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Daily Manna devotions: Editor's Choice
Archive for 2021

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
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1st January 2021. Malachi 2:17 to 3:4. The word of the Lord God Almighty given to Malachi in 400 BC says, "You have wearied the Lord with your words ... 'Where is the God of justice?' See, I will send My messenger who will prepare the way for Me ... the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD God Almighty... "He will be like a refiner's fire or a launder's soap... So I will come near to you for judgment." Revelation 32:24-28 gives the words of Jesus to John for the churches. "To you who have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets... hold on to what you have until I come. To him who overcomes and does My will to the end, I will give authority over the nations... just as I have received authority from My Father. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." *Thank you Father for revealing your truth and purpose to your servants Malachi and John. Encourage the desire in Your people to see Your justice at work in today's society under Your new covenant, whatever the personal cost it takes to grow in your righteousness through Your refining fire. We ask for Your mercy in stopping Satan from perverting this generation with his deep evil secrets. Enable us in 2021 to build on Your faith and righteousness in Christ and to overcome and do Your will to the end with His authority and compassion at work in us over individuals, institutions and nations. To Your glory. Amen.*

4th January 2021. 1 Samuel 30:9-31 records the instructions of the future King David to share plunder from battles equally between his followers. Some trouble makers disagreed with this decision and wanted to withhold the plunder from those who did not join the battle with them (v.22) but David said, "No my brothers, you must not do that with what the Lord God has given us... All shall share alike" (v.23-24). 2 Corinthians 12:19-20 records Paul's concern for the church in Corinth. "We have been speaking in the sight of God as those in Christ; and everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening. For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarrelling, jealousy, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder." *Dear God, we see clearly in the Bible records of God's people behaving badly despite the righteous leadership of David and Paul. Send Your refining fire so that the Church of Jesus Christ today is obedient to You and compassionate towards others as we trust You in the ministry of Your calling to establish righteousness in the land. Help us to be examples of Christ-like caring for others, with wisdom in interpreting Your guidelines and with obedience towards those You have given in authority over us. Amen.*

5th January 2021. 2 Chronicles 34:19-33 records the time when the prophetess Huldah was consulted by government officials during a period when God's people were severely judged because of the sins of their fathers (v.21). She said, "This is what g40

the Lord, the God of Israel, says... 'I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people... because they have forsaken Me...' " (v.24-28). The King called the people together and 'read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant' and on their behalf 'renewed the covenant in the presence of the LORD God Almighty' (v.30-31). 'As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the LORD' (v.33). Hebrews 2:17-18 says, "He [Jesus] had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted." *Thank You Heavenly Father, that You sent Your Son in the form of human flesh to live as our example and to suffer as our redeemer and scapegoat and to rise from death to bring us everlasting resurrection life through Your mercy. Provide us Your prophets and prophetesses, priests, government officials and kings and queens to seek Your forgiveness, withhold Your judgement and lead our nations back into righteousness. For the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ who died as a punishment for our sins and the sins of previous generations. Amen.*

Genesis 49:8-12 gives the words of Jacob's blessing on his son Judah whom the rest of the family of Israel "will bow down to" (v.8). "The right to rule will not depart from Judah. It will be his until the King it belongs to comes. [Then] it will be His until the nations obey Him (v.10, NIrV). Galatians 2:6-10 Paul warns, "As for those who seemed to be important, whatever they are makes no difference to me. God does not judge by external appearance... On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews" (v.6-7). The church leaders in Jerusalem agreed to this, asking Paul to continue to remember the poor (v.9-10). *We thank You God for these historical and prophetic words recorded for us to see Your purposes in the family of Abraham through Judah in preparing the way for the Christ-child to be born and brought up 1700 years later by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem then Egypt then Nazareth before His ministry as King of the Jews. We thank you that Paul accepted Jesus as Israel's Messiah and was called to preach the Good News to the rest of the world. May the whole of the Bible speak clearly the truth from God for today and see the nations repent and bless You and bring salvation to the poor and needy and to all, regardless of "whatever they are". In the name of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

7th January 2021. Psalm 138 is a psalm of David. "I will praise You O LORD God Almighty with all my heart... I will praise Your name for Your love and faithfulness... When I called, You answered me... Though the LORD is on high, He looks upon the lowly, but the proud He knows [only] from afar. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You preserve my life... The LORD will fulfil His purpose for me; Your love, O LORD, endures for ever. Do not abandon the works of Your hand!" 1 Corinthians 10:23-33. Paul quotes a familiar saying of believers, "Everything is permissible" for those who have been freed from the Old Testament covenant. However, Paul adds "not everything is beneficial" and "not everything is constructive" (v.23). He gives an example about not eating meat offered to idols, "for why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience?" (v.27-29). "So... whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks [Gentiles] or the church of God" (v.31). "I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved" (v.33). *Dear Father, while heeding the warnings of Paul, we thank You for the new life and freedom given by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. We also thank You for King David's belief of Your purpose being fulfilled in him through praise and worship and testifying of Your love and safekeeping "in the midst of trouble". Establish us in Your everlasting mercy through the cross of Christ for Your glory and for "the good of many, so that they may be saved". Amen.*

8th January 2021. Isaiah 52:5-10 gives God's words to Isaiah, "All day long My name is constantly blasphemed." Yet God assures Isaiah that "My people will know My name" (v.5-6). God continues, "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion 'Your God reigns'... When the Lord returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes" (v.7-8). "The Lord God Almighty will bare His holy arm in the sight of all nations and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God" (v.10). Romans 10:8-11 gives Paul's explanation that under the new covenant, "the word [of God's law] is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart (Deuteronomy 30:14), which is the word of faith we are proclaiming, that if you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from death, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." *Dearest Father, in these days when Your name is blasphemed, assure us we will know You personally and know Your delight in us as we proclaim Your Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ for people to see for themselves that our God reigns. Bring on the time when "all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God". Help us to realise the truth is within us to confess "Jesus is Lord" and to know we are saved. Amen.*

11th January 2021. Psalm 38:10-15 echoes the longings of King David to be delivered from persecution, fear and isolation, which echoes today's plague situation. "My heart pounds, my strength fails me; even the light has gone from my eyes. My friends and companions avoid me... my neighbours stay away" (v.10-11). "I have become like a man who does not hear, whose mouth can offer no reply. I wait on You O Lord God Almighty" (v.14-15). Romans 16:1-20 mentions at least 28 people by name whom Paul sends special greetings to at the end of his letter to the Roman church (v.1-16). He concludes by warning them to keep away from those "who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned" (v.17) and to "be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (v.19-20). *Father God, grant the love, compassion, wisdom and conviction of Paul so that we may be strong in supporting believers today who are in ministry and who may be oppressed by persecution, fear and isolation or who find themselves unable to worship, listen or speak in the way they are accustomed to. Overrule those who play into the hands of the enemy in hindering the Good News of Jesus Christ or who cause disagreement between believers. Comfort those who are prevented from meeting with friends and companions. In the name of Jesus. Amen.*

12th January 2021. 1 Samuel 28:8-25 describes the sad end of Saul's reign as the first king of Israel. He knew that he had disobeyed God which had resulted in the loss of communication with the Almighty (v.15). He unwisely consulted the spirit of Samuel through a medium for advice on how to defeat the enemies of Israel and was told it was too late to repent and God would give the kingdom over to David (v.17). Further, he and his sons would be destroyed the next day in battle and would end up in Heaven with Samuel (v.19). So God blessed David in battle against the Amalekites (Chapter 29) but Saul was destroyed in battle against the Philistines (Chapter 30). Acts 13:4-12 records the opposition to the Good News from God preached by Paul and Barnabas on the island of Cyprus. Paul accused Elymas of "perverting the right ways of the Lord" and told him he would become blind for a time (v.10-11). Because of this the Roman governor of Cyprus believed the Good News of Jesus Christ (v.12) and later on, some of the Jews there also believed in Jesus as their Messiah. *Father God, encourage us to remain obedient believers, not disobedient believers, that we will be richly rewarded in Heaven and leave a legacy of success for Your Kingdom on Earth. Enable us to get things right by walking in the light of Your truth at all times so that Your Spirit will not depart from us and that many will be saved by our works, witness and worship. Encourage us to persevere and see victory for Your people and restoration of true faith in You whilst there is time. In the name of Jesus and for His sake, Amen.*

13th January 2021. Joel 2:17-32 says "Let the priests who minister before the Lord God Almighty weep [and] say 'Spare Your people O Lord. Do not make Your inheritance an object of scorn [fun]. Why should they say among the peoples, "Where is their God?" ' (v.17). Then Joel assured his readers that "the Lord will take pity on His people" (v.18). They will never be ashamed again and in the last days God will "pour out My spirit

on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, you young men will see visions" (v.27-28). "And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (v.32). Luke 18:17 gives the words of warning from Jesus, "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." This warning follows on from His question, "When the Son of Man comes [returns] will He find faith on earth?" (18:8). *Heavenly Father thank you for these encouraging words prompted by questions that are relevant for today. Many wonder "Where is God?" and "Where are the people of faith awaiting Christ's return?" May our leaders of church and state humble themselves and weep before You so that Your name and Your church are glorified and Your Spirit can freely minister to the believers, young and old alike, in power. Take pity on us and strengthen our faith and enable us to extend Your Kingdom as we await our Saviour's return. Amen.*

14th January 2021. 1 Chronicles 8 confirms the genealogy of Israel's first king chosen by God from the smallest tribe, Benjamin (8:33). Sadly, this record is followed by the testimony that "Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD God Almighty. He did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance and did not enquire of the LORD" (10:13-14). Revelation 2:12-17 gives the words of Jesus to the apostle John regarding the church in Pergamum. "I know where you live, where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to My name... Nevertheless, I have a few things against you... Repent, therefore!" (v.13-16). "To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna", the food of Christ (v.17). *Dear God, the words of our Saviour reveal how a few people in the church at Pergamum brought judgement on all the people. This was ever true, as with Saul's disobedience which brought judgement on all of God's people. We thank you for the written word expressing your mercy in anointing David as Saul's successor who in turn brought Your light and salvation to Israel and whose family line gave birth to the opportunity of salvation for the world through Jesus Christ. Help us at all times to heed your word and not risk unholy behaviour nor let unrighteous decisions hinder the spiritual growth of those around us. May our example bring glory to Your name and blessings to Your people and our nation. Amen.*

15th January 2021. Psalm 86 is a prayer from a "poor and needy believer" who is devoted to God Almighty, seeking His mercy and joy (v.1-3). "Teach me Your way O LORD, and I will walk in Your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear Your name. I will praise You O LORD with all my heart; I will glorify Your name for ever. For great is Your love towards me; you have delivered me from the depths of the grave" (v.11-13). So, "give me a sign of your goodness, that my enemies may see it and be put to shame" (v.17). Matthew 17:14-23 describes the power of Jesus over demons and the lack of faith of His disciples who were unable to do the same. Jesus told them they needed faith even if it was as tiny as a mustard seed (v.20). This was the time that Jesus revealed to His followers that men "will kill Him and on the third day He will be raised to life" which further upset the disciples (v.23). *Father God, forgive us for not reaching out to You in greater faith to meet the spiritual, mental and physical needs of those around us, even if we ourselves are "poor and needy believers". Increase our faith beyond that of a mustard seed, to "glorify Your name for ever". Help us to understand more of Your provision which was fulfilled in the sacrifice of Christ our Saviour, who died for our sins and was resurrected to eternal life with You, that He might intercede on behalf of all who believe. So may we reach out in faith to others in the name of Jesus and through the power of Your Holy Spirit within us. Amen.*

18th January 2021. 1 Samuel 30 describes how the future King David wept before the Lord over the destruction caused by some of the enemies of Israel. Unlike King Saul in Chapter 28 who sought guidance from a medium, the Witch of Endor (Chapter 28), David 'found strength in the LORD his God' and enquired from Him what to do (v.6-8). The LORD ordered David to pursue the enemies and he was soon guided to where they were hidden. None of them were allowed to get away 'except for 400 men who escaped on camels' and everything was recovered (v.15-19). Revelation 21 describes the future New Jerusalem, and the Apostle John was told "the dwelling of God is with men and He will live with them. They will be His people and God Himself will be with them and be their God" (v.3). *Lord God, forgive us for trusting in our own wisdom or worse, trusting in mediums or horoscopes. Encourage us in good times and bad times to seek You*

and trust in Your guidance. Renew Your vision again and again of the glorious New Jerusalem when our Lord and Saviour will reign on Earth and all Your creation will obey and worship You and peace will reign and the moral and physical pollution we have caused will be banished. Amen.

19th January 2021. Jeremiah 48 records God's sadness for the nation of Moab (v.31). They were descendants of Lot who travelled to God's Promised Land with Abraham 1300 years before. They were guilty of "making offerings on the high places and burning incense to their gods". God wanted to restore their fortunes (v.47) but 20 years later they and their distant relatives in Israel were punished and conquered by Babylon. Unlike the Jews, there was no remnant of the Moabites. Luke 6:20-45 records the sermon of Jesus to His disciples. "Blessed are you [faithful believers] who are poor... hungry... mourning..." (v.20-21). "Blessed are you [faithful believers] when men hate you... exclude you... insult you... reject you... because of the Son of Man" (v.22). "Rejoice... because great is your reward in Heaven" (v.23). This teaching is followed by instructions to love our enemies, to show mercy and to avoid judging others (v.27-42) and to bear much good fruit (v.43-45). *Thank You heavenly Father for the records that show Your love and mercy to those who obey and worship You, the One True God. Forgive us when we are guilty of allowing the worship of lesser gods. Thank You for the teachings of Jesus, Your Son and our Saviour, to remain faithful and even rejoice in times of hardship, showing love and mercy to those who persecute us. May Your remnant of faithful believers bear much good fruit on Earth and in Heaven, as an everlasting witness to Your mercy. Amen.*

20th January 2021. Deuteronomy 12:8-14 records some of the commands God gave to Moses before entering the Promised Land "so that your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all His decrees and commands that I give you and so that you may enjoy long life" (6:2). Moses told the people of Israel, "You are not to do as we do today, everyone as he sees fit... but you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance" (12:8-10). "Then to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling place for His Name, you are to bring everything [sacrifices] I command you" (v.11). "Offer them only at the place the LORD will choose in [each] one of your tribes and there observe everything I command you" (v.14). Romans 2:8-10, Paul says, "For those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger (v.8), but glory, honour and peace for everyone who does good" (2:10). Paul made it clear that he was telling this to both Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ. *Dear Father, thank you for the Old and New Testament records which clarify the importance of not "doing as we see fit" which results in "self-seeking and rejecting Your truth". Thank You for the many examples in the ministry of Christ our Saviour that portray a self-less interest in caring for others before He sacrificed His life for all who believe in Him. Show us the sacrifices in life you wish us to make, what, when and where, in order to extend Your Kingdom before Christ returns. Amen.*

21st January 2021. Psalm 37 is famous for David's advice based on his personal experience of God's salvation. He says, "Do not fret... (v.1); trust in the LORD God Almighty... (v.3); delight in the Lord... (v.4); commit to Him... (v.5); be still and wait patiently... (v.7)." David believed strongly that "there is a future for the man of peace but... the future of the wicked will be cut off. The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD" (v.37-39). John 17:20-25 records the prayer of Jesus to His Heavenly Father for all future believers. He prayed "that all of them may be one... as We are one" (v.20-21). "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent Me" (v.23). "...that the love You have for Me may be in them and that I Myself may be in them" (v.26). *Lord Jesus, thank you for this prayer for Christian unity and love. Help us in the power of Your Holy Spirit to heed the advice of King David. And may our lives witness to the world that Father God sent You to teach and to help the needy and then to die in our place as punishment for our sins. Thank you for the future You have provided for all true believers, on Earth and in Heaven with You. Amen.*

22nd January 2021. Nehemiah 8:17-18 records that in the seventh month after the 42,360 Jewish exiles from Babylon settled back in Jerusalem and region, "the whole company that had returned from exile built booths [of tree branches] and lived in them. From the days of Joshua ... until that day [1000 years] the Israelites had not celebrated like this and their joy was very great. Day after day, Ezra read from the Book of

the Law of God. They celebrated the Feast [of Booths] for seven days." This was followed by public confession and worship (Chapter 9). Hebrews 13:15-16, 500 years after the Feast of Booths was re-established in Jerusalem, the writer of the book of Hebrews instructs the Jewish believers. "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips that confess His name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for such sacrifices God is pleased." *Lord Jesus, thank you that in living and dying for our sins to be forgiven we are able to "continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise" anywhere in the world. May we also offer "the fruit of lips that confess His name" and be a blessing as we "do good and share with others" the Good News and the good things of His provision. Thank you Heavenly Father for the reminder from Old Testament days to be disciplined in understanding Your commandments and their application and joyful in our worship and not to neglect Your salvation purposes fulfilled through Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua and Israel's Messiah over many generations. Forgive us for any devaluing of Your divine truth. Amen.*

25th Januaray 2021. Jeremiah 14:19-22. Around 600 BC, Jeremiah asked God, "Why have You afflicted us so that we cannot be healed? ... O Lord God Almighty, we acknowledge our wickedness and the guilt of our fathers; we have indeed sinned against You. For the sake of Your name, do not despise us... Remember Your covenant with us and do not break it... our hope is in You." The people did not repent and were conquered by the Babylonians, with a remnant of faithful believers exiled for 70 years. Acts Chapter 7 records Stephen's speech to his persecutors of the purposes of God for Israel and His Messiah. Then Stephen, "full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to Heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." This resulted in the stoning to death of Stephen and even greater persecution by Saul who was later miraculously converted on the road to Damascus. *Father in Heaven, hear the prayers of Your people whose hope is in You. Enable us to understand Your Holy Scriptures and apply them in today's world of disobedience and affliction. Deliver us from persecution and plague. Bring repentance, forgiveness, miracles of healings and conversions and also leaders who uphold Your truth and salvation in Christ Jesus alone. Amen.*

26th January 2021. Genesis 30:22-24. "Then God remembered Rachel. He listened to her and opened her womb. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son... She named him Joseph." Joseph became one of the family of his father Jacob. Jacob was later called Israel. God used Joseph to fulfil His promise made to Abraham for Jacob's family to settle in Egypt for 430 years, to prosper with many children and flocks, before settling in the Promised Land of Canaan, which adopted the name of Israel. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 (NIrV) records Paul's teaching on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit is given to each of us in a special [unique] way. This is for the good of all (v.7)... All the gifts are produced by one and the same Spirit. He gives them to each person just as He decides" (v.11). *Father God, we thank you for your spiritual gifts of life and salvation through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Saviour. You sent Him down from Heaven to be born into the family of Abraham to teach Your truth and to take the punishment for our sin and the sins of those who repent and believe. Thank you also for Your provision through Joseph who became a Saviour to Israel whilst in Egypt. We rejoice with His mother Rachel who valued the gift of a son through whom many have come to know the One True God of Israel. We also rejoice with Mary who valued the gift of Your Son, Israel's Messiah. May the world learn to value the gift of babies and nurture them into fullness of life to develop the gifts You decide for the good of all. Amen.*

27th January 2021. 2 Chronicles 7:1-3 records the first Temple in Jerusalem dedicated to Yahweh, Almighty God, in 1004 BC. This was after Solomon had prayed for God to be open and attentive "to the prayers offered in this place" (6:41). After Solomon prayed, 'the glory of the LORD filled the Temple' (7:1-2). 'When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD God Almighty above the Temple, they knelt ... and worshipped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying "He is good, His love endures for ever" ' (7:3). This was an answer to King David's fervent desire years before the Temple was built: "Be exalted O LORD in Your strength [and] we will sing and praise Your might" (Psalm 21:13). Philippians 1:27 (NIrV) recounts Paul's fervent desire for believers "to work together as one person... to spread the teachings of the Good News". *Hear prayers Father God, not only for the experience of worshipping You in buildings dedicated to You and in*

the presence of Your Holy Spirit fire but to work together in unity, sharing the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ, so that each and every nation will kneel and worship and give thanks to You. For Your glory. Amen.

28th January 2021. Isaiah 22:15-25 reveals how the LORD God Almighty confirmed to His prophet Isaiah that Shebna (v.15) would be deposed from office (v.19). "In that day I will summon my servant Eliakim... I will clothe him with your robe and fasten your sash around him and hand your authority over to him" (v.20-21). "I will place on his shoulder the key to the House of David" (v.22) for the purposes of establishing the reign of Israel's Messiah 700 year later. Even so, God was eventually forced to remove Eliakim from power (v.25). Hebrews 8:8-13 says how God again 'found fault with the people and said [through His prophet Jeremiah], "The time is coming, declares the LORD God Almighty, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and Judah" (v.8). "I will put My laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be My people" (v.10). *Thank You Heavenly Father for explaining through Your prophets how You are prepared to act to appoint and then remove people from power in order to establish Your Kingdom on Earth through Israel's Messiah, Jesus Christ. Thank You for Your promised new covenant, through the gift of Holy Spirit power after the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour, so that Your truth can be received personally into the minds and hearts of all who repent and believe Jesus suffered for their salvation. Help us to trust in Him for our ongoing understanding of Your truth and believe You will raise up and cast aside leaders of Your choosing when we seek His forgiveness for sins of our nation past and present. Amen.*

29th January 2021. Deuteronomy 28:43-47 warns of one of the things that will happen if God's people disobey Him. God warned, "The alien who lives among you will rise above you higher and higher but you will sink lower and lower" (v.43). Why? God said, "Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of your prosperity" (v.47). James 5:1-10 warns the rich that their wealth will be destroyed in the last days (v.1-3). But for the faithful who wait on the Lord's coming, "be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near" (v.8). *Father God, forgive us for valuing and using wealth and prosperity wrongly without benefitting the poor and needy to Your glory. Forgive us for allowing institutions and businesses to control us which discriminate against biblical and ethical standards. Forgive us for welcoming other religions into our society on an equal basis in ways that risk compromising Your truth. Raise up strong leaders in our nation who will bring others to Christ our Saviour who alone can restore our relationship with You, the One True God Almighty. For His sake, who died to save all who acknowledge He is Your Son. Amen.*

1st February 2021. 1 Chronicles 23:1-5 records the way King David prepared for his son, Solomon, to build and equip the Temple in Jerusalem. He had previously been instructed by God what to do (22:6-16) and his first tasks before his death was to make Solomon king and then appoint the Levites their tasks in readiness for Solomon's Temple (v.4-5). This included the musicians "to praise the LORD God Almighty with the musical instruments I have provided for the purpose." Mark 6:7-29 reveals how King Herod liked to listen to John the Baptist (v.20) but is remembered most for being deceived into permitting his execution (v.27). This happened at the time Jesus was training His disciples to go out and teach and preach and to deliver people from demons and to heal the sick (v.7-13). *Father God, in these urgent times, enable us to know how to pray for the leaders of our nations so that peace will prevail and freedom maintained to praise and worship You. May they be "instructed by God what to do". At the same time, encourage your people "to go out and teach and preach and to deliver people from demons and to heal the sick". May we do this to prepare the way for the return of Christ as at the time of John the Baptist, without counting the cost and in the power of the Holy Spirit. For Your glory. Amen.*

2nd February 2021. Isaiah 45 faithfully records these words of God for Israel through His Old Testament prophet Isaiah, 2700 years ago: "I will strengthen you though you have not acknowledged Me, so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting, men may know there is none besides Me. I am [Yahweh] the LORD God Almighty, and there is no other. I form the light and I create disaster. I the LORD do all these

things" (v.5-7). "People from other nations will say, 'Surely God is with you and ... there is no other god' " (v.14). Luke 1 faithfully records the purpose of God revealed to Zechariah 700 years later, concerning John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets: "Many will rejoice because of his birth for he will be great in the sight of the LORD... Many people of Israel will he bring back to the LORD their God... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord", meaning Israel's Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (v.14-17). *Father God, thank you for revealing Your Hope, Light and Truth for these days of darkness and disbelief. Forgive our sins and the sins of our fathers and have mercy on us by rejecting disaster and restoring us as Your people of whom "other nations will say, 'Surely God is with you and ... there is no other god' ". Revive our faith and obedience so that we are prepared for, and can prepare others for, the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son and our Saviour. For His sake. Amen.*

3rd February 2021. Ezekiel 23 gives the word of God through His prophet Ezekiel to Israel at the time of their great disobedience 2600 years ago. "I will put a stop to the lewdness and prostitution you began in Egypt. You will not look on these things with longing or remember Egypt anymore..." (v.27). "Since you have forgotten Me and thrust Me behind your back, you must bear the consequences..." (v.35). "Then you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD God Almighty" (v.49). 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 says how Paul "was given me a 'thorn in my flesh', a 'messenger of Satan', to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it from me. But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weakness, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." *Lord Jesus, help us to put behind us forever the sins of the past that we may be strong in You, and in the power of Your Spirit, to journey through the life that Father God has chosen for us, despite present difficulties, both personal and more generally in the world around us. Help us to willingly suffer the consequences of disobedience in our land and continue to witness the joy of salvation in You alone, in the belief that our present difficulties will lead to personal and public confession, divine mercy and a strong Church made ready to welcome You back as Saviour of the world. Amen.*

4th February 2021. Leviticus 25:8-19 gives details of establishing a fifty-year jubilee in the land, to celebrate two generations of God's provision. The Lord God Almighty told Moses, "Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants" (v.10). "For it is a jubilee and is to be holy for you" (v.12). "Follow My decrees and be careful to obey My laws and you will live safely. Then the land will yield its fruit and you will eat your fill and live there in safety" (v.18-19). Revelation 22:11-12 gives the instructions of Jesus recorded by the apostle John regarding the Last Days. "Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; let him who is holy continue to be holy." Why? "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with Me and I will give to everyone according to what he has done." *Father God, we thank You for Your purpose down the centuries to bless those who love and obey You, not just in honouring You every Sabbath but to look back and delight in Your mercy and provision on special occasions. After two further generations of time may we now live in freedom to testify You are Almighty and will bless those whose trust is in You and Your Son, Jesus Christ. For our salvation and provision and to live safely in the Last Days, surrounded by so much evil. Come, Lord Jesus, come soon! Amen.*

5th February 2021. 1 Kings 6:11-19 records the words of God spoken to King Solomon and his response. God told him, "As for this Temple you are building, if you follow ... all My commands and obey them, I will fulfil through you the promise I gave to David your father. And I will live among the Israelites and will not abandon My people Israel" (v.12-13). 'So Solomon built the Temple and completed it' (v.14). 'He prepared the inner sanctuary within the Temple to set the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD there' (v.19). 2 Corinthians 12:19 explains Paul's reason for his concern about disobedience in the church. "We have been speaking in the sight of God as those in Christ; and everything we do, dear friends, is for your strengthening." He goes on to explain his fears that many have refused to repent (12:21) and will need his reproof (13:2). *Father God, thank you for this reminder to treasure Your written commandments as did King Solomon, aware that You would not abandon Your people if they obeyed them. May we learn from both Old and New Testaments the*

need to respect and obey Your Truth revealed by "those in Christ" and become strengthened in the faith without need of reproof. Keep us and our nation, therefore, obedient to the Word of God so that You will live among us and not abandon us in these days when our enemy seeks to destroy or weaken our witness of You. For the sake of Christ Jesus who suffered and died, that we might be set free from yielding to sin. Amen.

8th February 2021. Jeremiah 9 records God's lament to Jeremiah over His people 600 years before He sent His Messiah. "They go from one sin to another; they do not acknowledge Me" (v.3). "You live in the midst of deception; in their deceit, they refuse to acknowledge Me" (v.6). "See, I will refine and test them, for what else can I do because of the sin of My people?" (v.7). "Death has climbed in through our windows and has entered our fortress; it has cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the public squares" (v.21). "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom... but let him who boasts, boast about this: that he knows and understands Me, that I am the LORD God Almighty, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on Earth, for in these I delight" declares the LORD (v.24). Hebrews 10:16-17 records what God said later to Jeremiah in 31:33-34: "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put their laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds. Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." *Father God, thank you for revealing Your truth down the ages. Our streets are now empty because of death or the fear of death while so-called wise men boast of their achievements. May our faith be in You and in Christ Jesus alone so that Your "kindness, justice and righteousness" will reign on Earth, "for in these I delight". In Your mercy, forgive us. Amen.*

9th February 2021. Ecclesiastes 3:9-14 asks what is the purpose and benefit to mankind of all the work we do. The writer says, "I have seen the burden [distress, trouble] God has laid on mankind. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men. Yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end" (v.10-11). He acknowledges that there is nothing better for mankind "than to be happy and to do good ... and find satisfaction in all his toil, which is the gift [purpose, provision] of God" (v.12-13). He also affirms that "God does it so that men will revere [fear, honour] him" (v.14). 1 Corinthians 11:32 gives Paul's understanding that "we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world." Paul also says in Romans 8:22-27, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in pains of childbirth right up to the present time." However, he believes that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express... because the Spirit intercedes in accordance with God's will." *So Heavenly Father, affirm for us this day that your purpose and provision in life is "to toil and be happy and do good" for Your glory and honour. As Your created world groans around us as never before, may Your Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus Christ our Saviour, strengthen us, individually and collectively, and intercede on our behalf in accordance with Your will, free from condemnation and to Your glory. And may such amazing grace be publically testified in locations near and far, that people will reach out for Your salvation in Christ alone! Amen.*

10th February 2021. Genesis 18 records the time 4000 years ago when the LORD God Almighty appeared to Abraham in the form of three men (v.1-2). After blessing him with the promise of a child in his old age (v.10) they confirmed that Abraham's family would in future become "a great and powerful nation... to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just" (v.18-19). In the meantime, they also confirmed that "the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous, that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached Me" (v.20-21). Romans 1:16-17 confirms the strength of Paul's belief in the Good News of God's salvation in Christ alone. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the Gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written, 'The righteous will live by faith'." *Father God, thank you for clarifying again in Your Old Testament writings Your purposes in establishing righteousness through the Jewish family of Abraham by the miracle birth in the old womb of Abraham's wife Sarah. Thank You also for clarifying in Your New Testament writings Your purposes in establishing righteousness and salvation through the Jewish Messiah by the miracle birth in*

the young womb of Mary. We pray for the future extension of the Kingdom of God through the family of Abraham and through all who trust in Mary's firstborn Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Meanwhile, hear the outcry of faithful believers who are persecuted by those who disobey your truth in the Bible. For the sake of Jesus who suffered for all who live by putting their trust and faith in You. Amen.

11th February 2021. 2 Chronicles 34 records the time when King Josiah enquired of the Lord God Almighty what He would say "for me and for the remnant in Israel and Judah". This was because in his eighteenth year of his reign, the truth had been revealed to him that "Great is the Lord's anger that is poured out on us because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord" (v.21). God revealed through the prophetess Huldah His plan to "bring disaster on this place and its people... because they have forsaken Me" (v.24-25). So the king "renewed the covenant in the presence of the Lord to follow the Lord and keep His commands, regulations and decrees" (v.31). Acts 18:9-10 says that the Lord Jesus spoke to the Apostle Paul in Corinth through a vision, "Do not be afraid. Keep on speaking; do not be silent. For I am with you and no-one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." *Lord Jesus, thank you for this record of Your intervention to show mercy on the city of Corinth for the many believers in that place at that time. And thanks be to God for the record that shows how He withheld His punishment in the reign of Josiah when he prayed for the remnant of believers in Israel and Judea. Lord Jesus, Father God, for the sake of Your name and for the faithful believers in our nations, free us from plagues and persecution and unrighteous legislation so that Your Good News can be freely and faithfully preached and Bible-based laws will be established or renewed and obeyed publically once again and all false and unholy teachings rejected. In the power of Your Spirit. Amen.*

12th February 2021. Jeremiah 46 to 51 records God's condemnation of the unholy nations that surrounded his people Israel. "A curse on him who is lax in doing the work of the LORD God Almighty!" (48:18). This is said in the context of failing to destroy evil. There is one chapter added to these writings and prophecies of Jeremiah by an unknown author. Chapter 52 records the evil done by the last king of Israel (Zedekiah) before the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of the 4600 remnant of Jews to Babylon. 1 John 3:13-18 says "Do not be surprised if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love each other." (v.13-14). John goes on to say, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" (v.16-18). *Father God we thank you for Your love for us, Your people. Forgive us when we fail to remember You and shut out Your love at work in us. May we remember the words of Jesus to love You and to love each other. May we remember the words of John to recognise the sacrifice of Jesus was to set us free from the sins of the world that surround us. May we respond to Christ's gift of eternal salvation in this world and the next with acts of love and obedience to You and to mankind and avoid Your condemnation, judgement, rejection, death and even exile. May we learn then from Jeremiah that You, Almighty God, will deal with the evil enemies around us if we ourselves honour and obey Your commands and live as holy people in Christ our Saviour. Amen.*

15th February 2021. Deuteronomy 31:7-8 records how Moses spoke to his successor, Joshua, saying to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with the people into the land that the LORD God Almighty swore to their forefathers to give to them... The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." 1 Corinthians 15:35-49 teaches "What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed... God gives it a body as He has determined" (v.36-38). Paul then applies this to the eternal life of believers in Christ Jesus. "So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable [but] it is raised imperishable... it is sown in weakness [but] it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body [but] it is raised a spiritual body" (v.42-46). "And just as we have been borne in the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear likeness of the Man from Heaven", meaning Christ Jesus Himself. *Thank you Father for the privilege of understanding how Moses died knowing that the spiritual work in his life would be fulfilled after his death and resurrection through others. Encourage us to realise how*

the seeds we sow will bring a harvest long after we die and have faith to believe that our own lives will not perish but see everlasting life with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Help us to see the true needs in Your creation at this time as we enter into Your chosen roles in society and in the world around us, to bear good fruit now and in the future. Amen.

26th February 2021. 2 Kings Chapters 1 to 11 records the time in Israel when prophecies were fulfilled regarding the death of the evil King Ahab's wife Jezebel and their family, along with the prophets of their gods of Baal. This cleared the way for the 40-year reign of King Joash in Jerusalem who repaired the Temple for worship of our LORD God Almighty, using workmen who "acted with complete honesty" (12:15). Joash was assassinated (12:20). Acts 7 records Stephen's speech concerning the amazing history of the Jews from the time of Abraham up to the 33-year reign of Jesus Christ on Earth. Stephen said, "You are just like your fathers: you always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One [Israel's Messiah]. And now you have betrayed and murdered Him – you who have received the Law that was put into effect through angels, but have not obeyed it!" Stephen was martyred (v.54-60). *Father God, forgive us for allowing the persecution of those who have upheld Your truth down the ages. May our nations uphold the freedom of speech today in acting "with complete honesty" to establish Your righteousness in society with the freedom to receive salvation through the preaching of the Good News of Your Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Make us strong in the power and compassion of Your Holy Spirit and obedient to Your commandments, whatever the personal cost. For Christ's sake. Amen.*

17th February 2021. Jeremiah 9:23-24 records the words of the LORD God Almighty to His servant Jeremiah. "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom, or the strong man boast of his strength, or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts, boast about this: that he understands Me, that I am the LORD who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on the Earth, for in these I delight." Matthew 21:1-17 tells what happened in the last few days before the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. He instructed His disciples to fetch a donkey and its colt for Him to ride into Jerusalem. "If anyone says anything to you, tell them that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away" (v.3). Jesus chose to ride on the young colt, not the old donkey (Mark 11:7) as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. The first words of Jesus recorded in Jerusalem were spoken in the Temple. He said, "My house will be called a house of prayer but you have made it a den of robbers" (v.13). *Father God, we note how Your Son humbled Himself by riding on the colt of a donkey but showed contempt for the rich traders in the Temple. Not only were they robbing people of their money but robbing You of the worship and prayer that was Your purpose for that place. Help us to understand Your desire for kindness, justice and righteousness on Earth and reject worldly wisdom and unholy use of power and riches. Help us also to respond to the commands of Jesus our Saviour in the same way as the owner of the donkey and colt allowed him to fulfil our Lord's destiny recorded in the Old Testament. In these Last Days, keep us humble in preparing for the return of the Messiah and remove all obstacles to worship and prayer. For Your glory and for the salvation of the lost and for the encouragement of the faithful, "whilst there is time" in fulfilling the destiny of our Messiah in His second coming. Amen.*

18th February 2021. 2 Chronicles 6 records the prayers of King Solomon before the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem. "O LORD God Almighty... You who keep your covenant of love with Your servants who continue wholeheartedly in Your way... keep for Your servant David my father the promises You made to him ... 'if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before Me according to My law, as you have done.'" (v.14-17). Solomon continued, "Whatever disaster or disease may come, and when a prayer or plea is made by any of Your people... then hear from Heaven, Your dwelling place, forgive, and deal with each man according to all he does ... so that they will fear You and walk in Your ways all the time they live in the land that You gave our fathers" (v.28-31). Luke 20:20-26 reveals how Jesus spoke wisely to His accusers and said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." They were astonished by His answer and became silent. *Lord Jesus, enable us to trust Your Holy Spirit within us to speak with wisdom and authority against those who seek to accuse You and Your ministry today. Thank you for the faith of our fathers and forefathers who*

trusted in God Almighty and obeyed His commandments first, before worshipping in buildings made by man. Hear prayers to save us from current disasters and diseases especially those of us who are locked down or locked out of church buildings. Enable us to speak with wisdom and authority against those who seek to accuse us or destroy our witness. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

19th February 2021. Job 40:1-9 records how Job was chastised for arguing with God Almighty (v.2). Job admitted, "I am unworthy. How can I reply to You?" (v.4). God demanded answers to three questions: "Would you discredit My justice? Would you condemn Me to justify yourself? Do you have an arm like God's [to save yourself]?" After this, and further words from God, Job repented (Chapter 42). Romans 8:26-27 says "The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit because the Spirit intercedes for the saints [God's people] in accordance with God's will." *Thank You again, heavenly Father for these wonderful truths faithfully recorded in our Bibles. Thank you for sending Jesus our Saviour to take our punishment for sin and leave us with His Spirit at work in our lives. May we therefore learn to exercise Your divine wisdom that caused Job to stumble regarding Your justice, Your justification, Your deliverance. Thank You that the Holy Spirit power is at work in our lives who knows our weaknesses and gives us words to pray which are in line with Your will for the needs of Your people and the ministry we all have in this fallen world. May we readily relent and repent and through Your readiness to forgive may we see revival before Jesus returns to Earth. Prepare us through Your Spirit to minister signs and wonders in the name of Jesus to the glory of God Almighty! Amen.*

22nd February 2021. Psalm 136 encourages the reader to remember that the love of the LORD God Almighty endures for ever. The writer gives thanks to the Lord (v.1-3), acknowledges He is Creator (v.4-9), who brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt into the Promised Land (v.10-22). He encourages the reader to "give thanks to the God of Heaven" who remembers His people "in our low estate", who frees us from enemies and provides us with food (v.23-26). Luke 16:10 gives the words of Jesus about people who prove if they can be "trusted with very little can also be trusted with much". Sadly, this also applies, Jesus said, to those who are "dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much". *Father God, in Your mercy open our eyes, as with the psalmist, to the good things You have done and provided in our lives. May we prove worthy of Your trust and the trust of others in the small things we do "in our low estate" that we may prove wise in seeking and gaining and trusting Your security and provision without resorting to dishonesty. May we never doubt that Your love "endures for ever" and live according to the calling and salvation secured in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. May we prove worthy to take on the responsibilities you want us to adopt, with Christ-like integrity and authority, in and with Your love and mercy. Amen.*

23rd February 2021. Ezekiel 48 records the amazing vision given by God regarding the future city of Jerusalem with land apportioned in great detail to the twelve tribes and with a "special portion" for the Zadokites (v.9-12) who were the faithful descendants of Aaron, the priest and brother of Moses. The name of the city will be known as "The LORD Is There" (v.35) and will be the fulfilment of God's promise in Ezekiel 37:27, "My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God and they will be My people." This was first fulfilled when God's Son, Jesus Christ, was born in Jerusalem who was called 'Immanuel' by the angel who visited Joseph the future wife of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Immanuel means, 'God with us' (Matthew 1:23), which will take on a new fulfilment when Jesus returns one day soon to Jerusalem in glory (Acts 1:11). Acts 7:44-53 records the words of Stephen at the time of the rapid growth in believers who responded to the preaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem (see 6:7). Stephen said, "Our forefathers had the Tabernacle of the Testimony with them in the desert. It had been made as God directed to Moses according to the pattern [details] he had seen" (7:44). He explained that it remained until the time of the first Temple built by Solomon (7:45-47). Then the Temple leaders crucified the "Righteous One" whom the prophets of God said would come to "bring God with us" (7:52). *Father God, we ask that we will never forget these things recorded for the faithful descendants of believers. Grant further understanding to believe in the Second*

Coming of our righteous Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in order to boldly proclaim the full Gospel with hope of revival now with You in the midst of Your people. Amen.

24th February 2021. Genesis 28:6-15 records how Esau chose for himself to marry a descendant of Abraham through his son Ishmael as well as having Canaanite wives (v.6-9) whereas his twin brother Jacob set out to seek a wife from Abraham's relatives 750km away in Haran. He was given God's blessing en route when he saw what we call 'Jacob's ladder' in a dream. There above it stood the LORD God Almighty, who said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." James 1:16-18 says, "Do not be deceived my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all He created." *Heavenly Father, thank You for Your 'word of truth' recorded in Scripture and your blessing on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through whom we become children of Abraham because of faith in his descendant – Mary's Christ-child, Your Son, our Saviour. Help us to take it in that we are part of the promise given to Jacob to be a blessing to You and Your people everywhere. Amen.*

25th February 2021. Leviticus 16:20-22 describes the final part of sacrifice and atonement for the sins of God's people as given to Moses and Aaron. After the sacrifices in the sanctuary of the Tent of Meeting containing the Ark of the Covenant, Aaron must take a live goat and "he is to lay both hands on the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellions of the Israelites – all their sins – and put them on the goat's head. He shall [then] send the goat away into the desert... The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place." This goat is known as the scapegoat to confirm that the sins of the people have not only been forgiven but have been removed to a far place. Hebrews 12:4-11 warns us to understand the need for discipline under any persecution we experience for Christ's sake. "In your struggles against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood" (v.4). "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? We have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits?" (v.7,9). "Discipline... produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (v.11). *Thank your Father God for the discipline we need in serving our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ when we are persecuted for our faith. Keep reminding us of the blood He sacrificed for our salvation and that our sins have not only been forgiven but sent out to a distant place like the scapegoat in the desert. Amen.*

26th February 2021. Joel 2:28-32 records the famous prophecy given to Joel of the Day of the LORD. "I will pour out My Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams and your young men will see visions" (v.28). "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved" (v.32). Luke 18:26 asks the question, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus assured His followers that "no-one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come, eternal life" (v.29). This was said after the words of Jesus that "anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it" (v.17). *Father God, thank You for these words to encourage our faith in You and Your provision through salvation in Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Help us to sacrificially build the Kingdom of God now with child-like faith, that many more will experience the work of Your Holy Spirit in their lives "in this age, and in the age to come, eternal life". Amen.*

1st March 2021. Malachi 3-4 speaks of another Day of the Lord. God reminds His prophet Malachi, "I the LORD God Almighty do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed... return to Me and I will return to you" (3:6-7). 'Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other and the Lord listened and

heard' (3:16). "I will spare them just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him" (3:17). "For you who revere My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings... See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful Day of the Lord comes" (4:2,5). Matthew 27-28 records the action by Pilate to secure the body of Jesus in the tomb by sealing it and guarding it (27:62-66). On the first day after the Sabbath, 'Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake for an angel of the Lord came down from Heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it... The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men' (28:1-4). 'The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified... He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him" ' (28:5-7). *Father God, thank you for preparing us to celebrate the victorious Easter resurrection of our Lord and Saviour and the hope that is ours in His return to Earth as King and Judge. Send another Elijah to prepare Your creation at this time in repentance, forgiveness and revival. For Your glory and for the sake of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.*

2nd March 2021. Numbers 20:1-13 records the time when the people of Israel complained to Moses that there was no water in the desert on the way to the Promised Land and they wished they were back in Egypt (v.2-5). Moses and Aaron prostrated themselves before the Lord God Almighty at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. The Lord spoke to Moses. The Lord said, "Take the staff... gather the assembly together. Speak to the rock... and it will pour out its water... so that they and their livestock can drink" (v.6-8). Then Moses disobeyed God and in anger struck the rock with his staff and failed to give God the glory for the water which poured out (v.9-12). Luke 2:43-52 tells of the time when Jesus the Christ was a boy and stayed in the Temple at Jerusalem for three days instead of returning home to Nazareth with His earthly parents. He said, "Did you not know I had to be in My Father's house?" but became obedient to them instead of remaining in Jerusalem to train as a Rabbi. *Father God, help us to listen carefully to humbly obey You and give You glory in all that we say and do so that others may see Your light and truth and be blessed by streams of living water that comes from the Rock of our Salvation in Christ Himself. May our leaders prostrate themselves before You and see the need to put their trust in Jesus Christ and give glory to You through acknowledging Your provision in answer to prayers, in humility and patience, without anger or trying to assert themselves. Amen.*

3rd March 2021. Judges 4 records the time when Israel was saved by God-fearing women. The prophetess Deborah spoke to Barak the word of God to go into battle against Sisera and the Canaanites (4:4-7). The battle went in Israel's favour and the injured Sisera was met by Jael, the wife of a Kenite descendant of Moses. She helped him into her tent then infamously took a stake and hammered it into his head. (v.18-21). 'On that day, God subdued Jabin the Canaanite king before the Israelites. And the hand of the Israelites grew stronger and stronger against Jabin ... until they destroyed him' (v.23-24). Deborah sang a song of praise to the Lord God Almighty (Chapter 5) ending "May they who love You be like the sun when it rises in strength." Then the land had peace for forty years (5:31). John 16:5-16 records the words of Jesus before His arrest, trial and crucifixion. "Now I am going to Him who sent Me... I tell you the truth, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor [Holy Spirit] will not come to you" (v.5-7). "When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth" (v.13). *Heavenly Father, thank You for transforming the way we seek and hear Your truth for today through the outworking of Holy Spirit power among Your people. May young and old, male and female, uphold Your truth to subdue or destroy the wicked and bring peace in our time to Your glory with Your love in us shining as the sun. And may those who love You enjoy freedom to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ without hindrance or persecution. Amen.*

4th March 2021. Ezekiel 21 records the final words of God Almighty spoken against His people and the city of Jerusalem that they had polluted, before He allowed King Nebuchadnezzar to destroy them. It is not until Chapter 36 that God shows mercy for the remnant of believers because of His great love and because of what the other nations are saying about His special people. God promised, "I will use you to show the nations how holy I am. Then they will know I am the Lord God Almighty" (36:23). "I will put My Spirit within you... You will live in the land I gave your people long ago. You will be My people and I will be your God" (36:27-28). John 1 begins the account of who Jesus was and is, fully man but fully God, with power over everything. Also,

John writes about the teachings of Jesus and His trial, crucifixion and resurrection. His book ends with how Jesus showed mercy to Peter who had denied Him and who would "bring glory to God" as leader of His Church (21:19). *Father God, thank you for the extracts from Scripture which reveal Your mercy even to the most disobedient people because of your love for mankind whom You created in Your image. May we seek Your forgiveness and rise up with new beginnings of ministry and witness to your love through revival Spirit power and renewed faith in Jesus the Christ as Israel's Messiah and Son of God, Saviour of the world. For His sake. Amen.*

5th March 2021. 2 Chronicles 14 records the 10-year reign of King Asa in Judah nearly 3000 years ago, during which he removed the altars and idols of alien gods. "He commanded Judah to worship the LORD [Yahweh], the God of their people. He commanded them to obey the LORD's laws and commands" (14:4). During his reign, a neighbouring nation tried to attack Judah. "Then Asa called out to the LORD his God. "LORD, there is no-one like You. You help the weak against the strong. LORD our God help us. We trust in You. In Your name we have come out to fight against this huge army" ' (14:11). God gave victory and the people took back home many goods and cattle from their enemy. Jude wrote words of encouragement and perseverance to the early church believers. "Dear friends. Build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. Show mercy to those who doubt" (v.20,22). *Father God, thank You for the ministry of encouragement down the ages through godly leaders of faith in You and Your Son, Jesus Christ. Forgive us for permitting alien faiths to influence us in our nation. Bless us as we stay faithful in worshipping and obeying You and You alone. Help us not to doubt but to be holy and guided by Your Spirit. May we be a blessing to other nations as You bless us. Through the compassion and in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*

8th March 2021. 1 Kings 8 & 9. After the completion of the Temple, King Solomon sought God's favour on the people. "Pay attention to them every time they cry out to You" (8:52). "May He give us what we need every day. Then all the nations on Earth will know that the LORD is God. They will know that there is no other god" (8:59-60). Then the LORD God Almighty appeared to Solomon and warned him, "Suppose you or your sons turn away from Me and do not obey the commands and rules I gave you [all] and go off to serve other gods and worship them. Then I will cut Israel off from the land I gave them. I will turn my back on the Temple. I will do it even though I have set it apart for My name to be there. Then Israel will be hated by all the nations. They will laugh and joke about Israel" (9:6-7). Romans 11:11-24. Paul teaches that "they [Israel] did not trip and fall once and for all time, did they? Not at all! Because Israel sinned, those who are not Jews can [now] be saved. That will make Israel jealous of them. Israel's sin brought riches to the world. Their loss brought gain to the non-Jews. What greater riches will come when all Israel turns to God!" (11:11-12). "He was hard on those who stopped following Him. But He was kind to you. So you must continue to live in kindness. If you do not, you also will be cut off" (11:22). *Father God, thank you for this reminder of the cause for the worldwide persecution of Your special people. Thank you also for Paul's explanation of Your blessing for the non-Jews. May we be ever grateful for salvation though Israel's Messiah and pray for them daily. May we also heed Paul's warning to remain faithful. Amen.*

9th March 2021. Genesis 21:1-7 records the birth of Isaac as promised by God to Abraham and Sarah despite Abraham's great age. "The Lord God Almighty ... did for Sarah what He promised to do." Sarah said, "Everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." Luke 15:1-7 gives the parable of the shepherd and the lost sheep. "Would he not go and look for the one lost sheep until he finds it? When he finds it, he will joyfully put it on his shoulders and go home... He will say, 'Be joyful with me. I have found my lost sheep.'" *Father God we are reminded from these two Bible stories how precious each person's life is to You and to our Great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. From birth, even before birth, there is much reason to rejoice for every life because it is special to You, since You know each one of us personally. Thank You for conceiving and nurturing us in the womb to produce fruitful lives that bring joy in Heaven and on Earth. Bring out the full potential within us to live the lives You have created to Your glory! May we see the potential You have created in all people like you did with Isaac, to rejoice and be part of Your purpose to bring salvation to the*

world. Show us how to seek those who have lost their way in life to bring them back to the Great Shepherd of His sheep. Amen.

10th March, 2021. 1 Chronicles 24:1-5 records the way King David impartially separated the descendants of Aaron for their roles in ministering as priests. No distinction was made regarding family seniority (24:31). Acts 7:9-53 records how Stephen, who lived 1000 years after King David, testified how God chose Joseph, the eleventh child of Abraham's grandson Jacob, to become ruler of Egypt despite the persecution of his jealous brothers. God was with Joseph and the whole family of Jacob moved to Egypt and prospered and grew greatly (7:14-17), before returning to the Promised Land of Canaan now called Israel. They were led there by Moses who "received living words to pass on to us" (7:30-38). Stephen's last words to the Jews in Jerusalem before he was martyred were, "The Law you received was brought by angels, but you have not obeyed it" (7:53). He said this because they killed Israel's Messiah. *Lord Jesus, thank You for fulfilling all the Law requires for our salvation even though You were persecuted and suffered and died a cruel death to set Your people free, including everyone who confesses You are the Son of God today. We give thanks to our Heavenly Father for encouraging His servant David to share responsibility fairly to promote the ministry of the priesthood whilst in the Promised Land. We thank Him for recording Stephen's speech for us to see clearly how He used the most persecuted believers, like Joseph and Moses, to prepare the way for His special people to be blessed and ultimately welcome their Messiah. Fulfil Your plan for us all to receive Your impartial forgiveness and Holy Spirit power to share equally in the priesthood of all believers in today's persecuted church. Amen.*

11th March 2021. Micah 4 and 5 record God's plans in 700 BC for the future of Israel (including the disabled, the exiles and the grieving, 4:6) and for the rest of the world. "You will have to go to Babylon. But that is where the Lord God Almighty will save you. There He will set you free from the powerful hand of your enemies. But for now, many nations have gathered together to attack you" (4:10-11). "Bethlehem ... out of you will come a Ruler over Israel for Me... The promised Ruler will stand firm and look after His flock... His people will live safely and His greatness will reach from one end of the Earth to the other. And He will bring them peace" (5:2-5). Revelation 18. An angel prophesies to the apostle John of another Babylon. "How terrible for you, Babylon, city of power. In just one hour you [will] have been destroyed! The traders of the world will be sad and cry over her [for] no-one buys what they sell any more" (18:10-11). *Father God, thank you for your truth revealed in Scripture, past, present and future. Thank you for your mercy shown to Your special people by raising up a remnant in exile in Babylon who then returned and rebuilt Jerusalem which witnessed the triumphant entry of their Ruler and Messiah who was born in Bethlehem and became Saviour of the world. Help us, the remnant of believers, to prepare for the fall of modern Babylon and equip us to bring Your peace and salvation before the Second Coming so that many will be saved and rejoice in these Last Days. For the sake of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Saviour, who died that we might have eternal life. Amen.*

12th March 2021. Proverbs 11:11,20,27. These selected proverbs say, "The blessing of honest people build up a [whole] city, but the words of wicked people destroy it... The Lord God Almighty hates those whose hearts are twisted, but He is pleased with those who live without blame... Anyone who looks for good, finds favour." John 4 is the story of Jesus at the well in Samaria where He promises the woman 'living water' (v.10). She immediately progressed to seeking this provision to which Jesus offered 'eternal life' (v.14). This followed with perception that Jesus was a prophet and led her to confess her sins (v.17) then to proclaim God's truth that "salvation comes from the Jews" (v.19,22), and then profession of faith, "I know that Messiah is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything" (v.25). She left Jesus and told her friends, "Could this be the Christ?" Then, through her testimony, many people believed (v.39) and then even more people believed when they invited Jesus to stay and talk with them (v.40-41). They confessed their faith by saying, "We know that this man really is the Saviour of the world" (v.42). *Heavenly Father, thank you for this famous story of how the woman at the well progressed step by step to witnessing her faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. As a result, many more came to believe in Jesus our Saviour. Empower us through*

Your Spirit, to bless others with 'honest living' and live 'without blame' so that we may find favour with others in order to 'build up a whole city' with a saving faith in Yourself. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

15th March 2021. Psalm 37:34. "Wait for the LORD God Almighty to act. Live as He wants you to do." Revelation 18:1-4 gives John's account of another angel coming down from Heaven who shouted, "Fallen! Babylon the Great has fallen!" A voice from Heaven said, "Come out of her My people. Then you will not take part in her sins. You will not suffer from any of her plagues." *Father God, thank you for the warning of the consequences of our nation engaging with today's lifestyle of modern Babylon. In Your mercy, may we repent and fully come out and know Your forgiveness and recover quickly from past unrighteousness and from plagues You have allowed us to experience. Protect us from experiencing further plagues in future and encourage us to live as You want us to live and wait on You to do mighty things in these Last Days. Enable our nation to be part of your church revival and see marvellous signs and wonders before Christ our Saviour returns! Amen.*

16th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 1:8-9. Paul encourages the church members at Corinth:

- to believe God will keep them "strong to the end";
- to be blameless when they meet their Lord at His return;
- to remember that God is faithful towards all who have been called to "share life with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord".

When we confess our sin, the blood of Jesus makes us clean and God makes us strong in our faith. "Then you will be without blame [before God] on the day our Lord Jesus Christ returns" (1:8). We can be blameless only because God gives us His Holy Spirit to live in us. The Holy Spirit brings Christ's righteous life to us. God's Spirit shows us our sins, so that we can be made holy.

Paul called the return of Israel's Messiah as "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" because it is the day of Christ's final victory over all His enemies. And it will be a victory day for all who eagerly wait for His coming. "God is faithful" (1:9).

The New Testament of the Bible reminds us that Jesus is the fulfilment of God's Ten Commandments (Matthew 5:17). They were given to Moses 3500 years ago, recorded for us in the Old Testament (Exodus 20). As we call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to save us and stop us from further sinning, may we obey all the Ten Commandments in our worship, work and witness of Almighty God. We do not have Moses or Paul to guide or mediate for us but we have Christ Himself, who died to save us. At this very moment He dwells with our Almighty God and Creator, guiding us through His Spirit and mediating on our behalf. Remember also that Jesus said, "Practise and teach these commands, then you will be called important in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5:19).

17th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 1:10-17. Paul said, "I ask you to agree with one another. I make my appeal in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:10). Christ Himself was speaking to these Christians through Paul. It was said in love.

Great men of God had preached in Corinth – Paul, Apollos, Peter. Some Corinthians said they followed one man, some another (1:12). Paul told them not to follow men but to unite in following Christ and be as His body on Earth.

He also asked them, "Did Paul die on the cross for you? Were you baptised in the name of Paul?" (1:13). His questions showed them how foolish they were to follow men. It was God who called them and saved them. It was God who blessed them. Only God, through the Holy Spirit, could:

- plant the seed of faith in a person's heart (Romans 10:10).
- save them by the gospel of Jesus Christ (Mark 1:15).
- receive them into His family through baptism (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Like many Christians today, they put value on a preacher and whoever baptised them in water. They took their eyes off Jesus and put them on a man. Paul wanted them to give all the glory to God and only "boast about what the Lord has done" (Jeremiah 9:24).

Father God, we invite You to reveal Your power in righteousness and justice that upholds Your ultimate plan of salvation in Christ alone so that we are saved from the foolish plans of mankind and enfolded in the love of Your mercy and forgiveness.

18th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. Paul spoke about his Gospel message. He knew that human wisdom was important to the people in Corinth. But Paul said that human wisdom does not understand God.

By our own wisdom, we cannot find God. Human wisdom leads us away from God. "The message of the cross [of Christ] seems foolish... But it is God's power to us who are being saved" (1:18). Paul quoted the words of Isaiah, "God will do away with the cleverness of those who think they are so clever" (1:20; Isaiah 29:14).

The Jewish leaders thought they were wise. Many of them hated Jesus. They had rejected their Messiah and sent Him to His death, a sacrifice God planned for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles.

As a Jew, Paul had learned all the wisdom of the Pharisees. Before Paul was saved, he hated Christians too and tried to kill them. But now he used only the words of Jesus to lead people to God. He said, "God has made foolish the wisdom of this world" (1:20).

The Jews looked for a warrior Messiah, a leader who would deliver their nation from the Romans who ruled most of the world at that time.

"The world through its wisdom did not know Him [but] God was pleased... to save those who believe" (1:21). "We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles [non-Jews]. But to those whom God has chosen... it is [Christ, KJV], the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1:24).

The Greeks in Corinth wanted to be men of great wisdom and strength. Paul said, "The foolish things of God are wiser than human wisdom" (1:25).

19th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. "Think of what you were when God chose you. Not many of you were wise by human standards. Not many were powerful; not many belonged to important families" (1:26). He asked them to remember what they were when God called them.

God is sovereign. He does as He wishes. He planned to choose the foolish things and the weak people of the world to shame the wise and the strong (1:27). "So that no-one can boast..." (1:29).

This Good News is for all people, for men and women of all position, education and riches. God does not look to see if a person is rich or poor, weak or strong, sick or healthy, young or old. He looks for those with an open heart, those who want to know His forgiveness and His love. People who will trust, worship and obey him and follow His Son.

Paul says confidently, "Because of what God has done, you belong to Christ Jesus. He has become God's wisdom for us. He makes us right with God [righteous, KJV]. He makes us holy and sets us free" (1:30). He rescues us from sin. He changes us for the better and we should give Him the glory for our new life.

Paul quoted Jeremiah, "The one who boasts should boast about what the Lord has done" (1:31). God told Jeremiah, "He should boast that he has understanding and knows Me. I want him to know that I am the LORD God Almighty" (Jeremiah 9:24).

Do you trust God's power to save you or are you still trusting in yourself? Ask for the wisdom to receive God's righteousness, holiness and salvation through Christ alone and not through the foolish ideas of mankind. Amen.

22nd March 2021. 1 Corinthians Chapter 2. The deep things of God were shown to Paul by God's Spirit (2:13). He was not pretending to be bold or strong. He did not come with fancy words or great wisdom. "I preached to you about the truth of God's love" (2:1).

Remember that Paul was a very learned man. He studied God's Law in the school of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). But His mind was on one thing only. Paul chose to speak only about "Jesus Christ and His death on the cross" (1 Cor. 2:2).

We often call this 'the mystery of Christ':

- Son of Creator God, recreated as a human being within the womb of a virgin.
- Lived for 33 years as a Son of Man with power to raise the dead and cast out demons.
- Loves us so much that He was willing for His own flesh and blood to be sacrificed.
- Sacrificed so that His punishment became our salvation from sin for those who believe.
- Requested us to remember His injured body and spilt blood when taking bread and wine.
- Prays for us while seated with God Almighty, whom He left to live on Earth to suffer and die.
- Reigns in glory over the Kingdom of God for eternity with all who are saved.
- Promises eternal life through faith alone, living in obedience with works of charity in the name of Jesus.
- Sends His Holy Spirit to live in all who believe and portray the divine nature of God Himself.

Based on the words of the famous writer Jeremy Taylor, born in Cambridge, England, in 1613.

23rd March 2021. 1 Corinthians 2:3-10. Paul wrote, "When I came to you, I was weak and afraid... [But] as I preached, the Holy Spirit showed His power. That is so you would believe, not because of human wisdom, but because of God's power" (2:3-5).

Paul wanted his readers to know, "Our words are different from the words of the... rulers of the world" (2:6). Paul shared the "secret wisdom of God" with them freely. But he did not use any clever words, only the words given through Holy Spirit power.

"God planned that His wisdom would bring us heavenly glory" (2:7). God planned this from the beginning. The rulers of this world did not know God's plan. If they had known it, they would not have crucified "the Lord of glory" (2:8). They were unwise and ignorant.

Paul then quotes from the prophet Isaiah: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has known what God has prepared for those that love Him" (2:9; Isaiah 64:4). This mystery is part of the amazing secret of the Christian Church. It:

- was planned by God before the world began;
- brings all people of faith in Yahweh God together;
- blesses all people then and now in this age;
- shows the world God's glory.

"God has shown it to us through His Spirit. The Spirit understands all things... even the deep things of God" (2:10). The Holy Spirit works in people's hearts to reveal the Father's will and bring salvation through Jesus Christ alone.

24th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16. Paul said, "Some people... do not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God" (2:14). Paul knew that God's servants think differently and act differently to those who refuse salvation through Christ alone. Christians are under God's authority and they take orders from above. Those who do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God do not understand this. A Christian's thoughts, beliefs and motives are foolish to others without the Holy Spirit's help.

Paul quoted from the prophet Isaiah to confirm that only those who have the mind of Christ know the mind of God. Without this indwelling of the Holy Spirit, non-believers cannot know the mind of God nor the mind of Christians. "Who has known the mind of the Lord God Almighty?" (Isaiah 40:13). Paul stated confidently that Christians can know the mind of God in any matter because "we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16).

By trusting in the prompting and guidance of the Holy Spirit, true believers can know what is right and righteous. They learn to understand, and also feel and love as Christ loved. This is possible when they allow the Holy Spirit power to work in them. Jesus Himself promised that His Father in Heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him (Luke 11:13).

The apostle James said, "If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you" (James 1:5).

Pray for God to raise up leaders in church and state who are spiritually strong, and whose wisdom comes from the Holy Spirit, not from ungodly people with persuasive words.

25th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 3:4-13. Paul again reminds his readers not to argue about which teacher to follow (3:4). Peter, Paul and Apollos were only servants of the Lord (3:5). God used Paul to plant the seed of the Good News of Jesus Christ. He used Apollos to water the seed in their hearts, but it was God through the Holy Spirit who made it grow (3:6). And God wants to make us into mature Christians. He wants the freedom to do His work in us. "It is God who makes things grow" (3:7), not Paul or Apollos.

"The one who plants and the one who waters the seed have the same purpose. The Lord will give each of us a reward for our work" (3:8). God blesses His servants now and He will reward them later. God will say to each one, "You have done well, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

Paul wanted to do only what God called him to do. He wanted to preach the Good News about the power of the cross of Christ (1:17).

Paul told them, "You are like God's field or building" (3:9). God wants His Church to be farmed well and built well. God had given Paul the grace to prepare the ground and to lay a firm foundation. "Now someone else is building on it. But each one should build carefully" (3:10).

Paul said there is no better foundation "than the one that has already been laid. That foundation is Jesus Christ. A person may build on it using gold, silver... wood or straw. But each person's work will be shown for what it is" (3:11-13). The day will come when it will be brought to the light and judged by fire (or persecution) to see if it remains strong (Job 23:10).

26th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 3:16-23. Paul asked, "Do you not know that you are God's temple? God's Spirit lives in you" (3:16). We must always remember that each believer is built with others into the family of God. Each person is like a stone or brick in a building (1 Peter 2:5). Paul warned, "If anyone destroys God's

temple, God will destroy them. God's temple is holy and you are that temple" (1 Cor. 3:17).

Paul was worried that false prophets would destroy the church in Corinth. Paul knew that wrong teaching would turn believers away from the truth. This would make the church weak, locally and nationally.

"Do not fool yourselves", Paul said. "Some of you think you are wise... The wisdom of this world is foolish in God's eyes" (3:18-19). Paul added quotations from the Old Testament writings (3:20). "The Lord God Almighty knows that the thoughts of the wise do not amount to anything" (Psalm 94:11). "God catches the wise in their own tricks" (Job 5:13).

Paul then warned the church, "No more boasting about... Paul or Apollos or Peter!" (1 Cor. 3:21). What mattered most was, "You are joined to Christ. You belong to Him and He is joined to God" (3:23).

The Corinthian church was blessed by the ministry of Paul, Apollos and Peter, but the believers were taking sides. Some liked one leader better than another and followed that person. This caused disunity and weakened the work and witness of the church. They failed to share the teachings of Christ and show His Spirit at work in their lives.

Does the ministry you do bring praise for yourself or praise for God?

29th March 2021. 1 Corinthians 9-17. Life was hard for Paul. Believers and non-believers had wrongly judged him. He was not complaining. Other apostles had been persecuted and even killed for Christ's sake. Often, Paul and his companions were (4:9-13):

- made to feel like criminals, risking injury, even death;
- served God as fools, for Christ's sake;
- hungry, thirsty, and dressed in rags;
- homeless and forced to work with their hands;
- often beaten, and treated like rubbish.

Paul said these things to show the believers in the Corinthian church how sad he was that they had caused disunity. He wanted to bless those who persecuted him and the other preachers (4:12).

However, Paul said, "I am not writing this to shame you. You are my dear children, and I want to warn you" (4:14). Many leaders had cared for them, but he was like their father. They were his children in the faith. He saw them accept Christ, and he fed them with God's word. He prayed for them. He wanted only God's best for them. He wanted them to become strong and mature Christians, united in serving Christ.

Paul knew there were many believers in Christ in Corinth but they had few spiritual fathers (4:15). He wanted them to follow his example in serving Christ (4:16). "That is the reason I am sending Timothy to you... He is faithful in serving the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in serving Christ" (4:17).

Paul knew we must stop grieving God with our disunity caused by lack of love and respect for each other.

30th March 2021. Matthew 5:3-10. The eight blessings that Jesus taught).

These teachings are called the Beatitudes of Jesus the Christ. They were at beginning of the greatest sermon that Jesus preached to His closest followers (Matthew Chapters 5 to 7). They are important teachings for us to understand today and know true happiness.

1. "Blessed are those who are spiritually weak [poor in spirit, KJV]. Then the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them."

2. "Blessed are those who are sad [mourn, KJV]. Then they will be comforted."

3. "Blessed are those who are humble [meek, KJV]. Then they will be given [inherit, KJV] the Earth."

4. "Blessed are those who hunger for what is right [righteousness, KJV]. Then they will be filled."

5. "Blessed are those who show mercy. Then they will be shown mercy."

6. "Blessed are those whose hearts are pure. Then they will see God."

7. "Blessed are those who make peace. Then they will be called the children of God."

8. "Blessed are those who suffer for doing what is right. Then the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them."

Then Jesus added (5:11-12), "Blessed are you when people make fun of you and hurt you because of Me. You are also blessed when they tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of Me. Be joyful and be glad. Your reward in Heaven is great. In the same way, the people hurt the prophets who lived long ago."

31st March 2021. 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. Paul warned the believers in Corinth for allowing sin in the church. "I am told a man is living with his father's wife" (5:1). He was living an immoral life but claiming to be a Christian.

Paul said, "You should be filled with sadness!" He told them they should put the man out of the church (5:2). "I am not there with you, but I am with you in spirit. I have already judged the man who did this" (5:3).

Paul did not judge this man's faith in God but judged his wrong behaviour. He failed to walk away from temptation. Paul believed that this man must leave the church and see for himself the work of Satan in his life. He must then choose the right thing to do. When he is rejected by the church, Paul hoped he would repent and be saved.

Paul said that when they meet together, they must tell this man he cannot be part of their fellowship. Paul twice makes it clear that decisions to discipline another church member must be approved by the whole church "when you come together" (5:4-5).

Because this man was living an immoral life, he had to leave their meetings. They must keep on loving this man and praying for him, so that his spirit might be saved on the day of the Lord (5:5). God is full of mercy and grace. Therefore, we do not stop loving sinners, but we must pray for those who fall into sin. We resist Satan in Christ's name by using spiritual weapons, such as prayer (Ephesians 6:10-18).

Victory comes as we expose and judge sin and separate ourselves from it.

1st April 2021. 1 Corinthians 5:5-7. Some of the church members boasted about who they were in the church or what they did. They also boasted about whose teaching they followed. Paul said, "Your boasting is not good" (5:6). He said that the sins of pride and also sexual behaviour are like yeast. A little yeast in bread "works its way through the whole lump of dough".

In a similar way, these sins and other sins of this world, spread quickly through the whole church. Paul wanted believers to convert people of this world to Christ. It was therefore most important for them to avoid worldly sins in their own lives. We must save others, and ourselves, from the sins of the world. Paul said, "Get rid of the old yeast [sins in your life]. Be like a new lump of dough without yeast" (5:7).

If you ignore sin in your church or in your life, it will spread and affect your whole life and others. There is no such thing as a small sin; all sin is unholy and hated by God. He turns His back on sin. We then quickly lose contact with Him and our Saviour. We also lose the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit unless we repent.

When we share bread and wine together at the Lord's Supper, we must be honest and truthful. As true believers, we remember Christ's death as His sacrifice for us. No sin must be left among us. We remember that "Christ has been offered up for us. He is our Passover Lamb" (5:7; Exodus 12:21-27).

2nd April 2021. 1 Corinthians 5:7-13. When we share bread and wine together at the Lord's Supper, we must be honest and truthful. As true believers, we remember Christ's death as His sacrifice for us. No sin can be left among us. We must remember that "Christ has been offered up for us. He is our Passover Lamb" (5:7; Exodus 12:21-27). We must not boast in sin but repent and unite in worshipping Christ together.

Paul reminds the church in Corinth again and again to "stay away from people who commit sexual sins" (5:9,11). "You must stay away from anyone who claims to be a believer who does these things."

Paul also lists other sins. "Stay away from a person who worships statues of gods, or who tells lies... gets drunk or who cheats. Do not even eat with a person like that" (5:11).

To keep their fellowship pure and holy, they could not have such people in their meetings. If such people joined their fellowship, it would spoil their witness. Those outside the church would not see any difference between them and their heathen neighbours.

However, we should not judge non-believers outside the church, but we should pray for them. We must judge ourselves, and those inside the church (5:12). "God will judge those outside" (5:13).

"Put your hope in the Lord God Almighty. Live as he wants you to and He will honour you... The Lord saves those who do what is right" (Psalm 37:34,39).

Church leaders should therefore discipline sinners in our churches, with the agreement of its members and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is a small sacrifice to make compared to the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross for our sins.

5th April 2021. 2 Chronicles 7:11-15. When King Solomon had finished building the Temple in Jerusalem, the LORD God Almighty appeared to him and said, "I have heard your prayer... Suppose I close up the sky and there isn't any rain? Suppose I command locusts to eat up the crops? And suppose I send a plague among My people? If they make themselves humble in My sight. If they pray and look to Me. And if they turn from their evil ways. Then I will listen to them from Heaven. I will forgive their sin. And I will heal their land. After all,

they are My people. Now My eyes will see them. My ears will pay attention to the prayers they offer in this place."

1 Corinthians 5:12-13. Paul said that we should not judge non-believers outside the church, but we should pray for them. We must judge ourselves, and those inside the church (5:12). "God will judge those outside" (5:13). King David said, "Put your hope in the Lord God Almighty. Live as He wants you to and He will honour you... The Lord saves those who do what is right" (Psalm 37:34,39).

Why is it important for us to humble ourselves to pray for God's righteousness in the land? How can we, God's people, keep our lives pure and holy before we begin to judge others? This is a small sacrifice to make compared to the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross for our sins and for the extension of His Father's Kingdom on Earth before He returns to Jerusalem.

6th April 2021. Exodus 34:29-32 records one of the times when Moses met with God Almighty to receive His words written on stone tablets. On this occasion "he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD." Note that the Bible does not say it happened because the LORD had spoken to Moses, but that Moses had spoken to Him. The outcome was that the people feared to come near Moses until he called them to listen to the commands of God. First the leaders came then all the people of God came to listen.

Acts 1:1-5 records how Jesus spent time with His disciples (now called apostles) after His resurrection. He gave them "instructions through the Holy Spirit" (v.2) and "spoke about the Kingdom of God" but warned them to wait, since "in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit" (v.5).

Thank you Heavenly Father that time and again You draw us close to Yourself and to Your Son to hear more of Your truth and commands despite our sin and disobedience, even betrayal and denial. Help us to realise that as we draw near to You in repentance and obedience, we receive the radiance of Your glory and the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit. Teach us to be aware of the privileged outcome of becoming apostles of Your word, "first for leaders, then for all the people of God to listen to". Enable us, then, to put behind us all our sins, disobedience and denials and shine for Jesus in the power of Your Spirit for the extension of Your Kingdom. Amen.

7th April 2021. Zephaniah 3 records God's prophecy for Jerusalem given in 600 BC which at that time was "disobedient and unclean... They do not trust in the LORD God Almighty nor ask for His help" (3:1-2). "Daily the LORD does what is righteous yet the unrighteous know no shame" (3:5). Zephaniah then records that the LORD will pour out His anger on the world (3:8) but will "purify what all the nations say and they will use their words to worship Me. They will serve Me together" (3:9). God will also remove from Jerusalem "those who delight in pride... but I will leave within you the meek and humble who trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of believers will do no wrong... They will eat and lie down in peace and no one will make them afraid" (8:11-13). "Sing and be glad... The Lord has taken away your punishment; He has turned back your enemy" (8:14-15). "The LORD your God is with you. He is mighty to save... I will give you honour and praise among all the peoples of the Earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes" (8:17,20).

Matthew 5:5 Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are humble [meek, KJV]. Then they will be given [inherit] the Earth." Jesus taught us to learn from what is weak and wrong in our own lives by reaching out to Him in faith to humbly meet the needs of others before our own needs.

Father God, thank You for Your promised mercy for Jerusalem and for the world. Keep us in Your will to be "meek and humble" and establish daily Your righteous Kingdom through faith in Israel's Messiah. "Purify what all the nations say" to worship You. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

8th April 2021. 1 Kings 15:1-14 reveals how King Abijah "was not fully devoted to the LORD his God" (v.3). He did not worship idols but allowed the people to continue in sin. However, God blessed Jerusalem and Judah for the sake of His former King David (v.4). After three years, God raised up King Asa who reigned in Jerusalem for 41 years and "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD" (v.11). "He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his father had made" (v.12).

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 says how the apostle Paul warned against mixing with unbelievers. "What fellowship can light have with darkness?" (v.14). "How can the temple of the true God and the statues of other gods agree? We are the temple of the living God!" (v.16). Paul then quotes from God's former prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and Samuel. "Come out from among them and be separate. Do not touch anything that is not pure and clean, then I will receive you. I will be your Father and you will be My sons and daughters" (v.17-18).

Father God, we pray for this generation to be blessed by leaders who believe Your written word and who expel what is evil in the land. May we in turn choose to separate ourselves from who or what is evil. We ask this not only for the sake of former leaders who made our nations great but for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Saviour. Bring revival so that His sacrifice is not in vain and we can live in the hope of His eternal salvation through the power of His Spirit, until He returns to Jerusalem to reign in victory. Amen.

9th April 2021. Malachi 2:10-17 warns against unfaithfulness to God and to the people of God. Malachi is told that this is like a man who is unfaithful to his wife whom the LORD God Almighty "made one" (v.15). God's purpose in faithful marriage is to "seek godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. I hate divorce" (v.15-16). In this way, God was revealing to Malachi how the people of God had broken their covenant with Him which was established at the time of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Instead, they had raised up children from marriages to unbelievers (v.11). They had wearied the LORD with their unfaithfulness to Him and constant questioning, "Where is the God of justice?" (v.17).

Acts 11:19-21 records the time when God encouraged the followers of Jesus to spread the Good News not only to believing Jews (v.19) but to believing Gentiles (v.20). In this way, "the Lord's hand was with them and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord" (v.21).

Lord Jesus, help us to understand the need to be "faithful to God and to the people of God" under His new covenant with His people. May we therefore proclaim the Good News and raise up "godly offspring" to extend His promised worldwide family of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Help us not to compromise His plan for the Kingdom of God You spoke about so many times to Your disciples. Enable us through Your Spirit to minister to others in a selfless way with Your compassion but without yielding to the ways of sinners and non-believers. Help us to patiently endure as we "obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). Amen.

12th April 2021. Job 23 covers the period in Job's life when he said, "If only I knew where to find Him [God] ... I would find out what He would answer me" (v.3-4). However, he had the conviction that "when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold, for my feet have closely followed His steps. I have kept to His way without turning aside. I have not departed from the commands of His lips. I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my daily bread" (v.10-12). Yet Job also suspected that God had not finished refining him in his walk in life (v.13-17).

1 Corinthians 6:8 explains that the disputes and moanings within the church showed that their own hearts were wrong. Paul said, "You ... do wrong ... to your brothers and sisters" (6:8). They were guilty of judging others but failed to judge themselves. They were also selfish and did not forgive one another. This gave Satan a foothold in their lives. "Do not give the devil a chance" (Ephesians 4:27). Once you let him lead you astray he will try and take control and spoil all the good things God is doing in your life and church.

Father, forgive us when we argue or moan about things in our church when we ought to look at what is wrong in our own lives. Make us faithful to Your commands and treasure Your words, like Job, while being open to the refining Holy Spirit power in our lives so that, also like Job, we do not lose touch with You. Forgive our selfish ways and encourage us to seek the forgiveness of others and to be more forgiving ourselves. In Jesus' name. Amen.

13th April 2021. Genesis 21 records the beginnings of Jewish and Arab nations according to the word of the LORD God Almighty. Ishmael, the son of Abraham by his maidservant Hagar, was already born when his wife Sarah "became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age at the very time God had promised him" (21:2). God also promised Abraham, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, because he is your offspring" (21:12-12).

1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Paul reminds the church, "Do you not know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you?" (6:19; also 3:16-17). The Corinthian believers probably thought that God cared only for their spiritual salvation and not for their bodies. Paul warned them that we are not our own; we were bought at a price. "Christ has paid the price for you", he said. We belong to Him and our bodies must be under the control of His Spirit. "Use your bodies in a way that honours God" (6:20).

Dear Lord God, thank you for teaching us that Abraham's family through Isaac and Jacob has had to live with the result of unfaithfulness in marriage which has caused conflict down the ages. May we learn from Paul's teaching that You have concern for bodily needs as well as spiritual needs and trust fully in Your purpose and timely provision in life. Forgive us for doing wrong in the past. Help us to receive Your forgiveness and to know Your victory in our lives though the sacrifice of Your Son, our Saviour. Show us also how to see and understand Your provision for those around us even when there is ongoing conflict. Amen.

14th April, 2021. Numbers 33 records details of over 40 stages in the journey of the family of Jacob (Israel) from Egypt to the Promised Land of Canaan. That was the country where Abraham used to live and where Isaac was born. These stages were written down by Moses at the command of God Himself (v.2). When they arrived on the banks of the River Jordan, God told Moses to tell the people of Israel to "drive out all... destroy all... demolish all... take possession... and distribute the land" (v.50-54). "But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land... they will give you trouble... And then I will do to you what I plan to do to them" (v.55-56).

Romans 9 records Paul's understanding of God's purpose and provision for the people of Israel, his own people. They were chosen as God's children, with divine glory, blessed with His covenants and the Law and the Temple. He gave to the founders of Israel His promise of the coming Christ, "who is God over all. May He always be praised! Amen." (v.4-5).

We thank you Lord Jesus for the insight given to Moses to record for us all the special provision in the family of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob over 3500 years ago. We believe that this was done with Your Father's salvation of the world in mind through Your birth, death and resurrection in Israel 1500 years later. Help us to learn today from these records of what God's people did, good and bad, and show mercy at this present time when the world awaits Your return to deliver believers from persecution and evil. Help us to live all "40 stages in our journey" of faith and believe that "You are God over all". Amen.

15th April 2021. Psalm 38 (NIV), records David's prayer of faith for hope of God's salvation. "All my longings lie open before you, Lord; my sighing is not hidden from You. My heart pounds, my strength fails me; even the light has gone from my eyes" (v.10-11). "LORD, I wait for You; You will answer, Lord my God" (v.15). "I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin" (v.18). "LORD, do not forsake me; do not be far from me, my God. Come quickly to help me, my LORD and my Saviour" (v.21-22).

1 Corinthians 1:18-30 (NIRV) says, "The message of the cross seems foolish to those who are lost and dying. But it is God's power to us who are being saved. It is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of those who are wise" (v.18-19; Isaiah 29:14). "God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong... Because of what God has done, you belong to Christ Jesus. He has become God's wisdom for us. He makes us right with God. He makes us holy and sets us free" (v.27-30).

Father God, help us to understand the amazing truth recorded by your apostle Paul. Like David, we long for You, we confess to You and we trust in You for our salvation. Though we feel like a humble shepherd or even a wandering sheep, we know You did not leave David, who became Your king to prepare the way for Israel's King Jesus, our Saviour. Help us to understand the message of the cross to shame those around us by proclaiming Your truth of our Messiah who "makes us holy and sets us free". Amen.

16th April 2021. 1 Samuel 30:17-25 tells how King David returned from a successful battle against the Amalekites with much plunder (v.17-20). He was met by 200 of his army who had stayed behind because they were too weary to fight. David greeted them, but some members of his army were angry with them for deserting. They refused to share the plunder (v.21-22). David said, "No my friends, you must not hold back the share of what the LORD God Almighty has given us... Everyone's share will be the same." David made this a law for Israel (v.23-25).

James 5:13-16 gives guidelines for prayerful fellowship among believers in the early days of the Jewish congregations who believed in Jesus as their Messiah. "Are any of you in trouble? Then you should pray. Are any of you happy? Then you should sing songs of praise. Are any of you ill? Then send for the elders of the church to pray over you... If you have sinned, you will be forgiven."

Lord Jesus, we thank you for the Old Testament guidelines that have been taught from the earliest days of Your Church, among Jewish and Gentile believers alike. Keep us aware of the love in our Heavenly Father's heart for all people. May we enter into the fullness of God's provision and purpose for those who put their trust in Him and who accept His forgiveness and salvation through Your sacrifice. May we in turn, generously reflect His love to others and pray for those who are fearful, weary or ill, forgiving them and rejoicing with those who are glad. Amen.

19th April, 2021. 2 Chronicles 34:29-33 records the time of King Josiah after the lost book of the Law of God was found in Solomon's Temple. "Josiah called together all the elders ... all the people of Jerusalem ... from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing the words ... and renewed before them the covenant in the presence of the LORD God Almighty – to follow the Lord and keep His commands ... with all his heart

and his soul and obey the words of the covenant written in this book" (v.29-31). He removed all the idols from the land. "As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the LORD, the God of their fathers" (v.33).

Revelation 22:10-12 records the words from Jesus that the angel of God gave to the apostle John. "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book because the time is near. Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who is right continue to be right; let him who is holy continue to be holy. Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with Me and I will give to everyone according to what he has done."

Lord Jesus, thank You for the revelation You gave to your servant John to continue to read our Bibles faithfully in these evil days as we await Your return. We pray that Your church will faithfully preach the word of God without compromise so that Your Holy Spirit will convict some and encourage others to receive Your salvation and fearlessly witness the righteousness of God in their lives. May we "not fail to follow the LORD, the God of our fathers" and "continue to be right and holy". Come soon, Lord Jesus! Amen.

20th April, 2021. Judges 15:9-20 gives the story of Sampson when the Philistines came to take him prisoner (v.10). The men of Judah were afraid and tied Sampson up with strong new rope to hand him over to their enemies (v.12-13). When Sampson was delivered into the hands of the Philistines, he faced death but "the Spirit of the Lord God Almighty came up him in power." He broke the ropes and slaughtered a thousand men using a donkey's jawbone (v.14-16). He became a leader and judge of Judah for 20 years (v.20).

Romans 8:28-39 records the words of Paul, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose... to the likeness of His Son" (v.28-29). "If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all" (v.31-32). "Jesus Christ... is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who can separate us from the love of Christ? As it is written, 'For Your sake we face death all day long' (Psalm 44:22). In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (v.35-37). Paul was convinced that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (v.38-39).

Thank you Father God for working all things for our good and for reminding us of how Sampson was prepared to die for the sake of other believers. Thank you Jesus for being prepared to die to save us from spiritual death and intercede for us. Amen.

21st April 2021. Job 41 gives God's answer to Job to explain why he had planned so much suffering in his life. God points to the huge and powerful sea creature called leviathan and says that no-one is strong enough to stand against it. "Who then is able to stand against Me? Who dares to ask Me to explain? Everything under Heaven belongs to Me!" (v.10-11). Job admitted before God, "I know that You can do all things; no plan of Yours can be defeated... I despise myself and repent" (42:2,6).

Hebrews 7:18-25 explains that, "The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless, for the law [given by God to Moses] made nothing perfect. A better hope is introduced by which we draw near to God... Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant... because Jesus lives for ever, He has a permanent priesthood. Therefore, He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He lives for ever to intercede for them."

Father God, forgive us for questioning what You do and why You do it. Thank you for the life of Job to testify of Your mighty power to create and to save. Thank You for the testimony of the writer of the book of Hebrews who confirms the imperfect nature of Your old covenant and the trust we can place in Jesus Christ as Your new covenant for our salvation for ever and tells us how He intercedes with You for us. Help us to admit that no plan of Yours can be defeated. Enable us to live lives of praise and thanksgiving. Amen.

22nd April, 2021. Psalm 7:14-17 warns that "men are full of evil, plans trouble and ends up telling lies. Anyone who digs a hole, falls into the pit he has made [because] the trouble he makes comes back on him. And the violent things he does comes down on his own head." However, David, the psalm writer says with equal conviction, "I will give thanks to the LORD God Almighty because of His righteousness and will sing praise to the LORD Most High."

1 Timothy 2:8-15 warns men and women not to copy the customs of the world around them but to "lift up holy hands in prayer without anger or disputing" (v.8) and to "continue in faith, love and holiness" (v.15). Paul's advice to Timothy is said in the context of women submitting to the authority of men in the home and in the church and that women should find fulfilment in childbearing and in caring for them and in doing good deeds to all. Indeed, in the 2000-year period of the Christian Church, "women have demonstrated to a greater degree than men, the qualities of faith, love and holiness" (Thomas Hale, colleague of Fred Morris, quoted in The Applied New Testament Commentary, published by Kingsway Publications, 1996).

Father God, You have created both men and women in your likeness but with different roles and characteristics. David and Paul understood much about the failings of human nature. Help us also to understand how to live our lives with mutual respect and love for each other. Forgive us when we abuse the roles you have purposed in life and also the responsibilities You have given us for the world around us. For the sake of Your Son who died to save us from our sins. Amen.

23rd April 2021. Judges 8:28-33 records the time of Gideon who lead Israel in peace for 40 years. But as soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel joined themselves to the gods that were named after Baal. "Israel was not faithful to the LORD God Almighty... They forgot what the LORD their God had done for them. He had saved them from the power of their enemies."

1 Corinthians 1:17-18 describes Paul's chief focus in his life. "Christ sent me to preach the Good News. He commanded me not to use human wisdom. That would take all the power away from the cross of Christ. The message of the cross seems foolish to those who are lost and dying. But it is God's power to us who are being saved."

Dear God, forgive us for forgetting what You have done to save us from our enemies. Help us to refocus our lives on You and on Your calling. May we preach in the name of Jesus, pray for public repentance and praise You in the power of Your Spirit for Your salvation plan for the lost and the dying through faith in the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. May we never presume on Your everlasting mercy and risk having Your back turned towards us through worshipping the gods of this age. Amen.

26th April 2021. Jeremiah 51:59-64 gives the word of God Almighty concerning the promised destruction of Babylon which happened less than 60 years later at the hand of Cyrus king of Persia. This prepared the way for the release of the Jewish remnant to rebuild Jerusalem in 539 BC.

Hebrews 10:19-23 says "We are not afraid to enter the Most Holy Room. We enter boldly because of the blood of Jesus... It has been opened for us through the curtain... So let us come near to God with an honest and true heart. Let us come near with a faith that is sure and strong... Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."

Father God, our trust is in You to do and finish what You have promised. Despite the persecution of all the apostles, You have established the Church of Jesus Christ across the world. Despite the persecution of Your people Israel, You have established them in the land of Your promise once again. "Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have" in Christ our Saviour in these Last Days before His return. Prepare us and the world to receive Him in glory with great numbers to welcome Him. May we soon see revival to add to those "with a faith that is sure and strong". Thank you for rebuilding your earthly Temple so that we could enter boldly through the curtain into Your presence, now and for ever, "because of the blood of Jesus" Your only Son, our Saviour. Amen.

27th April, 2021. Jeremiah 36 describes the time when the word of God came to Jeremiah to "get a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you. Write down what I have said about Israel, Judah and all the other nations... from the time of King Josiah until now... Maybe then all of them will turn from their evil ways. If they do, I will forgive their sins" (v.1-3). Baruch the scribe took the scroll and read it to the people and a time of fasting before the Lord God Almighty was proclaimed (v.8-9). While Jeremiah and Baruch hid, the king ordered the scroll to be read to him and he burnt it, bit by bit (v.19-23). God spoke to Jeremiah to write another scroll to send to the king to tell him of the disaster that would come on him and on Jerusalem. But the king burned it in the fire (v.27-32).

Revelation 7-10 describes those who survived the great tribulation, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (7:14). "The Lamb will be their shepherd... And God will wipe every tear from their eyes" (7:17). Then the seventh seal was opened and an eagle called out in a loud voice "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the Earth!" (8:13). Then a mighty angel came holding a scroll who declared, "The mystery of God will be accomplished, just as He announced to His servants the prophets" (10:1-7). This is generally understood to refer to the Mystery of Christ and His Kingdom.

Father God, in Your mercy, help us to heed Your written word for today, that we may see a mighty extension to Your Kingdom through Christ our Saviour before His return to Earth. Amen.

28th April 2021. Exodus 10:15-30 [NIV] gives instructions under the old covenant for Aaron the priest to make a "breastpiece of decision" so that "whenever he enters the Holy Place of God Almighty, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart... as a continuing memorial before the Lord God Almighty" (v.29).

Hebrews 9:6-28 [NIRV] says that "the priests entered in to do their work for God and for others but only the high priest went into the inner room once a year... He offered the blood for himself and for the sins the people had committed because they did not know any better" (v.6-7). "When Christ came to be the High Priest ... He did not enter by spilling the blood of goats and calves. He entered the holy room by spilling His own blood. He did it once and for all time. He paid the price to set us free from sin for ever" (v.11-12). "Christ offered Himself to God without any fault. He did this through the power of the eternal Holy Spirit... Now we can serve the living God. That is why Christ is the go-between of a new covenant. Now those God calls to Himself will receive the eternal gift He has promised. They will receive it now that Christ has died to save them. He died to set them free from the sins they committed under the first covenant" (v.14-15). "He will take away the sins of many people. He will also come a second time. At that time He will not suffer for sin. Instead, He will come to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him" (v.28).

Thank you Father for this clear message of Your Good News of salvation in Christ to proclaim for today. Come Lord Jesus! Amen.

29th April 2021. Ezekiel 48:30-35 records God's plans for Jerusalem including its gates, one of which will welcome the return of Jesus our Lord in the last days. The new name of the city will be "The LORD God Almighty is there" which is an everlasting promise.

Jude verses 17-25 says, "Dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ said was going to happen. They told you, 'In the last days people will make fun of the truth. They will follow their own ungodly ideas.' ...They are not led by the Holy Spirit. Dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring you eternal life. As you wait for His mercy, remain in God's love [and] show mercy to those who doubt... Save them. To others, show mercy mixed with fear." Finally, Jude says, "Give praise to the One who was before all time, who now is, and who will be for ever. Amen."

Eternal Father, keep us in Your love and prompt us through Your Spirit to be a blessing to You and also to other believers, especially those who doubt in these last days. Show us how to be merciful and wise to others who make fun of Your truth. May we remember to pray for Jerusalem and its role in the world as we await our Saviour's return. Thank You for Your mercy and salvation. Grant Your people a full measure of Your Holy Spirit to persevere and serve the church of Jesus Christ with signs and wonders, that many will be saved. Amen.

30th April, 2021. Genesis 30:22-43 records how God's provision prevailed for Jacob and his family and his flocks whilst working for his uncle Laban. God provided extra children through his second wife, Rachel (v.22-24) then Jacob planned a way to increase his flock of goats (v.35-43) before returning to Canaan, future Israel, the land God promised to his grandfather and father, Abraham and Isaac.

Acts 6:1-9 records how the apostles planned a way of meeting the needs of church growth and daily provision of food (v.1). They met to decide how to avoid neglecting 'the teaching of the word of God' (v.2). Then they gave instructions 'to choose seven of your men... who are wise and full of the Holy Spirit' while they themselves gave 'attention to prayer and to teaching the word' (v.3-4). The congregation were pleased and chose seven men. 'Then the apostles prayed and placed their hands on them. So God's word spread. The number of believers in Jerusalem grew quickly. Also a large number of priests began to obey the teachings of Jesus' (v.5-7). Signs and wonders followed, but also opposition arose (v.8-9).

Father God, thank You for the record of how Noah's prayer (Genesis 9:26) prepared the way for his first son Shem's family to become established and prosper in Canaan. Praise you for how you blessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the people of Israel before and after the resurrection of their Messiah. Encourage us to observe Your ongoing divine strategy of growth and miracles of provision midst today's growing persecution. In the blessed name of Jesus, we ask. Amen.

3rd May 2021. 2 Chronicles 24 (NIV) records the life of King Joash who "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD God Almighty all the time Jehoiada was priest in Jerusalem" (24:2). He collected taxes due under the law of Moses and repaired the Temple. "All the officials and the people brought their contributions gladly" (24:10). "They rebuilt the Temple of God according to its original design and reinforced it" (24:13). However "After the death of Jehoida, the officials of Judah paid homage to the king and he listened to them. They abandoned the Temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and worshipped Asherah poles and idols. Because of their guilt, God's anger came upon Judah and Jerusalem. Although the LORD sent prophets to the people to bring them back to Him, and although they testified against them, they would not listen" (24:17-19).

Acts 7:1-53 records the speech of the apostle Stephen who reminded the Jews how God fulfilled His promise to Abraham to greatly increase the number of God's people greatly whilst in Egypt (v.17). But a new king persecuted the people and ordered their newborn babies to be killed. But Moses was saved by Pharaoh's daughter who in turn saved the people of Israel and led them back toward the Promised Land of Canaan. "At Mount Sinai, he received living words to pass on" (v.38) but the people rejected him "and in their hearts turned back to Egypt" (v.39). Stephen told his listeners, "You are just like your fathers. You always resist the Holy Spirit. You have received the Law but not obeyed it" (v.51,53).

Father God, forgive us for disobeying You. Remind us that "My Breath's wrath is real!" Bring repentance and revival today! Amen.

4th May 2021. Genesis 22:1-19 is the account of Abraham's testing to be willing to sacrifice his only son Isaac in the way alien tribes did (v.1-2) and how Abraham obeyed (v.3-10) only to be stopped by God's angel and told to sacrifice the blood of a male sheep instead (v.11-13). The angel of the Lord God Almighty then gave Abraham a message from God, "I make a promise on oath in My own name. I will bless you because of what you have done. You have not held back your son, your only son. So I will certainly bless you. I will make your children after you as many as the stars in the sky... Your children will take over the cities of their enemies. All nations on Earth will be blessed because of your children. All this will happen because you obeyed Me" (v.15-18).

Revelation 20:4 records the vision given to the apostle John. "I saw the souls of those whose heads had been cut off because they had given witness to Jesus and because of God's word. They had not worshipped the Beast or his statue. They had not received his mark on their foreheads or hands. They came to life and ruled with Christ for 1000 years."

Father God, enable Your people to be bold and fearless in "witnessing to Jesus and Your word". May we refuse to yield our lives to alien leaders and alien religions but put our trust in salvation through the Lamb of God whom You sacrificed for the forgiveness of sins. So fulfil Your promise to Abraham nearly 4000 years ago and keep us from yielding to the mark of the Beast, to share in the blessings of the Kingdom of Christ on Earth. Amen.

5th May 2021. Ecclesiastes 8:14 records the despair of the writer regarding the apparent lack of meaning in life. "Godly men get what wicked people should receive and sinful men get what godly people should receive." However, he is wise enough to advise, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your might" (9:10) and then concludes with divine wisdom, "Respect God and obey His commandments" (12:13).

Acts 21:17-21 records the arrival of Paul in Jerusalem to meet the Jewish elders of the believers in Christ as Saviour. "He reported everything God had done among the non-Jews through his work. When they heard this they praised God." But some of the Jewish believers were stirring up trouble for Paul because they had heard false rumours which had to be put right (v.21).

Lord Jesus, in Your Church on Earth, grant divine wisdom through the work of Your promised Holy Spirit that we may not be trapped in or tripped up by human wisdom. Encourage us to work with fervour and rejoice in the purposes of God according to our calling in service to others. Enable us to give glory to God as we find true meaning in life through obeying His commandments. Enable us to stand up strong against lies and persecution as we seek to extend and support Your Church. So do not let us despair but help us to overcome evil with good. For Your sake, who died for those who believe in You as the Son of all Righteousness. Amen.

6th May 2021. 1 Samuel 9:15-16 records the calling of Saul as God's first king of Israel. It tells how God spoke to Samuel the day before, "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man... Anoint him to be leader of my people Israel. He will save them from the powerful hand of the Philistines. I have seen how much My people are suffering. Their cry for help has reached me."

Hebrews 10:1-5 explains how 'the Law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming... The same sacrifices have to be offered over and over again. They must be offered year after year. That is why the Law can never make perfect those who come near to worship... the worshippers would have been made clean once and for all time. They would not have felt guilty for their sins any more... So when Christ came into the world, He said, "You did not want sacrifices and offerings. Instead, You prepared a body for Me."'

Father God, You revealed Your purpose many years before the 1000-year reign of kings in Israel to save them from their enemies, then suddenly put it into action within 24 hours through Your obedient servant Samuel. From the beginning of time, You planned to create a body for Your only Son as our Saviour to bless the world through His sacrifice for sin. Then suddenly, in less than 48 hours, His crucifixion and resurrection

prepared the way for eternal life for all who believe. Hear our cry for Your help today to save us from the destructive work of the enemy and the persecution of believers. Bring revival and prepare the world for the sudden return of Your Messiah! Amen.

7th May 2021. 1 Samuel 14:44-47 tells how the new King Saul of Israel tried to honour God rather than his own son, Jonathan. However, the followers of Saul encouraged him to forgive Jonathan and so instead he focused successfully on defeating the enemies of Israel on every side: Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah and the Philistines.

Revelation 20:4-6 is where the apostle John says, "I saw the thrones of those who had been given authority to judge were sitting... also the souls of those whose heads had been cut off because they had given witness for Jesus and because of God's word. They had not worshipped the beast of the statue. They had not received his mark on their foreheads or hands. They came to life and ruled with Christ..."

Heavenly Father, again thank You for Your everlasting truth recorded in the Bible. Help us to focus on fighting the enemies of Your Kingdom instead of passing judgement on those near to us who share our faith. May we continue to "give witness for Jesus and ... God's word" and not conform to the worldly powers around us. Teach us to know what Jesus would say and do. Whatever the cost, we look forward to our resurrection with Christ. For your glory. Amen.

10th May 2021. 2 Kings 9:1-13 records the instructions of Elisha to one of the prophets to anoint Jehu as future 'king over the LORD's people Israel'. In addition, to prophesy that the family of former king Ahab would perish and so would his wife Jezebel. Although Jehu tried to dismiss what the prophet told him (v.11), those who were with him 'blew the trumpet and shouted "Jehu is king!" ' Jehu reigned for 28 years (10:36) and did everything that the prophet said and God was pleased (10:30). Yet he was 'not careful to keep the Law of the LORD God Almighty with all his heart... In those days, the LORD began to reduce the size of Israel' (10:31-32).

1 Timothy 3:8-13 gives Paul's advice concerning the work of church deacons who must be "worthy of respect, honest and true... They must hold on to the deep truths of the faith... They must be first tested, then let them serve as deacons if there is nothing against them... Those who have served well earn the full respect of others and also become more sure of their faith in Christ Jesus."

Lord Jesus, enable us to live our lives worthy of respect and uphold the deep truths of our faith in You and in God our Father. May we learn from Scripture to obey God with all our heart and not dismiss what the Spirit is saying to us so that His influence through us increases and does not reduce. Open our eyes to what is happening to us and around us in today's world so that we may pass each test and grow in faith, love and obedience as we await Your return. Amen.

11/5/21. Genesis 42 reports the journey of ten of the sons of Jacob to Egypt to buy corn. Joseph, their lost brother, met them there but they did not recognise him (v.8). He spoke to them with authority from Pharaoh, king of Egypt (v.15) but also acknowledged his faith in God Almighty (v.18). Secretly, he showed his compassion for his estranged brothers and wept for them despite the wrong they had done to him and their father (v.24).

Jude 21-22 is written probably by one of the brothers of Jesus. "Dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring you eternal life. As you wait for His mercy, remain in God's love."

Heavenly Father, thank you for these encouraging and anointed words from brother Jude who knew personally our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Your Son. Thank you for our purpose and provision in Christ and also for Your words from 3700 years ago when Your purposes for Your people Israel were being established. Although many things are not always revealed to us until later, help us to note how Your servant Joseph respected the authority of the nation he lived in at that time and also testified of his faith in the one true God of his father Jacob (Israel). Help us to respect the authority in our land and give glory to You at all times as we await understanding of our role to play and Your purpose and provision for this day and every day. May we show compassion to those who have done wrong as did Joseph and Jesus. Amen.

12th May 2021. Ezekiel 28:25-26 says, "The LORD and King says, 'I will gather the people of Israel together from the nations where they have been scattered. I will show that I am holy among them. I will let the nations see it. Then Israel will live in their own land. I gave it to my servant Jacob. My people will live there in safety. They will build houses. They will plant vineyards. They will live in safety. I will punish all of their neighbours who told lies about them. Then Israel will know that I am the LORD their God.' "

2 Timothy 1:12-14 records Paul's testimony and advice. "I know the One I have believed in. I am sure He is able to take care of what I have given Him. I can trust Him with it until the day He returns as judge. Follow what you heard from me as the pattern of true teaching. Follow it with faith and love because you belong to Christ Jesus. Guard the truth of the Good News that you were trusted with. Guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us."

Father God, continue to open our eyes to understand the times we live in. Strengthen the same belief and faith and trust You have given us as you gave Paul. As the world around us trembles, may we encourage others to follow the true teaching of the Good News in Christ and live in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Bless and keep safe this day Your people Israel and prepare us and them for the time when Jesus our Messiah returns to Jerusalem in glory. For His sake who died with Your compassion to save the world from sin. Amen.

13th May 2021. Isaiah 23 records prophecy concerning Tyre, a great city which traded with the world including Israel, especially in supplying her with timber for King David's palace and for Solomon's Temple. God warned that for seventy years it would lose its wealth through trading which had encouraged unholy revelry (23:7). At the end of the seventy years, the LORD God Almighty told Isaiah that He would restore the trade to Tyre, "But the money it earns will be set aside for the LORD. The money will not be stored up or kept for Tyre. Instead, it will go to those who live the way the LORD wants" (23:17-18).

Romans 9:22-33 shows Paul's clear understanding of the Old Testament prophets. He quotes from Hosea how God chose to bless the Gentiles as well as the Jews. "I will call those who are not My people 'My people'... they will be called 'children of the living God' " (9:25-26). He explains how Isaiah lamented, "The number of people from Israel may be like the sand from the sea, but only a few of them will be saved" (9:27). Paul said that the Jews did not find the righteousness of God because they did not look for it by faith. "They tripped over the Stone that causes people to trip and fall. It is written [by Isaiah] 'Look! In Zion, I am laying a Stone that causes people to stumble. The one who trusts in Him will never be shamed' " (9:30-31).

Father God, thank you that you chose to bless some of the Gentile tribes as well as the Jews with Your righteousness in Old Testament times before offering salvation for all through Christ. Continue to reveal Your truth to Jews and Gentiles today to live by faith in You. For Your glory and for Christ's sake. Amen.

14th May 2021. Esther 10:1-3 tells how attempts to persecute the Jews failed in the time of King Xerxes. This was at the time of the Jewish exile in Babylon. 'Mordecai the Jew was second only to the king... All the other Jews had the highest respect for him. That is because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the benefit of all the Jews.' The name Mordecai means 'little man' and he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest of the twelve tribes of Israel.

1 Corinthians 12:12-21 explains how the body is made up of different parts which work together as one body. Paul teaches us that the same applies to the body of Christ – His Church on Earth (v.12). "We are all baptised by one Holy Spirit into one body. It does not matter whether we are Jews or Greeks [Gentiles], slaves or free people [servants or masters]. We were all given the same Spirit" (v.13). "God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them" (v.18). "He has given more honour to the parts that didn't have any. In that way, the parts of the body will not take sides. All of them will look after each other" (v. 24-25). By this Paul means we should avoid looking down on some believers but give honour to all members of the body of Christ and care for each one.

Thank You Father for your love for us all and for sending Your Son to die for our salvation. Help us to fulfil Your purpose in caring equally for each other with the compassion of Christ and in the power of His Spirit. Amen.

17th May 2021. Jeremiah 44 gives God's judgement on the Jews who left Jerusalem to settle in Egypt and did new sins by creating new gods. "They made Me very angry. They burned incense to other gods and worshipped them. You and your people of long ago never had anything to do with those gods before" (44:3). "Why make Me angry with the gods your hands have made?" (44:8). God warned them that only a few would escape His punishment by sword, famine and plague (44:13-14). But the people told Jeremiah, "We will not listen to the message you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord God Almighty" (44:16).

Luke 2:41-52 records the time when Jesus was 12 years old and went with Joseph and Mary to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem. After the Feast was over, Jesus was missing for several days because He was sitting in the Temple Courts listening to the teachers and asking them questions. "Jesus became wiser, stronger and more and more pleasing to God and to His people" (2:52).

Father God we thank You for the record of how Jesus valued the Old Testament teachings, unlike some of Your people 600 years before at the time of Jeremiah. Help us to be obedient to Your truth recorded

for us in both Old and New Testaments and not be deceived by new teachings of today nor worship "new gods" that Your people have never worshipped before. Help us to reject "new ideas" that are wrong and adopt "new ideas" that are righteous. For the sake of Jesus Christ who sacrificed His life for all who believe He is the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Amen.

18th May 2021. 1 Chronicles 24:1-5 is where King David gave instructions for ministry at the site of the House of the LORD God Almighty and its altar for the burnt offerings of repentance for sins. This was done before the Temple was built. The priestly descendants of Aaron were appointed to serve God and the people as "officials of the Temple and officials of God" (v.5). Two of Aaron's four sons had no offspring. His son Eleazar had many more descendants than his other son Ithamar. So David arranged for twice as many descendants of Eleazar to serve than descendants of Ithamar and these officials or priests were all appointed fairly by lot.

Galatians 3:6-14 states Paul's understanding of God's old and new covenants. He wrote, "We know that no-one is made right with God by keeping the Law. Scripture says, 'Those who are right with God will live by faith' " (v.11; Habakkuk 2:4). He knew after his conversion on the road to Damascus that "Christ Jesus set us free [redeemed us] so that the blessing given to Abraham would [also] come to non-Jews through Christ. He did it so that we might receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by believing in Christ" (v.14).

Thank You heavenly Father for recording the divine wisdom of King David to appoint a fair system of priests and officers to serve You in worship and sacrifice for future generations. Make bold the Church today to "live by faith" and to declare Your truth of salvation through Christ alone. Help us, whatever our ancestry, to respect that ALL believers are "appointed fairly", called by You as priests "to serve God and the people" under the new covenant. Amen.

19th May 2021. Judges 9 to 12 records the ungodly events between the times of Gideon and Samson, when the rulers and people failed to trust in the LORD God Almighty. The end of Chapter 8 says, "As soon as Gideon died... Israel was not faithful to the Lord" (8:33). However, Chapter 13 records the miraculous birth of Samson. In His mercy, "The Lord blessed him and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir in him" (13:24-25).

Titus 3:3-8 gives the words of Paul to his friend in Crete. "At one time we too acted like fools. We did not obey God... We were controlled by all kind of longings and pleasures. We were full of evil... But the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared. He saved us. It was not because of the good things we had done. It was because of His mercy. He saved us by washing away our sins. We were born again. The Holy Spirit gave us new life. God poured out the Spirit on us freely because of what Jesus Christ our Saviour has done. His grace made us right with God. So now we have received the hope of eternal life as God's children." So, "commit to doing what is good."

Thank You God for Your mercy in calling us into eternal life as Your children. As we reflect upon the sacrifice You made through the miraculous birth of Your Son, who was punished for our sins and the sins of the people, may "the Spirit of the Lord begin to stir us up" so we "commit to doing what is good". In these unfaithful days, encourage repentance, holiness and good deeds. Forgive the disastrous ungodly sins of our nation and raise up world revival in preparation for Messiah's return. For Your glory and for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

20th May 2021. 1 Chronicles 9:22-34 lists the appointment of priests from the tribe of Levi, originally prepared by David and Samuel (v.22). This included gatekeepers for the House of the LORD God Almighty, and those in charge of its treasures and the articles to use in the Temple service, plus the furnishings and oil and incense. Also, baking the offering bread in preparation for Sabbath and the leading of daily worship by musicians.

1 Corinthians 9:9-19 gives Paul's views on whether ministers should be paid to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. He said, "Here is what is written in the Law of Moses. 'Do not stop an ox from eating while it helps separate the grain from the straw' ... We have planted spiritual seed among you. Is it too much to ask that we receive from you some of the things we need? ... Do you not know that those who work in the Temple get their food from the Temple? ... In the same way, those who preach the Good News should receive their living from their work [the Gospel, KJV] ... I am not writing because I hope you will do things like that for me ... I am able to preach the Good News free of charge ... I do it to win as many as I can to Christ."

Lord Jesus, we thank You for the example of Paul in preparing the way for supporting the preachers of the Good News of Your sacrifice for our salvation. Similarly, your servants David and Samuel prepared the

way for people to worship our Heavenly Father. Help us to live holy lives and focus on the witness, worship and work of Your Church, trusting You for our personal needs. For Your glory. Amen.

21st May 2021. Isaiah 40:27-31 gives these famous words from the LORD God Almighty to His people: "Why do you say, 'The LORD doesn't notice our condition'? Do you not know who made everything? ...The LORD is the God who lives forever. He created everything on Earth. He will not become worn out or get tired... He gives strength to those who are tired. He gives power to those who are weak... Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly on wings like eagles. They will run and not get weary. They will walk and not grow faint."

Jude says, "I feel I should write and ask you to stand up for the faith... Dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ said was going to happen. They told you, 'In the last days, some people will make fun of the truth. They will follow their own ungodly longings.' They are not led by the Holy Spirit... Build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring you eternal life. As you wait for His mercy, remain in God's love. Show mercy to those who doubt... Give praise to the One who is able to keep you from falling into sin. He will bring you into His heavenly glory without any fault. He will bring you there with great joy... Give praise to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord. Give praise to the One who was before all time, who now is, and who will be forever."

Thank You Father for Your eternal truth. We praise Your name and Jesus our Saviour. Refine us so that our lives are an acceptable daily offering to You. Amen.

24th May 2021. Ezra 5 and 6 records what happened after the Jews were told to stop rebuilding Jerusalem and its Temple for 15 years (4:24). Haggai, received a prophesy from God and encouraged the building to recommence (5:1-2). This time, the enemies of Israel did not stop the work but instead investigated the historical facts behind the rebuilding and wrote to the new king Darius of Persia without any lies or accusations (5:3-17). The king researched the palace records for the truth (6:1-5) and issued the instruction, "Do not try to stop the work on God's Temple" (6:7). In addition he ordered that expenses be paid to the workmen and the ingredients be provided on a daily basis for sacrifices "pleasing to the God of Heaven". He also said, "I want them to pray that things will go well for me and my sons", also daily (6:8-10).

John 21 gives the account of the time after the resurrection of Jesus when He chose to meet the disciples who had gone fishing in the Sea of Galilee without a single fish being caught. He told them what to do to catch many fish and to bring them ashore for breakfast. John was the first to recognise the Lord but Peter, who had recently denied Jesus, was the first to jump out of the boat to greet Him and then be blessed by Him (21:7-19).

Dear "God of Heaven", we praise You for these examples of times when You acted in mercy to bless Your people with freedom to work without false accusations and with abundance of daily provision. Release us today from those who hinder Your love, mercy and provision and may we become a daily blessing to others. Through the resurrection power of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

25th May 2021. Ezekiel 47:1-12 records a famous vision given to Ezekiel, one of God's major prophets. He was given visions of the destruction of Jerusalem, the exile of God's people and the future glory of Jerusalem. Here, in 574 BC, he describes the river of fresh water that will flow from under the Temple into the Jordan valley and then into the former Dead Sea, with a port for fishermen at En Gedi and fruit trees along the river banks. "Every month they will bear fruit. The water from the Temple will flow to them. Their fruit will be used for food and their leaves will be used for healing" (v.12).

1 Peter 1:1-7 is written to Christians during the first century dispersion, "to you, God's chosen people. You are strangers in the world. You are scattered all over... You have been chosen in keeping with what God the Father had planned. That happened through the Spirit's work to make you pure and holy. God chose you so that you might obey Jesus Christ. He wanted you to be made clean by the blood of Christ... In His great mercy He has given us a new birth and a hope that is alive. It is alive because Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Your salvation is going to be completed. It is ready to be shown to you in the last days... Your troubles have come in order to prove that your faith is real. It is worth more than gold."

Father God, thank You for these encouraging words to give us "real faith" in our future through the resurrection power of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Despite the destruction, persecution and dispersion of Your people today, grant us a personal "hope that is alive". Amen.

26th May 2021. Genesis 49:29 to 50:9 records the death of Jacob whilst living in Egypt 400 years before the Exodus. He requested to have his bones buried in the cave in the field in Canaan purchased by Abraham over 200 years before. Pharaoh honoured the will of God by arranging for the family of Jacob to travel to Canaan with many Egyptian officials for a seven-day period of mourning (50:8-9).

Luke 1:11-17 records the time when the Jewish priest Zechariah was told by an angel of God that his wife Elizabeth will have a son named John [the Baptist] who would bring much joy to him and to Israel (1:14). "He will be important in the sight of the Lord God Almighty... He will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he is born. He will bring many of Israel's people back to the Lord their God. And he will prepare the way for the Lord [Jesus, their Messiah]" (1:15-17).

Dear Father God, we note how You intervened in Egypt to establish Your purpose revealed to Abraham that through his grandson Jacob the tribes of Israel would dwell in Canaan despite much persecution and opposition from the Egyptians later on. You appointed Moses to prepare the way for Your plan who in turn prepared the way for the children of Israel to become a holy people. Thank you for this example of your purpose and preparation for Your people and for the way You later appointed John the Baptist to prepare the people to be holy and receive their Messiah, Jesus Christ our Saviour. May we learn from what You did 2000 and 3500 years ago and prepare ourselves and others to be holy, "despite much persecution and opposition", in readiness for the promised second coming of Christ. Amen.

27th May 2021. Jeremiah 44:1-14 records the warning to God's people who tried to escape from divine judgement in Jerusalem by fleeing to Egypt. But they continued to worship other gods. God asked "Why do you want to bring all this trouble on yourselves?" (44:7). So Jeremiah brought a message from God Almighty to them. "I will destroy the people of Judah who are left... All of them will die in Egypt... I will use war, hunger and plague to punish the Jews who live in Egypt. I punished Jerusalem in the same way" (44:12-13).

Acts 8:4-7 records the time of church persecution in Jerusalem before Paul's conversion. Yet "the believers, who had been scattered, preached the word [Good News] wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria. There he preached about the Christ. The crowds listened to Philip. They saw the miraculous signs he did. They all paid close attention to what he said. Evil spirits screamed and came out of many people. Many who were disabled or who couldn't walk were healed. So there was great joy in that city."

Heavenly Father, thank you for the evidence of how Your people suffered much in the Middle East in Bible times, both from divine punishment brought on by their own sins and from the persecution of non-believers. Help us to distinguish today between the signs of Your punishment and of enemy persecution and not run away from the responsibility You have given us to repent and proclaim the Good News to re-establish Your truth in the land. For the sake of Jesus Christ who died for us in order to extend the Kingdom of God with signs and wonders. Amen.

28th May 2021. 2 Chronicles 36:11-17 records the lead-up to the destruction of Jerusalem 600 years before the birth of Christ. "Zedekiah ... ruled in Jerusalem for 11 years. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. He did not pay any attention to the message the LORD spoke through the prophet Jeremiah ... His heart became very stubborn. He would not turn to the Lord, the God of Israel. And the people and the leaders of the priests became more and more unfaithful ... The people and leaders made the LORD's Temple unclean ... The Lord, the God of Israel, sent word to His people through His messengers. He sent it to them again and again. He took pity on His people ... But God's people made fun of His messengers. They hated His words. They laughed at His prophets. Finally the LORD's burning anger was stirred up against His people. Nothing could save them. The LORD brought the king of Babylonia against them."

James 2:18-22 says, "Show me your faith that doesn't do good works. And I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that ... Do you want proof that faith without good works is useless? Our father Abraham [was] considered to be right with God because of what he did. So you see that what he believed and what he did made his faith complete."

Father God, forgive us when our faith without works saddens You as much as those who reject you. May the people and leaders avoid divine judgement by turning back to You and taking action in faith. So have pity on us and prepare us for the second coming of Christ our Saviour. Amen.

31st May 2021. Deuteronomy 18:9-19 gives clear guidance for God's people who were given a new beginning in the Promised Land of Canaan. Moses told them, "Do not copy the practices of the nations that are there... Do not practice any kind of evil magic at all... Do not get messages from those who have died... You must be without blame in the sight of the LORD your God... The LORD your God will raise up for you a

prophet like me. He will be one of your own people. You must listen to him. [God said] 'I will put My words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him to say. The prophet will speak in My name.' "

John 8 12, 31-36 records the words of Jesus to the people. "I am the light of the world. Those who follow Me will never walk in darkness. They will have the light that leads to life... If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free... Everyone who sins is a slave to sin... So if the Son [of God] sets you free, you are free indeed."

Thank you Father for the new beginning You gave to us humans at the time of Moses and the prophets and finally at the time of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Saviour. Forgive us for the times we have done evil and sought after sinful pleasures or sought guidance from evil powers. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, set us free from the darkness that surrounds us so that we and our loved ones can begin again to walk in the light of Your truth as taught and lived by Jesus. For His sake, who suffered the punishment for our sins. Amen.

1st June 2021. Psalm 37:23-27. "If the Lord is pleased with the way a man lives, He makes his steps secure. Even if he trips he will not fall. The Lord's hand takes good care of him. I once was young and now I am old. But I have never seen good people abandoned. I have never seen their children begging for bread. Those who do what is right are always giving and lending freely. Their children will be blessed. [So], turn away from evil and do good. Then you will live in the land for ever." Also, Psalm 18:36 says "You give me a wide path to walk in so that I do not twist my ankles."

Luke 10:25-29 records the time when Jesus spoke to someone who knew the Old Testament teaching well. The man asked, "Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?" "What is written in the Law?" Jesus replied. The man answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and Love your neighbour as you love yourself." Jesus replied, "Do this and you will live." Then the man asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus then told him the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your forgiving mercy to those who confess their sins and put their trust in You. Help us not to stumble over how to understand and apply Your written Word but to learn from what Jesus our Saviour taught regarding the Kingdom of God on Earth and in Heaven, based on love for You and for others. May we receive the fullness of Holy Spirit power in our worship and witness. Amen.

2nd June 2021. Exodus 3 is the time when God spoke to Moses from a 'burning bush' on the edge of the Sinai desert. The angel of the LORD God Almighty prepared the way for the calling of Moses 'and appeared to him in flames of fire from within the bush' (3:2). When Moses went near, God Himself spoke to him. "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (3:4-6). God quickly shared His thoughts of compassion and mercy with Moses. "I have seen My people suffer in Egypt. I have heard them cry out because of their slave drivers... So I have come down to save them" (3:7-8). "I am sending you to Pharaoh. I want you to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. They are My people" (3:10).

Jude 24-25 gives Jude's doxology. "Give praise to the One who is able to keep you from falling into sin. He will bring you into his heavenly glory without any fault. He will bring you there with great joy. Give praise to God... through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for the record of how Moses, after 40 years 'in the wilderness', was led by an 'angel of light' to hear Your voice of compassion for Your special people and then be told what to do to set them free. Thank you for sending Jesus Christ, not only to reveal 'the light of Your truth' but to save all who believe He is the Son of God. Enable us this day to put our years 'in the wilderness' behind us and to know Your thoughts and calling to set others free. Enable us to do this 'without fault' through the compassion and mercy of Christ at work in our lives and with the power of His Holy Spirit. Amen.

3rd June 2021. Proverbs 23:26 (NIV) gives a warning and a calling. "My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to My ways."

John 5:36-42 tells how Jesus spoke to those who were taught the Law of Moses which is from God Almighty. "I am doing the very work the Father gave Me to finish. It gives witness that the Father has sent Me. The Father who sent Me has Himself given witness about Me. You have never heard His voice. You have never seen what He really looks like. And His word does not live in you. This is because you do not believe the One He sent. You study the Scriptures carefully. You study them because you think they will give you eternal life. The Scriptures you study give witness about Me. But you refuse to come to Me and receive [eternal] life... I know you. I know that you do not have love for God in your hearts."

Heavenly Father, the God of Abraham and the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, open our eyes to both Old and New Testament teachings we pray. Increase the longing in our hearts to love You and know You

personally. Enable us to keep our eyes on Your way of salvation without being distracted by the desires and demands of the world around us. Thank you that Jesus came to finish and fulfil the words You gave to Moses and the prophets. May we be true followers of Him, the Living Word, who knows You personally. May we be like Him when He was on Earth, and "give you our heart" and worship You, without being distracted from Your plan for our salvation through His teachings, persecution and suffering for our sins. For His sake. Amen.

4th June 2021. Psalm 36:5-11 says, "LORD, Your love reaches to the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches up to the skies. Your righteousness is as high as the mountains. Your justice is as deep as the oceans... You are the fountain of life. We see light [truth] because you give us Your light. Keep on loving those who know you. Continue Your righteousness to those whose hearts are honest. May the foot of the proud not come against me, nor the hand of the wicked."

Revelation 22:10-14 records the words of Jesus Christ to the apostle John. "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy in this book. These things are about to happen. Let those who do wrong keep on doing wrong. Let those who are evil continue to be evil. Let those who do what is right keep on doing what is right. And let those who are holy continue to be holy. Look! I am coming soon! I bring my rewards with me. I will reward each person for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am the First and the Last. I am the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes."

Lord Jesus, You know the end from the beginning because You are the First to the Last. In this age of wickedness, persecution and pollution, enable us to experience new beginnings of Your mercy and provision in preparation for Your second coming. Encourage us with a wave of revival to establish Your salvation for many more believers to greet You on Your return, including our families and friends. For Your sake, who took our punishment, and for the glory of our loving, faithful, righteous God of justice. Amen.

7th June 2021. Proverbs 3:5-8 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways remember Him. Then he will make your paths smooth and straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes. Have respect for the LORD and avoid evil. That will bring health to your body. It will make your bones strong."

1 Corinthians 8:9 says, "Be careful how you use your freedom [in Christ]. Be sure it doesn't trip up someone who is weaker than you." Paul goes on to give an example of eating meat sold in local markets that had been offered to idols. In this case he says he would prefer never to eat meat again rather than cause those with a weak or new faith to stumble (v.13).

Lord Jesus, You ate the food of sinners when you dined with them and You ate the Jewish Passover food when you dined with Your disciples. In all our ways may we trust in God our Heavenly Father to do what is right in His eyes and not trust in our own understanding. May we show respect for Him and also for others, as You did when You lived on Earth. So show us how to be careful to use Your freedom wisely and not cause others of weak or new faith to stumble or cause confusion or doubts. Also, make our paths smooth and straight that we in turn grow healthier mentally, spiritually and physically to become a blessing to You and to those around us. Amen.

8th June 2021. Isaiah 40 to 42 gives many words of encouragement to faithful believers in the LORD God Almighty. "Do you not know who made everything? The LORD is the God who lives forever. He created everything on earth... He gives strength to those who are tired. He gives power to those who are weak... Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weary." (40:28-31). "The LORD says, 'People of Israel, you are my servants... You are the children of my friend Abraham... I have chosen you. I have not turned My back on you. So do not be afraid... I am the LORD your God. I will help you.'" (41:8-13). "I, the LORD, have chosen you to do what is right... You will be a light for the other nations." (42:5-7).

1 Peter 2:13-17 says, "Follow the lead of every human authority. Do it because the Lord wants you to. Obey ... the highest authority. Obey the governors ... Live like free people. But do not 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 [human authority]."

Father God, we take note of your encouragement to Jews and Gentiles alike who put their trust in You. Help us to understand the times we live in and watch You prepare Your people to welcome Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Israel's Messiah, in these Last Days. As we wait, help us to live as God-fearing citizens, showing respect and standing up for righteousness without growing weary. For the sake of Jesus who died on the cross to save us. Amen.

9th June 2021. Jeremiah 9:4-7 gives God's warning to Jeremiah. "Be on guard against your friends; do not even trust the members of your own family... You live among people who tell lies. When they lie, they refuse to pay any attention to Me... I will put them through the fire to test them. What else can I do? My people are so sinful!"

Philemon 4-7 gives Paul's praise to Philemon. "I always thank my God when I remember you in my prayers. That's because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus. I hear about your love for all of God's people. I pray that you will be active in sharing what you believe. Then you will completely understand every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy. It has cheered me up. My brother, you have renewed the hearts of God's people."

Father God, what a difference in these two testimonies! Help us to be aware of the sins of the people around us. Keep us faithful and righteous during times of Your testing. Give us wisdom to discern lies and to learn who our true friends are and give You thanks for them. May we remember to support them in our prayers for their faithful witness and for their encouragement to the followers of Christ our Saviour. Help us then to walk boldly in the light of Your truth and encourage others to do the same. May we also "completely understand every good thing we have in Christ". In the name of Jesus. Amen.

10th June 2021. Exodus 33:12-23 records the time when Moses needed reassurance from the LORD God Almighty in his calling to lead the people of Israel on the way to the Promised Land. "If you are pleased with me, teach me more about Yourself. Then I can know You. And I can continue to please You." The LORD replied, "I will go with you... I will do exactly what you have asked. I am pleased with you... I have mercy on whom I have mercy. And I will show love to those I love. But you cannot see my face." Then the Lord told Moses to stand in an opening in a rock for His glory to pass by without seeing His face.

1 Peter 2:23-25 says of Jesus Christ, "People shouted at Him and made fun of Him. But he did not do the same back to them. He suffered. But ... He trusted in the One who judges fairly. He Himself carried our sins in His body on the cross. He did it so that we ... would lead godly lives. His wounds have made you whole. You were like sheep who were wandering away."

Heavenly Father, thank You that when Your leader Moses and Your people Israel were wandering in the desert, You came down to speak to him and reassured him. Thank You that Your apostle Peter reminds us that Jesus also suffered persecution and complaints from the people of Israel. But He suffered without complaining and trusted in You to save those who believed in You from wandering away like sheep. Keep us faithful in the midst of persecution. In Your mercy, keep us faithful to our Lord and enable us to see Your glory at work in Him through the lives of faithful believers and the work of His Spirit today. Amen.

11th June 2021. Proverbs 1:1-7 provides the purpose of Solomon's famous proverbs. This includes the importance of divine wisdom and the discipline to obey, in order to do "what is right and honest [just] and fair". He says that wisdom is particularly important for advising children and childish persons. But for all, he wants "the people to listen and add to what they have learned" and to "understand the sayings and riddles of the wise".

Philippians 3:12-16 gives Paul's wise advice. "Not that I have been made perfect. But I move on to take hold of what Christ Jesus took hold of me for... I forget what is behind me. I push hard towards what is ahead of me. I move on towards the goal to win the prize. God has appointed me to win it. The heavenly prize is Christ Jesus Himself. All of us who are grown up in the faith should see things that way. Maybe you think differently about something. But God will make it clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already reached [received]."

Lord Jesus, thank You that through Your sacrifice you have enabled us who believe You are the Son of God, to put our old lives behind us. Help us to be obedient and live up to the wisdom and fulfilment we have already received in our salvation and press on. May we "add to what we have already learned" and be a blessing to You and to our Heavenly Father and to everyone He has given us to care for, pray for, teach and support. May we be more and more aware of our "heavenly prize in You." Amen.

14th June 2021. 1 Samuel 7:15 to 8:8 records how Samuel remained as the last judge of Israel for the rest of his life. He was obedient to the Lord God Almighty and gained the respect of the people but was disappointed that his sons did not choose to follow him in leading Israel. The people of Israel therefore rejected Samuel's sons and instead asked him to appoint a king for them, which further disappointed Samuel. However, God told Samuel to go ahead with appointing and anointing a king and to warn them what Israel's first king might do in serving the people.

Galatians 3:24-28. Paul claims "the law was put in charge until Christ came. He came so that we might be made right with God by believing in Christ. But now faith in Christ has come. So we are no longer under the control of the Law. You are all children of God by believing in Christ Jesus."

Heavenly Father, thank You that Scripture makes clear Your purposes under the old covenant which points us to the new beginnings in Christ our Saviour. Deliver us from the outcome of mankind's imperfect attempts to obey Your Law when they appoint leaders to rule our lives. Enable us instead to be obedient to both the letter of Your Old Testament Law and its fulfilment in our New Testament resurrection lives which have been purchased at great cost through Christ's punishment for our sin. May His Spirit dwell in us that we may judge and lead and serve the people of God today with His wisdom, love, compassion and power. Amen.

15th June 2021. 1 Chronicles 8 records the descendants of Benjamin which provided Israel their first king, Saul (v.33). This and other genealogies, were so important to the Jews for their faith in God Almighty and His calling to witness to the world.

1 John 1 records the 'Word of Life' by the apostle John, also a Jew, who had experienced the fullness of God's provision for the special people of God through personally knowing His Son our Saviour, Jesus, the 'Word of Life'. John said, "Here is what we announce to everyone about the Word of Life. He was already here from the beginning. We have heard Him. We have seen Him with our eyes... We give witness about him. And we announce to you that same eternal life. He was with the Father [and] He has appeared to us. We announce to you what we have seen and heard. We do it so you can share life together with us. And we share life with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ... And the blood of Jesus, his Son, makes us pure from all sin... If we admit that we have sinned, He will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done."

Father God, forgive us for the times we place our faith in our inheritance which has been sinful and corrupt instead of in Your truth revealed through the purity of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Thank you for this faithful testimony of the apostle John for Jews and Christians the world over. May we daily walk in the light of this truth and be effective in our witness that our salvation is through faith in Christ alone. Amen.

16th June 2012. Psalm 55 gives the plea of King David to God to listen to his prayer and not to ignore him (v.1). He requests that God Almighty will confuse the wicked who bring threats and lies to the streets of the cities (v.9-11). In faith he states, "I call to God and He saves me" (v.16). In faith he calls on others to believe, "He will never let the righteous fall" (v.22). He ends by saying "As for me, I trust in You."

1 Timothy 3:13-16. Paul says, with much experience in the Church, "those who have served well earn the full respect of others. They also become more sure of their faith in Christ Jesus... I am writing these directions to you. Then if I have to put off my visit, you will know how you should act in God's family. The family of God is the church of the living God. It is the pillar and foundation of the truth. There is no doubt that godliness is a great mystery. Jesus appeared in [the form of] 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."

Thank You heavenly Father for recording the experiences and faith of men like David and Paul. Help us to stand firm against the persecution and lies of the wicked. May our focus be on serving and respecting other believers, living godly lives in "the church of the living God". May there be much evidence of Jesus in our midst through the presence of His Holy Spirit with much impact locally and "among the nations" for the world to believe in Him. To His glory. Amen.

17th June 2021. Genesis 48:11-22 gives the record of the time when Jacob (Israel) was old and almost blind. Joseph brought his two sons to be blessed by their grandfather. When Jacob placed his hands on the boys' heads, he crossed his hands over so that the younger boy, Ephraim, received the greatest blessing. He went on to become the largest tribe in Israel. But the tribes of both boys became famous in all Israel and an example to everyone else (v.20).

1 Corinthians 11:17-34 records Paul's teachings on the Lord's Supper in which he warns the brothers and sisters to come together in love and unity and mutual respect (v.17-22). He then goes on to express his understanding of what the Lord Jesus did and said at the Last Supper and the need to understand the way in which they can be made worthy of sharing in the body and blood of Jesus without sinning against their brethren. He warned them to be open to "further directions" when he visited them in the future! (v.34).

Heavenly Father, thank you for the way in which Jacob finally became aware of the worthiness of all his family members to share in the blessing of God Almighty and so become a blessing to each other. Thank you, also, for Paul's understanding of the importance for the gathered fellowship of believers to view each

other with equal honour and respect to avoid judgement and discord among the brethren. Thank you for his understanding of the importance of remembering the sacrifice and death of our Lord and Saviour when we share the bread and wine together in the presence of His resurrection glory. Keep us open to further teaching! Amen.

18th June 2021. 2 Samuel 7:8-16 records the words of God Almighty to His servant King David. "I took you away from the grasslands where you were taking care of your father's sheep and goats. I made you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you everywhere you have gone. I cut off all of your enemies when you were attacking them. Now I will make you famous. Your name will be just as respected as the names of the most important people on earth... I tell you that I myself will set up a royal house for you... Then I will make one of your own sons the next king after you. And I will make his kingdom secure... I will set up the throne of his kingdom. It will last forever... Your throne will last forever."

James 3:13-18 says to the Jewish and Gentile believers, "Are any of you wise and understanding? You should show it by living a good life. Wise people are not proud when they do good works... The wisdom that comes from Heaven is pure. That is the most important thing about it. And that's not all. It also loves peace. It thinks about others. It obeys. It is full of mercy and good fruit. It is fair. It does not pretend to be what it is not. Those who make peace should plant peace like a seed. If they do, it will produce a crop of right living."

Heavenly Father, thank You for these words of James who knew our Lord personally and confirms Your purpose for His Kingdom to reign eternally as promised to His servant David. Help us to "produce a crop of right living" by living wise, peaceful, caring, obedient, fair and merciful lives to your glory and for the sake of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

21st June 2021. Judges 2:6-31 records the remaining years of Joshua's leadership of Israel in the Promised Land of Canaan and what happened after. 'They went to take over the land. All of them went to their own shares of land. The people served the LORD as long as Joshua lived... Then those who were born after grew up and they did not know the Lord. They did not know what He had done for Israel. The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. They served the gods that were named after Baal. They deserted the Lord, the God of their people... They served the gods of the nations that were around them. They made the LORD angry because they deserted Him... So He handed them over to robbers... And now they were suffering terribly. Then the LORD gave them leaders. The leaders saved them from the power of those robbers... But when the leaders died, the people returned to their evil ways. The things they did were even more sinful than the things their people before them had done.'

Matthew 14:13-21 tells us that Jesus, after the death of his cousin John the Baptist, 'went alone to a quiet place. The crowds heard about this and followed him... He felt concern for them and healed those among them who were ill.' Then follows the story of the feeding of 5000 men.

Father God, the compassion and miraculous ministry of Jesus, Your Son, our Saviour, gives us no excuse to turn away from You or the godly people You have sent to us in the past. Forgive us and restore divine leadership and miraculous provision we pray in these Last Days. For Your glory. Amen.

22nd June 2021. 2 Samuel 5 to 6 records the events over 3000 years ago which led to David becoming king of all Israel, fulfilling Samuel's calling by God to anoint him as the future king whilst still a young shepherd boy. One of the first things he did was to conquer Jerusalem and the Philistines and bring the Ark of God there in readiness for the future Temple which his son Solomon built.

Romans 7:22 to 8:2. Paul says, "Deep inside me I find joy in God's Law. But I see another law working in my body. It fights against the law of my mind. It makes me a prisoner of the law of sin. That law controls the parts of my body. What a terrible failure I am! Who will save me from this sin that brings death to my body? I give thanks to God. He will do it through Jesus Christ our Lord. So in my mind I am a slave to God's Law. But in my sinful nature I am a slave to the law of sin. Those who belong to Christ Jesus are no longer under God's sentence [condemnation]. I am now controlled by the law of the Holy Spirit. That law gives me life because of what Christ Jesus has done. It has set me free from the law of sin that brings death."

Father God, thank You that we are able to look back at how You prepared the way for Samuel and David to fulfil the vision given to Abraham of Israel's Messiah who would save the world through faith in the one true God Almighty. May our focus continue to be on Jerusalem as Your mercy unfolds for that place to welcome the return of Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Thank you for the events that happened there 2000 years ago which means I am "now controlled by the law of the Holy Spirit which has set me free from the law of sin that brings death." Amen.

23rd June 2021. Nehemiah Chapters 1 and 2 record how Nehemiah wept before the Lord God Almighty when he heard about the desolation of Jerusalem where the remnant of exiles still lived (1:4-11). King Artaxerxes noticed how sad Nehemiah had become and sent him to visit and report on Jerusalem with permission to obtain timber to commence the rebuilding (2:1-9). Despite opposition from the local pagan tribes, God's hand was upon Nehemiah and the work of rebuilding was commenced. He also told the enemies of Israel to go away (2:17-20).

Luke 13:11-32 tells the story of the prodigal son and his resentful brother. It records how the rightful inheritance of the younger son was wasted on foolish living but when he repented, his father forgave him but his elder brother did not.

Heavenly Father, thank you for these Bible records which express Your love for Your people, including remnants and wayward family members, and Your readiness to forgive. May we too, know Your forgiveness and refuse to step outside Your perfect will through waywardness or through resentment. Help us to handle persecution and opposition wisely and firmly and trust in You for our needs. Keep us ever in line with Your will and live expecting to welcome our Saviour's sudden return to Jerusalem. In His name we ask. Amen.

24th June 2021. Jeremiah 3:21-25 gives the words of God to His people Israel and their response at the time of His prophet Jeremiah. "A cry is heard on the barren hilltops. The people of Israel are sobbing and praying. That's because their lives are so twisted [perverted]. They have forgotten the LORD their God. 'You have not been faithful,' says the Lord. 'Return to Me. I will heal you. Then you will not turn away from Me anymore.' 'Yes,' the people say. 'We will come to you. You are the LORD our God. The gods we worship on the hills and mountains are useless. You are the LORD our God. You are the only one who can save us. From our earliest years shameful gods have ... destroyed our sons and daughters... We and our people before us have sinned. We have not obeyed You from our earliest years until now.' "

2 Timothy 2:24-26 records Paul's advice. "Anyone who serves the Lord must not fight [quarrel]. Instead, he must be kind to everyone. He must be able to teach. He must not hold anything against anyone. He must gently teach those who oppose him. Maybe God will give a change of heart to those who are against you. That will lead them to know the truth. Maybe they will come to their senses. Maybe they will escape the devil's trap. He has taken them prisoner to do what he wanted." This teaching is followed by Paul's warning: "There will be terrible times in the last days" (3:1).

Father God, bring much repentance in these terrible times of the 'last days' before Jesus our Messiah returns. Forgive us for neglecting the teaching of Your truth to our sons and daughters. Prompt us to repent and to do many acts of kindness. Heed our prayers for revival. Amen.

25th June 2021. Ezra Chapter 2 lists the 50,000 Jewish descendants who returned to Jerusalem 70 years after the exile in Babylon. The following year, "All of the people gave a loud shout. They praised the LORD. They were glad because the foundation of the LORD's Temple had been laid" (3:11).

Hebrews 9:15 says, "Christ is the go-between of a new covenant. Now those God calls to Himself will receive the eternal gift He promised. They will receive it now that Christ has died to save them. He died to set them free from the sins they committed under the first covenant."

Thank You Father God that Your Son, our Saviour, made the sacrifice under Your new covenant to provide access to You and Your love and mercy anywhere in the world, not just in the sacred buildings Your people have raised up. Encourage us to seek Your forgiveness and to worship You and welcome the promised Holy Spirit into our lives wherever we live. Bless all believers who are exiled in foreign lands or persecuted in their home lands, that they may build strong foundations through knowing resurrection power in their lives in Jesus Christ who died to set us free. Amen.

28th June 2021. 1 Samuel 11:12-15. After Saul was anointed king, he raised up an army of 33,000 men in Israel and Judah and defeated the Ammonites. Then the people reaffirmed him as king in the presence of the Lord God Almighty. Saul refused to punish those who doubted he was God's choice for their king. "We won't put anyone to death today! After all, this is the day the LORD God Almighty has saved Israel" (v.13). 'They sacrificed friendship [peace] offerings to the Lord. And Saul and all of the people of Israel celebrated with great joy' (v.15).

2 Peter 1:3-12. "God's power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life... So you should try very hard to add goodness to your faith. To goodness, add knowledge. To knowledge, add the ability to control yourselves. To the ability to control yourselves, add the strength to keep going. To the strength to keep going, add godliness. To godliness, add kindness to believers. And to kindness to believers, add love... If

you do everything I have just said... you will receive a rich welcome into the Kingdom that lasts forever. It is the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Dear God, thank You for this Old Testament record which shows an example of a righteous and united kingdom whose leader showed compassion for all his people. He also listened to and obeyed God, forgave those who rebelled, and encouraged the people to worship You together and rejoice. Thank You for this New Testament list of Christian values to unite in remembering to dwell in "the Kingdom that lasts for ever". Amen.

29th June 2021. 1 Samuel 12 records Samuel's speech to the people of Israel after Saul's first success as king over Israel. He reminded them of how the LORD God Almighty sent Moses and Aaron to bring them out of Egypt. "They settled them in this land. But the people forgot the LORD their God. So He gave them over to the powerful hand of the Philistines... The people cried out to the Lord. They said, 'We have sinned. We have deserted the LORD. We have served the gods that are named after Baal... Save us now from the powerful hands of our enemies. Then we will serve You.' The LORD sent Gideon, Barak, Jephthah and me. He saved you from the hands of your enemies, who were all around you. So you lived in safety. But then you saw that the king of Ammon, was about to attack you. So you said to me, 'We want a king to rule over us.' You said it even though the LORD your God was your king... The LORD has placed a king over you. But you must have respect for the Lord. You must serve Him and obey Him... Both you and the king who rules over you must follow the LORD your God."

Philippians 3:12-14 says, "I have not yet been made perfect. But I move on to take hold of what Christ Jesus took hold of me for... I forget what is behind me. I push hard toward what is ahead of me. I move on toward the goal to win the prize... The heavenly prize is Christ Jesus Himself."

Heavenly Father, help us – our leaders and our people – to put behind us what we and our children and our parents have done wrong and put our full trust in You. For Christ's glory. Amen.

30th June 2021. Proverbs 3:5-8 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways remember Him. Then He will make your paths smooth and straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes. Have respect for the LORD and avoid evil. That will bring health to your body. It will make your bones strong."

Philemon verses 15-17 records Paul's words to his old friend regarding his prodigal servant Onesimus who ran away from Philemon before he gave his life to Jesus. Paul said to Philemon, "Onesimus was separated from you for a little while. Maybe that was so you could have him back for good. You could have him back not as a slave. Instead, he would be better than a slave. He would be a dear brother. He is very dear to me. But he is even more dear to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord. Do you think of me as a believer who works together with you? Then welcome Onesimus as you would welcome me."

Heavenly Father, help us to learn from these words in the Old and New Testaments to trust in Your purpose and provision at work in our lives and not to trust in our own understanding. Forgive us for the many times we have run our own difficult route in life instead of Your 'smooth and straight pathway'. Give us a greater understanding of Your purpose and provision in our lives and in the lives of others around us that we may work closely together, enfolded by Your love. Grant us 'health to our body' and perfect us also in mind and spirit, through the resurrection power of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

1st July 2021. Genesis 42:18 states that Joseph, ruler of Egypt during the 7-year famine, told his brothers he believed in God Almighty which led them to realise they were being judged for their wrong-doing years before. In a miraculous way, this resulted in the entire family of Jacob (Israel) settling in Egypt for 400 years, a fulfilment of God's revelation to their ancestor Abraham.

James 4:6-11 says, "Scripture says, 'God opposes those who are proud. But he gives grace to those who are not.' (Proverbs 3:34) So obey God. Stand up to the devil. He will run away from you. Come near to God, and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners. Make your hearts pure, you who cannot make up your minds. Be full of sorrow. Cry and sob. Change your laughter to crying. Change your joy to sadness. Bow down to the Lord. He will lift you up. My brothers and sisters, do not speak against one another. Anyone who speaks against another believer speaks against the law [of God Almighty]."

Dear God, we see how You achieved good out of evil when the brothers of Joseph sold him as a slave into Egypt. Encourage us this day to take note of the advice of James to avoid doing or speaking evil against other believers, especially family members. In your love and mercy, forgive us and put right the wrongs we have said or done in the past which have caused sadness, conflict, rejection, separation and shame. Grant

new opportunities to rebuild relationships to Your glory, through the empowering of the Spirit of Christ our Saviour and in accordance with Your holy law. Amen.

2nd July 2021. Job 38-42 records the well-known answers to Job who questioned God Almighty why he had been allowed to suffer so much. God said to Job, "Who do you think you are to disagree with My plans?" (38:2). "Were you there when I laid the Earth's foundation?" (38:4). "Its features stand out like different parts of your clothes [as viewed by astronauts]" (38:14). "Have you travelled to the springs at the bottom of the ocean [as viewed by deep-sea divers]?" (38:16). Job replied, "I know that You can do anything. No one can keep You from doing what You plan to do. You asked me, 'Who do you think you are to disagree with My plans?' ... I spoke about things I did not understand. I talked about things that were too wonderful for me to know ... So I hate myself. I am really sorry for what I said about You. That's why I am sitting [I repent, KJV] in dust and ashes." ...So the Lord blessed the last part of Job's life even more than the first part (42:1-12).

Romans 1:16-17 proclaims Paul's words, "I am not ashamed of the Good News. It is God's power. And it will save everyone who believes. It is meant first for the Jews. It is meant also for those who are not Jews... From beginning to end, becoming right with God depends on a person's faith. It is written, 'Those who are right with God will live by faith' " (Habakkuk 2:4).

Thank You Father for these famous words about the experiences of Job and Paul who finally yielded their lives fully to Your plans and repented in faith. Help us to have faith in Your plans and experience Your blessing in the midst of many trials. Amen.

12th July 2021. Nehemiah 9 records that after joyfully celebrating the daily reading by Ezra from the Book of the Law of God, "The people of Israel gathered together ... and stood and admitted they had sinned. They also admitted that their people before them had done evil things. They listened while the Levites read parts of the Scroll of the Law of the LORD their God... They also worshipped the LORD." The rest of the chapter records all they knew of their rich inheritance and blessing from God before asking Him to forgive them and deliver them from their present difficulties.

Colossian 4:2-6 gives more advice to the church. "Spend a lot of time [continue, KJV] in prayer and always be watchful and thankful" (v.2). "Be wise in the way you act towards those outside the church, making the most of every opportunity. Let the words you speak always be full of grace" (v.5-6). Paul also requested prayers for himself and his fellow ministers. He was in prison at the time and asked the church to pray that God would open a door for preaching the Good News which is "the mystery of Christ" (v.3).

Heavenly Father, as we read Your word, prompt us to confess our sins and the sins of our ancestors. Forgive us and enable us to recall the good times when Your people obeyed You. Establish Your truth in our land and deliver us from our "present difficulties". We ask this in Your mercy and for Your glory and for the sake of Jesus Christ who took our punishment so that we can teach and proclaim Your truth through His promised Holy Spirit power. Prompt us also to pray for your ministers. Amen.

13th July 2021. Jeremiah 50:18-20 records the prophecy given to Jeremiah about the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. "The LORD God Almighty, who rules over all, says 'I will bring Israel back to their own grasslands. I will feed them on Mount Carmel and in Bashan. I will satisfy their hunger on the hills of Ephraim and Gilead. A new day is coming... At that time people will search for Israel's guilt. But they will not find any... That is because I will forgive the people I have spared.' "

Colossians 1:21-23 describes what we were, what Jesus has done for us, what we are now and what we are to do. "At one time you were separated from God... because of your evil ways. But because Christ died, God has brought you back to Himself. Christ's death (punishment) has made you holy in God's sight... But you must keep [continue in, KJV] your faith, steady and firm. Do not move away from the hope that the Good News holds out to you. It is the Good News that you heard... (for) every creature under heaven. I, Paul, now serve the Good News." In this way, Paul encouraged his readers, both Jews and non-Jews, to remain strong in their faith and live lives that bear fruit. This is achieved by believing, living and preaching the truth of God and witnessing the Good News of Jesus Christ all over the world.

Dear God, forgive us and our forefathers for not entering fully into the salvation You offered through faith and obedience in Your word promised to Noah and Abraham as given to Moses and fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Keep us "steady and firm" in our faith to "bear fruit" that will continue to give us hope of our eternal salvation and will also encourage others "all over the world" to believe! Amen.

14th July 2021. 1 Chronicles Chapters 2&3 give the descendants of Judah before listing the descendants of the other eleven sons of Jacob (called Israel) in chapters 4 to 8. The family of Judah included King David, confirming the importance of this tribe 1000 years before Israel's Messiah was born in Bethlehem. Jesus, the Christ or Messiah, later rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and was welcomed by the people as "Son of David" (Matthew 1:1 and 21:9).

James 5:7-11 says, "Brothers and sisters, be patient [suffer long, KJV] until the Lord comes. See how the farmer waits for the land to produce its rich crop... You too must be patient. You must stand firm. The Lord will soon come back. Brothers and sisters, do not find fault with one another. If you do, you will be judged. And the Judge is standing at the door! Think about the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. They are an example of how to be patient when you suffer. As you know, we think that people who do not give up are blessed. You have heard that Job was patient. And you have seen what the Lord finally did for him. The Lord is full of tender mercy and loving concern."

Heavenly Father, thank You for revealing Your mercy and Your purpose for your people in the past as we suffer and wait patiently for Your Messiah to return in the future. Open our eyes in the meantime to see Your hand at work in the affairs of our nation – what is important and what is not. And help us to show compassion towards our brothers and sisters in Christ, seeking unity in and between church and state. Amen.

15th July 2021. Deuteronomy 11:26-32. After giving Moses the Ten Commandments for the second time, God said, "Listen to Me. I am setting a blessing and a curse in front of you today. I am giving you the commands of the LORD your God today. You will be blessed if you obey them. But you will be cursed if you do not obey them. So do not turn away from the path I am now commanding you to take. Do not worship other gods. You have not known anything about them before... You will enter the land and take it over. The LORD your God is giving it to you. You will take it over and live there. When you do, make sure you obey all of the rules and laws I am giving you today."

2 Timothy 2:14-19. After Paul instructed Timothy on faithfulness, he said, "Keep reminding the believers of those things. Warn them before God not to argue about words. It is of no value. It only destroys those who listen. Do your best to please God. Be a worker who does not need to be ashamed. Teach the message of truth correctly. Stay away from godless chatter. Those who take part in it will become more and more ungodly... They destroy the faith of some people. But God's solid foundation stands firm. Here is the message written on it. "The LORD knows who His own people are" (Numbers 16:5). Also, "All who say they believe in the LORD must turn away from evil."

Dear God, help us to be faithful in obeying Your commandments which will prove a blessing to us. Help us to "turn away from evil" including "other gods we have not known anything about before" which will prove a curse to us. Help us also to encourage faithfulness in other believers and avoid arguments and "godless chatter". Amen.

16th July 2021. Job 40:6-9 records the time when Job was challenged by God for trying to argue with Him and to justify himself. "Then the LORD spoke to Job... 'Get ready to stand up for yourself. I will ask you some more questions. Then I want you to answer me. Would you dare to claim that I am not being fair? Would you judge Me in order to make yourself seem right? Is your arm as powerful as mine is?' "

Luke 10:25-37 is the parable of the Good Samaritan. An expert in Old Testament teaching sincerely questioned Jesus about how to inherit eternal life. Jesus said, "What is written in the Law? How do you understand it?" The man answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love Him with all your strength and with all your mind (Deuteronomy 6:5). And, love your neighbour as you love yourself (Leviticus 19:18)." Jesus replied. "You have answered correctly. Do that, and you will live." But the man wanted to make himself look good [to justify himself, KJV]. So he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Then Jesus told him the parable and encouraged the man to be like the Jew in the story who helped the Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans normally despised each other, but Jesus told the devout Jew to be like the good Samaritan who showed mercy on the injured Jew in the story.

Father God, forgive us for the times we fail to see we wrongly try to justify ourselves that we are right and righteous. Forgive us for questioning, even judging, You and Your people and non-believers, when we fail to show the love and compassion of Christ. Help us to "stand up" and answer Your questions honestly about our own attitudes as did Job, and repent. Amen.

19th July 2021. Joel 2 gives a word from the Lord God Almighty to repent after many days of pestilence. "Let them say, 'LORD, spare Your people. Do not let others make fun of them. Do not let the nations laugh at them. Do not let them ask where is their God' " (2:17). After God's warning to repent, He promised, "I will

pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy... In those days I will pour out My Spirit on those who serve Me, men and women alike... Everyone who calls out to Me will be saved" (2:28-32).

1 John 3:13,16. "My brothers and sisters, do not be surprised if the world hates you... We know what love is because Jesus Christ gave his life for us. So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters."

Father God, thank You for our salvation in and through Christ Jesus. Forgive us for disobeying Your word and suffering the consequences of ignoring Your sacrifice that brings us fullness of life. Save us from conflicts and pestilences and help us to rebuild relationships with You. Grant us the passion and compassion of our Saviour for our family, friends and neighbours so we will not be ridiculed for our failings but glorify You. Pour out Your Spirit on us in serving You and the men and women around us. Help us and others to experience the fullness of Your love in these last days, even if our witness generates hatred among some non-believers. Prepare us to suffer for the sake of sharing the Good News of Christ's sacrifice for us. Amen.

20th July 2021. Psalms 12 & 13. King David said, "The LORD says, 'The weak are beaten down. Those who are in need groan. So I will stand up to help them. I will keep them safe from those who tell lies about them. The words of the LORD are perfect... You will keep us safe. You will always keep sinners from hurting us. Proud and sinful people walk around openly when the evil they do is praised by others' " (12:5-8). "But I trust in Your faithful love [mercy, KJV]. My heart is filled with joy because You will save me. I will sing to the LORD. He has been so good to me" (13:5-6).

1 John 2:1-6 says: "My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But suppose someone does sin. Then we have One who speaks to the Father for us. He stands up for us. He is Jesus Christ, the Blameless One. He gave His life to pay for our sins. But He not only paid for our sins. He also paid for the sins of the whole world. We know that we have come to know God if we obey His commands. Suppose someone says, 'I know Him' but does not do what God commands. Then that person is a liar... But if anyone obeys God's word, then God's love is truly made complete in that person... Those who claim to belong to Him must live just as Jesus did."

Father God, thank you for providing for our salvation through sacrificing Your own flesh and blood in Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Saviour, who "paid for the sins of the whole world". Thank You for giving us the confidence (like King David) to joyfully sing "I trust in Your faithful love and mercy" (through King Jesus). So when we are "weak and beaten down", destroy the works of evil around us and keep us safe. Amen.

21st July 2021. Deuteronomy 9:26-29. Moses said, "LORD and King, do not destroy your people. They belong to You. You set them free by Your great power. You used Your mighty hand to bring them out of Egypt. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Forgive the people of Israel for being so stubborn. Do not judge them for the evil and sinful things they have done. If you do, the Egyptians will say, 'The LORD was unable to take them into the land He had promised to give them...' They are Your people. They belong to You... You reached out Your mighty arm and saved them."

Jude 24-25 says, "Give praise to the One who is able to keep you from falling into sin. He will bring you into His heavenly glory without any fault. He will bring you there with great joy. Give praise to the only God. He is our Saviour. Glory, majesty, power and authority belong to Him. Give praise to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord. Give praise to the One who was before all time, who now is, and who will be forever. Amen."

Heavenly Father, raise up church leaders today who will seek Your forgiveness and salvation and healing for Your people in the midst of disobedience, persecution, destruction and even death. Forgive us for "the evil and sinful things we have done" so that your power and purpose is seen at work again in our midst and we are not mocked when we uphold Your truth. Save us and bring us into Your "heavenly glory without any fault... with great joy" as we seek to "praise You through Jesus Christ our Lord" without "falling into sin". Amen.

22nd July 2021. Joshua 3:7-11 gives an example of how Almighty God goes ahead of His people to prepare the way to cease wandering in the wilderness and to move into the fullness of His provision and to face all the difficulties ahead. First, He confirmed His anointing was on Joshua as it was with Moses. "Today I will begin to honour you in the eyes of all of the people of Israel." Then God said, "Speak to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant. Tell them, 'When you reach the edge of the Jordan River, go into the water and stand there.' " Joshua obeyed and then spoke to the people of Israel. "Listen to what the LORD your God is saying... The priests will carry the Ark of the Lord... As soon as the priests step into the Jordan, it will stop flowing... That is how you will know that the living God is among you."

Luke 2:43-52 explains how Jesus spent three days as a 12-year-old, listening to the teachers in the Temple and being trained as a future Rabbi (2:46-47).

Heavenly Father, thank You for showing us that whether we have been wandering in the wilderness for many years or brought up as a carpenter's son, we all need Your anointing on our future ministry, as did Joshua and Jesus, whose names mean "the Lord is our salvation". Hear prayers for teaching and obeying the word of God for training up leaders, whatever their background, who have Your anointing to bring the Lord's salvation in times of the great needs that lie ahead. So enable us all to enter into Your perfect purpose and provision in these Last Days. Communicate this clearly to Your leaders, Your priests and Your people with demonstrations of Your mighty power. We ask this in the name of Jesus and for His glory. Amen.

23rd July 2021. Job 11:7-11 records Zophar's answers to Job's despair in the previous chapter, when he wanted to end his life. His friend Zophar asked, "Can you fathom [search and find, KJV] the deep mysteries of God?" Zophar was only able to criticise Job and tell him, without love, to "commit yourself to God completely and reach out your hands to Him for help." This did not satisfy Job at all (chapters 12 to 14) who ended up saying "All we feel is the pain of our own bodies. We are full of sadness only for ourselves" (14:22). This acknowledgement, however, was the beginning of Job's preparation for seeking further the true wisdom of God, not of man.

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 is where Paul describes how the different parts of the body work together for the benefit of the whole body, as it is with the Church, the Body of Christ (v.12). But because each part is very different, we must make sure we use our different gifts fully by working together for the benefit of others. And we should not only seek after the benefits of the more important gifts, but do so in love, which is Paul's message in Chapter 13.

Heavenly Father, thank you that You make us aware of the need not only to reach out to You for our well-being but to do so in thanks and love and then use the gifts we have to do the same for others. Help us then to reach out for the well-being of all and to do so in love, drawing out the benefits of the more important gifts available in the Body of Christ, your Church. Forgive us when we are "sad only for ourselves" or offer others Your divine truth with judgement and without love. Amen.

26th July 2021. Psalm 28:6-9. King David says, "Give praise to the Lord. He has heard my cry for His favour. The LORD gives me strength. He is like a shield that keeps me safe. My heart trusts in Him, and He helps me. My heart jumps for joy. I will sing and give thanks to Him. The LORD gives strength to His people. He guards and saves his anointed king [Your leader]. Save your people! Bless those [Your children] who belong to You! Be their shepherd! Take care of them forever!"

Timothy 4:10-16. The apostle Paul says, "We have put our hope in the living God. He is the Saviour of all people. Most of all he is the Saviour of those who believe. Command these things. Teach them... Set an example for the believers in what you say and in how you live. Also set an example in how you love and in what you believe. Show the believers how to be pure. Until I come, spend your time reading Scripture out loud to one another. Spend your time preaching and teaching. Do not fail to use the gift the Holy Spirit gave you... Be careful of how you live and what you believe. Never give up. Then you will save yourself and those who hear you."

Heavenly Father, we seek to use our gift unhindered in the ministry You have anointed us to do. Give us Your Holy Spirit strength to do this and rejoice in serving You and in leading and serving those "who belong to You". Help us to "set an example" in love, taking time to "reading Scripture out loud to one another" or using modern communication methods in preaching and teaching Your word. For Christ's sake and for "Your children" who listen. Amen.

27th July 2021. Isaiah 22 warns of the time when Jerusalem was surrounded by its enemies, causing much commotion, yet the people still indulged in wild parties (v.2-3)! Isaiah wept for Jerusalem (v.4) yet the people put their trust in their weapons, their water supplies and their strong walls, but "did not look to the One who planned everything long ago" (v.4-11). Isaiah warned that God would not forget this sin (v.14). He will raise up His servant Eliakim to ensure that the "key to the House of David" is maintained (v.20-24) for the great day of Israel's Messiah. But shortly, Jerusalem and its leaders would fall (v.25).

1 Thessalonians 3:2-6 shows Paul's concern for the church after much persecution by some of the Jews and the hindrances of Satan himself (2:13-19). "We sent our brother Timothy to give you strength and hope in your faith. He works together with God in spreading the Gospel of Christ. We sent him so that no one would be upset by times of testing. You know very well that we have to go through them. In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that our enemies would make us suffer. As you know very well, it has turned out that way. That is the reason I sent someone to find out about your faith... I was afraid that Satan

might have tempted you in some way... But Timothy has come to us from you just now. He has brought good news about your faith and love."

Heavenly Father, make us strong in You during times of persecution and hindrance to the Gospel of Christ. Do not let us be deceived by those who seek after partying and revelry. May we encourage the believers as we wait, during times of testing, death and denial, for the return of Messiah. Amen.

28th July 2021. 2 Kings 8:25 to 9:13 records the time when God intervened in the evil reign of Ahab and his successor Ahaziah and also Ahab's wife Jezebel. "Ahaziah followed the ways of the royal family of Ahab and did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as the family of Ahab had done" (8:27). He reigned in Jerusalem for just one year. Then God instructed His prophet Elisha to find Jehu and anoint him as king over Israel. He also announced that the family of Ahab would be destroyed including his evil wife (9:6-9). Jehu was disbelieving at first but his fellow army officers blew a trumpet and shouted "Jehu is king!" He reigned over Israel for 28 years (10:36).

Revelation 19:11-21 records John's vision of Heaven revealing the white horse with its rider "Faithful and True" whose eyes were like blazing fire. He was dressed in a robe "dipped in blood" and His name is "The Word of God" (19:11-13). Out of the rider's mouth came a sharp sword to "strike down the nations". Scripture says, "He will rule them with an iron rod" (Psalm 2:9). The name that was written on the rider was "THE GREATEST KING OF ALL AND THE MOST POWERFUL LORD OF ALL" (19:15-16). The rest of the chapter describes how the beast and the false prophet and those who had received the mark of the beast were destroyed by the sword of the One who is called "The Word of God" (19:19-21).

Heavenly Father, help us to believe that evil will not prevail but You will intervene in Your time in the lives of Your people and our rulers, through the mighty power of our resurrected Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

29th July 2021. Isaiah 13 records God's promise to bring down Babylon. "The LORD has sent soldiers ... to carry out His anger against Babylon." (13:3) "The LORD ... will punish evil people for their sins. He will put an end to the bragging of those who are proud... who do not show any pity." (13:11) "The city of Babylon ... will be destroyed just as He did with Sodom and Gomorrah." (13:19) The next chapter begins with "The LORD will show tender love toward Jacob's people. Once again He will choose Israel." (14:1)

Matthew 27:62 to 28:4 describes how the body of Jesus was kept secure so that no-one could steal the body and spread false rumours about His resurrection (27:62-66). "It was dawn on the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. The angel went to the tomb. He rolled back the stone and sat on it. His body shone like lightning... The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here! He has risen, just as He said he would!' "

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for these important records of Your actions to destroy the wickedness of evil men and bring salvation and restoration to Your people. Encourage us to testify of Your merciful destruction and victory and resurrection power for all who support Your people Israel and believe in Jesus as Son of God and Saviour of the world. Amen.

30th July 2021. Jeremiah 48 records the lament of the Lord God Almighty for Moab, the descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew, who departed from the Lord. "I know how rude they are, but it will not get them anywhere... So I weep over Moab... The people burn incense to their gods. But I will put an end to those people" (48:30-35). "But in days to come, I will bless Moab again with great success" (48:47).

Acts 7:2-7 is the start of Stephen's speech before he was martyred in Jerusalem for his faith in Jesus Christ. "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham. At that time Abraham was still in Mesopotamia... 'Leave your country and your people,' God said. 'Go to the land I will show you.' So Abraham left the land of Babylonia... God sent Abraham to this land where you are now living. [Lot and his family went with him.] God did not give him any property here... But He said they would possess the land... 'Your family after you will be strangers in a country that is not their own. They will be slaves and will be treated badly for 400 years... But after that, they will leave that country and worship Me here.' "

Heavenly Father, thank You for the punishment and mercy You show to this day for the descendants of Abraham, despite worshipping alien gods. Thank You that through Israel's Messiah, Jesus the Christ, You show mercy to all people of all nations who believe He is the Son of God Almighty. Forgive us and establish us in your salvation and righteousness. Make us worthy to witness and suffer faithfully for the sake of Christ who died on the cross for all who believe. Amen.

2nd August 2021. Genesis 50:12-21 covers the time after Jacob's death in Egypt when his twelve sons took his body back to Mamre, to be buried in Canaan, now Israel, where other family members of Abraham were laid to rest. "So Jacob's sons carried his body to the land of Canaan. They buried it in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre... After Joseph buried his father, he went back to Egypt. His brothers ... went back with him. Now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers were worried. They said, 'Remember all of the bad things we did to Joseph? ...They said to Joseph, 'Please forgive our sins. We, too, serve the God of your father.' They knelt before him and offered to be his slaves. Joseph, sobbed, 'You planned to harm me. But God planned it for good. He planned to do what is now being done.' He set them free from their fears. And he spoke in a kind way to them."

Matthew 11:25-30 begins with the words of Jesus to Almighty God. "I praise you, Father. You are Lord of heaven and earth. You have hidden these things from the wise and educated. But you have shown them to little children. Yes, Father. This is what you wanted." This was also the time when He said, "I will give you rest. Become my servants and learn from me... You will find rest for your souls. Serving Me is easy, and My load is light."

Thank You Heavenly Father for these records of Your everlasting love for those whose trust is in You, despite doing much wrong. Forgive us and permit Your purpose to be revealed and fulfilled in our lives as servants, not slaves, which is more than we deserve. Thank You Jesus for times of rest in the midst of trouble for the children in Your family of believers. Amen.

3rd August 2021. Psalm 107 explains the futile and foolish lives of some of God's people (v.4,10,17,23). They cried out to Him when they were in the midst of their troubles (v.6,13,19,28) and ended up "giving thanks to the LORD for His endless love" (v.8,15,21,31). The psalm begins with the reminder to "give thanks to the LORD for He is good". It ends with: "Consider the great love of the LORD God Almighty".

1 Corinthians 11:17-32. Paul writes, "Your meetings do more harm than good... When you come together as a church, you take sides... On the night the Lord Jesus was betrayed, He took bread... He said, 'This is my body. It is given for you. Every time you eat it, do it in memory of Me.' In the same way, after supper He took the cup. He said, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Every time you drink it, do it in memory of Me.' ...So do not eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in a way that is unworthy of Him. If you do, you will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person should take a careful look at himself before he eats the bread and drinks from the cup... We should judge ourselves."

Dear Father God, as Your special people, forgive our "futile and foolish lives" and the harm we do when we come to church and begin to "take sides". Help us to judge our lives in the way You see us and cry out to You in the troubles we cause so that we can be forgiven and unite with other believers to "give thanks to the LORD for He is good". For the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour who died for us that we might be saved. Amen.

4th August 2021. Proverbs 13:12-16 says, "Hope that is put off (delayed) makes one sick at heart. But a longing that is met is like a tree of life." The writer then gives words of spiritual and practical wisdom to renew hope and faith in God for those who lose heart and become weary of life. "Anyone who hates what he is taught will pay for it later. But a person who respects a command will be rewarded. The teaching of wise people is like a fountain that gives life. It turns those who listen to it away from the jaws of death. Good understanding wins favour. But the way of liars does not last. Wise people act in keeping with the knowledge they have. But foolish people show how foolish they are!"

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 gives Paul's own spiritual and practical wisdom to encourage obedience to the teachings of Christ. "I live in the world. But I do not fight my battles the way the people of the world do. The weapons I fight with are not the weapons the world uses. In fact, it is just the opposite. My weapons have the power of God to destroy the camps of the enemy. I destroy every claim and every reason that keeps people from knowing God. I keep every thought under control in order to make it obey Christ."

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for Your wise and powerful teachings. Praise You for the examples of perseverance in Your short life on Earth midst much persecution and suffering at the end for our sakes. Renew our hope and faith in our Father God's mercy and provision. Give us "spiritual and practical wisdom" with "weapons that have Your power to destroy the enemy" who "keeps people from knowing God." Help us to "keep every thought under control" and live a life obedient to You. Amen.

5th August 2021. 2 Chronicles 34:29-33. "Then the king called together the elders of Judah and Jerusalem... All of them went, from the least important to the most important. The king had all of the words of the Scroll of the Covenant read to them... He agreed to the terms of the covenant in front of the LORD. He

promised to follow Him and obey His commands, directions and rules... Then he had everyone commit themselves to the covenant... He removed all of the statues of gods from the whole territory that belonged to the people of Israel... As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the LORD, the God of their people."

1 Thessalonians 1:4-8 gives the words of Paul to the young believers in Thessalonica. "Brothers and sisters, you are loved by God. We know that He has chosen you. Our Good News did not come to you only in words. It came with power. It came with the Holy Spirit's help... You suffered terribly. Even so, you welcomed our message with the joy the Holy Spirit gives. So you became a model to all the believers in the lands of Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you... Your faith in God has also become known everywhere."

Thank You heavenly Father for these records of faithful reading and preaching of your truth. May we all, "from the least important to the most important", obey Your "commands, directions and rules". Also, help us to realise we are Your chosen people with the power of Your Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Cleanse our land from false gods, refine us and use us as "a model to all the believers" near and far, as we joyfully suffer and await His return. Amen.

6th August 2021. Job Chapter 37 gives advice from Job's friend Elihu, who prepared the way for God's amazing intervention in Job's life in the following chapters. Elihu concluded, "God comes in His shining glory... Everything He does is fair and right. So He doesn't crush people... He cares about all those who are wise."

Luke 22:20-32 records some of the words of Jesus at the Last Supper before His crucifixion. He said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood... But someone here is going to hand Me over to My enemies... The Son of Man will go to His death, just as God has already decided" (20-22). Then the disciples argued about who would betray Jesus and also who would be the greatest in His Kingdom. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the nations hold power over their people... But you must not be like that. Instead, the most important among you should be like the youngest. The one who rules should be like the one who serves" (25-26). He then spoke to Simon Peter who would deny Him that very night. "Simon, Simon! Satan has asked to sift you disciples like wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon. I have prayed that your faith will not fail. When you have turned back, help your brothers to be strong."

Father God, thank You for the Bible records that show us how You use believers who are good, bad, weak and strong to serve Your purposes. Elihu knew so little of the real truth about You. Judas betrayed our Saviour. Peter denied His master. Forgive us and enable us to encourage our brothers and sisters to be strong in You. Pray for us Lord Jesus! Amen.

9th August 2021. Leviticus 19 begins with more laws from God that were given to Moses on the way to the Promised Land, still relevant for today. These begin with, "Be holy, because I the LORD your God am holy" and end with "Keep all My laws and follow them. I am the LORD."

Revelation 1:3-7 says, "Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy. Blessed are those who hear it and think everything it says is important. The time when these things will come true is near." It continues with confirmation of our eternal salvation and the Second Coming of Christ our Saviour. "Give glory and power to the One who loves us! He has set us free from our sins by pouring out His blood for us. He has made us members of His royal family. He has made us priests who serve His God and Father. Give Him glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. Look! He is coming with the clouds!"

Father God, thank you for Your words of life recorded for us regarding holy living, salvation in Christ, eternal life and the return of Jesus. Help us to live in faith and obedience according to Your word, in ways that honour You and testify of our Salvation in Jesus Christ, with hope of His return soon. Teach us and encourage us to meet the needs of others through serving You as His modern-day priests. And may our love for You stir up a Holy Spirit revival in these days. Amen.

10th August 2021. 1 Chronicles 23. After King David ordered his son Solomon to build the Temple at Jerusalem (22:6), he made Solomon king over all Israel in 1015 BC. He then called together the leaders and priests of the tribe of Levi who were 30 years old or more to supervise the work of the Temple, assisted by those who were 20 years old or more (23:27). "They helped them serve in the LORD's temple... the courtyards and the side rooms. They made all of the sacred things pure and clean. They also had other duties at the house of God. They were in charge of setting the holy bread out on the table. They prepared the flour for the grain offerings. They made the wafers without yeast. They did the baking and the mixing... They stood every morning to thank and praise the LORD. They did the same thing every evening. They also did it every time burnt offerings were brought to the LORD. Those offerings were brought every Sabbath day (23:28-31).

Mark 3:13-19 records the time when Jesus called His followers together. "He appointed 12 of them and called them apostles. From that time on they would be with Him. He would also send them out to preach. They would have authority to drive out demons" (3:14-15).

Father God, thank You for the records covering the 1000 years leading to the fulfilment of Your plan for King David's greater Son, King Jesus, to authorise the priestly duties of His apostles for all the world to serve and worship You through eternal salvation in Him. Grant us the wisdom of Solomon, the appointing and anointing of Jesus and the power and authority of the Holy Spirit to minister today and prepare for Christ's second coming. Amen.

11th August 2021. Jeremiah 35 gives the account of the family of Recab who for over two centuries had remained faithful to the commands and traditions of their ancestors. God spoke to Jeremiah that the Recabites were a good example of faithfulness and obedience which the people of Judah at that time were not. Because of this, God told Jeremiah to warn them, "The children of Jonadab, the son of Recab, have obeyed the command Jonadab gave them long ago. But the people of Judah have not obeyed me. So the LORD God, who rules over all, speaks, 'I am going to bring disaster on Judah. I will also bring it on everyone who lives in Jerusalem... I spoke to them. But they did not listen. I called out to them. But they did not answer' " (35:16-18).

James 3 warns us that the tongue cannot be tamed since it is full of evil. With it we praise our Lord (Jesus) and our Father (God) and yet we curse mankind who has been created in God's likeness. "Are any of you wise and understanding? You should show it by living a good life. Wise people are not proud when they do good works... The wisdom that comes from heaven is pure... It also loves peace. It thinks about others. It obeys. It is full of mercy and good fruit."

Lord Jesus, when we come to You to worship and praise You for our salvation achieved at great cost, help us to love others with the same compassion You have for the rest of God's creation. Enable us to be faithful to the truth of God and obey the commands He has given to our people for generations. May our words be a testimony to You. Save us from disaster caused by unfaithfulness and careless talk. For Your sake. Amen.

12th August 2021. Isaiah 24 prophesies, "The LORD is going to completely destroy everything on Earth... He will scatter those who live on it. Priests and people alike will suffer... The earth will be completely destroyed... The world will dry up and waste away... The earth is polluted by its people. They have not obeyed the laws of the LORD. They have not done what He told them to do. They have broken the covenant that will last forever. So the LORD will send a curse on the earth. Its people will pay for what they have done... Very few of them will be left."

Matthew 24:4-14, Jesus prophesies, "Keep watch! Be careful that no one fools you. Many will come in My name. They will claim, 'I am the Christ!' They will fool many people. You will hear about wars... Do not be alarmed. Those things must happen. But the end still isn't here. Nation will fight against nation. Kingdom will fight against kingdom. People will go hungry. There will be earthquakes in many places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then people will hand you over to be treated badly and killed. All nations will hate you because of Me. At that time, many will turn away from their faith... But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. This Good News of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world. It will be a witness to all nations. Then the end will come."

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for confirming and fulfilling the Old Testament scriptures. Fill us with Your compassion for the lost. Fill us with Holy Spirit power to save many lives through Your Good News of salvation for those who seek You and remain faithful and will greet You at the end when You return. Come Lord Jesus, soon! Amen.

13th August 2021. Isaiah 34&35 compares God's judgement on Edom, Esau's tribe (34:8), with His future blessings on Israel, Jacob's tribe: "Those the LORD has saved will return to their land. They will sing as they enter the city of Zion. Joy that lasts forever will be like beautiful crowns on their heads. They will be filled with gladness and joy. Sorrow and sighing will be gone" (35:10).

Acts 7 gives Stephen's testimony of God's mercy towards Abraham's family, including Isaac and Jacob, and their land of promise in Canaan, now Israel. But he accused his listeners, "You people! You will not obey! You are stubborn! You will not listen! You are just like your people of long ago! You always oppose the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your people did not try to hurt? They even killed those who told about the coming of the Blameless One. And now you have handed Him over to His enemies. You have murdered Him. The law you received was brought by angels. But you have not obeyed it" (7:51-53). Stephen

died the death of a Christian martyr (7:39) because of his witness to Jesus, Israel's Messiah, and Saviour for all who believe He was and is the Son of God.

Praise God for these faithful and true words from Scripture, which confirm His purpose past, present and future for His special people Israel and for all who trust in their Messiah. Father God, in these days as we await the return of Jesus to Jerusalem, help us fearlessly to proclaim the Good News about Jesus the Christ so that many more will know His eternal forgiveness, salvation, compassion and resurrection power. Amen.

16th August 2021. Jeremiah 52:28-34 records God's punishment and exile of 4600 Jews to Babylon and His mercy to Israel in giving honour to their king before returning to Israel 70 years later.

Romans 9:15-18 says, "God said to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy. I will show love to those I love.' (Exodus 33:19). So it does not depend on what we want or do. It depends on God's mercy. In Scripture, God says to Pharaoh, 'I had a special reason for making you king. I decided to use you to show my power. I wanted My name to become known everywhere on earth.' (Exodus 9:16). So God does what he wants to do. He shows mercy to one person and makes another stubborn."

Father God, thank you for reminding us of Your love and mercy as well as Your need to apply divine punishment to encourage obedience. Forgive us for failing to obey You and praise You and apply the whole truth recorded in the Bible since the time you freed us over 70 years ago from World War 2. Forgive us for being over-confident and seeking selfish pleasures and riches since that time and grant us now the passion and compassion of our Saviour for the lost and disadvantaged and persecuted people of Your world. May we be more and more open to the power of the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus as we proclaim and witness to Your truth and mercy and salvation. In the name of Jesus Christ who suffered so much to gain freedom from our sins. Amen.

17th August 2021. Psalm 146 says, "I will praise the LORD God Almighty... all my life. I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Do not put your trust in human leaders... Blessed are those who ... put their hope in the LORD their God. He is the maker of Heaven and Earth and the seas. He made everything in them. The LORD remains faithful forever. He stands up for those who are beaten down. He gives food to hungry people. The LORD sets prisoners free. The LORD gives sight to those who are blind. The LORD lifts up those who feel helpless. The LORD loves those who do what is right. The LORD watches over the aliens who live in our land. He takes good care of orphans and widows. But He causes evil people to fail in everything they do... Praise the Lord."

Hebrews 1:1-8 says, "In the past, God spoke to our people through the prophets... But in these last days, He has spoken to us through His Son. He is the one whom God appointed... God made everything through Him... He is the exact likeness of God's being... He provided the way for people to be made pure from sin. Then he sat down at the right hand of the King, the Majesty in Heaven... God's first and only Son is over all things... Your throne will last for ever."

Thank You heavenly Father for these words from writers unknown to us who affirm You as Creator of the world and Saviour of all who put their trust in Your Son, Jesus Christ, who was with You from the beginning and now sits at Your right hand. May we too, through the power of the Holy Spirit, affirm these things to all whom we meet, in love. Amen.

18th August 2021. 1 Samuel 9:15-16 records the time when the Lord God Almighty told the prophet Samuel he would meet Saul, God's choice for the first king of Israel. "He will save them from the hand of the Philistines. I have seen how much My people are suffering. Their cry for help has reached Me."

Romans 4:11-18 records the revelation of Paul, a Jew, regarding Abraham, the 'father of all nations'. "He was ... right with God before he was circumcised. So Abraham is the father of all believers who have not been circumcised. God accepts their faith. So their faith makes them right with Him ... God promised that Abraham would receive the world. It would not come to him because he obeyed the law. It would come because of his faith, which made him right with God ... The promise is based on God's grace. The promise comes by faith ... Those who have the same faith that Abraham had are included. He is the father of us all. It is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations' (Genesis 17:5). God considers Abraham to be our father ... He became the father of many nations, exactly as God had promised. God said, 'That is how many children you will have' " (Genesis 15:5).

Thank You Father God for Your written word that confirms again and again Your truth in the Old Testament records which are fulfilled in New Testament times and teaching right up to today. Help us to see Your purposes and provision for all who believe in You and Your Son, our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. For Your glory. Amen.

19th August 2021. Ezekiel 16:47-62 gives part of God's condemnation of the people of Jerusalem in 600 BC. He compares them to Sodom. "You lived exactly the way they did. You copied their evil practices. I hate those practices. Everything you did was so sinful that you soon became even worse than they were" (v.47). Despite God's condemnation, He shows mercy. "I will not only give you back what you had before. I will also do the same thing for Sodom and her daughters ... [They] will return to what they were before. And you and your daughters will return to what you were before" (v.53-55). Meanwhile, God declares, "You will be punished for your impure conduct" (v.58)... "But I will remember my covenant with you... Now I will make a new covenant with you. It will last forever... Then you will know that I am Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty" (v.58-62).

Matthew 26-28. After the persecution, arrest, trial, punishment, death and resurrection of Jesus, He meets his disciples. "All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Father God, thank You for the many examples of how You seek repentance and forgiveness through punishment and in Your mercy have used the punishment of Your own Son to bring salvation to all people who repent and put their trust in Jesus the Christ. Forgive us for the times and ways we bring fresh punishment upon ourselves. Amen.

20th August 2021. Isaiah 22 warns there will be times when God's people will sin so badly that their sin "will not be atoned for" (v.14). God will continue to appoint and anoint and bless His chosen people (v.20-24) but the Lord will carry out His punishment (v.25).

Mark 1:14-18 says, "After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee. He preached God's good news. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God is near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!' One day Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee. There he saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a net into the lake. They were fishermen. 'Come. Follow me,' Jesus said. 'I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed him."

Dear God, for the sake of Jesus Your Son who died to save us from eternal death, help us to respond quickly to Your call to follow as His disciples and make a difference in the world through preaching the Good News of salvation through Christ alone. Have mercy on this sinful generation by appointing and anointing Your people to be a blessing to others as we work to prepare the way for Christ's return. Destroy man's attempts to rebuild Babylon and instead encourage us all to focus on what you are rebuilding in Jerusalem in these last days. Amen.

23rd August 2021. Jeremiah 23:5-8 records God's prophecy for Old and New Testament times which is still relevant today for Israel: "A new day is coming. At that time I will raise up from David's royal line a true and rightful Branch. He will be a King who will rule wisely. He will do what is fair and right in the land. In His days Judah will be saved. Israel will live in safety. And the Branch will be called 'The LORD Who Makes Us Right With Himself'. Other days are also coming. At that time people will no longer say, 'The LORD brought the people of Israel up out of Egypt.' ...Instead, they will say, 'The LORD brought the people of Israel up out of the land of the north. He gathered them out of all of the countries where He had forced them to go... Then they will live in their own land."

2 Timothy 3:1-9 warns, "There will be terrible times in the last days. People will love themselves. They will love money. They will brag and be proud. They will tear others down. They will not obey their parents. They won't be thankful or holy. They won't love others. They won't forgive others. They will tell lies about people... They will be wild. They will hate what is good. They will turn against their friends. They will act without thinking. They will think they are better than others. They will love what pleases them instead of loving God. They will act as if they were serving God. But ... their foolish ways will not deceive anyone."

Thank you Heavenly Father for reminding us about Your plans for Your people Israel and warning us about these last days. Stop man-made attempts to impose global control, peace and prosperity but empower us to pray, witness and minister to the needy as Jesus did. Amen.

24th August 2021. 2 Chronicles 33:10-17 tells how King Manasseh and the people of Jerusalem and Judea ignored God's warning about their evil ways. So the LORD brought the army commanders of the king of Assyria against them. They took Manasseh as a prisoner ... to Babylon. When Manasseh was in trouble, he asked the LORD his God to show favour to him. He made himself very low in the sight of the God of his people. Manasseh prayed to Him. When he did, the LORD felt sorry for him. He answered his prayer. He

brought him back to Jerusalem and his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God. After that ... Manasseh got rid of the strange gods. He removed the statue of one of those gods from the LORD's temple ... Then he made the LORD's altar look like new again. He sacrificed friendship and thank offerings on it. He told the people of Judah [Judea] to serve the LORD, the God of Israel.

1 Peter 5:12-13 was written from Rome, often called 'Babylon' because of its evil ways. He gives spiritual advice to stand firm against evil. "I have written to cheer you up. And I have written to give witness about the true grace of God. Stand firm in it. The members of the church in Babylon send you their greetings. They were chosen together with you... May God give peace to all of you who believe in Christ."

Thank You God our Father for reminding us that even under the influence of today's evil 'Babylon', you hear and answer prayers of repentance for the churches of Christ our Saviour. Encourage Your people to 'stand firm' in Your Word and serve You faithfully in peace. Amen.

25th August 2021. Ecclesiastes 9 confirms we all have a common destiny to die, but we are all in God's hands (v.1-2). The writer proposes that in life we must eat and drink and enjoy life for "it is now that God favours what you do" (v.7-8). "No matter what you do, work at it with all your might. Remember, you are going to your grave. And there isn't any work or planning or knowledge or wisdom there!" (v.10). At the end of the book the writer concludes, "Have respect for God and obey His commandments... God will judge everything people do. That includes everything they try to hide. He will judge everything, whether it's good or evil" (12:13-14).

Luke 2:42-52 records that when Jesus was 12 years old, Joseph and Mary found Him in the Temple courts at Jerusalem. 'He was sitting with the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard Him was amazed at how much He understood... When His parents saw Him, they, too, were amazed... "Why were you looking for Me?" He asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?" But they did not understand what He meant by that... Jesus became wiser and stronger. He also became more and more pleasing to God and to people.'

Thank You Father God for revealing that we must make the most of our short time on Earth, enjoying what You have created and provided. Help us to grow in wisdom through obeying Your commandments and avoid secretly yielding to temptation but become more Christ-like, 'wiser and stronger... pleasing to God and to people.' Amen.

26th August 2021. 2 Kings 23:1-3 records the time when King Josiah restored the covenant of God in Israel. 'Then the king called together all of the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. He went up to the LORD's Temple. The people of Judah and Jerusalem went with him. So did the priests and prophets. All of them went, from the least important of them to the most important. The king had all of the words of the Scroll of the Covenant read to them... He agreed to the terms of the covenant in front of the LORD. He promised to follow Him and obey His commands. He promised to obey them with all his heart and with all his soul. So he agreed to the terms of the covenant that were written down in that scroll. Then all of the people committed themselves to the covenant.'

1 Corinthians 15 gives Paul's reminder that what we sow in life does not come to life unless it first dies. "When you plant something, it isn't a completely grown plant that you put in the ground. You only plant a seed... And to each kind of seed he gives its own body... People have one kind of body. Animals have another... The body that is planted does not last forever. [But] the body that is raised from the dead lasts forever."

We praise You our God and our Creator for revealing the truth we need to know in order to live fruitful lives and be resurrected with Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Forgive and forget our past sins. Raise up leaders who will re-establish Your truth in our land with hope of resurrection for 'the least important to the most important' to meet our Saviour and not be ashamed. Amen.

27th August 2021. Isaiah 44:1-3 records the words of Almighty God to His chosen people: "I will pour out My Spirit on your children. I will pour out my blessing on their children after them."

Luke 7:36-50 gives the story Jesus told Simon the Pharisee and the teaching behind it. "Two people owed money to a certain lender. One owed him 500 silver coins. The other owed him 50 silver coins. Neither of them had the money to pay him back. So he let them go without paying. Which of them will love him more?" Simon replied, "I suppose the one who owed the most money." "You are right," Jesus said. This happened in the company of a woman who was well-known for her sinful life who had come to Jesus to confess and receive His forgiveness. Jesus said to the Pharisee, "I tell you this. Her many sins have been

forgiven. She has loved a lot. But the one who has been forgiven little loves only a little." Then Jesus said to her, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your desire to bless the families of those You have chosen to believe. Change our hearts towards our children and grandchildren and change the hearts of our children and grandchildren towards their parents and grandparents. May Your love and forgiveness flow freely among us and in turn may we express our love and forgiveness freely to be the blessing you want us to be to each other. Help us to realise that Your blessing on our families is often worked out through the love and forgiveness we have for them, whether they have loved a lot or a little, and whether they have sinned a lot or a little. Amen.

30th August 2021. 2 Kings 8:25-29 describes the brief one-year reign of King Ahaziah, the wicked son of the wicked King Ahab of Israel. The next chapter describes how God sent one of his prophets to secretly anoint and appoint Jehu as king (9:1-10). The people welcomed this news (9:13) and Jehu reigned for 28 years (10:36). During this time the relatives of Ahab and Jezebel were destroyed.

Jude verses 20-23 instructs, "Dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring you eternal life. As you wait for His mercy, remain in God's love. Show mercy to those who doubt. Pull others out of the fire. Save them. To others, show mercy mixed with fear. But hate even the clothes that are stained by the sins of those who wear them." *Dear Father God help us to show Your mercy and the compassion of Jesus Christ to those who doubt, with the hope of pulling some "out of the fire". May we proclaim Your truth boldly, fearful that we also will fall into sin if we love the sinner but fail to reject their sin. Keep us wise and obedient when You secretly guide us to those whom You are calling into ministry or leadership. Prompt us by Your Spirit in ways that do not hinder Your provision for church and state to "welcome this news" and to bring peace, stability, salvation and revival in these needy and destructive end times. For the sake of Jesus who suffered and died to pay the price for our sins. Amen.*

31st August 2021. Genesis 1:24-31 gives part of the account of creation. 'God said, "Let the land produce all kinds of living creatures." God made all kinds of wild animals. He made all kinds of livestock. He made all kinds of creatures that move along the ground. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let Us make mankind in our likeness. Let them rule over the fish in the waters and the birds of the air. Let them rule over the livestock and over the whole earth. Let them rule over all of the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in His own likeness. He created them in the likeness of God. He created them as male and female. God blessed them. He said to them, "Have children and increase your numbers. Fill the earth and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the waters and the birds of the air. Rule over every living creature that moves on the ground." Then God said, "I am giving you every plant on the face of the whole earth that bears its own seeds... All of them will be given to you for food.'" ' Note that the record says, "Let Us make..." confirming the Holy Trinity of God.

John 1:1-4 says, "In the beginning... the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were made through Him. Nothing that has been made was made without Him. Life was in Him, and that life was the Light for all people." Note that John confirms that Jesus, the Word and the Light, was involved in creation as part of the Trinity.

Father God, help us to believe, understand and teach the full truth about Jesus. Amen.

1st September 2021. 1 Kings 9-13: "The LORD became angry with Solomon. That's because his heart had turned away from the LORD. He is the God of Israel. He had appeared to Solomon twice. He had commanded Solomon not to follow other gods. But Solomon did not obey Him. So the LORD said to Solomon, "You have chosen not to keep My covenant. You have decided not to obey My rules... So you can be sure I will tear the kingdom away from you. I will give it to one of your officials. But I will not do that while you are still living. Because of your father David I will wait. I will tear the kingdom out of your son's hand. But I will not tear the whole kingdom away from him. I will give him one of the tribes because of my servant David. I will also do it because of Jerusalem. That is the city I have chosen." Later, God relented and spared not only the tribe of Judea but also Benjamin along with His chosen city of Jerusalem.

Acts 9:1-19 tells the story of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. He obtained permission from the high priest in Jerusalem to imprison men and women of "The Way". The resurrected Jesus met him on the road and said to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" Jesus then told him to go into Damascus to wait for further instructions.

Heavenly Father, thank You for the mercy You show for those who are led astray by corrupt leaders. Also for those who are persecuted because of their faith in Jesus. Help us to keep watch on events in Your special city of Jerusalem as we wait Your further instructions for our own special calling. Also, raise up in these needy days more spiritual leaders to declare salvation through Your Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

2nd September 2021. Ecclesiastes 4:13 warns that "a poor but wise young man is better off than an old but foolish king." The writer of Ecclesiastes then seeks to help believers to find a purpose in life by encouraging us to "be careful what you say when you go to God's house. Go there to listen" (5:1).

Acts 25:8-9 records what Paul said in his defence after being held two years in prison by the corrupt Roman governor Felix (24:25). The new governor Festus was also corrupt. 'Paul spoke up for himself. He said, "I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the Temple. I have done nothing wrong against Caesar." But Festus wanted to do the Jews a favour. So he said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem? Are you willing to go on trial there? Are you willing to face these charges in my court?" ' Paul's answer was to appeal to Caesar for the truth to be upheld (25:11).

Father God, thank you for reminding us to go to church to listen! Help us then to avoid giving in to the ways of foolish or corrupt leaders but stand up for the truth that brings glory to You. Help us to suffer even as Jesus did in order to fulfil Your purpose in life that many will hear and read Your truth, and listen and receive eternal salvation. For Christ's sake, enable us through His Spirit within us to make wise and brave decisions under all forms of persecution. And raise up more "poor but wise young men" in leadership roles to uphold the truth in these difficult times. Amen.

3rd September 2021. Deuteronomy 25:4 instructs, "Do not stop an ox from eating while you use it to separate grain from straw." This is a warning to care for the needs of the animal that provides food for mankind so that nothing hinders God's provision. It is referred to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:9 who applies it to the preachers of the Good News of Jesus Christ. "We have planted spiritual seed [grain] among you. Is it too much to ask that we receive from you some of the things we need?"

Mark 3:13-16 gives the time when Jesus appointed the 12 disciples to be his preachers and healers. "Jesus went up on a mountainside. He called for certain people to come to Him, and they came. He appointed 12 of them and called them apostles. From that time on they would be with Him. He would also send them out to preach. They would have authority to drive out demons. So Jesus appointed the Twelve." This was the preparation for the work they were called to do after His death and resurrection to spread the Good News about God's salvation through faith in Christ.

Father God, thank You that You have done everything possible to empower and prepare the way for believers to share the Good News of Jesus. Allow nothing or no-one to hinder what we do to extend Your Kingdom. Help us all to share in the responsibility of caring for each other and meeting the needs of those who travel near and far to spread the Good News. For the sake of Jesus Christ who suffered and died for us to achieve Your purpose and provision for mankind. Amen.

6th September 2021. Jeremiah 49 to 50 lists many promises of the LORD God Almighty regarding Israel and her surrounding enemies which make it clear He is in control and will destroy or bless nations as He chooses according to their past, present and future obedience and His purposes for the End Times. For example, Elam on the Persian Gulf, which God will batter, scatter and shatter (49:34-57), "but in days to come I will bless Elam with great success again" (49:39). Also, "A new day is coming. At that time the people of Israel and Judah will gather together. They will come in tears to Me... They will enter into the covenant I make with them. It will last forever. It will never be forgotten. My people have been like lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them down the wrong path... They have forgotten that I am their true resting place" (50:4-6). "I will forgive the people [the remnant] I have spared" (50:20).

Luke 16:19-31 gives the parable of Jesus about the rich man and the beggar who after death were separated by a great chasm. The beggar, who had trusted in the Word of God, was with Father Abraham. Jesus warned that many "will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead", clearly referring to Himself.

Almighty God, thank you for Your repeated calls to stay obedient to You and the many times you forgave those who wander from the Truth and even changed the fortunes of whole nations. May the world know today that obedience to You and faith in Your resurrected Son, Jesus Christ, will lead to eternal fellowship with Father Abraham and the faithful who have gone before. Amen.

7th September 2021. Joshua 12:6-24 records the land on the east bank of the River Jordan that Moses conquered for some of the tribes of Israel to inhabit (v.6). This is followed by a detailed list of 31 kings who were conquered by the Israelites on the west bank under Joshua (v.7-24). The next 9 chapters give details of the conquering, in a short time, of the remaining land in Canaan that God promised for the Israelites. "Not one of the LORD's promises failed" (21:45).

Mark 4:30-34 is the parable Jesus told of the mustard seed. "What can we say God's Kingdom is like? What story can we use to explain it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed planted in the ground. But when you plant the seed, it grows. It becomes the largest of all garden plants. Its branches are so big that birds can rest in its shade." Using many stories [like this], Jesus spoke the word to them. He told them as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a story. But when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything."

Dear God Almighty, help us to take in and understand these words recorded in the Old and New Testaments. Help us to realise that Your earthly and heavenly kingdoms can only be established by believers and their leaders who are obedient to You and Your Son, Jesus the Christ. Enable us, through the promised power of Your Holy Spirit, to learn and teach and preach Your word for today. Open our eyes to see how quickly You respond in these urgent times to prepare the way for Jesus to return and establish Your rule. For His sake, who shed His blood for us. Amen.

8th September 2021. 1 Kings 10:24. "People from the whole world wanted to meet Solomon in person. They wanted to see for themselves [to hear, KJV] how wise God had made him."

Galatians 3:26-29. "You are all children of God by believing in Christ Jesus. All of you who were baptized into Christ have 'put on Christ'... There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free person. There is neither male nor female. Because you belong to Christ Jesus, you are all one in Him. You who belong to Christ are Abraham's seed. You will receive [as heirs, KJV] what God has promised."

Father God, we praise you today for assuring us of our inheritance in Christ as sons and daughters of Abraham, in unity with all believers whatever their race, status or sex. Help us to reject traditions that hinder our salvation, or ignore how people judge us because of our backgrounds or whether we were born male or female. May we learn from Scripture divine wisdom about who You are and who we really are when we 'put on Christ'. So enable us to take up our calling to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, that the whole world will want to see and hear for themselves this same wisdom of God. Amen.

9th September 2021. Deuteronomy 8:1-3. God gave this warning to His people through Moses: "Make sure you follow every command I am giving you today. Then you will live. You will increase your numbers. You will enter the land and take it as your own. It's the land the LORD promised with an oath to your people long ago. Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way. He guided you in the desert for these 40 years. He wanted to take your pride away. He wanted to put you to the test and know what was in your hearts. He wanted to see whether you would obey His commands. He took your pride away. He let you go hungry. Then he gave you manna to eat... He tested you to teach you that man does not live only on bread. He also lives on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."

1 John 2:28 gives this warning to God's people today through John: "Dear children, remain joined to Christ. Then when He comes, we can be bold. We will not be ashamed to meet Him when He comes."

Dear Father, praise and thank you for Your constant love, mercy, purpose and provision from the beginning of time. Put the longing in our hearts to obey your spoken and written word and the teachings of Jesus, our Saviour and His apostles. Encourage us to feed daily on your spiritual food and "remain joined to Christ". Enable us to prepare for His coming return by sharing Your Good News of Salvation in Christ alone whilst there is time to increase the numbers of Your people to meet Him without shame when He comes. Test us and enable us to fulfil Your heart's desire! Amen.

10th September 2021. Isaiah 57:10-21. Isaiah speaks God's truth to His sinful people. "All of your efforts wore you out. But you would not say, 'It is hopeless.' ...You have not remembered Me. You do not even care about Me. (v.10-11) "I live in a high and holy place. But I also live with anyone who turns away from his sins. I live with anyone who is not proud. I give new life to him. I give it to anyone who turns away from his sins. I will not find fault with My people forever. I will not always be angry with them. ... I turned my face away from them because I was angry. But they kept on wanting their own way. I have seen what they have done. But I will heal them. I will guide them. And I will comfort them just as I did before. Then the people of Israel who are sorry for their sins will praise Me. I will give perfect peace to those who are far away and those who are near. And I will heal them. But ... there is no peace for those who are evil." (v.15-21)

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 reminds us "There is one body. But it has many parts. Even though it has many parts, they make up one body. It is the same with Christ. We were all baptized by one Holy Spirit into one body. It did not matter whether we were Jews or Greeks, slaves or free people. We have all been given the same Spirit to drink into."

Lord Jesus thank You for Your sacrifice on the cross that brings our Father God's salvation through the resurrection power of Your Spirit. Forgive us for the times He turns His face from us when we go our own hopeless way. Comfort us and unite us in the peace of loving, worshipping and serving You this day. Amen.

13th September 2021. Deuteronomy 24:17-22 confirms God's concern for widows, orphans and aliens in our society. God's people must offer them justice (v.17) and surplus food at harvest time (v.19-21). "Then the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do... Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I am commanding you to do those things" (v.22).

Acts 22:21-29 explains how Paul was offered justice in the midst of persecution because he was a Roman citizen.

Merciful Heavenly Father, thank you for revealing Your heart of love and mercy towards the vulnerable in society. Thank you that this includes those who are persecuted for their faith, even leaders of Your Kingdom on Earth, like Paul. Help us to realise as servants of Jesus our Lord and Saviour, we are saved from our slavery to the sin of our old lives and we have been promised justice and provision and a purpose in life through the resurrection power of Jesus Himself. Grant us the compassion of Christ to minister to the needy and faith to trust in His Spirit for their needs. May our calling in ministry, whether humble or mighty, witness to Your mercy and love with provision sufficient for our needs, so that we can impact the world in the power of Your Spirit, to prepare the way for the return of our Messiah. May Your mercy and our understanding of the Good News of Jesus overcome weak faith and rebellion against Your commands as we await His return. For the sake of Jesus who suffered and died for our sins. Amen.

14th September 2021. Job 19 records how Job suffered the judgement of one of his friends (v.1-3) as well as feeling shut off from God (v.7), walking in darkness without hope (v.8-10) and assuming God is angry with him (v.11). He complains he has lost the support of family and friends (v.13-19) and suffers ill health (v.20). And yet his faith holds strong as he declares those famous words, "I know that my Redeemer lives. In the end He will stand on the earth. After my skin has been destroyed, in my body I will still see God. I myself will see Him with my own eyes. I will see Him, and He will not be a stranger to me. How my heart longs for that day!" (v.25-27).

1 John 5 begins with "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born again because of what God has done." And continues with, "I am writing these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God. I am doing it so you will know that you have eternal life. There is one thing we can be sure of when we come to God in prayer. If we ask anything in keeping with what he wants, he hears us. If we know that God hears what we ask for, we know that we have it."

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the faith of Job recorded for us in the midst of his despair when he feared he had lost Your respect as well as the respect of his friends and family. In the midst of "walking in darkness without hope" or suffering persecution or ill health, reassure us of Your love, not anger. Hear and answer our prayers, that we may we know our salvation is through our Redeemer Jesus, and we are born again with the promise of eternal life. Amen.

15th September 2021. Genesis 19 describes how Lot, the nephew of Abraham, greeted and welcomed two angels. God had sent them to visit Sodom, whose sin, God told Abraham, "is so bad that I will go down and see for Myself" (18:20). When Lot invited them into his house, sinful men 'came from every part of the city of Sodom. Young and old men alike surrounded the house. They called out to Lot. They said, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us. We want to have sex with them." ' (19:4-5). The two angels ordered Lot and his family to leave Sodom immediately. They said, "There has been a great cry to the LORD against the people of this city. So He has sent us to destroy it" (19:13).

Revelation 22:12-16 records the words of Jesus. "Look! I am coming soon! ...I will reward each person for what he has done ... I am the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes. They will have the right to come to the Tree of Life. They will be allowed to go through the gates into the city. Outside the city are the dogs and those who practice witchcraft. Outside are also those who commit sexual sins and murder. Those who worship statues of gods, and everyone who loves and does what is false, are outside too. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this witness for the churches."

Heavenly Father, may the words from the Holy Bible witness to the truth of these End Times. Help Your people to recognise and welcome Your angels and others who support the Truth of Your Word today and grant freedom of expression to let the words speak for themselves and reap a harvest of souls with times of revival. Amen.

16th September 2021. 1 Kings 12&13 records how, in the year 975 BC, the ten northern tribes of Israel rebelled against King Rehoboam, grandson of King David, who ruled over Jerusalem and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Rehoboam raised up 180,000 loyal men to fight against the northern tribes of Israel (12:21). But a messenger from God came. "Do not go up to fight against your brothers. I want every one of you to go back home. Things have happened exactly the way I planned them." So the fighting men obeyed the LORD's message and went home again (12:22-24). That same year, the northern tribes of Israel built golden calves and altars for the people to worship and appointed priests who were not Levites (12:33). But a man of God visited one of the altars and told them that "A son named Josiah will be born into the royal family of David... Josiah will sacrifice the priests of [your] high places on you... This altar will be broken to pieces!" (13:2-4).

Romans 3:1-4, Paul asks, "Is there any advantage in being a Jew? ...There is great value in every way! The Jews have been given the very words of God. What if some Jews did not believe? Will the fact that they do not have faith keep God from being faithful? Not at all! God is true, even if every human being is a liar."

Thank You Heavenly Father, that Paul, a Jew, could see from the Old Testament writings the importance of God's plan to establish the throne of David in Jerusalem where Israel's Saviour died 1000 years later to save the world from sin – and will return one day soon. Help us to see and trust Your plans, without going to war! Amen.

17th September 2021. Jeremiah 33:22-26 again confirms God's purpose for the two southern Israelite tribes of Judah and Benjamin centred on Jerusalem. "Here is what I will do for My servant David. And here is what I will do for the Levites who serve Me. I will make their children after them as many as the stars in the sky. And I will make them as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. It will be impossible to count them... I will bless My people with great success again. I will love them with tender love."

Matthew 24&25 records the words of Jesus regarding the End Times. "You will hear about wars. You will also hear people talking about future wars. Do not be alarmed. Those things must happen. But the end still isn't here. Nation will fight against nation. Kingdom will fight against kingdom. People will go hungry. There will be earthquakes in many places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then people will hand you over to be treated badly and killed. All nations will hate you because of Me. At that time, many will turn away from their faith... Because evil will grow, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. This Good News of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world... Then the end will come." (24:4-14). Then Jesus told the parable of the talents about those servants who were faithful in many ways and those who were not. He declared that the unfaithful servants will be thrown into darkness and there will be much weeping (15:14-30).

Father God. Thank You for Your promised faithfulness to Jews and Gentiles who are faithful to You. Help us to live in these difficult times to teach Your truth and preach the Good News of Jesus and prepare for His return to Jerusalem soon. Amen.

20th September 2021. Psalm 67. "May God show us Your favour and bless us... Then Your ways will be known on earth. All nations will see that You have the power to save... May all of the people on Earth praise You. May the nations be glad and sing with joy. For You rule the people of the earth fairly. You guide the nations of the earth... May all the peoples praise You. Then the land will produce its crops and God, our God, will bless us... People from one end of the Earth to the other will fear [respect] Him."

Romans 14:9-13 says, "Christ died and came back to life. He did this to become the Lord of both the dead and the living. Now then, who are you to judge your brother or sister? Why do you look down on them? We will all stand in God's courtroom to be judged. It is written, 'You can be sure that I live,' says the Lord. 'And you can be just as sure that every knee will bow down in front of Me. Every tongue will tell the truth to God.' (Isaiah 45:23) So we will all have to explain to God the things we have done. Let us stop judging one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put anything in your brother's way that would make him trip and fall."

Heavenly Father, may our focus today be on worshipping You and seeking Your mercy to bless us and Your people. Forgive us for failing to witness that Jesus Christ our Saviour died for us all. Help us to stop judging fellow believers and truly believe "You rule the people of the earth fairly and guide them" in love.

Help us to apply this to those around us and freely share the compassion of Christ through the resurrection life we have been given at such great cost. Help us to encourage those who are growing in faith and using the gifts of the Spirit for today's needs so that "all nations will see that You have the power to save." Amen.

21st September 2021. Psalm 36 begins with "Here are the words God has given me to say about the evil ways of anyone who sins. He doesn't have any respect for God. He praises himself so much that he cannot see his sin or hate it. His mouth speaks words that are evil and false. He has stopped being wise. He has stopped doing good." However, the psalmist quickly turns to praise of our LORD God Almighty. "LORD, your love is as high as the heavens... You are as holy as the mountains are high. You are as honest as the oceans are deep... You have the fountain of life. We are filled with light because you give us [Your] light. Keep on loving those who know you! Keep on doing right to those whose hearts are honest! Do not let the feet of those who are proud step on me. Do not let the hands of those who are evil drive me away."

Philippians 3:1-3 urges believers, "Brothers and sisters, be joyful because you belong to the Lord... Watch out for those dogs [who] do evil things... We worship God by the power of His Spirit. We boast about what Christ Jesus has done. We do not put our trust in our weak human nature."

Dear heavenly Father, we note from these words of the choice that evil people have to sin or repent. But we admit before You that we, your children, are also free to sin and are easily tempted. May I be quick to praise and worship You and thank you for Your "life" and "light" and for "loving" and "doing right" through "what Christ Jesus has done". Save me from those who seek to "step on us" or who seek to "drive me away" from trusting You and "doing good". Amen.

22nd September 2021. Ezekiel 13:13-23 warned God's people 2600 years ago whilst in exile: "The LORD and King speaks. He says, 'When I am burning with anger, I will send a powerful wind. Hailstones and heavy rains will come. They will fall with great force. I will tear down the wall you prophets painted [whitewashed]... You who painted it will be gone too. You prophets of Israel prophesied to Jerusalem. You saw visions of peace for its people. But there wasn't any peace... Then you will know that I am the LORD... When you told them lies, you made them lose all hope. You [even] advised sinful people not to turn from their evil ways... I will save My people from your powerful hands. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

Galatians 3:11-14 reminds us, "Scripture says, 'Those who are right with God will live by faith' (Habakkuk 2:4). The Law is not based on faith. In fact, it is just the opposite. It teaches that 'the one who does those things will live by them' (Leviticus 18:5). Christ sets us free from the curse of the Law. He did it by becoming a curse for us. It is written, 'Everyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse' (Deuteronomy 21:23). Christ Jesus set us free so that the blessing given to Abraham would [also] come to non-Jews through Christ. He did it so that we might receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by believing in Christ."

Father God, save Your people from the powerful hands of those who tell us lies, who whitewash over walls built without foundations and fail to warn sinful people to turn from their evil ways. Renew our hope with the call to live by faith in Jesus Christ who promised us His Holy Spirit to guide us and bless us. For His sake. Amen.

23rd September 2021. Proverbs 1:1-7 clarifies the aim of Solomon to think and live wisely and avoid crime. "Proverbs teach you wisdom and train you... They lead to what is right and honest and fair. They give understanding to childish [simple, KJV] people. They give knowledge and good sense to those who are young. Let wise people [also] listen and add to what they have learned." Solomon begins with "Respect [fear, KJV] for the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. But foolish people hate wisdom and training [discipline, NIV; instruction, KJV]."

Revelation 12:1-12 portrays a pregnant woman and a huge red dragon. "The dragon stood in front of the woman waiting to eat her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son. He will rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was taken up to God and to His throne... There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon... The great dragon was thrown down to Earth, and his angels with him. The dragon is that old serpent called the devil, or Satan. He leads the whole world down the wrong path. Then I [John] heard a loud voice in Heaven. 'Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God have come. The authority of His Christ has come... because the Lamb gave his life's blood for them... The devil is very angry. He knows his time is short.' "

Father God, thank you for providing these teachings and visions to understand life on Earth and in Heaven, in the past, present and future. Grant us Your wisdom as you train, discipline and instruct us. Also Your Holy Spirit power promised by Jesus to extend Your Kingdom in His love, during these last days of wickedness by the enemy in his anger. Amen.

24th September 2021. Ecclesiastes 3:1-14 records these famous words. "There's a time for everything that is done on Earth... There's a time to be born, to die; to plant, to pull up; to kill, to heal; to tear down, to build up; to cry, to laugh; to be sad, to dance; to scatter stones, to gather them; to hug, not to hug; to search, to stop searching; to keep, to throw away; to tear, to mend; to be silent, to speak; to love, to hate; for war, for peace. What does the worker get for his hard work? I have seen the heavy load God has put on men. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also given men a sense of what He has been doing down through the ages. But they cannot completely understand what He has done from the beginning to the end... God does that so men will respect [revere, NIV; fear, KJV] Him."

1 Corinthians 2:1-5. Paul testifies, "Brothers and sisters, when I came to you I didn't come with fancy words or great wisdom. I preached to you the truth about God's love. I made up my mind to pay attention to only one thing while I was with you. That one thing was Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. When I came to you, I was weak and afraid and trembling all over. I didn't preach my message with clever and compelling words. As I preached, the Holy Spirit showed his power. That was so you would believe not because of human wisdom but because of God's power."

Heavenly Father, forgive us for trying to understand life and all creation and help us instead to know the Creator and seek Your wisdom and purpose day by day. Above all, we seek to know and love and worship You and our Saviour Jesus Christ. So grant us Holy Spirit wisdom and power to proclaim Your truth and deliver us from worldly wisdom. Amen.

18th October 2021. Psalm 78:51-72 gives some of the teaching by Asaph, King David's choir leader. It reminds the people of Israel how God struck down the fist-born males of Ham's descendants who settled in Egypt but led the Israelites, the descendents of Shem, safely out of slavery, "like sheep through the desert, to settle in the Promised Land of Canaan" (v.51-52). (Ham and Shem were sons of Noah along with Japheth, who settled in Europe.) But "they put God to the test and refused to obey the Most High God and did not keep His laws" (v.56). However, "He chose the tribe of Judah ... and His servant David. He took him from the sheep pens ... and made him shepherd of Israel, His special people" (v.68-71).

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 gives some of the teaching by Paul the apostle. He reminds the Jewish believers in Christ about "our people who lived long ago. They were all led by the [pillar of] cloud and walked through the Red Sea ... and ate the same supernatural food [manna]" (v.1-3). But "God was not pleased with most of them. Their bodies were scattered all over the desert" (v.5). "These things happened to them as an example to us and were written down to warn us... So be careful. When you think you are standing firm, you might fall" (v.11-12).

Thank You Heavenly Father for writing these words down for us in the Old and New Testaments as warnings and examples for us today in case we fall. Forgive us when we disobey Your truth and stumble in our walk with You. Thank you for Your mercy in Christ's sacrifice for our sins. Help us to live to Your glory in His resurrection power promised to all who believe He is Your Son and Saviour of the world. For His sake. Amen.

19th October 2021. Isaiah 34&35 refers to God's judgement on the nations. But Isaiah confirms that God's judgement will be followed by our redemption. And in the meantime, Isaiah asks God to encourage the faithful believers. "Strengthen the hands of those who are weak. Help those whose knees give way. Say to those whose hearts are afraid, 'Be strong. Do not fear. Your God will come' (35:3-4). Then only those who are pure and clean can travel on 'The Way of Holiness' and only those who lead a holy life can use it (35:8). The redeemed of the Lord will walk there... everlasting joy will crown their heads. They will obtain joy and gladness. And sorrow and sighing will flee away" (35:9-10, NKJV).

Revelation 2:4-7 Jesus warns, "Here is something I hold against you. You do not have as much love as you had at first. Remember how far you have fallen! Turn away from your sins. Do the things you did at first. If you don't, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place... Those who have ears should listen to what the Holy Spirit says to the churches. I will allow those who overcome to eat from the tree of life in God's paradise."

Heavenly Father, thank you for Your scriptures that speak of Your truth and remind us of what Your faithful people did in the past, both right and wrong. Help us to walk in "The Way of Holiness" in these difficult times with our eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus our Saviour with renewed love for Him and His people and with hope of full redemption and a new Heaven and Earth with its "everlasting joy". Amen.

20th October 2021. Ezekiel 5 records the condemnation of Almighty God and His punishment for His special people Israel because of their great sinfulness. He tells His prophet Ezekiel, "I have placed Jerusalem in the centre of the nations with countries all around it. But its people are sinful and have refused to obey my laws and rules" (5:5-6). "I will punish you in the sight of the nations. I will do to you what I have never done before and will never do again. This is because you worship statues of gods. I hate them!" (5:8-9). But in His mercy, God also told Ezekiel to tell the people, "I will gather you from the nations. I will bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered. I will give you back the land of Israel. They will return to it and will remove all its statues of evil gods... They will be careful to keep My laws. They will be My people and they will be My God" (11:17-20).

Acts 7:49-60 records the speech by Stephen in Jerusalem over 600 years after the time of Ezekiel. Stephen warned that the prophet Amos, who lived 200 years before Ezekiel, said, "You lifted up the place where Molech was worshiped. You lifted up the star of your god Rephan. You made statues of them to worship. So I will send you away from your country" (Amos 5:25-27). Then Stephen told them, "You people! You won't obey! You are stubborn! You will not listen! You are just like your people of long ago! You always oppose the Holy Spirit!"

Lord Jesus, prepare the way for many more believers to welcome your Second Coming to Jerusalem. Wake up and shake up Your Church to repent and proclaim now the Good News of salvation for all who put their trust in You as the Son of God instead of trusting in man-made attempts to save the world from pollution, crime, corruption and terror. Deliver us from false teaching and make us obedient to Your Spirit here on Earth. Amen.

21st October 2021. Judges Chapters 4&5 records the time (1300 BCE) when Israel "once again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD God Almighty" (4:1). This was after God had delivered them from the control of the Moabites and gave them 80 years of peace in the land. "So the LORD gave them over to the power of Jabin the king of Canaan... He treated the people of Israel very badly for 20 years. So they cried out to the LORD for help" (4:2-3). Israel's judges were often powerless to defend their land because they failed to unite the people because of their tribal background. However, God used Israel's prophetess, Deborah, to unite Israel and "God brought Jabin, under Israel's control" (4:23). Deborah sang a song of praise to the LORD. "The princes in Israel lead the way and the people follow them [willingly, KJV]... I will sing to the LORD, 'He is the God of Israel'... Lord, may all your enemies be destroyed. But may those who love You be like the morning sun" (5:2,3,31). So there was peace for 40 years.

Romans 1:17-21. Paul quotes from another Old Testament prophet (Habakkuk 2:4), "The righteous will live by faith." Paul adds, "God shows His anger against all the godless and evil things people do who say no to the truth [suppress the truth, NIV]... The truth about God is plain to them... Ever since the world was created it has been possible to see the qualities of God... So people have no excuse for what they do. They knew God but did no honour Him."

Heavenly Father, raise up men and women of God for your people to unite and willingly follow, whatever our tribal background. Suppress evil and grant us the strength to live by faith and power to speak boldly the Good News of Jesus Christ so that Your truth is no longer suppressed in our schools, churches, businesses, governments or on the streets of our nation. Amen.

22nd October 2021. Psalm 119: 41-46. "LORD, show me Your faithful love. Save me as You have promised. Then I will answer those who make fun of me, because I trust in Your word. Help me always to tell the truth about how faithful You are. I have put my hope in Your laws. I will always obey Your law, for ever and ever. I will lead a full and happy life, because I have tried to obey Your rules... I praise Your commands, and I love them. I meditate on them."

Philippians 2:12-16. Paul says, "My dear friends, you have always obeyed God. You obeyed while I was with you. And you have obeyed even more while I am not with you. So 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. Among the people of the world you shine like stars in the heavens. You shine as you hold out to them the word of life."

Heavenly Father thank You for the faithful words of the psalmist as an example to us to "hope in Your laws" and value and obey them and meditate on them. Thank you, too, for Paul's testimony of the faithful and obedient believers at Philippi. Help us to "plan and act in keeping with Your good purpose" and become "children of God without fault in a sinful and evil world". May we then "shine like stars" in the world and "hold

out to them Your word of life" even to "those who make fun of me/us". In the name of Jesus and for His sake. Amen.

25th October 2021. Job 40-41 records God's words to Job after he admitted he was unworthy. "Get ready to stand up for yourself... Would you dare to claim that I am not being fair? Would you judge Me in order to make yourself seem right? Is your arm as powerful as Mine is?" He adds to Job's shame by suggesting he has behaved as if "your own right hand can save you!" (40:7-14). Job said, "My ears had heard about You. But now my own eyes have seen You... I am really sorry [repent, KJV] for what I said about You." The remainder of the book is about God's forgiveness and restoration with Himself and God's rebuke for Job's friends who tried but failed to help him recover from despair.

Acts 5:12-42 describes how the apostles performed many miracles in Jerusalem in the name of Jesus with signs and wonders (v.12-16). The Jewish leaders became jealous of the crowds that gathered and put the apostles in jail. However, an angel of the LORD released them and told them to go back to the Temple area and "tell the people all about this new life". The leaders found them and told them, "We gave you clear orders not to teach in the name of Jesus!" They replied, "We must obey God rather than men!" (v.25-29). Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law told the leaders, "If it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men. You will only find yourself fighting against God" (v.39).

Father God, forgive us for the times we have hindered "telling the people all about this new life" in Jesus. Like Job, we live our life as if "your own right hand can save you" and wonder why we despair. Deliver us from our own ideas and those around us and help us listen to You! Minister to us through angels and wise men like Gamaliel, so we can stand up against opposition. Amen.

26th October 2021. Jeremiah 51 records God's condemnation of the unholy nations that surrounded His people Israel, and Babylon who destroyed Jerusalem and killed many Jews, taking a remnant into captivity. God tells Jeremiah, "Babylon must fall." (v.49.) He then He gives a message to Jeremiah for the remnant of Jews at the end of their 70 years in exile to get ready to leave. "Do not wait!" He also commands them, "Remember Me and think about Jerusalem!" (v.50). But the people complained, "No-one honours us any more. People make fun of us... People from other lands have entered the holy places of the LORD's house." (v.51.) But God said, "A new day is coming!" (v.52).

Philippians 3:12-16 says, "I have not yet been made perfect. But I move on to take hold of what Christ Jesus took hold of me for. Brothers and sisters, I don't consider that I have taken hold of it yet. But... I forget what is behind me. I push hard toward what is ahead of me. I move on toward the goal to win the prize. God has appointed me to win it. The heavenly prize is Christ Jesus himself. All of us who are grown up in the faith should see things that way. Maybe you think differently about something. But God will make it clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already reached."

Dear God, in times of difficulty, help us to remember You and think of Your purpose for Jerusalem, past, present and future. Despite the shame and punishment that Jesus suffered there on behalf of the sins of His people, He was faithful to the end in His calling to provide salvation for all who believe He is Your Son. Help us to forget what is behind, believe a new day is coming, and push forward! Amen.

27th October 2021. Proverbs 11:19-20 declares that the truly righteous person gains eternal life but the one who pursues evil receives eternal death. Why? Because the LORD God Almighty detests a person with a twisted heart but delights in those whose ways are blameless.

John 15:1-8. Jesus said that He is the true vine. His Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch joined to Him that does not bear fruit. He trims [prunes] every branch that does bear fruit. Then it will bear even more fruit. Jesus told His followers that they were already clean because of the word He had spoken to them. "Remain joined to Me, and I will remain joined to you. No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain joined to the vine. In the same way, you cannot bear fruit unless you remain joined to Me. I am the vine. You are the branches. Anyone who remains joined to Me, and I to them, will bear a lot of fruit. You cannot do anything without Me. Anyone who does not remain joined to Me, is like a branch that is thrown away and dries up. Branches like those are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain joined to Me and my words remain in you, ask for anything you wish. And it will be given to you. When you bear a lot of fruit, it brings glory to My Father. It shows that you are My disciples."

Heavenly Father, thank you for these words that reveal how the choices we make in this world affect us in eternity. Lord Jesus, You died to set us free from our selfish ways. May Your promised Holy Spirit keep us joined to You in such a way that our lives will show much fruit to bring glory to God – in our meeting places and in the world around us. Amen.

28th October 2021. Deuteronomy 7:1-6. God told Moses, "The LORD your God will bring you into the land. You are going to enter it and take it as your own. He will drive many nations out to make room for you... Do not make a peace treaty with them. Do not show them any mercy. Do not get married to any of them. Do not give your daughters to their sons. And do not take their daughters for your sons. If you do, those people will turn your children away from following the LORD God Almighty. Then your children will serve other gods. The LORD's anger will burn against you. It will quickly destroy you. So here is what you must do to those people. Break down their altars. Smash their sacred stones... Burn the statues of their gods in the fire. You are a holy nation. The LORD your God has set you apart for Himself. He has chosen you to be His special treasure."

1 John 2:28 to 3:1. The apostle John wrote, "Dear children, remain joined to Christ. Then when He comes, we can be bold. We will not be ashamed to meet Him when He comes. You know that God is right and always does what is right. And you know that everyone who does what is right has been born again because of what God has done. How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God! And that's what we really are!"

Father God Almighty, thank You for making clear we must marry only those You have chosen who believe in You. Help us to be bold, "joined to Christ" against sin as "children of God" and as "a holy nation". Continue to keep us free from sin so that "we will not be ashamed to meet Him when He comes". Amen.

29th October 2021. Exodus 6:1-5. Moses felt a failure and asked God why He had not yet saved the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. Then the LORD God Almighty spoke to Moses. "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. Because of My powerful hand, he will let the people of Israel go. Because of My mighty hand, he will drive them out of his country. I am the LORD God Almighty. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the Mighty God. But I did not show them the full meaning of my name, Yahweh, [Jehovah, KJV]. I also made my covenant with them. I promised to give them the land of Canaan. That is where they lived as outsiders [strangers, KJV]. Also, I have heard the groans of the Israelites. The Egyptians are keeping them as slaves. But I have remembered my covenant." These words convinced Moses that God had not forgotten His people or His promises, but had waited for His appointed time to act.

Revelation 11:10-12. The angel sent by Jesus told the apostle John, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy in this book. These things are about to happen. Let those who do wrong keep on doing wrong. Let those who are evil continue to be evil. Let those who do what is right keep on doing what is right. And let those who are holy continue to be holy. Look! I am coming soon! I bring My rewards with Me. I will reward each person for what he has done."

Lord Jesus, our Saviour, keep us strong and faithful and righteous in Your sight. Complete our part in the preparation for Your return to Jerusalem to save and rule the world at Father God's appointed time. In Your mercy, may many tens of thousands be saved in the meantime to welcome You at Your return. Amen.

1st November 2021. 1 Samuel 17:45-47. David stood boldly before Goliath and said, "You are coming to fight against me with a sword, a spear and a javelin. But I am coming against you in the name of Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty, who rules over all... The LORD does not save by using a sword or a spear. And everyone who is here will know it. The battle belongs to the LORD."

Revelation 12:4-12 records one of the visions given to the apostle John. "The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to have a baby. He wanted to eat her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son [Jesus]. He will rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was taken up to God and to His throne ... Michael and his angels fought against the dragon... But the dragon was not strong enough. He and his angels lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was thrown down to Earth, and his angels with him. The dragon is that old serpent called the devil, or Satan. He leads the whole world down the wrong path. Then a loud voice in Heaven said, 'Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God have come. The authority of His Christ [Messiah] has come... But how terrible it will be for earth and sea! The devil has come down to you. He is very angry. He knows his time is short.' "

Thank You Heavenly Father for the privilege of living at the time of fulfilment of Your Messiah's victory over Satan and His return to Earth to reign! Help us to stand boldly before our common enemy so that "everyone will know the battle belongs to the LORD". Overcome this day those who are persecuting Your people and are destroying this planet You created for us to look after. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

2nd November 2021. Psalm 138:6-8 (NKJV). King David wrote: "Though the LORD is on high, yet He regards the lowly. But the proud He knows [only] from afar. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me. You will stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand will save me.

The LORD will perfect that which concerns me. Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the works of Your hands!"

Matthew 21:12-16 (NIRV) records, 'Jesus entered the Temple area. He began chasing out all those who were buying and selling there... He said to them, "It is written that the Lord said, 'My house will be called a house where people can pray.' (Isaiah 56:7) But you are making it a den for robbers." (Jeremiah 7:11) Blind people and those who were disabled came to Jesus at the Temple. There He healed them. The chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things He did. They also saw the children in the Temple area shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" But when they saw all of this, they became angry.'

Lord Jesus, we see how King David knew that Father God rejects the proud and supports the lowly people just as You did when You turned out the rich traders in the Temple. Help us to be bold in standing up for the poor and needy against those who get angry if they cannot exploit the world for their own gain. Keep reminding us of the responsibility we have to care for the world we live in. "Do not forsake the works of Your hands!" This includes its people, especially the future generations, and those who are blind and disabled. Help us to reach those who seek Your salvation and to reject the selfishness of mankind. Amen.

3rd November 2021. Deuteronomy 5:6-21 gives the words of Yahweh, our LORD God Almighty, listing His Ten Commandments, 1500 years before the personal ministry of Jesus His Messiah who fulfilled every part of the Law before His sacrifice on the cross for our salvation. "Worship the Lord... Have no other gods... Do not misuse the name of the LORD... Observe the Sabbath... Honour your father and mother... Do not murder... Do not commit adultery... Do not steal... Do not lie... Do not envy your neighbour's possessions..."

Luke 22:40 & 46 give the last words of Jesus to His disciples on the Mount of Olives before He suffered and died on the cross as punishment for our sins. "Watch and pray that you do not fall into temptation." A second time he said, "Why are you sleeping? Get up! Watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation."

Heavenly Father thank you for these reminders how we have let You down and our Saviour down through disobedience and lack of self-discipline. We confess we let ourselves down and those around us when we sin or disobey. Help us to know and receive Your forgiveness and put the guilt of the past behind us. Help us to remain alert to the needs around us. So shake us up, wake us up and make us up to be Your ambassadors and examples of holiness! Empower us with Your Holy Spirit through the resurrection life made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus. May we be part of the preparation for His return as we worship, work and witness in these difficult Last Days. For Your glory and for the establishment of Your holy Law. Amen.

4th November 2021. Joshua 13:1 gives God's word to Joshua that in his old age "there are still very large areas of land to be taken over." The previous chapter summarises what had been achieved and the next 9 chapters list what had yet to be achieved!

John 17:20. Jesus prayed to His Father "for those who will believe in Me through their message..." meaning His teachings passed on by His disciples/apostles. This clearly gives the responsibility for us to act in reaching out to those God is calling into His Kingdom. So in fulfilling God's desire to save our families and others, we must fulfil our part in reaching them with the Gospel!

Revelation 22:12 gives the words of Jesus. "Look! I am coming soon! I bring my rewards with Me. I will reward each person for what he has done."

Thank You Jesus, for clarifying the words You prayed to Father God 2000 years ago that are more urgent than ever now. Help us to realise that God will bring others into Your Kingdom as we do our part in declaring the truth by whatever means is available today. For Your return is surely very soon and there is so much left to do! Thank you for the records where we read how successful Joshua was, despite his old age. We remember that the name of Joshua is the same as Your name – Jesus or Yeshua – and means "God's salvation". Thank You that in this name we declare the truth from God to extend Your Kingdom on Earth. Help us to understand how to live and communicate this Good News freely today without hindrance, so that many will be saved and welcome You back to Earth soon. For the sake of Your suffering on our behalf to save us that others might be saved. Amen.

5th November 2021. Proverbs 24:1-12 warns God's people "not to envy the wicked or desire their company" for their hearts plan violence while they make trouble with their lips (v.1). Life is built like a house through wisdom, understanding and knowledge. From this comes power, strength, guidance and victory (v.3). Do not end up "weak when trouble comes" (v.10). Then you will "save those who are being lead away

to death" and not need to say "but we did not know anything about this!" God knows what you are thinking and in His justice, "will pay every person back for what they have done" (v.11-12).

Romans 12:17-21 warns the followers of Jesus, "Do not pay back evil with evil. Be careful to do what everyone thinks is right. If possible, live in peace with everyone... Leave room for God to show His anger. It is written, 'I am the One who judges people. I will pay them back,' (Deuteronomy 32:35). Scripture says, 'If your enemies are hungry, give them food to eat. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink' (Proverbs 25:21) Do not let evil overcome you. Overcome evil by doing good."

Father God, grant us divine wisdom to avoid us being physically and spiritually "weak when trouble comes". In turn, help Your people to "save those who are being led away to death" both physical and spiritual. Enable us to "live in peace" and leave You to judge others. Help us live with the "power, strength, guidance and victory" of Jesus to "overcome evil by doing good" in love. Amen.

8th November 2021. Joshua 5:14 to 6:3 gives the start of the occupation of the west bank of Jordan in the Promised Land of Canaan, later called Israel. "The LORD God Almighty spoke to Joshua. 'I have handed Jericho over to you... March around the city once with all of your fighting men. In fact, do it for six days.' " Joshua, whose name means 'God's salvation', had the same name as Yeshua, the Hebrew name for Jesus, Israel's future Messiah or Christ.

Revelation 6:9-17 describes the vision given by Jesus, the Lamb of God, to His servant John. "I saw the souls of people who were killed because of God's word and their faithful witness. They called out in a loud voice. 'How long, Lord and King, holy and true... will you wait to judge those who live on Earth? How long will it be until you pay them back for killing us?' Then each of them was given a white robe. 'Wait a little longer... There are still more of your believing brothers and sisters who must be killed.' The sky rolled back like a scroll... Everyone hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. This included the kings of the earth and every slave... They called out 'Hide us from the anger of the Lamb!' "

Heavenly Father, do not let Your servants suffer without hope of Your promise of eternal salvation and glory. Expose the deceit of evil people and those who cheat to gain power. Thank you for Your servants Joshua and John who helped prepare the way of salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

9th November 2021. Psalm 37 encourages us with many positive words. "Do not be upset... Do not be jealous... Trust in the LORD and do good... Delight in the LORD... Commit your life to Him... Be still, patient and wait for the LORD to act... Turn away from anger..." (v.1-8). Also, "Turn from evil and do good..." (v.27). Again, "Wait for the LORD to act. Live as He wants you to" (v.34). King David ends with, "The LORD blesses those who do what is right [righteous, KJV]. He is their place of safety [refuge]" (v.39).

Colossians 4:2-6. Paul writes while in prison, "Spend a lot of time in prayer. Always be watchful and thankful. Pray for us too. Pray that God will open a door for our message. Then we can preach the mystery of Christ. Because I preached it, I am being held by chains. Pray that I will preach it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders. Make the most of every opportunity. Let the words you speak always be full of grace... Then you will know how to answer everyone."

Heavenly Father, thank You for the amazing teaching in our Bibles from Your servants David and Paul. Help us not to be upset when we experience stress in times of difficulty. May our trust and delight be in You as we wait patiently for You to act. Keep our thoughts from evil and help us to do good. Encourage us to spend more time in prayer and be watchful of events around us. We pray for opportunities to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ – for ourselves and others in ministry. Help us to understand and preach sensitively the "mystery of Christ" in love and wisdom. Provide open doors for the messages You give us, whatever the cost in following Jesus. Be our refuge and protect us from persecution. Amen.

10th November 2021. Jeremiah 35 records the story of the Racabite family who were faithful to God and to their forefathers in refusing to drink wine or to build houses but lived in tents. They said, "We have obeyed everything" (v.1-10). Jeremiah the prophet was told by God to instruct the Racabites to witness about their faithfulness. Then God sent a message to the people of Israel, "Will you never learn a lesson? Will you never obey My words? ...I have spoken to you again and again. In spite of this, you have not obeyed Me" (v.12-16). Then God promised that the Racabites "will always have a man from the family to serve Me" (v.19).

1 Corinthians 9:18-23. Paul asks, "What reward do I get? ...I do it [preach] to win as many as I can to Christ. To the Jews I became like a Jew. To those not under the Law I became like one not under the Law. [But] I am not free from God's Law. I am under Christ's law... I have become all things to all people so that in all possible ways I might save some. I do all of that because of the Good News [of Jesus the Christ]."

Thank You heavenly Father for these examples of faithful people who obeyed wise traditions and the Old Testament Law without thought of selfish gain. Keep us faithful to obey our own godly forefathers as well as the teachings of Jesus our Saviour which He based on Your Ten Commandments. Thank you for the privilege and blessing of serving You, like Paul, as a witness to others without thought of selfish gain. Amen.

11th November 2021. Isaiah 15 to 16 records the judgement of Almighty God on the Moabites, descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot. They had refused to worship Yahweh, the one true God, and the prophet Isaiah warned of the destruction of their nation east of Israel (16:12-14). This happened around 700 B.C.E. They were given three years to repent during which time they prayed to their shrine but their god could not help them. Meanwhile, Isaiah prophesied, "A man from the royal house of David will sit on Judah's throne" (16:5) This refers to Israel's coming Messiah, Jesus the Christ, who is God's salvation plan for the world.

Acts 10 records the salvation of a Roman army officer, Cornelius, who believed and worshipped the one true God. Peter, the former disciple of Jesus, was told by God to visit him and speak to him even though he was not a Jew. Peter told him, "I now realize how true it is that God treats everyone the same. He accepts people from every nation. He accepts all who have respect for Him and do what is right. You [already] know the message God sent to the people of Israel. It is the Good News of peace through Jesus Christ." While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. Some Jewish believers had come with Peter. They were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on those who were not Jews.

Thank You again heavenly Father, for these Bible records for us to rejoice that You treat everyone the same and give ample warnings and time to repent. Thank You for sending us our Saviour Jesus who died for our sins and gave us His Spirit of power and peace for today. Amen.

12th November 2021. Exodus 6 summarises part of the history of God's people Israel. It gives God's promise to Moses to deliver His people out of Egypt (v.1). God then told Moses to share this good news of His salvation, which was promised many years before to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (later called Israel) (v.4-8). But the people of Israel did not listen at first because of the persecution of their cruel slave masters. Moses said to the Lord God Almighty, "The people will not listen to me, so why should Pharaoh listen?" (v.12). The family history is then given of Reuben, Jacob's firstborn son. It includes Aaron, the brother of Moses, whom God called to speak to Pharaoh on behalf of Moses and the people of Israel (7:1).

Matthew 17:1-13 describes the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain top. Moses and the prophet Elijah met with Him there and spoke with Him. On the way down from the mountain, Jesus told His disciples that a new Elijah had come to prepare the way for the ministry of Jesus who was His cousin John. It was this prophet John who baptised Jesus in the river Jordan to begin His three years ministry to bring God's salvation to the people of Israel as their Messiah. He would then, through His sacrifice and resurrection, offer salvation to the rest of the world as Jesus the Christ.

Lord God, thank You for these amazing words which reveal Your purposes over the centuries for Your special people Israel and for the rest of the world. Keep us listening and watchful in these cruel times for those You have called to prepare the way for Christ's return to establish His Kingdom on earth. For His sake. Amen.

15th November 2021. 2 Chronicles 34 to 36 tells of the good done by King Josiah when the lost book of God's Laws was read aloud for the people to repent from their evil ways. After his death, the prophet Jeremiah established the tradition of singing laments (sad songs) to remember Josiah. But the people returned to their evil ways under their new kings. "The LORD sent word to His people again and again. He took pity on them and His Temple in Jerusalem. But God's people made fun of His messengers and hated His words. Finally, the LORD's burning anger was stirred up against His people. The Lord brought the king of Babylonia against them" (36:15-17).

Galatians 4:8-11. Paul wrote, "At one time you didn't know God. But now you know God. Even better, God knows you. So why are you turning back to those weak and worthless beliefs? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I am afraid for you."

Father God, we have just lamented the sacrifices of innocent lives in two world wars from which You delivered us. Forgive us for turning back to "weak and worthless beliefs" instead of obeying Your Laws and trusting in Christ our Saviour. Do not let Your people ignore the writings of Paul and the other apostles and the Old Testament prophets. As we remember "special days and months and seasons and years" may we remember the sacrifice of the innocent life of Jesus to set us free from our selfish ways. Amen.

16th November 2021. Isaiah 22:8-13 tells of the time when Jerusalem was surrounded by its enemies. God's people put their trust in the weapons stored in the Palace and the water stored up in the Lower Pool and the Old Pool and the strong walls they had built from demolished houses. "But you didn't look to the One ...who planned everything long ago. The LORD who rules over all called out to you at that time. The Lord told you to sob and cry ...Instead, you are enjoying yourselves at wild parties! ...You are saying, 'Let us eat and drink, because tomorrow we will die.' " Isaiah warned them, "Your sin can never be paid for as long as you people live."

Philippians 2:12-16 gives the words of Paul from prison. "My dear friends, you have always obeyed God. You obeyed while I was with you. And you have obeyed even more while I am not with you. So 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 children of God without fault in a sinful and evil world. You shine among the people of the world... as you hold out to them the word of life."

Oh God our Father, as we see weeping because of persecution, poverty and plague, whilst some of us eat, drink and hold parties, forgive us and help us to be true "children of God" to "shine among the people of the world" with Your "word of life". In the blessed name of Jesus. Amen.

17th November 2021. Malachi 3:6-18 says, "I am the LORD. I do not change. That is why I have not destroyed you... You have turned away from My rules and not obeyed them. You have lived that way ever since the days of your people long ago. Return to Me. Then I will return to you," says the LORD who rules over all. Those who had respect for the LORD talked with each another. And the LORD heard them... "They will belong to Me," says the LORD. "They will be My special treasure. I will spare them just as a loving father spares his son who serves him."

Revelation 18-19. John saw an angel coming down from Heaven who shouted, "Babylon the Great has fallen! She has become a home for every evil spirit... The traders of the world grew rich from her great wealth." Then John heard another voice from Heaven say, "Come out of her My people" (18:1-4). Then another mighty angel picked up a huge rock and threw it into the sea. "That is how the great city of Babylon will be shaken down" (18:21). After these things a huge crowd shouted "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God" (19:1).

Father God who rules over all. May our respect for You grow strong in these wicked days and talk of You to each other so that You may spare us as we obey You and not dwell with or trade with wicked people. Hear us shout "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God" as we believe Jesus our Messiah reigns! And help us to support all migrants who run away from wickedness. Amen.

18th November 2021. Exodus 21:28-30 gives one of many instructions given to Moses by Almighty God in addition to His Ten Commandments. "Suppose a bull kills a man or woman with its horns. Then you must kill the bull by throwing stones at it... The owner of the bull will not be held accountable. But suppose the bull has had the habit of attacking people. And suppose the owner has been warned but has not kept it fenced in. Then... the owner must also be put to death. But suppose payment is required of him instead. Then he can save his life by paying what is required." This reveals the mind of God from the beginning of time that punishment by death is what our sins deserve and payment can be made for freedom. 1500 years later, God sent His only Son, Jesus the Christ, to pay the price of our punishment by dying on the cross, so that all can be set free – for eternity – through faith in Him.

Galatians 3:11-14. "We know that no-one is made right with God [just] by keeping the Law. Scripture says, 'Those who are right with God will live by faith'... Christ Jesus set us free so that the blessing [promises] given to Abraham would come to Jews and non-Jews through faith in Christ. We receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by believing in Him", the Son of God, our Messiah (Christ) and Saviour.

So help us God our Father to truly believe that our faith in Christ alone brings freedom from the everlasting punishment we deserve and gains us eternal life with You! Help us to live in thanks and praise to You. Amen.

19th November 2021. Psalm 34:15-22. King David wrote, "The LORD looks with favour on those who are godly. His ears are open to their cry... Godly people cry out, and the LORD hears them. He saves them from all of their troubles. The LORD is close to those whose hearts have been broken. He saves those whose spirits have been crushed. Anyone who does what is right may have many troubles. But the LORD saves them from

all of them... Sinners will be destroyed by their own evil. The enemies of godly people will be judged. The LORD sets those who serve Him free. No one who goes to Him for safety will be judged."

John 15:12-17. Jesus said, "Here is My command. Love each other, just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than the one who gives his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command... I have told you everything I learned from My Father... I chose you. I appointed you to go and bear fruit. It is fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you anything you ask for in My name. Here is My command. Love each other."

Thank You heavenly Father for these reassuring words of Your servants King David and Messiah Jesus. This day we celebrate the lives of Fred and Lorna Morris who have departed this world and are now with You and their Saviour. Manna Publications volunteers around the world give witness to their faithful love and fruitful teaching. You appointed them to "go and bear fruit and it is fruit that will last". Thanks be to Jesus Christ, who suffered much to save His followers. Amen.

22nd November 2021. 2 Samuel 14 tells the story of how a 'wise woman from Tekoa' was used to prepared the way for Absalom, third son of King David, to be restored to Jerusalem. She told the king, "God doesn't take life away. Instead, He finds a way to bring back anyone who was driven away from Him" (v.14). She also told David, "You know what is good and what is evil. May the LORD your God be with you" (v.17). History reveals that Absalom, after living two years in Jerusalem, refused to visit his father (v.28) but conspired against him and set up his own kingdom at Hebron (15:10). This eventually led to his downfall, but in the meantime, King David suffered much because of the deceit of the 'wise woman from Tekoa'.

Luke 15:28-32 records the second part of the parable of the prodigal son. Jesus said, "The older brother became angry. He refused to go in. So his father went out and begged him. But he answered his father, 'Look! ...This son of yours wasted your money with prostitutes. Now he comes home. And for him you kill the fattest calf!' The father said, 'My son, this brother of yours was dead. And now he is alive again. He was lost. And now he is found.' "

Father God, in your mercy, may we and our rulers discern and learn what is good and what is deceitful. Spare Your people from unwise decisions and resentment and eventual downfall over what we think is right and wrong. Help us avoid the suffering caused by big ideas about what we want and think we deserve. Bring love, peace and unity in our nation. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

23rd November 2021. Jeremiah 50 gives a prophecy about Babylon and the Children of Israel who were exiles in that land. A 'nation from the north' would attack and destroy Babylon (v.3). God declared "At that time the people of Israel and Judah will gather together. They will come in tears to Me... They will ask how to get to Zion. Then they will turn their faces toward it. They will come and join themselves to Me. They will enter into the covenant I make with them. It will last forever. It will never be forgotten. My people have been like lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them down the wrong path" (v.4-6). "I will forgive the people [remnant] I have spared" (v.20).

1 Timothy 1:13-16. Paul testifies, "I used to speak evil things against Jesus. I tried to hurt His followers... But God showed me mercy... Our Lord poured out more and more of His grace on me. Along with it came faith and love from Christ Jesus... Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the worst sinner of all. But for that very reason, God showed me mercy... I was an example for those who would come to believe in Him. Then they would receive eternal life."

Thank You God for your truth revealed to Jeremiah and Paul. May Your people "come in tears" to You and live without guilt. Forgive those who have been "led down the wrong path". Bring revival in these Last Days. And may the world receive our testimony of Your grace, loving mercy and salvation in Christ Jesus. For His sake. Amen.

24th November 2021. Exodus 4:10-12. Moses spoke to the LORD God Almighty. "Oh, LORD, I have never been a good speaker. And I have not got any better since You spoke to me. I do not speak very well at all." The LORD said to him, "Who makes a man able to talk? Who makes him unable to hear or speak? Who makes him able to see? Who makes him blind? It is I, the LORD. Now go! I will help you speak. I will teach you what to say." But Moses said, "Lord, please send someone else to do it." Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses.

1 Corinthians 2:13-16. Paul says, "We do not use words taught to us by people. We use words taught to us by the Holy Spirit. We use the words of the Spirit to teach the truths of the Spirit. Some people do not have the Holy Spirit. They do not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God. Things like that are foolish to them. They cannot understand them. In fact, such things cannot be understood without the Spirit's

help. Everyone who has the Spirit can judge all things... It is written, 'Who can ever know what is in the LORD's mind?' (Isaiah 40:13). But we have the mind of Christ." Forgive us heavenly Father when we provoke You to anger with our doubts and fears.

Thank you for Your indwelling Spirit promised with the defeat of sin and the gift of resurrection life through Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Help us then to have "the mind of Christ". May we faithfully obey Your teachings and commandments – as Moses eventually did! Amen.

25th November 2021. Psalm 60:1-5 describes King David's feeling that God is angry and has rejected His people. "Now restore us!" is his cry in desperate times. "You lead into battle those who have respect for you. You give them a flag to wave against the enemy's weapons. Save us! Help us with your powerful right hand, so that those You love may be saved." The writer finishes with strong words of faith. "With Your help we will win the battle" (v.12).

Revelation 20:1-3 describes how an angel comes down with the keys of Hell to lock Satan up for a thousand years. The apostle John was told that this will be to keep Satan from fooling the nations anymore until the 1,000 years are ended. After that, he must be set free "for a short time to deceive the nations once more before being thrown into the lake of burning sulphur for ever and ever" (v.10).

Almighty God, in these desperate times, help us to stand firm with "strong words of faith". Forgive us for making You angry. Do not reject us but forgive us and restore us! Prepare us to serve You in power and love in these last days until Jesus returns "so that those You love may be saved". Help us to understand what is happening so that we may prepare others to be saved to meet their Saviour. Help us to hold Your banner or flag high! For the sake of Jesus who suffered death on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. Amen.

26th November 2021. Psalm 150 gives the answers to praising the LORD God Almighty: Where? Why? How? Who? "Praise God in His holy temple. Praise Him in His mighty heavens. Praise Him for His powerful acts. Praise Him because He is greater than anything else. Praise Him by blowing trumpets. Praise Him with harps and lyres. Praise Him with tambourines and dancing. Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes. Praise Him with clashing cymbals. Praise Him with clanging cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!"

1 Timothy 6:11-16. Paul encourages Timothy, "Try hard to do what is right and godly. Have faith, love and gentleness. Hold on to what you believe. Fight the good fight along with all other believers. Take hold of eternal life... In the sight of God and Christ, I give you a command. Obey it until our Lord Jesus Christ appears... Then no-one can find fault with it or you. God will bring Jesus back at a time that pleases Him. God is the blessed and only Ruler. He is the greatest King of all. He is the most powerful Lord of all... Give honour and power to Him forever. Amen."

Thank You for Your teaching today to praise and worship You, Almighty God. Encourage us to work "with all other believers" to "fight the good fight". Encourages us to "give honour and power to You forever" as we await the return of Our Saviour. Meanwhile, may we be found making joyful noises in worship in the presence of the Spirit of Christ Himself! Amen. Amen.

29th November 2021. Psalm 35:1-10 says, "Lord, stand up against those who stand up against me... Rise up and help me... Say to me, 'I will save you...'" Let those who plan to destroy me be turned back in terror... They set a trap for me without any reason... Let the trap they set for me catch them. Let them fall into their pit and be destroyed. Then I will be glad because the LORD has saved me. My whole being will cry out, 'Who is like you, LORD? You save poor people from those who are too strong for them.'" The psalmist concludes, "My tongue will speak about it and praise You all day long."

John 9:1-41 records the time when Jesus healed the sight of a man who was born blind. The Jewish leaders did not believe what the man said and questioned his parents who sent them back to the man. They did not want to believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah who could not only restore sight but heal someone who was born blind. The man told them "One thing I know. I was blind but now I can see!" The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man. He then went back to Jesus who told him, "I have come into this world so that the blind will see but those who see will become blind." *Heavenly Father, thank you for confirming to us that the world around us refuses to believe in Your salvation plan through Jesus. Help us to withstand the anger of those who refuse to listen or see the truth for themselves. Help us to "speak about it and praise You all day long." Amen.*

30th November 2021. Leviticus 24:15-16 gives the punishment due under the old covenant for blasphemy before Jesus took our punishment on Himself. God told Moses, "If anyone calls down a curse on Me, he will be held accountable. If anyone speaks evil things against My Name, he must be put to death. The whole community must kill him by throwing stones at him. It does not matter whether he is an outsider or an Israelite. When he speaks evil things against My Name, he must be put to death."

Luke 24:25-27 records the words of Jesus to some of His followers on the road to Emmaus. "How foolish you are! How long it takes you to believe all that the prophets said! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then receive his glory?" 'Jesus then explained to them what was said about Himself in all the Scriptures. He began with Moses and all the Prophets.' *Heavenly and holy Father, thank you that all your holy laws are recorded for us to read and apply. We have no excuse for disobedience. We deserve the punishment that is due. Thank You that in Jesus our Saviour, Israel's Messiah, we are forgiven through faith in Him as the Son of God who was punished for our sins. He was with You in creating this wonderful world and yet agreed to becoming as one of us. He was trained as a rabbi and taught His followers to understand His teachings before He submitted in fullness of love to the punishment which we deserve. Glory and honour and praise to Your holy name. Amen.*

1st December 2021. Ecclesiastes 1:13-18 says, "What a heavy load God has put on men! I've seen what is done on this earth. It doesn't have any meaning. It's like chasing the wind! ...I said to myself, 'Look, my wisdom has really been growing. In fact, I'm now wiser than anyone who ruled over Jerusalem in the past. I have a lot of wisdom and knowledge.' Then I used my mind to understand what it really means to be wise... I found out that that is also like chasing the wind. A lot of human wisdom leads to a lot of sorrow. More knowledge only brings more sadness."

2 Timothy 3:1-9 warns, "There will be terrible times in the last days. People will love themselves. They will love money. They will brag and be proud. They will tear others down. They will not obey their parents. They will not be thankful or holy. They will not love others. They will not forgive others. They will tell lies about people. They will be out of control. They will be wild. They will hate what is good. They will turn against their friends. They will act without thinking. They will think they are better than others. They will love what pleases them instead of loving God. They will act as if they were serving God. But what they do will show that they have turned their backs on God's power. Have nothing to do with those people... Their foolish ways will be clear to everyone."

Dear God, grant us YOUR wisdom, not the folly of mankind. Keep us safe in these last days, preparing those around us for the return of our Saviour to Jerusalem. Amen.

2nd December 2021. Ezekiel 7. "I say to the land of Israel, 'The end has come! It has come on the four corners of the land... I will pour out my anger on you. I will judge you based on how you have lived. I will pay you back for all of your evil practices. I hate them. I will not spare you or feel sorry for you... I will pay you back in keeping with how you have lived... You will know that I am the LORD (7:1-5)... The people will try to get visions from the prophets. But there will not be any. The teaching of the law by the priests will be gone... The king will be filled with sadness. The princes will lose all hope. The hands of the people of the land will tremble. I will punish them based on how they have lived... Then they will know that I am the Lord" (7:27).

Romans 9:29-32. "Isaiah said, 'The Lord who rules over all, left us children and grandchildren. If He hadn't, we would have become like Sodom' (Isaiah 1:9). What should we say then? Those who are not Jews did not look for a way to be right with God. But they found it by having faith [in Israel's Messiah]. Israel looked for a law that could make them right with God. But they didn't find it. Why not? Because they did not look for it by faith. They tried to get it by working for it. They tripped over the Stone that causes people to trip and fall.' "

Have mercy on us Father God, that we too do not trip up over Jesus our Saviour. Forgive our foolish ways and restore our prophets, priests, kings and princes, as we "look for a way to be right by faith" in Israel's Messiah. Amen.

3rd December 2021. Isaiah 6:1-5 records the vision Isaiah had of God Almighty seated on a throne surrounded by seraphs, each with six wings. And they called out "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty; the whole Earth is full of His glory!" Isaiah cried out "Woe is me! I am a man of unclean lips living among people of unclean lips!" He is aware that God can be worshipped everywhere but our sins have spoilt what He has created and without His Holy Spirit things would be much worse. God then purifies Isaiah to prepare him to tell the nations of the coming Messiah (Immanuel).

Luke 9:46-48 tells His disciples, "Anyone who welcomes this little child in my name welcomes Me. And anyone who welcomes Me welcomes the One who sent Me" Jesus added, "The least important person among all of you is the most important."

Thank You heavenly Father for awareness of Yourself and awareness of our sin that hinders our worship of You and pollutes what You have created in us and the world in which we live. Prepare us and the world to welcome Messiah, the Christ-child, this Christmas. May the truth dawn in our lives that "anyone who welcomes Him welcomes the One who sent Him." Not only that, help us to tell the world that You welcome "the least important person as if they are the most important". For the sake of Jesus who died to save us from our sins. Amen.

6th December 2021. Judges 9 is the story of Abimelech who killed 70 of his father Gideon's sons so that he would become king in Israel. A surviving son, Jotham, prophesied in the name of God that Abimelech, and the citizens of Shechem who supported him, would be destroyed (9:7-20). After reigning three years, a rebellion arose and many of the people of Shechem died. Abimelech was severely injured when a woman dropped a mill stone on his head from a tower and he ordered his armour-bearer to kill him so that word would not get out that a woman had defeated him. "That is how God paid Abimelech back for the evil thing he did to his 70 brothers [and] also the men of Shechem" (9:56-57). Titus 1:1-6. Paul said, "God sent me to help His chosen people believe in Christ. I have been sent to help them understand the truth that leads to godly living. Faith and understanding rest on the hope of eternal life. God promised to give that life... Titus, you are my true son in the faith we share... I left you on the island of Crete... to appoint elders in every town... An elder must be without blame. His children must be believers. They must not give anyone a reason to say that they are wild and do not obey."

Father God, in Your mercy, raise up children of true believers to proclaim Your "truth that leads to godly living". May they be like Jotham and the woman of Shechem to stand firm against evil men who "are wild and do not obey". Raise up pray-ers and teachers of the truth as "elders without blame". For Christ's sake. Amen.

7th December 2021. Psalm 106 begins by acknowledging "God is good and His faithful love continues for ever" (v.1). However, the psalmist also acknowledges, "We have sinned just as our people did long ago" (v.6). After delivering His people from Egypt, "they soon forgot what God had done" and many died of disease (v.13-15). Later, those who survived rebelled again against the Lord and even got Moses into trouble (v.32). The psalmist ends with the plea "Lord our God, save us... Then we will give thanks to You because Your name is holy. We will celebrate by praising You... Let all the people say, 'Amen!' " (v.47-48).

Acts 24 describes how Paul was brought before Felix, the Roman governor, with the unproven charge of causing riots in Jerusalem because he was "a leader of those who follow Jesus of Nazareth" (v.5). Felix was sympathetic, knowing much about the ministry of Jesus (v.22) and gave him a fair hearing but left him in prison for the next governor to decide about Paul (v.27). This eventually led to Paul being sent to Rome where he was under house arrest but free to entertain visitors from around the world and wrote many letters to the churches about the teachings of Jesus.

Heavenly Father, forgive us and our forefathers who have disobeyed You. May we stand up and confirm Your "faithful love continues for ever" and "celebrate by praising You". And as followers of Jesus may we be prepared to face up to false accusations and persecution by proclaiming the truth about Jesus even at risk of imprisonment. Grant us faith and hope in obeying our calling to worship You and testifying of Christ our Saviour. May all God's people say, "Amen!"

8th December 2021. Ezekiel 3:16-27 is where God told Ezekiel he had been appointed as a watchman to warn people about their evil ways. "I will hold you accountable!" (v.16-19). He must also warn the righteous person not to sin (v.21). However, the Lord would determine the time when Ezekiel speaks out and takes control. Why? "For they are a rebellious people" (v.27).

1 Corinthians 1:27-31. "God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong... He chose what is not considered to be important to do away with what is considered to be important. So no one can boast to God. Because of what God has done, you belong to Christ Jesus. He has become God's wisdom for us. He makes us right with God. He makes us holy and sets us free. It is written, 'The one who boasts should boast about what the Lord has done.' "

Heavenly Father, thank you for making clear to us how You see us. Thank You for warning us not to seek after the foolishness of worldly things and people but to warn them about boasting of their own achievements, which are often selfish and sinful. Thank you for choosing us and holding us accountable for

taking control and warning people around us. Also for choosing when and what we should say. Help us never to forget it was You who chose us when we were nothing and You have made us what we are in Christ today. You have "made us holy and set us free" through His sacrifice for our sins, with His wisdom, power and love at work within us as "accountable watchmen". Amen.

9th January 2021. Isaiah 11:1-9 is the record of God's promise to the scattered Jews to return to their Promised Land in advance of the birth of Israel's Messiah. "Jesse's family [descendants of Ruth and Boaz from Bethlehem] is like a tree that has been cut down. A new little tree will grow from its stump. From its roots a Branch will grow and produce fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on that Branch. He will help Him to be wise and understanding. He will help Him make wise plans and carry them out. The Branch ... will always do what is right when He judges those who are in need. He will be completely fair when He makes decisions about poor people... He will put godliness on as if it were His belt. He will wear faithfulness around His waist... In the same way, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord."

Acts 11:19-21 records the time after the persecution of the early church in Jerusalem. "Some believers had been scattered by the suffering that came to them after Stephen's death. They... told the message [of the Messiah] only to Jews. Then some believers... went to Antioch. There they began to speak to Greeks also. They told them the Good News about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's power was with them. Large numbers of people believed and turned to the Lord."

Lord Jesus, we are amazed how Father God prepared His special people for Your birth in Bethlehem and ministry on Earth in Jerusalem. Thank You that Your suffering and that of the apostles also prepared the way for the salvation of the Gentiles. We rejoice that millions of Jews are returning to Israel today to welcome Your return to Jerusalem. Come soon Lord Jesus! Amen.

10th December 2021. Genesis 31:22-29 tells about Laban, the nephew of Abraham, whose daughters married Jacob, Abraham's grandson. Jacob, after 14 years serving Laban as shepherd, secretly journeyed back to Canaan to rejoin his parents Isaac and Rebekah. After one week, Laban caught up with him and his wives and children and his large flocks of sheep which once belonged to Laban. Then God spoke to Laban in a dream to warn him not to say anything to Jacob, good or bad. So they ended up making an agreement and had a meal together before Laban returned to his home without his family or his sheep (31:51-55).

1 Peter 5:10-12. "God always gives you all the grace you need. So you will only have to suffer for a little while. Then God Himself will build you up again. He will make you strong and steady. And He has chosen you to share in His eternal glory because you belong to Christ. Give Him the power for ever and ever. Amen. I consider Silas to be a faithful brother. With his help I have written you this short letter. I have written it to cheer you up. And I have written to give witness about the true grace of God. Stand firm in it."

Heavenly Father, thank you for these examples of "the true grace of God". Help us to "stand firm in it" and ready to "suffer for a little while" assured that You have "chosen us to share in Your eternal glory because we belong to Christ". Do not let us become fearful of harsh punishment as with Jacob, but trust in Your eternal purpose and provision working out to Your glory in our lives. Thank You, too, for faithful friends. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

13th December 2021. Jeremiah 28-29 records the words of the false prophet Hananiah who told the people of Israel that they would be set free from captivity within two years (28:3). That same year, Hananiah died. Then Jeremiah preached the truth from God to the exiles in Babylon. "Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce. Get married... Increase your numbers there... Also work for the success of the city I have sent you to. Pray to the LORD for that city. If it succeeds, you too will enjoy success. The LORD who rules over all is the God of Israel. He says, 'Do not be fooled by those who claim to have secret knowledge. All of them are prophesying lies to you in My name. I have not sent them. You will be forced to live in Babylonia for 70 years. After they are over, I will come to you. My gracious promise to you will come true. I will bring you back home. I know the plans I have for you. I want you to enjoy success. I do not plan to harm you. I will give you hope for the years to come' " (29:4-11).

Jude 4 warns, "Certain people have slipped in among you in secret... They are godless people. They use the grace of our God as an excuse for sexual sins. They say no to Jesus Christ. He is our only Lord and King.

God of mercy, spare us from ungodly wisdom and false preaching in Your name! In the midst of great difficulties and temptations, fulfil Your "gracious" plans for Your people. Grant us "success and hope" as we await Your coming Kingdom on Earth at the return of Israel's Messiah, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus the Christ! Amen.

14th December 2021. 1 Chronicles 3:1-16 gives the genealogy of King David's family written down 1000 years before Jesus was born. These family records are so important to Jewish families. It is why Matthew recorded the genealogy of Joseph who married Mary the mother of Jesus who was born through the Holy Spirit while she was still a virgin. The Old Testament prophets spoke about Israel's Messiah descending from the family line of Judah and King David. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph was told by an angel to take Mary as his wife so that Jesus was legally adopted as Joseph's son (Matthew 1:18-25). This is why Matthew's genealogy from Abraham, Judah and David to Joseph adds at the end, "Joseph was the husband of Mary from whom was born Jesus who is called the Christ or Messiah" (Matt 1:16). Jesus was therefore the legal son of man and divine Son of God as prophesied in the Old Testament. Many Jews rejected this but through Him, the family of Abraham was enlarged by the adoption of Gentiles who believed Jesus was Israel's Messiah.

Acts 11:1-18 says that after Cornelius and his family accepted Jesus the Christ as Saviour, the Jewish believers in Jerusalem criticised Peter and his fellow believers for entering the house of a Gentile, preaching and then baptising them. However, after Peter spoke to them they praised God and believed. "God has allowed even those who are not Jews to repent and receive eternal life" (v.18).

Thank You heavenly Father for this account in the season of Advent of Your purposes of salvation for Your special people to prevail over many generations to this day which includes all Gentiles who repent and accept Jesus as Saviour. Amen.

15th December 2021. Isaiah 45:1-6. God tells King Cyrus of Babylon to return the Jews from 70 years in exile to rebuild Jerusalem and its Temple. "I will march out ahead of you... Then you will know that I am the LORD God Almighty. I am the God of Israel. I am sending for you by name, Cyrus... I am doing it for Israel. They are My chosen people. You do not know anything about Me. But I am the LORD... I will make you strong. Then people will know there is no God but Me."

Acts 17:16-31. 'Paul was very upset to see that the city of Athens was full of statues of gods. So he went to the synagogue. There he talked with Jews and with Greeks [Gentiles] who worshiped God... Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus. He was telling them that Jesus had risen from the dead' (v.16-19). Then Paul gave his testimony. "We are God's children. So we shouldn't think that God is made out of gold or silver or stone. He isn't a statue planned and made by clever people. In the past, God didn't judge people for what they didn't know. But now he commands all people everywhere to turn away from their sins. He has set a day when he will judge the world fairly. He has appointed a Man to be its judge. God has proved this to all people by raising that Man from the dead" (v.29-31).

Thank You heavenly Father that the leaders of this world are under Your control, whether they know You or not! Thank you for the miraculous birth, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. He is our Saviour if we confess our sins and believe He is Your Son. Raise up Your leaders today to establish Your Kingdom on Earth and prepare for Messiah's return! Amen.

16th December 2021. Psalm 106:40-47. "The LORD became angry with His people. He turned away from His own children. He handed them over to the nations. Their enemies ruled over them... Many times the LORD saved them. But they refused to obey Him. So He destroyed them because of their sins. But He heard them when they cried out. He paid special attention to their suffering. Because they were His people, He remembered His covenant. Because of His great love, He felt sorry for them... LORD our God, save us! Bring us back from among the nations. Then we will give thanks to You, because Your name is holy. We will celebrate by praising You."

Luke 24:36-49 gives the last ministry of Jesus to His followers before His ascension. "Why are you troubled? Why do you have doubts in your minds? ...Everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms must come true... The Christ will suffer. He will rise from the dead on the third day. His followers will preach in His name. They will tell others to turn away from their sins and be forgiven. People from every nation will hear it, beginning at Jerusalem... I am going to send you what My Father has promised. But for now, stay in the city until you have received power from Heaven."

Heavenly Father, forgive us when we make You angry by failing to obey You and follow Your Bible truth. Thank You for Your great love for us which is more than we deserve. We "give thanks to You and celebrate by praising You". Lord Jesus, we admit we are often "troubled and have doubts". So renew Your Spirit's power within us to "preach in Your name and to tell others to turn away from their sins and be forgiven." Amen.

17th December 2021. Deuteronomy 9:26 to 10:2 records part of the conversation Moses had with Almighty God before the people of Israel crossed the River Jordan into the Promised Land. "LORD and King, do not destroy Your people. They belong to You. You set them free by Your great power. You used Your mighty hand to bring them out of Egypt... Forgive the people of Israel for being so stubborn. Do not judge them for the evil and sinful things they have done... They are Your people. They belong to You... You reached out Your mighty arm and saved them." The LORD said, 'Carve out two stone tablets, just like the first ones... I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets... Then you must put the tablets in the chest.' Then the LORD wrote on the tablets what He had written before. It was the Ten Commandments."

2 Corinthians 12. Paul writes, "I was given a problem that caused pain in my body [a 'thorn in the flesh']... Three times I begged the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, 'My grace is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak.'" (v.7-9). Paul then explained the things that make an apostle are signs, wonders and miracles which he had done with perseverance (v.12).

Thank you Father for the records which reveal the "signs, wonders and miracles" at work among Your people over the centuries. Help us, like Moses and Paul, to persevere in times of much rebellion and overcome personal difficulties to reveal Your Commandments to Your people. Help us extend the influence of Your Promised Land and to prepare the way for Christ's future Kingdom on Earth. Amen.

20th December 2021. Jeremiah 31. Jeremiah prophesies that "the LORD will do a new thing on Earth: a woman will guard over [encompass, KJV] a man" (v.22). Then Jeremiah prophesies that "the Lord will make a new covenant with His people" (v.32). He goes on to explain "I will write my law in their minds and on their hearts" (v.33).

Acts 2:17-18. Peter quotes the words of the prophet Joel, "In the last days, God says, 'I will pour out My Holy Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will have dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit on those who serve Me, both men and women. When I do, they will prophesy.'" "

Thank You heavenly Father for confirming to us today the new things you spoke about centuries ago. Women will minister to men and Your Spirit will work through all who serve You, young and old alike. In your mercy, prepare believers who are restrained by traditions to discern the truth that sets us free. In Your mercy, prepare older believers to experience new dreams and visions and may their sons and daughters teach and prophesy Your truth. Interpret, establish and apply Your laws for today's needs in our minds and on our hearts with new power and inspiration from Your Holy Spirit. May we witness what Peter witnessed, that "those who accepted his message were baptized and about 3,000 people joined the believers that day." May such miracles of repentance happen again and again until Jesus our Messiah returns to reign over His Kingdom on Earth. For His sake who suffered much for our salvation. Amen.

21st December 2021. Jeremiah 50:20 records God's mercy for the remnant of His special people Israel. "A new day is coming," announces the Lord. "At that time people will search for Israel's guilt. But they will not find any. They will search for Judah's sins. But they will not find any. That is because I will forgive the people I have spared."

Matthew 24:36-42 warns the faithful people of God in the days leading up to the return of Jesus our Saviour. Jesus said, "Remember how it was in the days of Noah. It will be the same when the Son of Man comes. In the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking. They were getting married... They did all those things right up to the day Noah entered the ark. They knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes... So keep watch. You do not know on what day your Lord will come." According to *The Applied New Testament Commentary* by Tom Hale, a friend of Manna Publications author Fred Morris: "To keep watch means to look always for the Lord, to meditate on Him, to desire His company, to remain obedient to His will, and to immediately repent of any known sin. Only if we do these things will we be ready for His coming." (p.218).

Father God, as we celebrate the first coming of Jesus our Christ and our Saviour, help us prepare for His second coming. Also to prepare others by sharing the teachings of Jesus and the assurance of Your mercy towards the faithful remnant of believers in Him, both Jews and Gentiles. Amen.

22nd December 2021. Psalm 106 begins with three verses of praise to God Almighty but quickly turns to petitions (v.4-5). It then records the sins of the people over many generations (v.6-39) beginning with "we have sinned just as our people long ago". It then records how God became angry and handed them over to their enemies (v.40-42). "Many times the LORD saved them. But they refused to obey him. So he destroyed them because of their sins. But He heard them when they cried out... Because they were His people, He

remembered His covenant. Because of His great love, He felt sorry for them." (v.43-45). The psalm ends with more petitions and praise (v.47-48).

James 4:3-10 says, "When you ask for something, you do not receive it. Why? Because you ask for the wrong reason. You want to spend your money on your sinful pleasures. You are not faithful to God. Do you not know that to be a friend of the world is to hate God? ...The spirit that God caused to live in us wants us to belong only to God... Scripture says, 'God opposes those who are proud. But He gives grace to those who are not.' So obey God. Stand up to the devil... Come near to God, and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners. Make your hearts pure... Change your laughter to crying. Change your joy to sadness. Bow down to the Lord. He will lift you up."

Father God, in these days of danger, doubts and depression, may we seek joy in You, not in worldly pleasures! Make us aware of "the sins of the people over many generations". Then before we offer You our "petitions and praise" encourage us to repent! For the sake of Jesus who died for our sins and called us to preach Your Good News. Amen.

23rd December 2021. Job 40-41 is where Job begins to repent and admit "I am unworthy!" This readiness to repent prepares the way for him to listen to nearly 1000 words from God Almighty! Job needed to repent further, humble himself, stop trying to justify himself, and stop complaining that righteous people often suffer while the wicked people prosper. Job ended up not only confessing again his unworthiness but also confessing his sin before God (42:6). Through Job's patience and suffering, he found God in a new way as Creator of the universe and as Someone who loved him. The first thing God asked Job to do was to forgive and pray for his misguided friends (42:8).

John 14:12-31 is where Jesus confirms to His followers, "Anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. In fact he will do even greater things" (v.12). Jesus explains this will happen when He returns to His Father and "I will ask the Father to give you... the Spirit of truth" (v.17). In the remaining verses of the chapter Jesus refers to the importance of our love for Him six times.

Lord Jesus, thank you for the promise of the Holy Spirit to live with us and in us to guide us in the truth from Your Father. Like Job, may we learn to praise God for His love in good times and bad. And encourage us again and again to express our love for You who suffered so much in order to pay the price for our sins. Thanks be to God we are saved even though we are unworthy. Holy Spirit, help us to become good listeners to the truth from God, to be quick to give You all the glory and to forgive and be aware of the need pray for those around us. Amen.

24th December 2021. Kings 9 describes the anointing of Jehu as king of Israel who reigned for 28 years. He rose up from a lowly position and had the privilege of hearing and believing prophecies from both Elijah and Elisha regarding the evil reign of King Ahab and his wife Jezebel. Jehu helped fulfil these prophecies of the Lord God Almighty. He first destroyed the evil influence that Jezebel had on her husband and on Israel at that time. She died and was eaten by dogs as prophesied. Then later, Ahab and his heathen family and followers were also destroyed through God's purpose in the life of Jehu.

Luke 20:9-19 gives the parable of the vineyard tenants who benefited from its fruit but failed to respect the servants and the son of its owner. When they killed the son, the owner returned and destroyed the tenants. Jesus then quoted from Psalm 118:22, "The stone the builders rejected has become the most important stone of all." The Jewish religious leaders knew that Jesus had told this story against them. He was that "Important Stone" which they had rejected.

Thank You Father God for reminding us how you raised up Jehu, of lowly birth, to free Israel from its evil rulers. Hear our praise on this Christmas Eve of raising up Jesus Your Son, our Saviour, over two thousand years ago. He came of lowly birth to destroy the evil reign of sin in this world by suffering and dying in place of the punishment we deserve. While we await His return, hear our prayers for Your truth to be upheld boldly by Your faithful servants, whatever the cost. And we thank You for "the privilege of hearing and believing" Your purposes and plans for Jesus, Your "Important Stone", which we can help fulfil in our time. Amen.

27th December 2021. Ezekiel 43:1-7 continues the vision given to Ezekiel of the new Temple to be built in the new Jerusalem after the exile of God's people in Babylon. "Then the man brought me to the east gate. There I saw the glory of the God of Israel. He was coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters... I fell with my face toward the ground. The glory of the LORD entered the temple through the east gate. Then the Spirit lifted me up. He brought me into the inner courtyard. The glory of the LORD

filled the Temple." This is the same east gate through which Jesus our Messiah is prophesied to return one day soon. Then Ezekiel heard a voice saying, "This is where I will live among the Israelites for ever."

John 7:1-9 records the time when Jesus stayed away from Jerusalem to avoid the Jewish religious leaders who were waiting to kill Him (v.1). His own step-brothers did not believe he was Son of God at that time. They tried to make Him travel back to Jerusalem to prove who He was (v.3-5). Jesus said, "The right time has not yet come for Me" (v.6 & 8). Jesus trusted in God's timing for Him to sacrifice His life for the forgiveness of sin for all who believed He was Israel's Messiah and Saviour of the world.

Praise You our Almighty God for reminding us again and again of the second coming of Your Son our Saviour. We believe this will be through the east gate of Jerusalem at a time which You have appointed. Keep us faithful and strong as we prepare the way for His return. Amen.

28th December 2021. Psalm 107 confirms how Almighty God blesses His people and also oppresses His people to keep them humble. (v.38-39) "But he lifted needy people out of their suffering. He made their families increase like flocks of sheep. Honest people see it and are filled with joy. But no one who is evil has anything to say. Let those who are wise pay attention to these things. Let them think about the LORD's great love." (v.41-43)

Revelation 2:1-7 is the message of Jesus Christ to the first of seven churches in the first century AD. "I know what you are doing. You work long and hard. I know you cannot put up with those who are evil. You have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not. You have found out that they are liars. You have been faithful and have put up with a lot of trouble because of Me. You have not given up. But here is something I hold against you. You do not have as much love as you had at first. Remember how far you have fallen! Turn away from your sins. Do the things you did at first. If you do not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you do have this in your favour. You hate the way the Nicolaitans act. I hate it too. Those who have ears should listen to what the Holy Spirit says to the churches. I will allow those who overcome to eat from the tree of life in God's paradise."

Heavenly Father, in these difficult times keep us, Your people, faithful and humble. May our love for You never fade! We praise You for Your great love and the salvation, power and provision we have through Jesus our Saviour who suffered on the cross for the sins of His followers. Amen.

29th December 2021. Genesis 28:1-4. "Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him. 'Do not get married to a woman from Canaan... Go to the house of your mother's father and find a wife for yourself there... May God give you children. May He increase your numbers until you become a community of nations. May He give you and your children after you the blessing He gave to Abraham. Then you can take over the land where you now live as an outsider. It's the land God gave to Abraham."

Jude writes about unfaithful people like Cain (v.11). "Those people complain. They find fault with others. They follow their own evil longings. They brag about themselves. They praise others to help themselves (v.16). Dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ said was going to happen. They told you, 'In the last days, people will make fun of the truth. They will follow their own ungodly longings.' They are the people who... are not led by the Holy Spirit... Build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring you eternal life. As you wait for His mercy, remain in God's love." (v.17-21).

Father God, thank You for these reminders of Your everlasting love and salvation for those who remain faithful to You. Thank You for Your mercy shown to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and later to us all through Jesus, Israel's Messiah. May His promised Spirit of holiness and power give faith and hope in these Last Days as we prepare for His return according to Your will and purpose. Amen.

30th December 2021. Judges 8:22-34 records what happened after God used Gideon to save the Israelites from the Midianites. 'The people of Israel spoke to Gideon. They said, "Rule over us. We want you, your son and your grandson to be our rulers. You have saved us from the power of Midian." But Gideon told them, "I will not rule over you. My son will not rule over you either. The LORD God Almighty will rule over you" (v.22-23). Israel brought Midian under their control... So the land was at peace for 40 years. The peace lasted as long as Gideon was living (v.26). As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel joined themselves to the gods that were named after Baal. Israel wasn't faithful to the LORD... They forgot what the LORD their God had done for them. (v.33-35).

2 Peter 1 describes important teachings for true believers to inherit eternal life in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (v.1-11). Peter adds, "I will always remind you of these things... that you will always be able to remember these things after I am gone (v.12-15). Above all, here is what you must understand. No prophecy

in Scripture ever came from a prophet's own understanding... Instead, the Holy Spirit guided the prophets as they spoke. So prophecy comes from God" (v.20-21).

Heavenly Father, thank You for reminding us through Gideon and Peter that righteous authority and wisdom comes from You, through Your written word and through those who believe "the LORD God Almighty will rule over you". Guide us and free us up through Your Holy Spirit power to proclaim today the authority and wisdom of Jesus Christ. For His sake, who died for our sins. Amen.

31st December 2021. Ecclesiastes 1 to 12 tells how the author tries to understand what life is all about and concludes that "human wisdom leads to a lot of sorrow and knowledge only brings more sadness" (1:18). He learns to enjoy life to the full that God has given us without going beyond what He has planned for us. In the last chapter, he says, "Remember the One who has created you" seven times. He concludes, "Have respect for God and obey His commandments. That is what everyone should do. God will judge everything people do. That includes everything they try to hide. He will judge everything, good or evil!" (12:13-14).

2 Corinthians 7 describes Paul's joy in the believers who lived in Macedonia. He declares the promises of God will be fulfilled in those who keep themselves holy and honour Him (7:1). He told them that when they repent in sorrow, "Godly sadness causes us to turn away from our sins and be saved". It leaves us without regrets for "you are [now] ready to make sure that the right thing is done" (7:10-11).

Heavenly Father, we accept You know the end from the beginning so we ask You to forgive us for trying to use our own worldly wisdom to plan ahead, which ends up in sorrow. At the beginning of a new year, help us to "remember the One who has created you", obey Your commandments, and put our trust in Jesus our Saviour and His Holy Spirit power. We promise to keep ourselves holy and honour You in all things, believing that sorrow leads to repentance and salvation without regrets or guilt. Thank you that You will equip us so "that the right thing is done" to fulfil Your vision at work in us in the days ahead. Amen.