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**Weekend Manna: FRED SAID**

**Extracts from Manna Bible teaching commentaries by Fred Morris**

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**Archive for 2021**

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

**Genesis chapter 3: *Adam and Eve try to hide their shame***

Adam and Eve found some big leaves and sewed them together to make aprons (skirts). They tried to hide their shame by covering their nakedness with aprons. They put on the aprons and crept away into the forest. They knew God would be coming to talk with them. He always came to the garden in the evening when it was cool (3:8).

Would He come? Would He stop loving them? No! He did not stop loving them, but He was very sad. When we disobey God's laws it hurts God, it hurts us and it hurts others.

In the evening, God came to the garden to talk with His children. Adam and Eve were hiding because they knew they had done wrong. How foolish for them to think they could hide from God! The Bible says 'No-one can hide from God. His eyes see everything we do. We must give an answer to God for what we have done' (Hebrews 4:13).

There is only one way for people who have lost their closeness with God to come back to Him. They must be sorry for their sin of wrong wrong. They must tell God they are sorry for the wrong things they have done. They must repent. They must turn away from the wrong things they do and come back to their Heavenly Father.

God wanted Adam and Eve to admit their sin and to be sorry for disobeying His command. He wanted Adam to confess his sin, so God came calling to Adam, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:9)

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**Genesis Chapter 18: *Abraham grows in faith and knowledge***

Then the Lord told Abraham more about how he must live (18:19). Have you noticed that each time God speaks to Abraham, He adds a little more information? God does not tell us everything there is to know. He tells us what we need to know. We must obey what He tells us, each step of the way through life, a little at a time. He teaches us what we need to know at the time and gives us more faith to meet that need. Later He teaches us even more things.

Abraham lived close to God. For this reason Abraham is called "the friend of God" (Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23). God said, "I have chosen him" and "I have known him". Those people who live trusting in God and who obey Him will know God's plans more than other people. Those people who live in fellowship with God understand better the meaning of life (Psalm 107:43; Hosea 14:9), and what will happen in the future. God said of Abraham, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him" (18:19).

Because of God's agreement with him, Abraham gathered his household to teach them and lead them in the worship of God who is All-Sufficient or All-Mighty (El-Shaddai). This meant Abraham taught his workers too. He is our spiritual father and example of faith in God.

**Think about this:** Will God show you greater things if you do not obey the little things?

Extracted from "ABRAHAM" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2001, 2003, 2006, 2010.

### **Genesis Chapter 27: *Isaac blesses Jacob***

Isaac did not see that God's covenant was with Jacob and not with Esau. However, Isaac spoke his blessing on Jacob in the words of God's covenant. The old man explained what he should have told his son years before! He spoke of "taking possession of the land where you now live" as it had been promised to his father Abraham many years before (13:14-17).

The blessing that Isaac gave to Jacob was wide-ranging and included . . . plenty, power, blessing on his friends and curses on his enemies.

Esau was blessed too, but it was not enough to comfort him and he cried a loud and bitter cry (27:34). The New Testament writer said that Esau wanted to repent, but it was too late (Hebrews 12:17).

All who do not ASK and SEEK now, will cry later. Jesus said, "Not all those who cry 'Lord, Lord', will enter the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 7:21), but only those who do the will of God as it is revealed to them, will receive mercy and enter into God's blessing.

So Jacob received the blessing. Esau was "cut off" from much of the inheritance and the blessing.

The unrepentant believers of this world will say, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your Name, and in Your Name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" But Jesus will answer, "I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!" (Matthew 7:22-23).

Esau cried again for a blessing (27:38). There are many who will not have the blessing of Christ our Lord, but will choose instead the blessing of "the Church" and they seem quite content to have that alone.

Extracted from "ISAAC AND JACOB" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2002, 2018.

### **Genesis Chapter 47: *Pharaoh blesses Jacob and his family.***

Joseph chose five of his brothers and took them to the king. When Pharaoh asked them about their work, they told him they were shepherds (47:3). The Egyptians did not keep sheep or goats; they kept cattle. So the children of Israel would be left alone in the region of Goshen.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "The land of Egypt is before you; let your father and brothers live in the best part of the land" (47:6). So the children of Israel (Jacob's family) went to live in the land of Goshen in the region of Rameses in the north of Egypt. In this way the Hebrews were far from the Egyptians. God wanted his people to be separate from other nations. The river pastures also provided rich food for their sheep and goats.

#### **A remnant of faithful believers**

At certain times in history, God has separated a few people who had faith in Him, to continue His work on Earth. The Bible calls these true believers 'a remnant'.

- God saved Noah and his family (a remnant of 8 persons) from the Great Flood (Genesis 7:23; 1 Peter 3:20).
- God saved Jacob and his family (a remnant of 70 persons) from a great famine (Genesis 46:27).
- God brought back a remnant of Jews from the captivity in Babylon (Jeremiah 27:22).

Extracted from "JOSEPH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2002, 2018.

### **Exodus Chapter 12: *The people of Israel leave Egypt***

Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron in the middle of the night. Pharaoh said to Moses:

- Go! Leave my people!
- Go! Worship Yahweh, your God!
- Go! Take your animals with you!
- Go! And give me your blessing!

He now knew that Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, was greater than all the gods and kings of Egypt.

So the people of Israel took their dough, even before it was baked into bread, and they left their houses.

Over one million people left Egypt that night (12:37). They were like a huge army marching to another country (12:41). They left after 430 years in a foreign land, just as God promised Abraham (Genesis 15:13,14).

The people remembered the words Joseph said to the leaders of Israel. "God will take care of you and lead you out of this place, and then you must take my body with you" (Exodus 13:19; Genesis 50:25). So they carried Joseph's bones with them to bury them in the Promised Land of Canaan.

The people of Israel now believed God's promises. Many had died before seeing God's purpose fulfilled. However, their families worshipped God and obeyed Him (Exodus 12:27,28,50). They now believed God's words and talked about them. The truth given by God was 'on their lips' and 'in their hearts' (13:9).

Extracted from "THE BIRTH OF GOD'S NATION" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2007, 2012.

### **The Book of Deuteronomy**

In this fifth book assembled by Moses, he tells the next part of the plan of God for the Hebrew people, the children of Jacob (Israel). These are the final words of Moses from God to the people. God wanted them to live in the land of Canaan and make it their own land. He had promised it to them; now they must take it. They must overcome the wicked tribes living in the land and be a witness for Yahweh, Almighty God and Creator of the world and the universe. God in His grace and mercy had chosen them to be His people and by obeying Him, to show people everywhere how people should live, and how they should honour Him.

The people were ready to cross over the Jordan River and enter the land that God had promised.

In Deuteronomy, Moses reminds the new generation of people of the instructions God gave them and what happened to their parents who disobeyed. No other nation had rules and laws like these (4:8).

Moses told the people, "Obey these laws and that will show the nations how wise and understanding you are" (4:6).

God was with Israel. He cared for them and protected them. As the people kept His laws, the heathen nations would see how right and holy God was. "Teach them to your children," Moses told the people, "and don't forget what God has done for you" (4:10).

"I will drive out these nations to make room for you because they are evil... as I promised to Abraham" (9:4-5).

Extracted from "THE GROWTH OF GOD'S NATION" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2004, 2012.

### **Joshua 10. *Why did our loving God destroy the Canaanites?***

The Canaanites chose to worship false gods and to do all kinds of evil things. They chose to have sex with people who were not their own wives or husbands. They looked for many wrong ways to enjoy having sex including men with men and men with animals and men with children. They even killed their own children to sacrifice them to their gods.

God created them and saved them at the time of Noah. Their evil ways were never God's purpose for His creation. The Canaanites did not repent. Their punishment was death. They did evil things forbidden by God (Leviticus 18:3,22).

God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his family (Genesis 15:18). The family included Abraham's grandson Jacob, who was later called Israel. After 430 years in Egypt, the people of Israel returned to Canaan. They crossed the River Jordan and God gave Jericho and Ai time to repent. He gave the other kings of Canaan time to repent. Apart from Gibeon, they were all totally destroyed as God said, including women and children. This was to make certain that Israel would not copy the wicked ways of the Canaanites.

God punished sin but loved the people he created. His plan was to show this to the world through the people of Israel. His final plan was to punish His only Son, Jesus Christ, who came down to Israel to save them and the world from sin. Read John 3:16.

Today, our loving God offers mercy and forgiveness to sinners through faith in Christ. Jesus Himself taught that His followers should also show love and mercy to sinners.

Extracted from "JOSHUA" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2005, 2014.

### **Ruth Chapter 1: *Ruth goes with Naomi to live in Bethlehem***

Naomi felt very sad. We can see from the Bible, however, that God worked in the life of Naomi during her sadness. We can learn from this that we should not let our feelings weaken our faith. Nor should we weaken the faith of others. We must believe that God is at work in our lives at all times.

Naomi's faith in God was tested. She needed to believe that God had not rejected her. She needed to believe that the people of God had not rejected her. She needed to believe that they would be kind to her and to Ruth.

Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem with what they carried on their backs. What happened is told in the Bible with very few words (1:22). We know that God was not against them. God was with them. Israel blessed Naomi and her foreign daughter-in-law. The people of Israel welcomed both Naomi and Ruth to stay and live in Bethlehem.

They arrived when people were beginning to harvest the barley grain. It was also the start of the Feast of the Passover to remember when God's Angel of Death passed over His people before He set them free to journey to the Promised Land of Israel.

**Think about this:** What risky decisions or mistakes have you made in the past? Thank God for His faithfulness and blessing in times of danger and need. Think of ways to grow in your faith and become a blessing to God and to others. Pray for your nation to become a blessing to others.

Extracted from "RUTH AND HANNAH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2000, 2008, 2016.

### **Mark Chapter 8: *Peter believes that Jesus is the Christ***

One day, Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do people say I am?" (8:27). He wanted to know what they really believed.

They answered, "Some say that you are John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Still others say [that you are] one of the prophets" (8:28).

"But what about you?" Jesus asked. "Who do you say I am?" (8:29).

Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). Peter meant the Messiah, the special king that God had promised Israel, who would become saviour of the world (Jeremiah 23:5). At last the eyes of the disciples were opened!

Jesus was pleased with this answer. "This faith was not given to you by man. My Father in Heaven showed it to you" (Matthew 16:17).

Jesus then told His disciples what would soon happen to Him. 'He told them that He must suffer many things. He said that the religious leaders would not accept Him. The chief priests and the teachers of the [Old Testament] law would not accept him either. He must be killed and after three days rise again' (8:31). Soon, He would be taken away by His own people, the Jews and their religious leaders. Many would shout, "Kill Him!"

Peter was very upset about this. He did not want to believe that his Lord and Master would be rejected. He said to Jesus "Never, Lord! This will never happen to You!" (Matthew 16:22.)

Satan used Peter's words to try to stop the punishment of Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour of the world. Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan. You are not thinking about the things God cares about" (8:33).

Extracted from "THE EARLY TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2000, 2008, 2016.

### **Mark Chapter 14: Jesus warns the disciples they will fail him**

Then Jesus warned the disciples that they would betray or deny Him before His resurrection (Mark 14:27-30):

- They would all run away;
- Jesus would die as it says in the Old Testament (Zechariah 13:7);
- Peter would say three times that he did not even know Jesus (Matthew 26:34).
- He would then come alive and meet them again in Galilee to explain everything (Matthew 26:32).

The disciples could not fully understand these things until after they happened. Peter said to Jesus, "I may have to die with you but I will never say I do not know You" (14:31).

John, the disciple of Jesus, wrote down for us many of the things Jesus said at this time. Read them for yourself in John 14:1 to 17:25.

Then Jesus led the disciples out across the river Kedron and into a garden called Gethsemane. This garden was on the Mount of Olives. Jesus often went to this garden to pray and He went there this last time to pray with great sadness.

"Sit here while I pray" He said. He went further on, to be alone with His Father and knelt down and prayed. He asked Peter, James and John to stay near Him (14:33). He was so sad He felt as if He was dying (14:34).

"Abba, Father," He said. "Everything is possible for You. Take this suffering from Me. But let what You want be done, not what I want" (14:36).

So Jesus obediently suffered and died for the sins of the world. He obeyed the will of His Father and died so that our sins could be forgiven.

Extracted from "THE DEATH, RESSURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF JESUS THE CHRIST" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2002, 2020.

### **John Chapter 7: *Jesus goes secretly to the feast in Jerusalem***

Jesus continued teaching and performing miracles in the region of Galilee. The religious leaders in Jerusalem wanted to kill Him. So He stayed away from Jerusalem and the region of Judea (7:1).

Soon it was harvest, when many Jews go up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles.

His brothers went up to Jerusalem for the Feast. Jesus went up later, in secret (7:10). Many people were looking for Him. Some believed that He was good and some did not believe in Him (7:11-12).

When the Feast was half over, Jesus went to the Temple and taught the people (7:14). The Jews were amazed at His teaching. They asked, "How did this man learn so much?" (7:15).

Jesus answered, "What I teach is not my own. It comes from the One who sent Me. Anyone who chooses to do what God wants him to do, will find out whether My teaching comes from God or from Me" (7:16-17).

Jesus then said that the person who works for the honour of God has the truth of God within him (7:18). Jesus spoke these words about Himself, but the words are also true for all followers of Jesus.

Jesus knew that some of the religious leaders wanted to kill Him for doing good works on the Sabbath day.

He said to them, "Not one of you keeps the Law [of Moses]. Why are you trying to kill Me?" (7:19-20). "You circumcise boys on the Sabbath... Why are you angry with Me? I healed a whole man on the Sabbath... Judge correctly!" (7:23-24).

Extracted from "THE GOSPEL OF JOHN" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2008, 2015.

### **John Chapter 19. *The religious leaders shout "Crucify Him!"***

Once more Pilate went outside and said to the people, "I find no reason for a charge against Him" (19:4). Jesus followed him outside. He stood before them wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe (19:5).

As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Pilate said a third time, "I find no reason for a charge against Him" (19:6).

The religious leaders answered Pilate, "We have a law. That law says He must die. He claimed to be the Son of God" (19:7).

'When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid' (19:8). He wanted to ask more, but Jesus did not answer. He said to Jesus, "Do you not understand? I have the power to set You free or to nail You to a cross" (19:10).

Jesus said that only God gave Pilate power. Jesus knew His Father was in control. "You were given power from Heaven. If not, you would have no power over Me. So the one who handed Me over to you is guilty of a greater sin" (19:11). In this way, Jesus explained to Pilate that he was powerless to change the plan of God.

The Jewish leaders shouted to Pilate, "Kill Him! Kill Him! Crucify Him!"

"Should I crucify your king?" Pilate asked them.

Pilate took some water and washed his hands in front of the crowds. He said, "I am not guilty of this man's death" (Matt. 27:24).

Extracted from "THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS ON EARTH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris © 2002, 2017.

### **Acts Chapter 4. *Praying to God in times of trouble***

God blessed the early church in Jerusalem. It grew very strong. But there was trouble for the believers (4:16-18). The Jewish leaders told the apostles not to teach in the name of Jesus. Church growth and persecution often happen at the same time. The believers prayed, studied God's word in the Old Testament scriptures and acted in faith when these troubles began:

- They praised God (4:24) and put their trust in Him. They spoke words of faith and knowledge to show that they believed in Him.
- They read from God's word (4:25-26). Psalm 2 says that rulers and leaders would make trouble for their promised Messiah and His followers.
- They knew the Old Testament prophecies had come true (4:27-28). Things had happened because God planned them. The prophecies had been fulfilled in and by Jesus.
- They told God about their troubles (4:29). They reminded Him of their problems but did not blame Him for them.
- They asked God to enable them to do the work that Jesus called them to do (4:29) and they believed God answers prayer. They knew they were praying 'in His will'.
- They asked God to do even more miracles as they preached (4:29-30) They trusted in the power of the name of Jesus. They knew the religious leaders and rulers would be angry, but they knew they had to preach boldly. It was a work of God and He had called them to do it.

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### **Acts 19:19-41. *The power of God's Spirit at work***

"We have seen God's power at work. He visited us with miracles. People brought their idols to be burnt and gave their lives to Christ. At night, some people could not sleep. They came back in the morning to confess the wrong things they had done. It was a time of God's grace. Now I am receiving phone calls and visits of people to praise God because He has changed their lives. Glory to God!" (Pastor B., Burkina Faso, September 2004.)

The work of the Holy Spirit in Ephesus was very powerful at the time of Paul's third missionary journey. The Good News spread everywhere around (19:20).

During this time Paul decided to visit the new churches in Macedonia and Achaia. He also wanted to visit Jerusalem and Rome (19:21). Jerusalem was the centre of the Jewish religion and also the Jewish followers of Christ. Rome was the centre of the Roman Empire. Achaia was the centre of the former Greek empire. Paul knew that these were important places to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ and to teach and encourage the new believers who lived there.

At this time, the people who made silver idols in Ephesus encouraged the crowds to cause trouble for the followers of Jesus (19:23-29). The city clerk calmed the crowds down, knowing that the Roman governor would want to know why there was trouble in that city (19:35-41). In this way, God used a non-believer for His purposes. Therefore, Paul did not move away from Ephesus at that time. He stayed with the believers. He wanted to help and support them.

Extracted from "PAUL BRINGS GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2012, 2021.

### **Romans 6:1-11. *Dead to sin, alive to Christ***

In 5:20 Paul said, "Where sin increased, God's grace increased even more."

"What should we say, then?" Paul asks. "Should we continue to sin so that God's grace can increase?" (6:1). Paul answered, "Of course not!" When we become Christians, the power of sin is dead. "So how can we keep on sinning?" (6:2).

"We are baptised into Christ Jesus" (6:3). It is a new beginning. We are lifted up out of the water to begin our new life. "We are dead to sin and alive to Christ." The true believer is "joined to Christ". His power overcomes sin. Therefore we are no longer controlled by sin:

- because we were buried with Christ into His death (6:4);
- because He rose again from death and brings us new life in the Spirit (6:4-5);
- we serve Him instead of being "slaves to sin" (6:6);
- we are set free from sin to live holy lives. Death and sin no longer have power over us (6:7).

We know that our old life was put to death (6:6). When we believe in Jesus Christ, it means that we die to our old way of life when we could not help doing wrong. That way of life is finished. "The old person you used to be was nailed to the cross with Jesus" (6:6). We then receive Christ's resurrection in our bodies.

"In the same way, consider yourselves to be dead as sin is concerned. Now that you believe in Christ Jesus, consider yourselves to be alive as far as God is concerned" (6:11). We share in His resurrection glory and power!

Extracted from "IN CHRIST ALONE" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2007, 2012.

### **Romans 13:8-13. *The law of love***

Paul knew that Jesus said we must love God first and then our neighbours (Matthew 22:37-39). We can never repay the debt of love we owe to our Lord. But we can show His love to others: our relatives, friends and neighbours at home or at work. This law of love also encourages the Christian to pay his taxes, his debts and to be a good citizen. "Those who love others have done everything the Law [of God] requires" (Romans 13:8).

Many of God's Ten Commandments apply to our relationship to others. Paul says that they all fit under a wider command of "Love your neighbour as yourself" (13:9). God's love in us enables us to go beyond the legal demands of the law, which include "Do not commit adultery, murder, steal, nor envy what others have".

Paul quotes some of these Ten Commandments given to Moses as a guide for living in love and peace with neighbours. He repeats, "Love does everything the Law requires" (13:10).

Paul added, "Keep in mind the times we are living in" (13:11). He warns the believers that they must now live as if Christ would soon return. Paul then adds his own guidelines to holy living: no wild parties, no drunkenness, no sexual sins, no evil behaviour, no fighting or anger, no jealousy. Above all, we must learn to live in the light of Christ, not in the darkness of sin (13:12-13). Paul's teaching remains true today, nearly 2000 years later.

Extracted from "LIVING IN CHRIST" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2007, 2012.

### **Ephesians Chapter 2. *Jesus preached peace.***

God planned to bring all believers as one body back to Himself through the cross of Christ. Jesus put all fear, anger and rejection to death on that cross so that we can have unity with God our Creator. Paul then wrote more words for the Gentile believers. He said, "Jesus came and preached peace. He preached peace to you who were far away from God" (2:17). To the Jewish Christians Paul said, "He also preached peace to you who were near God."

Paul and others went to Ephesus and preached the Good News about Jesus to all. The apostles taught and shared about Jesus when there were few Christians. These faithful believers laid for us the foundation of the New Testament church. These people were called by God for this purpose.

In Christ, people are united with God and also to one another. Jesus took away the barrier between us and God and also between us and mankind, and made peace. As each one is at peace with God, so we can be at peace with other Christians. This was the prayer of Jesus. "Father, I pray they will be one, just as you are in Me and I am in you" (John 17:21).

Paul said that through Jesus we all come to the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit (2:18). Because of this, those believers who are not Jews are no longer strangers to God but members of God's family (2:19).

We carry this same message of peace. Men may try to bring peace to countries where there is hatred between people groups, but only Jesus, the Prince of Peace, can give everlasting peace (Isaiah 9:6).

Extracted from "EPHESIANS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2018.

### **Hebrews Chapter 7. *The Old and New Covenants of God***

In the Old Testament, we read how God made a covenant or agreement with His people. God promised salvation and forgiveness for sins instead of punishment, if the people obeyed Him. The blood of an innocent animal was sacrificed to remind the people of the punishment that they deserved.

In the New Testament, we read how Jesus took the punishment that we deserve. God agreed to accept the sacrifice of His Son as the price for our sins. This agreement requires sinners to repent and to obey God and to believe that they are forgiven through the blood of Jesus. We are all reminded of His sacrifice for us when we share communion together.

'Jesus makes the promise of a better covenant certain' (Hebrews 7:22).

Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to destroy what is written in the [Old Testament] Law or in the Prophets... I have come to give full meaning to what is written" (Matthew 5:17).

The Old Covenant provided a relationship between God and His people. The people, however, could only approach God through the priests. Because of the blood sacrificed by Jesus, we are made holy. We can now approach God at any time (Ephesians 2:18). His blood was the final sacrifice that God required for sin. Jesus is now our High Priest and our way to God (1 Timothy 2:5). He takes the place of the priest and the sacrifices they offered at the Temple altar.

Jesus hears us and talks to His Father about our prayers. He does this for us whenever we pray.  
Extracted from "HEBREWS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2016.

### **Revelation 3:1-6. *Wake up and repent!***

Repent from what? Repent from works that lead to spiritual death. Works that are not done with love and care and perseverance. Works that do not bring glory to the name of Christ. Works that are done by human effort without the power of the Holy Spirit, do not please God. He knew the problem and He knew that the remedy was to repent and confess sin. 'If we admit we have sinned, He will forgive us our sins... He will cleanse us and make us pure' (1 John 1:9).

In the city of Sardis, there was spiritual decline and decay. Jesus warned them:

- "You have a name for being alive but you are dead" (3:1).
- "You must strengthen the remaining gifts that are about to die" (3:2).
- "The good things you have done are unfinished in the eyes of God" (3:2).
- "Remember and keep on remembering what you have received and heard and hold on to it" (3:3).

All Christians need to remember what Christ has done for them. That is why Jesus took bread at His last supper, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is My body given for you, do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19). All believers need to remember this whenever they eat bread and drink together.

Every time the Jews celebrated Passover, they remembered that God had rescued them through lamb's blood on their wooden doorposts. The blood saved them from the angel of death and from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12:13). When we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we remember that God rescued us through the blood of Jesus on the wooden cross (Luke 22:19).

Extracted from "MESSAGE TO SEVEN CHURCHES" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2013.

### **Genesis Chapter 4. *God gives Cain another chance.***

God instructed Cain to live by faith in Him and be accepted. God warned, "If you do not do what is right, sin is waiting at your door to grab you. But you must rule over it" (4:7). Cain knew what was pleasing to God. He knew that the sacrifice of an animal was acceptable to God. But instead he became angry and would not ask his brother for one of his lambs to sacrifice.

Out in the field, Cain killed his brother because he could not control his anger. Anger is like a fire. It burns deep in men's hearts. Abel's blood 'cried out to God' from the earth where it had been spilled (4:10).

Oh, the grace of God that He does not go on His way and leave us to suffer in our sin!  
"Where is your brother?" God asked Cain.

Cain again had to make a choice. He could confess his sin and ask for pardon. But he chose to avoid God's question and he told a lie to cover up what he had done. How foolish! God knows all about us, and He knew all about Cain! He sees deep into our hearts and our lives.

God gave Cain time to repent and confess his sin. But he does not wait for ever. When God spoke to Cain again, it was in judgement. If we do not obey God's voice when He calls us to repent and trust Him, what is there left for us? Only His judgement!

Extracted from "BEGINNINGS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2001, 2003, 2006.

### **Genesis 15:1-18. *God speaks to Abraham again***

These verses show God's plan for Abraham. He would become the father of the Jewish nation and of all people who believe in Yahweh, the one true God Almighty and Creator of the Universe. Abraham heard God say, "Do not be afraid, Abraham. I am your shield and your very great reward" (15:1).

God said that Abraham was good and right because of his faith. Abraham had no goodness and righteousness of his own. He had a righteousness that God gave him because he trusted in God.

Abraham's answer to God was, "I still don't have any children. My servant will get everything I own" (15:2,3). God told him to go outside. "Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can." Then God said to him, "That is how many children that you will have" (15:5).

Abraham did not know where this great multitude of people would come from. Abraham thought that Eliezer, his servant, would inherit all his property (15:2). This was the custom of those days if there were no children. But God had a much greater plan! He told Abraham, "This man will not get what belongs to you. A son will come from your own body" (15:4). Then Scripture says that Abraham believed in the Lord and the Lord accepted Abraham and called him righteous because he put his trust in God. Abraham's faith made him right with God (15:6).

Fellowship (that is, friendship) with God would be Abraham's greatest reward.

Extracted from "ABRAHAM" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2001, 2003, 2006, 2012.

### **Genesis Chapter 35. *Jacob seeks holiness for his family***

Jacob knew that many things in his life needed to be put right. God spoke to Jacob and He told him, "Go up to Bethel and settle there. Build an altar there to honour Me. That is where I appeared to you when you ran away from your brother" (35:1; 28:10-22).

Jacob obeyed God. He told his family to make themselves holy (35:2). As head of his family, Jacob must lead them in the things of God. "Get rid of the foreign gods that you have with you", Jacob told his sons and also his servants. "Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to honour God" (35:2-3).

Jacob's family still had idols in their tents. Almost everyone wore magic charms. So they gave Jacob all their foreign gods and their earrings and Jacob buried these things.

Then Jacob gathered his family together and they set out for Bethel. Many people in Shechem wanted to attack them. We read that "the terror of Yahweh God fell on the towns around them so that no one chased them" (35:5). God's army of angels was still with them.

When Jacob arrived there, he built an altar to El Bethel, the God of Bethel. It was there that God had appeared to him several years before. Now God said, "You will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel" (35:10). Jacob's first altar was an altar of fear. This was now an altar of faith.

Extracted from "ISAAC AND JACOB" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2018.

### **Genesis Chapter 47. *Jacob meet Pharaoh.***

Joseph brought his father Jacob to meet Pharaoh (47:7). Jacob blessed Pharaoh twice (47:7,10). This shows that Jacob's faith in God remained strong. After meeting Almighty God at Beersheba, Jacob was encouraged (46:3). So he knew that he had God's authority to bless Pharaoh. He knew that his God was greater than Pharaoh, King of Egypt (Hebrews 7:7). But Jacob was also humble in his later years.

God had really changed Jacob. Despite all his bad ways and everything he had suffered in his life, Jacob now knew that God, in His grace and mercy, would fulfil His promise to Abraham to raise up a special people through his family. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had spoken. He would keep His covenant promise. The children of Jacob (later called Israel) did well in the land of Egypt. Pharaoh gave them the best land for their flocks (47:11).

Jacob had no authority. He had no power. He had no wealth. He had a promise from God Almighty for his family. Pharaoh was part of God's plan for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jacob believed this and so blessed Pharaoh using God's authority in faith.

'Joseph also provided food for his father and family... He gave them enough for all their children' (47:12). Joseph, who was persecuted by his brothers, became the saviour of Jacob's family. God gave him authority from Pharaoh to be servant and saviour to the family of Jacob (Israel). This prepared the way for the time when God sent Israel's Messiah, Jesus the Christ, with His authority to be the persecuted Servant and Saviour of all who believe He is the Son of Almighty God.

Extracted from "JOSEPH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2018.

### **Joshua Chapters 17 to 19: *Sharing the land of Canaan***

Joshua continued to divide and share the land of Canaan.

All Israel gathered at Shiloh, the place God had chosen for the Tabernacle (18:1). This became the central place of worship for all the tribes of Israel at that time.

Many battles had been fought and won, but there were still seven tribes without their inheritance (18:2). God had promised it, but they had not occupied the land.

"How long will you delay in occupying the land?" Joshua asked the leaders of the tribes. "Appoint three men from each tribe. I will send them out to make a survey of the land, town by town" (18:4-9). "You must divide the land up into seven shares. Write reports about those seven shares of land. Bring them here to me. Then I will cast lots for you in the sight of Almighty God" (18:6).

Today, as Christians, we do not inherit land in the same way. The best inheritance is still to come: we will be with the Lord forever (Psalm 23:6). Meanwhile, all of God's people live wherever they are in His Kingdom on Earth, which is worldwide. They live alongside non-believers and with people of other faiths.

The tribes of Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan received land in the north. Simeon received part of the land of Judah in the south (19:9).

Joshua waited until the very last for his own land. The people of Israel gave him the town he asked for, Timnath-Serah, in the hill country of Ephraim (19:49-50).

Extracted from "JOSHUA" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2014.

### **Ruth 3:9-18. *Boaz agrees to help Ruth***

Boaz woke up in the middle of the night. "Who are you?" he asked. "I am Ruth" she said. "You are my family protector. Take good care of me by making me your wife" (3:9).

Boaz praised Ruth for asking him for help instead of going after the younger men of Israel (3:10). He also praised her for her good reputation in the town (3:11). He wanted to marry Ruth. "Do not be afraid. I will do for you everything you ask" (3:11).

There was a problem, however. "It is true that I am a relative of yours. But there is a family protector more closely related to you than I am... If he wants to help you, good. Let him help you. But if he does not want to, then I will do it" (3:12-13).

Boaz then showed his faith in God. "You can be sure that the Lord God Almighty lives. You can be just as sure that I will help you" (3:13). Her request was part of the plan of God and Boaz accepted it was the will of God.

Ruth told Naomi what Boaz said to her. Naomi told Ruth to sit down and wait. She said, "The man will not rest until he settles the whole matter today" (3:18).

The Law of God gave a widow rights to the property of her dead husband. Therefore, Naomi also had a right to a share of the land and property that used to belong to Elimelech.

Extracted from "RUTH AND HANNAH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2008, 2016.

### **1 Samuel Chapter 5: *What happened when the Philistines kept the Ark of the Lord***

After the Philistines captured the Ark, they took it to the city of Ashdod on the Mediterranean Sea coast. They put it in Dagon's temple beside the large statue of their god Dagon (5:1-2). The next day, the idol-statue had fallen on its face on the ground in front of the Ark of the Lord God Almighty! (5:3). They put it back in its place. The following morning the statue was lying broken on the ground. 'Its head and hands were lying in the doorway of the temple' (5:4).

Dagon had no power to protect himself or the Philistines against the God of Israel. 'The powerful hand of God Almighty punished the people of Ashdod' (5:6). They became ill and many died. God punished them because they had taken the Ark. They and the people nearby suffered a plague of boils on their bodies.

The men of Ashdod said, "The Ark of the God of Israel must not stay here with us... His powerful hand is punishing us and our god Dagon. What shall we do with the Ark?" (5:7-8).

The rulers sent the Ark to Gath. There, too, the power of God Almighty was against the city. The people panicked. He caused the people of the city to suffer painful swellings in their bodies, so they sent the Ark to Ekron (5:9-10). When the Ark came to Ekron, the people cried out, "They have brought the Ark of the God of Israel to kill us. Send the Ark away; let it go back to its own place" (5:11).

Extracted from "SAMUEL AND SAUL" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2021.

### **Mark Chapter 7: *A foreign woman shows faith in Jesus***

Jesus walked 60 km to Tyre (7:24). Tyre and Sidon were very old cities on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The people who lived there were not Jews. They worshipped gods or idols.

Jesus did not want people to know where He was. But even in this place, the people knew about Jesus.

A woman saw Jesus and knelt down at His feet. She wanted Jesus to heal her daughter. An evil spirit controlled her little girl (7:25). 'She begged Jesus to drive out the demon from her daughter' (7:26).

Jesus told her, "It is not right to take the bread from the children and throw it to dogs" (7:27). Jesus meant that he had come to teach the truth of the Kingdom of God to the Jews first. Jesus told His disciples to do this (Matthew 10:6). Their time to teach those who were not Jews would come later (Mark 16:15).

The woman knew what Jesus meant. She knew that Jesus was testing her faith. She was bold and strong in her faith. She answered, "Yes Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the crumbs that the children leave" (7:28).

Jesus was very pleased with her answer. He told her, "That was a good reply. You may go now. The demon has left your daughter" (7:29). She went home and the demon was gone (7:30).

The Kingdom of God is for all people including foreigners. Jesus accepts anyone who confesses his or her sins, repents and follows Him. He later warned those who did not repent. He said that it would be easier for Tyre and Sidon on Judgement Day (Matthew 11:20-22).

Extracted from "THE EARLY TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2008, 2016.

### **Mark 10:47-52. Jesus heals a man who has much faith**

A large crowd followed Jesus. Near Jericho they heard a blind man shouting. "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me" (10:47). He understood that Jesus was the promised Messiah from the family line of King David. When the crowds told him to be quiet, he shouted the same words even louder (10:48)!

Jesus stopped and sent a message to the blind man to come to Him. 'He threw his coat to one side. Then he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus' (10:50).

Jesus asked, "What do you want Me to do for you?" (10:51).

The man answered, "I want to see."

"Go," Jesus said. "Your faith has healed you" (10:52).

Jesus knew that blind Bartimaeus had faith. Even in a large crowd, Jesus could hear the cries or prayers of faithful people. Faith in Jesus means putting all our trust in Him. We cannot fool God. He knows when we are sorry for our sins. He knows when we have understanding and faith (Hebrews 4:13). Then when we receive an answer to prayer, we know that it has come from God.

Once again, the teaching of Jesus is made very clear by Mark. Faith in Jesus (10:47) and faith in action (10:50) bring answers to prayer (10:52). Bartimaeus understood these things. He shouted out and his sight was restored. Then, instead of going his own way, he followed and went the way of Jesus (10:52).

Extracted from "THE DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2020.

### **John Chapter 11. Jesus raises Lazarus from death.**

*Mary fell at the feet of Jesus. She said, "Lord, I wish You had been here! Then my brother would not have died" (11:32).*

*Jesus looked at Mary and her friends crying. His spirit became very sad and He was troubled. "Where have you put him?" He asked (11:33-34).*

*Then Jesus wept.*

*The Jews saw how much Jesus loved Lazarus and His sisters (11:35-36). Some said, "He opened the eyes of the blind. Could not He stop this man from dying?" (11:37).*

*Once more Jesus became very sad. He went to the place where the body of Lazarus lay. There was a heavy stone across the entrance of the tomb (11:38).*

*"Take away the stone", He said (11:39).*

*"But Lord," said Martha... "by this time there is a bad smell. Lazarus has been in the tomb four days" (11:39).*

*Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" (11:40). So they took away the stone. Jesus looked up and thanked His Father for hearing Him (11:41).*

"I know that You always hear Me." He said this for the sake of the people standing there. He wanted them all to believe that His Father, our Almighty God and Creator, had sent Him (11:42). Then Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man walked out of the tomb covered in strips of cloth.

Our Father God always listens to the voice of His Son when He makes requests on behalf of His people (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25).

*Extracted from "THE GOSPEL OF JOHN" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2008, 2015.*

### **John Chapter 15. The world hates God's children.**

Jesus warned His disciples that the world will hate them. "Remember that it hated Me first" (John 15:18). If people persecuted Jesus, they will persecute His followers also.

People who do not know God persecute the people of God. It was like this from the beginning with the children of Adam and Eve. Wicked Cain killed his righteous brother (Genesis 4:8). God loved Cain and Abel but only Abel chose to love and obey God.

The people who hate God are lost in the darkness of sin. They choose not to know personally the One true and living God and His Son (John 16:3). Satan uses them as his tools. They attack God's servants and even kill them.

Jesus warned, "If you belonged to the world, it would love you like one of its own. But you do not belong to the world. I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you... If people hated Me and tried to hurt Me, they will do the same to you... They will treat you like this because of My name. They do not know the One who sent Me." (15:19-21.)

Jesus then promised His followers., "If they obey My teaching, they will obey yours also" (15:20).

However, those who reject Jesus, reject God Himself (15:23). Jesus said that the Old Testament prophecies had come true (15:25). "They hated Me without any reason" (Psalm 35:19; 69:4).

Then Jesus reminded His disciples again that He will send the Holy Spirit from His Father.

*Extracted from "JOHN'S GOSPEL PART 2" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2017.*

### **Acts Chapter 11. How the early Christians spread the Good News.**

At this time other believers shared the work of the apostles and travelled throughout the Roman Empire. At first, they preached the Good News of Jesus Christ to the Jews (11:19). Then some of them preached to other nations (11:20).

Antioch in Syria was the third largest city in the Roman Empire. It was here that the believers were first called Christians (11:26). God was with them and many people believed and accepted Jesus as their Saviour (11:21).

The church leaders in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch to meet the new Christians. Through him, many more believed in Jesus and were saved from their sins (11:24). Barnabas then went to Tarsus to bring Saul back to Antioch to help him (11:25-26). It is still important today for new believers to understand their new faith. We do this:

- by **listening** to good teachers or Bible teaching books;
- by **reading** and **understanding** the whole Bible;
- by **obeying** the teachings of Jesus;
- by **inviting** the Holy Spirit's help in **applying** what we learn.

Agabus, a prophet from Jerusalem, also came to Antioch. The Holy Spirit warned him that there would be very little food in the Roman Empire. This happened around AD 50. So the Christians gave money to Barnabas and Saul to take as a gift to the church in Jerusalem (11:29-30).

Therefore the church in Antioch became an important centre for Christian teaching, evangelism and also aid.

*Extracted from "THE EARLY CHURCH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2004, 2012, 2019.*

### **Acts Chapter 13. Why did the apostles lay hands on people's heads?**

"Laying on of hands" is an act of dedication and blessing that is mentioned several times in Acts. Paul (Saul) laid hands on people when he prayed for them to be healed (Acts 28:8-9). And when Paul laid his hands on the heads of believers in Ephesus (Acts 19:6) they received the Holy Spirit, spoke in different languages and prophesied. This also happened when the apostles laid their hands on

believers in Samaria (Acts 8:17). Church leaders lay their hands on believers when new leaders are chosen for a special work or office, especially as deacons (Acts 6:6), preachers and teachers (1 Timothy 4:13-14) and as missionaries (Acts 13:3).

Only believers gifted by the Holy Spirit should lay hands on other believers. No-one troubled by demon spirits should lay hands on people, nor should hands be laid on people troubled by demon spirits.

Notice also that the Holy Spirit called Saul and Barnabas but it was the local church that sent them out. The church members confirmed their support for Saul and Barnabas and also for their church leaders. They were all in agreement. They all met together united, to witness the laying on of hands. In this way, Saul and Barnabas were sent out by God through the local church. Later, the church welcomed them back and called a special meeting to listen to their reports (14:27).

Extracted from "PAUL BRINGS GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2012, 2019.

### **John Chapter 7. *The arguments about Jesus.***

Some people believed that Jesus was the Great Prophet promised in the Old Testament writings who would come before the Messiah. Others believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah, or Christ.

The Old Testament writings said that the Messiah would be a son of King David. He would come from the town of Bethlehem where David lived. The people knew that Jesus grew up with Mary and Joseph in Nazareth. They did not know at that time that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-6). They did not know that Joseph was from the family of King David (Matthew 1). They did not know that Mary was also from the family of King David. So the people could not or would not agree about who Jesus really was. They doubted or disagreed, but many just argued and refused to believe.

People still argue and doubt today.

Jesus was teaching the people who were standing in the Temple courtyard. He cried out, "Yes, you know [the town] where I am from. [But] the One who sent Me... you do not know" (7:28). "I know Him... and He sent Me" (7:29). Jesus came from God. In Heaven He is part of the Holy Trinity of God.

When Jesus said this they tried to arrest Him. But no-one touched him. The time for His crucifixion had not yet come (7:30).

Extracted from "THE GOSPEL OF JOHN" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2008, 2015.

### **John Chapter 17. *The final promise of Jesus.***

Jesus wanted them to be together perfectly united as one. "This will let the world know that You sent Me" (17:23). Our unity with others comes from our unity with God Almighty and with our Lord Jesus Christ. We must not let Satan destroy this witness of love and unity with others nor with our Saviour and our God.

Finally, Jesus said He wanted His followers to see Him in all His glory. His disciples would see Him briefly on Earth after His resurrection. But all followers of Jesus will be with Him in glory. This glory was given to Jesus because God loved Him "before the world was created" (17:24).

Before He was arrested, Jesus made a promise to His Father. He explained, "Those You have given Me know that You have sent Me. I have shown You to them." Then He promised "I will continue to show You to them. The love You have for Me will be in them" (17:25-26).

This is the final promise Jesus made to God before His trial and death. He continues to keep this promise for us through the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way, Jesus enables us to know God. We know God's love and we know the compassion of Jesus. Jesus confirmed, "I myself will be in them" (17:26). He does this through the power and filling of the Holy Spirit.

He continues to talk with His Father about us and prays [pleads] for us in Heaven (Hebrews 7:25).

Extracted from "JOHN'S GOSPEL PART 2" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2017.

### **Acts Chapter 10. *Peter visits someone who is not a Jew.***

At this time, the Romans ruled Israel as well as many other countries. Roman soldiers from Italy lived in the towns and the forts. The Roman army was divided into groups of 100 soldiers. The captain of a group was called a 'centurion' (Luke 7:2). A 'regiment' was a larger group, probably of 1000 men; each regiment had a name.

Cornelius was a centurion in the Italian Regiment. He and his family were not Jews but they believed in the one true and only God and prayed to Him (Acts 10:2). They did not know about Jesus but were kind and helped people in need.

One day, when Cornelius was praying, he saw an angel of God. "What is it, LORD?" he asked. God gave him a message: "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up like an offering to God (10:4). Send men to Joppa to bring back a man called Peter. He is staying with Simon the leather-worker" (10:6-7). Cornelius obeyed and sent some of his men to Joppa.

Peter was still in Joppa. While he was praying, he became hungry. He saw a vision from God. He saw what looked like a large cloth coming down from Heaven. It had all kinds of unclean creatures in it, birds and animals, which the Jews were not allowed to touch or eat.

There was no angel, but a voice said, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

"I never eat anything unclean", Peter replied (10:14). Then the voice said, "Do not say anything is not pure that God has made clean" (10:15).

The voice from Heaven came three times. In this way, God prepared Peter to tell Cornelius, who was not a Jew, the Good News about Jesus the Christ.

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### **Acts Chapter 16. The second missionary journey of Paul.**

Paul, Silas and Timothy visited the churches in Lystra to encourage them. Their numbers grew daily (Acts 16:5). Then they went to towns which Paul had not visited before.

Every day Paul waited on God to find out what he should do. He went to Galatia because the Holy Spirit told him not to go north (16:6). It is always important to know what we should not do as well as what we should do.

One night, Paul had a vision. A man from Macedonia called to him, "Come over and help us." Next morning they set out for Macedonia (16:10). Paul and his fellow workers obeyed the Holy Spirit quickly.

At this time Luke joined Paul and the others. Luke wrote down these acts or actions of the apostles for us all to read.

Like Paul, we too must wait and trust the Holy Spirit to guide us, and then obey. The Holy Spirit does this in many ways and at many times:

1. When we ask for the Holy Spirit in our lives (Luke 11:13).
2. When we do what pleases the Lord (Acts 16:5).
3. When we witness to others about Jesus (Luke 21:13-15).
4. When we study to understand the written word of God (2 Timothy 3:16,17).
5. When we are ready and waiting to obey (Acts 16:10).
6. When we move forward in the work God has called us to do (16:6).

Paul was doing all these things when the Holy Spirit spoke to him and moved him onwards (16:6-10).

Extracted from "PAUL BRINGS GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2012, 2019.

### **Romans Chapter 4. Abraham, the father of believers in Christ.**

Paul, a Jew, strongly believed that both Jews and Gentiles must come to God by believing in Christ. In this way, Abraham is the father of all believers in Yeshua (Jesus) and in Yahweh (the One True Almighty God). Abraham showed the way of faith which leads to God and makes us right with Himself. This is why Paul says that Abraham is father to us all. God said that this would happen (Romans 4:17; Genesis 17:5; Galatians 3:29).

Abraham believed God could bring life out of death. He was 100 years old, so his body was almost dead. And Sarah's womb was dead (4:19). Abraham and Sarah were too old to have a son, yet God promised them a son. God said to Abraham, "Your wife Sarah will have a son by you, and you will name him Isaac" (Genesis 17:19).

Many people would say, "Impossible!" but Abraham's faith said "Yes" to God. He believed that God could bring life out of death and give Sarah a son (Genesis 21:1-7). God kept this promise and Isaac was born.

If we are tempted to say that we can never have the faith of Abraham then we must remind ourselves that in Christ all things are possible through the kindness and mercy of God (2 Timothy 1:9).

Lack of faith (unbelief) is a root cause of all sin because it does not give glory to God. Abraham "became strong in his faith and gave glory to God" (Romans 4:20). "God accepted Abraham because he believed that God could do what he promised. So his faith made him right with God" (4:22; Genesis 15:6).

Extracted from "IN CHRIST ALONE" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2008, 2012.

### **Romans Chapter 13. *The Law of love.***

Paul quotes some of the Ten Commandments given to Moses (13:9). He says, "These and other commandments are all included in one rule. 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself'" (Leviticus 19:18). This is Paul's guide for living in love and peace with neighbours, friends and family. This includes the church family.

"Love does everything the Law requires" (3:10). Paul adds, "Keep in mind the times we are living in" (13:11).

He also warns the believers that they must now live as if Christ would soon return. Paul then adds his own guidelines to holy living: no wild parties, no drunkenness, no sexual sins, no evil behaviour, no fighting or anger, no jealousy. Above all, we must learn to live in the light of Christ, not in the darkness of sin (13:12-13). Paul's teaching remains true today, nearly 2000 years later.

Old habits are difficult to overcome. Our old natures will call us to follow our old ways. So old habits must be put off, as we follow our Lord in this new way of holiness (Ephesians 4:22-32). Other deeds of darkness must be put away: superstition and witchcraft; stealing from the government by cheating on taxes; refusing to pay debts; going after another man's wife; failing to love the brethren. All these destroy a Christian's testimony.

Paul said, "Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ" (13:14). Every morning, put on Christ as you would put on clothing. Take all that God has given you in Christ. Put on Christ and be holy. This is 'living in Christ'. "Do not think about how to satisfy your sinful nature."

Extracted from "LIVING IN CHRIST" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2007, 2012.

### **Ephesians Chapter 5. *Living in and reflecting the light of Christ.***

Paul said to the Christians at Ephesus, "You are the children that God dearly loves. So, follow His example" (5:1). In this way, you will become more and more like Jesus as you let the Holy Spirit work in your life. This will help you to "lead a life of love, just as Christ did" (5:2).

Then Paul listed some of their past sins (5:3-5). Like us, they had to leave these behind and live as God's holy people.

Some had sinned with their bodies, others with their mouths. There must be no sexual sin. Unholy jokes and foolish talk needed to stop. In its place, they should give thanks to God for saving them (5:4). Paul knew that the Holy Spirit would change their talk as they followed Him. Any person who continued to sin would not "share in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (5:5). He said, "God is angry with those who do not obey. Do not go with people like that" (5:6-7).

Paul continued, "At one time, you were in the dark. But now you are in the light because of what the Lord has done. Live like children of the light" (5:8). Light produces good things. Find out what good things please the Lord (5:9-10). Darkness produces nothing good. Paul said, "Everything that the light shines on becomes light. Wake up! Rise from the dead. Then Christ will shine on you" (5:13-14). May we reflect the light of Christ wherever we go!

Extracted from "EPHESIANS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2018.

### **Hebrews Chapter 5. *A warning to grow up.***

We can sense the love and sadness in the heart of the writer. He says that they are slow to learn. "By this time you should be teachers. But in fact, you need someone to teach you all over again. You still need the simple truths of God's word. You still need milk, not solid food" (5:12).

We learn simple but important truths at the time we are saved. We must, however, grow in faith and knowledge of God. Believers must feed their minds with the truth from God. The writer of Hebrews says, "Anyone who lives on milk is still a baby" (5:13).

They could not stay as spiritual babies. These Jewish believers in Jesus had not grown up. They were not strong in their faith. They did not want to learn about living the right way. So they were told to eat the solid food that is for those who are grown up (5:14). They behaved like people who did not want to learn more. They were lazy or found other interesting things to do.

The writer quoted, "Call out to Me... Pray to Me. And I will listen to you. When you look for Me with all your heart, you will find Me" (Jeremiah 29:12-13).

Extracted from "HEBREWS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2016.

### **Revelation 3:2-9. "Wake up and repent!"**

The risen Christ warned them, "Wake up! Strengthen what is left, or it will die. You have not done all that my God wants you to do" (3:2).

We must repent from works that lead to spiritual death. Works that are not done with love and care and perseverance. Works that do not bring glory to the name of Christ. Works that are done by human effort without the power of the Holy Spirit. These things do not please God. Jesus knew the problem and He knew that the remedy was to repent and confess sin.

Jesus warned them:

- "You have a name for being alive but you are dead" (3:1).
- "You must strengthen the remaining gifts that are about to die" (3:2).
- "The good things you have done are unfinished in the eyes of God" (3:2).
- "Remember and keep on remembering what you have received and heard and hold on to it" (3:3).

All disciples of Christ need to remember what He has done for them. That is why Jesus took bread at His last supper, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is My body given for you, do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19).

Every time the Jews celebrate Passover, they remember that God had rescued them through the sign of lamb's blood on their wooden doorposts. The blood saved them from the angel of death and from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12:13). When Jewish and Gentile believers celebrate the Lord's Supper, we remember that God rescued us through the blood of Jesus on His wooden cross (Luke 22:19). Praise God!

Extracted from "MESSAGES TO SEVEN CHURCHES" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2010, 2013.

### **Genesis 9:25-27. *The Beginnings of World Religions.***

The peoples of the world descend from the three sons of Noah: Shem, Japheth and Ham. Through them, we can see how the nations and religions of the world were formed. The prophecies and curses of Noah came true (9:25-27):

1. The families of Canaan (son of Ham) were very evil and included the Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites. They sacrificed babies and did many bad things which angered God, including the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. God sent the children of Israel to live in their land and to destroy or rule over the Canaanites.
2. Other sons of Ham moved into Africa and later formed the ancient people of Southern India, Australia and South America. They took with them a belief in the creator God but mixed the worship of spirits into their religion.
3. The families of Shem (Semites) spread throughout Asia and probably across to North America. They took with them their belief in God the creator but later formed many new religions that we still see today. Only the Semitic people descending from Abraham's first marriage kept faithful to the one true God. These were the children of Jacob (called Israel), the grandson of Abraham.
4. The families of Japheth spread into Europe and at different times enlarged their empires or territories around the world. This included the empires of the Greeks, Romans, European and Scandinavian peoples. Later the British, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Belgians extended their empires worldwide and took their faith in Jesus the Christ with them, which had been established in the first and second century AD.

Source: Dave Hilsley, *Tishrei Study Paper No. 3.*

Extracted from "BEGINNINGS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2001, 2003, 2006, 2021.

### **Genesis 18:17-19. *Abraham grows in faith and knowledge***

God showed to Abraham that He truly was the LORD God Almighty for He told Abraham everything about His promises given before (Genesis 12:2-3). He reminded Abraham that his family will become a great nation and all nations will be blessed because of him (18:18). This includes the nations who believe in Israel's Messiah who is our Lord Jesus Christ and Saviour.

Then the LORD told Abraham more about how he must live (18:19). Have you noticed that each time God speaks to Abraham, He adds a little more information? God does not tell us everything there is to know. He tells us what we need to know. We must obey what He tells us, each step of the way through life, a little at a time. He teaches us what we need to know at the time and gives us more faith to meet that need. Later He teaches us even more things.

Abraham lived close to God. For this reason Abraham is called "the friend of God" (Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23). God said, "I have chosen him" and "I have known him". Those people who live trusting in God and who obey Him will know God's plans more than other people. Those people who live in fellowship with God understand better the meaning of life (Psalm 107:43; Hosea 14:9), and what will happen in the future. God said of Abraham, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him" (18:19). Because of God's agreement with him, Abraham gathered his household to teach them and lead them in the worship of God who is All-Sufficient or All-Mighty (El-Shaddai).

Extracted from "ABRAHAM" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2001, 2003, 2006, 2012.

### **Genesis Chapter 27. Isaac blesses Jacob.**

Isaac did not see at first that God's covenant for Abraham's family was with Jacob and not with his twin brother Esau. However, Isaac spoke his blessing on Jacob in the words of God's covenant. The old man explained what he should have told his son years before! He spoke of "taking possession of the land where you now live" as it had been promised to his father Abraham many years before (13:14-17). We are often slow in seeking the purposes of God and preparing the way for their fulfilment.

The blessing that Isaac gave to Jacob was wide-ranging and included property, power, blessings on his friends and curses on his enemies.

Esau was blessed too, but it was not enough to comfort him and he cried a loud and bitter cry (27:34). The New Testament writer said that Esau wanted to repent, but it was too late (Hebrews 12:17).

All who do not ASK and SEEK now, will cry later. Jesus said, "Not all those who cry 'Lord, Lord', will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who do what My Father in Heaven wants will enter" (Matthew 7:21). So Esau was "cut off" from much of the inheritance and the blessing.

Believers who do not fully repent of this world's sins will say, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your Name, and in Your Name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" But Jesus will answer, "I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!" (Matthew 7:22-23).

Extracted from "ISAAC AND JACOB" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002.

### **Genesis Chapter 37. Joseph and his Brothers.**

Joseph lived with his father and brothers in Canaan until he was seventeen. This was the land God had promised to give to Abraham's family. In the years after this, Joseph learned to trust God for all he had promised.

God showed Joseph His plans for him in dreams, and when he told his brothers, they knew immediately what the dreams meant. They were not pleased with him.

Joseph was Jacob's favourite firstborn son of Rachel, his favourite wife. He was one of Jacob's youngest children. To show his great love for his son Joseph, Jacob made him a special coat with cloth of many colours. This was not a wise thing to do. Joseph's brothers were jealous and 'could not even speak one kind word to him' (37:4).

Joseph gave Jacob news about his older brothers. It was not good news (37:2). Joseph may have meant well, but he caused trouble with his brothers. The older brothers were jealous of Joseph and angry with him.

Joseph's gift from God was that he was able to understand dreams. In his own dreams we see that Joseph was always the important one and his brothers had to bow down to him (37:5-11). This made his brothers even more angry.

It was not all Joseph's fault. He was Jacob's favourite and that was why there was trouble between Joseph and his brothers. If parents have favourites, they make their children jealous of each other. Parents need to treat their children equally and fairly.

Extracted from "JOSEPH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2018.

### **Exodus Chapter 16: Manna from Heaven.**

God promised food from Heaven in the night (16:4). The next morning, God sent special food from Heaven (16:13). We call it 'manna'. It was like coriander seed (Numbers 11:7). Every morning for six days each week the people gathered it into their pots. Then they ground the grains, boiled them in a pot and made them into cakes (11:8).

God told Moses, "Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any." God wanted His people to rest on the seventh day so on the sixth day He gave them enough food for two days (Exodus 16:28-29).

The manna fell at night, so they got up early and gathered it. If they tried to keep it for the next day, it spoiled. On the sixth day they gathered enough for two days and it did not spoil on the seventh day (Sabbath). Always there was enough for the young and the old and the weak ones. No-one had too much; no-one had too little (16:17-18).

God sent manna from Heaven until the people came to Canaan (16:35). This supplied their daily need for bread for 40 days. The birds supplied their meat. God also guided the people through the desert and supplied their water.

1500 years later, Jesus spoke about the bread of Moses and called Himself the 'Bread of Heaven' who came to give us everlasting life (John 6:32-35,48-54,57-58). He said, "Those who feed on this bread will live forever."

Extracted from "THE BIRTH OF A NATION" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2007, 2012.

### **Numbers 26: *The census and the role of Levites.***

This is the fourth book assembled by Moses. It is the story of Israel's further journey on the way to the Promised Land of Canaan. After they left Egypt, the children of Israel wandered in the desert for forty years, so the Hebrew name for this book is 'In the Wilderness'. We now call this book 'Numbers' because it gives details of the numbers of people in each tribe at the beginning and the end of the forty years travelling to the Promised Land. They counted the number of men 20 years old and over.

The total number of adult men first came to 603,550 (Numbers 1:46). Later, this dropped to 601,730 (26:51). This was after the death of most older males due to the plagues following Israel's sin against God. This meant there were over one million, perhaps nearly two million, people in total at this time.

Notice that the name of Perez is listed in 26:20. He became the ancestor of King David, through whose family Mary bore Israel's Messiah many years later.

The book of Numbers records the appointment of certain Levites under Eleazar, son of Aaron, who were in charge of the Ark of the Covenant, the table, the lamp stand, the altars, the articles of the sanctuary used in ministering, the curtain and everything related to worship and the animal blood sacrifices for the sins of the people (3:31-32).

Extracted from "THE GROWTH OF GOD'S NATION" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2004, 2012, 2021.

### **Joshua 7: *The men of Ai defeat Israel.***

After winning the battle of Jericho, Joshua was sure they would win the battle of Ai. But no-one asked God what they should do next. When the soldiers marched on Ai, they were defeated.

What can hinder God's plans? Our sin hinders the purposes of God and holds back His plans. God remains in control but waits for us to follow and to obey Him.

Sometimes we presume that God will do what we want. Joshua was confident he would win the battle of Ai without asking Him what to do. His faith was in himself, not in God. This, also hindered the purpose of God.

At the report of this defeat, Joshua was no longer sure that God was in control. Joshua began to blame God instead of asking what he had done wrong.

He then told God that he needed an answer. They could not go forward.

In times of difficulty we should stop feeling sorry for ourselves. We must stop blaming God and ask Him what is wrong in our life and in the lives of other believers. We should think about how to move forward to the glory of God.

God stopped Joshua moaning. Then Joshua listened instead of telling God to do something. Believers should listen to God at all times, in good times and in bad times.

Extracted from "JOSHUA" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2005, 2014, 2021.

### **Ruth Chapter 4: *Ruth and Boaz have a son.***

Naomi took the child in her arms and took care of him (4:16). The women of Bethlehem said, "Naomi has a son." They named him Obed (4:17). Obed means serving or servant.

The family name of Ephrath was saved through which Jesus was born 1300 years later. Obed became the grandfather of God's anointed king, David (4:17). King David became an ancestor of Joseph and his wife Mary. Mary was the virgin mother of Jesus, the Son of God (Matthew 1:5,6,16) whom Joseph adopted as his own son.

So Jesus was Son of Man and Son of God. He was the Christ or Messiah of Israel. He became the Saviour of the world. He became our Redeemer to pay the price for us to begin a new life. Joseph was told by an angel, "Mary will have a Son. You must give Him the name Jesus." This name means salvation or saviour in Hebrew. "This is because He will save the people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Jesus is Saviour of Jews and non-Jews. "He accepts people from every nation" (Acts 10:34-35).

So the prayers of Naomi and her friends for the baby Obed, "May this child become famous all over Israel" were answered in an amazing way (Ruth 4:14).

Extracted from "RUTH AND HANNAH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2008, 2016.

### **1 Samuel 4: *The Philistines take the Ark of the Lord.***

The elders disobeyed God and took the Ark of the LORD God Almighty from Shiloh. It held tablets of stone on which were written the covenant of God including the Ten Commandments. They carried it with them into the battle camp. Israel wanted to carry God with them, as the Philistines carried their little Dagon god statues. But God was not with Israel on that day. He left them to their own ways. They believed they had God Almighty with them on their side. Their faith was in the Ark of the Lord which He did not want them to remove from Shiloh.

The Philistines fought and defeated the men of Israel (4:9-10). 30,000 men of Israel died that day. God promised Joshua 300 years earlier, "No-one will be able to oppose you as long as you live" (Joshua 1:5). But the purpose of God for the salvation of Israel had not failed. He also planned for 1000 years of prophets, priests and kings to prepare the way for a new covenant through His Son, Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah and the Saviour of the world.

Meanwhile, the Ark of God was captured by the Philistines. The Israelites believed that God had deserted them. They did not know that God would help Samuel to lead the country back into good ways. Because of what he did, the purpose of God to save the world would continue through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

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