) living in Egypt and how Pharaoh gave instructions to make them slaves (1:11) and for their baby boys to be thrown into the River Nile

(1:22). God provided a Saviour in Moses but it took forty years before God sent him to rescue them. In that time the people remained faithful to God and they cried out to Him for His mercy (2:23). **Acts 17:31**. The Apostle Paul says that God sets the times when He judges the world. It was Paul's belief that God does this through the One He appointed, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who was punished and died for our sins and was raised to life to judge the world with justice, seated at the right hand of God Almighty. *Thank you Father for the Bible that testifies of your provision and faithfulness towards those who believe. Help us to remain faithful and trust You for the salvation of many and for the righteous judgement of those who reject You and Your people. Amen.*

**Day 72. Ezekiel 17:62-63 (NIRV)**. God spoke to Israel's prophet Ezekiel: "I will make my new covenant with you. Then you will know that I am the Lord God Almighty. I will pay for all of the sins you have committed." We see clearly that this new covenant between God and mankind for our salvation was fulfilled 600 years later through the birth, life, death and resurrection of God's Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who paid the price "for all of the sins you have committed". **Acts 11:1**. After the conversion of the Roman centurion, Cornelius, the news quickly got round Israel that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. *Lord Jesus, help us to understand and be thankful for the purpose of Father God down through the centuries that the Good News of eternal salvation through Your sacrifice for us on the cross is available to the whole world in every nation, tribe and language. Amen.*

**Day 73. Numbers 14**. The descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob rebelled against God's plan to live in the Promised Land of Canaan (v.3). They told Moses they wanted to go back not forward but instead, God provided water, manna and quail for them to live in the desert between Egypt and Canaan for forty years (v.34) until a new generation was born to move forward and create the nation of Israel in Canaan. God's plan to use Moses to save the people of Israel from Egypt was not defeated. **2 Peter 1:12-21**. Fifteen hundred years later, the Apostle Peter witnessed seeing Moses on a mountain top with Israel's Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ (v.16-18). Peter warns us never to ignore prophecies in the Old Testament scriptures. They come direct from the Holy Spirit (v.19-21) and point towards the time of Christ when God the Father spoke the words "This is my Son, whom I love ... Listen to Him" (v.17; Matthew 17:5). *Father God, thank you for Your prophetic words in the Bible about Jesus our Saviour. Help us to listen and move forward in faith. Amen.*

**Day 74. 1 Samuel 9:27**. The prophet Samuel shared with Saul a secret message from God when they were totally alone. It was not shared even with other believers or with household members. **Acts 11:19-21**. In the New Testament writings we read how the Good News of Jesus Christ was shared near and far, and not kept a secret, even in times of persecution. Every Christian, in the newly-given power of the Holy Spirit, became messengers, both to believers in God and to non-believers. As a result, a great number of people turned to the Lord Jesus Christ and were saved. *Thank God for His salvation in Jesus and for the New Testament power of His Holy Spirit to share this Good News near and far to people of faith or no faith, including your family members.*

**Day 75. Zechariah 10:2-5**. Five hundred years before Christ, God warned about evil people with false dreams and leaders who oppress the people. He also promised the Christ, the 'cornerstone', would come from the tribe of Judah and His people who had to fight 'messy battles' will overcome because the Lord God Almighty is with them. **Luke 1**. When the Christ child was born to Mary, God's angel told her to give Him the name Jesus, who would take over the throne of His ancestor King David (from the tribe of Judah) and reign for ever (v.31-33). Mary rejoiced over God's mercy in remembering Abraham and his descendants for ever (v.54-55). *We thank you Father God that all who put their trust in your Son Jesus Christ are forgiven and are 'grafted in' to the ongoing family of Abraham, destined to overcome, however 'messy' the situation. Amen.*

**Day 76. Leviticus 26:1-13 (NIV)**. The Lord God Almighty warned His people against unholy living and instructed them in the way of obedience and promised them His provision, peace and favour. "I will walk among you and be your God and you will be My people" with the result that His people will "walk with heads held high". **1 Corinthians 10:12-13**. The Apostle Paul also warned the early churches to be careful and not fall down under temptation. God is faithful and merciful and will provide a way out "so that you can stand up under it". *Father God, through Your Spirit, walk among Your people and enable us to "stand tall" under the pressures to sin so that the sufferings of our Lord and Saviour are not in vain for receiving Your provision, peace and favour. Amen.*

**Day 77. Deuteronomy 10:10-11.** Moses returned from Mount Sinai the second time with a new set of Ten Commandments written by God in stone. Moses assured the people that God would not destroy them despite their sin like He threatened the first time (9:12-14) but would bring them to their Promised Land. **Revelation 22:12-15 (NIRV).** "Look! I am coming soon! ... I will reward each person for what he has done... Blessed are those who wash their robes... They will be allowed to go through the gates into the city. Outside the city are ... those who practice witchcraft ... also those who commit sexual sins and murder ... and everyone who loves and does what is false." *Lord, thank you for overlooking our past sins. Help us to not to yield to the pressures of today's evil society but remain pure in thought word and deed, obedient to Your Ten Commandments, and enter into Your promised reward. Amen.*

**Day 78. Isaiah 24-25.** This is part of the prophet Isaiah's vision of world-wide destruction that only a remnant will survive because the people have disobeyed God's laws and Earth has been defiled (24:5-6). In the next chapter, Isaiah quickly turns to praising God that even the ruined cities of ruthless nations will revere Him (25:3). **1 Corinthians 11:32 (NIV).** The apostle Paul reassures his readers that "when we are judged by the Lord we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world." *May we be obedient to the laws of God, care for the world He has created, and live Christ-like lives so that in God's mercy, His peace, purpose and provision will prevail in our lives and for all whom we pray for. Amen.*

**Day 79. 1 Chronicles 25.** A thousand years before the coming of Christ, King David established, through the Levite priests, a ministry in Jerusalem of prophesying while accompanied by music. This was in order to powerfully praise God with much joy through words of divine knowledge given under the direction of the Holy Spirit. **Acts 9:31.** Luke describes for us a time of peace for the New Testament churches in and around Jerusalem when the number of believers in Christ grew under the encouragement of the Holy Spirit while living with a deep reverence and respect for God. *Lord God Almighty, thank You for these accounts of life and worship from the Old and New Testaments. Teach and inspire us through Your Holy Spirit to live for You and worship You with much faith, love, enthusiasm and reverent devotion. For the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 80. Daniel 11.** Over 500 years before the Christian era, a fearful revelation was given to the prophet Daniel describing nations with "power to destroy" the people of God, "bent on evil" who show "favour to those who forsake the holy covenant" with "flattery and corruption" (v.16-32a). But "the people who know their God will firmly resist" (v.32b). **James 5.** The apostle James also spoke against evil men (v.1-6) and encouraged God's people to be patient until the Lord's coming (v.7) and to pray in times of trouble (v.13), since "the prayer of the righteous man is powerful and effective" (v.16). *Heavenly Father, we recognise today some of the evil people and events described in the Bible and long for the return of Jesus. Keep us ever patient in suffering and faithful in prayer. Amen.*

**Day 81. Proverbs 31.** The writer praises the virtues of noble women who fear God Almighty and provide and care for their families and who help the poor and needy through working hard in planting crops, preparing food and making clothes and who also give wise counsel to bless their families and husbands. **1 Peter 5:13 (NIV).** Here, the apostle Peter, like other New Testament writers, refers to the people of the church as having female virtues: "**She** who is in 'Babylon' (Rome), chosen together with you, sends **her** greetings..." *May we be quick to recognise and encourage the calling of "noble women" who honour God, neighbours and family and pray that their wise counsel will lead to righteous leadership and blessings in the body of Christ.*

**Day 82. Ecclesiastes 4&5.** The writer sees all the oppression in the world and the tears of those who are oppressed and who have no comforter (4:1). His inspired wisdom is to worship God by listening to His voice rather than offering the thoughts and sacrifices of fools who do not know what they are saying or doing (5:1). **Acts 7:60.** One thousand years later, the followers of Christ listened to His teaching and were prepared to die for their faith in their concern for the salvation of others. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, prayed, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them". *Father God, enable us to put aside our worldly thoughts and actions and instead obey the teachings of Jesus to reach out to You and to others in love so that our sacrifices will become a blessing and Satanic oppression will cease for those who need a Comforter. Amen.*

**Day 83. Exodus 21:28-30.** God's judgement and punishment for both innocent sin and for deliberate sin are given here together with His merciful plan for redemption and forgiveness. It expresses God's heart's

desire to teach us His righteousness and obedience, with His punishment due for sin and His willingness to offer forgiveness through repentance and sacrifice. It was given to the people of God 1500 years before His final plan for the atonement of all sin through repentance and faith in His Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who took the punishment for sin on our behalf through the sacrifice of His life on a Roman cross. **Luke 2:29-32.** The Holy Spirit confirms to Simeon that Jesus is God's salvation plan for both Gentiles and Jews. *Heavenly Father, help us to understand these simple yet profound theological words to receive and pass on Your love and mercy offered to all of Your created people who have gone astray. Amen.*

**Day 84. 1 Chronicles 1-9.** The Old Testament book of 1 Chronicles begins with an historical record from Adam through Abraham to the 12 tribes of Israel at the time of King Saul. It mentions that the tribe of Ephraim, son of Joseph, had the privilege of occupying the blessed town of Bethel in the Promised Land of Canaan (7:28) where his grandfather Jacob built an altar to the Lord God Almighty many years before the Exodus. The town's name means 'House of God'. **Galatians 6:9.** The apostle Paul advises "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." *God surprises us with how He plans many years ahead to bless the practical outcome of His people who live faithful lives – even if we don't live to see it! Heavenly Father, You are amazing! Thank You for planning ahead for our salvation through the sacrifice of Your own flesh and blood in Jesus, Your Son, our Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 85. Exodus 22:10-13.** This Bible teaching given to Moses about restoration requires us to compensate and pay back gladly and generously for what is lost, stolen or damaged. It follows the Ten Commandments and the teaching on redemption. **Romans 5:12-21.** The apostle Paul explains that before the Law of Moses, the sin of Adam in all mankind resulted in death. The Law was given to increase our awareness of sin and the need for God's salvation. But now, through the grace and mercy of God, we have the hope of eternal life in Christ as well as the gifts of His forgiveness and righteousness in this world. *Father God, grant understanding of Bible theology to enable us to live righteous lives. Help us to show love and mercy to those whom we harm or offend, with gladness and generosity, aware of your abundant love and mercy towards us in Christ. Amen.*

**Day 86. Genesis 28:1-15.** Isaac told Jacob to go to his uncle Laban and seek a wife from among the people who feared God Almighty and not from any of the pagan Canaanite women. On his way, God confirmed his blessing for Jacob in a dream ('Jacob's Ladder') and God promised "all nations on earth will be blessed because of you and your children". **Romans 15.** The apostle Paul encouraged the church to read the Old Testament writings (15:4) which confirm the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that the Gentiles (all the non-Jewish nations) would glorify God for His mercy in sending Jesus Christ (15:8-9) and would become "acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (15:16). *Father God, may we follow the examples of Jacob and Paul to put behind us unrighteous and unfulfilled lives and go forward wherever you lead and find Your power and calling among the people of God and then join others to enable the nations of the world to seek and find the Jewish Messiah, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Day 87. Isaiah 49:22-23.** God promised through the prophet Isaiah that the Gentiles will be used by Him to bless the Jews. "Then you will know that I am the Lord God Almighty; those who hope in Me will not be disappointed." **Revelation 6&7.** God showed the apostle John the vision of many believers who had been "slain because of the ... testimony they had maintained" (6:9). He also showed John "a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb of God" who cried out with loud voices, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb" (7:9-10). *Lord Jesus, open our eyes to events past, present and future that will encourage our hope in God to persevere with our testimony of Your crucifixion and resurrection and also to understand our role in supporting Israel ready for the time when, Jews and Gentiles together, rejoice with loud voices before Your throne that salvation belongs to our God. Amen.*

**Day 88. 2 Samuel 9.** This is the story of Mephibosheth, a lame grandson of King Saul, who considered himself a "dead dog", but whom King David honoured for the sake of his late father Jonathan (9:7-8). **Romans 14.** The apostle Paul warns Christians again and again to accept those whose faith is weak without passing judgement on what they do (14:1,4,10,13). He says that the Kingdom of God is about righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit and we should not destroy the work of God in the lives of others (9:17-19). We risk condemning ourselves if we condemn others (9:22). *Father God, forgive us when we pass judgement, and grant us the love for other believers that You have and King David showed, however*



*inadequate their lives appear to us, so that we may honour them for the sake of departed loved ones and for the sake of Jesus who died for us all. Amen.*

**Day 89. Ezekiel 48.** We see here what is in the heart of God when He gave the vision to Ezekiel for the future Jerusalem and the land of Israel. The city will be known as "The Lord [Yahweh] is there". **Romans 14:5-23.** Paul urges believers to worship God in faith together from our various traditions and experiences, even though some observe special days, some eat special food, others abstain from alcohol. He says the Kingdom of God is nothing to do with these things but is righteousness, peace and joy. *Heavenly Father, help us to see clearly how You welcome believers from different backgrounds to worship You in unity and love. Prepare us to join with other believers, including the very different tribes of Israel, as we serve Christ and worship our Father together, without passing judgement, aware only of Your presence among us through the Holy Spirit, so that the world will say "the Lord is there".*

**Day 90. Leviticus 2:11-13.** God instructed Moses to provide offerings of grain with salt. Salt is a symbol of purity and of a lasting relationship with God. The grain offering must be without yeast. **Mark 8.** When Jesus fed His followers with bread and fish He gave thanks and miraculously multiplied the food to bless 4000 men with seven basketfuls left over. Later, Jesus warned the disciples not to seek bread containing "yeast of the Pharisees and Herod" (8:15) with their religious and political demands but ordinary bread from God that provides good food for everyone with plenty left over. *Lord Jesus, help us to understand your teachings and give thanks for the pure and everlasting spiritual food of God and reject religion corrupted by politics so that we may bring Your pure light and salt into the world in abundance with the promise of an everlasting relationship with our Creator. Amen.*

**Day 91. Psalm 12 (NIRV).** The psalm writer had much confidence in God's mercy for the poor and needy. He believed that God would protect the oppressed and the weak from those who do them wrong (12:5). "Proud and sinful people walk around openly when the evil they do is praised by others [but] Lord, you will keep us safe. You will always keep sinners from hurting us" (12:7-8). **1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV).** Paul said, "God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear." This was in the context of personal idolatry, immorality, or simply moaning against God (10:6-10). *Dear Lord, provide for our needs and keep us strong under persecution from wicked people and also strong under temptation from within. And forgive us when we moan a lot! Amen.*

**Day 92. Jeremiah 51:34-37.** The Israelites who survived God's punishment, captivity and exile looked forward to the day when they would return to Jerusalem and see God's punishment fall on Babylon, as it surely did. This shows us that God's people finally understood the justice of God in punishing them for their own disobedience in contrast to His justice in the destruction of the pagan nations which surrounded them and sought to enslave them. **Revelation 22:11-16.** Jesus tells John at the end of His revelation to the churches to let him who does wrong continue to do wrong and let him who does right and is holy continue to do right and be holy. Jesus says, "I am coming soon!" and He will reward everyone according to what he has done. Those who "wash their robes" will go through the "gates" and leave outside those who practise magic, the sexually immoral, the murderers, idolaters and those who love falsehood. *Grant us, Lord, an understanding of what these last days will mean for believers, and the nature of Your justice in judging this world. Amen.*

**Day 93. Ezekiel 17:22-24.** God confirmed to Ezekiel His future plan to establish His Messiah in Israel for all the world to know. This vision is in the form of an allegory: a tree shoot would be planted on Mount Zion to produce a "splendid cedar" with much fruit where birds from every nation will find shelter. At the same time, other strong trees will be destroyed but weaker smaller trees will flourish. **Philippians 3:1-11.** The apostle Paul knew that the destruction of his powerful former life as a Pharisee with all its "legalistic righteousness" (3:5-6) was nothing compared to the righteousness gained through faith in Christ the Messiah (3:8-9). *Lord God Almighty, help me to realise that in my weakness I can flourish through salvation in Christ alone and put aside striving after worldly gain or glory and instead join others from every nation who find refuge in our Saviour. Help me to trust You will overrule powerful unholy forces and strengthen the weak who are righteous. Amen.*

**Day 94. Psalm 111.** The psalmist promises to praise God with all his heart within the "assembly" of other believers (v.1) and reminds us that it is normal for His great works to be meditated upon by all who fully

appreciate them (v.2). Great are His deeds: they are remembered because of His righteous compassion (v.3-4). The list of God's goodness (v.5-9) warrants "eternal praise" which is the beginning of all wisdom and understanding (v.10). **Hebrews 8:10-12**. The writer repeats the words of the prophet Jeremiah regarding a "new covenant" for God's people that will be written in their hearts and minds so they will know Him personally and experience personally His salvation. This new covenant is through Christ our Saviour (9:15). *Father God, help us to be quick to fully appreciate and remember your compassionate deeds and praise You in the "assembly" with hearts and minds that have been transformed by the new relationship and understanding with You through Christ's sacrifice for our sins. Amen.*

**Day 95. Nehemiah 1-10.** After Nehemiah's prayers (chapter 1), permission to return to Israel (2), the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem under persecution (3-7) and the reading of the Law of Moses (8), the people confessed their sins (9), then solemnly agreed to obey the Law (10). This agreement involved **ALL**: the priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, servants, wives and children old enough to understand (10:28). It included the gifts of money and crops to maintain the ministry of the House of God (10:32-39). **1**

**Corinthians 16:1-3.** Paul gave instructions to the church members at Corinth to set aside each week "a sum of money in keeping with his income" for God's people in Jerusalem. *Father God, we thank You for Your mercy under persecution in hearing our confessions and prayers to rebuild Your church and encourage the regular reading and teaching of the Bible and not to neglect the regular support of the needy and those who have been called into full-time ministry. Help us **ALL** to pray, read, learn, confess and solemnly and gladly obey. Amen.*

**Day 96. Jeremiah 35-37.** When God was preparing to punish His people for their constant disobedience, He showed mercy to the righteous family of Racab (35:17-19) and then gave everyone else the opportunity to repent (36:1-3). Jeremiah was not allowed to speak in public, so he entrusted the message from God to his special friend Baruch, twice (36:6,32), but the call to repent was rejected and Jeremiah ended up in prison (37:16). **2 Timothy 2:1-10.** The apostle Paul, writing from prison, instructed his special friend Timothy to train "reliable men" to teach others the Good News of Jesus Christ "for the sake of the elect". *Father God, even under persecution, may we be faithful in warning others to repent or in training others to teach Your truth about Jesus, without counting the cost, for the sake of the righteous whom You are calling into Your Kingdom. Amen.*

**Day 97. Job 38:14-15.** God revealed to Job what the Earth looked like from outer space when He first created it: "The Earth takes shape like clay under a seal; its features stand out like those of a garment." But He went on to say that the wicked people know only the things of darkness for they deny themselves their own light that comes from God their Creator. **1 Corinthians 15:47-49.** Pauls reminds us that the first man, Adam, was created from the dust of the Earth but Jesus, the second Adam, was from Heaven. We are born without the light of Christ within us so "let us bear the likeness of the Man from Heaven" [NIV 1984 footnote]. *Creator God, thank you that You have done everything in Christ to set us free from the original sin within to enable mankind to walk in Your light. Help us always to choose to live in that light and be blessed by the amazing things you long to reveal to us and then bless others as we share these divine truths. Amen.*

**Day 98. Proverbs 3:5-7 (NIV).** "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil." **James 5:11-12.** James reassures his readers that the Lord is full of compassion and mercy and will bless those who persevere. But he warns us to be single-minded (may our yes be yes and our no be no) so that we may keep to the straight way that God has planned for us and not risk being condemned for our sins but set free and submit prayerfully each day to His inspiration from the Bible. *Lord Jesus, thank You for suffering and dying for our salvation so that we may walk daily in the light of the truth of God our Father and in the power and wisdom of Your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**Day 99. Daniel 4:34-37.** After several years of suffering mental illness, King Nebuchadnezzar praised God for restoring his mind, his understanding and his faith. He admitted that no-one can hinder the purposes of Almighty God or have the right to question what He is doing, for His works are always just and righteous. The king proved personally that God humbles those who walk in pride. **1 Peter 2:21-25.** The apostle Peter reminds us that Jesus Christ was not guilty of sin, yet suffered much for us without complaint, trusting His heavenly Father who judges fairly, so that we might die to sin and live in righteousness. We who went astray like many lost sheep, God has brought back to the Shepherd. *Lord, forgive the pride in us that takes us away*

*from You. Heal and restore our minds that are full of sinful or wandering thoughts so that we can praise You as we walk with You unhindered, trusting in Your just and righteous mercy. Amen.*

**Day 100. 1 Chronicles 1-9.** Ezra lists the descendants of Adam and Eve in the first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles. It is amazing how he is able to proudly record the family line of Israel right from the beginning to the time of King Saul through Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah, which became the family line of King David and later Joseph who married the virgin mother of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (See the family line in Matthew 1:1-17.) **2 Corinthians 3:10.** The apostle Paul reminds us that the glory of the Old Testament news is nothing compared to the glory of the Good News of Jesus Christ. We can rejoice that followers of Jesus are adopted into the worldwide family of God as descendants of Abraham. *Thank You Jesus for saving us through Your death and resurrection into Your amazing family as Your brothers and sisters, accepted by Father God with hope of eternal life in Heaven. Amen.*

**Day 101. Deuteronomy 31:11-13.** Moses was instructed by God to assemble the people in places of His choosing to read the Law for all the men, women and children to hear, listen and obey, including any strangers and foreigners in their midst, that they and their children would learn to fear the Lord God Almighty. **Revelation 17:3-14.** John was given the terrible vision of the evil woman seated on a scarlet beast who waged war against the Lamb of God. But the Lamb, who is Jesus Christ, will triumph over them "because He is the most powerful Lord of all and the greatest King of all. His appointed, chosen and faithful followers will be with Him." (NIRV). *Thank You Father God for giving us a clearer understanding of Your truth and purpose and to know the reality of Your victory through Christ against the evil on earth and in high places. Direct the time and place for us to meet with Your people to receive Your righteous guidance and enable us to worship You with reverence in the light of your Word. For Christ's sake, who died to set us free from sin. Amen.*

**Day 102. 2 Samuel 2:26 (AB).** In this story of Abner, many people were killed who belonged to rival tribes of Israel. But the aggressive rivals came to their senses when Abner called out, "Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not know that bitterness will be the result? How long will it be before you bid the people to stop pursuing their brethren?" The destructive personal rivalry then ceased and God's purpose prevailed for the future King David to grow stronger (3:1) and for Jerusalem to be established as the holy place of the Jews. **Acts 2:23-36.** Years later, Peter told the crowds in Jerusalem at Pentecost how Jesus was killed by wicked people but God raised Him up from death, just as King David prophesied what would happen to their Messiah. Peter boldly claimed that God had made Jesus, the One whom they crucified, to be their Messiah. *Father God, forgive us any bitterness, resentment and rivalry that lingers in our lives and enable us to move on in life to see the 'bigger picture' you have established for Your people on Earth through Jesus Christ our Messiah and Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 103. 2 Samuel 4:9.** After the death of King Saul and before David was claimed King of Israel, David showed no mercy towards those who killed Saul's son Ish-bosheth. David acknowledged that God had spared his own life in the midst of much danger from Saul's family but refused to show God's grace and mercy towards others who acted with such misguided motives. **James 5:9-11.** James warns his readers, "Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!" He goes on to mention the prophets, like Job, who suffered much but who were blessed by God through His love and mercy. *Heavenly Father, thank you for Your loving mercy in keeping us and sparing us from death before receiving Your eternal salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who suffered and died for us by taking the punishment that we deserve. Help us to learn well how to show mercy and forgiveness to others, however misguided they are. Amen.*

**Day 104. 1 Samuel 6.** This is the amazing story how God taught the enemies of Israel to respect the Ark of the Lord and return it to its rightful owners. Despite their evil ways, the Philistines knew enough about the Almighty God of Israel to act in righteousness with reverence and fear. This action by the Philistines was part of God's plan to install the Ark of the Lord in Jerusalem nearly 100 years later at the time of King David. **1 Timothy 6:1-2.** Paul warns workers to show respect for their bosses as part of their normal Christian life. Their freedom found through faith and salvation in Christ should not weaken their respect for others by neglecting their duties to serve with grace those who are in authority. In this way, Paul says, the churches will gain a good reputation and bring glory to God. *Thank you Father that you bless Your people in unexpected ways, even through non-believers. Help us not to hinder Your provision and blessing through*

*those whom we work under and to respect those who rule over us. May our nation become a righteous example to neighbouring nations you wish to influence in the name of Christ. For Your glory. Amen.*

**Day 105. Proverbs 3:25-26 (NIV).** "Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the Lord God Almighty will be at your side and will keep your foot from being snared." This is faith in action for individual believers and also for any local fellowship of believers. **Ephesians 4:3-6.** The apostle Paul reminds his readers to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit" resulting from the peace of God. He then testifies of his personal faith that there is but one body of Christ which is the Church, one Spirit, one calling, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God above all, which is sufficient reason to bind all believers together in unity and peace. *Lord, help us in our weakness to overcome our fears and prove You are God in all things and make us of one mind, strong in faith and unity which will demonstrate Your love and mercy in action. Amen.*

**Day 106. Proverbs 3:21-23.** The writer of Proverbs states again and again the importance of looking for divine wisdom and the understanding of it to realise God's blessing and safekeeping in life. **Mark 1:3-4.** John the Baptist came to prepare the way for God's salvation through Jesus Christ by preaching the need for repentance in order to receive forgiveness and deliverance from the old life and its oppression and bondage caused by sin. *Lord, deliver us from depression by repossessing our lives through the power of Your Spirit that we may walk with joy in the light and understanding of Your truth and become a blessing to ourselves, to You and to others. Amen.*

**Day 107. Proverbs 10:27-32.** The writer again gives his readers much hope for those who are righteous and who worship the Lord God Almighty in reverence and in fear and with gladness. They will be given divine strength with staying power and godly wisdom to know what is acceptable. **Acts 27:4-10.** The apostle Paul was given the divine knowledge that his journey to Rome by ship would be hazardous with risk to life and cargo. His advice was not heeded and the ship was wrecked on the island of Malta but all lives were saved through the mercy of God. *Thank you Father that Your delight is to give holy wisdom to those who put their trust in You and in Your salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. May these wonderful words of truth transform the circumstances we find ourselves in by enabling us to speak forth the wisdom You reveal to us Your servants in timely and forthright fashion. Amen.*

**Day 108. 1 Chronicles 15.** King David advises the priests how to bring the Ark containing the Covenant of God to its resting place in Jerusalem, having enquired of God first how to do it (v.13). Certain Levites were appointed for the task along with doorkeepers, musicians and trumpet players (v.17-19). It was done with much rejoicing (v.25), all dressed in fine linen (v.27), with the whole of Israel looking on with much shouting, sounding of rams' horns, trumpets and cymbals (v.28). **James 5:7-9.** James encourages God's people to be patient even in suffering and to stand firm waiting for the Lord's second coming. There are times of suffering and times of celebration in the Kingdom of God on Earth but at all times we must enquire what is pleasing to Him. *Father, help us to live our lives in a way that is a blessing to You and with hope in the excitement of meeting our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, soon. Encourage and revive us at this time and call us to rejoice because of Your Spirit and Your Word among us. Amen.*

**Day 109. 1 Chronicles 3&4.** Here is a long record of names of the tribe of Judah which God chose for the "royal family line" through King David down to Joseph who married Mary the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. It includes the testimony of Jabez (4:10-11) who called out to God Almighty for safekeeping and freedom from aches and pains! In His love and mercy, God granted his request. **Philippians 3:10-16.** Paul says he wants to know "resurrection power" in his life (v.10) as he presses on to become more and more perfect in Christ (v.12). Acknowledging that each of us has a different experience and point of view in our spiritual walk (v.15), his only plea is that we should live up to what God has already done in our lives (v.16). *Father God, we thank You for the different ways in which You have brought us to faith and blessed us in Your love and mercy. Enable us to live up to what You have been seeking to do in our lives, going forwards not backwards, so that we may mature in Christ and attain even higher levels of perfection in Your unique purpose for each one of us. Amen.*

**Day 110. Ezekiel 36:8-23.** A prophecy and promise from God to bless the people of Israel on their return from captivity in Babylon "for the sake of My holy name" (v.22). **1 Peter 2:13-17.** An instruction "for the Lord's sake" to submit to all authority from the king downwards. Peter encourages us to believe that in doing

good it is God's will that foolish men will be silenced. He also commends the teachings of Jesus to fear God, love our fellow believers and respect those in control over us. *Heavenly Father, keep reminding us to respect leaders and do good at all times for the sake of Your name and for the glory of Your people. Amen.*

**Day 111. 1 Samuel 9.** This is the story of how God, in his mercy, heard the cries of His people to save them from the Philistines and arranged for the prophet Samuel to meet Saul, an "impressive young man without equal" (v.1) to be anointed as the unexpected first king of Israel (v.16). **Luke 1:37-80.** This is the amazing story of the birth of John the Baptist, who was the unexpected son of Zechariah the priest who prophesied that God had raised up a mighty saviour in the family line of King David to save Israel from their enemies (v.68-71) in His mercy and in fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham (v.72-73). Zechariah went on to say how John would prepare the way for the Messiah who would "give the people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of sins" (v.77) and would "guide our feet in the path of peace" (v.79). *Thank you heavenly Father for these ancient records in Your Bible which show Your loving mercy and amazing plan of salvation for Your people and ultimately the rest of the world in and through our Lord Jesus the Christ. Amen.*

**Day 112. Psalm 106.** The psalmist longs for times of blessing when the love of God Almighty is at work in the nation (v.1-5) that is hindered through the sins of the people (v.6-7). He reminds God how He saved them again and again "for His name's sake" (v.8) in looking back to the many times the people disobeyed God (v.9-43). When God heard their cry for help He remembered His promises and in great love and mercy He relented and saved them (v.44-46). The psalmist ends with a plea for God's mercy and salvation for His glory and praise (v.47-48). **Luke 12:11-12.** Jesus looked forward to the times when many of His followers would be tested for their faith but promised that "the Holy Spirit will teach you what to say". *Lord Jesus, spare us from repeating past sins and instead encourage us to look forward to serving You and witnessing in the wisdom and power of Your Holy Spirit to the glory of God in our nation. Amen.*

**Day 113. 2 Chronicles 7 (NIRV 2014).** At the dedication of Solomon's Temple, 'fire came down from heaven. It burned up the burnt offering and the sacrifices. The glory of the Lord filled the Temple... All the people of Israel saw the fire coming down. They saw the glory of the Lord above the Temple. So they got down on their knees in the courtyard with their faces toward the ground. They worshiped the Lord God Almighty' (v.1-3). **John 13:20-21.** After His final visit to the Temple in Jerusalem, Jesus confirmed to His disciples that "whoever accepts Me accepts the One who sent Me" then warned that "one of you is going to betray me." Thus Jesus, on the day before His crucifixion, shifts the focus from worshipping His Father in the Temple to worshipping Himself as the final sacrifice of innocent blood. *Father God, help us to take in this amazing record of Your salvation plan that the followers of Jesus may have access to You anywhere in the world through the death and resurrection of Your Son, our Lord, and His promised Holy Spirit. Thank You. Amen.*

**Day 114. Genesis 49:29-33.** At his death in Egypt, Jacob, grandson of Abraham, whose name God changed to Israel, requested he should be buried in the cave with his former wives, his father and his grandfather. The cave was purchased by Abraham near Hebron, one of the oldest cities of the world 25 Km from Jerusalem. **John 6:25-58.** John records for us the famous words of Jesus who told the crowds not to look for bread which perishes that He had supplied through miracles but to look for His 'food' that gives eternal life (v.27) which He came down from heaven to give to the world (v.33). He is the bread of life (v.35) that His Father sent (v.57). "Your forefathers ate manna and died but he who feeds on Me will live forever" (v.58). The proud Jews were well informed about their forefathers from the time of Abraham but failed to see Jesus as their promised Messiah who would bring salvation and eternal life to all "who fed on Him". *Open our eyes, dear God, to see Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 115. Daniel 9:2-19.** Daniel's famous prayer for the Israelites to return to rebuild Jerusalem after 70 years in exile is based on his reading of Scripture (v.2) followed by much petitioning and confession on behalf of the nation (v.3-6,11-13), with praise for God's righteousness (v.7,14), mercy and forgiveness (v.9) and willingness to hear and answer prayers for the sake of His name (v.17, 19a) and for the sake of His city and for His people (v.19b). **John 21:15-19.** John records for us the last words of Jesus before His ascension which were to call Peter to put behind him the shame of his denials and care for other followers of Jesus as part of his calling to follow Him. *Father, encourage us to be inspired by reading Scripture to confess our sins and the sins of our nation before going out in the strength of Your peace, purpose and provision as our personal calling dictates, for the sake of Your name. Amen.*

**Day 116. 2 Chronicles 36:15-23.** This records the total destruction of Jerusalem in 610 BC, 70 years before Daniel's prayer to Almighty God to rebuild it, and how the remnant of Jews were carried off as slaves to Babylon and how God in His amazing love and mercy moved the heart of King Cyrus to send the Jews back to Jerusalem to rebuild it and its Temple. **Mark 4:1-20.** Jesus taught the parable of the sower and the seed that fell on paths, among weeds and stones and on fertile soil as an example of the establishment of the Kingdom of God among those who are receptive to His truth. *Dear God, encourage us again and again to keep reading Scripture and to be open to understanding the amazing lengths You went to to establish Your righteousness on earth, through providing guidelines to holy living, punishment of sin, then through renewal and reformation and finally forgiveness and salvation in the personal sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we may lead fruitful lives and be receptive to Your Holy Spirit, to Your glory. Amen.*

**Day 118. Jeremiah 45.** Jeremiah tells his faithful scribe Baruch not to be discouraged by the terrifying prophecy of God's forthcoming righteous judgement on the nation. He warns that it is not the time to seek personal gain but to carry on selflessly doing the important work God has given him to do in recording the divine truth dictated to him by Jeremiah. Jeremiah reassured him that God would be merciful to him and keep him safe in times of trouble. **Mark 4:1-20.** This parable of the sower reminds us of the importance of sharing the word of God even when people reject it or do not allow it to grow in their lives, as with the seeds falling on stony or hard soil. *Heavenly Father, help us to remember that it is not ourselves that are important in the work of the Kingdom You call us to do but it is Your words of life that we faithfully share with people in need of Your truth. Amen.*

**Day 119. Proverbs 21:27-31.** The writer reminds us that the work of the wicked is detestable; nor must we listen to false witness or be deceived by those who 'put up a bold front'. The upright person 'gives much thought to his ways' since he knows that no thought or plan can succeed against the plans of God Almighty: victory rests with Him. **Mark 8.** At the feeding of the four thousand, Mark makes it clear that Jesus showed compassion for the people because they were hungry for food (v.2) after being hungry for His teaching for three whole days. Jesus later warned His followers not to hunger after the teaching of the Pharisees and Herodians (v.15). *Father God, help us to reflect on the teaching in Your word and avoid being misled by worldly wisdom so that we can become quietly confident in You. May our actions can be founded in compassion for the needy as demonstrated by our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 120. Proverbs 10:17.** The writer reminds us to heed the discipline required in godly living which is the way to life itself. Whoever ignores this advice is at risk of leading others astray. **1 Timothy 6:1-2.** Paul's teaching here about servants and masters can also be applied to church members and their leaders. Our leaders are our brothers and sisters in Christ but we must remember to respect and support their calling in leadership so that we do not hinder their teaching and pastoral ministry to other believers. *Lord Jesus, thank you for your personal discipline in God's costly salvation plan. Thank You for calling me to follow and serve You. Help me to extend and bless the Kingdom of believers through my own personal discipline and holiness and also to respect and support those who have been called into leadership to care for other believers in the Kingdom. Amen.*

**Day 121. Job 32:13.** Job's friend Elihu warns us to be careful if we think we have found wisdom since our knowledge is very limited compared to the wisdom of God. **Luke 18:18-30.** The wisdom of Jesus given to the rich young ruler was that eternal life "in the age to come" is best found by giving up the riches of this life for the sake of the Kingdom of God. *Heavenly Father, in our search for holy and righteous living let us be truly wise and not be deceived by worldly interests and fantasies which hinder our preparation for fellowship with You now and in the age to come. Amen.*

**Day 122. Psalm 41:11-13.** King David praises the Lord in the confidence he has been given that God is pleased with him and upholds him and establishes him in the presence of the Almighty God Himself, for ever. **Luke 1:1-4.** Luke says he has confidence in writing down the truth of Jesus passed on to him by eyewitnesses who heard and saw what happened at the time of His ministry and sacrifice on Earth. *Heavenly Father, thank you for the wonderful confidence You give us in the truth of Your Bible and in the faithful records of people like David and Luke. Prompt us to seek daily the divine knowledge of Your word and to nurture an awareness of Your holy presence upholding us before You. Yes and amen!*

**Day 123. Micah 5:2-5 (NIV).** This is the amazing prophecy of the One from Bethlehem "who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from ... ancient times [eternity]... He will stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord God Almighty [whose] greatness will reach to the ends of the Earth. And He will be their peace." **Matthew 14:15-16.** This story of the feeding of the five thousand begins with the disciples asking Jesus to send the crowds away to get food. Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." The One from Bethlehem became the means of salvation and provision for the world through His followers. *Father, forgive us for the times we have dismissed the needs of others and in doing so failed to "shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord God Almighty" as part of the ongoing call to share the greatness of Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah, "to the ends of the Earth". Amen.*

**Day 123. Psalm 37:1-11.** King David encourages us not to worry; to trust in the Lord God Almighty; to delight in Him and commit everything in life to Him; to be still before Him and wait patiently for Him; to turn away from anger; for it is the meek who will inherit the Earth and enjoy great peace. **Galatians 2:8-10.** In the fullness of time, the separate ministries of the apostles became clear but they all agreed on one important thing: to continue to remember the needs of the poor. *Lord, help us to have the faith of King David and may we all agree in our ministries to work with the meek and the weak in establishing peace for the Kingdom of God through His mercy and calling in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

**Ezekiel 16:62-63 (NIRV).** In the days of Ezekiel, God promised His people, "I will make a new covenant with you. Then you will know that I am the Lord God Almighty. I will pay for all the sins you have committed." He then warned, "You will remember what you have done [and] you will never speak against Me again." **Romans 4:11.** Paul argues that the righteousness of God is available for all peoples, not just for the family of Jews through Abraham. This adoption into the family of Abraham comes through faith (v.16) and is for all who believe that Jesus "died for our sins and was raised to life in order to make us right with God" (v.25). *Father, help us to rejoice in our salvation through Christ and our adoption into the new covenant with the worldwide family of Abraham. As we remember the shame of our forgiven sins, let us take every opportunity to speak up for You in thanksgiving for our salvation. Amen.*

**Day 125. Job 22:21-22.** The good advice of Eliphaz was not sufficient for his friend Job, which was to submit to God, find peace with Him and value His words. Job was a man of great faith (19:25) but struggled to find God in his time of great need (23:3). **Matthew 25:1-13.** Jesus told this parable of the ten virgins to illustrate how some believers would know the truth of God but fail in times of need because they were unprepared to put their knowledge into practice. *Lord God, forgive us in times of trouble when we doubt Your truth and love or even Your very existence. Keep preparing us to watch out for You and seek and experience You in a personal way so that our Saviour will know us and welcome us when He returns. Amen.*

**Day 126. Genesis 43.** Jacob (called Israel) was afraid to let his youngest son Benjamin go to Egypt to buy corn. He did not know that it was God's will for Benjamin to meet there his long lost brother Joseph, let alone establish the Israelites there as a holy nation under God. **John 15:18-27.** Jesus warned His disciples that when they go out to testify of Him, people will treat them badly. But He also promised that the Holy Spirit would be with them to testify about Him (v.26). *Lord Jesus, thank You for Your warnings and promises to your followers. Help us to obey You without fear and to trust in God our Father that His will shall prevail for us and our families in ways beyond our understanding. Help us to see Your "bigger picture". Amen.*

**Day 127. Exodus 10-12.** For the seventh time, Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt and with contempt said, "May your Yahweh God help you if you do!" (10:10). After three more devastating plagues, Pharaoh agreed and set them free and even asked for God's blessing for himself (12:32)! **Luke 4:24.** Jesus performed few if any miracles in His home town of Nazareth. He refused to bless those who did not believe in Him. *Father God Almighty, wherever there is contempt for the Bible and Christianity, may the Spirit of Christ work changes in the hearts of the people. We ask this in Your mercy and with hope of freedom to speak Your truth and to see miracles among those we seek a blessing from You. Amen.*

**Day 128. Ecclesiastes 10:12-14.** The writer declares that words from a wise man's mouth are gracious, but a fool just multiplies words. Or as *The Applied OT Commentary* puts it, "Those who are empty of wisdom are often full of words". **Romans 1:28-32.** Here, Paul expresses his disgust with those who do not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, who have become filled with every kind of wickedness and who approve of those who practice them. *Lord Jesus, You suffered death that we might commune with God and*

*know His divine wisdom. Through the ministry of Your Holy Spirit, empower us not only to believe but to apply and speak out Your truth with conviction and without fear. Amen.*

**Day 129. Psalm 85:9.** It is the psalmist's conviction that God's salvation "is near to those who fear Him" and for this reason: that "His glory may dwell in our land". **Romans 15:1-7.** The apostle Paul urges all believers to "bear with [make allowances for] the failings of the weak" (v.1) and build them up in the Lord (v.2) through God-given endurance and through the encouragement of Scripture (v.4-5) and for this reason: that we may "glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v.6). *Dear God, help us to remember at all times to glorify You in the company of our friends, relatives and neighbours, that both weak and strong may see Your glory in this land and may know Your salvation for all who fear You and put their trust in Jesus our Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 130. Joshua 8:35 & 9:1-2.** After successfully defeating Jericho, Joshua read the words of the Lord God Almighty to the people of Israel which had been given through Moses. He read them to the whole assembly including the women and children and the migrants from Egypt who chose to live with them. Word soon got round to the neighbouring nations of Israel and they met together to plan war. **2 Peter 3:17-18.** Peter warns us to be on our guard against "lawless men" and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". *Lord Jesus, help us not to fear the threats and deceits of godless men but to trust daily in You and the words of God our heavenly Father. Amen.*

**Day 131. Joshua 4 (NIV).** After crossing the Jordan, God told Joshua to set up a memorial of twelve riverbed stones so that "all the peoples of the earth might know the power of the Lord God Almighty" and also that each of the twelve tribes of Israel would remember to "always fear the Lord your God". **Mark 3:13-19.** Jesus called twelve followers as future apostles to be with Him and to learn from Him and to go out to preach and have authority over demons. *Dear God, help us to remember we have "crossed over" with You to leave the old life behind and live God-fearing lives in the power of the Lord God Almighty, and to minister with authority in the name of Jesus so that all the peoples of the earth might know You through Him. Amen.*

**Day 132. Genesis 27.** This story of Jacob stealing the birthright and blessing from his twin brother Esau shows how the sins and mistakes we and others make in life often leave resentment, anger and guilt. However, the twin's father Isaac prophesied that one day Esau would overcome his troubled feelings (27:40), which happened 20 years later (33:4). **Luke 6:39-42 (NIV).** Jesus warns us, "Can a blind man lead a blind man? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." *Lord Jesus, help us not to judge others and enable us to see and live above our feelings of shame and resentment caused by our sins and mistakes, and the sins and mistakes of others, in the hope of mutual forgiveness and reconciliation in God's mercy and timing. Amen.*

**Day 133. 2 Chronicles 36.** Six hundred years before the time of Christ, ungodly kings sealed the fate of Jerusalem, which was destroyed and its survivors taken as slaves to Babylon until the time of King Cyrus, through whom God ordered the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple after the land of Israel had enjoyed 70 years of rest. **Romans 13.** Paul wrote these words 20 years after the time of Christ to say that the teachings of Jesus, to love one another, totally fulfils the Law of God (v.8-10) and to put aside the love of self and thoughts of sinful desires by "clothing yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ" (v.12-14). *Lord Jesus, forgive our sinful desires which lead only to acts of rebellion against our God Almighty. Help us instead, to love one another, to clothe our thoughts with You and the desire for Your peace in our land and pray for righteous leadership to the glory of God. Amen.*

**Day 134. Habakkuk 1-3.** After Habakkuk's many complaints to God about the wicked perverting the course of justice (1:4) he decides to call on God and watch to see what He will say (2:1) and then resolves to rejoice in the Lord (3:18) even when there is no evidence of change. **Romans 12:9-21.** Paul gives practical advice to remain joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer (v.12) and even bless those who persecute you (v.14) without attempting to repay evil with evil (v.17) only showing kindness to your enemies (v.20). He concludes, "Overcome evil with good" (v.21). *Lord Jesus, You died to save me and the world from the consequences of sin. Help me to be like Habakkuk and Paul and rejoice in the God of my salvation in the midst of evil and respond only with love. Amen.*



**Day 135. Judges 11:24.** Jephthah, the mighty warrior of God in Gilead, Israel, firmly believed that "whatever the Lord our God has given us, we will possess." He did not rest until all land that God had promised was taken back from the sinful nations who had occupied it. **Romans 7:21-25.** Paul laments, "When I want to do good, evil is right there with me" (v.21). He knew in His mind, through Jesus Christ, that his body had been saved from its slavery to sin (v.24). He reminds us in 8:8-9 that God is not pleased when we are controlled by our sinful nature instead of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. *Heavenly Father, You have won and possessed us through the sacrifice of Jesus. May we firmly believe in our minds that we must take back any part of our life that has been occupied by sin. Amen.*

**Day 136. Exodus 22:21.** God told Moses to tell the Israelites not to ill-treat aliens or oppress them, for they were all aliens when in Egypt. **Romans 3:21-29 (NIV 1984).** Paul, a Jew, states clearly that "righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference... God is God of both Jews and Gentiles." He goes on to remind his readers God Himself promised that Abraham would become the father of many nations (4:13-18). *So help us Father God to show the love and salvation of Jesus to all foreigners in our midst as adopted children of Father Abraham. Amen.*

**Day 137. 1 Samuel 8.** Samuel was a God-fearing judge, priest and prophet to Israel. Yet his two sons turned away from God (v.3) and the people used this as an excuse to stop supporting the line of judges and start supporting kings instead (v.5). God used this rebellion to establish the line of King David, which resulted 1000 years later in the birth of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Israel's Messiah. **John 17:11-12.** Jesus asked His Father to protect His followers (v.11). Yet one of them turned away from Him. God used this rebellion to fulfil the predicted death of the Messiah (v.12) and establish His resurrection and the 2000-year reign of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of the world. *Father God, help us to take it in that in Your mercy You overrule rebellions and disasters to establish Your righteous rule in the lives of all who put their trust in Your Son. Amen.*

**Day 138. Isaiah 29:13-21 (NIV).** God tells Isaiah, "Woe to those who go to great lengths to hide their plans from the Lord God Almighty" (v.15). The day will come when "the deaf will hear... the eyes of the blind will see... the humble and needy will rejoice" (v.18-19). "But the ruthless will vanish, the mockers disappear and all who have an eye for evil will be cut down" (v.20). **John 16:22-24.** Jesus promised, "...no-one will take away your joy. In that day... I tell you the truth, My Father will give you whatever you ask in My name." *O God, keep us humble to realise we cannot hide our worldly plans or sinful ways from You, but let us join with the needy and rejoice that our salvation and provision are met in You alone in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 139. Leviticus 11.** Such is the love of God for His people, He wants us to be pure and clean mentally, physically and spiritually. This chapter warns which food not to eat and which creatures spread diseases. This is all part of living healthy and holy lives acceptable to God. It is why He told Moses to command the people of God, "Be holy because I am holy" (v.45). **Mark 1:40-45.** Jesus healed a man with leprosy and warned him to go to the priest and "offer sacrifices that Moses commanded for cleansing as a testimony to them" (v.44). Jesus wanted everyone to know that the healing and cleansing power of God is received through faith in Christ. *Almighty God, enable us to testify of your holiness at work in our lives through the healing and cleansing of our bodies, minds and spirits in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 140. Isaiah 19.** Isaiah prophesies about amazing events in the Middle East during the centuries after Israel's Messiah, in which there will be much suffering in advance of salvation. The day will come, however, when there will be a "highway of friendship" between Egypt and Assyria via Israel and all three nations will be blessed by Almighty God and become a blessing to the world (v.24-25). **1 Timothy 6:11-16 (NIV).** Here, the apostle Paul advises young Timothy to pursue a righteous life (v.11) and "fight the good fight of faith" (v.12) "without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in His own time" (v.14-15). *Father God, as we await the Second Coming of our Messiah, help us to stay faithful and faultless, resilient in times of suffering and ready to be part of Your amazing blessing to the world through "highways of friendship". Amen.*

**Day 141. Nehemiah 8:8-10.** 450 years before the birth of Christ, the Levites read aloud from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear to understand. The people wept as they listened. Nehemiah said, "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." **Acts 7:37-39 (NIV).** 500 years later, the apostle Stephen warned the religious leaders that Moses said, "God will send you a Prophet like me from your own people..."

He [Moses] received living words to pass on to us." This prophecy was about Jesus Christ but Stephen told the leaders, "You always resist the Holy Spirit! You have received the Law but have not obeyed it" (v.51, 53). They failed to understand the teaching of the scriptures and rejected their own Messiah! *Dear Lord Jesus, help us to remember that the Bible is the living word of God, bringing understanding, repentance, salvation and joy, which is our strength. Help us always to obey Your living word and not grieve the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**Day 142. 2 Chronicles 36:23.** Cyrus rose to power as the first king of Persia. He established religious freedom throughout his vast empire. He encouraged the Jews to return to Judah. He claimed it was the Lord God Almighty Himself who made him ruler of the world and told him to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. He gave the Jews his blessing and let them go, which prepared the way for their promised Messiah. **Acts 10:22.** Over 600 years later, Cornelius, a centurion in the worldwide army of Rome, who believed in the Lord God Almighty, was told by God to invite the apostle Peter into his house to hear about the Jewish Messiah. This prepared the way for the Good News about Jesus Christ to be preached through the world to the Gentiles. *Heavenly Father, thank you for the assurance that You raise up God-fearing individuals in the fullness of time to bless us in Your purpose to save the world. Amen.*

**Day 143. Job 1.** God allowed Satan to test the faith of His servant Job by destroying his family and his possessions (v.12-19). He was devastated, but said, "The Lord God Almighty gave and He has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised" (v.20-22). Worse was to come but Job continued to praise God and said, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19:25). **John 19:38-42.** After the death of Jesus, two of His followers took His body away and placed it in a nearby tomb. Roman guards sealed the tomb and stood guard so it could not be stolen. These faithful servants saw God Almighty allow Satan to destroy their Lord and Master. Yet, through them, we have the true record of the resurrection and witness that Jesus, our Redeemer, lives. *Lord, help us to be faithful servants in times of satanic destruction that we may testify our Saviour lives – for evermore. Amen!*

**Day 144. Ecclesiastes 3:9-14.** The writer believes that God made everything beautiful in its time and also created the potential for eternal life in us all. Yet we often fail to understand what God has done from the beginning (v.10). The writer desires that we are happy doing good and find satisfaction in work, which is the gift of God (v.12-13). The end purpose of God is that we will worship Him (v.14). **1 Corinthians 10:15.** Paul urges the believers to learn to judge for themselves what is right and what is wrong. He says we are "sensible people" with the Spirit-led ability to decide what to do when there are mixed messages. *Heavenly Father, help us to see the bigger picture of your purpose in life from the beginning by working hard, doing good and enjoying your creation. Help us not to lose sight of Your eternal purpose in Jesus our Saviour, and bring You the glory in all things we say and do. Amen.*

**Day 145. Leviticus 18-20.** These chapters give laws from God on holy living which, if disobeyed, deserve punishment, even death. They are still relevant today to Christians whose punishment has been taken by our Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins. **1 John 5:18-20 (NIRV).** "We know that those who are children of God do not keep on sinning... The evil one [Satan] cannot harm them... We [also] know that the whole world is under the control of the evil one... The Son of God ... has given us understanding. Now ... we belong to the One [God Almighty] who is true." *Thank You Father God for saving us from the punishment we deserve through sacrificing Your Son, our Saviour, on the cross. When we are surrounded by the sins of the world from which you saved us, help us to be strong when tempted and sin no more. Amen.*

**Day 146. 1 Kings 11:7-13.** In 992 BC, God became angry with King Solomon for building temples near Jerusalem for foreigners to worship their gods. God vowed He would destroy the kingdom of Israel because of the disobedience of Solomon but would save Jerusalem and the tribe of Judah because of the faithfulness of Solomon's father, King David. **Romans 14:1-6.** In the Christian era, Paul warns us not to upset others whose faith is weak. Some eat only vegetables, others eat everything. Some observe certain special days of worship, others consider each day is alike. *Lord Jesus, You died to save us all from our sins and to be at peace with Almighty God. Grant us wisdom to know which differences in our faith and worship can be ignored in love and to see the bigger differences that anger God today and should be avoided in obedience to His word. Amen.*

**Day 148. Ezekiel 48:35.** Ezekiel's vision for Jerusalem after the return from exile gives the name for the city as *Jehovah Shammah*, "The Lord God Almighty is there". They would not need to ask any more "Is God

with us?" even in times of trouble. **Mark 7:24.** Jesus travelled 60 Km to Tyre and was unable to keep His presence there a secret. The power of God Almighty was with Him in a foreign land and He healed the daughter of a woman who heard about Him and begged Him to drive the demon out. *Heavenly Father, help us to remember You are always with us wherever we are, in good times and in bad times. May we believe that we will have opportunities to witness to others of Your saving and healing power in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**Day 149. Daniel 11.** This vision describes the terrible events that happened in the Middle East in the second and third century BC resulting in "the abomination that causes desolation" in the Temple of God in 168 BC. Many believe that part of this vision also portrays what will happen in the future when the powers from north and south occupy Jerusalem for a time (v.45). **John 1:29-34 (NIV).** John describes meeting Jesus "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (v.29). He says, "I saw the Spirit [of God Almighty] come down from Heaven as a dove and remain on Him" (v.32). He will "baptise with the Holy Spirit. I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God" (v.33-34). *Father God, help us to live without fear as Your chosen people in the power of your Spirit, alert to the signs of the times and testifying of Your saving grace in Jesus Christ alone. Amen.*

**Day 150. Joshua 22:18.** The Israelites who were faithful to God were worried that some of their people were disobeying God and risked His judgement falling on the whole nation. The problem was quickly resolved and everyone praised God (v.33). **Romans 8:13 (NIRV).** Paul states, "If you live under the control of your sinful nature, you will die. But by the power of the Holy Spirit you can put to death the sins your body commits." Paul's desire is to encourage righteous living which enables us all to receive the love and goodness of God with the promise of eternal life. *Heavenly Father, encourage us to resolve together to do what is right in the power of Your Spirit for the good of all and for the sake of Your Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Day 151. Job 40:4 (NIRV).** Job told God, "I am not worthy. How can I reply to You?" God warned him to be ready for even more awkward questions (40:7). Job grew in awe of God Almighty and confessed again, "I am really sorry for what I said about You" (42:6). **James 5:1-5.** James warns the rich they have had an easy life on earth but lived without showing justice and righteousness to others. He says they will suffer for this. *Heavenly Father, help us to learn from the books of Job and James how to live in awe of You and not take life for granted. Warn us again and again to appreciate everything we have and to show kindness to others who have so little. Amen.*

**Day 152. Psalm 106:29-31.** A psalm that recalls the great sins of the people of Israel but also the everlasting mercy of God's saving grace. And it mentions Phinehas by name, who remained obedient to God, and his righteousness was long remembered. **1 Corinthians 12:27-31.** This is Paul's reminder to the church that we are all equally important to God and are baptised into the "one body of Christ", the fellowship of believers. This is true, whatever part we play in the ministry of the church: its teaching, preaching, prophesying, healing, helping, administering, speaking in tongues or interpreting. *Lord Jesus, help us to be obedient to Your calling that our righteousness will long be remembered for serving and blessing others who are saved through God's mercy. Amen.*

**Day 153. Nehemiah 4:1-14.** This is the record of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, despite great opposition from the people around, with assurance that God was with the Jews who had returned from exile in Babylon. They suffered anger, ridicule, insults and threats. They prayed to God as they became weary and fearful. Nehemiah encouraged the workers, telling them not to be afraid but to remember the Lord God Almighty who is great and awesome and to work on for the sake of their families and friends. **Romans 15:1-4.** Paul wrote that we who are strong in faith ought to suffer patiently the failings of the weak and build them up. He says that everything written in the past was written to teach us and encourage us to have hope through endurance. *Thank God for the teachers and teachings that encourage us in times of weakness. Ask Him to help you to share in the task of building others up in the faith.*

**Day 154. Haggai 2:6-9.** This prophecy speaks of the "shaking of the nations" and also the "desire of all nations" who will come at the end of time when the Messiah will reign in glory and peace. **Matthew 24:4-14.** Jesus warned His followers not to be deceived by those who claim to be the Christ. There will also be wars, famines and earthquakes before the end comes, with much persecution and wickedness and many will lose their faith. "But those who stand firm to the end will be saved and the gospel of the Kingdom of God will

be preached in the whole world." *Come soon, Lord Jesus, and keep us strong in faith as we wait, so that no-one will take our crown from us (Revelation 3:11).*

**Day 155. Deuteronomy 20:1-8.** Moses was told what to say when fighting against Israel's enemies which included "Do not be afraid of them, for Yahweh your God will be with you." Also, the priests were told to reassure the men that God would be with them and grant victory. Those who were faint-hearted or had unfinished business were sent home. **Hebrews 11:32-40.** The writer reminds his readers of great men and women of faith who conquered kingdoms as God turned their weakness to strength. Many were greatly blessed but others were tortured, ridiculed, flogged, stoned, killed, persecuted or ill-treated in God's plan for their future perfection. The writer goes on to say, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (12:2). *Lord Jesus, make us strong in conquering evil and remain faithful in your work of perfection in our lives for the greater good. Amen.*

**Day 156. 1 Chronicles 8.** This list of names giving the genealogy of the tribe of Benjamin includes their first king Saul. It records the importance of one of the smallest tribes of Israel born to Jacob and Rachel at the cost of her life which also later produced the apostle Paul. **Acts 8:26-40.** This is the conversion through the apostle Philip of the Ethiopian after seeking the one true God in Jerusalem and reading the Old Testament scriptures. This man was not allowed to worship with the Jews because he was a eunuch but through conversion to Christ he returned to Ethiopia rejoicing in his salvation and baptism (v.39). *Father God, thank you that you exalt those who suffer or who are rejected through whom you bring many spiritual offspring into the Kingdom of God in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. May we, whatever our position in life, be ready to witness to those whom you are calling. Amen.*

**Day 157. Jeremiah 35:15-16 (NIV).** The word of God was given to Jeremiah to say to the people of Israel, "Again and again I sent all My servants the prophets to you. They said, 'Each of you must turn from your wicked ways.' But you have not paid attention or listened to Me. [Only] the descendants of Jonadab have carried out the command their forefathers gave them." **Luke 14:34-35.** Jesus said that in the costly service of being His disciple, we need to be like salt which is effective both for cooking and healing. Without its saltiness, it is useless and cannot be used even in the soil or on the manure heap. It is fit only to be thrown out. *Pray that our lives are not wasted but spent in obedience to the word of God and in effective service down through the generations of believers.*

**Day 158. 2 Samuel 3:36-39.** The Old Testament tells us that the people were pleased with King David even though his actions had led to the death of an innocent man of God (v.27-28). David readily admitted, "Though I am the anointed king, I am weak." **1 Timothy 1:3-5.** Paul asked Timothy to stay in Ephesus to ensure no false teachings influenced the believers and their work for God. He said, "The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith." Paul readily admitted that he himself had acted "in ignorance and unbelief" before he knew Jesus as his Saviour. He regarded himself as the "worst of sinners" (v.13-15). *Heavenly Father, grant us the humility to recognise and confess our sins and failings as we lovingly seek to lead and encourage others in the faith. Amen.*

**Day 159. Jeremiah 30:12-24.** Jeremiah's message from God confirmed that the guilt and sins of the people were "so many" (v.14). But God's plan was to restore them (v.17-18) and bless them and bring honour to them (v.19). God, in His mercy, said, "So you will be My people and I will be your God" (v.22). **Luke 7:36-50.** Simon the Pharisee learnt from Jesus that the greater the sins God forgives, the greater will be the sinner's love for God. He watched as Jesus proved this point by allowing a repentant prostitute anoint His feet with perfume in gratitude for her forgiveness and salvation. He told her, "Your faith has saved you" (v.50). *Lord Jesus, we have sinned in so many ways and You have forgiven us. Build our faith to serve You in sharing the love and mercy and salvation of God to others. Amen.*

**Day 160. Jeremiah 29:4-14.** Jeremiah wrote to the exiled Jews in Babylon saying the Lord God Almighty wanted them to settle down, build houses, plant and eat food, marry and increase in number (v.4-6). They must not listen to those who are prophesying lies (v.8) "for I have plans to prosper you and not harm you" (v.11). **Luke 15:20-21.** The parable of the prodigal son portrays the love of God for His wayward people: "His father saw him and was filled with compassion for him." The son confessed his sins and said he was not worthy to be called his son. The other son was judgemental. *Father God, we are not worthy to be called your*

*children yet Your purpose is to bless us and enable us to start over again. Help us to ignore those who judge otherwise. Thank you for your loving compassion and desire to prosper us, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Day 161. 1 Kings 11:23-25.** God's anger was roused against King Solomon who had wasted his riches on buildings to worship foreign gods (v.7-11). So God chose to punish Solomon by raising up enemies who settled in Damascus and who became "hostile towards Israel" as long as Solomon lived. **Hebrews 2:17.** In the Christian era, God chose to send His Son as a human being "in service to God and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people". *Thank You Father God that you planned to punish Your Son, our Saviour, for the sins of Your people, that through Your mercy and His service to You, we may receive Your forgiveness and a new life on earth as long as we live and the hope of eternal life beyond the grave. Amen.*

**Day 162. Psalm 108.** King David faithfully declares his determination to praise Almighty God and to witness of Him to the people and to the surrounding nations, because of His love and faithfulness (v.1-5). However, he seeks deliverance from enemies and reminds God of His promises to triumph over them, remarking who else could help him to succeed in battles (v.6-10) for he confesses that it feels like God has rejected Israel and is no longer with them. So he asks for God's intervention against the enemy since help from any other source is worthless (v.11-12). Confidently he declares, "With God we shall gain the victory" (v.13). **Romans 15:4.** Paul declares, "...everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of Scriptures, we might have hope." *Lord, help us to remain faithful and not turn to other sources of help which might prove worthless. Amen.*

**Day 163. Isaiah 37:14-20 (NIV).** In 710 BC, Hezekiah went up to the Temple to pray against the king of the Assyrians. He said, "You alone are God over all the kingdoms ... and have made Heaven and Earth... Now O Lord, deliver us from his hand, so that all kingdoms on Earth may know that You alone, are the Lord God Almighty." **Romans 1:24-25.** 750 years later, Paul reminds us of the sinful men and women who "exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator." He goes on to warn the Roman church not to judge others for fear of judging themselves (2:1). Why? Because righteousness from God comes [only] through faith in Jesus Christ ... for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (3:22-23). *Lord, save us from this wicked generation and help us to witness for You by living righteous lives ourselves. Amen.*

**Day 165. Deuteronomy Chapter 8.** The Lord God Almighty warned Moses to "be careful to follow every command I am giving you" (v.1,6) in the Promised Land which was full of good things. God also instructed Moses to say, "Praise the Lord your God for the good land He has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God" (v.10,11). **2 Peter 1:12-15.** The apostle Peter warns the early church to remember his teachings when he departs, regarding matters of faith, goodness, self-control and love (1:5-7). *Lord God, forgive us the times when we take Your mercy and provision for granted and help us to demonstrate a full appreciation of the divine nature given through our salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Day 166. Ezekiel 48:9-12.** God instructed Ezekiel to preserve land for the priests of Zadok, descendents of Aaron, the brother of Moses, who were "faithful in serving Me and did not go astray as the Levites did." These faithful Zadokites were later pushed out by the Maccabees who influenced the Pharisees in planning the death of Jesus Christ. At that time, the Zadokites retreated to Qumran, taking their Old Testament scriptures with them, the 'Dead Sea Scrolls', which predicted the life and death of their Jewish Messiah. **1 Corinthians 15:3-11.** Paul testifies that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures [and] was raised on the third day according to the scriptures and that He appeared to Peter and then the Twelve [and] to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time." *Praise God for the faithful believers who have preserved the Old and New Testament writings that have impacted the lives of many other believers down the ages.*

**Day 167. Psalm 65:1-5.** This is a psalm of praise by King David to the One who hears prayer (v.1-2) who forgives our transgressions and blesses those whom He chooses (v.3-4) and who answers with deeds of righteousness and is the hope of all (v.5). **Acts 9:15-17.** Luke records the moment when Ananias, after hearing from God in a vision, went to lay hands on Saul to restore his sight and confirm his ministry in converting Gentiles and their leaders, as well as the Jews. *Praise God for His desire to bless the world through the message of righteousness and hope in forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ preached by Saul (Paul) and the other apostles and as foreseen by King David.*

**Day 168. Micah 3.** 700 years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Micah warned that God would not listen to the cries of the people or their leaders who hate good and do evil (v.2,4,7) nor those who prophesy lies (v.5) nor those who despise justice by distorting the truth (v.9). But Micah continued in the power of the Spirit to declare the justice of God to the people (v.8). **Acts 8:30-35.** The apostle Philip was sent by an angel to explain to an Ethiopian official the writings of Isaiah which foretell the Good News of Jesus. The man went on his way back to Ethiopia rejoicing to share with others about Jesus while Philip continued preaching in his own country (v.39-40). *Dear God, in these days of spiritual rebellion, let us remain faithful in declaring your desire for justice and the Good News of Jesus Christ to all who will listen, at home and abroad. Amen.*

**Day 169. Deuteronomy 7.** God instructed Moses to tell the children of Israel to totally destroy seven of the pagan nations living in the land of Canaan (v.1) along with their idols and altars (v.5) because "the Lord God Almighty has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the Earth to be His people, His treasured possession" (v.6). God did this because of His promise to Abraham's family through Isaac that they would be saved from slavery in Egypt (v.8). **Philemon.** Paul's letter to Philemon asks him to receive back his former runaway slave Onesimus "as a dear brother in the Lord" (v.16). *These readings remind us to value the freedom from slavery to sin and alien religions through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and know that we are adopted into the worldwide family of Abraham as part of God's everlasting covenant. Thank you Father; thank you Jesus.*

**Day 170. Job 1:12-22.** God allowed many disasters to happen to Job regarding family and property. Yet Job did not blame God but worshipped Him, acknowledging that "the Lord God Almighty gives and He takes away; may the name of the Lord be praised." **2 Peter 1:21.** The apostle Peter was convinced that the truth from the Old Testament prophets never originated from the will of mankind but they "spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." *Heavenly Father, keep us always open to Your love and Your truth, that we may never misjudge You nor corrupt what You say with our own desires or reflections on life. Help us to trust the guidance of Your Holy Spirit in good times and in bad and worship You and seek to know Your will that we may praise You and witness Your truth. Amen.*

**Day 171. Isaiah 40.** The Old Testament prophet asks, "To whom can you compare God?" (v.18). He answers, "Yahweh, the Lord God Almighty, is the everlasting God... He will not grow tired or weary" (v.28). He assures believers, "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength" (v.31). **Matthew 12:50.** Jesus taught the crowds, "Whoever does the will of My Father in Heaven is my brother and sister..." meaning all those who listen to and obey His truth from God. *Lord Jesus, forgive us for growing weary in our walk with You. Help us to value Your teachings and those of the Old Testament prophets to know that our awesome God is our hope and refuge and strength, who continually watches over us. Thank You Jesus; thank You Father. Thank You for Your costly plan of salvation. Amen.*

**Day 172. Malachi 4.** The last words in the Old Testament remind us that the day is coming when the "arrogant and evildoers" will be gone (v.1); faithful believers will leap for joy and trample on the ashes of the wicked (v.2-3); the words of Moses and Elijah will be fulfilled (v.4-5) and the Lord will "turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers" (v.6). **Matthew 1.** The first words in the New Testament record the 42 generations of Jews from Abraham to Joseph who married the virgin mother of Jesus Christ (v.2-16). Matthew then confirms that the words of the prophet Micah were fulfilled when "the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son and they will call Him Immanuel", which means "God with us" (v.23). *Heavenly Father, we look forward to the day when Your Son, our Saviour, will be with us to establish peace and justice on earth. Come, Lord Jesus!*

**Day 173. Jeremiah 30:22.** The prophet confirms, in the context of God's restoration and compassion: "You will be My people and I will be Your God". **James 5:16.** The brother of Jesus confirms, in the context of God's forgiveness and healing: "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective". *Father God, help us to realise how special we are to You and to experience Your power at work in the Church today through the blessed name of Jesus. In Your mercy, forgive us and restore us and empower us to perform miracles in the ministry You have called us to do. Amen.*

**Day 175. Joshua 18:8 (NirV).** 'Joshua directed them, "Go and map out the land. Write a report about its features. Then return to me. I will cast lots for you here at Shiloh in the sight of the LORD." ' This was part of the ongoing fulfilment promised to Abraham that his holy family would occupy the land of Canaan, later called

Israel. At that time, Shiloh was the holy city for the Tabernacle of God because the people had not driven the heathen tribes out of Jerusalem (15:63). **Romans 1:21 and 32.** 1500 years later, Paul warns twice that the holy people of Israel knew God yet failed to obey Him. He goes on to urge the Christians in Rome not to make the same mistakes (2:1). *Almighty God, help us to repent of seeing the wrong in others yet failing to confess and drive out the wrong in our own lives. Amen.*

**Day 176. Job 1:6 to 2:10 (NIV).** Twice God allowed Satan to test Job. First, God allowed Satan to do evil things to his family and possessions provided he left Job unharmed. Job did not blame God. Then, when God allowed Satan to harm Job, he still did not blame God. He said, "Shall we accept [only] good from God and not trouble?" (2:10). **James 5:13.** James teaches us, "Is anyone of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise." *Lord God, keep us strong in faith in good times and in bad so that we can pray and praise and prove to ourselves and to others that Your salvation, anointing and blessing remain with us at all times. In the name of Jesus and for His sake, Amen.*

**Day 177. Psalm 140:9-13 (NIV).** In this psalm of King David, he turns from asking for burning coals to fall on the heads of those who trouble him (v.10) to asking for God's protection for his nation from slanderers and men of violence (v.11). Finally, he demonstrates his faith and confidence in Almighty God by declaring, "I know that the LORD secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy" (v.12). **Revelation 2:11.** The Apostle John is told by the Lord Jesus Himself to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches and avoid the spiritual death of all evildoers. *Lord Jesus, thank you for my salvation to eternal life with You. Help me to declare boldly my faith in God and to trust Him to judge the world of sin and show mercy to the poor and needy. Amen.*

**Day 178. 1 Samuel 30.** King David and his men wept when the people of Ziklag and their possessions were taken away by the Amalekites (v.3-5). 'But David found strength in the LORD his God' (v.6) and enquired of Him what to do (v.8). He obeyed God and pursued the enemy and found them all and with only 400 men destroyed them and took back all the people of Ziklag and their possessions (v.9-19). **Jude 3-4.** Jude explains his two-fold purpose in writing his letter: to encourage the believers in their faith and to stand up for their faith among godless people. *Father God, forgive us for allowing the enemy to take over or influence the lives and livelihood of our friends and relatives. Grant us Your strength to fearlessly take back all ground that has been lost, though we may be few in number. In and through the blessed name of Jesus, Amen.*

**Day 179. Ezekiel 8:12.** The vision given to Ezekiel revealed what was going on in dark places where the elders worshipped idols. They said, "The LORD does not see us; the LORD has forsaken the land." In the same vision, the Lord God Almighty vowed that He would not look on them with pity (8:18) but would save the faithful men and women by marking the foreheads of those who lamented over the detestable things that were being done (9:4). **1 Corinthians 12:12-31.** Paul reminds the church we are all baptised by the one Spirit into one body (12:13). And God has given greater honour to the parts that lack it (12:24). *Almighty God, we lament over the shocking things we hear about the church in the past. Help us when tempted to think You don't see us or You have forsaken us. Help us believe we are all important to You in the Church of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Day 180. Exodus 21:29-30.** The principles of God's just punishment and righteous redemption are clearly given here 1500 years before Christ died for our sins to save us from the punishment we deserve. **Romans 14:19 (NIRV).** Let us value the freedom we have from God's punishment that we have found in Christ by "doing everything we can to live in peace and work hard to build each other up". *Heavenly Father, never let us forget the punishment we deserve for sin and the price paid by the sacrifice of Your own flesh and blood through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, whose death redeemed us and set us free. May we constantly radiate Your love and mercy in the forgiveness and peace You have freely given so that others will know Your saving grace and be encouraged in their faith and Christian walk. Amen.*

**Day 181. Joshua 15:47.** Part of the allotment for the tribe of Judah in the Promised Land of Canaan included the land around Gaza as far west as the Mediterranean Sea and south to the Wadi of Egypt. This Bible record dates back to 1444 BC. Joshua organised it with Eleazar the priest and established what God had commanded through Moses (14:1-2). **Acts 8:26-27.** Gaza is mentioned here in the first century AD as the common route to use at that time to travel to Africa, along which worshippers freely journeyed to Jerusalem. *Lord God Almighty, You long for peace and freedom in the land that has special meaning to You. May your*

people Israel see clearly their role in enabling all peoples to worship the One True God and so prepare for Messiah's return to Jerusalem. We ask for peace and provision for Gaza as part of Your end-time plan, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**Day 182. Numbers 6:22-27 (NIV).** God told Moses to bless the people with these famous words: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you [His] peace." These words would put the blessing of God's special name (Yahweh) on the people and He would bless them. **Luke 16:31.** Through the parable of Lazarus, Jesus warned that the people must heed the teachings of Moses and the prophets to receive Him, the One who "rises from the dead", in order to join their father Abraham in Heaven. *Lord God, open everyone's eyes to these Old and New Testaments teachings that they may receive in faith Your long-promised eternal life through Jesus Christ who died for our sins and rose again for our salvation and so know Your blessing in this world and the next. Amen.*

**Day 183. Daniel 11:11-19.** This is part of a vision given to Daniel of the near future leading up to the first coming of the Messiah. It refers to the kings of Syria and Egypt to the north and south of Israel who were at war on many occasions and which at times God allowed to engulf Israel, 'The Beautiful Land' (v.16), who foolishly took sides in the conflicts. **1 Peter 4:12-19.** Peter warns about times of suffering to come and quotes the old proverb, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly?" (v.18). His advice to "those who suffer according to God's will" is that they should "commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good" (v.19). *Scripture does not promise salvation from persecution but advises at such times against building foolish alliances and instead be found trusting in God and doing good.*

**Day 184. Job 10:15-16.** Without divine intervention, Job was confused by his friends and made to feel ashamed for sins he had not committed. He began to blame God for his circumstances but God intervened and Job admitted he was wrong to judge God over things he did not understand (42:3). **Philemon.** Paul writes to his friend to ask him to forgive Onesimus and even offers to pay him for anything "he has done wrong or owes you anything" (v.18). Paul knew the heart of God and His divine wisdom in order to minister salvation in Onesimus and prompt forgiveness in Philemon. *Lord God, help us to avoid drawing wrong conclusions about circumstances and the thoughts and actions of others. Show us the divine truths that will bring personal salvation and a forgiving attitude. May we be ready to pay the price to achieve a righteous solution, as Christ sacrificed Himself for us. Amen.*

**Day 185. Deuteronomy 11.** Moses tells the people of Israel again and again to love the Lord their God and keep His commands (v.1, 8, 13, 22, 32). They must remember what He had taught them and how He had disciplined them and not be influenced by their children who did not experience these things (v.2). Instead they must teach their children at all times about what God said and did (v.19). They must also trust God to provide for them in the future (v.10-15). **2 Timothy 3:1-9.** Paul warns Timothy of the terrible times ahead when people will do evil things (v.1-6), opposing the truth like they opposed Moses (v.7-8). *Lord Jesus, thank You for Your Holy Spirit power to obey the commands of God and the faith to build on our personal salvation experiences. Enable us to trust in the provision and protection that God has planned and teach others to do the same. Amen.*

**Day 186. Joshua 6:12-27.** The fall of Jericho includes God's instruction to follow His plan to maintain a seven-day week in the Promised Land and ultimately the rest of the world. All the nations heard about God's purpose to totally destroy sin and punish sinners by what He did at that time through Joshua (v.27). **Acts 9:15.** The Lord Jesus instructed Ananias to go to Saul to anoint him as His "chosen instrument" to preach about Jesus to Israel and the world. Saul quickly changed his understanding that God saves repentant sinners because Jesus took their punishment on the cross. *Heavenly Father, prepare us to reveal to the world Your eternal plan to testify of Your unchanging need to punish sin and how the sacrifice of Your Son, our Saviour, achieved this through the shedding of His own blood on the cross. And keep us mindful of your unchanging 7-day routine of work, witness and worship! Amen.*

**Day 187. Ezekiel 48:28-29.** These verses confirm the purposes of God that part of Israel's inheritance should include the coastal strip of Gaza, as in Joshua 15:47. This strip of land was occupied at the time of Ezekiel and at the time of Christ and remains so to this day. **Luke 12:11-12.** Jesus warns that when the



time comes to stand in court against those who persecute you, "do not worry about how to defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you." Jesus knows the perfect will of God Almighty and also knows that men will be prepared to kill His followers; but they should not fear (v.4). *Lord, help Your people to stand up for the purposes of God even when it causes persecution. Help us and our nation to believe we will be led by Your Holy Spirit power and that Your righteous peace will prevail at a time of Your choosing. Amen.*

**Day 188. 1 Chronicles 9.** The writer lists the total number of Jewish exiles who returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon: 690 from the tribe of Judah, 956 from Benjamin plus 1760 priests and 212 Levites and their families (v.6,9,13,22). This was the remnant God saved to rebuild Israel. **Romans 9 (NirV).** The Apostle Paul said he would give his life to see his fellow Jews accept Jesus as their Christ and Saviour (v.3). He said, "The people of Israel have been adopted as God's children. God's glory belongs to them. So do the covenants. They received the Law. They were taught to worship in the Temple. They were given the promises. Christ comes from their family line" (v.4-5). Paul told them that God showed mercy on the remnant of the family line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (v.7-15,27) and they should now live by faith in Christ as do many non-Jews (v.30-33). *Amazing grace for all nations!*

**Day 189. Jeremiah 29:20-23.** The word of God Almighty came to Jeremiah in 600 BC accusing certain false prophets not only of "outrageous" moral behaviour but "in My name have spoken lies". God said they were destined to be "burned in the fire". **Jude 17-22.** Jude reminds the churches that the apostles of Christ foretold there would be ungodly men who follow their human instincts and do not have the Holy Spirit at work within them. He told the believers to build their faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, remain in God's love, hope in eternal life, show mercy to those who doubt and "snatch others from the fire and save them". *Heavenly Father, make us strong and wise in the company of the ungodly who speak lies about You and your eternal truth. Help us to show them Your mercy that they might be saved from the fire of spiritual death. Amen.*

**Day 190. Numbers 11 (NIV).** "The people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord God Almighty and ... His anger was aroused" (v.1). A certain "rabble" among them stirred up trouble, demanding free meat and other food to eat in addition to God's daily supply of manna (v.4-6). God sent a huge supply of quail meat but the people were "struck with a severe plague" (v.31-33). Those who had craved after other food died and were buried there (v.34). Then the people moved 60 km north from Mount Sinai towards the Promised Land, and stayed there for a time (v.35). **Matthew 19:21.** Jesus said, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor and follow Me." *Dear God, help us to be content with Your provision and purpose in life and follow where Jesus leads. Amen.*

**Day 191. Isaiah 52:5-10.** God tells Isaiah He was frustrated by His name being constantly blasphemed and His people being mocked, so He would take action to redeem them (v.5). Then, "My people will know My name" and they will "bring good news ... proclaim peace ... bring good tidings ... proclaim salvation ... and declare 'Your God reigns' " (v.6-7). "And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (v.10). **Luke 17:11-19.** In this story of the healing of the ten lepers, only one came back to Jesus, praising God and thanking Him. The man was a foreigner (v.18). *Heavenly Father, let us be part of the fulfilment of Your heart's desire to reign among Your people and to bless all nations. Open our eyes to who You are working through so that we can share in the praise and thanks for the powerful ministry of Jesus today! Amen.*

**Day 192. 2 Chronicles 34:19-33.** In the days before the exile to Babylon, King Josiah restored the Temple and its worship. He wept when the words of the Law were discovered and read out to him. He confessed, "Our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord God Almighty" (v.21). The prophetess Huldah said to him, "Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God ... your eyes will not see all the disaster I [God] am going to bring." (v.27-28). Then Josiah and the people promised to obey the words of God's covenant written in the book of the Law (v.31-32). **James 3:9-10.** James warns, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in God's likeness... This should not be." *Lord Jesus, you died that we might live under the new covenant of Father God. Teach us to learn, obey and speak only divine truth. Amen.*

**Day 193. Jeremiah 29.** Jeremiah warned the elders that God knew they had spoken lies in His name (v.23) so He would not permit them to "see the good things I will do for My people" (v.32). **Mark 13:9-12 (NirV).** Jesus told His disciples, "You will stand [accused] in front of governors and kings because of Me. In that way you will be witnesses to them. The Good News has to be preached to all nations before the end comes... Do

not worry ahead of time about what you will say. Just say what God brings to your mind at the time. It is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit... The one who stands firm to the end will be saved." *When our leaders speak lies and the faithful are arrested for speaking the truth, Almighty God, help us to stand firm in the hope of seeing many converts and the good things You long to do. Amen.*

**Day 194. Job 21:23-26 (NIV).** Job pointed out to his well-meaning friend, "One man dies... well nourished... another man dies... never having enjoyed anything good. Side by side they lie in the dust [grave]". **1 Corinthians 10:15-16 (NirV).** Paul says, "I am talking to people who are reasonable [sensible]. Judge for yourselves what I say. When we give thanks for the cup at the Lord's Supper, are we not sharing in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, are we not sharing in the body of Christ?" In celebrating the Lord's Last Supper, we share in His death and resurrection through which we receive a new life that is everlasting. *Thank You Jesus that through Your suffering for our sins we enjoy the hope of resurrection life before and after the grave.*

**Day 195. Ecclesiastes 3.** The writer affirms there is a time for every circumstance: birth & death, planting & uprooting, killing & healing, tearing down & building up, weeping & laughing, mourning & dancing, scattering & gathering, embracing & refraining, searching & giving up, keeping & throwing away, tearing & mending, silence & speaking, loving & hating, war & peace. He believes that "everything God does will endure... so that men will revere Him" (v.14). **Colossians 4.** Paul wrote from prison to send greetings to the church at Colosse. He says that his fellow prisoner "wrestles in prayer for you" to "stand firm in the will of God" (v.12). Paul also tells Archippus to "complete the work you have received in the Lord" (v.17). *Heavenly Father, at all times may we see Your hand at work and the role we and others must play in the extension of Your Kingdom, to Your glory, whatever the cost or circumstance. Amen.*

**Day 196. Jeremiah 28.** This chapter records the words of the Lord through Jeremiah denouncing the false prophecies of Hananiah who tried to prove that only good things would happen to the people of Israel. Jeremiah said "in the hearing of the people" that it was a time (600 BC) when they and the rest of mankind would have to submit to the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (v.14). **Romans 1:18-32.** Paul records in the first century AD that "the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth" (v.18). "Although they knew God, they neither glorified Him or gave thanks to Him ... Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools" (v.21-22). *Lord Jesus, thank You that You died so that we could be saved in this age from foolish lies and wickedness to do good and enjoy eternal life (2:7).*

**Day 197. Job 1:6-22.** God told Satan about Job, "There is no-one on Earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil" (v.8). God allowed Satan to test Job's faith (v.12). Satan went away and destroyed much of Job's family and wealth. Job fell to the ground in worship and said, "The Lord God Almighty gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised" (v.20-21). **1 John 5:18-20.** John believed, "We know that those who are children of God ... the evil one cannot harm them... [Yet] we know that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. We also know that the Son of God has come." John, a disciple of Jesus, knew all about the battle between good and evil and the victory we have in Christ for our salvation and eternal life. *May the name of the Lord be praised!*

**Day 198. Genesis 15:1-6.** God told Abraham not to be afraid and promised him great rewards. But Abraham was worried about one thing only. He wanted a son and heir. This is the occasion when God showed him all the stars in the sky and said, "So shall your offspring be." Abraham believed the Lord God Almighty. His faith established Abraham in God's righteousness. **Luke 10:38-42.** Jesus stayed for a meal with Martha and Mary. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus to listen to His teaching while Martha was busy preparing the meal and complained to Jesus because she needed Mary's help. Jesus told Martha, "You are worried and upset about many things but ... Mary has chosen what is better." *Lord, forgive us when we focus on our many worries and fears instead of the one thing that is important at the time. May our faith and trust be counted as righteousness. Amen.*

**Day 199. 1 Samuel 10.** Samuel anointed and blessed the Old Testament Saul before sending him on his way as God's future king of Israel (v.1). Samuel also warned Saul that his father was worried for him because he had been away from home a long time looking for lost donkeys (v.2). On his way, 'God changed Saul's heart' (v.9) and God's Spirit fell upon him in power as he met up with a company of prophets (v.10). After

this, his uncle met him with news from Saul's father (v.14). In this way, God empowered Saul for ministry whilst showing concern for personal family matters. **Acts 9:1-9**. The New Testament Saul was given letters of authority to persecute the new church in Damascus (v.2). On his way, the Lord stopped him and told him to wait in the city for further instructions (v.3-6). *Lord Jesus, equip us to serve You in power under Your authority alone whilst trusting You for our personal family matters. Amen.*

**Day 200. 2 Samuel 3:35-39.** We see here King David portraying New Testament principles by avoiding repaying evil with more evil and trying to do what is right and noble and honourable in the sight of others in order to live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:17). Instead of taking revenge for the murder of Abner, David wept, refused food, gave honour to the dead and resolved to let the Lord God Almighty repay the evil that had been done. Everything that David said and did pleased the people (v.36). **Luke 20:27-40.** When the Sadducees questioned Jesus about the truth of life after death, He highlighted their failure to believe in the power of God and their ignorance of the scriptures. Some of the Jewish leaders responded, "Well said, teacher!" (v.39). *Lord Jesus, help us to conduct ourselves well at times of public distress or when there is a lack of faith and understanding. Amen.*

**Day 201. 2 Chronicles 32:7-8.** "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged... with us is the LORD our God to help us." **1 Peter 1:1-8.** Peter describes the church members as "God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered [yet] chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the [Holy] Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and [confirmed by the] sprinkling of His blood" (v.1-2). He goes on to praise God for His great mercy, new birth, living hope of resurrection and an inheritance that cannot perish (v.3-4). He claims this is our joy, though we may have suffered grief in all kinds of trials so that our faith, which is of greater worth than gold, may result in praise, glory and honour to Jesus, who "though you have not seen Him, you love Him... and receive the salvation of your souls" (v.6-8). *Thanks be to God! Amen.*

**Day 202. Ecclesiastes 4 & 5.** These are the famous observations of the writer who saw all the oppression that was taking place and the tears of the oppressed, who had no comforter since power was on the side of the oppressors such that the dead were happier than the living! (4:1-3). However, in the next chapter the writer advises his readers to worship God and prepare to listen rather than offer the sacrifice of fools who do not understand what they've done wrong (5:1). He calls us to "stand in awe of God" (5:7). **1 John 1:5-6 (NIV).** The Apostle John advises us that "this is how we know we are 'in Christ': whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did." *Heavenly Father, thank You that You are less interested in our sacrifice of time and talent than in a genuine desire follow Jesus and walk in His way surrounded by our oppressors.*

**Day 203. Ruth 1:12-18.** Naomi's husband and sons died in Moab and she felt that God's hand "has gone out against me!" (v.13). However, her daughter-in-law Ruth refused to let Naomi go back to her home town of Bethlehem without taking her with her. She said, "Your people will be my people and your God will be my God" (v.16). **John 15:26 to 16:3.** Jesus had taught his disciples important things "so that you will not go astray" (16:1). This included the promised Holy Spirit (15:26-27) "who will testify about Me. And you also must testify [about Me]". This promise and command must be remembered in stressful times so that believers will not stumble in their faith or be deceived by people who do not know the Lord (16:2-3). *Lord Jesus, help us to remember Your Spirit is close to us at all times to testify and witness about You in the hope that even foreigners like Ruth will be saved. Amen.*

**Day 203. Genesis 28:10-22.** The famous dream of Jacob's ladder was the occasion when God told Jacob (later known as Israel) that he and his descendants would be blessed in the land that is now Israel, just as He promised Jacob's grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac (v.13). God also promised that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring" (v.14). **Acts 9:1-16.** The famous vision of the risen Lord Jesus appearing to Saul (later known as Paul) on the road to Damascus was followed by the promise of God to use Saul "to carry My name before the Gentiles and... the people of Israel" (v.15). These Bible records prove how God uses the most unlikely and rebellious people to pass on the truth of God and His Good News of Jesus to all nations. *Dear Lord, use even me to witness and preach that Your eternal salvation is offered to all peoples on earth. Amen.*

**Day 204. Jeremiah 43 and 44.** The prophet Jeremiah was accused of "false news" that the people of Israel would not escape the wrath of God by emigrating to Egypt (43:1-2). Instead, God would punish Egypt

and destroy their temples of the gods as well as punishing Israel for their unfaithfulness (43:11,13). Also, the remnant of Jews in Egypt would perish at the same time (44:12). **Jude.** The follower of Jesus wrote to warn about certain ungodly men who had come into their community (v.4). Jude reminded the people who read his letter that the Lord delivered His people out of Egypt but later destroyed those who did not believe (v.5). These first-century men who did not understand the things of God and behaved as "unreasoning animals" (v.10) would end up like fruitless trees which are dug up and destroyed (v.12). *Keep us faithful to Your truth, Lord, and grant wisdom to stand up against the ungodly. Amen.*

**Day 205. Nehemiah 11:22-23.** These verses describe how, after the Israelites returned from exile, the priests worked closely with both the worship leaders in the new Temple and with their King. There was a daily duty to encourage believers to serve God and State. **Ephesians 3:16-21.** It was Paul's desire to glorify God in the church through Christ Jesus in succeeding generations of believers (v.21). He believed this would happen with the power of the Holy Spirit (v.16) through faith in Christ and founded in love (v.17) – a love that is high, wide and deep, which "surpasses knowledge" (v.18-19). With Holy Spirit power at work within us, God is able to do more than we ask (v.20)! *Father God, enable us to fulfil Your heart's desire to encourage believers to worship you in love and power through the Spirit of Christ, with an awareness of the responsibility and impact we can have in Church and State. Amen.*

**Day 206. 1 Chronicles 1 to 9.** These chapters give the amazing family records of Adam and Eve down to the time of Noah (1:1-3). Also of Noah's three sons who survived the Flood and whose families populated Europe (through Japheth), Africa (through Ham) and Asia (through Shem) (1:4-27). The records continue by listing Abraham's Arab families descended from Hagar and Keturah (1:28-33) and the Arab families of his grandson Esau descended from Isaac through Sarah (1:34-54). The following eight chapters list the Hebrew families of his other grandson Jacob (later called Israel) also descended from Sarah and Isaac. **Matthew 1 and Luke 3.** Matthew and Luke both record the genealogy of Joseph who married Mary the mother of Israel's Messiah, Jesus the Christ, Son of God. Matthew lists Joseph's family line from Abraham; Luke lists the family line from Adam. *Dear God, help us to understand the importance of these family records in background Bible teaching.*

**Day 207. 2 Chronicles 36.** This records the end of the kingdom of Judah before their exile in Babylon. After 400 years of many bad and some good kings of both Israel and Judah, God fulfilled His threat to punish His special people because so many had copied the sinful ways of their neighbours and refused to obey God's commandments. However, the final verse records how God spoke to Cyrus, king of Persia, to send the faithful remnant of Jews back home to rebuild Jerusalem and its Temple. **Jude.** This letter to the churches warns about the evil times ahead (v.17-19) and encourages the believers to build up their faith, pray in the Spirit and remain in God's love, with the hope of eternal life through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (v.20-21). *Thank You Father God for Your mercy in keeping us faithful to your commandments when surrounded by evil and secure in Your salvation through Christ alone. Amen.*

**Day 208. Isaiah 37:21-23.** Israel's righteous king Hezekiah received a message from the Lord God Almighty through His prophet Isaiah "because you have prayed to Me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria." God made it clear that Sennacherib's insults against Jerusalem were in fact a blasphemy against God Himself. God would save Jerusalem from the Assyrians for His name's sake and for the sake of His servant David (37:35). **Revelation 22:11-16 (NIV and footnote).** The apostle John received a message from the Lord Jesus Christ through an angel that evil people will continue to do wrong but the righteous must continue to do what is right and remain holy. "Behold I am coming soon! I will give to everyone according to what they have done... I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give [everyone] this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and Offspring of David..." *We say with John, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (22:20).*

**Day 209. 1 Chronicles 24:1-5.** King David took great care choosing priests in readiness for the Temple to be built in Jerusalem. Of the four sons of Aaron, two died without raising a family, the other two sons produced large families. Eleazar's family had twice as many members as Ithamar's family but David chose fairly from them the number to serve God and the people of Israel as priests for the years ahead in order to encourage respect for each other and unity. **1 Corinthians 10:31-33 (NIV).** "So eat and drink and do everything else for the glory of God. Do not do anything that causes another person to trip and fall... I try to please everyone in every way." Like David, Paul wanted people to worship in unity and not allow different

backgrounds to hinder spiritual growth. *Lord, during great times of change, help us to focus on serving You and each other together in love, peace and unity. Amen.*

**Day 210. 1 Samuel 25.** This is the story of Abigail who gave the future King David sound advice not to take vengeance on his enemies but to let God judge what was needed. David listened and praised God that she came just in time to avoid unnecessary loss of life that would have later caused David shame and guilt. **2 Corinthians 12:7-10.** Paul suffered much from his so-called "thorn in the flesh" but accepted that God's grace "is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness". Paul was prepared to suffer, for Christ's sake, the insults, hardships, persecutions and difficulties, "for when I am weak, then I am strong". *Lord Jesus, keep me humble in heeding advice from others who are prompted by God, whoever they are, and not to act in my own strength when threatened. Help me to avoid reacting wrongly, whatever the personal cost, to avoid regrets later on. Amen.*

**Day 211. Isaiah 42.** God announces the coming of the Messiah, His "chosen One in whom I delight" (v.1) who will "bring forth justice" (v.3). It is therefore a time to praise God with a "new song" (v.10) for He will "turn darkness into light" (v.16). However, He also asks, "Which of you will listen to this or pay close attention in [the] time to come?" (v.23). **1 Peter 1:3.** Peter says, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope..." It was Fred's last wish to his Manna editorial team that Old Testament teachings should be viewed in the light of their New Testament fulfilment and that NT teachings should be viewed in the context of God's purposes and promises expressed in the OT. *Dear God, help us to pay attention to Your eternal purpose to bring justice and hope for today through Jesus Christ! Amen.*

**Day 212. Nehemiah 9:1-3.** The faithful remnant of Jewish believers who had returned from their captivity in Babylon, "confessed the sins and the wickedness of their fathers" and read aloud from the Book of the Law and worshipped the Lord God Almighty. **Hebrews 8 and 9.** The writer describes the New Covenant for "the house of Israel", promised by God through His prophet Jeremiah (8:8-13), which replaces the Old Covenant. When Christ came, His own blood offered eternal redemption for everyone in the world (9:12) "that we may serve the living God!" (9:14). Praise be to God that we are set free from the sins of our youth and of our forefathers and are forgiven through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ who is the New Covenant for Israel and the world. *May we long for our friends and family to know God through what He offered for them on the cross of His Son, Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 213. Psalm 109.** This is a testimony of how God saves His people when they cry out to him in times of trouble (v.6,13,19,28) with the exhortation to "give thanks to the Lord God Almighty for His unfailing love" (v.8,15,21,31). It is also a testimony against those who refuse to worship God: "The upright see [these things] and rejoice, but all the wicked [continue to] shut their mouths" (v.42). **Revelation 22:11-12.** This confirms through the words of Jesus Christ Himself that those who do wrong will continue to do wrong but "let him who is holy continue to be holy". When Jesus returns to Earth, He will judge everyone "according to what he has done". So for those who thirst after righteousness, "let him come and ... take the free gift of the water of life" (22:17). *"Whoever is wise, let him heed these things and consider the great love of the Lord God Almighty" (Psalm 109:43).*

**Day 214. Isaiah 36:13-15.** The commander from the king of Assyria shouted to the Jews who were under siege in Jerusalem, "Do not let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in your God when he says that your God will deliver you." The Assyrian king had ordered lies to be told to God's people. Hezekiah, however, ordered the Jews not to say anything and instead they turned to their Lord God Almighty in prayer and sought advice from Him through the prophet Isaiah and were promised deliverance (37:1-7). **Hebrews 10:15-17.** "The Holy Spirit testifies, 'This is the [new] covenant I will make... I will put My laws in their hearts and I will write them on their minds.'" The writer of Hebrews trusted in God's deliverance and mercy through Christ and went on to emphasise perseverance, faith and discipline. *Dear Lord Jesus, establish Your new creation in our hearts and minds to oppose the lies and threats of the enemies of our Father God. Amen.*

**Day 215. Numbers 14:1-9.** The Israelites grumbled in the desert on the way to the Promised Land of Canaan. They said it would be better to go back to Egypt (v.2-3). But Joshua and Caleb said, "If the Lord God Almighty is pleased with us, He will lead us into that land. Only do not rebel... and do not be afraid" (v.6-9). **Romans 10:10-17 (NIV).** The Apostle Paul says that "it is with your heart that you believe and are justified

and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says 'Anyone who trusts in Him [the Cornerstone, which is Christ] will never be put to shame' (Isaiah 28:16)." However, Paul mentions that not all the Israelites accepted the Good News (Romans 10:16). *Help us, Heavenly Father, to trust in Your Son, our Saviour, as we 'bring the Good News' (10:15) without fear or looking back or counting the cost. Amen.*

**Day 216. Nehemiah 4:1-15.** The rebuilding of Jerusalem provoked anger and ridicule from its ungodly neighbours. Nehemiah led prayers to God and the wall was quickly built half way despite a shortage of good quality stones. However, the Jews became weary and also more fearful of their enemies. Nehemiah encouraged them not to be afraid and soon their enemies saw for themselves how God Almighty was helping His people. **2 Corinthians 13:4-5 (NIrV).** Paul wrote, "Christ was nailed to the cross because He was weak... In the same way, I share His weakness. But by God's power I will live with Him to serve you... Don't you realize that Christ Jesus is in you?" In this way, Paul encouraged the believers to look beyond their weaknesses and know the resurrection power of God at work in their lives through Christ Jesus. *Lord, empower us to continue building Your kingdom even with limited resources so that Your enemies will see You at work in our lives. Amen. 2/11/18*

**Day 217. Judges 4 (NIV).** This Bible account reminds us of the sinful nature of mankind and the faithfulness of God. For 20 years "the Israelites once again did evil in the eyes of the Lord God Almighty" (v.1). God allowed them to be "cruelly oppressed" before they repented (v.3) and then He used the prophetess Deborah to deliver Israel under the leadership of the God-fearing Barak (v.4-8). After victory over their enemies, Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to God and "the land had peace for 40 years" (5:31). **Revelation 22:12-15 (NIrV).** Jesus said, "I am coming soon! Blessed are those who... have the right to the tree of [eternal] life. They will be allowed to go through the gates into the city [of God]." *Heavenly Father, thank you for your mercy and love in restoring peace to Your creation in times of repentance. Hear our prayers for forgiveness and revival through the resurrection power of Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 218. Joshua 22.** There was a period of much unity between the twelve tribes of Israel (v.3) despite having descended from the four rival wives of Jacob. However, a misunderstanding quickly arose when Joshua sent two and one half tribes across the River Jordan to live (v.10-12). They built an altar on the river bank as if they wanted to worship God separately to the other tribes (v.18). Peace was restored when leaders of all twelve tribes agreed to leave the altar as "a witness [symbol] between us that Yahweh is God" (v.34). **Luke 22:39-45.** When Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray, He asked His disciples to stay awake and pray. *Lord Jesus, forgive us when we ignore the call to pray with fellow believers at crucial times. May we see the need to unite now under the symbol of the cross as a witness to the mercy and provision of God Almighty. "Wake us up, shake us up, make us up – to be united in love!" Amen.*

**Day 219. Genesis Chapters 4.** After a period of disobedience, disunity and death in the family of Adam and Eve, God favoured them with a third son, Seth and grandson Enosh. During this time "men began to call on the name of the Lord God Almighty" (4:25-26). This testifies of God's eternal purpose for the world He created in establishing obedience, unity and life on Earth despite the sinful nature of mankind after the Fall. **John 3:16-17 (NIV).** "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son [Jesus Christ] that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through Him." This testifies how God's plan for the world offers salvation and eternal life through the dramatic sacrifice of His own flesh and blood. *Lord, help me to take it in!*

**Day 220. 2 Chronicles 36:11-23.** Around 600 BC, God spared a remnant of believers (v.20) when He allowed the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem and its Temple (v.17-19) after His people ignored many warnings (v.15-16) during the evil reign of King Zedekiah (v.11-14). Zedekiah was the last king of the Jews until the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, King of Kings. The land of Israel enjoyed 70 years of "Sabbath rests" before Jerusalem and its temple were rebuilt (v.21-23) only to be destroyed again in AD70. **Revelation 1:1-3 (NIV).** The "word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" were given to the Apostle John around AD96 "to show His servants what must soon take place... Blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it." *Father God, help us to understand in these Final Days the role of your remnant in preparing for the Second Coming of Israel's Messiah and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Day 221. Ezekiel 2.** Ezekiel was called to speak to the rebellious people of God (v.3). He was told to say to them, "This is what the Sovereign Lord God Almighty [Yahweh] says" (v.4). In saying this, the people would be in no doubt that a prophet of God had been among them (v.5). Ezekiel was told not to be afraid of them or their words, whether they listened or not (v.6-7). The first thing that Ezekiel did was to go and sit among God's people for seven days who lived near the River Kebar (3:15). **James 1.** James tells his readers "Consider it pure joy when you face trials... persevere so that you may be mature" (v.2-3). "Humbly accept the word planted in you" (v.21). *Heavenly Father, help us to take in Your word for today and humbly and joyfully sit among God's people for the right moment to say, fearlessly, "This is what God Almighty says..." Amen.*

**Day 222. 2 Chronicles 35 (NIV).** The prophetess Huldah assured King Josiah that "because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God... your eyes will not see all the disaster God will bring" (v.27-28). Josiah celebrated the Passover which "had not been observed like this in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel" (v.16-19). However, the king was tempted to attack Egypt even though their king had no quarrel with Israel. Their king warned, "Stop opposing God, who is with me, or He will destroy you" (v.20-12). Sadly, Josiah died needlessly in battle (v.22-24). **Galatians 3:22.** Paul says that the Old Testament "declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised ... through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." *Lord God, keep us humble and responsive to what You say to us including through others, so that we do not become arrogant and foolish in our walk of faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.*

**Day 223. Ezekiel 16.** The word of the Lord God Almighty came to Ezekiel to say that the people of Jerusalem behaved like Canaanites (v.1-3) and had sinned more than Sodom and Samaria (v.49-51). God said, "I will deal with you as you deserve because you have despised my covenant" (v.59). "Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you and will establish an everlasting covenant with you. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed" (v.60-61). **1 Corinthians 10.** Paul wanted the believers to realise that their forefathers ate spiritual food and drink in the desert that was from Christ – manna from heaven and water from the rock (v.1-4). "These things happened as examples to us..." (v.6). "Be careful that you don't fall!" (v.12). However, God "will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear" (v.13). *Thank you Father for promising a new and everlasting covenant in Christ and protecting us from undue temptation. Amen.*

**Day 224. Nehemiah 8 & 9.** Prompted by the daily public reading and explanation of the Book of the Law of God (8:8,18) the Jews who returned from exile "confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers" (9:2). The Levites ordered the people, "Stand up and praise the LORD your God" (9:5). **1 Timothy 1:3-20.** Paul warned against the wrong interpretation of the Law of God in the days when the New Testament was not available. Certain teachers caused controversies rather than interpreting the new covenant truth in faith, undergirded by love from a pure heart and a good conscience (v.5). Paul connects faith and love with Christ Jesus Himself, who came into the world to save sinners (v.14-15). *Father God, we praise You for Your purposes and truth revealed through Your word and for our salvation in Christ. Help us to fully benefit from daily reading of the Bible and expose those who have "shipwrecked their faith" (v.19). Amen.*

**Day 225. Jeremiah 42-44.** Some of the remnant of believers whom God saved from exile in Babylon didn't want to settle in Jerusalem but planned to go to Egypt instead. Jeremiah warned them that they would perish (42:15-22). But they told Jeremiah that he was lying (43:2) and they defied God's warning and ended up worshipping other gods (44:15). This amazing rebellion warns us all to seek God in everything we plan to do. **John 11:32-37.** Mary's brother Lazarus had died and when she saw Jesus she testified her faith in Him by saying, "Lord, if You had been here my brother would not have died." Jesus wept with her and her friends. However, some judged Jesus for not arriving soon enough to heal Lazarus (v.37). *Father, help us to trust You to be in the right place at the right time to bring glory to Your name and to learn from Jesus how to deal with judgement, despair or rebellion against Your perfect will. Amen.*

**Day 226. Job 38:33 (NirV).** God asked Job: "Do you know the laws that govern Heaven? Can you rule over Earth the way I do?" Job confessed he was unworthy to answer (40:4). Then God warned Job to get ready to answer even more questions to do with His fairness and righteousness and power (40:8-9). **Luke 11:29-32.** Jesus knew that those who refused to believe He was the Son of God kept asking for more miracles. Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation." He said that even the people of Ninevah repented in Jonah's time. The sign of Jonah being saved from the great fish after three days would be repeated at His

resurrection because He was greater than Jonah. *Forgive us Creator God when we fail to stand in awe of Your majesty, righteousness and power and acknowledge Jesus as our risen Lord and Saviour, who is equal with God Almighty Himself.*

**Day 227. Genesis 49-50.** God's purposes for Israel at the time of Jacob's death is revealed: Jacob's prophecies over each of his twelve sons (tribes) for future generations (49:1-27); instructions to bury his body in the Promised Land of Canaan with his parents and grandparents in the field that Abraham purchased 25 km from Jerusalem (49:29-32); the support from Egypt to carry out these wishes in style (50:1-14); the assurance Joseph gave to his eleven brothers that everything had happened according to the will of God (50:15-21). **Mark 3:13-19 (NIV).** Jesus went up a mountain and called twelve disciples as future apostles "that they might be with Him and He might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons" (v.14-15). *Father God, may we understand what is clearly written in our Bibles and fulfil the instructions of our Lord and Saviour as our part in Your 4000-year plan of events that unfolded in and around Jerusalem. Amen.*

**Day 228. 1 Chronicles 21.** God allowed Satan to tempt David to count all the fighting men he had in Israel. His commander tried to stop him since it was a sinful thing to do out of pride. However, the counting went ahead and there were over one million troops in Israel at that time who owned swords. Some refused to be counted because they knew it was wrong for David to put his trust in fighting men and not in Almighty God (v.5-6). **Revelation 13.** John saw a beast rise up out of the sea which was given power to utter proud words against God and rule over all the earth (v.1,5-7). However, the saints were encouraged to show patience and faithfulness (v.10b). *Heavenly Father, forgive us when we show arrogance and pride. Keep us humble and faithful to walk in the light of Your truth at all times when tempted by the wrong ideals of the world. Amen.*

**Day 229. 1 Chronicles 8.** This describes the importance of the region around Jerusalem to the kings of Israel (8:28) beginning with the tribe of Benjamin, through whom came King Saul (8:33). Jerusalem itself later became the city of King David (11:7) who was an ancestor of Joseph who married Mary the mother of Jesus, King of Kings and Son of God (Matthew 1:6-16). **John 14.** Whilst in Jerusalem, Jesus spoke words of comfort to His followers before His sacrifice on the cross (v.1). He said, "I am in the Father and the Father [lives] in Me" (v.10). Jesus followed these words with His promise of Holy Spirit power in Jerusalem after His resurrection (v.15). This passage is also famous for His desire for His followers to obey and love Him: "Love Me" is mentioned six times. *Lord Jesus, may you find us waiting in love and obedience, watching for the signs of Your return to Jerusalem. Amen.*

**Day 230. Genesis 42.** When Joseph, the eleventh son of Jacob (called Israel), became governor of all Egypt, his brothers bowed down to him (v.6). Joseph realised this was a fulfilment of the dream he had many years before (Gen. 37:7), so unjustly he made them bow down even more by telling his brothers they were spies (v.9). In this way, Joseph tested his brothers (v.15). However, after three days, Joseph realised he too was being tested and his actions were accountable to God (v.18). **Ephesians 5:8-17.** Paul tells his readers, "Live as children of light ... and find out what pleases the Lord" (v.8,10). He repeats, "Understand what the Lord's will is" (v.17). *Father God, help us to see your purpose and provision in all we do so that we do not judge or treat other believers wrongly but instead radiate Your truth and light in the way You intend through our faith in Jesus who is our Saviour. Amen.*

**Day 231. Lamentations.** The writer declares that Yahweh, the Lord God Almighty, is good to those whose hope is in Him (3:25) "for we are not cast off from Him for ever" (3:31). "Though He brings grief, He will show compassion, so great is His unfailing love" (3:32). The writer firmly believes God's punishment for the sins of their forefathers will not be prolonged (4:22). However, he was ready to admit, "We also have sinned" (5:16) then asks, "Why do You forsake us so long? Renew our days as of old" (5:21). **Luke 8:46-48.** Jesus said, "Someone has touched Me; I know that power has gone out from Me." A woman who suffered much grief for twelve years reached out to Jesus in faith and was healed. *Merciful God, we pray for the suffering and persecuted church that they will continue to reach out in faith to Our Lord and Saviour and know His forgiveness and be renewed by His power. Amen.*

**Day 232. Genesis 49:18.** Before Jacob died, he spoke prophetic words over his 12 sons and their future Israelite tribes. In the middle of his prophecies, he paused to seek God's mercy for his family: "I look for Your deliverance, O Lord God Almighty." He knew that God had said the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be "strangers in a country not their own [Egypt] and be enslaved for 400 years" (Gen. 15:13) before



returning to Canaan. **2 Thessalonians 1:3-4.** Paul knew all about the persecutions and trials of the Thessalonian believers and praised them for their perseverance which enabled their faith and their love for each other to grow. Paul promised to pray for them that by God's power He may fulfil every good purpose in them (v.11). *Father God, may we have the vision of your servants Jacob and Paul to see the powerful fulfilment of Your purposes in our families, church and nation. Amen.*

**Day 233. Daniel 10:20-24 (NirV).** While Daniel was praying, the angel Gabriel came to him and said, "Daniel, I have come now to give you a good knowledge and understanding... As soon as you began to pray, the Lord gave you an answer... The evil things people do will be paid for. Everything that has been made known in visions and prophecies will come true." **1 Peter 2:9-12.** "God chose you to be His people... He brought you out of darkness into his wonderful light... Dear friends, you are outsiders and strangers in this world. So I am asking you not to give in to your sinful longings... But lead good lives then [people] will see your good works. And they will give glory to God on the day He comes to judge." *Father God Almighty, grant a fuller understanding of what happened in and through Christ our Saviour to pay for the sins of the world for Your glory - for Your glory, at all times and places. Amen. Amen.*

**Day 234. Isaiah 34:8-9.** We cannot ignore God's judgement against the godless offspring of Esau (Edom) and the way He upheld the family of Jacob (Israel). But the prophet promised times of much rejoicing for all who have been redeemed (35:9-10). **Acts 13:4-12.** In the Christian era, miracles and conversions became the new norm in all the nations of the world. The false Jewish prophet living in Cyprus named Bar-Jesus was condemned as an "enemy of God's righteousness" (v.6-11) but the pagan Roman governor believed in Jesus Christ because of the miracles he saw and because of "the teaching about the Lord" (v.12). *Father God, increase our faith to believe in modern-day miracles along with Holy Spirit power in the preaching and teaching about Your Son, our Saviour and so overrule those who pervert the righteous truth of God. Amen.*

**Day 235. 1 Kings 12.** These events established forever the purposes of God for Israel. The ten northern tribes turned their backs on the tribes of Judah and Benjamin who lived around Jerusalem (v.15-16). King Rehoboam tried to regain control over the ten northern tribes but God warned him not to "fight against his brothers, the Israelites" (v.21-24). In this way, the Israelites to the north were destined to be destroyed or dispersed around the world while the Jews to the south (Judea) were destined to be led away in captivity then later re-established in the area around Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4). **John 5:31-45.** Jesus had problems with His Jewish listeners in Jerusalem. He said, "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These [same] Scriptures testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have [eternal] life" (v.39-40). *Dear God, help us to understand old and new teachings that are important today. Amen.*

**Day 236. Deuteronomy 11:13-28.** God said through Moses, "If you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you – to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and soul – then I will send rain on your land in season" (v.13-14). He also warned them to be careful not to provoke Him to anger (v.16-17) but to "fix these words in your hearts and minds [and] teach them to your children" (v.18-19). **James 5:13-20.** The writer gives practical advice for Christian living, such as: pray to the Lord in times of trouble; sing songs of praise in times of joy; call the elders together to pray for the sick and for forgiveness of sins; pray for those who wander from the truth. He says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective". *Lord, may we heed ALL these words from the Bible written by godly men, which remain true to this day. Amen.*

**Day 237. Ezekiel 18.** God told Ezekiel, "Every living soul belongs to Me, the father as well as the son" (v.4). He goes on to explain, "The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son." Also, "If a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed... he will surely live. None of the offences he has committed will be remembered against him." (v.20-21.) **Luke 22:39-46.** Jesus twice warned His disciples on the Mount of Olives to "pray so that you will not fall into temptation". Above all, Jesus longed for them to pray with Him to share in His suffering for the sins of the world. *Lord Jesus, help us to daily remember the agony of your sacrifice for others and accept responsibility to pray for those You want us to care for, knowing that Father God loves every living soul and remembers not the sins of those who come to You in repentance. Amen.*

**Day 238. Deuteronomy 2:1-19.** This records the time when the twelve Hebrew tribes of Israel (who was formerly called Jacob) were told by God to move north to possess the Promised Land of Canaan. God also

told them to pass carefully through the land He had given to Esau, Jacob's brother, and not to quarrel with the Arabs who lived there (v.2-5). God gave the same warning about the Arabs who lived in the land He had given to Lot, the nephew of Abraham (v.9,19). **Hebrews 2:14-18**. The writer told these Hebrew-speaking Christians that all believers who suffer in the name of Jesus and are tempted in the same way that He was tempted, He is able to help them (v.18). *Father God, help us also to understand that Your love embraces Jews, Arabs and other Gentiles and You long for them to have faith in Your Son our Saviour who suffered and died for their sins. Amen.*

**Day 239. Ecclesiastes 3:9-14 (NIV)**. The writer understood God's amazing purpose in life in setting His burden on mankind to work hard in His beautiful world with an awareness of eternal matters that were not fully understood (v.9-10). However, the writer knew "there is nothing better for men than to... find satisfaction in all his toil [which] is the gift of God" (v.12-13). He strongly believed that God does this so that men will revere Him (v.14). **Romans 14:17-18 (NIRV)**. "God's kingdom has nothing to do with eating or drinking. It is a matter of being right with God [righteous]. It brings the peace and joy the Holy Spirit gives. Those who serve Christ in this way are pleasing to God." *Thank you Heavenly Father for your provision for mankind in working hard for our daily food with an awareness of "eternal matters" beyond our understanding, never forgetting Your righteous provision of eternal salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. Amen.*

**Day 240. Deuteronomy 7:11-15**. These words confirm the "covenant of love" between God and His people and declare His desire for them to obey His commands and receive His blessing "more than any other people". **2 Timothy 2:14-26**. Paul expresses his desire through Timothy to avoid quarrelling over words (v.14) but to correctly "handle the word of truth" (v.15), avoiding "godless chatter" (v.16). Instead, we are to be kind to those who oppose us "in the hope that God will grant them repentance, leading them to a knowledge of the truth" (v.24-25) and that they will "come to their senses" (v.26). *Dear God, deliver us from godless chatter and help us to walk and talk always in the light of Your truth and to value Your longstanding desire for a covenant of love between Yourself and Your people which was ultimately expressed through the sacrifice of Your Son, our Saviour, who took upon Himself the punishment for our sins. Halleluiah! Amen.*

**Day 241. Joshua 20:49-51**. These three Bible verses confirm that the allocation of land in Canaan to the twelve tribes of Israel was done in strict fairness around 3500 years ago by twelve tribal leaders along with Joshua, God's chosen replacement for Moses, and Eleazar the High Priest. Note that the allocation was done "in the presence of the LORD". **2 Peter 3:11-16**. The Apostle Peter asks, "What kind of people ought you to be?" His answer is, "You ought to be living holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God" (v.11-12). "Make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with Him" (v.14). Peter also commends the writings of "our dear brother Paul" even though they contain "things that are hard to understand ... which people distort, as they do the [Old Testament] Scriptures, to their own downfall" (v.15-16). *Lord Jesus, keep us strictly to the truth we read in our Bibles.*

**Day 242. 1 Samuel 26**. The future King David had the opportunity to secretly kill his enemy King Saul who was asleep in a tent (v.7-8). However, David spared Saul's life, saying "The Lord Himself will strike him; either his time will come and he will die or he will go into battle and perish" (v.10). **Matthew 27:32-44**. At the crucifixion of Jesus, some of the Jewish leaders mocked Him and said, "He trusts in God. Let God rescue Him if he wants Him" (v.41-43). These Jews did not understand the purpose of God to bring salvation to the world through the sacrifice of Jesus, His Son and their Messiah, who is our Saviour. *Father, forgive us when we wrongly judge other believers and risk hindering Your purpose and provision. Help us to see clearly from Scripture what You achieved through King David and King Jesus and daily trust in Your work of judgement and salvation – and Your timing. Amen.*

**Day 243. 2 Chronicles 36:11-14**. The writer records the evil things that happened before God finally destroyed Jerusalem and its Temple in 610 BC. The young king Zedekiah refused to acknowledge the word of the Lord God Almighty and His prophet Jeremiah (v.12). He also rebelled against the great King Nebuchadnezzar despite taking "an oath in God's name" (v.13). The priests and leaders of the people became more and more unfaithful and defiled the Temple of the Lord (v.14). **Matthew 25:14-30**. This is the second of two parables used by Jesus to warn about His second coming and final judgement. Those believers who had been faithful with the gifts that they were given by their Master, shared in His happiness (v.21,23). But

the believer who was 'afraid' to use his gift in God's service was judged and found guilty of unfaithfulness. *May we heed the warnings in Scripture in using our gifts joyfully in God's worship, witness and ministry!*

**Day 244. Jeremiah 51:33-45.** Around 595 BC, Jeremiah records the words of God against Babylon and predicts its fall (v.33). In addition, He said, "I will defend your cause and avenge you" (v.36). God also warned them that there would come a time to take action: "Come out of her, my people!" (v.45). **Luke 22:37-45.** On the night of the Last Supper, Jesus warned, "What is written about Me is reaching its fulfilment" (v.37). Then He went out to the Mount of Olives as He had done many times before (v.39). But on this occasion, Jesus prayed, "Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me. Yet not My will but Yours be done" (v.42). It was also the time when the disciples fell asleep exhausted and sorrowful (v.45). *Father, keep us faithful at all times to do Your will and empower us to get up and take action in and through our daily prayer vigils. Amen.*

**Day 245. Isaiah 37:14-20.** When Jerusalem was under threat from the Assyrians, King Hezekiah reached out to God Almighty in faith and praised Him, saying, "You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth" (v.14-15). He then petitioned God, asking for deliverance, "so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Yahweh, are God" (v.20). **James 5:16-17.** James, who knew Jesus personally, wrote: "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Elijah was a man just like us. [Yet] he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again, he prayed, and the heavens gave rain..." *Father God, encourage us to pray boldly in the name of Jesus, giving You our praise and declaring Your greatness while trusting in Your provision, that the world will know You alone are God Almighty. Amen.*

**Day 246. Psalm 14.** King David knew the aching heart of God when he wrote that only fools say, "There is no God" (v.1). God seeks those who seek Him (v.2). But evildoers don't do this – they never learn (v.4)! Instead, they frustrate the plans of the poor. However, the Lord God Almighty is their refuge (v.6). May God's people rejoice and be glad (v.7)! **Romans 3:21-30.** Paul, a Jew, declares that the righteousness of God for mankind comes through faith in Jesus Christ, about whom the Old Testament writings testify (v.21-22). Whatever our religious or non-religious backgrounds, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (v.23). Our sins are forgiven freely by God's grace through the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus (v.24) for all who express their faith in Him (v.26), both Jews and Gentiles (v.30). *Father, we rejoice that You show favour to everyone who reaches out to You in the name of Jesus!*

**Day 247. 2 Kings 23:4-26.** Josiah the king, after reading the Book of the Covenant to all the people, ordered the destruction of shrines, property and objects connected with pagan worship. He then celebrated the Passover (v.21). He also got rid of the mediums and household gods (v.24). Josiah turned to the Lord "with all his soul and with all his heart and with all his strength" (v.25). This delayed God's 70-year punishment and cleansing of Jerusalem over the sins of Manasseh (v.26). **Revelation 14:14-20.** This vision portrays the time Jesus Christ comes to judge the Earth and blesses the righteous and casts out the wicked from the Kingdom of God. *Lord, Jesus, we read in the Scriptures of the past and future judgements and blessings of our holy and righteous Father. Through Your Spirit, hasten days of repentance and renewed faith in readiness for the gathering together of true believers into the Kingdom of God at Your return. Amen.*

**Day 248. 2 Samuel 19:9-43.** These verses show the tensions and jealousies that existed at the time of King David between the ten tribes of Israel to the north of Jerusalem and the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin who lived around Jerusalem. Eventually God's chosen people split into two kingdoms yet still served His purpose in the advent of Israel's Messiah. Today, many nations, religions, churches and families are divided by tensions and jealousies as we await the second advent of Jesus our Messiah. **Luke 10:1-24.** Jesus sent out some of His followers as "workers in the harvest field ... like lambs among wolves" (v.2-3). He said, "Be sure of this: the Kingdom of God is near" (v.11). They returned with much joy over the miracles that happened (v.12) and Jesus rejoiced that these things were "revealed to little children" (v.21). *Father, help us to fulfil your eternal purposes in Jesus while we await His return in a troubled and divided world. Amen.*

**Day 249. Hosea 9-11.** God warned His special people Israel about their unfaithfulness (9:1) and the punishment they deserved (9:7). Their true prophets of God even experienced hostility and corruption within the House of God (9:8-9). Despite this, God accepted that He would never forsake them and the time would happen when His children will return to Him and "come trembling from the west" (11:8,10). **James 5:7-11.**

James encourages true believers to be "patient until the Lord's coming" (v.7) refusing to grumble against each other (v.9). He said that those who persevere will be blessed, for the Lord is full of compassion and mercy as He was to Job, who was found greatly blessed among "those who have persevered" (v.11). *Heavenly Father, as we live through prophetic times for Your people, keep us strong under hostility within and without the Church of God, that we and other true believers may persevere to Your end blessings, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Day 250. Psalm 6.** King David reaches out in hope mixed with despair to Yahweh, the Lord God Almighty (v.1-3) testifying that He is our deliverer and will save us "because of Your unfailing love" (v.4). He again reminds God that he is "worn out with groaning" (v.6-7) before recovering his faith to declare that the Lord has heard and accepted his prayer and will protect him (v.8-10). **Philippians 3.** Paul commences the chapter with "Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord!" believing that "the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus" (v.8) is what matters above all other aspects of religion. Paul then testifies that the righteousness of God through faith in Christ (v.9) enables us to know Him and share in His sufferings in this world with resurrection power now and "somehow" after death (v.10-11). *Lord, help us to witness with joy our faith and righteousness in the midst of our sufferings to the glory of God. Amen.*

**Day 251. Job 23.** Like the writer of Psalm 6, Job reaches out to God with a mixture of hope and despair. Soon after declaring that he knows his Redeemer lives (19:25) he says, "If only I knew where to find Him!" (23:3). However, Job knows that God is testing him (23:10-11). He admits that God "does whatever He pleases" and will continue to carry out the many plans He still has for him, whatever they are (23:13-14). **1 Corinthians 11:31-32.** Paul warns that judging ourselves is ineffective (v.31) but confirms that "when we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned [along] with the world" (v.32). *Lord Jesus, help us to avoid acting on our own thoughts or the thoughts of others but reach out to you for judgements that are both righteous and effective and thus avoid being tossed about by feelings of hope and despair. Amen.*

**Day 252. Isaiah 52:13-15.** Isaiah's prophecy of Israel's Messiah, Jesus Christ, as the suffering servant of God Almighty, declares that His purpose in life would succeed and He would be "raised and lifted up and highly exalted" (v.1) but at appalling personal cost in the way His body was "disfigured beyond that of any man" (v.2). However, Isaiah predicts that many nations and their leaders will be amazed how the sprinkling of His sacrificial blood brings cleansing and salvation when they hear and understand these things (v.15). **Acts 11:1-18.** Peter describes how God's vision led him to go to the home of Cornelius who was not a Jew. This prepared the way to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ to his whole household and in turn for all the apostles to preach to the nations across the Roman Empire. *Dear God, stir up more preachers/teachers to bring understanding of the Gospel to our households and nations today. Amen.*

**Day 253. Psalm 107.** The writer says to the faithful people whom God has redeemed: "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; his love endures for ever" (v.1-2). He then speaks to others who have not obeyed God (v.4,10,17,23) but have "cried out to the Lord in their trouble" (v.6,13,19,28) to also "give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love" (v.8,15,21,31). "Whoever is wise, let him heed these things and consider the great love of the Lord" (v.43). **Romans 14:10-12.** Paul warns us that "we will all stand before God's judgement seat", then quotes from Isaiah that "every knee will bow before Me; every tongue will confess to God." *Dear God, help us to reach out to those who are in trouble who have failed to obey You, that by example, we will do our part to bring repentance and salvation to the world and praise for Your love revealed in the birth of Christ. Amen.*

**Day 254. Joshua 3:7.** When God prepared His people to cross the River Jordan, He told Joshua that "I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel so that they may know that I am with you." **1 Corinthians 9:24-27.** Paul said that in running a race only one person gets the prize but each person should "run in such a way as to get the prize" (v.24). This requires strict training. "We do it to get a crown that will last for ever" (v.25). Paul trained and controlled his body to "make it my slave". He pushed himself hard in ministry with the hope of gaining the prize of praise and honour from God for his faithful service. *Dear God, help me to be faithful in proclaiming Your salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to Your glory and in a way that testifies You are with me and I am with You. Amen.*

**Day 255. Psalm 26.** King David proclaims aloud his praise of God Almighty, "telling of all Your wonderful deeds" (v.7). He pleads for God to "be merciful to me" (v.11) and promises to praise the Lord in the "great assembly" of God's people (v.12). **Luke 10:38-42.** Jesus was invited into the home of Martha and Mary. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus listening to what He said. Martha was busy preparing a meal and she asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her. Jesus kindly said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things but ... Mary has chosen what is better." *Lord Jesus, in our busy world with its many distractions and worries, guide us through Your Spirit to relax daily at Your feet and listen to what You want to say to us, so that we can praise aloud our Heavenly Father and share His Good News with God's people – and with others. Amen.*

**Day 256. 1 Samuel 28:5-6.** King Saul was afraid of the Philistines and "enquired of the Lord God Almighty but the Lord did not answer him". Instead of repenting for his earlier disobedience, he turned to a witch for advice and was told that the next day he and his sons would be dead. God gave Saul time to repent but he refused and instead, took his own life when the Philistines attacked and killed his sons (31:4). **Mark 12:1-12.** The parable of the vineyard tenants shows how those who disobey God and reject His Son deserve to die (v.9). *Dear God, thank You that Your Bible reminds us that our sins warrant death but for Your mercy through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Help us at all times to turn to You for forgiveness and guidance in full repentance and not to put our trust in others. Hear and answer our prayers in the*