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Daily Manna devotions: Editor's Choice
Archive for 2022

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>

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3rd January 2022.

Numbers 33 gives the stages in the journey of the Children of Israel (Jacob) from slavery in Egypt through the wilderness on their way to possess God's Promised Land of Canaan. God had promised this to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "The LORD God Almighty commanded Moses to record their journey. Here are the places where they stopped. The people of Israel started out from Rameses... It was the day after the Passover Feast. They marched out boldly in sight of all of the Egyptians. The Egyptians were burying all of their oldest sons. The LORD had struck them down. He had done it when He punished their gods" (v.2-4). Over 40 camp sites are written down by Moses, ending on the east bank of the River Jordan overlooking Canaan (v.49).

Galatians 3:26 to 4:7 gives Paul's teaching how all children of God are no longer slaves to their old ways. "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 no Jew or Greek [Gentile]. There is no slave or free person. There is no male or female. Because you belong to Christ Jesus, you are all one. You who belong to Christ are Abraham's seed. You will receive what God has promised... God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. He is the Holy Spirit. By His power we call God 'Abba', our Father. So you are no longer slaves. You are God's children. Because you are His children, He gives you what He promised to give His people."

Thank You Father God for the written records of Moses and Paul which help confirm our amazing inheritance as Your adopted children through Your promises to Abraham and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah. Amen.

4th January 2022.

Joshua 1:16-17 records the commitment of the Israelites to their new leader, Joshua, as they waited on the east bank of the River Jordan. They were ready to serve Joshua and to serve God to fulfil His purpose to establish God's Kingdom in the land of Canaan. It had been promised to the Israelites, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, over 500 years before. "We will do what you have commanded us to do. We will go where you send us. We obeyed Moses completely. And we will obey you just as completely. But may the LORD your God be with you, just as He was with Moses."

Mark 13 gives the many warnings of Jesus about the troubled days ahead and the "end of the age" before He returns to Earth. It ends with Jesus warning His followers to keep watch and pray because we will not know when these things will happen. He also warns, "You will be arrested and brought to trial. But do not worry ahead of time about what you will say. Just say what God brings to your mind at the time. It is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit" (v.11).

Dear heavenly Father, thank You again for the evidence in Your word of difficult times ahead that are part of Your plan to establish Your Kingdom on Earth. As we go forward, raise up spiritual leaders like Moses and Joshua whom we can support. Help us to discern those who are not true believers. Help us also to believe we have the promised Holy Spirit of Christ Jesus at work in our lives

and in our ministries to stand against all forms of persecution. Grant us boldness and peace to declare Your truth. May we prove the promises of Jesus that we will be given the right words to say. Amen.

5th January 2022.

1 Kings 21 records the evil of King Ahab and his wife Jezebel who arranged false testimony against Naboth, the king's neighbour. This resulted in his arrest and death so that Jezebel was free to tell Ahab to take over Naboth's vineyard for himself. Elijah, the prophet of God at that time (900 BC), told Ahab, "You did what was evil in the sight of the LORD God Almighty. So the LORD says, 'I am going to bring disaster on you. I will destroy your children after you... You have made Me very angry. You have caused Israel to commit sin... Dogs will [also] eat up Jezebel near the wall of Jezreel.' "

1 John 5:9-15 says, "The witness of God is more important [than the witness of mankind] because it is God who gives it. He has given witness about His Son. Those who believe in the Son of God have accepted that witness in their hearts... He has given us eternal life. That life is found in His Son. Those who belong to the Son have life. Those who do not belong to the Son of God do not have life. 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... 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."

Father God, thank You for John's testimony of faith in Jesus Your Son, our Saviour. Spare us from the destructive false testimony of non-believers which leads our nation "to commit sin". Raise up "prophets of God" in these evil times and grant us strong personal faith in our eternal salvation through Jesus Christ who ensures You "hear what we ask for and have it." Amen.

6th January 2022.

Daniel 11:28-35 describes the way a "king from the north" would try to destroy the kingdom of Israel. "He will make evil plans against the holy Temple in Jerusalem. He will do a lot of harm to the Temple and the people who worship there. Then he will return to his own country. At God's appointed time, he will march south again. But this time ... ships from the west will oppose him... [But] he will take out his anger against the holy Temple. And he will show favour to the Jews who desert it... He will lead them to do what is evil. But the people who know their God will firmly oppose him. Those who are wise will teach many others [the truth from God]. But for a while, some of the wise will be killed with swords. Others will be burned to death. Still others will be made prisoners. Or they will be robbed of everything they have... They will be made pure in the fire. They will be made spotless until the time of the end. It will still come at God's appointed time."

Luke 2:27-32 describes how God's Spirit sent Simeon to the Temple in Jerusalem to meet the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, when He was only eight days old. Simeon prophesied, "LORD God Almighty, my eyes have seen Your salvation. You have prepared it in the sight of all people. It is a light to be given to those who are not Jews. It will bring glory to your people Israel."

Thank You Father God for reminding us of the persecution of Your people Israel, past, present and future. Thank You for confirming in Your word that their Messiah is Jesus the Christ whom Gentile believers worship. May all true believers remain "spotless until the time of the end". Amen.

7th January 2022.

Numbers Chapter 1 gives the amazing record of the numbers of Israelite men above 20 years of age as instructed by the LORD God Almighty. This happened when "the LORD spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the Desert of Sinai... on the first day of the second month in the second year after the people of Israel came out of Egypt" (v.1). The total was 603,550, which means there must have been around 1.5 million Israelites altogether including the women and children. "But the families of the tribe of Levi were not counted along with the others... God said, 'Instead, put the Levites [as priests] in charge of the holy Tent. That is where the tablets of the covenant [Law] are kept' " (v.47-50). They were told to "set up their tents around the Tabernacle" so that only true believers could approach the meeting place with God, "so that My anger will not fall on the community of Israel" (v.53).

2 Peter 3:11-18 warns that in the end days, "You should lead holy and godly lives" (v.11)... So try your best to be found pure and without blame... Remember that while our Lord is waiting patiently to return, people are being saved" (v.14-15). "So be on your guard. Then you will not be led

down the wrong path by the mistakes of people who do not obey the Law... Grow in the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Get to know him better" (v.17-18).

Thank You Father for Your warnings in both Old and New Testaments to keep ourselves holy and refuse to be influenced by ungodly people. Keep us obedient to Your Ten Commandments as we draw close to Jesus our Lord and Saviour who fulfilled every detail of the Law. Help us to prepare the way for His second coming. Amen.

10th January 2022.

Genesis 18:20-33 records the time when the LORD God Almighty took note of the great sin that was happening in Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham asked God to spare the two cities from His punishment for the sake of the true believers who lived there – including the family of his nephew Lot. God promised Abraham that He would spare them if there were only 10 believers living there.

Revelation 19:1-10 gives John's vision of those who remained faithful to God Almighty. In Heaven there was a great multitude shouting "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to Him who is true and just in His judgement of mankind" (v.1-2). Then from Heaven a voice ordered, "Praise our God all you servants who fear Him, both great and small" (v.5). This was part of John's revelation for all who are invited to the great wedding feast of Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb of God (v.9).

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your love and mercy for those who remain faithful in these days of great sin and departure from Your truth. Encourage us again and again with Your promise given to Abraham and Your vision given to John that You will save the families of true believers when You bring punishment on Earth in these last days. Thank you for your enfolding compassion towards us and the power of Your Spirit promised to us by Jesus Himself through His resurrection power at work in our lives. May we in turn portray His compassion and power in our lives towards our loved ones and towards those whom you are seeking to save. We give thanks for Jesus who suffered so much on our behalf. Hallelujah!

11th January 2022.

Isaiah 45:20-25 records the commands of the LORD God Almighty after the prophesy to restore Jerusalem for the remnant of exiles in Babylon. "Come together... Talk it over together... I am the One who saves. There is no God but Me. All of you who live anywhere on Earth, turn to Me and be saved... I have made a promise... The LORD will help all the people of Israel. He will make them right with Himself and they will praise Him."

Acts 1:12-14 records what happened after Jesus prophesied (1:5) that they would be baptised by the Holy Spirit when His disciples and followers returned to Jerusalem. They would "be My witnesses from one end of the Earth to the other" (1:8). "When they arrived, they went to an upper room... to pray. The women joined them too. So did Mary the mother of Jesus and His brothers [her other sons]." Before the Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, they appointed Matthias as replacement for Judas who had betrayed Jesus (1:21-26).

Heavenly Father, thank you for the prophecies recorded by Isaiah for Jews to be established in Jerusalem to worship You. Also that "all of you who live anywhere on Earth, turn to Me and be saved." Thank You for the prophecies of Jesus that His Jewish followers would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem and they would "be My witnesses from one end of the Earth to the other". We praise You for including non-Jews in Your plan of salvation. Forgive us when we appoint replacement leaders like Matthias in our churches instead of waiting for the Spirit of Christ as we "talk it over together". Help us to serve others with His compassion and Spirit power as we proclaim Your truth to the world. You are "the One who saves". Amen.

12th January 2022.

Joshua 24 records the time after the conquest of Canaan under Joshua's leadership when he sent for the other leaders of Israel. They came and stood there in the sight of God... He reminded them, "Yahweh, is the LORD God of Israel. He says, 'Long ago your people lived east of the Euphrates River. They worshiped other gods there. Your people included Terah. He was the father of Abraham and Nahor. I took your father Abraham from the land that is east of the Euphrates. I led him all through Canaan. I gave him many children and grandchildren. I gave him Isaac. To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave the hill country of Seir to Esau. But Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. Then I sent Moses and Aaron. I made the people of Egypt suffer because of the plagues I sent

on them. But I saved you out of Egypt' " (v.1-5). Joshua then challenged the leaders to "choose for yourselves right now whom you will serve. You can choose the gods your people served east of the Euphrates River or the gods of Canaan... But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD" (v.15).

1 Timothy 3:13 gives Paul's testimony for church leaders who have chosen to serve God and the followers of Christ. "Those who have served well earn the full respect of others. They also will become more sure of their faith in Christ Jesus."

Father God, help us to choose this day to put behind us for ever the old life of sin. May we see clearly the way You have led us and our forefathers over the years. As we serve You and our Saviour and our fellow believers, may we put behind us guilt and doubts and instead grow in honour and faith as we lead and teach others Your truth. Amen.

13th January 2022.

Psalms 73 begins, "God is good to those who have pure hearts." But the psalmist then confesses, "I had almost tripped and fallen." Why? "I saw that proud and wicked people were doing well and I began to long for what they had" (v.1-3). He says, "I tried to understand it all... It troubled me until I entered God's Temple. Then I understood what will happen to bad people in the end. You will make them slip and fall" (v.16-18). Then the psalmist acknowledged, "I am always with You. You hold me by Your right hand. You give me wise advice to guide me. And when I die, You will take me away into the glory of Heaven" (v.23-24). He then renews his commitment to God Almighty. "I have made You my place of safety and I will talk about everything You have done" (v.28).

Acts 27-28 records the shipwreck when Paul was on his way to Rome as a prisoner for preaching the Good News of Christ. "The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners... But the commander wanted to save Paul's life. So he stopped the soldiers from carrying out their plan... everyone reached land safely (27:42-44). The Maltese people showed them much kindness" (28:2) and when they arrived in Rome, the believers from the church met them. Paul "thanked God and was cheered up" (28:14-16).

Heavenly Father, thank you for the testimony of the psalmist who nearly tripped and fell in his walk of faith. Help us to believe You will make our enemies "slip and fall". Make us Your "place of safety" and guard us from falling, as You did Your servant Paul, while we finish our witness to the world with "pure hearts" to prepare for the return of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

14th January 2022.

Ezekiel 10 describes the vision of the glory of the LORD God Almighty filling the Temple, with cherubim moving on "wheels within wheels" and a man dressed in linen. It was at the time of great sin in Jerusalem and God told the man to scatter burning coals of fire from the Temple over the city. Then the presence of the Lord departed from the Temple with the cherubim and their wheels. Six years later, Jerusalem was burned to the ground. Before that happened, Ezekiel prophesied that after the people of God had been cleansed, His presence would return through the east gate of Jerusalem (43:1-9).

James 4:4-10 warns, "Do you not know that to be a friend of the world is to... become an enemy of 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' (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. Weep and change your laughter to crying. Change your joy to sadness. Bow down to the Lord. He will lift you up."

Heavenly Father, cleanse us and lift us up into the joy of knowing Your salvation through repentance and obedience. In these days of great sinning by Your church of Jesus Christ, refine us with Your fire. Do not depart from us but fulfil the vision of Ezekiel for Messiah's return. Help us to stand up against the devil with the power of the Spirit of Jesus living in our lives. Amen.

17th January 2022.

Nehemiah 9 records what happened soon after the Israelites returned to Jerusalem after their exile in Babylon. They separated themselves from non-believers to confess "they had sinned and their people before them had done evil things" (v.2). Then the Book of the Law of God was read. "They listened for a quarter of the day. They spent another quarter of the day admitting their sins and

worshipped the LORD their God" (v.3). The people said, "Blessed be Your glorious name. May it be lifted high above every other name" (v.5). They went on to give thanks to God for choosing Abraham and for making a covenant with him to provide the land of the Canaanites for the children of Israel (Jacob) (v.7-8). Even when they sinned, "because You loved them so much You did not abandon them" (v.19).

Jude 17-23 warns, "Dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ said was going to happen. 'In the last days, some people will make fun of the truth.' ...They are the people who separate you from one another... 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... Show mercy to those who doubt. Pull others out of the fire."

Heavenly Father, thank you for guiding us to separate ourselves from non-believers and not allow them to separate us from each other. As we meet together, encourage us to listen to the Bible and confess our sins and worship You. Guide us as we pray for those who doubt and for those You wish to save from everlasting fire to everlasting glory. Make us strong to persevere in these last days before Christ's return to Jerusalem. Amen.

18th January 2022.

Judges 4 occurs at the time when Israel "again did evil in the eyes of the Lord God Almighty" (v.1). The prophetess Deborah was judge over Israel. She sent for Barak and told him, "The LORD the God of Israel is giving you a command to take 10,000 men to Mount Tabor... I will draw Sisera into a trap... I will hand him over to you" (v.4-7). But Barak refused to go to war without Deborah going with him. So Deborah told him, "I will go with you but you will not receive the honour... The Lord will hand Sisera over to a woman" (v.8-9). Barak with Deborah successfully defeated Israel's enemy. Before that time, Israel had chosen to worship new gods and war had come to them (5:8). After the death of Sisera, the land had peace for forty years (5:31).

Philippians 2:12-16. Paul says, "My dear friends, you have always obeyed God... 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... You shine as you hold out to them the word of life."

Heavenly Father, when we seek to go forward to do Your will, choose for us the believers to work with who know Your Spirit's guidance. Also reveal to us the needs of the sinful world around us at this time. Make us obedient in serving You to bring salvation, hope and peace whilst proclaiming Your truth revealed through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

19th January 2022.

2 Chronicles 16 records the reign of Asa, king of Judea and Jerusalem, 900 BC. He took the silver from God's Temple and his palace to gain support from the king of Aram in Damascus (v.2-3). Hanani, the prophet of Almighty God, spoke to Asa, "You trusted the king of Aram. You didn't trust in the LORD your God... He gives strength to those who commit their lives completely to Him. You have done a foolish thing. From now on you will be at war" (v.7-9). Asa was angry with Hanani and put him in prison and persecuted some of the people (v.10). Then Asa fell ill. But even though he was suffering, he didn't look to the LORD for help. He died two years later (v.12-13). His son Jehoshaphat ruled after him in Jerusalem. God blessed him and his kingdom because he walked in the ways of King David (17:3).

John 20:9-18 records that two of the disciples of Jesus found the empty tomb of Jesus but "they still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes. But Mary stood outside the tomb crying... Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there... Jesus said, 'Go to those who believe in Me. Tell them, I am returning to my Father [who is] your Father, to my God [who is] your God.' Mary went to the disciples with the news. 'I have seen the Lord!' "

Lord God, forgive us for not turning to You and believing Scripture when times are difficult. Deliver us from those who refuse to believe in Your mercy, love and provision and even persecute other believers. Fill us with Christ's resurrection glory and power and His compassion for the lost as we prepare for His return. Amen.

20th January 2022.

Malachi 3 gives God's words to Israel 400 years before the birth of Christ. "I am the LORD. I do not change. [But] you have turned away from My rules. You have not obeyed them... Return to Me. Then I will return to you" (v.6-7). Those who had respect for the LORD talked with each another. And the LORD heard them... "I will spare them just as a loving father spares his son who serves him. Then once again you will see the difference between godly people and sinful people." (v.16,18). "Remember the Law My servant Moses gave you" (4:4).

Acts 5:17-42 records what happened when the apostles were persecuted by the religious leaders. "They arrested them and put them in the public prison. But during the night an angel of the Lord came. He opened the prison doors and brought the apostles out. 'Go! Stand in the Temple courtyard,' the angel said. 'Tell the people all about this new life' " (v.18-20). So, "Peter and the other apostles spoke out. 'We must obey God instead of people!' " (v.29). Then Gamaliel ordered the leaders to leave the apostles alone. "If their plans and actions are only human, they will fail. But if their plans come from God, you won't be able to stop these men. You will only find yourselves fighting against God" (v.38-39).

Father God, encourage Your people to obey the Ten Commandments You gave to Moses to encourage them to "return to Me, then I will return to you." Also, free us from the fear of persecution, even imprisonment, to "tell the people all about this new life" in Jesus and His "plans which come from God". May the people "see the difference" in those who serve You. Amen.

21st January 2022.

Nehemiah 2:1-10 records the time in Babylon around 450 BC when King Artaxerxes saw how sad Nehemiah was. He told the king about Jerusalem. "The city where my people of long ago are buried has been destroyed." He then prayed to the God of Heaven before speaking to the king. "If it pleases you, let me go to the city of Jerusalem where my people are buried. I want to rebuild it." ...Then Sanballat and Tobiah heard about what was happening. They were very upset that someone had come to work for the good of Israel's people.

Hebrews 9:11-15 reminds us about the blood of Christ sacrificed in the newly built Jerusalem for our sins. "Christ came to be our high priest... He did not enter by spilling the blood of goats and calves. He entered the Most 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 forever... He did this through the power of the eternal Holy Spirit... So now we can serve the living God... He died to set us free from the sins committed under the first covenant."

Dear God, thank You for these records of what happened to rebuild Jerusalem and prepare the way for Jesus our Redeemer, Israel's Messiah. May we understand the truth about Your special people Israel and the eternal salvation offered to the world through Your new covenant fulfilled in Christ. We "pray to the God of Heaven" in our sadness for the state of the world today, to provide us with the means to prepare for Christ's return to Jerusalem and defeat those who oppose the "work for the good of Israel's people" and Your plans of salvation for the rest of the world through their Messiah. Amen.

24th January 2022.

2 Samuel 20 records the time when much of Israel rebelled against King David. The rebels were led by "a troublemaker named Sheba from the tribe of Benjamin". His rebellion did not last long, however, when David ordered Joab to pursue Sheba. (v.7.) A wise woman in the town of Abel Beth Maaeah asked Joab why David should want to destroy their loyal town, "the Lord's inheritance", just to capture Sheba. She then arranged to obtain the head of Sheba to save her God-fearing town and its people. (v.18-21.)

Acts 26:1-23 records how Paul defended himself before King Agrippa against the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem who wanted him put to death because he preached the Good News of Jesus Christ as Messiah. He explained that on the road to Damascus, Jesus Himself stopped him to tell him, "I will save you from your own people and from those who are not Jews. I am sending you to them to open their eyes. I want you to turn them from darkness to light. I want you to turn them from Satan's power to God. I want their sins to be forgiven. They will be forgiven when they believe in Me. They will have their place among God's people." (v.17-18.)

We thank You Father God for upholding Your truth and purpose through King David, his leader Joab and the wise woman to save righteous believers. We thank you that over 1000 years later, You upheld Your truth and purpose in Israel and its Messiah through King Agrippa and Your

servant Paul. Thank You that nearly two millennia later, You are asking us to protect "the Lord's inheritance" and prepare for the return of Jesus to Jerusalem. Keep us bold and faithful as we declare Your truth and purpose and salvation in Jesus. Amen.

25th January 2022.

Isaiah 35 pronounces salvation for the faithful believers – then and later at the time of Israel's Messiah and for today. "The desert and the dry ground will be glad. The dry places will be full of joy. Flowers will grow there. Like the first crocus in the spring, the desert will bloom with flowers... Everyone will see the glory of the LORD. They will see the beauty of our God. 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. He will pay your enemies back. He will come to save you.' Then the eyes of those who are blind will be opened. The ears of those who cannot hear will be unplugged. Those who cannot walk will leap like a deer. And those who cannot speak will shout with joy... A wide road will go through the land. It will be called The Way of Holiness. Only those who are pure and clean can travel on it. Only those who lead a holy life can use it... Those the LORD has saved will return to their land. They will sing as they enter the city of Zion. Everlasting joy will be like beautiful crowns on their heads. They will be filled with gladness and joy. Sorrow and sighing will be gone."

Mark 12:30-31 gives the words of Jesus our Messiah, "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love Him with all your mind and with all your strength... Love your neighbour as you love yourself. There is no commandment more important than these."

Thank you Father for reminding us of Your plans for these Last Days and the commandments that Jesus upholds for the faithful. Thank you for the joy of Your salvation in Him. Amen.

26th January 2022.

Micah 4 gives the prophecy of the first and second coming of Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah and Saviour of the world. "You can be sure the day of the LORD is coming. My anger will burn like a furnace. All those who are proud will be like straw. So will all those who do what is evil. The day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD who rules over all. "Not even a root or a branch will be left to them. But here is what will happen for you who have respect for Me. The sun that brings life will rise. Its rays will bring healing to My people. You will go out and leap like calves that have just been let out of the barn. Then you will stomp on sinful people. They will be like ashes under your feet. That will happen on the day I act," says the LORD. "Remember the law My servant Moses gave you... I will send you the prophet Elijah. He will come before the day of the LORD arrives. It will be a great and terrifying day. Elijah will teach parents how to love their children. He will also teach children how to honour their parents."

Revelation 22:16-20 records the last words of Jesus to John. "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this witness for the churches. I am the Root and the Son of David. I am the bright Morning Star... Anyone who is thirsty should come. Anyone who wants to take the free gift of the water of life should do so." John said, "I am warning everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If you add anything to them, God will add to you the plagues spoken about in this book. If you take any words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from you your share in the tree of life... Come, Lord Jesus!"

27th January 2022.

Leviticus 14 gives instructions that God gave to Moses for the actions needed to cure infectious skin diseases and mould growth in their homes when the Children of Israel settled in the land of Canaan. They give instructions to put their needs in the hands of the priests and offer sacrifices in faith for healing and cleansing.

James 2:5-10 warns, "My dear brothers and sisters, listen to me. Hasn't God chosen those who are poor in the world's eyes to be rich in faith? Has He not chosen them to receive the Kingdom? Has He not promised it to those who love Him? But you have put poor people down. Are not rich people taking advantage of you? Are they not dragging you into court? Are they not speaking evil things against the worthy name of Jesus? Remember, you belong to Him. The royal law is found in Scripture. It says, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself' (Leviticus 19:18). If you really keep that law, you are doing what is right. But you sin if you do not treat everyone the same. The law judges

you because you have broken it. Suppose you keep the whole law but trip over just one part of it. Then you are guilty of breaking all of it!"

Thank You Heavenly Father for your love and wisdom in encouraging us to keep our bodies and homes clean from infections and diseases for our sake and the sake of those around us. We love You and seek to love others who are worse off than ourselves who need our love and care. Help us to meet the health needs of others caused by poverty with the compassion of Christ our Saviour and in faith to receive Your merciful healing and cleansing in His name and to Your glory. Amen.

28th January 2022.

Judges 8:22-23 records what the Israelites said to Gideon. "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." During Gideon's lifetime, the land enjoyed peace for forty years (v.28).

Acts 8:30-35 records the time when the apostle Philip was led by the Holy Spirit to go from Jerusalem towards Gaza. He met the Ethiopian official who had been worshipping at the Temple. The man was reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah. "Do you understand what you're reading?" Philip asked. "How can I?" he said. "I need someone to explain it to me." So Philip joined him and read, "He was led like a sheep to be killed. Just as lambs are silent while their wool is being cut off, He did not open his mouth. When He was treated badly, He was refused a fair trial. Who can say anything about His children? His life was cut off from the earth" (Isaiah 53:7,8). The official said to Philip, "Tell me, please. Who is the prophet talking about? Himself, or someone else?" Then Philip began with that same part of Scripture. He told him the Good News about Jesus. The officer returned to Ethiopia to serve his Saviour in the Queen's court.

Thank You heavenly Father for these records, 1300 years apart, of important people who knew their priority was to obey and serve You and Your Son our Saviour. Lord, whatever our role in life, help us to obey Your truth and serve our Saviour so that the Good News of Jesus will be witnessed near and far and peace will reign in the hearts of all believers. Amen.

31st January 2022.

Leviticus 19 provides a range of laws and advice for daily living which is still relevant today, 3500 years after God spoke to Moses, for wisdom and for high moral and spiritual behaviour at home, on the land and in business as well as in personal holiness and worship. This chapter follows God's laws on sexual purity and holiness.

2 Corinthians 19-21 gives Paul's concern for the church in Corinth as he writes to them before his third visit. "I have been speaking with God as my witness. I have been speaking like a believer in Christ. Dear friends, everything I do is to help you become stronger. I am afraid that when I come I will not find you as I want you to be. I am afraid that you will not find me as you want me to be. I am afraid there will be arguing, jealousy and fits of anger. I am afraid you will separate into your own little groups. Then you will tell lies about each other. You will talk about each other. I am afraid you will be proud and cause trouble... Then I will be sad about many who sinned earlier and have not turned away from ...uncleanness, sexual sins and wild living. They have done all those things."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your word that reminds us to live pure and holy lives. Keep us humble as we seek to follow the high standards You give your children. Thank You for reading about Paul's real fears of finding ungodliness and arguments among the believers in Corinth. Help us this day to live in the power of Your Holy Spirit regarding divine wisdom and holiness as followers of our Lord Jesus so that we are examples of unity and love to all around us as we prepare the way for His return. Amen.

1st February 2022.

Jeremiah 30 is the prophecy of the restoration of Israel. "I am with you. I will save you. I will completely destroy all of the nations among which I scatter you. But I will not completely destroy you. I will correct you... I will punish you in a way that is fair and right" (v.11). "I will bless Jacob's people with great success again. I will show tender love to Israel. Jerusalem will be rebuilt where it was destroyed... The sound of great joy will come from there. I will increase the numbers of my people... People will have respect for them. Things will be as they used to be for Jacob's people. I will make their community firm and secure. I will punish everyone who treats them badly. Their leader

[Messiah] will be one of their own people... And He will come close to Me. He will commit Himself to serve Me" (v.18-21).

Romans 8:26-33 assures us "the Holy Spirit helps us when we are weak. We do not know what we should pray for. But the Spirit himself prays for us... God, who looks into our hearts, knows the mind of the Spirit. And the Spirit prays for God's people just as God wants Him to pray. We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him... God planned that those He had chosen would become like his Son... What should we say then? Since God is on our side, who can be against us? God did not spare His own Son. He gave Him up for us all... God makes us right with himself."

Thank You Jesus for Your faithful fulfilment of God's purpose for Israel and the Gentiles. In the days before Your return, make us bold in Your faith and compassion for the lost and teach us through Your Spirit to trust our Heavenly Father who "works for the good of those who love Him". Amen.

2nd February 2022.

Leviticus 20 states many of the horrific sins that God detests and the punishment they deserve. These sins were forgiven under the old covenant given to Moses through the regular offering of animal blood sacrifices. They are no longer demanded by our righteous and merciful God under the new covenant because of our forgiveness and salvation offered through the sacrifice of the blood of His Son, Jesus the Christ, who took the punishment for our sins upon Himself.

Revelation 10:5-7 gives the vision and words of John given by God's angel. "Then the angel ... made a promise in the name of the One who lives for ever and ever. He took an oath in the name of the One who created the sky, earth and sea and all that is in them. He said, 'There will be no more waiting! But in the days when the seventh angel is ready to blow his trumpet, the last part of God's plan will be carried out. God told all this to the prophets who served Him long ago.' " By this the angel meant the further development of the mystery of God in Christ's sacrifice and redemption for mankind when the Kingdom of Christ will be established at His second coming to Earth. This predicts the defeat of Satan and the final punishment of unrepentant evildoers. It is the vision of God's final plan that was partially revealed in Daniel 12:1-3.

Father God, thank You for the amazing truth recorded for us in Your written words from Moses, Daniel and John. May we never forget the compassion of Christ to save sinners. Equip us with Your Holy Spirit power to remain strong in faith and share Your Good News of Jesus Christ as we await His return. Amen.

3rd February 2022.

Joshua 6:22-25. This passage records how the prostitute Rahab was saved from the destruction of Jericho at the beginning of the occupation of God's Promised Land of Canaan. "Then Joshua spoke to the two men who had gone in to spy out the land. He said, 'Go into the prostitute's house. Bring her out. Also bring out everyone who is with her.' So they brought her out along with her parents and brothers... They put them in a place that was outside the camp of Israel. Then they burned the whole city and everything that was in it... Joshua spared the prostitute Rahab... He did it because she hid the spies he had sent to Jericho. Rahab lives among the people of Israel to this very day." In the purpose of God, Rahab found freedom, faith and forgiveness in God Almighty and became the mother of Boaz who married Ruth, an ancestor of King David who prepared the way for the coming of Jesus the Christ, Israel's Messiah.

John 8:31-36 records the words of Jesus. "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth. And the truth will set you free... If the Son of Man sets you free, you will be free indeed." Thank You Almighty God that You save even the worst of sinners and provide for their "freedom, faith and forgiveness".

Thank You, that through the blood sacrifice of Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man, Your mercy is not restricted to just the few but for the many who repent and put their trust in Him. May many sinners today repent, be saved and share in the amazing preparation for Christ's second coming. Amen.

4th February 2022.

Ecclesiastes 2:12-26. The writer says, "I decided to think about wisdom. I also thought about foolish pleasure. I saw that wisdom is better than foolishness, just as light is better than darkness... A

person who is foolish lives in darkness. But I finally realized that death catches up with them" (v.12-13). "So I [began to] hate life because the work that is done on Earth makes me sad... I will have to leave all of it to someone who lives after me" (v.17-18). However, "A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink and be satisfied with his work. I am finally seeing that those things come from the hand of God. Without His help, who can eat or find pleasure? God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness to men who please Him" (v.24-26).

Mark Chapters 7 and 8 give examples of the ministry of Jesus in teaching the Jewish religious leaders (7:1-23), miraculously healing the daughter of a non-Jewish foreign woman (7:24-30) and healing a dumb and deaf man in Galilee (7:31-37) and also showing compassion to 4000 hungry men by miraculously feeding them all with bread and fish (8:1-13).

Heavenly Father, thank You that the writer of Ecclesiastes found pleasure in Your wisdom and knowledge in life and in pleasing You through enjoying Your creation instead of storing up riches. Thank You for the example of Jesus teaching "religious" people the need to show compassion in life for the bereaved, handicapped and hungry people around us as we share the wonders of Your creation and ministry of Your Spirit with others who are ready to listen and receive. Amen.

7th February 2022.

Deuteronomy Chapter 3 describes the success of the people of Israel in overcoming the ungodly cities on the east bank of the River Jordan in the 14th century BC under the leadership of Moses. Then Moses asked the Lord God Almighty, "Let me cross the River Jordan. Let me see the good land that is beyond it." But God told Moses, "That is enough! Do not speak to Me anymore about this matter!" Instead God told him to climb a high place to look north, west and south to see the Promised Land of Canaan. Then He ordered Moses, "Appoint Joshua as the new leader. Help him to be brave. Give him hope and strength. He will take the people across the Jordan. You will see the land but he will lead them into it."

John 15 reveals that five times Jesus said to His followers "Remain in Me" (v.4,5,6,7,9). That was when He described himself as "the true vine" (v.1). He told them that His Heavenly Father "cuts off every branch joined to me that does not bear fruit. But He trims every branch that does bear fruit. Then it will bear even more fruit... 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" (v.2-4).

Thank You Heavenly Father for saving us through the blood of Jesus. Help us to "remain in Him" as our Saviour. May we learn from Moses to obey You in all things so that Your pruning will bring much fruitfulness and become an inspiration to others in the growth of Your promised Kingdom on Earth. Help us to see this vision and our part in its fulfilment, even if we do not see all of it being fulfilled in our lifetime. Amen.

8th February 2022.

Nehemiah 9 tells what the Israelites did after returning from exile. After Ezra had read to them the Book of the Law of Moses (God's Torah teaching), the people repented, fasted, separated themselves from foreigners, listened again to the reading of the Book of the Law, following with further confession and worship of the LORD God Almighty (v.1-5).

Colossians 1:3-12 expresses Paul's kind words to the church in Colosse who were famous for their faith in Christ Jesus and their love for other believers (v.3-4). "Your faith and love are based on the hope you have [in Heaven]. You were told about it when the message of truth was given to you. I'm talking about the Good News [of God's plan in Jesus] that has come to you. All over the world the Good News is bearing fruit and growing. It has been doing that among you since the day you heard it. That is when you understood God's grace in all its truth... Epaphras told us about your love that comes from the Holy Spirit. That is why we have not stopped praying for you. We have been praying for you since the day we heard about you. We have been asking God to fill you with the knowledge of what He wants. We pray that He will give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. We pray that you will lead a life that is worthy of the Lord Jesus... So we want you to bear fruit [and] grow to know God better. We want you to be strong... patient... joyful."

Thank You Heavenly Father for these records at the time of Nehemiah and Paul regarding the importance of reading and understanding Your truth in Your Law and its fulfilment in Christ. May we, too, become famous for expressing our love, faith, patience and joy! Amen.

9th February 2022.

Job Chapters 40-42. God speaks to Job of the wonders He created in the behemoth and the leviathan. Job was ashamed and responded, "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? You do not know what you are talking about!' I spoke about things I did not completely understand. I talked about things that were too wonderful for me to know... My ears had heard about You. But now my own eyes have seen You. So I hate myself. I am really sorry for what I said about You."

1 John 2:28 to 3:4 says, "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 is what we really are! The world does not know us because it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God ... we know that when Christ appears, we will be like Him. We will see Him as he really is. He is pure. All who hope to be like Him make themselves pure."

Father God, thank You for making it very clear to us the need to live pure, Christ-like lives. As Your born-again children, we look forward to meeting our Saviour unashamed. Thank You for Your great love. Keep speaking to us to "remain joined to Christ" and ready to repent like Job. Amen.

10th February 2022.

Jeremiah 30:2 [NIV] gives God's instruction to Jeremiah to "write in a book all the words I have spoken to you." He ends this chapter by saying, "The LORD's burning anger will not turn back [until] He accomplishes everything His heart plans to do. In days to come you will understand this."

John 5:39-40 [NIRV] is where Jesus tells the scholars in Jerusalem, "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 life!" The chapter ends with, "Do you believe Moses? Then you should believe Me. He wrote about Me. But you do not believe [follow or do] what he wrote. So how are you going to believe [follow or do] what I say?"

Heavenly Father, we note that at the time of Jesus on Earth, the religious leaders failed to understand Your truth recorded by Moses or Jeremiah. Speak to us in these final days before Jesus returns and through Your promised Spirit, give us understanding to write down what You tell us and its importance for today. Enable us to share this Good News of Jesus Christ in a way that will prepare the way for His second coming, so that many will be saved to welcome Him personally in Jerusalem or watch the events live on TV. For His sake who died for our sins. Amen.

11th February 2022.

Jeremiah 49:34-39 records the word of the Lord God Almighty through His prophet to foretell the downfall of the nation of Elam. Despite this, God in his mercy promises to set His throne in Elam in days to come and restore their fortunes (v.38-39).

Luke 15:28-31 records the end of the parable of the lost son. Jesus said, "The older brother became angry. He refused to go in [to celebrate the return of his brother]. So his father went out and begged him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I have worked like a slave for you. I have always obeyed your orders. You never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But this son of yours wasted your money with some prostitutes. Now he comes home. And for him you kill the fattest calf!' 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me. Everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad. This brother of yours was dead. And now he is alive again. He was lost. And now he is found.' "

Father God, thank You for these examples of Your mercy towards sinners, even sinful nations. Enable us to have the love and compassion of Jesus towards those who are far from You and to forgive them. Change our cold hearts towards those around us. In Your mercy, stop our resentment towards others that causes divisions within families, neighbourhoods and whole nations. Help us to overcome envy, knowing that Your love is great enough for us all to share in. Forgive us and show us how to forgive others with Your love and mercy in line with the teachings of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

14th February 2022.

Psalms 106 says, "Praise the Lord God Almighty. Give thanks, because He is good. His faithful love continues for ever... I will be joyful together with Your people... We have sinned, just as our people of long ago did. We too have done what is evil and wrong" (v.1-6). "They traded their glorious God for a statue of a bull" (v.20). "Later on, they refused to enter the Promised Land. They didn't believe God's promise. They told the LORD how unhappy they were. They didn't obey Him... They joined in worshipping Baal... Their evil ways made the LORD angry. So a plague broke out among them" (v.24-29). "They mixed with those nations and adopted their ways" (v.35). "He turned away from His own children... Their enemies ruled over them" (v.40-41). "But He heard them when they cried out... And because they were His people, He remembered His covenant. Because of His great love, He felt sorry for them... LORD our God, save us... Then we will give thanks to You... We will celebrate by praising You" (v.44-47).

2 Timothy 4:1-8. Paul instructs Timothy, "Preach the word. Be ready to serve God in good times and bad... The time will come when people will not put up with true teaching... Do not give up when times are hard. Work to spread the Good News. Do everything God has given you to do."

Lord Jesus, forgive the sins of our nation and hear our prayers for Your Good News to be preached boldly and with Your compassion and power. May God's "faithful love continue for ever" and see us "giving thanks, because He is good" and being "joyful together with Your people". Amen

15th February 2022.

Deuteronomy Chapters 7 & 8 record God's instructions to Moses after 40 years in the wilderness. After reading the Ten Commandments, Moses says, "Pay attention to the laws of the LORD your God. Be careful to obey them. Then He will keep His covenant of love with you" (7:12). "You might say to yourselves, 'These nations are stronger than we are. How can we drive them out?' But do not be afraid of them... The LORD your God is with you. He is a great and wonderful God" (7:17,21). Moses continued, "Make sure you follow every command I am giving you today... 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" (8:1,3). "So do not forget the LORD your God and do not fail to obey his commands, laws and rules" (8:11).

2 Thessalonians 2. Paul warns of the final days when "the man of lawlessness" will display false teachings and satanic miracles (v.8-9). He reminds the true believers, "The Lord loves you. God chose you from the beginning. He wanted you to be saved. Salvation comes through the Holy Spirit's work to make people holy through believing the truth and accepting the Good News that we preach. And you will share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Brothers and sisters, stand firm. Hold on to what we taught you" (v.13-15).

Heavenly Father, as we experience the terrible forces of evil around us, may our strength and faith be in You to drive them out! May we always rejoice in Your salvation through the Good News of Jesus our Saviour and feed daily on "every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD". Amen!

16th February 2022.

Ecclesiastes 1:12-18 records the famous question about the meaning of life regarding the wisdom and knowledge gained. "I was king over Israel in Jerusalem. I spent all of my time studying... I looked into everything that is done on earth... It doesn't have any meaning! It is like chasing the wind... I said to myself, 'Look, my wisdom has really been growing. In fact, I am 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." Not until the last chapter does the writer acknowledge the need to submit all worldly wisdom and knowledge to God for Him to judge and pronounce His truth. "Here is the final thing I want to say. 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, whether it is good or evil" (12:13-14).

Romans 4:11-13 is part of the famous declaration by Paul regarding salvation through faith in God and His Son, Jesus the Christ or Messiah. He also says that Abraham is the father of all believers, Jews and Gentiles. Their faith makes them right with God [righteous before Him].

Father God, forgive our foolish thoughts, words and deeds. Encourage us to obey Your commandments through the understanding given by the Spirit of Christ He has placed within all who believe He is the Son of God. Amen.

17th February 2022.

Judges 4 gives the story of how the prophetess Deborah brought the word of God to save Israel from their enemies. King Jabin's army leader Sisera possessed an amazing 900 iron chariots and cruelly oppressed Israel for twenty years before they cried to the LORD for help (v.3). Deborah sent for Barak and told him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, says, 'Go! Take 10,000 men... Then I will draw Sisera into a trap... There I will hand him over to you.' " But Barak refused to go to war unless Deborah went with him (v.6-8). Deborah said. "I will go with you. But because of the way you are doing this, you will not receive any honour. The LORD will hand Sisera over to a woman" (v.9). God gave them victory and Israel had peace (5:31).

Ephesians 6:10-20 gives Paul's warning to the followers of Christ to put on the full armour of God. "Then you can stand firm against the devil's evil plans. Our fight is not against human beings. It is against the rulers, the authorities and the powers of this dark world. It is against the spiritual forces of evil" (v.12). Paul then describes the spiritual forces we have available to fight against the enemy: God's truth, His righteousness, the Good News of Jesus Christ, His peace, salvation and Holy Spirit power. "At all times, pray by the power of the Spirit... Be watchful, so that you can [know how to] pray" (v.18).

Dear God our Father, may Your people repent and cry out to You this day for help. Raise up leaders, men and women, at this time of serious oppression by the huge forces of evil that surround us. Keep us spiritually alert so that we know how to pray and use the resources You have given us in Christ our Saviour. Amen.

18th February 2022.

Proverbs 23:22-25. "Listen to your father, who gave you life. Do not hate your mother when she is old. Buy the truth and do not sell it. Get wisdom, training and understanding. The father of a godly child is very happy. Anyone who has a wise child is glad. May your father and mother be glad. May the woman who gave birth to you be happy."

Acts 10 is the account of Cornelius and how his life was changed by accepting Jesus Christ as his Saviour. He and his family believed in God and gave generously to the poor and needy. However, "one day about three o'clock in the afternoon he had a vision. He saw an angel of God clearly. The angel came to him and said, 'Cornelius!' He was afraid and stared at the angel. 'What is it, Lord?' he asked. The angel answered, 'Your prayers and gifts to poor people have come up like an offering to God. So He has remembered you. Now send men to Joppa. Have them bring back a man named Simon. He is also called Peter' " (v.3-5). Simon Peter, the Jewish disciple of Jesus, also had a vision from God. This prepared him to visit the non-Jewish family of Cornelius and tell them of God's salvation plan in Christ (v.9-23).

Father God, thank You for teaching us to accept that Your calling of repentance and salvation is for all people, close to us or far away. Help us to love others as You love them and see their needs as You do. Change our wrong attitudes that we may be forgiven and so become a blessing to our parents, family, friends and neighbours and to anyone You guide us to talk about Your Good News in Jesus Christ. Go before us that they will accept Jesus as their Saviour. Amen

February 21st 2022.

Exodus 5:22 to 6:12 describes the conversation Moses had with God when he failed to get Pharaoh to let the Children of Israel go free. "LORD, why have you brought trouble on these people? I went to Pharaoh to speak to him in Your name. Ever since then, he has brought nothing but trouble on these people. You haven't saved Your people at all!" (5:22-23). God assured Moses He would use Pharaoh himself to drive the people out of Egypt! (6:1). "I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty [El Shaddai]... I promised to give them the land of Canaan... I have heard the groans of the Israelites. I have remembered My covenant" (6:2-5). But when Moses told the Israelites that God would set them free from slavery in Egypt, they would not listen and believe (6:9).

Revelation 22:10-14 gives these words of prophecy 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 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 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. They will have the right to come to the tree of life."

Father God, help us to "listen and believe" that Jesus Christ our Saviour is coming soon and will welcome all who remain faithful and holy. Use us to proclaim Your Good News even when many are suffering and refuse to listen and believe. Amen.

22nd February 2022.

Psalm 36 is a psalm of David. "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... Lord, your love is as high as the heavens. Your faithful love reaches up to the skies... 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 2:12-16. Paul says (probably from prison), "My dear friends, you have always obeyed God... 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... as you hold out to them the word of life.

Dear Lord God, as the frontiers of evil extend around us in these Last Days, enfold us with Your holy and faithful love. Protect us from the "feet of the proud and the hands of those who are evil" who are blind to their own sin. As we remember that Jesus took the punishment we deserve, provide us with His promised Holy Spirit power to remain "pure and without blame". Show us how to work "in keeping with Your good purpose" to bring others into Your Kingdom, with faith in Your divine intervention. Amen.

23rd February 2022.

Psalm 107 calls five times for God's redeemed people to "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good" (v.1,8,15,21,31). Each time, the psalmist gives examples of how the people suffered or sinned which led them to "cry out to the LORD in their trouble". Each time the same advice is given to "give thanks to the LORD for His unfailing love". God humbled His people by reducing their numbers and by oppression, calamity and sorrow (v.39). "But He lifted needy people out of their suffering. He made their families increase like flocks of sheep. Honest [righteous, KJV] 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).

Jude 20-25 (NIV) includes these words: "Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt. Snatch others from the fire and save them. To others, show mercy, mixed with fear."

Dear Heavenly Father, what can we say? History shows how the people You love and bless and save end up suffering and sinning by wandering from Your truth. Open our eyes to see how You delight in "lifting needy people out of their suffering". Let us "pay attention to these things and think about Your great love". Help us to "keep ourselves in God's love" as we await Your promised eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who took our punishment upon Himself to save us. Show us how to "snatch others from the fire and save them" in the loving mercy of Your Spirit and with fear of Your great and miraculous power. Amen!

24th February 2022.

1 Samuel 28:15-20 records King Saul's final act of disobedience to God in asking a medium to contact the spirit of the dead prophet Samuel. Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you troubled me by bringing me up from the dead?" Saul said, "The Philistines are fighting against me. God has turned away from me. He doesn't answer me anymore. He doesn't speak to me through prophets or dreams. So I've called on you to tell me what to do." Samuel said, "The LORD God Almighty has turned away from you... So why are you asking me what you should do? The LORD has [already] spoken through me and has done what He said He would do. He has torn the kingdom out of your hands... He has given it to David. You didn't obey the Lord... So He is punishing you today. He will hand both Israel and you over to the Philistines."

Acts 28:11-31 records the Apostle Paul's final journey to Rome as a 'prisoner for Christ' where he was immediately greeted and encouraged by followers of Jesus. Three days later he asked the

Jewish leaders to visit him to explain who he was and why he was on trial for preaching about Jesus Christ as the Jewish Messiah. 'He told them about God's kingdom and explained it to them... He tried to get them to believe in Jesus. Some believed what he said. Others did not.'

Dear God, we note the contrast between Saul and Paul and pray for our leaders to seek and obey You alone in times of peace and in times of great need. May their trust be in You, Almighty God, and not in mediums or ungodly leaders. Encourage them with Your divine intervention so that many lives will be saved in these Last Days. Bring repentance and revival before Christ our Saviour returns! Amen.

25th February 2022.

Jeremiah 50:33-34 speaks the word of God against Babylon, Israel's oppressor at that time. "The LORD who rules over all says, 'The people of Israel are being treated badly... Those who have captured them are holding them... I am strong and will save them... I will bring peace and rest to their land. But I will bring trouble to those who live in Babylonia.' "

Acts 26:9-18 records what Paul said to King Agrippa. "I myself believed that I should do everything I could to oppose the name of Jesus... On the authority of the chief priests, I put many of God's people in prison... I even went to cities in other lands to hurt them. On one of these journeys I was on my way to Damascus... About noon, I was on the road. I saw a light coming from heaven... I heard a voice speak to me in [my own] language. 'Saul! Saul! Why are you opposing Me? It is hard for you to go against what you know is right. I am Jesus. I am the one you are opposing... I have appeared to you to appoint you to serve Me and be My witness.' "

Father God, thank You for encouraging us to stand up for Jesus our Saviour and all who believe in Him as Your Son. We ask You to stand up for us and all who are oppressed to "bring peace and rest to their land". As Jesus did for Paul, stop those who are under authority to "put many of God's people in prison ... even in cities in other lands to hurt them." Speak to the oppressors today in their own language. May they see Your "light coming from heaven" and appoint them instead to serve You! For the sake of all who are suffering and who follow Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

28th February 2022.

1 Chronicles 23:24-32 describes the instructions of King David to the Levite priests "twenty years old or more". This was now the time when "the LORD God of Israel has given peace and rest to his people [and] has come to Jerusalem to live there forever" (v.25). They were given their duties in readiness for the future Temple. This included standing every morning and evening to thank and praise the LORD (v.30). This work and ministry was carried in the meantime at the Tent of Meeting and its Holy Place (v.32) before the first Temple in Jerusalem was built by Solomon (2 Chronicles 5-7).

1 Timothy 4:11-15 gives Paul's instructions to Timothy. "Command and teach these things. Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young. Set an example for the believers in what you say and in how you live [and] in how you love and in what you believe... Spend your time reading Scripture out loud to one another [and in] 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."

Thank You Jesus for these words to encourage us in preparing for Father God's purpose in worship, thanks and praise, even if there are no buildings to meet in! Help all believers aged twenty and over through Your Spirit to know our Father's will for serving the fellowships of believers now and in the future. Help us through teaching and preaching from Scripture, to encourage those who need Your love and mercy in these difficult days, and save those who hear us. Amen.

1st March 2022.

2 Chronicles 15:15-19 records the time when King Asa was faithful to the LORD God Almighty of Israel and Judah. "All of the people of Judah ... turned to God with all their heart... So the LORD gave them peace and rest on every side... There were no more wars until the 35th year of Asa's rule." However, in his 36th year of reign, King Asa ignored the advice of God's prophet Hanani and put him in prison. Asa became ill and after 40 years as king he refused to seek help from God and died. His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him and "he walked in the ways of King David" by worshipping the God of his father (2 Chron. chapters 16 and 17).

1 Corinthians 11:17-33 speaks about disunity among God's people. "Your meetings do more harm than good... When you come together as a church, you take sides... Do not eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in a way that is unworthy of the Lord. 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. Anyone who eats and drinks must recognize the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. If he doesn't, God will judge him for it. That is why many of you are weak and sick. That is why a number of you have died."

Father God, we ask You this day that our leaders will put their trust in You to know Your peace in our land "on every side". And may we also find true unity at personal and church level between all believers, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant and Messianic Jews, that we may find our rest and strength and health in You, before it is too late. This we ask in the name of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

2nd March 2022.

Ezekiel 11:17 records God's promise to His people Israel. "The LORD and King says, '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.' "

Colossians 1:15-20. Paul declares His faith in Jesus the Christ who is over all. "Christ is the exact likeness of God... He is the first [born], and He is over all of creation. All things were created by Him. He created everything in Heaven and on Earth. He created everything that can be seen and everything that cannot be seen. He created kings, powers, rulers and authorities. Everything was created by Him and for Him. Before anything was created, He was already there. He holds everything together. And He is the Head of the body, which is the Church. He is the beginning. He is the first to be raised from the dead. That happened so that He would be far above everything... That includes all things on Earth and in Heaven. God has made peace through the blood of Christ [spilt] on the cross."

Heavenly Father, thank you for the reminder that Your heart is for the salvation and restoration of Your people. Give us more understanding of Your purpose and provision in Christ who existed from the beginning and has "created kings, powers, rulers and authorities" seated at Your right hand. In Your mercy bring peace through repentance and submission to His authority in the world. Restore Your people to their lands and property and friends and relatives as we humbly bow the knee for all persecuted people everywhere. For the sake of Jesus who sacrificed His blood for our salvation. Amen.

3rd March 2022.

Isaiah 44:6-23 asks God's special people to remember Him and what He has done since He established them (v.6-8). And yet many had created idols in their life to value and worship and are at risk of being "terrified and put to shame" (v.9-11). God then shares with Isaiah an example of how carpenters cut down trees to use as fuel to keep warm and to cook food. But they keep some of the wood to carve idols to worship. Their eyes had become blind to what they are doing and their minds closed and failed to understand (v.14-18). "The LORD says, 'Return to Me. Then I will set you free... Shout out loud, you Earth! Sing to the LORD you forests and all of your trees!' " (v.21-23).

1 Peter 3:13-18. "Who is going to hurt you if you really want to do good? If you suffer for doing what is right, you will be blessed! Scripture also says, 'Do not fear what others fear. Do not be afraid' (Isaiah 8:12). But make sure in your hearts that Christ is Lord. Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you about the hope you have. Be ready to give the reason for it. But do it gently and with respect. Live so that you don't have to feel you have done anything wrong. Some people may say evil things about your good conduct as believers in Christ. If they do, they will be put to shame for speaking like that about you. It is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. Christ died ... to bring you to God."

Lord Jesus, thank You for suffering to save us! Open our blind eyes and closed minds to see the mercy and provision of Father God and to repent. Forgive Your people and save us in these terrifying times! Amen.

4th March 2022.

Malachi 4:1-2. "You can be sure the day of the LORD is coming. My anger will burn like a furnace. All those who are proud will be like straw. So will all those who do what is evil... But here is what will happen for you who have respect for Me. The sun that brings life will rise. Its rays will bring healing to My people. You will go out and leap like calves that have just been let out of the barn."

Revelation 3:11-13. Jesus says to His people, "I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have. Then no one will take away your crown. Those who overcome will be pillars in the temple of My God. They will never leave it again. I will write the name of My God on them... Those who have ears should listen to what the Holy Spirit says to the churches."

Lord Jesus our Saviour, tell us how to pray in these final days before Your return. Encourage Your people to listen and obey what Your "Holy Spirit is saying to the churches". Bring repentance so that we do not join the "proud and all those who do evil". Instead, may we repent and uphold and apply the full teachings of God's truth. Help us to persevere in His will to live and declare the Good News of salvation in Christ alone. Show us how to comfort the persecuted and the bereaved. Hear our prayers for Your mercy to bring peace by overcoming evil with good. Raise up many faithful and bold believers in the Last Days to prepare the world for Your return. We look forward to You establishing God's Kingdom on Earth with much hope and joy. May this vision and Your voice be heard around the world today! Amen.

7th March 2022.

1 Kings 1 records the days of King David when he was close to death. His eldest son Adonijah began to gain support for himself to become Israel's future king (1:5-9). But he did not consult with Nathan the prophet of the LORD God Almighty who knew God's will was for David's son Solomon to become king. Then Nathan met with Solomon's mother Bathsheba (v.11), King David (v.23) and Zadok the priest (v.32) in order to anoint Solomon as king (v.34). David praised God for establishing His will before he died (v.46-48) and the supporters of Adonijah fled (v.49).

Revelation 19:9-10 records the words of a great and mighty angel to the apostle John. "Here is what the angel told me to write. 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!' Then the angel added, 'These are the true words of God.' When I heard this, I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'Do not do that! I serve God, just as you do. I am God's servant, just like other believers who hold firmly to what Jesus has taught. Worship God! What Jesus taught is the very heart of prophecy.' "

Lord Jesus, keep us firmly rooted in Your prophetic teaching which is based on Father God's truth and His purpose for His people. Help us to pray in His will to support only those who are God's anointed and appointed people for these difficult days as we await Your return. May prophets, priests and kingly leaders unite with godly mothers to establish the rule of Your righteousness this day. Reveal Your truth to unholy leaders, scatter their supporters and enable us to show mercy as You restore peace across the world and obedience to the call to worship God Almighty! Amen.

8th March 2022.

1 Kings 11 records the time when King Solomon repeatedly chose to disobey God and His laws. God vowed to take away ten of the tribes of Israel from Solomon and leave them under the control of God-fearing rulers. Earlier, Solomon had written, "The fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10) but in his later years he failed to choose right from wrong. Then God's prophet Ahijah appointed Jeroboam as king over Judah and Jerusalem, the city of David, "where I chose to put My name" (v.36).

Acts 8:9-25 tells what happened under the ministry of the apostle Philip in Samaria during a time of persecution of the early Jewish believers in Christ. This fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus in Acts 1:8. Simon the magician lived there and performed evil miracles. "But Philip preached the Good News of Jesus Christ. Men and women believed and were baptised. Simon himself believed and was baptised" (v.12-13). Then Peter and John came from Jerusalem and laid their hands on the new believers to receive the Holy Spirit (v.14-17). Sadly, Simon thought he could pay to have God's power to lay hands on people but was warned "Your heart is not right with God... You are a prisoner of sin" (v.18-23). Simon asked for prayer. Many others received the words from the Lord.

Father God, we acknowledge that even when we know and believe Your truth we are still vulnerable to sin and disobedience, like Solomon and Simon, who put their divine calling at risk. Open our eyes to see how you will equip us to share in the ministry of salvation through Christ. We pray in His name for others to be warned to serve You alone and choose to do what is right. Amen.

9th March 2022.

Genesis 24:1-9 gives the instructions of Abraham nearly 4000 years ago to his servant to arrange for his son Isaac to marry the girl of God's choosing. Abraham said to him, "The LORD is the God of heaven and the God of Earth. I want you to make a promise with an oath in His name. I am living among the people of Canaan. But I want you to promise me that you will not get a wife for my son from their daughters. Instead, promise me that you will go [back] to my country and to my own relatives. Get a wife for my son Isaac from there." The servant asked him, "What if the woman doesn't want to come back with me to this land? Then should I take your son back to the country you came from?" Abraham said, "Make sure you do not take my son back there. The Lord, the God of heaven, took me away from my father's family. He brought me out of my own land. And He made me a promise with an oath. He said, 'I will give this land to your family after you.' The LORD will send his angel ahead of you. So you will be able to get a wife for my son from there."

1 Peter 3:1-7. "Wives, follow the lead of your husbands... Let them be won to Christ without words, by seeing how their wives behave. Let them see how pure you are... Husbands, take good care of your wives... Then nothing will stand in the way of your prayers."

Father God, ensure our families and relatives marry partners of Your choosing and do not submit to people of alien cultures whose desire is to control for selfish reasons. In your mercy, establish freedom for Your people, both Jews and Gentiles, from nearby nations and rulers who do not live according to Your purpose. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

10th March 2022.

Psalms 31:9-24. "LORD, show me Your favour. I am in deep trouble... My whole body grows weak with sadness... I might as well be dead. I have become like broken pottery. I hear the lies many people tell about me. There is terror all around me. Many have joined together against me. They plan to kill me. But I trust in You, LORD. I say, 'You are my God. My whole life is in Your hands. Save me from my enemies. Save me from those who are chasing me. Let Your face smile on me with favour. Save me because Your love is faithful. LORD, I have cried out to you. Do not let me be put to shame. But let sinners be put to shame... Their lips tell lies. Let them be silenced. They speak with pride against those who do right.' " The writer concludes, "Love the LORD, all of you who are faithful to Him! The LORD watches over the faithful. But He completely pays back those who are proud. Be strong, all of you who put your hope in the LORD God Almighty. Never give up!"

Revelation 3:11-12. Jesus says, "I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have. Then no one will take away your crown. I will see to it that those who overcome will be pillars in the temple of My God... I will write the name of my God on them." Hebrews 10:35 [NIV]. "So do not throw away your [reason for] confidence. It will be richly rewarded."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your encouragement in these terrifying days to endure in faith. Forgive us for the years we have presumed on your righteousness and failed to give You all the glory. Save us from our enemies and strengthen us to prepare for the return of our Saviour. And help us to support those in need this day. Amen.

11th March 2022.

Job 16 & 17 (NIV). In the midst of his distress, Job tells God He has worn him out (16:7) and turned him over to evil men (v.11). He says that God has made him His target and men with arrows surround him (v.12-13). His face is red with weeping and deep shadows ring his eyes. "Yet my hands have been free of violence and my prayer is pure" (v.16-17). The hostile men surrounding him "have closed their minds to understanding" (17:2,4). But Job strongly believes that "the righteous will hold to their ways and those with clean hands will grow stronger" (v.9).

Acts 4:1-4 [NIRV] records a time of persecution in the early days of the messianic believers in Jerusalem. "Peter and John were speaking to the people. The priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees came up to the apostles. They were very upset by what the apostles were teaching the people. The apostles were saying that because Jesus rose from the dead, people can be raised from the dead. So the temple authorities arrested Peter and John [and] put them in prison

until the next day. But many who heard the message believed. The number of men who believed grew to about 5,000."

Dear Father God, thank You for these wonderful words of endurance by Job in the midst of much personal tragedy. Mindful of the destruction of life and property in the world today, we ask for Your peace and strength to save the righteous and innocent people. Thank you that our Bibles tell us of the blessings that followed Job's disaster. Also how the New Testament church grew stronger under persecution. Jesus is Lord! Amen.

14th March 2022.

Psalms 21 and 22. In his lead-up to Psalm 23, King David declares his faith in "the unfailing love of the LORD Most High" (21:7) and how the plans of the wicked cannot succeed (v.11). However, he asks "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (22:1). "My heart melts within me and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth" (v.14-15). "Oh LORD, my strength, come quickly to help me" (v.19). David then vows, "I will declare Your name to my brothers and in the congregation I will praise You... Future generations will proclaim His righteousness" (v.27,30,31). Then David follows this with "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want..." in his famous Psalm 23.

Luke 17:1-3 Jesus warns us that "things that cause people to sin are bound to come." He said to His followers, "If your brother sins, rebuke him and if he repents, forgive him."

Lord Jesus, in the midst of much persecution and suffering, teach us how to pray and how to repent and how to witness and how to forgive. We feel like King David at times with a mixture of despair and praise. Help us to realise, whether we are a leader or a servant, our testimony will be that "future generations will proclaim God's righteousness" if we remain faithful. Help us to trust in You, our Shepherd, for Your deliverance and salvation and look forward to dwelling with You for ever. Make us bold in resisting the evil one. Amen.

15th March 2022.

Exodus 21:18-24 gives Torah teaching regarding personal injuries. "Suppose two men get into a fight and argue with each other. One hits the other with a stone or his fist. He does not die but has to stay in bed. And later he gets up and walks around outside with his walking stick. Then the man who hit him will not be held accountable. But he must pay the one who was hurt for the time he spent in bed. He must be sure that the person is completely healed... But if someone is badly hurt, a life must be taken for a life. An eye must be put out for an eye. A tooth must be knocked out for a tooth. A hand must be cut off for a hand and a foot for a foot." The principle of divine redemption is then given in verse 30, later fully fulfilled in the punishment Jesus took on the cross for mankind: "But suppose payment is required of him instead. Then he can save his life by paying what is required."

Romans 16:17-20 says in the words of Paul, "Everyone has heard that you obey God. So you have filled me with joy. I want you to be wise about what is good. And I want you to have nothing to do with what is evil. The God who gives peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."

Father God. Thank you for Paul's words of encouragement. And help us to know that Jesus our Lord has paid the price for our punishment for sin. Thank you that we are mercifully forgiven and gloriously saved. Help us to live with His power and compassion midst trials, wrong actions and persecution. Help us to show Your mercy to those who do us harm. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

16th March 2022.

Malachi 2:1-9 records God's dealings with the priests who refused to listen to Him and honour Him. "I will send a curse on you. I will turn your blessings into curses... You will know that I have given you a warning. I have warned you so that my covenant with Levi will continue. My covenant promised Levi life and peace. So I gave them to him. I required him to respect Me. And he had great respect for My name. True teaching came from his mouth. Nothing but the truth came from his lips. He walked with Me in peace. He did what was right. He turned many people away from their sins. The lips of a priest should guard knowledge. People should look for true teaching from his mouth... But you have turned away from the right path. Your teaching has caused many people to trip and fall. You have broken my covenant."

Luke 15:11-32 gives the parable of Jesus about the prodigal son. The younger son took his share of his father's property and "wasted his money on wild living" and ended up eating food fit only for pigs (v.13-16). He regretted what he had done and decided to return home and tell his father, "I have sinned against Heaven and I have sinned against you." His father was "filled with tender love for his son. He ran to him and threw his arms around him and kissed him" (v.19-20).

Heavenly Father, spare us from false teachings and leaders today who no longer honour You. Spare us Your people from being attracted towards a lifestyle that causes us to stumble and "many other people to trip and fall". May we desire to stay faithful to You and be quick to repent so that we are restored and "filled with Your tender love" and then behave with divine knowledge and power as we follow Jesus our Saviour. For His sake who died for our sins. Amen.

17th March 2022.

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 records the end of the life of Moses as the Israelites waited to conquer Canaan and occupy the Promised Land now called Israel. "Moses climbed Mount Nebo... The LORD showed him the whole land from Gilead all the way to Dan [and] the whole land of Judah all the way to the Mediterranean Sea... Then the LORD spoke to Moses. 'This is the land I promised with an oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I told them, "I will give this land to your children and their children." ' "

James 5:1-6 gives a warning against rich and powerful oppressors. "You rich people, listen to me. Cry and sob, because you will soon be suffering. Your riches have rotted... Your wanting more and more will eat your body like fire. You have stored up riches in these last days... The cries of those who gathered the harvest have reached the ears of the Lord who rules over all. You have lived an easy life on earth. You have given yourselves everything you wanted. You have made yourselves fat like cattle that will soon be butchered. You have judged and murdered people who are not guilty. And they were not even opposing you."

Thank you heavenly Father for revealing Your truth sufficient for the needs of this day. We praise You for raising up Moses to fulfil the ongoing promises You gave to Abraham's family. Meanwhile, show mercy to the descendants of Japheth and Ham as well as Shem. Restore the land to your faithful people in Europe and Africa in time for harvests. Bless them with timely rains and the means to rebuild homes and supportive businesses. Humble the powerful and rich to support the needy – in Your mercy and to Your glory – as we wait for our Saviour's return. Amen.

18th March 2022.

Malachi 3:6-12 says, "I am the Lord. I do not change... You have turned away from My rules. You have 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... I will pour out so many blessings that you will not have enough room for them. I will keep bugs from eating up your crops. And your grapes will not drop from the vines before they are ripe. Then all of the nations will call you blessed. Your land will be delightful."

Luke 5:1-11 records how Jesus, by the Sea of Galilee, got into a boat and asked the fisherman Simon to row out a little way from the shore. "Then he sat down in the boat and taught the people. When he finished speaking, he turned to Simon, 'Go out into deep water. Let the nets down so you can catch some fish.' Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.' When they had done so, they caught a large number of fish. There were so many that their nets began to break... When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus. 'Go away from me, Lord!' he said. 'I am a sinful man!' He and everyone with him were amazed at the number of fish they had caught... Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." ...Then they left everything and followed Him.

Thank You Father God for Your Old and New Testament teachings of Your faithful provision when we obey You and follow Jesus our Saviour. Make us strong witnesses when we face opposition in these last days: help us to persevere and bring glory to You and Your Church. For the sake of Jesus who died to set us free from our sins and for the sake of those who follow Him. Amen.

21st March 2022.

Psalms 145 declares the faith of King David. "The LORD is right in everything He does. He is loving toward everything He has made. The LORD is ready to help all those who call out to Him... He satisfies the needs of those who have respect for Him. He hears their cry and saves them. The LORD

watches over all those who love Him. But He will destroy all sinful people. I will praise the LORD with my mouth. Let every creature praise His holy name for ever and ever."

2 Peter 2:5-9 declares the faith of Apostle Peter. "God did not spare the world's ungodly people long ago. He brought the flood on them. But Noah preached about the right way to live. God kept him safe. He also saved seven others. God judged the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He burned them to ashes. He made them an example of what is going to happen to ungodly people. God saved Lot. He was a man who did what was right. He was shocked by the dirty, sinful lives of people who didn't obey God's laws. That good man lived among them day after day. He saw and heard the evil things they were doing. They were breaking God's laws. And his godly spirit was deeply troubled. So the Lord knows how to keep godly people safe in times of testing. He also knows how to keep ungodly people under guard until the day they will be judged. In the meantime, He continues to punish them."

Father God, thank You for these records of faithful and godly David and Peter who suffered much at the hands of sinful people, as did Naoh and Lot. Enable us to survive and thrive for your glory in these dark days of great sin and disobedience, to witness and testify of Your love and mercy as You weep for Your creation. Enable us to help others to come to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. For His sake. Amen.

22nd March 2022.

Isaiah 3:10-11 says, "Tell those who do what is right that things will go well with them. They will enjoy the results of the good things they have done. But how terrible it will be for those who do what is evil! Trouble is about to fall on them. They will be paid back for the evil things they have done."

Acts 5:27-42 tells how the apostles were taken before the Jewish Sanhedrin for questioning. Peter and the other apostles replied, "We must obey God instead of people! You had Jesus killed by nailing him to a cross. But the God of our people raised Jesus from the dead. Now Jesus is Prince and Saviour. God has proved this by giving Him a place of honour at His own right hand. He did it so that He could turn Israel away from their sins and forgive them. We are witnesses of these things. And so is the Holy Spirit. God has given the Spirit to those who obey Him" (v.29-32). A Pharisee called Gamaliel got up and said to the Jewish leaders, "Let me give you some advice. Leave these men alone! Let them go! If their plans and actions are only human, they will fail. But if their plans come from God, you will not be able to stop these men. You will only find yourselves fighting against God" (v.38-39).

We praise You heavenly Father for the timely encouragement of Your words of truth regarding the persecution of followers of Jesus our Saviour. Since the beginning of time, Your created people have sinned and You have mercifully intervened in many, many ways. We invite you to destroy this day the work of the wicked one and his evil supporters. "Pay them back for the evil they have done." Raise up Your people to testify of Your love and mercy for all who are righteous and to prepare the way for many more to be saved in time to welcome our "Prince and Saviour" back to Jerusalem. Bring repentance and revival in our nations to Your glory! Amen.

23rd March 2022.

Joshua 20:1-9 describes God's law to establish cities of refuge for those who flee from their accusers until their rights and wrongs of every dispute have been established. Vengeance was disallowed until matters were agreed in court.

2 Corinthians 13:1-10 is Paul's final warning in his letter to prepare for his next visit to the believers in Corinth. "Every matter must be proved by the words of two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15)... When I return, I will not spare those who sinned earlier. I will not spare any of the others either. You are asking me to prove that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you. He is powerful among you. It is true that Christ was nailed to the cross because He was weak. But He lives by God's power. In the same way, I share His weakness. But by God's power I will live with Him to serve you. Take a good look at yourselves to see if you are really believers. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you? ...I pray so that you will do what is right, even if it seems I have failed. I cannot do anything to stop the truth. I can only work for the truth. I am glad when I am weak but you are strong. I pray that you will become perfect. That is why I write these things before I come to you. Then when I do come, I will not have to be hard on you when I

use my authority. The Lord gave me the authority to build you up. He did not give it to me to tear you down."

Father God, thank You for your mercy shown to Your people in times of great distress. Forgive our sins and grant us mercy to find refuge without seeking revenge. We are weak but give authority to people of integrity to act strongly on our behalf in line with Your perfect will. May they "work for the truth" that is in us through Jesus Christ but not spare those who are wrong. For His sake who died for us to gain new life in this world and beyond. Amen.

24th March 2022.

Micah 2:1-3 describes what will happen to those who plan against God's plans. "How terrible it will be for those who plan to harm others! How terrible for those who make evil plans before they even get out of bed! ...That's because they have the power to do it. If they want fields or houses, they take them. They cheat men out of their homes and property. So the LORD says to them, 'I am planning to send trouble on you. You will not be able to save yourselves from it. You will not live so proudly anymore. It will be a time of trouble.' "

1 Peter 3:14-18 says, "Suppose you suffer for doing what is right. Then you will be blessed. Scripture also says, 'Do not fear what others fear. Do not be afraid' (Isaiah 8:12). But make sure in your hearts that Christ is Lord. Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you about the hope you have. Be ready to give the reason for it. But do it gently and with respect. Live so that you do not have to feel you have done anything wrong. Some people may say evil things about your good conduct as believers in Christ. If they do, they will be put to shame for speaking like that about you. It is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil if that is what God wants. Christ died for sins once and for all time. The One who did what is right died for those who do not do right. He died to bring you to God. His body was put to death. But the Holy Spirit brought Him back to life."

Father God, we thank You for the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Israel's Messiah. Strengthen us and save us from the wickedness of those who plan against You and who "cheat men out of their homes and property". Help us not to be afraid in our suffering. Amen.

25th March 2022.

Isaiah 42:9-13 speaks of doing "new things" after the former things have taken place (v.9). So God's people are encouraged to "Sing a new song to the LORD. Sing praises to Him from one end of the Earth to the other. Sing, you who sail out on the ocean. Sing, all of you creatures in it. Sing, you islands [nations]. Sing, all of you who live there. Let the desert and its towns raise their voices... Let them give glory to the Lord. Let them praise Him. The LORD will march out like a mighty warrior. He will stir up His anger like a soldier getting ready to fight. He will shout the battle cry. And He will win the battle over His enemies!"

1 Corinthians 4:20. Paul warns the believers, "The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk. It is a matter of power!"

Heavenly Father, as the nations and islands wage war, men meet together in their worldly power to discuss their plans and their threats and their actions to save their people. LORD, we long for "new things" that have their source of power in You. Encourage us to honour and glorify You with our praises "from one end of the earth to the other" as we invite You to move freely among us with Your Spirit of Truth. Help us to trust You to work out Your "new things" in these days of waiting for Messiah to return. In your mercy, save many to welcome His return and in the meantime, protect us from oppressors. Amen.

28th March 2022.

Joshua 6:25 records the time when the city of Jericho was destroyed at the beginning of the conquest of God's Promised Land of Canaan. "Joshua spared the prostitute Rahab... He did it because she hid the spies he had sent to Jericho." Rahab became the mother of Boaz who married Ruth. Ruth and Boaz were the grandparents of King David in the family line of Joseph, whose wife Mary gave birth to Jesus, the Son of God, Israel's Messiah, while she was still a virgin.

2 Corinthians 4:1-9 says, "Because of God's mercy, we have work to do... And we do not give up. Instead, we have given up doing secret and shameful things. We no longer twist God's word. In fact, we do just the opposite. We present the truth plainly. In the sight of God, we make our appeal to everyone's sense of what is right and wrong... The god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe. They cannot see the light of the Good News of Christ's glory... God said,

'Let light shine out of darkness' (Genesis 1:3). He made His light shine in our hearts. It shows us the light of God's glory in the face of Christ. Treasure is kept in clay jars. In the same way, we have the treasure of the Good News in these earthly bodies of ours. That shows the mighty power of the Good News comes from God. It does not come from us... Others make us suffer. But God does not desert us. We are knocked down but not knocked out."

Thank You Father God for Your amazing ancient plans for the birth of Israel's Messiah, Jesus the Christ. Thank You for the "light of the Good News of Jesus" at work in the lives of Jews and Gentiles today through His resurrection power. Amen.

29th March 2022.

Ezekiel 3:16-21 makes clear God's desire for righteousness and the need to proclaim His truth to all, in His desire for repentance and salvation. The LORD said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, I have appointed you as a prophet to warn the people of Israel. So listen to My message. Give them a warning from Me. Suppose I say to a sinful person, 'You can be sure you will die', and you do not warn him... Then he will die because he has sinned. And I will hold you accountable for his death. But suppose you do warn that sinful person. And he does not turn away from his sin or his evil ways. Then he will die because he has sinned. But you will have saved yourself. Or if a godly person turns away from his godliness and does what is evil... then he will die since you did not warn him. The godly things he did will not be remembered. And I will hold you accountable for his death. But suppose you do warn a godly person not to sin and he does not sin. Then you can be sure that he will live because he listened to your warning. And you will have saved yourself [also, KJV]."

Luke 16:9-11. Jesus warned His followers to use money for good things and gain friends. "Suppose you can be trusted with very little. Then you can be trusted with a lot. But suppose you are not honest with very little. Then you will not be honest with a lot. Suppose you have not been worthy of trust in handling worldly wealth. Then who will trust you with true riches?"

Father God, help us to heed Your warning to Ezekiel and to the followers of Jesus to "use money for good things" that through our kindness and friendships many will receive Your "true riches" in this world and the next. Amen.

30th March 2022.

Genesis Chapters 16 and 17 record events with long-lasting impact on God's special people, the Jews. Chapter 16 records the time when the wife of Abraham, Sarai, offered her maid to him to have a son, named Ishmael. This was because she had not produced a son of her own to carry out the promise of God that they would have a large family. Fourteen years later, Isaac was miraculously born to Sarai before she died in her old age. These events secured the fulfilment of God's promise for Abraham's special family but also caused many problems in the future due to wars between the families of Ishmael (Arabs) and Isaac (Jews). Circumcision became the sign of God's covenant promise to both Arabs and Jews, but only the Jews chose to follow Yahweh, the one true God Almighty, until their Messiah came.

Jude verses 17 to 21 says, "Dear friends, remember the apostles foretold, '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. 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."

Dear Father God, help us to walk in the light of Your renewed covenant with mankind through Jesus Your Son, our Saviour. Help us to persevere in these last days and show mercy to those who reject us or persecute us, including the family of Ishmael as well as Isaac, which also happened to Jesus, who died for us all to be saved. Enable all sons of Abraham, including adopted Gentile believers, to understand how to be circumcised in their hearts through Christ alone. Amen.

31st March 2022.

Psalms 147:12-20 [NIV] extols the Lord God of Israel, who "strengthens your gates and blesses the people within". He "grants peace to your borders and satisfies you with the finest of wheat" scattering "snow like wool, frost like ashes and hail like pebbles." He has also "revealed His truth and laws."

Hebrews 2:16-18 quotes the teachings of Jesus. "It is not angels He [Jesus] helps but Abraham's descendants. For this reason He 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, making atonement for the sins of the people. And because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted."

Father God, continue to grant understanding of Your profound mercy and faithfulness that in Christ Jesus, who suffered much for our sins, all who believe He is the Son of God enables us to receive Your eternal inheritance as sons of Abraham. So we invite You today to "strengthen our gates and bless the people within" and "grant peace to our borders and satisfy us with the finest of wheat" thinking especially of Your children in Ukraine and others around the world who are persecuted by evil unbelievers. Keep us strong in Your "truth and laws" and "the teachings of Jesus". Amen.

1st April 2022.

Deuteronomy 23 provides a variety of laws for God's people to keep themselves holy. Moses told them what God said: "Your camp must be holy. Then He will not see anything among you that is shameful. He will not turn away from you" (v.14). Earlier, Moses reminded them that "He turned the curse [of Balaam] into a blessing for you because He loves you" (v.5).

Romans 9:27-33 records Paul's teaching on the prophecies of Isaiah. "The number of people from Israel may be like the sand by the sea. But only a few of them will be saved. The Lord will carry out his sentence. He will be quick to carry it out on earth, once and for all." 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. Israel looked for a law that could make them right with God. But they did not 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' [Jesus] that causes people to trip and fall. It is written, "Look! In Zion I am laying a 'stone' that causes people to trip. He is a 'rock' that will make them fall. But the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame."

Heavenly Father, thank you for the many examples of righteous living You gave Your special people in love. Help us to understand what was on Your heart so that we do not cause You to turn your back on us through our ungodliness. Thank you for Your mercy shown to Gentiles as well as Jews through their Messiah. Please help us not to stumble over 'the mystery of Christ' but grow in faith in Him who saves us. May His spirit of compassion rule in our hearts with Holy Spirit power. Amen.

4th April 2022.

Psalms 65. Before the Temple was built in Jerusalem, King David looked forward to worshipping God there. "All people will come to You." Why? "Because You hear and answer prayer. When our sins became too much for us, You forgave our lawless acts" (v.1-3). David continues with a long list of reasons to fulfil his desire to "praising You in Zion". This includes the good things God brings and the wonderful things He does. Also His saving power which causes people all over the world to put their hope in Him (v.4-5). David says that in addition to creating the world with its mountains (v.6) "You calmed the oceans [and] the angry words and actions of the nations" (v.7). He says that God's amazing miracles "make people from one end of the earth to the other sing for joy" (v.8). David ends with thanks for God's provision of water, grain and grass for God's people and their flocks and herds (v.9-13).

Acts 22:3-22. Paul spoke to the crowds in Jerusalem. "I am a Jew ... trained by Gamaliel in the law of our people. I wanted to serve God as much as any of you do today. I hurt the followers of the Way of Jesus and sent many to their death." Paul then described how he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. But the crowds refused to listen to him. Two nights later, Jesus appeared to Paul and said "Be brave! You have given witness to me in Jerusalem. You must do the same in Rome" (23:11).

Father God, if You can forgive and save sinners like David and Paul and use them for saving others, please use me to help "people from one end of the earth to the other sing for joy". Amen.

5th April 2022.

2 Samuel 3:32-39 records the time when the future King David wept over the murder of Abner. "David sobbed out loud at Abner's tomb. So did the rest of the people... He said, 'Should Abner have died as sinful people do? His hands were not tied. His feet were not chained. He died as if he had been killed by evil people.' All of the people sobbed over Abner again. Then all of them came and begged David to eat something... He said, 'I will not taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down. If I do, may God punish me greatly!' All of the people heard it and were pleased. In fact, everything the king did pleased them. So on that day all of the people of Judah and Israel understood. They knew that their [future] king did not have anything to do with the murder of Abner... David said, 'I am the anointed king. But today I am weak.' " Soon after this public confession, David was appointed by the people as King of Israel. He conquered Jerusalem and took the Ark of God Almighty into the city. This was in addition to defeating the Philistines.

1 Corinthians 5:12-13 is where Paul warns the church not to have anything to do with a certain sinful man in their fellowship. "What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not supposed to judge those inside the church? God will judge those outside. Scripture says, 'Get rid of that evil person!'"

Dear God, thank you again for the examples of David and Paul who refused to have anything to do with evil people but left judgement to You. Their lives testify of the way in which You used them to proclaim Your truth to the world and uphold Your purposes for Jerusalem and Israel. Help us to get rid of evil in our own lives as we await our Saviour's return to Jerusalem. Amen.

6th April 2022.

Isaiah 37:14-20 records the time Israel was threatened by huge Assyrian armies led by Sennacherib. King Hezekiah "went up to the LORD's Temple. There ...Hezekiah prayed to the Lord. He said, 'LORD who rules over all, You are the God of Israel. You sit on Your throne between the cherubim. You alone are God over all of the kingdoms on Earth. You have made Heaven and Earth. Listen, LORD, hear us! Open Your eyes, LORD. Look at the trouble we are in. Listen to what Sennacherib is saying. You are the living God and he dares to make fun of you! ...LORD our God, save us from the powerful hand of Sennacherib. Then all of the kingdoms on earth will know that You alone are God.' "

Acts 23:28-31 gives the final words recorded by Luke about the ministry of Paul. "Here is what I want you to know. God has sent his salvation to people who are not Jews. And they will listen!" For two whole years Paul stayed there in a house he rented. He welcomed all who came to see him. He preached boldly about God's kingdom. No-one could stop him from teaching people about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father God, we thank You for the mercy shown to Your people Israel even with their history of not listening to You. Show mercy to them today as many return to Jerusalem in anticipation of a new Temple and their coming Messiah. Thank You that through them many Gentiles have become part of Abraham's promised extended family. May nothing "stop us from teaching people about the Lord Jesus Christ", Israel's Messiah. Then "all of the kingdoms on Earth will know that You alone are God." Listen and look at the trouble the world You created is in! In the name of Jesus, Your Son, our Saviour. Amen.

7th April 2022.

Exodus 18:7-27 describes the time after escaping from Egypt that Moses met his father-in-law. Jethro saw how the people queued up to seek guidance and advice from Moses. He told Moses, "You will just get worn out. And so will these people who come to you. There's too much work for you... I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must speak to God for the people. Take their problems to Him. Teach them the rules and laws. Show them how to live and what to do. But choose men of ability from all of the people who have respect for God... Appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Let them serve the people as judges. But have them bring every difficult problem to you. They can decide the easy ones themselves. That will make your load lighter." Later, God confirmed to Moses on Mount Sinai what he should say to the people. "The whole Earth is Mine. But you will be a kingdom of priests to serve Me. You will be My holy nation. That is what you must tell the Israelites."

James 2:14-26 explains that faith without action in doing good deeds is worthless. He gave Abraham as an example. "What he believed and what he did worked together. What he did made his faith complete" (v.22).

So help us God to trust You for faith and works to go and grow together. We believe that Jesus suffered and died so that we can live transformed lives through His resurrection power. Grant us His compassion to guide and teach others like Moses. Also the power of Christ to perform miracles to demonstrate faith in action today as a "kingdom of priests" in serving You and others in His name. Lord, delegate others to do the same! Amen.

8th April 2022.

1 Kings 11:9-11 records the time when God spoke to King Solomon about his disobedience. "The LORD became angry with Solomon. That was because his heart had turned away from the LORD. He is the God of Israel who appeared to Solomon twice. He 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. I commanded you to do what I told you but you did not do it. So you can be absolutely sure I will tear the kingdom away from you. I will give it to one of your officials.' "

1 Timothy 6:11-18 follows Paul's warning to Timothy not to seek worldly riches. "You are a man of God. Run away from all of those things. 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. You were chosen for it when you openly told others what you believe... In the sight of God and Christ, I give you a command. Obey it until our Lord Jesus Christ appears. Obey it completely. Then no one can find fault with it or you." Paul follows this with his command to warn the rich to put their trust in God, not wealth, and to be "rich in good deeds".

Heavenly Father, we pray for Your chosen leaders of today. May they be faithful to the end like Timothy and not be distracted by wealth and worship of other gods like Solomon. Lord God, "tear the kingdom away" from those who disobey You and give it to others who will obey You. Establish peace, security and provision Your way so that all may prosper in faithfully following Christ our Saviour. Amen.

11th April 2022.

Jeremiah 46 records Jeremiah's prophecies in 600 BC how Egypt will be destroyed by Babylon but will be rebuilt later (v.26). Also the remaining tribe of Jacob must not fear. "You are my servant. I am with you... I will completely destroy all of the nations among which I scatter you. But I will not completely destroy you. I will correct you. But I will be fair. I will punish you in a way that is fair and right."

Matthew 19:17-21 gives the words of Jesus to the rich young man who sought eternal life. "If you want to enter the Kingdom, obey the commandments." Jesus then emphasised these six commandments: "Do not commit murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give false witness. Honour your father and mother (Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20) and love your neighbour as you love yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). The young man was happy with this until Jesus added, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell everything you have. Give the money to those who are poor. You will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

Father God, help us to accept that You are in charge of this world "in a way that is fair and right" with both punishments and blessings. Help us, too, to accept we must give up much as well as take up much in our desire to receive eternal life with You, without counting the cost. So as we ask for strength to serve You and others, grant us Holy Spirit power within through the resurrected life that Jesus offers His followers. Keep us obedient to Your commandments. Change us, that we may change the world! For Christ's sake. Amen.

12th April 2022.

Habakkuk 2 gives God's answer to the complaints of His prophet. He had moaned and complained to God of the evil in the world that went unpunished. Even the believers in God Almighty were behaving in unrighteous ways. "I will go up to the lookout tower... I will wait to see how the LORD will answer me... and how to answer Him!" (2:1). God spoke to Habakkuk, telling him to write down what will surely happen. "It will happen when I want it to!" He warned that the proud want what is not good but "the righteous will live by faith" (2:4). And "those who have robbed many nations ... will themselves be robbed" (2:8). Human effort is no better than fire wood ...But the Earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (2:13-14). Habakkuk concludes with more famous words: "The fig trees might not bud. The vines might not produce any grapes. The

olive crop might fail. The fields might not produce any food. There might not be any sheep in the pens. There might not be any cattle in the barns. But I will rejoice because of what the LORD has done. God my Saviour fills me with joy. The LORD is my strength" (3:17-19).

Ephesians 6:10-18 gives Paul's command to be strong in the Lord and put on the full armour of God and "pray in the power of the Spirit ... for all God's people."

Again we ask You heavenly Father for daily strength to fulfil Your tasks through the Holy Spirit power within us that Jesus promised His followers. As we stand in faith and look for You to destroy those who seek to destroy us, enable us to put on the full spiritual armour Christ has given for His people to withstand the enemy. For His sake who died to save us. Amen.

13th April 2022.

Job 40 says, "I am the Mighty One. Will the man who argues with Me correct Me? Let him who brings charges against Me answer Me!" Job replied to the LORD, "I am not worthy. How can I reply to You? ...I really do not have any answer." Then the LORD ... said, "Get ready to stand up for yourself. I will ask you some more questions... 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?" After God's long speech to Job, Job admitted, "My ears had heard about You. But now my eyes have seen You... I am really sorry for what I said about You." (43:5-6)

Romans 9:30 to 10:4 says, "Those who are Gentiles did not look for a way to be right with God. But they found it by having faith. Israel did look 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... Brothers and sisters, with all my heart I long for the people of Israel to be saved. I pray to God for them. I can give witness about them that they really want to serve God. But how they are trying to do it is not based on what they know. They did not know how God makes people right with Himself. They tried to get right with God in their own way. They did not do it in God's way. Christ has completed [fulfilled] the Law. So now everyone who believes [in Him] can be right with God."

Father God, forgive us when we listen to Your truth without opening our eyes (and hearts) to You, like Job. Forgive us when we seek to live righteous lives in our own strength without living by faith in Christ our Saviour and His promised Spirit within us. We thank you for speaking to us through Your Word today. Amen.

14th April 2022.

Psalms 72:1-4 gives the prayers of King David for his son Solomon. He asks God for His wisdom to judge matters fairly and with His righteousness. David tells God that he wants his son to "rule Your people in the right way and to be fair to those ... who are hurting." David believes the land will "produce rich crops because the people will do what is right." He wants the new king to "save the children of those who are in need and crush those who treat others badly." David's psalm ends with "May the whole Earth be filled with the glory of God. Amen and Amen!"

1 Timothy 3:13-16 gives part of Paul's advice for church leaders: bishops, ministers, pastors, deacons and administrators. "Those who have served well earn the full respect of others. They also become more sure of their faith in Christ Jesus... 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 a body. The Holy Spirit proved that He was the Son of God [through His resurrection]. 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 Lord Jesus, for coming to live among Your people as a Jewish carpenter and suffering the punishment we deserve. Help us to understand "the great mystery of godliness" as we fulfil Your calling to lead others in the faith. May we "also become more sure of our own faith in Christ Jesus". We pray as David did for all in authority to "judge matters fairly and with God's righteousness" and be "fair to those who are in need and crush those who treat others badly." To the glory of God. Amen and Amen!

15th April 2022.

Exodus 19 1-6 records the first encounter with Almighty God on Mount Sinai by Moses as he led the children of Israel out of Egypt to their Promised Land 3500 years ago. Moses went up to God. The LORD called out to him from the mountain. He said, "Here is what I want you to say to My people, who came from Jacob's family. Tell the Israelites, 'You have seen for yourselves what I did to Egypt [the ten plagues]. You saw how I carried you on the wings of eagles and brought you to Myself [the Passover and the crossing of the Red Sea]. Now obey Me completely. Keep My covenant. If you do, then out of all of the nations you will be My special treasure. The whole Earth is Mine. But you will be a kingdom of priests to serve Me. You will be My holy nation. That is what you must tell the Israelites.' "

1 Thessalonians 1:2-4 records Paul's words to the faithful church members in Thessalonica. "God gave us the boldness to tell you His Good News [of Jesus Christ]. We preached to you even though people opposed us strongly [both Jews and Gentiles]. The appeal we make is based on truth. It comes from a pure heart. We are not trying to trick you. In fact, it is just the opposite. God has accepted us to preach. He has trusted us with the Good News. We are not trying to please people. We want to please God."

Heavenly Father, on this special day of Passover for Jews and the Crucifixion for Christians, may we be united in love for You and each other. We give thanks for Your salvation hope now and in the future through Jesus Christ, our Messiah. In Your mercy, deliver us all from the persecution, deceit and ungodliness of unbelievers. Amen.

18th April 2022.

Ezekiel 18 records the time when Almighty God spoke to His prophet Ezekiel to make it clear that the righteous will live (v.5-9) but the unrighteous shall die (v.10-13). "But suppose a sinful person turns away from all of the sins he has committed. And he keeps all my rules. He does what is fair and right. Then you can be sure he will live. He will not die. None of the sins he has committed will be held against him. Because of the godly things he has done, he will live" (v.21-22). The chapter ends with a call to repentance for the whole nation (v.30-32).

2 Corinthians 13: 4- 5 records Paul's final warning to the church in Corinth. "It is true that Christ was nailed to the cross because He was weak. But he lives by God's power. In the same way, I share His weakness. But by God's power I will live with Him to serve you. Take a good look at yourselves to see if you are really believers. Test yourselves. Don't you realize that Christ Jesus is in you? Unless, of course, you fail the test!"

Forgive us heavenly Father when we Your chosen people fail to witness, work and worship to glorify You and Your Son and the Church He established through the Jewish and Gentile believers. We can see from Your Scriptures that from the beginning, it was Your plan that if we repent and do what is right we will be saved and live for ever more. We thank you for the extent of Your sacrificial love and mercy to punish Your own flesh for our sake in fulfilling your plan. We ask again to help us live in resurrection faith to defeat the fiery darts of the wicked one so that we will live now and for ever in the power and compassion of Christ, serving our friends and relatives and church families and all those we can reach with the Good News of Jesus in these evil times. Amen.

19th April 2022.

Joshua 14 records the time when Caleb, one of the two faithful spies who were sent into the Promised Land of Canaan while the Israelites were still encamped in the wilderness, received his share of land on the west bank of the River Jordan. 'He said, "The LORD has done just as He promised. He made the promise while Israel was wandering in the desert. That was 45 years ago. He has kept me alive all of this time. So here I am today, 85 years old! I am still as strong today as I was the day Moses sent me out. I am just as able to go out to battle now as I was then. So give me this hill country. The LORD promised it to me that day." Ever since that time Hebron has belonged to Caleb... because he followed the LORD, the God of Israel, with his whole heart... So the land had peace and rest' (14:10-15). Hebron is the ancient city where Abraham lived. He purchased a plot of land there to bury his wife and family 3900 years ago (Genesis 13:18; 23:1-20), 500 years before Caleb lived there. The cave is still there to this day, 20 miles from Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 12:19 records the witness of Paul to the church in Corinth, Greece. "I have been speaking with God as my witness... as a believer in Christ. Dear friends, everything we do is to help you become stronger."

Thank you Father God for the records of these faithful men Abraham and Caleb who obeyed You when they were sent out under the guidance of Your Holy Spirit. Today, we seek Your Holy Spirit

power to go out wherever You send us, like Paul and his team. Grant us the compassion of Christ and the passion for spreading the Good News to all who will believe and receive Your salvation. Use us to strengthen and grow Your church to prepare for our Lord's return. Amen.

20th April 2022.

Psalm 35: 1-10. "Lord, stand up against those who stand up against me. Fight against those who fight 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. Without reason they dug a pit to catch me... Let the trap they set for me catch them. Let them fall into their own pit and be destroyed. Then I will be full of joy because of what the LORD has done. I will be glad because He 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. You save poor and needy people from those who rob them.' "

Hebrews 10:14-17. The writer claims: "By that one sacrifice, He [Jesus] has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. The Holy Spirit also gives witness to us about this." The writer then quotes from the prophet Jeremiah. "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the LORD. I will put My laws in their hearts. I will write My laws on their minds. I will not remember their sins any more." (Jeremiah 31:33-34.)

Heavenly Father, thank you for Your truth revealed again this day. Help us to apply it at a personal level, family level, church level, neighbourhood level and national level. Grant us faith and wisdom to trust in Your purposes and provision for Your people, and also Your perfect timing when our enemies will fall into their own pit they have dug. Meanwhile, help us to know how to share Your Good News in Jesus to the poor and needy. Amen.

21/4/22.

Ezekiel 8 to 10 records the vision given to Ezekiel regarding the detestable behaviour of God's people and their religious leaders which caused God to withdraw from them and their Temple (8:18). The people then complained that the Lord God Almighty had forsaken the land and did not see the needs of the people. The LORD said, "I will not look on them with pity or spare them, but I will bring down on their own heads what they have done" (9:10, NIV). Then the glory of the LORD departed from the Temple (10:18).

Revelation 2:12-17 records the words of Jesus given 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. You did not renounce your faith in Me even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was put to death." However there were some people in the church who followed the teachings of Balaam, Balak and the Nicolaitans. God warned them to repent.

Dear God, forgive us for the times we complain to You that You have forsaken our land. We have often sinned and followed or tolerated false teachings. Make us strong in upholding Bible truth and in honouring Your name, to avoid the risk of You departing from our churches. Purify and forgive and revive Your church to enable us to stand against the persecution of evil political and religious forces at work in the world today. Help us not to count the cost but to be eager to prepare the way for the return of Christ our Saviour so that many, many more people will be saved to welcome Him back to Jerusalem to establish His Father's Kingdom on Earth. Amen.

3rd May 2022.

Isaiah chapters 13 to 24 give many prophesies against the Arab and Jewish people. Why? "The earth is polluted [defiled] by its people. They have disobeyed the laws of the LORD. They have not done what He told them to do. They have broken the everlasting covenant" (24:5). However, this passage ends with the bold statement: "The Lord God Almighty will reign in Jerusalem" (24:23).

Romans 1:18-32 expresses God's anger against the whole of mankind. Why? "They did not think it was important to know God. So God let them go. He allowed them to have dirty [depraved] minds. They did things they should not do" (1:28). Paul said, "They are full of every kind of sin, evil and ungodliness... They know that God's commands are right. They know that those who do evil things should die. But they continue to do those very things. They also approve of others who do them" (1:29,32). However, Paul quickly confirms, "God will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good and who seek glory, honour, and life that never ends" (2:7).

Lord Jesus, You warned Your followers, "When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be frightened. These things must take place but that is not the end. Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places and famines. These things are merely the beginning of birth pangs." Forgive us for wandering from our Father's truth so often that puts at risk our faith and eternal salvation You achieved through taking our sins to the cross. Forgive our sins, deliberate and unintended, and continue to inspire and empower us through Your Holy Spirit to care for the poor and needy and to preach, teach or share the Good News of Your salvation to prepare the way for Your return to Jerusalem. Amen.

4th May 2022.

Malachi 1:6 gives a message from God to the priests 400 years before the birth of Christ: "A son honours his father. A servant honours his master. If I am Father, where is the honour I should have? If I am Master, where is the respect you should give Me? ...You priests look down on Me!" Then the LORD God Almighty explained to His prophet Malachi in 2:7-8. "The lips of a priest should guard [divine] knowledge. People should look for true teaching from his mouth. After all, he is My messenger. But you have turned away from the right path. Your teaching has caused many people to trip and fall. You have broken My covenant with Levi."

Acts 8:26-40 gives the account of the apostle Philip who was told by an angel of God to meet the important official travelling by chariot back to Ethiopia from worshipping God in the Temple at Jerusalem. The official was reading from Isaiah 53:7-8. Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading. "How can I?" he said. "I need someone to explain it to me." So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Then Philip began with that same part of Scripture. He told the man the Good News about Jesus. He believed and was baptised.

Father God, in these days of lies and distortion of Your truth, forgive us and establish the full teaching from Scripture among our church leaders. Also open the eyes of people like the Ethiopian official who desired to worship You and who sought further understanding in his day. Equip us more and more in our day to explain Your Bible to others and then send Your Spirit to guide whomsoever we meet and what we say. So help us to honour You and overcome wrong teaching and prepare the way for many more to believe and be baptised in readiness for Christ's return. Amen.

5th May 2022.

Isaiah 22:8-14 gives God's prophesy in 712 BC of the destruction of Jerusalem nearly 800 years later. "You saw that the City of David had many holes in its walls that needed to be repaired... You strengthen the city walls against attack. You built a pool between the walls and used it to save the water that was running down from the Old Pool. But you did not look to the One who made it all possible... The LORD who rules over all called out to you at that time... Instead, you are enjoying yourselves at wild parties... You are saying, 'Let us eat and drink, because tomorrow we will die.' The LORD says, 'Your sin can never be paid for as long as you people live.' "

Philippians 3:8-11 adds to Paul's conviction for us to "rejoice in the Lord Jesus" (3:1) because of His Holy Spirit power at work in us, witnessing joy in our salvation without complaining about the problems around us. "I consider everything to be nothing compared to knowing Christ Jesus my Lord... Because of Him, I have lost everything. But I consider all of it to be garbage so I can get to know Christ and be joined to Him. For me, being right with God does not come from the Law. It comes because I believe in Christ. It comes from God and is received by faith. I want to know Christ better. I want to know the power that raised Him from the dead. I want to share in His sufferings. I want to become like Him by sharing in His death and resurrection."

Lord Jesus, thank You for the example of Paul's joy in his salvation through faith in You. May we, too, "want to know Christ better" and share in Your suffering, death and resurrection, "witnessing joy in our salvation without complaining". Help us to avoid paid for our sins. Amen.

6th May 2022.

Exodus 20:1-20 lists the Ten Commandments to God's people given with thunder and lightning and a trumpet call. "I am the LORD your God... Do not put any other gods in place of Me. Do not make statues of gods... Do not bow down to them or worship them... Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God... Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy... Honour your father and mother... Do not commit murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give false witness against your neighbour. Do not long for anything that belongs to your neighbour."

1 Timothy 3:14-16 gives Paul's reason for his letter to Timothy. "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. God appeared in a body form. 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." Paul then adds to the importance of his teachings. "The Holy Spirit clearly says that in the last days some people will leave the faith. They will follow spirits that will fool [deceive] them. They will believe things that demons will teach them" (4:1).

Dear Heavenly Father, in these last days help us to remain faithful to Your commandments and also the instructions of Paul and the other apostles which are based on their understanding of the Mystery of Christ. May the ministry, teachings and resurrection power of Jesus be at work in us to "know how you should act in God's family". For His sake who died to save us from our sins. Amen.

9th May 2022.

Ezekiel 7 is God's warning to Israel in 594 BC regarding the punishment of their sins and the destruction of Jerusalem. Three times God says, "Then you will know that I am the LORD God Almighty." Nine chapters later, God said through Ezekiel, "I will deal with you as you deserve... Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed" (16:59-61).

1 Timothy 4:9-13 gives Paul's advice. "It is a saying you can trust... that we have put our hope in the living God. He is the Saviour of all people [especially] those who believe. Command these things. Teach them. Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young. 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... Spend your time reading Scripture out loud to one another. Spend your time preaching and teaching."

Heavenly Father thank You for revealing to us the time when You acted to bring punishment on believers who had sinned and abused Your holy Temple, priests and people alike. We deserve Your punishment today through failing to obey the teachings of our youth. Have mercy and shame us and forgive us and enable us to understand and follow totally the truth from God for these final days before our Saviour returns. Encourage us to "put our hope in the living God" and teach others to do the same, setting good examples in our life style. Prompt us to "spend time reading Scripture out loud to one another" and teaching and applying what we read for the needs of today. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

10th May 2022.

Job 23-42 records 3725 words of Job's complaints to God and 3087 words of worldly wisdom from his friend Elihu which were followed by 2117 words of divine wisdom from God Almighty. Only then did Job admit "I spoke about things I didn't completely understand. I talked about things that were too wonderful for me to know. You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak. I will ask you some questions. Then I want you to answer Me.' My ears had heard about You. But now my own eyes have seen You. So I hate myself. I am really sorry for what I said about You. That is why I am sitting in dust and ashes."

2 Peter 3:5-10 is where Peter speaks to his readers a bit like God spoke to Job. "Long ago, God's word brought the heavens into being. His word separated the earth from the waters. And the waters surrounded it. But those people forget things like that on purpose. The waters also flooded the world of that time. It was destroyed. By God's word the heavens and earth of today are being reserved for fire. They are being kept for the day when God will judge. Then ungodly people will be destroyed. Dear friends, here is one thing you must not forget. With the Lord a day is like a thousand years. And a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow to keep his promise. He is not slow in the way some people understand it. He is patient with you. He doesn't want anyone to be destroyed. Instead, he wants all people to turn away from their sins. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief."

Dear God, thank You for Your patience with us. Forgive us when we demand answers without listening and seeing the truth You reveal. Grant us understanding and the faith to believe so that we can repent and witness to others of Your majesty and your salvation in Christ our Saviour in time for His return. Amen.

11th May 2022.

Deuteronomy 26:12-19 includes the law of tithing the produce from the land. "You will set apart a tenth of everything you produce in the third year... for people who have special needs. You will give it to the Levites [priests], foreigners, widows and orphans. Then all of them will have plenty to eat in your towns." Then Moses instructed the people to follow the LORD's Commands. "This very day the LORD your God commands you to follow all of those rules and laws. Be careful to obey them with all your heart and with all your soul. Today you have announced that the LORD is your God... You have agreed to keep His rules, commands and laws. And you have said you would obey Him. Today the LORD has announced that you are His special people... The LORD your God has set you apart for Himself."

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 gives Paul's words to the church. "Brothers and sisters, when I came to you I did not come with fancy words or great wisdom. I preached to you the truth about God's love. I made up my mind to know nothing but Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. When I came to you, I was weak and afraid and trembling. I did not 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."

Father God, thank You for Your guidelines for righteous living. Help us to be generous to the poor and needy including the foreigners in our land. Thank You also for Paul's example to "know nothing but Jesus Christ and His death on the cross". Help us to trust in Your indwelling Holy Spirit's power and compassion and avoid using "human wisdom" to convince others of the Good News of the "mystery of Christ" Paul often speaks about. Amen.

12th May 2022.

1 Chronicles 29:10-20 gives King David's prayer of praise and petition to the LORD God Almighty before his son Solomon took the throne of Israel. "David praised the LORD in front of the whole community. He said, "LORD, we give You praise... for ever and ever. LORD, you are great and powerful. Glory, majesty and splendour belong to you. Everything in Heaven and on Earth belongs to you. LORD, the kingdom belongs to you. You are honoured as the One who rules over all. Wealth and honour come from you. You are the ruler of all things. In Your hands are strength and power. You can give honour and strength to everyone. Our God, we give You thanks. We praise Your glorious name" (29:10-13). "LORD, you are the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Keep this longing in the hearts of Your people forever. Keep their hearts true to You" (29:18).

Jude 17-23 gives Jude's prayer for perseverance. "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 the people who separate you from one another. They do only what comes naturally. 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. Show mercy to those who doubt. Pull others out of the fire. Save them. To others, show mercy mixed with fear. Hate even the clothes that are stained by the sins of those who wear them."

Heavenly Father, encourage us to read and re-read these amazing words to worship You and pray to You and witness of You and Our Saviour Jesus the Christ. For His sake who died for us. Amen.

13th May 2022.

Exodus 12:21-28 is the time when Moses instructed the Israelite slaves in Egypt to prepare for the Passover Feast before their release from slavery and their journey to God's Promised Land of Canaan where Abraham's relatives were buried. "Then Moses said to them, 'Choose the animals for your families. Each family must kill a Passover lamb... Put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. None of you can go out the door of your house until morning. The LORD will go through the land to strike the Egyptians down. He will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe. He will pass over that house. He will not let the destroying angel enter your homes to kill you. Obey all of these directions... The LORD will give you the land, just as He promised. When you enter it, keep [remember] this holy day...' "

Hebrews 9:26-28 says, "Christ did not enter [return to] Heaven to offer Himself again and again. If He had, He would have had to suffer many times since the world was created. But now He has appeared once and for all time. He has come at the end of the ages to do away with sin. He has done that by offering Himself. People have to die once. After that, God will judge them. In the same way, Christ was offered up once. He took 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."

Thank You Father for reminding us to celebrate the Passover and the Last Supper of Jesus, the Lamb of God, before he died to "take away the sins of many people". Come soon, Lord Jesus! Amen.

16th May 2022.

Isaiah 65 reveals God's plan for a remnant of Jews. "The LORD says, 'Sometimes juice is still left in grapes that have been crushed. So people say, "Do not destroy them. Some good juice is still left in them." That is what I will do for the good of those who serve Me. I will not destroy all of My people' (65:8). 'They will ask me to bless their land. They will do it in My name. I am the God of truth... The troubles of the past will be forgotten. They will be hidden from My eyes... And I will be full of joy because of Jerusalem. I will take delight in My people. Sobbing and crying will not be heard there anymore' " (65:16,19).

Luke 22:37-46 is where Jesus quoted from Isaiah referring to His imminent arrest and trial. Jesus said, "It is written, 'He was counted among those who had committed crimes' (Isaiah 53:12). I tell you that what is written about Me must come true" (Luke 22:37). Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives. His disciples followed Him. When they reached the place, Jesus spoke. "Pray that you will not fall into sin when you are tempted."

Heavenly Father, we know that within 40 years of Jesus speaking of His sacrifice on the cross, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. And yet a remnant of Jews survived and to this day await their Messiah in the newly built Jerusalem. Thank You that Jesus reminded His disciples to "pray that you will not fall into sin when you are tempted". So keep us in these days of persecution and seduction safe and free from the guilt of sin, and avoid compromising Your true and prophetic word. Come, Holy Spirit, and encourage all those who seek The Truth of Almighty God's love and forgiveness. In the name of Jesus and for His sake. Amen.

17th May 2022.

Psalms 150 gives the where, why, how and who of praise to the LORD God Almighty. "Praise the LORD. 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... Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!"

Colossians 1:24-29. Paul says, "...for the sake of Christ's body, which is the church, I serve. God appointed me to bring all of His word to you. That word contains the mystery that has been hidden for many ages. But now it has been made known to God's people. God has chosen to make known to them the glorious riches of that mystery. And He has made it known among those who are not Jews. Here is what it is: Christ is in you. He is your hope of glory. We preach about Him. With all the wisdom we have, we warn and teach everyone. When we bring them to God, we want them to be perfect as people who belong to Christ. That is what I am working for. I work hard with all of Christ's strength which works powerfully in me."

We praise You heavenly Father for the words of the psalmist and of Paul. We seek to glorify You and Your Son our Saviour in all we do. May we delight in serving Your people as we honour You and serve Christ's body which is the church. Praise You that through the suffering of the Jewish Messiah You extended eternal salvation to all who believe in Him. "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!" And grant us the "wisdom to teach everyone" the mystery of Christ before His return. Amen.

18th May 2022.

Proverbs 31:10-31 speaks about the wife of noble character. "She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband trusts her completely. She gives him all the important things he needs. She

brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life... Her lamp doesn't go out at night. With one hand she holds the wool. With the other she spins the thread. She opens her arms to those who are poor. She reaches out her hands to those who are needy... She speaks wisely. She teaches faithfully. She watches over family matters. She is busy all the time. Her children stand up and call her blessed. Her husband also rises up, and he praises her... Charm can fool you. Beauty fades. But a woman who has respect for the LORD should be praised."

Acts 9:1-6 records the time when Saul, later called Paul, met the risen Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus. "Saul continued to oppose the Lord's followers. He said they would be put to death. He went to the high priest. He asked the priest for letters to the synagogues in Damascus. He wanted to find men and women who belonged to the Way of Jesus. The letters would allow him to take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. On his journey, Saul approached Damascus. Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground. He heard a voice speak to him. 'Saul! Saul!' the voice said. 'Why are you opposing me?' 'Who are you, Lord?' Saul asked. 'I am Jesus, He replied. 'I am the one you are opposing. Now get up and go into the city. There you will be told what you must do.' "

Heavenly Father, thank you for the scriptures that uphold correct relationships between men and women for today and also the records of what happens to men who persecute believers. Open our eyes to Your Bible Truth to set us free for the good of all. Amen.

19th May 2022.

Jeremiah 16:14-21 records the promises of God for Israel to be restored to the land of their fathers (16:14-15). "But a new day is coming," announces the Lord. "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... I will bring them back to the land I gave their people long ago.' " The chapter ends with a further promise. "I will teach them about Myself. This time I will show them how powerful and mighty I am. Then they will know that I am the LORD" (16:21).

Hebrews 9:7-12 records, "Only the high priest went into the inner room. He went in only once a year. He never entered without taking blood with him. He offered the blood for himself [and] for the sins the people had committed... Here is what the Holy Spirit was showing us. He was telling us that God had not yet clearly shown the way into the Most Holy Room. It would not be clearly shown as long as the first 'holy tent' [tabernacle] was still standing. It is an example for the present time. It shows us that the gifts and sacrifices they offered were not enough. They were not able to remove the worshiper's feelings of guilt... Christ came to be the high priest of the good things that are already here. When He came, He went through the greater and more perfect 'holy tent'... He did not enter by spilling the blood of goats and calves. He entered the Most 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 forever."

Thank You heavenly Father for these assurances of Your purpose and provision and salvation for Your people Israel and for all of mankind through Your Son and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

20th May 2022.

Ezekiel 16 is the time in 594 BC when God expressed His anger over Israel's sinful behaviour which was more detestable than Sodom (v.51). "I will punish you in keeping with what you have done. I sealed with an oath the covenant I made with you. You hated that oath. And you broke My covenant." ...So God vowed to punish their unholy witness by allowing the surrounding countries to destroy their cities (v.37-41). "But I will remember My covenant with you. I made it with you when you were young. Now I will make a new covenant with you. It will last forever. Then you will remember how you have lived... So I will make My new covenant with you. Then you will know that I am the LORD. I will pay for all of the sins you have committed. Then you will remember what you have done. You will be ashamed of it. Because of your shame, you will never speak against Me again", announces the LORD and King (v.59-63).

1 Timothy 6:11-15. Paul says, "Run away from all of those things. 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. You were chosen for it when you openly told others what you believe. Many witnesses heard you. God gives life to everything. Christ Jesus told the truth when He gave witness to Pontius Pilate. In the sight of God and Christ, I give you a command. Obey it until our Lord Jesus Christ appears."

LORD God, in Your mercy, keep Your special people holy and aware of the importance to prepare for our Messiah's return. May we all "try hard to do what is right and godly" in preparing the way for many to be saved "until our Lord Jesus Christ appears". May we do it with "faith, love and gentleness". Amen.

23rd May 2022.

Genesis 27 is the account of how Rebekah deceived her husband Isaac to give the family birthright to Jacob instead of Esau (27:1-40). This resulted in Isaac sending Jacob to his uncle Laban to escape Esau's anger. This enabled Jacob to marry into the family line of Abraham instead of marrying a local heathen girl in Canaan, as did Esau (27:41-46). This was blessed by God, who told Jacob on his way to stay with Laban, "I am the LORD. I am the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your children after you the land on which you are lying. They will be like the dust of the earth that cannot be counted. They will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All nations on earth will be blessed because of you and your children after you. I am with you. I will watch over you everywhere you go. And I will bring you back to this land [Canaan]. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

1 John 5:11-13 says, "Here is God's witness. He has given us eternal life. That life is found in His Son. Those who belong to the Son have life. Those who do not belong to the Son of God do not have life. 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."

Thank You heavenly Father for the assurance You give through John the Apostle because of our salvation and eternal life in Jesus our Saviour. Thank you also that we are grafted into the family line of Jacob so that we can help fulfil the promise that "all nations on earth will be blessed". Amen.

24th May 2022.

Proverbs 21:29-31 says, "A sinful man tries to look bold but an honest person gives thought about how he lives. No wisdom, wise saying or plan can succeed against the LORD. You can prepare horses for the day of battle but the power to win comes from the LORD."

Revelation 18:17-20 says, "In just one hour your great wealth has been destroyed! Every sea captain and all who travel by ship will stand far away. So will the sailors and all who earn their living from the sea. They will see the smoke rising as she burns. They will ask, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?' They will throw dust on their heads. They will cry and be sad. They will cry out, 'How terrible! How terrible it is for you, great city! All who had ships on the sea became rich because of her wealth! In just one hour she has been destroyed!' "

Heavenly Father, continue to open our eyes to the wrong ways of mankind all around us. Forgive all who make great wealth from the harvests of sea and land that travel through our ports. May we learn quickly when cities are destroyed that "no wisdom, wise saying or plan can succeed against the LORD". May we learn quickly that as we "prepare for the day of battle the power to win comes from the LORD". May we "give thought to how we live" and uphold and proclaim Your truth from scripture to prepare instead for Christ's return, that many will be forgiven and saved to rejoice in unity of love and compassion and worship. For His sake who died that we might live eternally. Amen.

25th May 2022.

Isaiah 13:19 to 14:1. "The city of Babylon is the glory and pride of the Babylonians. But God will destroy it just as he did Sodom and Gomorrah. No one will ever live in Babylon again... Arabs will never set up their tents there. Shepherds will never rest their flocks there. But desert creatures will lie down there... [However] the LORD will once again choose Israel. He will settle them in their own land. Outsiders [Gentiles] will join them. They and the people of Jacob will become one people."

Luke 5 gives the account of Jesus healing the paralysed man who was lowered down by his friends through the roof. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.' The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law began to think, 'Who is this fellow who says such an evil thing? Who can forgive sins but God alone?' Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he asked, 'Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Is it easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven" or to say, "Get up and walk"? I want you to know that I, the Son of Man, have authority on earth to forgive sins.' So he spoke to the man who could not walk. 'Get up. Take your mat and go home.' The man stood up in front of them. He took his mat and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God... They said, 'We have seen unusual things today.' "

Heavenly Father, forgive or remove those who act badly as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah and raise up friends of needy people who have faith in Your Son, our Saviour. Bring acts of healing and salvation which will amaze everyone and bring You much praise and also respect for Your special people as they see Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

26th May 2022.

Judges 11 describes the time when the Ammonite king sought to fight Israel. Jephthah at that time was a "mighty warrior" (v.1). He reminded the Ammonite king that the God of Israel spared the tribes in that region at the time when the people of God wandered in the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. The king ignored Japhthah (v.28). Then, Japhthah unwisely made a foolish vow with God to fight for Israel against the king which won him the battle but cost him the life of his daughter (v.35).

Acts 17:29-34 gives Paul's address to the leaders of Athens where he was distressed to see so much idol worship in that city. "We are God's children. So we Judges 11 describes the time when the Ammonite king sought to fight Israel. Jephthah at that time was a "mighty warrior" (v.1). He reminded the Ammonite king that the God of Israel spared the tribes in that region at the time when the people of God wandered in the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. The king ignored Japhthah (v.28). Then, Japhthah unwisely made a foolish vow with God to fight for Israel against the king which won him the battle but cost him the life of his daughter (v.35). Acts 17:29-34 gives Paul's address to the leaders of Athens where he was distressed to see so much idol worship in that city. "We are God's children. So we should not think that God is made out of gold or silver or stone. He is not a statue planned and made by clever people. In the past, God did not judge people for what they did not know. But now ... He has appointed a man as Judge by raising that man from the dead." When they heard Paul talk about the dead rising, some of them made fun but others said, "We want to hear you speak about this again." ...A few men became followers of Paul and believed in Jesus. Dionysius was one of them. A woman named Damaris also became a believer. And so did some others. Dear Lord Jesus, the story of Japhthah at the time of the Judges of Israel reminds us not to make bargains with God our Father. You sacrificed Your life that we might have Your resurrection power living within us through the gift of the promised Holy Spirit. Thank You for this reminder that You are Judge and will guide us in God's will without the need for making vows or bargains. May our personal sacrifices safeguard the eternal lives of others and not foolishly lose lives but save some. Amen. planned and made by clever people. In the past, God did not judge people for what they did not know. But now ... He has appointed a man as Judge by raising that man from the dead." When they heard Paul talk about the dead rising, some of them made fun but others said, "We want to hear you speak about this again." ...A few men became followers of Paul and believed in Jesus. Dionysius was one of them. A woman named Damaris also became a believer. And so did some others.

Dear Lord Jesus, the story of Japhthah at the time of the Judges of Israel reminds us not to make bargains with God our Father. You sacrificed Your life that we might have Your resurrection power living within us through the gift of the promised Holy Spirit. Thank You for this reminder that You are Judge and will guide us in God's will without the need for making vows or bargains. May our personal sacrifices safeguard the eternal lives of others and not foolishly lose lives but save some. Amen.

27th May 2022.

Jeremiah 50:17-20 reviews God's punishment of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyria in 722 BC and the southern kingdom of Judah by Babylon in 586 BC. Then Jeremiah is given the prophecy that because of the great cruelty and hatred towards His people, God will punish Babylon and Assyria and bring the remnant of His people back to their land. By this time, God will have forgiven His people and He will find no sin in them.

Philippians 2:12-16 gives Paul's words of encouragement. "My dear friends, you have always obeyed God... 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. Among the people of the world you shine like stars... as you hold out to them the word of life. So I can boast about you on the day Christ returns."

Dear God, thank You for the reminder in the Bible of the terrible punishment of Your people. Lest we forget, forgive the part Christians played in the last century in the genocide of the Jews in

Europe. Thank you for "bringing the remnant of Your people back to their land" this century. Forgive the part Christians have also played this year in the genocide of innocent believers in Ukraine. In Your mercy, bring peace and restoration there and an end to the persecution of believers around the world. Grant us an understanding how to pray and how to speak and act "in keeping with Your good purpose" and "without finding fault or arguing", as we prepare to welcome our Saviour back to Jerusalem. May we be found like stars, shining "in a sinful and evil world." Amen.

30th May 2022.

Psalm 37 encourages us not to fear evil but to trust in the LORD God Almighty and enjoy His provision and delight in Him and commit ourselves to Him and be still before Him and wait patiently on Him (37:1-7). The psalmist concludes "The LORD saves those who do what is right. He is their place of safety when trouble comes. The LORD helps them and saves them. He saves them from sinful people because they go to Him for safety" (37:39-40).

John 7:28-43 records one of the occasions when Jesus was teaching in the Temple courtyard. He cried out, "Yes, you know Me. And you know where I am from." (Jesus referred to Nazareth, where He lived until He was 30 years old.) "I am not here on my own. The One who sent Me is true. You do not know Him. But I know Him. I am from Him, and He sent Me." (Jesus referred to His heavenly Father.) Later He said, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me and drink. Does anyone believe in Me? Then, just as Scripture says, streams of living water will flow from inside him." When He said this, He meant the Holy Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus would receive the Spirit later... When some of the people heard His words, they said, "This man must be the Prophet we've been expecting." Others said, "He is the Christ." Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from Galilee? The Scriptures say that the Christ will come from David's family and that He will come from Bethlehem, the town where David lived." So the people did not agree about who Jesus was.'

Heavenly Father, help us to trust in You in these evil and disbelieving times. Help us to know and teach the full truth about Jesus our Saviour so that we can help prepare the way for Your prophets and for Jesus Himself when He returns. Amen.

31st May 2022.

Isaiah 57 (NIV) explains why God's righteous people sometimes perish. "No-one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest in death" (57:1-2). God then condemns the wicked: sorcerers, adulterers, prostitutes, mockers, rebels, liars, lustful, sacrificing of babies, worshippers of idols, erecting pagan symbols, sleeping with anyone who offers an open bed. God said, "You were wearied by all your ways yet you would not say, 'It is hopeless' " (37:10). In turn, God mocks His own people. "Is it not because I have long been silent that you do not fear Me?" (57:11). Mercifully, God declares, "I will not accuse for ever, nor will I be angry, for the spirit of mankind would grow faint. I was enraged by his sinful greed; I punished him and hid my face in anger, yet he kept on in his wilful ways" (57:16-17). However, "I will heal him... and restore comfort to him, creating praise on his lips... But there is no peace for the wicked" (57:18-21).

Revelation 22:12-16. Jesus says, "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with Me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches."

Father God, may Your people all over the world heed these words today! For the sake of Jesus Christ, Your own self in human form, who took the punishment for our sins that we might be saved. Amen.

1st June 2022.

Genesis 28:11-15 records what happened to Jacob [called Israel] on his journey to find a wife among his Uncle Laban's relatives. 'In a dream he saw a stairway standing on the earth. Its top reached Heaven. Angels were going up and coming down on it. The LORD [Yahweh] stood above the stairway. He said, "I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of [your father] Isaac. I will give you and your children after you the land on which you are lying. They will be like the dust of the earth that cannot be counted. They will spread out to the west and to the east.

They will spread out to the north and to the south. All nations on Earth will be blessed because of you and your children after you. I am with you. I will watch over you everywhere you go." ' "

Matthew 21:1-11 records the time when Jesus prepared to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey (21:1-7). 'A very large crowd spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Some of the people went ahead of him, and some followed. They all shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD!" (Psalm 118:26). When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up. The people asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus. He is the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." ' "

Father God, we note that Jesus rode as prophesied into Jerusalem, the capital city of the land promised to Jacob [Israel] 1800 years before. We praise You that Jesus is more than just "the prophet from Nazareth". He is Israel's promised Messiah, raised from death and ascended to Heaven, through whom "all nations on Earth will be blessed". Hosanna, Lord Jesus! We look forward to Your return! Amen.

2nd June 2022.

Jeremiah 35 records the obedience of the tribe of Recab who followed faithfully the beliefs of their forefathers. Jeremiah the prophet used the Recabites as an example when he warned the people of Judah in Jerusalem to live like them in obedience. "This is what the LORD God Almighty says: 'I have spoken to you again and again. In spite of that, you have not obeyed Me. Again and again I sent all of My servants the prophets to you. They said, "Each of you must turn from your evil ways. You must change the way you act. Do not worship other gods." ...But you have not listened to Me. 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 God of Israel says, 'Listen! I am going to bring trouble on Judah [and] Jerusalem... I called out to them. But they did not answer.' "

1 Timothy 1:16 gives Paul's words, "God showed me mercy, the worst of sinners ... I was an example for those who would come to believe in Him [Jesus] and receive eternal life." 1 John 5:3-5 says, "This is what it means to love God: it means that we obey His commands. And His commands are not hard to obey. That is because everyone who is a child of God has won the battle over the world. Our faith has won the battle for us. Who is it that has won the battle over the world? Only the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God."

Father God, thank You for Your examples of obedient believers in Old and New Testaments. Forgive us and help us this day to be an example for You by upholding the faith of our forefathers that everyone can receive eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ who died to save us from sin. Amen.

3rd June 2022.

Deuteronomy 16:1-8 gives instructions from God Almighty to remember the Passover when He brought the people of Israel out of Egypt to live in Canaan, the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were told to eat their meal together every year on the anniversary of the evening of their last day in Egypt before the angel of death passed over, and before the people moved out the following day. They were told to celebrate the Passover for the next seven days.

1 Corinthians 11:17-33 gives Paul's account of the instructions from Jesus Christ given at the Passover meal in Jerusalem which was His Last Supper. "On the night the Lord Jesus was handed over to His enemies, He took bread. When He had given thanks, He broke it. 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.' When you eat the bread and drink the cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until He comes again." Paul went on to warn against eating the bread and drinking the wine in a way that is not worthy of Him (v.27).

Heavenly Father, through Your Spirit of Truth, convict the Church of Jesus Christ to repent of any unworthiness. Help us to hear "what the Spirit says to the churches" (Revelation 2 & 3). Enable us to meet together in humility, love and unity to celebrate the Passover and to remember the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, our Saviour. Help us to understand and apply all the truth in the Bible without compromise and prepare ourselves and others for living in these Last Days. May the suffering of our Lord not be in vain. Amen.

6th June 2022.

Jeremiah 14:19-22 gives a plea to Almighty God to deliver His people from famine, enemy attacks and captivity which He allowed as punishment for sin. "Lord, we admit we have done evil things... It is true that we have sinned against You. For the honour of Your name, do not turn Your back on us... We put our hope in You."

Matthew 25 is where Jesus taught His parables of the ten virgins, the talents, and the sheep and goats. He ends with the words, "Those who have done what is right will receive eternal life." Earlier, Jesus had warned about the "signs of the end of the age" (24:4-12). "But the one who stands firm to the end will be saved" (v.13).

Heavenly Father forgive us and our nation for the sin of failing to obey You and Your Bible truth. Thank You for your salvation through faith in Jesus Christ who took the punishment for our sin upon Himself. Through Your Spirit's power enable us to glorify Your name and show the compassion of Jesus for the needy and the lost so that His suffering was not in vain. As the "signs of the end of the age" increase around us, may we share with others the joy of Your blessings now and for ever and meanwhile "do what is right". In the name of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

7th June 2022.

1 Kings 3:16-28 is the famous record of how King Solomon was given divine wisdom to decide which of two women was the true mother of a baby they both claimed to be theirs. The outcome was that the woman who gave a false claim was found out and the baby was restored to its rightful owner. This story brought honour to both Solomon and to God Almighty across the whole nation of Israel. "All of the people of Israel heard about the decision the king had given. That gave them great respect for him. They saw that God had given him wisdom. They knew that Solomon would do what was right and fair when he judged the people."

Luke 23:23-25 is the famous record of how Pilate, the Roman ruler, was given divine wisdom to release Jesus from captivity in Jerusalem. But the Jewish religious leaders and their crowd of supporters wanted him to be crucified. 'Pilate spoke to them for the third time. "Why?" he asked. "What wrong has this man done? I have found no reason to have Him put to death. So I will just have Him whipped and let Him go" (v.22). The crowds continued to shout "Crucify Him!" so Pilate surrendered to the will of the people and handed Jesus over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. That day, Jesus suffered and died for the sins of us all as God planned. Within 40 years, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. But the followers of the risen Lord Jesus travelled across the world to proclaim the Good News of Jesus the Christ and Messiah of the Jews. God was loved and honoured wherever Jewish and Gentile believers met to worship Him.

Thank You Father God for establishing Your truth today through leaders who are open to the wisdom of Your Holy Spirit. Long may they serve and reign! Amen.

8th June 2022.

Jeremiah 48 brings a prophecy of God for Moab, the descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot. The tribe of Moab lived on the east side of the Dead Sea. They moved there after being saved by the mercy of God from His punishment of Sodom. However, they soon began to worship the idols of the other tribes who lived there. They were cursed for failing to do the work of the LORD God Almighty (v.10).

1 John 1:1-7. The Apostle John writes: "Here is what we announce to everyone about the Word of Life [the Son of God]. He was from the beginning. We have heard Him. We have seen Him with our own eyes... Our hands have touched Him... We give witness about Him. And we announce to you that same eternal life with the Father. 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 [as] we share life with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing this to make our joy complete. Here is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you. God is light. There is no darkness in Him at all. If we say that we share life with God but still walk in the darkness, then we are lying and not living by the truth. But if we walk in the light, just as He is in the light, then we share life with each other. And the blood of Jesus, his Son, makes us pure from all sin."

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the miraculous intervention in the lives of Your special people in Old Testament times. Forgive us when we fail to live by Your truth. We deserve Your punishment, as do non-believers, "for failing to do the work of the LORD God Almighty". Help us to

"walk in the light" and experience Your forgiveness and salvation through Jesus, Your Son, our Saviour. Amen.

9th June 2022.

Psalm 106 (NIV) records the famous words of an unknown writer: "Praise the LORD [Yahweh, our God Almighty]. Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever" (v.1). The writer then remembers the leaders of the nation: "Blessed are those who maintain justice, who always do what is right" (v.3). He then asks that God will not forget him "when You show favour to Your people" (v.4). He then seeks forgiveness on behalf of the nation: "We have done wrong and acted wickedly" (v.6). He reminds God how He saved His people out of Egypt even when "they did not remember Your many kindnesses, and they rebelled" (v.7). "Then they believed His promises and sang His praise. But they soon forgot what He had done and did not wait for His plan to unfold" (v.12-13). He then acknowledges the many times they "forgot the God who saved them" and "mingled with the nations and adopted their customs" and "defiled themselves by what they did" (v.14-39). "Therefore the LORD was angry... He handed them over to the nations... Many times He delivered them but they were determined to rebel... But He took note of their distress when He heard their cry... and out of His great love He relented [felt sorry for them]" (v.40-45). "Save us, LORD our God... that we may give thanks to Your holy name and rejoice in praising You" (v.47).

Revelation 11:15 (NIRV) looks forward to the time when "the kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our LORD and of His Christ. He will rule for ever and ever."

Thank You Father God for the many times You have blessed our nation and forgiven our disobedience and sinful acts because Your "love endures for ever". Grant us righteous leaders so that we are spared Your anger and can "rejoice in praising You" as we prepare for "the kingdom of our LORD and of His Christ". Amen.

19th June 2022.

Job 29 records the complaint from Job that he no longer felt that God was with him (v.5). He remembered how people in his town used to respect him (v.8) and also honour him for his work with the poor and needy (v.11-17). His closest friend Elihu warned him he was too self-righteous (32:1). Then God Himself spoke to him with many words and warned him that He looks down on all who are proud (41:35). Job repented and God forgave him and the LORD blessed the latter part of his life more than the first (42:12).

2 Peter 1 says, "God's power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life" (v.3). Paul then gives a list of Christian qualities: faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, kindness and love (v.5-7). He then writes "I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them... I hope that you will be able to remember these things after I am gone" (v.12,15).

Lord Jesus, help us to know you more and more and see You at work in our lives through the power of Your promised Holy Spirit. We repent of all that hinders our closeness to God our Heavenly Father and seek the divine nature recommended by Paul. Grant us the gifts of the Holy Spirit to heal and teach and live Your truth this day and every day without selfish pride. Amen.

13th June 2022.

Numbers 32-33 records the list of over 40 places where the Israelites camped on the way to the Promised Land of Canaan (33:3-48). However, before they crossed the river Jordan, 2½ of the tribes of Israel refused to cross over to Canaan but settled instead on the east bank of the river. "Our children and wives will remain here in the cities of Gilead... But we will prepare ourselves for battle. We will go across the Jordan River and fight for the LORD God Almighty." (32:26-27.) This decision helped secure God's purpose for Israel in the Promised Land but failed to secure a long-term future for themselves living on the wrong side of Jordan!

Hebrews 9:19-28 describes the importance of God's covenant laws: "Moses first announced every commandment of the law to all the people. Then he took the blood of calves... He sprinkled all the people and said, 'This is the blood of the covenant God has commanded you to keep... Without the spilling of blood, no one can be forgiven.' " The writer then records God's covenant fulfilled by the blood of Jesus. "Christ did not enter a sacred tent made by people... He did not enter Heaven to offer Himself again and again... He has come at the end of the ages to do away with sin by offering Himself once. He took away the sins of many people. He will also come a second time [but] will not suffer for sin. Instead, he will come to bring [fulfil] salvation to those who are waiting for Him."

Heavenly Father, help us to selflessly live and work in the power of Your Holy Spirit to prepare for the second coming of our Saviour and not be caught "living on the wrong side of Jordan"! Help us then to be concerned about Your purpose in life now as well as Your provision in the future. Amen.

14th June 2022.

Genesis 50 marks the end of the life of Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel. He was the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham. His twelve sons became the Israelites who later settled in God's Promised Land of Canaan. Before that, Joseph, the eleventh and favourite child of Jacob, took the body of his father to Canaan to bury his bones in the cave which Abraham had bought as a family burial place (v.7-14). Later, the ten eldest brothers of Joseph sought his forgiveness for all the wrong things they had done against him. Joseph wept and forgave his brothers (v.15-17). He told them, "Do not be afraid... You planned to harm me. But God planned it for good." (v.19-20.) Before he died Joseph told his brothers, "God will come to help you. He will take you up out of this land [Egypt]. He will bring you to the land [Canaan] He promised with an oath to give to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (v.24.)

1 Corinthians 1&2. Paul says, "God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong... Because of what God has done, you belong to Christ Jesus... He makes us right with God. He makes us holy and sets us free." (1:27-30.) Paul continues, "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... That was so you would believe, not because of human wisdom but because of God's power." (2:1-5.)

Father God, reassure us that all the wrong we have done and said in the past is forgiven in Christ and will not hinder Your purpose and promises for families of believers to be blessed. Thank You that You used the weakness of "human wisdom" in our lives and "planned it for good". Thank You that through Christ, You "make us holy and set us free." Amen.

15th June 2022.

Jeremiah 14 warns of "drought, famine and sword" because of the sins of His people who prefer to believe the false prophets who speak of better times ahead. Jeremiah pleads with God Almighty. "Lord, we admit we've done evil things. We also admit that our people of long ago were guilty. It is true that we have sinned against You. For the honour of Your name, do not turn Your back on us... Remember the covenant You made with us. Please do not break it. Do any of the worthless gods of the nations bring rain? Do the skies send down showers all by themselves? No! LORD our God, You send the rain. So we put our hope in You. You are the One who does all of those things." (v.20-22.) The LORD responded, "Turn away from your sins. Then I will heal you. And then you will be able to serve Me. Speak words that are worthy, not worthless. Then you will be speaking for Me." (15:19.)

2 Peter 2 reassures us that if God can rescue righteous Noah and Lot then "He knows how to keep godly people safe in times of testing" (v.9).

Help us heavenly Father in these dark days, to reject the false prophecies of better times ahead and to listen to Your true prophets. In the words of Your evangelist David Hathaway, enable us to "have a bold faith this year to believe that God will bless us in such a way that we can be a blessing to others." Help us daily to seek and find and apply Your words of everlasting life from the Bible. Prepare us to repent of our sins and the sins of our nation so that You may bless us and we can be a blessing to others. Confirm Your calling to serve You and speak for You in ministry, to do Your will in preparing the way for many to be saved to welcome Christ's return. Keep Your people safe, for His sake. Amen.

16th June 2022.

Joshua 4:15-24. Then the LORD spoke to Joshua. "Command the priests to come up out of the Jordan River carrying the ark with the tablets of My covenant." So Joshua gave a command to the priests. Then the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. As soon as they stepped out on dry ground, the water of the Jordan began to flow again... Joshua set up the 12 stones at Gilgal... taken out of the Jordan. Then God spoke to the people of Israel. "In days to come, your children after you will ask their parents, 'What do these stones mean?' Their parents must tell them that Israel went across the Jordan River on dry ground. The LORD dried up the Jordan for you until you had gone across it. He did to the Jordan River the same thing he had done to the Red

Sea... He did it so that all of the nations on Earth will know that He is powerful. He did it so that you would always have respect for the LORD your God."

2 Timothy 2:14-19. Paul warns, "Keep reminding the believers of those things... Warn them not to argue about words that do not have any value... 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... God's solid foundation stands firm. Here is the message written on it... 'All who say they believe in the Lord must turn away from evil'."

Lord Jesus, help us to build our lives with foundation stones based on the truth of God and faith in You our Saviour and in obedience to the Ten Commandments which remain as a covenant to this day. Help us to "always have respect for the LORD" and "turn away from evil" so that "all of the nations on Earth will know that He is powerful". Amen.

17th June 2022.

1 Kings 1 describes how, in his old age, King David was distracted and lost control of his kingdom temporarily to Adonijah. Solomon's mother went to David to demand he appoint Solomon as king which he had promised her years before. She told him, "All of the people of Israel are watching to see what you will do. They want to find out from you who will sit on the throne after you." (1:20.) At the same time, Nathan the prophet of God arrived in support of the truth. 'Then the king took an oath and made a promise. He said, "The LORD has saved me from all of my troubles... I will do today what I promised in the name of the LORD the God of Israel. I promised you that your son Solomon would be king after me. He will sit on my throne in my place." ' (1:29-30.) The result was that Adonijah bowed down to the future King Solomon. (1:33.)

Philippians 1:3-11 gives Paul's promise of joyful prayers for "the saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi" together with their church leaders. (v.1,4.) He was able to do this "because you have joined as partners with me in spreading the Good News. You have done this from the very first day until now. I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns." (v.5-6.) Paul then says how he will pray. "I pray that your love will grow more and more and be based on true knowledge and understanding... to know what is best." (v.9-10.)

Father God, we too pray for Your truth to know and do what is best. Forgive us when get distracted and lose control of "Kingdom work". Help us, as the world watches, to remain faithful to our calling and obedient to Your will, in partnership with other believers and church leaders. Amen.

2th June 2022.

Psalms 66. The psalmist echoes what is in God's heart. "Shout to God with joy, everyone on earth! Sing about the glory of His name! Give him glorious praise! Say to God, 'What wonderful things You do!' " (v.1-3) He then testifies what God has done for His people. "God has kept us alive. He has kept our feet from slipping. Almighty God, you have put us to the test. You put us through fire to make us like silver. You put us in prison. You placed heavy loads on our backs... We went through fire and water. But you brought us to a place where we have everything we need." (v.9-12) He then concludes with a personal testimony. "If I had enjoyed having sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But God has listened. He has heard my prayer... He has accepted my prayer. He has not held His love back from me." (v.18-20).

Luke 6:20-23. Jesus looked at His disciples and said, "Blessed are you who are needy. God's kingdom belongs to you. Blessed are you who are hungry now. You will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are sad now. You will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they have nothing to do with you and say bad things about you, and when they treat your name as something evil. Their people treated the prophets the same way long ago. When these things happen to you, be glad and jump for joy. You will receive many blessings in Heaven."

Father God, thank You for these encouraging words of Jesus our Saviour and of the unknown psalmist of long ago. May we delight You as we "jump and shout for joy" with love for You in our lives! Thank You for the righteousness and holiness that Jesus established in us through His punishment for our sins. Thank you for Your salvation in this world and for eternity. Make us strong and faithful when You "put us through fire". Amen.

21st June 2022.

Ezekiel 5:11-13 declares what God planned to do to His special people Israel because of their disobedience and sinful ways. "You have made my Temple 'unclean'. You have set up statues of all of your evil gods... So I will not show you My favour anymore... A third of your people will die of the plague inside your walls or will die of hunger. Another third will be killed with swords outside your walls. And I will scatter the last third of your people to the winds... Then My burning anger against them will die down. Then they will know that ...I am the LORD God Almighty."

Mark 2:23-28. "One Sabbath day Jesus was walking with his disciples through the fields of grain. The disciples began to break off some heads of grain to eat. The Pharisees said to Jesus, 'It is against the Law to do this on the Sabbath.' He answered, 'Have you not read about what David did? He and his men were hungry... David entered the House of God and ate the holy bread.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The Sabbath day was made for man. Man was not made for the Sabbath day. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.' " By this, Jesus meant that God established the Sabbath and the Temple laws for the benefit of mankind. The man-made rules of the Jewish leaders were too strict and demanding. They caused hunger and oppression but failed to bring rest and joy. Jesus spoke with the authority of God.

Father God, forgive us if we have desecrated places of worship or changed or added to your Your holy laws without Your love and compassion or authority. Forgive us when we disobey You and act sinfully or distort Your truth. We deserve to experience Your anger and punishment. We confess and acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and seek to be obedient, showing our Saviour's compassion to others. Amen.

22nd June 2022.

Jeremiah 36. In the days before the fall of Jerusalem and the exile in Babylon, Jeremiah wrote down some of the prophecies Almighty God had given him. He told Baruch the scribe, "Read out the words of the LORD you wrote down as I gave them to you. Read them to all of the people of Judah who come in from their towns. They will hear what the LORD will do to them when His burning anger blazes out against them. Then perhaps they will pray to Him. And maybe all of them will turn from their evil ways." Baruch 'went to the LORD's Temple and read the words of the LORD from the scroll' (v.4-8). However, King Jehoiakim instructed that as each part of the scroll was read out it should be burnt (v.23). So Jeremiah took another scroll and asked Baruch to write down the same warnings from God (v.32).

Acts 10 is the story of Cornelius, the Roman centurion in Caesarea, who followed the teachings of the local Jews. 'An angel from God visited him and said, "Your prayers and gifts to poor people have come up like an offering to God. So He has remembered you" (v.4). At the same time the apostle Peter had a vision from God which resulted in him preaching the Good News of Jesus to Cornelius. 'The Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message... They heard them speaking in languages they had not known before... Then Peter ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.' (v.44-48.)

Father God, forgive us and our nation for not valuing Your truth in Your written words and not heeding your warnings to obey them. May Your prophecies and Good News of Jesus Christ be republished and read again and again in these evil days so that many are saved and filled with Your Holy Spirit and are baptised. Amen.

23rd June 2022.

Genesis 18:20-33 records the time when Abraham pleaded with God Almighty to spare the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of the righteous God-fearing people who lived there. God agreed to save 50 or even 10 righteous people.

Philippians 1:12-21 gives Paul's teaching from prison. "What has happened to me has really helped to spread the Good News... I am being held by chains because of my stand for Christ. All of the palace guards and everyone else know it. Because I am being held by chains, most of the believers in the Lord have become bolder. They now speak God's word more boldly and without fear. It is true that some preach about Christ because they are jealous. But others preach about Christ to help me in my work. The last group acts out of love. They know I have been put here to stand up for the Good News... Whether for reasons that are right or wrong, Christ is being preached. That makes me very glad... I know that you are praying for me. I also know that the Spirit of Jesus Christ will help me. So no matter what happens, I am sure I will still be saved. I completely expect and hope

that I will not be ashamed in any way. I am sure I will be brave enough. Now as always, Christ will be lifted high through my body. He will be lifted up whether I live or die. For me, life finds all of its meaning in Christ. To live is Christ and to die is gain."

Thank You heavenly Father for the reminder from Scripture of Your mercy for righteous believers when surrounded by evil people. Help us to resist the evil one without compromise, especially in times of persecution, knowing as Paul did, that You will bring good out of adversity for the sake of the Gospel. May we live and die glorifying Christ. Amen.

24th June 2022.

Isaiah 36-37 describes the time when Jerusalem was under siege from Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, who mocked them and the LORD their God (36:4-7). King Hezekiah of Judah sent his administrator, secretary and the leading priests to the prophet Isaiah to say, "Perhaps the LORD your God will hear everything the field commander has said. His master, the king of Assyria, has sent him to make fun of the living God... So pray for the remaining people [remnant] who are still alive here" (37:4). Hezekiah then went to the Temple and confessed and prayed, "LORD who rules over all, You are the God of Israel. You sit on Your throne between the cherubim. You alone are God over all of the kingdoms on Earth. You have made Heaven and Earth. Listen, LORD. Hear us. Open Your eyes, Lord. Look at the trouble we are in ...LORD our God, save us from the powerful hand of Sennacherib. Then all of the kingdoms on Earth will know that You alone are God" (37:16-20).

1 Corinthians 12:12-30 (NIV) is Paul's teaching of the body of Christ which has many parts. And as the human body has many parts, they all make up one body. "God has joined together all the parts of the body. And he has given more honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body but that its parts should have equal concern for each other" (v.24-25).

Father God, thank You for Paul's teaching of the importance of unity and concern in and between churches and their members: for 'prophets, priests and kings', for administrators and secretaries, plus all who are part of the remnant of the body of Christ on Earth. We confess our wrongful attitudes and thank You for Your forgiveness and ask for Your intervention in these times of great need. Amen.

27th June 2022.

1 Chronicles 8 & 9. The family history of Saul, the first king of Israel, is listed here twice. It also records the importance of the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest of the twelve tribes of Israel, that produced King Saul (8:33 and 9:39). And after the exile in Babylon caused by Israel's unfaithfulness to Almighty God, the tribe of Benjamin became the second in importance after the tribe of Judah (9:1-3). It was the tribe of Judah who produced King David, through whom God chose Mary to give birth to Israel's Messiah, Jesus the Christ, 1000 years later.

Acts 7 records Stephen's speech covering the history of Israel from the time of Abraham. He covers the role of Moses in their deliverance from Egypt and God's "living words" passed down by an angel on Mount Sinai for all people today (v.38). Stephen then accuses his listeners of rejecting their Messiah: "You won't obey! You are stubborn! You won't listen! You are just like your people of long ago! You always oppose the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your people didn't 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!" (v.51-53.)

Father God, you have done mighty things to establish holiness and righteousness over many centuries despite the disobedience of mankind. Thank you for Your laws and their fulfilment in Christ. Thank You that You have been preparing Your redemption through Christ from the beginning and wait patiently for us to repent. Thank you that the least important people and the smallest of nations are important in Your sight. Help us to obey and establish Your truth before it is too late. Amen.

28th June 2022.

Jeremiah 50 to 52 speaks God's words through His Old Testament prophet about the evil of Babylon with His promise to destroy them. However, the record also speaks against the sins of God's people in Israel and how God would use Babylon to destroy their land and take them captive. The book of Jeremiah ends describing how peace was established during Israel's captivity between the leaders of Babylon and Israel (50:31-34). This happened around 600 BC before God brought Israel back to Jerusalem to rebuild its walls and Temple.

John 1:29-38. John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, prepared the way for his cousin Jesus who, at the age of 30, began His ministry in Israel as their promised Messiah. 'John said, "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world! This is the One I was talking about... God wants to make it clear to Israel who this Person is. ...I saw the Holy Spirit come down [on Him] from heaven like a dove. The Spirit remained on Jesus. I would not have known Him. But the One who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'You will see the Spirit come down and remain on someone. He is the One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen it happen. I give witness that this is the Son of God." The next day... he saw Jesus walking by. John said, "Look! The Lamb of God!" John's two disciples heard him say this. So they followed Jesus.'

Father God, thank you for revealing to us that You do not save nations from punishment who are evil or who disobey You and yet You bring peace and forgiveness in Your own way and Your own time to bring freedom and restoration. May we all learn, whilst there is time, to put our trust in "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" and follow Him as John's two disciples did. Amen.

29th June 2022.

Numbers 26:51-53 is where the Lord God Almighty instructed Moses to divide the land of Canaan fairly between the 601,730 adult males around the year 1450 BC. One thousand years later, at the time of King Xerxes, a plot was devised to persecute and even destroy the Jews, recorded in the book of Esther. However, the plot was found out and God's people were given official state protection at that time.

2 Corinthians 16:22-33. Paul boasts of his ministry in the Good News of Jesus. Like others, he was a Hebrew of the people of Israel, one of Abraham's children serving Christ. But more than others, he had been in prison many times for the Gospel, suffered terrible beatings to the point of death, including the 39 strokes five times. He had been beaten by sticks, stoned, shipwrecked three times, but kept on the move travelling to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. He had been in danger of unbelieving Jews and Gentiles and those who pretended they were believers. He had experienced hunger, thirst and cold, all in his concern for the churches. But he said, "If I have to boast, I will boast about the things that show how weak I am" (v.30). He then tells how Jesus answered his prayers for help. "My grace is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak." So I am very happy to boast about how weak I am. Then Christ's power can rest on me. Because of how I suffered for Christ, I am glad that I am weak. I am glad in hard times. I am glad when people offend me. I am glad when things are difficult. And I am glad when people make me suffer. When I am weak, I am strong." (12:9-10.)

Father God, help us to be strong in faith in our times of weakness and trust in Your divine blessings and intervention for upholding salvation through Christ alone. Amen.

30th June 2022.

Song of Songs claims to be the best of many songs written by King Solomon. It celebrates the God-given joy of love between a man and woman within marriage. It reflects the love between God and His people and between Christ and His Church. It also confirms the divine purpose in love and marriage to create new life to perpetuate the creation of mankind. It also confirms the importance of married couples to be joyfully united in body, mind and spirit, a gift from our loving God. The song also covers the strength of the relationship when married couples are temporarily separated and the renewed intimacy when they are back together again (Chapters 6&7.)

1 John 4:4-10. "Dear children, you belong to God. You have not accepted the teachings of the false prophets. That is because the One who is in you is more powerful than the one who is in the world. False prophets belong to the world. So they speak from the world's point of view. The world listens to them. But we belong to God... Everyone who loves God has been born again because of what He has done. That person knows God. Anyone who does not love God does not know God, because God is love. How did God show his love for us? He sent His one and only Son into the world. He sent Him so we could receive life through Him. What is love? ...It is that He loved us and sent His Son to give His life to pay for our sins."

Thank You Father God for these readings to portray Your precious gift of love in marriage and Your love for us Your children. Thank You also for Your self-sacrificing love expressed through Your own flesh and blood in Jesus, born of Mary in a stable and died for us on a cross of wood, so that our separation through sin can bring us back together again. Amen.

1st July 2022.

Psalm 145 speaks of Almighty God's greatness, glorious splendour, abundant goodness, compassion, faithfulness, love and righteousness in the first 17 verses. Then King David writes: "The LORD is ready to help all those who call out to Him... He satisfies the needs of those who have respect for Him. He hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all those who love Him. But He will destroy all sinful people... Let every creature praise His holy name for ever."

Philippians 3:1-9 says, "Be joyful because you belong to the Lord... Watch out for those dogs who do evil things. When they circumcise, it is a useless cutting of the body. But we have been truly circumcised [within]. 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. I have many reasons to trust in my human nature... I was circumcised on the eighth day... As far as the Law is concerned, I am a Pharisee. As far as being committed is concerned, I opposed and attacked the church... But I consider everything to be nothing compared to knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. To know Him is the best thing of all. Because of Him I have lost everything. But I consider all of it to be garbage so I can get to know Christ. I want to be joined to Him. For me, being right with God does not come from the Law. It comes because I believe in Christ. It comes from God Himself. It is received by faith."

Father God, thank you for these words of faith and praise from King David and the Apostle Paul. Thank You for the new foundation we have been given in Christ Jesus. Help us to leave behind what was hopeless and wrong and allow You to build us anew again and again in "knowing Christ Jesus my Lord". Amen.

4th July 2022.

Job 10:15-17 describes how Job felt when God allowed Satan to persecute him. "If I were guilty, how terrible that would be for me! Even if I have not sinned, I cannot be proud of what I have done. That's because I am so full of shame. I am drowning in my suffering. If I become proud, You hunt me down like a lion. You show Your mighty power against me. You bring new witnesses against me. You become more and more angry with me. You use Your power against me again and again!"

Matthew 23:13-32 describe the 'seven woes' Jesus spoke about to describe those who were responsible for teachings of God's laws. They hindered access to the Kingdom of Heaven. They corrupted the minds of converts. They perverted the purpose of God's Temple and its sacrificial altar. They religiously tithed their belongings but failed to show justice, mercy and faithfulness. They ceremonially cleaned the outside of cups and dishes but were full inside of greed and selfishness. They were like whitewashed tombs which were full of dead bodies within. They were just as guilty of death and destruction as their ancestors were.

Father God, thank You for warning us of wrong thoughts, selfish motives and failure to comprehend your merciful provision. Enable us, through the strength of our risen Saviour, to overcome the works of Satan and of self and to stand firm when confused within like Job and attacked from without by false "teachings of God's laws". Help us to establish Your Kingdom in these last days free from corruption, perversion, lack of mercy, greed, death within and failure to learn from past mistakes. For Christ's sake who died that we might be set free. Amen.

5th July 2022.

Malachi 2:16-3:4 records the longing of God Almighty for His people to be righteous. He expresses His hatred of divorce and of violence. "The LORD who rules over all says, 'Guard yourself in your spirit. And do not break your promises' " (2:16). To those who ask "Where is the God of justice?" He responds by promising a Messenger. "He will prepare the way for Me" (3:1). God then questions, "Who can live through the day when He comes? Who will be left standing when He appears?" (3:2). God says that He will come like a silver refiner's fire and purify the priests (3:3). Then the people will make "offerings of righteousness" and "be acceptable to Him. It will be as it was in days and years gone by" (3:4).

Luke 6:20-26 gives the "blessings and woes" of Jesus. "Blessed are you who are needy. God's kingdom belongs to you. Blessed are you who are hungry. You will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are sad. You will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they have nothing to do with you and say bad things about you... be glad and jump for joy! You will receive many blessings in Heaven. But how terrible it will be for you who are rich! You have already had your easy life. How terrible for you who are well fed now! You will go hungry. How terrible for you who laugh now! You

will cry and be sad. How terrible for you if everyone says good things about you! They treated the [unfaithful] false prophets the same way long ago."

Father God, prepare Your people for the faith and purity needed in our lives through the refiner's fire, ready for the second coming of Christ our Saviour. Help us to realise we do not need the riches and popularity of this world to survive persecution and receive Your eternal salvation. Amen.

6th July 2022.

Leviticus 16:29-34 records the words of God Almighty to Moses and the people of Israel in 1490 BC. "On the tenth day of the seventh month you must not eat anything. You must not do any work. It does not matter whether you are Israelites or outsiders. On that day your sin will be paid for. You will be made pure and clean. You will be clean from all of your sins in my sight. That day is a [special] Sabbath for you. You must rest on it. You must not eat anything on that day... The high priest must pay for sin. He must make everything pure and clean. He has been anointed... He must make the Most Holy Room, the Tent of Meeting and the altar pure. And he must pay for the sin of the priests and all of the people in the whole community. Here is a law for you that will last for all time to come."

James 4:7-10 builds on the Law of God. "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."

Thank You Almighty Father for proclaiming your truth over the centuries that establishes what is in Your heart for Your people. Thank You that the high priests were solemnly instructed to offer sacrifices for the people to "make everything pure and clean". Thank You that in Jesus, our High Priest for ever, You call us to "wash your hands, you sinners and make your hearts pure". Encourage us to pause and rest and solemnly "bow down to the Lord. He will lift you up". Thank You Jesus for this call to obey God our Father and so defeat the works of the devil. Amen.

7th July 2022.

Psalms 150 gives the Where? Why? How? Who? in praise to God. "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. Praise the Lord!"

Luke 16:18-31 is the story Jesus told about a rich man who went to Hell and a poor man who went to Heaven. The rich man was tormented by the heat and asked Abraham for water to be sent to him by the poor man. Jesus made it clear that this was not possible because of the huge chasm between them. So the rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus back to his five brothers to warn them. Abraham told him, "They have the teachings of Moses and the Prophets. Let your brothers listen to them." The rich man said, "If someone from the dead goes to them, they will turn away from their sins." But Abraham said to him, "They do not listen to Moses and the Prophets. So they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." Jesus told this story to warn His listeners that many will reject the plan of God's salvation through His death and resurrection because they reject the truth and instead hunger after the riches of this world.

Father God, teach us how to praise You in all circumstances, trusting You for our needs in this world. Encourage us to follow Your teachings in the Bible, Old and New Testaments, that we may receive the forgiveness and salvation You planned from the beginning. "Praise the Lord!" Amen.

8th July 2022.

1 Kings 11. 'The LORD became angry with King Solomon. That was because his heart had turned away from the LORD, 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. I commanded you to do what I told you. But you did not do it. So you can be absolutely sure I will tear the kingdom away from you. I will give it to one of your officials."' (11:10-11).

Philippians 3:1-7. "Be joyful because you belong to the Lord... Watch out for those dogs who do evil things. When they circumcise, it is nothing more than a useless cutting of the body. But we

have been truly circumcised [within]. 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. I have many reasons to trust in my human nature. Others may think they have reasons to trust in theirs. But I have even more. I was circumcised on the eighth day. I am part of the people of Israel. I am from the tribe of Benjamin. I am a pure Hebrew. As far as the Law is concerned, I am a Pharisee. As far as being committed is concerned, I opposed and attacked the church. As far as keeping the Law is concerned, I kept it perfectly. I thought things like that were for my benefit. But now I consider them to be nothing because of Christ."

Heavenly Father, when we see God-fearing leaders disobey Your commands in Your written word, hear the prayers of Your people for repentance or judgement. If You choose to remove them from office, raise up leaders who do not "trust in human nature" nor in "dogs who do evil things". Amen.

11th July 2022.

Ezekiel 34:1-12. God gave a message to his prophet Ezekiel about the leaders of His people Israel. "Prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Tell them, the LORD and King says, 'How terrible it will be for you shepherds of Israel! You only take care of yourselves. You should take good care of your flocks. Instead, you eat their butter and dress yourselves with their wool... But you do not take care of your flocks. You have not made the weak ones in the flock stronger. You have not healed the sick. You have not bandaged those that are hurt. You have not brought back those that have wandered away. You have not searched for the lost... I am against the shepherds. I will hold them accountable for My flock. I will stop them from taking care of the flock. Then they will not be able to feed themselves anymore... I Myself will search for My sheep... And I will look after My sheep.' "

1 Corinthians 4:9-16 describes Paul's feelings as an apostle of Jesus Christ. "It seems to me that God has put us apostles on display... like men sentenced to die in front of a crowd... We are fools for Christ... Up to this very hour we are hungry and thirsty. We are dressed in rags. We are treated badly. We have no homes. We work hard with our own hands... I am not writing this to shame you. You are my dear children, and I want to warn you... So I am asking you to follow my example."

Father God, thank you for these warnings from Ezekiel and Paul to care for other believers without seeking reward. Forgive us when we "only take care of ourselves". Thank You that You "will look after My sheep". Prepare us to be "fools for Christ" and suffer gladly for the Good News of His salvation for all who believe He died to save us from our sins. Amen.

12th July 2022.

Joshua 15-20 records the time when the land of Canaan was divided between the twelve tribes of Israel. "Then Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh in the sight of the LORD. There he gave out a share of land to each of the ...tribes in Israel" (18:10). The smallest tribe of Benjamin was allocated 26 towns and cities (18:11-20). But the tribe of Simeon was allocated land within the area given to the tribe of Judah which was "more than they needed" (19:1-9). In this way, land was allocated fairly according to need in a way that was acceptable to both God and His people.

Revelation 1:15-19 says, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our LORD and of His Christ. He will rule for ever and ever." The 24 elders were sitting on their thrones in front of God Almighty. They fell on their faces and worshiped Him. They said, "LORD God who rules over all, we give thanks to You. You are the One who is and who was. We give You thanks because You have taken Your great power and have begun to rule. The nations were angry, but the time for Your anger has come. The time has come to judge the dead and reward Your servants the prophets and Your own people and those who honour You. There is a reward for all Your people, both great and small. It is time to destroy those who destroy the Earth."

We praise You Father God for the time is at hand when You will judge the dead and the living to "reward all Your people, both great and small" and "destroy those who destroy the Earth." Thank You for Your mercy and righteousness, as seen at the time of occupation of the Promised Land according to need. Amen.

13th July 2022.

Job 28 describes man's search in remote places for precious silver, gold, iron, copper, sapphires and other treasures to transform Earth (v.1-11). Job asks, "But where can wisdom be

found? Where does understanding live? ...It cannot be found anywhere in the world. The ocean says, 'It's not in me.' The sea says, 'It's not here either.' It cannot be bought with the finest gold. Its price cannot be weighed out in silver... It cannot be bought with priceless onyx or sapphires. Gold or crystal cannot compare with it. It cannot be bought with jewels... Wisdom is worth far more than rubies. A topaz from Cush cannot compare with it... So where does wisdom come from? Where does understanding live? It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing. Even the birds of the air cannot find it (v.12-22). Job concludes, "God alone understands the way to it. He is the only one who knows where it lives. He sees from one end of Earth to the other. He views everything in the world. He made the mighty wind. He measured out the waters. He gave orders for the rain to fall. He made paths for the thunderstorms. Then he looked at wisdom and set its price. He established it and put it to the test. He said to human beings, 'Have respect for Me. That will prove you are wise. Avoid evil. That will show you have understanding' " (v.22-28).

Luke 4:34 records, "Jesus of Nazareth, I know who You are – the Holy One of God."

Lord Jesus, we turn to You, the Holy One of God and our Saviour, who knows all things as You sit in Heaven beside Father God our Creator. Grant us the wisdom to respect and obey in order to gain true understanding and wisdom and also avoid the evil that the world's treasures produce. For Your sake, who suffered much for our salvation. Amen.

14th July 2022.

Isaiah chapters 63 to 66 (NIV) cover God's vengeance and redemption, judgement and salvation, Isaiah's personal praise and prayers, and God's response. They include God's famous words, "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save" (63:1). "For the day of vengeance was in My heart and the year of My redemption has now come" (63:4). Isaiah responds with "I will tell of the kindness of the LORD, the deeds for which He is to be praised according to all the LORD has done for us" (63:7). He also laments, "Where are Your zeal and Your might? Your generousness and compassion are withheld from us" (63:15). He also pleads, "O Lord, will you hold Yourself back? Will you keep silent and punish us beyond measure (64:12)? Then God promises, "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new Earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. Be glad and rejoice for everything what I will create" (65:17-18).

Hebrews 2:14-18 (NIRV) says, "Jesus became human like them in order to die for them. By doing that, He could destroy the one who rules over the kingdom of death... Jesus could set people free who were afraid of death... He had to be made like His brothers in every way. Then He could serve God as a kind and faithful high priest and pay for the sins of the people by dying for them. He Himself suffered when He was tempted. Now He is able to help others who are being tempted."

Thank You heavenly Father for answering Isaiah's complaint that "Your generousness and compassion are withheld from us". Thank you for sending Jesus as our "kind and faithful high priest". Forgive our sins, accept our praise, and hear our prayers for forgiveness yet again. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

15th July 2022.

Genesis 28:1-4. Approx 3800 years ago, Isaac spoke these famous words to his twin son Jacob. "Do not get married to a woman from Canaan... Go to the house of your mother's father Bethuel. Find a wife for yourself there. Take her from among the daughters of your mother's brother Laban. May Almighty God bless you. May He 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."

2 Timothy 3:1-5 gives Paul's warning about the End Times. "Here is what I want you to know. 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."

Almighty God, thank You for the Bible records from the time of Noah declaring Your purpose and provision for Abraham and His family. Thank you for Your purpose and provision through Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel. May we heed Paul's warning to uphold Your purpose in the last days through Christ our Saviour as we await His return to Israel and witness of Your salvation plan in Him. Amen.

18th July 2022.

Numbers 22-25 records what happened *en route* to the Promised Land after God encouraged Moses to go forward and defeat the small kingdoms as he journeyed along the way. However, when the Israelites reached Moab, their king Balak tried to get the prophet Balaam to put a curse on the Israelites. Balaam answered, "How can I curse those whom God has not cursed?" (22:8). So Balak went away and let Moses pass through the land of Moab (24:25). Sadly, some of the men of Israel slept with the women of Moab and began to worship their gods, which angered The LORD God Almighty and He punished them with a plague (25:1-9).

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 do not consider that I have taken hold of it yet. But here is the one thing I do. 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."

Father God, thank You for the clear warning today to hold on to what You have already blessed our nation with in its Christian heritage and reject what is sinful. Like Paul, may we "take hold of what Christ Jesus took hold of me for" and move forward to our own "Promised Land" and "the heavenly prize which is Christ Jesus Himself". Protect our nation from foreign leaders and seductive alien faiths and practices. Encourage us to "live up to what we have already reached" in fear of more "punishment with plague". Amen.

19th July 2022.

Nehemiah 9:1-6. 'The people of Israel gathered together. They ...separated themselves from all foreigners... They listened while the Levites read parts of the Scroll of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day. They spent another quarter of the day admitting their sins. They also worshiped the LORD their God... Then some Levites said to the people, "Stand up. Praise the LORD your God. He lives for ever and ever!" So the people said, "Lord, may Your glorious name be praised. May it be lifted high above every other name that is blessed and praised. You are the one and only LORD. You made the heavens. You made even the highest [remote] heavens. You created all of the stars in the sky. You created Earth and everything that is on it. And You made the oceans and everything that is in them. You give life to everything." '

Revelation 11:15-18. 'There were loud voices in Heaven. They said, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our LORD and of His Christ. He will rule for ever and ever." The 24 elders... fell on their faces and worshiped saying, "Lord God who rules over all, we give thanks to You. You are the One who is and who was. We give You thanks because you have taken Your great power and have begun to rule. The nations were angry, but the time for Your anger has come to judge the dead and reward Your servants ...who honour You... both great and small." '

We praise You again Father God for the time is at hand when You will judge the dead and the living to "reward Your servants, both great and small". As in the time of Nehemiah, we uphold the truth of Your Law. We praise You our Creator, for Your promised Kingdom of Christ is now at hand. Halleluiah! Amen.

20th July 2022.

Jeremiah 29:4-14 records the letter Jeremiah wrote to the Jewish exiles in Babylon. "The LORD says, 'Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce. Get married. Have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons. Give your daughters to be married. Then they too can have sons and daughters. Increase your numbers there. Do not let the number of your people get smaller. 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... Do not let the false prophets trick you... 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. Then you will call out to Me. You will come and pray to Me. And I will listen to you. When you look for Me with all your heart, you will find Me. I will be found by you.' "

1 John 4:1-4 warns, "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit. Put the spirits to the test to see if they belong to God. Many false prophets have gone out into the world. How can you recognize the Spirit of God? Every spirit that agrees that Jesus Christ came in a human body belongs to God. But every spirit that does not agree with this does not belong to God. It is the spirit of the anti-Christ. You have heard that the enemy is coming. Even now he is already in the world. Dear children, you belong to God. You have not accepted the teachings of the false prophets. That is because the One who is in you is more powerful than the one who is in the world."

Grant us this day, Father God, spiritual discernment to know how to pray for success and plan for peace in this world You created, which mankind has corrupted, as we await Christ's return. Amen.

21st July 2022.

Genesis 49:29-33, approximately 600 years after Noah's Flood, in 1700 BC Jacob, grandson of Abraham, blessed his 12 sons, the future tribes of Israel who later settled in God's Promised Land of Canaan. He then instructed them, "I am about to join the members of my family who have already died. Bury me with them in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. The cave is in the field of Machpelah near Mamre in Canaan. Abraham had bought it as a place where he could bury his wife's body. He had bought the cave from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field. The bodies of Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried there. So were the bodies of Isaac and his wife Rebekah. I also buried Leah's body there."

Revelation 10 records John's vision of the seventh angel from Heaven. This followed on from the prophecy of the sixth angel who had predicted much death and destruction on Earth and much disobedience of those who survived. "But in the days when the seventh angel is ready to blow his trumpet, the last part of God's plan will be carried out. God told all this to the prophets who served Him long ago." This refers to the final days when the Kingdom of Christ will be established on Earth.

Father God and Creator, Your records and revelations amaze us, covering 4300 years of Your concern to bless Your special people Israel and all who put their trust in Yeshua their Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ. In these Last Days, we ask You to establish Your purpose for the Kingdom of Christ through leaders who uphold Your truth and remain obedient to faith in Christ alone for our eternal salvation. In the meantime, in Your mercy, keep us from the "death and destruction on Earth and much disobedience". Amen.

22nd July 2022.

2 Samuel 13-19 covers the time when King David's family caused much evil, division and deceit, even death, beginning with lust among family members. This also destroyed the loyalty of many of the people of Israel such that David went away for a time to the east bank of the River Jordan. This caused a decade of much mourning for David but finally he was able to return to Jerusalem with his popularity and respect restored. David then offered a song of praise to God Almighty for His mercy (1 Sam. 22). He also said with much faith, "A king must rule over people in a way that is righteous... Then he will be like the light of morning at sunrise when there are no clouds. He will be like the bright sun after rain that makes the grass grow on the earth. Is not my royal family right with God? Has He not made an everlasting covenant with me? Every part of it was well prepared and made secure" (23:3-5).

1 Timothy 5:17-21. Paul warns, "The elders who do the church's work well are worth twice as much honour. That is true in a special way of elders who preach and teach... Do not believe a charge against an elder unless two or three witnesses bring it. Elders who sin should be corrected in front of the other believers. That will be a warning to the others. I command you to follow those directions. I command you in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels. Treat everyone the same. Do not favour one person over another."

Heavenly Father, help us to keep unity in our families and in our churches. May family heads and church leaders "rule in a way that is righteous". In Your mercy, restore respect in our families and churches for Christ's sake and help us to avoid "favouring one person over another". Amen.

25th July 2022.

Leviticus 18 to 20 lists many, many sins for God's people to avoid and also the punishment we deserve when we disobey. "Obey all of My rules and laws. Follow them. Then the land where I am bringing you to live will not throw you out... I am going to drive out the nations that are in the land. You must not follow their practices. I hated those nations because they did all of those things. But I promised you, 'You will take over their land as your own. I will give it to you. It will belong to you. It is a land that is flowing with milk and honey.' I am the LORD your God. I have set you apart from the other nations" (20:22-24).

Hebrews 7:18-28 tells us that the Old Testament laws are set aside because they were useless because "the Law did not make anything perfect. Now a better hope has been given to us. That hope brings us near to God... Jesus makes the promise of a better covenant certain. There were many high priests in Levi's family line. Death kept them from continuing in office. But Jesus lives forever. So He always holds the office of high priest. People now come to God through Him. And He is able to save them completely and for all time. Jesus lives forever. He prays for them... He isn't like the other high priests. They need to offer sacrifices day after day. First they bring offerings for their own sins. Then they do it for the sins of the people. But Jesus gave one sacrifice for the sins of the people. He gave it once and for all time. He did it by offering Himself."

Father God, we take note of the long list of sins listed in the Old Testament and the punishment we deserve for disobedience. Thank You that Jesus forgives us when we confess our sins and grants eternal life free from guilt or punishment. Halleluiah! Amen.

26th July 2022.

Psalms 106 begins, "Give thanks to the LORD, because He is good. His faithful love continues for ever. Who can speak enough about the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can praise Him as much as He should be praised? Blessed are those who always do what is fair and right. LORD, remember me when You show favour to Your people. Help me when You save them. Then I will enjoy the good things You give your chosen ones. I will be joyful together with Your people. I will join them when they praise You." Then in the next 41 verses, the psalmist records the many sins of the nation and the harm they inflicted upon themselves plus the divine punishment they deserved. The psalm ends, "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 of the people say, 'Amen!' Praise the Lord!"

Ephesians 6:13-18 exhorts believers to "put on the whole armour of God. Evil days will come but you will be able to stand up to anything. And after you have done everything you can, you will still be standing. So ...put the belt of truth around your waist. Put the armour of godliness on your chest. Wear on your feet what will prepare you to tell the Good News of peace. Pick up the shield of faith to put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Put on the helmet of salvation and take the sword of the Holy Spirit which is the word of God."

Oh merciful God, accept our praise for Your forgiveness of sins and enduring love. Through the power of Your Holy Spirit at work in our lives may the faith, wisdom, compassion and righteousness of Christ our Saviour reside in us to justify His suffering and sacrifice on the cross for the "divine punishment we deserve". Praise the LORD! Amen.

27th July 2022.

Daniel 9:20-27 records the visit of God's Angel Gabriel to Daniel while he was speaking and praying, admitting that "I and my people Israel had sinned... While I was still praying, Gabriel said, 'Daniel, I have come now to give you a good knowledge and understanding of these things. You are highly respected. So as soon as you began to pray, the LORD gave an answer... Here is how you must understand the vision. The LORD has appointed 70 "weeks" for your people and your holy city... Then the Anointed King will come... A covenant will be put into effect with many people for the final "week". In the middle of the "week", sacrifices and offerings will come to an end. In one part of the temple the hated thing that destroys [abomination] will be set up. It will remain until the LORD brings the end He has ordered.' " Jesus taught that wars and hardships would continue right up to the end of the present age including earthquakes and famines (Mark 13:1-8). He also spoke of the "abomination that causes desolation" (v.14).

Hebrews 9 describes how the high priest offered once a year blood sacrifices for the sins of the people including the sins committed in ignorance (v.7). The gifts and the sacrifices were unable to free the worshippers from guilt. These laws were obeyed until the time of the "new covenant" (v.10).

"Christ did not enter the 'Most Holy Place' by spilling the blood of goats and calves. He entered [for us] by spilling His own blood. He did it once and for all time. He paid the price to set us free from sin forever" (v.12).

Father God, prompt us to speak to You and pray and confess on behalf of ourselves and others, and then watch what is happening. Then grant us understanding and the faith and peace in Christ our Saviour to persevere. Amen.

28th July 2022.

Genesis 27 records the time when Jacob deceived his father Isaac to obtain the traditional family blessing of the firstborn. When Jacob's twin brother Esau found out he cried out "Bless me – me too – my father!" (27:34) Sadly, Isaac could not change what he had done. Esau was angry with Jacob, and their mother Rebekah told Jacob to run away to his Uncle Laban's home. (27:41-45) It took 21 years for Esau to forgive Jacob. 'Esau ran to meet Jacob. He hugged him and threw his arms around his neck. He kissed him, and they cried.' (33:4) Before that happened, Jacob had a vision in which God promised him, "All nations on earth will be blessed because of you and your children after you." (28:14)

Revelation 19:10 records what an angel from God said to John when he fell at his feet to worship him. The angel said, "Do not do that! I serve God, just as you do. I am God's servant, just like other believers who hold firmly to what Jesus has taught. Worship God! What Jesus taught is the very heart of prophecy." Jesus was the fulfilment of all prophecy given by God.

Father God, thank you for revealing You are in control. Help us to trust Your purposes for mankind which are fulfilled in Christ our Saviour. Thank You for working in the lives of Isaac and Rebekah, Esau and Jacob, to bring reconciliation. But also the fulfilment of Your promise in Christ that "all nations on earth will be blessed because of you and your children after you". Grant us understanding – me too – that despite deceit, anger, jealousy and separation, we can believe that You will bring good for those whose faith is in You. We worship You! Amen.

29th July 2022.

Proverbs 24:3-4 says we must seek wisdom, understanding and knowledge. Isaiah 41:20 provides God's reason behind this proverb: "so that the people may see and know and understand what the hand of the Lord God Almighty has done".

John 14:12-17 records the words of Jesus. "Anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. In fact, he will do even greater things... And I will do anything you ask in My name. Then [in this way] the Son will bring glory to the Father. You may ask Me for anything in My name and I will do it. If you love Me, you will obey what I command. I will ask the Father. And he will give you another Friend to help you and to be with you forever. The Friend is the [Holy] Spirit of Truth." John then records that Jesus used the word "love" at least ten times in the final 15 verses of this chapter: "If you love me, you will obey what I command... Anyone who obeys my commands loves Me. My Father will love the one who loves Me. I will love him too... Anyone who loves Me will obey My teaching. My Father will love him", etc. etc.

Father God, help us to bring glory to You just as Jesus did and continues to do today through the Holy Spirit. Help us to realise the indwelling Spirit of Truth gives us access to Your "wisdom, understanding and knowledge". As we walk in the light of this truth and have faith in Jesus our Saviour, encourage us to ask in His name for whatever is in Your will. Then may we be found faithful and obedient to obey whatever You command. May this then release the three-way LOVE between Father, Son and Your Spirit which is at work in our lives to Your glory, so that the "people may see and know and understand what the hand of the Lord God Almighty has done". Amen.

1st August 2022.

Exodus 20:1-20 records God's Ten Commandments given to Moses 3500 years ago. "Do not have any other gods besides Me. Do not make statues or idols to worship. Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Honour your father and mother. Do not commit murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give false witness against your neighbour. Do not envy what belongs to your neighbour." The people trembled with fear when they heard and saw the thunder and lightning and the trumpet blast. Moses said to them, "Do not be afraid. God has come to put you to the test. He wants you to have respect for Him and to keep you from sinning."

Acts 7:30-53 gives the speech of the apostle Stephen in Jerusalem 1500 years after the time of Moses. He described how Moses trembled when the angel of God spoke to him through the burning bush. God told him, "I have seen the oppression of My people in Egypt and heard their groans. I have come down to set them free" (v.34). During the exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land, the people rejected Moses and God's commands and wanted to return to Egypt (v.39). Stephen told his listeners, "You are just like your people long ago! You always oppose the Holy Spirit!" (v.51). Stephen ended by saying they had disobeyed the Law of God (v.53). This resulted in his stoning and the persecution and scattering of the early church (Acts 8). This in turn led to the preaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ in many nations of the world which continues to this day!

Father God, help us to obey You and Your commandments through the power of Your Holy Spirit promised to all who receive salvation through faith in Christ our Saviour. For His sake who took our punishment for sin. Amen.

2nd August 2022.

Ecclesiastes 12:8-14. King Solomon repeats the words he began with, "Meaningless! Everything is meaningless! Nothing has any meaning." (1:2 and 12:8) He then concludes with these words of divine wisdom. "Have respect for God and obey His commandments. That is what everyone should do. God will judge everything people do including everything they try to hide." (12:13-14)

Luke 13:10-17 records Jesus healing a crippled woman. 'He asked her to come to Him. He said to her, "Woman, you will no longer be disabled. I am about to set you free." Then he put His hands on her. Immediately she stood up straight and praised God. Jesus had healed the woman on the Sabbath day. This made the synagogue ruler angry. "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days. But do not come on the Sabbath!" The Lord answered him, "You pretenders [hypocrites]! Do not each of you go to the barn and untie his ox or donkey on the Sabbath day? Then lead it out to give it water? This woman is a member of Abraham's family line. But Satan has kept her disabled for 18 long years. Should she not be set free on the Sabbath day from what was keeping her disabled?" Then all those who opposed Him were put to shame.'

Lord Jesus, forgive the many things we do, say or think which are meaningless, just meaningless! Prepare us to be ashamed as You "judge everything people do including everything they try to hide". Thank You that You suffered and died so that we could be saved and become "members of Abraham's family line" as promised by God our Heavenly Father. Thank You that through Your crucifixion and resurrection, more and more people than ever before are receiving eternal life in Your Kingdom. Amen.

3rd August 2022.

Ezekiel 45 gives God's instructions for when His people returned from captivity to Israel. The priests must live in the area of the future Temple and offer blood sacrifices on behalf of the people. The land surrounding this area must be allocated to the leaders (princes) of Israel. "And My princes will not crush my people anymore. Instead, they will allow the people of Israel to receive their own share of land. It will be divided up based on their tribes. Princes of Israel, you have gone far enough! Stop hurting others. Do not crush them. Do what is fair and right. Stop taking my people's land away from them. [Also] use weights and measures that are honest and exact." (45:8-10.) Then follows instructions for worship, holy days and offerings "to pay for the sins of the people." (45:15.)

Acts 11:15-18 gives Peter's description of what happened when he brought the Good News of Jesus to Cornelius, the Roman centurion, and his family. "The Holy Spirit came on them. He came just as He had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered the Lord's words. 'John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.' God gave them the same gift He gave those of us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. So who was I to think that I could oppose God?" When they heard this, they praised God and said, "So then, God has allowed even those who are not Jews to turn away from their sins and live."

Thank You Father God for instructing Your priests and leaders to "offer blood sacrifices on behalf of the people". Thank You for the final blood sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus the Christ and Israel's Messiah, to enable "even those who are not Jews to turn away from their sins and live." Grant us Your Holy Spirit power and also leaders this day who will "do what is fair and right". Amen.

4th August 2022.

Isaiah 43:10-13 records God's words regarding His special people Israel. "I have chosen you to be My servants. I wanted you to know Me and believe in Me. I wanted you to understand that I am the one and only God. Before Me, there was no other god at all. And there will not be any god after Me. I am the one and only LORD God Almighty. I am the only one who can save you. I have made known what would happen. I told you about it. And I saved you. I did it. It was not some other god you worship. You are my witnesses that I am God... No one can save people from my powerful hand. When I do something, who can undo it?"

Revelation 19:6-10 records the praise of a great multitude of worshippers. "Hallelujah! Our Lord God is the King who rules over all. Let us be joyful and glad! Let us give Him glory! It is time for the Lamb's wedding. His bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given to her to wear... Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" The angel then told John, "Worship God! What Jesus taught is the very heart of prophecy." This means that Jesus Himself is the true source or revelation about God and of His Church which is called the Bride of Christ, who are the great multitude of believers in Heaven and on Earth.

Father God and Creator in Heaven, we thank You for this reminder to worship You and Israel's Messiah or Christ, our Saviour. We thank you that we are privileged to be among Your special people who believe in You and Your Son. Encourage us through Your Spirit to serve Jesus, your "revelation", who was at the beginning with You and will be at the end, and who came down in human form to suffer the punishment we deserve. Amazing love!

5th August 2022.

Jeremiah 30:8-11 gives prophecies from God through Jeremiah about His people Israel who were in exile. "People from other lands will not make them slaves anymore. Instead, they will serve Me. And they will serve David their king. I will raise Him up for them. I am the LORD their God." This refers to Israel's "second David" or Messiah. "Your people will have peace and security again. And no one will make them afraid. I am with you. I will save you." This refers to the title of Jesus 'Emmanuel' or 'God with us', which is the blessing promised for all who put their trust in the God of Israel and in His Son who saves us through His sacrifice on the cross. This promise is followed by a warning about God's discipline. "I will correct you. But I will be fair. I will punish you in a way that is fair and right."

1 Corinthians 11:27-32 gives Paul's own warning about the need for personal discipline. "So do not eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in a way that isn't worthy. 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. Anyone who eats and drinks must recognize the body of the Lord. If he doesn't, God will judge him for it. That is why many of you are weak and sick. That is why a number of you have died. We should judge ourselves. Then we would not be found guilty. When the Lord judges us, he corrects us. Then we will not be judged along with the rest of the world."

Father God, thank You for Your teaching throughout the Bible of the need to expect Your discipline and punishment along with Your love and mercy. As we reflect on the symbols and meaning of blood sacrifice, help us to "take a careful look" at ourselves and consider the reality of "God with us" through Christ our Saviour. Amen.

8th August 2022.

Leviticus 21 to 22 records how God instructed Moses to ensure Aaron and the priests of Israel kept a very strict discipline of cleanness and holiness. "The priests must do what I require. If not, then they will become guilty and die. I am the LORD God Almighty who makes them holy." (22:9.)

Philippians 1:9-11 records how Paul instructed the early church members. "I pray that your love will grow more and more in knowledge and understanding. Then you will be able to know what is best. You will be pure and without blame until the day Christ returns. You will be filled with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

Father God, we praise You for your intention revealed in the Old Testament to give wisdom to people of faith regarding healthy and holy living, especially those in priestly ministry. Thank You for the teaching of Paul revealed in the New Testament, that our "knowledge and understanding" will grow as our "love grows more and more". Continue to refine us so that we "will be able to know what is best" and will become "pure and without blame until the day Christ returns". May this be true for our health and cleanness as well as our holiness, through the compassion of Christ our Saviour, and "to the glory and praise of God." Amen.

9th August 2022.

Jeremiah 47 and 48 reveals God's purpose, around 600 BC, to totally destroy the Philistines who originated from Caphtor (Crete) (47:4). They occupied the land of Gaza in the days before God used the Egyptians to attack them (47:1). The LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, also spoke through Jeremiah about the punishment of the nation of Moab who originated from the family of Lot, Abraham's nephew. They lived to the east of the river Jordan and had disobeyed the Lord (48:26). God wept over Moab (48:21) but acted to destroy those who offered sacrifices to alien gods (48:35). In His mercy, God planned to restore the nation (48:47) but history records their unfaithful descendants were finally destroyed around 200 AD when God allowed men from Yemen to attack them.

Luke 10:25-37 records how Jesus taught a devout Jew who knew the teachings of God in the laws given to Moses. He answered Jesus correctly with the words of eternal life, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart... and love your neighbour as yourself." Then Jesus warned him to copy the loving mercy of the man in the parable of the Good Samaritan who was from a nation the Jews did not like (v.37).

Heavenly Father, thank you for these examples (Moab and Samaria) of Your love and mercy towards Your people even when they have done wrong. We also note the self-destruction and punishment caused by refusal to obey and worship You. Open our eyes to the neighbours around us who are the people you want us to love even if we do not like them! Help us then this day, like the devout Jew, to apply the full teaching of Jesus our Saviour through the parable of the Good Samaritan to love You and all our neighbours. For His sake who died that we should have "eternal life". Amen.

10th August 2022.

1 Samuel 26:18-25 records what was said when David, God's future king of Israel, saved the life of King Saul a second time. David asked, "Why are you chasing me? What evil thing have I done?" ...Then Saul said, "I have sinned. My son David, come back. Today you thought my life was very special. So I will not try to harm you again... May the LORD bless you. You will do great things." So David went on his way and Saul returned home. The following chapters show that David did not trust Saul. He went to live with the Philistines for a while (27:1-7). This worried Saul who then disobeyed God and sought advice from a local witch (chapter 28). A short time later, Saul and his sons were destroyed by the Philistines (chapters 28 & 31). That same year, David was appointed as king (2 Samuel 2). 35 years later, David removed the bones of Saul and his sons and buried them in Saul's father's burial tomb (2 Samuel 21:12-14).

Revelation 19:1-2 (NIV) records how the apostle John heard a great shout from Heaven, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are His judgements." This was after the prophecy that the nation of Babylon and its evil leaders would be destroyed.

Heavenly Father, thank you for your "true and just judgements" yesterday, today and for ever. Thank You for the amazing way in which You established Your righteousness in the life of David, who remained faithful, compassionate and forgiving in the midst of much opposition. Thank You that through His family You raised up Israel's Messiah who took the punishment for our sins and who will defeat evil nations in these last days when He comes to reign on earth. Thank you for the witness of Your first King David and the blessing of Your "second King David" in Jesus our Saviour. Hallelujah! Amen.

11th August 2022.

Jeremiah 27:16 records God's warning through Jeremiah to the priests of Israel not to listen to the false prophets. "They are prophesying lies to you." That same year, the false prophet Hananiah opposed Jeremiah and said in front of the people that God "will break the yoke of the king of Babylonia" (28:2). God revealed to Jeremiah this was not true and told Jeremiah to tell Hananiah, "You have tricked these people. Now they trust in lies. So the LORD says, 'I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. Before this year is over, you will die. You have taught the people to turn against Me.' " (28:16.)

1 Corinthians 1:18-21 records God's warning through Paul to avoid divisions in the church and seek the wisdom and power of God through 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. It is written, 'I will

destroy the wisdom of those who are wise. I will do away with the cleverness of those who think they are so smart.' (Isaiah 29:14.) Where is the wise person? Where is the educated person? Where are the great thinkers of this world? Hasn't God made the wisdom of the world foolish? God wisely planned that the world would not know Him through its own wisdom. It pleased God to use the 'foolish things' we preach to save those who believe!"

Thank you, thank You, Father God for the awareness You need us to have of the foolish worldly wisdom of 'clever people'. May our trust be in Your 'foolish things' we preach and witness regarding 'the mystery of Christ'. Establish the leaders and prophets of Your choosing and "remove from the face of the earth" those who have "taught the people to turn against Me". Amen.

12th August 2022.

Ezekiel 28:24-26 confirms the mercy and forgiveness of Almighty God towards His people Israel 600 years before they rejected His Messiah. "The people of Israel will no longer have neighbours who hate them... 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... I will punish all of their neighbours who told lies about them. Then Israel will know that I am the LORD their God."

Hebrews 2:14-17. The writer explains God's purpose and provision in Christ our Saviour for His followers. "Jesus became human like them in order to die for them. By doing that, He could destroy the one who rules over the kingdom of death. I am talking about the devil. Jesus could set people free who were afraid of death. All their lives they were held as slaves by that fear. It is certainly Abraham's children that He helps. He does not help angels. So He had to be made like His brothers in every way. Then He could serve God as a kind [merciful] and faithful high priest and pay for the sins of the people by dying for them."

Heavenly Father, in these last days before the antichrist, help us to see more clearly your purposes revealed in Scripture. We rejoice in Your provision for your people Israel in the past, present and future. Also for all who put their trust in their Messiah as a "faithful high priest" who paid "for the sins of the people by dying for them". Forgive those who have rejected Jesus and forgive us Your people for failing to proclaim Jesus is Lord whilst there is time. For His sake. Amen.

15th August 2022.

2 Kings 13:14-19 records the time when God's prophet Elisha was close to death and King Jehoash visited him. The king wept over him. Elisha told Jehoash to open the east window and shoot an arrow in the direction of Israel's enemies. Elisha said this was God's 'victory arrow' to completely destroy the Arameans who lived there at that time (850 BC). Then Elisha told the king to strike the ground, which he did, but only three times. Elisha told him he should have done it more times to have complete victory. Jehoash's lack of enthusiasm or belief in the words of the prophet of God lost him total victory over the enemy. Elisha told him, "Now you will defeat Aram only three times."

James 5:13-18. "Are any of you in trouble? Then you should pray. Are any of you happy? Then sing songs of praise. Are any of you sick? Then send for the elders of the church to pray over you. Ask them to anoint you with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer offered by those who have faith will make you well. The Lord will heal you. If you have sinned, you will be forgiven. So admit to one another that you have sinned. Pray for one another so that you might be healed. The prayer of a godly person is powerful. It makes things happen. Elijah was just like us. He prayed hard that it wouldn't rain. And it didn't rain on the land for three and a half years. Then he prayed again. That time it rained. And the earth produced its crops."

Thank You Father God for showing us the need to have great enthusiasm and faith in Your truth revealed by Your Old Testament prophets like Elijah and Elisha. Thank You for Your New Testament apostles who encourage us to pray and praise You and seek miracles of healing and forgiveness and even deliverance from climate changes. Grant us much joy in the victory You have given us in Christ our Saviour. Amen.

16th August 2022.

Ecclesiastes 12:9-14. "The Teacher was wise... He did his best to find just the right words. And what he wrote was honest and true. The sayings of those who are wise move people to take action... They are given to us by one Shepherd. My son, be careful not to pay attention to anything

that is added to them... 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 is good or evil."

Revelation 17 describes the vision given to the apostle John of the woman sitting on a scarlet beast covered with blasphemous names and with seven heads and ten horns (v.3). "Then the angel said to me, 'The beast that you saw used to exist. But now he does not. He will come up out of the Abyss. He will be destroyed. Some of the people who live on the earth will be amazed when they see the beast... because even though the beast used to exist and now does not, he will come again. Here is a problem that you have to be wise to understand... The ten horns you saw are ten kings. They have not yet received a kingdom. But for one hour they will receive authority to rule together with the beast. They have only one purpose... They will make war against the Lamb. But the Lamb will overcome them because he is the most powerful Lord of all and the greatest King of all. His appointed, chosen and faithful followers will be with Him.' " (17:7-14)

Heavenly Father, thank you for these ancient words stressing the importance of trusting in Your wisdom alone. Help us to be aware of the coming days when ten kingly rulers will make war against the "chosen and faithful followers" of the Lamb of God. May our faith be in Him to overcome. Amen.

17th August 2022.

Psalm 106:40-48 records the outcome of sin among the people of God to remind us of His anger and punishment but also His prevailing love and salvation. "So 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. They beat them down and kept them under their power. Many times the LORD saved them. But they refused to obey Him. They were weakened [KJV] 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. He made all those who held them as prisoners show concern 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."

Mark 7:24-30 reveals how the ministry of Jesus on Earth prevailed in foreign lands. 'Jesus went to a place near Tyre... But he could not keep it a secret. Soon a woman heard about Him. An evil spirit controlled her little daughter. The woman came to Jesus and fell at His feet. She was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. Jesus had mercy on her and said, "You may go. The demon has left your daughter." She went home and found her child lying on the bed and the demon gone.'

Lord Jesus, thank You for revealing the true nature of Almighty God in His compassion for the lost and needy, whoever they are. We are also aware of the divine anger You showed towards selfish believers who disobeyed God's commandments. Help us to live in the power and righteousness of Your Holy Spirit and demonstrate Your forgiveness and compassion to all. Amen.

18th August 2022.

Isaiah 35:4-10 encourages believers with these words from God's prophet. "Say to those whose hearts are afraid, 'Be strong. Do not fear. Your God will come. He will pay your enemies back. He will come [with divine retribution, NIV] to save you.' Then the eyes of those who are blind will be opened. The ears of those who cannot hear will be unplugged. Those who cannot walk will leap like a deer. And those who cannot speak will shout with joy. Water will pour out in dry places... A wide road will go through the land. It will be called The Way of Holiness. Only those who are pure and clean can travel on it. Only those who lead a holy life can use it. Evil and foolish people cannot walk on it... Only people who have been set free will walk on it. 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."

Romans 15:17-21 records the words of Paul. "Because I belong to Christ Jesus, I can take pride in my work for God. I will not try to speak of anything except what Christ has done through me. He has been leading those who are not Jews to obey God... I have always wanted to preach the

Good News where Christ was not known... It is written, 'Those who were not told about Him will understand. Those who have not heard will know what it all means.' " (Isaiah 52:15.)

Thank You heavenly Father for the words quoted in the Old and New Testaments from Your prophet Isaiah. Make us bold to pray for "divine retribution" against those who hinder Your Good News about Jesus Christ. Bring physical and spiritual healing for the blind, deaf, dumb and lame that we may all walk together in "The Way of Holiness" with joy and without fear. Amen.

19th August 2022.

Joshua 18:1-10 describes in 1444 BC the allocation of the remaining land in God's Promised Land of Canaan after the defeat of the 31 kings (Chapter 12). The tribe of Judah was given the land to the south of where they stood in Shiloh, which included the future capital of Jerusalem (Chapter 15). Two tribes of Israel had already settled in the land east of the Jordan (Chapter 16). Joseph's family was given the land to the north of Shiloh (18:5). The Levites were not allocated land because of their priestly duties towards the other tribes (18:7). Joshua said, "I will cast lots for you here at Shiloh in the sight of the LORD" (18:8). Then Joshua cast lots for the allocation of the land west of Jordan for the remaining seven tribes of Israel (18:10).

Hebrews 9:6-12 describes the duties of the Levite priests before the Christian era. "God had not yet clearly shown the way into the Most Holy Room... It shows us that the gifts and sacrifices they offered were not enough. They were not able to remove the worshiper's guilt... They are rules that deal with things outside our bodies. People had to obey them only until the new covenant came. Christ came to be the High Priest of the good things that are already here. When He came, he went through the greater and more perfect holy tent. The tent was not made by people... He did not enter by spilling the blood of goats and calves. He entered the Most 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 forever."

Thank you Almighty God for Your amazing grace to provide for Your special people Israel and through them Your Great High Priest, the Jewish Messiah, as Saviour of the world for all who put their trust in Him. Thank You Jesus for suffering for us. Amen.

22nd August 2022.

Genesis 28 describes how Isaac instructed Jacob to visit his uncle in Paddam (Syria) to find a wife and not to choose a wife from the Canaanite women where they lived at that time in Bethel near Jerusalem (28:1-6). On the way to Padam, Jacob 'saw in a dream a stairway standing on the Earth. Its top reached to Heaven. The angels of God were going up and coming down on it. The LORD stood above the stairway and said, "I am the LORD. I am the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your children after you the land on which you are lying. They will be like the dust of the earth that cannot be counted. They will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed because of you and your children after you. I am with you... And I will bring you back to this land" ' (28:12-15). The following chapters describe how the twelve sons of Jacob were born before, during and after returning to Bethel, which became the centre of the Promised Land for the people of Israel.

Acts 7 describes Stephen's speech to the High Priest in Jerusalem in the early days of the New Testament Church of Israel's Messiah. He reminds them about God's promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (7:5-8). This included the promise of the land of Canaan and the Ten Commandments given to Moses for the people of Israel to obey. "The Law you received was brought by angels. But you have not obeyed it."

Thank You God for planning to bless all nations through Israel's Law and Messiah. Thank You that we can now enjoy a personal relationship with You through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus our Saviour. Forgive us when we do not obey Your teaching or Holy Spirit's guidance to be a "blessing to all peoples". Amen.

23rd August 2022.

Job 38:14-33 gives the words of God to Job after his friends had failed in counselling him. "The earth takes shape like clay under a seal. Its features stand out like the different parts of your clothes. Have you travelled to the springs at the bottom of the ocean? Do you understand how big the Earth is? Where does light come from? Have you entered the places where the snow is kept? Have you seen the storerooms for the hail? Where does lightning come from? Who tells the rain where it should fall? Who makes paths for the thunderstorms? Who is the father of the drops of dew?"

Does the ice have a mother? Can you tie up the beautiful Pleiades? Can you untie the ropes that hold Orion together? Do you know the laws that govern the heavens? Can you rule over the Earth the way I do?"

Philippians 2:12-16 gives wise counsel from Paul. "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 words of life."

Thank You Father God for Your wise counsel given to Job and through Paul. May we trust and obey You and not seek worldly counsel. Open our eyes to Your amazing creation and Your amazing mercy in Christ our Saviour. Encourage us to submit to Your "rule over the Earth" and "continue to work out our own salvation in fear and trembling". May we shine as "children of God". Amen.

24th August 2022.

Psalms 148:7-14. "Praise the LORD from the Earth, you great sea creatures and all of the deepest parts of the ocean. Praise Him, lightning and hail, snow and clouds. Praise Him, you stormy winds that obey Him. Praise Him, all you mountains and hills. Praise Him, all you wild animals and cattle. Praise Him, you small creatures and flying birds. Praise Him, all you princes and rulers on earth. Praise Him, young men and young women. Praise Him, old people and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD. His name alone is honoured. His glory is higher than the Earth and the heavens. He has given His people a strong king. All of his faithful people praise Him for that gift. All of the people of Israel are close to His heart. Praise the Lord." Note that "king" probably refers to God's future King of Kings, Jesus our Saviour, Israel's Messiah.

Revelation 10:1-7. After the prediction of terrible destruction of mankind in the last days (9:18), John was given another vision. "Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was wearing a cloud like a robe. There was a rainbow above his head. His face was like the sun... He made a promise in the name of the One who lives for ever and ever. He took an oath in the name of the One who created the sky, earth and sea and all that is in them. He said, 'There will be no more waiting! But in the days when the seventh angel is ready to blow his trumpet, the last part of God's mystery plan will be carried out.' " This probably refers to the mystery of the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank You God for these Bible references to the first and second comings of Israel's Messiah, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Help us to grow in understanding of the "mystery of Christ" and in faith of Your salvation plan for the world You created. Come, Lord Jesus! Come soon! Amen.

25th August 2022.

Job 32 to 37 gives the wise words of Elihu to Job after his three friends had finished criticising him and before God spoke to Job directly. 'Elihu's anger burned against Job's three friends. They had not found any way to prove that Job was wrong. But they still said he was guilty... Elihu said, "I am young, and you are old. So I was afraid to tell you what I know. I thought, those who are older should speak first. Those who have lived for many years should teach people how to be wise. But it is the Spirit in people that gives them understanding. The Breath of the Mighty One gives them wisdom." (32:2-8) Then Elihu said to Job, "You said, 'I am pure... I am not guilty of doing anything wrong. But God has found fault with me. He thinks I am His enemy.' But I am telling you that you are not right when you talk like that. After all, God is greater than a mere man. So why do you claim that God never answers any of our questions? He speaks in one way and then another. We might not even realize it." ' (33:9-14)

1 Corinthians 4:14-17 records the words of the apostle Paul. "I am not writing this to shame you. You are my dear children and I want to warn you. You may have 10,000 believers in Christ watching over you. But you do not have many [spiritual] fathers. I became your father by serving Christ Jesus and telling you the Good News. So I am asking you to follow my example... Timothy will remind you of my way of life in serving Christ Jesus. And that agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church."

Father God, thank you for the wise words of Elihu and Paul. Forgive us when we think "I am not guilty of doing anything wrong". May we listen for "the Breath of the Mighty One" and be wary of unwise friends before we understand and teach others Your truth in love. Amen.

26th August 2022.

Daniel 7:27 prophecies what will happen after the rule of evil in the end times. "Then the authority, power and greatness of all of the kingdoms on earth will be handed over to the people of the Most High God. His kingdom will last forever. Every ruler will worship and obey him."

Revelation 22:12-17 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. 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. 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. I am the Root and the Son of David. I am the bright Morning Star. The Holy Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' Let those who hear say, 'Come!' Anyone who is thirsty should come. Anyone who wants to take the free gift of the water of life should do so."

Lord Jesus, thank you for sharing with Your followers what will happen after the terrible times of these 'Last Days'. In Your mercy, equip Your church to serve others with Your compassion and Holy Spirit power. Help us to resist the forces of evil and prepare the way for Your return. We say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" In the meantime, show us how to help and encourage "anyone who is thirsty". Amen.

29th August 2022.

2 Chronicles 36 records the terrible period of unfaithfulness to God by kings and priests of Israel. First Egypt, then Babylon, imposed their rule over the people. Finally, Zedekiah was installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. 'Zedekiah refused to ... turn to the LORD, the God of Israel. And the people as well as the leaders and priests became more and more unfaithful. They followed all of the practices of the surrounding nations. The LORD hated those practices. The people and leaders made the LORD's Temple "unclean". The LORD had set the Temple in Jerusalem apart in a special way for Himself. The Lord, the God of Israel, sent word to His people through His messengers again and again. He took pity on His people. He also took pity on the Temple where He lived. 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... The LORD brought the king of Babylonia against them.' (36:13-16). Then they destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple as prophesied by God's prophet Jeremiah (36:19, 21).

1 John 4:1-3 says, "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit. Put the spirits to the test to see if they belong to God. Many false prophets have gone out into the world. How can you recognize the Spirit of God? Every spirit that agrees that Jesus Christ came in a human body belongs to God. But every spirit that doesn't agree with this does not belong to God. It is the spirit of the anti-Christ."

Father God, save our nation from coming under the control of evil surrounding nations. May our leaders of government and church obey You and Your prophets like Jeremiah. Give us Holy Spirit wisdom to believe those whom You send among us and reject the work of today's anti-Christ. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

30th August 2022.

Ecclesiastes 9:7-10 advises, "Go and enjoy your food. Be joyful as you drink your wine. Now is the time God favours what you do. Always wear white clothes to show you are happy... You love your wife so enjoy life with her. Do it all the days of this meaningless life God has given you on Earth. That is what He made you for. That is what you get for all of your hard work on Earth. No matter what you do, work at it with all your might. Remember, you are going to your grave. And there is no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom there." The book concludes, "Everything has now been heard. And here is the final thing I want to say. 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, whether it is good or evil."

Luke 16:19-31 is where Jesus told the story of the rich man and the beggar. They both died and saw each other after death. The beggar was with Abraham. But the rich man was in Hell and he begged Abraham to let the beggar give him some water. Abraham declined since it was too late to change matters and also there was a great chasm between them. So the rich man in Hell asked Abraham to care for his five brothers who were still alive. Abraham replied, "They have the teachings of Moses and the Prophets. Let your brothers listen to them." But he added, "They do not listen... So they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." This referred of course to their Messiah.

Father God, help us to realise that riches do not bring eternal life and joy. Help us to listen and follow the Bible teachings to receive eternal life through Christ our Saviour, who died to save us all. Show us how to live day by day rejoicing. Amen.

31st August 2022.

Jeremiah 29:10-14 records the famous words of God's prophet. 'The LORD says, "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. Then you will call out to Me. You will come and pray to Me. And I will listen to you. When you look for Me with all your heart, you will find Me... And I will bring you back from where you were taken as prisoners. I will gather you from all of the nations."'

Luke 1:57-66. Before the birth of Jesus to Mary came the birth of His cousin to Elizabeth. 'On the eighth day, they came to have the child circumcised. They were going to name him Zechariah, like his father. But his mother spoke up. "No!" she said. "He must be called John." ...His dumb father wrote, "His name is John." Everyone was amazed. Right away Zechariah could speak again. His first words gave praise to God. The neighbours were all filled with fear and wonder... And because the Lord was with John, they asked, "What is this child going to be?" His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit. He prophesied, "Give praise to the Lord, the God of Israel! He has come and set His people free. He has acted with great power and has saved us. He did it for those who are from the family line of His servant David. Long ago holy prophets said He would do it."

Father God we see from history your love and salvation for Your people Israel. We look today for the signs of the return of Jesus to establish His Kingdom on Earth. Forgive us for putting our trust in earthly kingdoms. Grant us the divine wisdom given to Jeremiah and Zechariah so see Your preparation for the salvation of the world through Your people and their Messiah. Amen.

1st September 2022.

2 Samuel 12 records the time when God's prophet Nathan visited King David and warned him there would be much trouble in his family because he did wrong to marry Bathsheba. (He had contrived for her husband to be sent to the front line of battle to be killed.) David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." (v.13.) Nathan told him that Bathsheba's first child would die. However, in God's mercy, she then gave birth to a son whom they named Solomon. God sent Nathan to David to tell him to call his son Jedidiah, which means 'loved by the Lord'. (v.24-25.) David wrote Psalm 51 in praise to God for His mercy.

1 Timothy 5:3-16 gives Paul's advice to care for widows. "Take care of the widows who really need help. Her children or grandchildren should first learn to put their faith into practice... The widow who really needs help and is left all alone puts her hope in God... But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she is still living... A widow should spend her time doing all kinds of good things... But here is the advice I give to younger widows. Get married. Have children. Take care of your own homes. Do not give the enemy the chance to tell lies about you."

Thank You heavenly Father for Your heart's desire to show mercy to widows. May we Your people care for elderly widows, especially if they do not have family to support them. We pray that younger widows will seek Your provision in remarriage. May we not be guilty of contriving situations to provide partners for widows or indeed for wives whose husbands are away from home. We seek Your forgiveness, like David, in harbouring marriage fantasies that are unrighteous for ourselves or others. Hear prayer in Jesus' name for His compassion to prevail for the needy in churches and society. Amen.

2nd September 2022.

Numbers 23:7-26 records how Balak, king of Israel's enemies in Moab, tried to hire God's prophet Balaam to curse Israel. "How can I put a curse on people God hasn't cursed? How can I speak against people the LORD hasn't spoken against? ...Let me die as godly people die. Let my death be like theirs!" Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I brought you here to put a curse on my enemies! But all you have done is give them a blessing!" He answered, "I have to speak only the words the LORD puts in my mouth... God is not a mere man. He cannot lie. He is not a human being. He does not change His mind. He speaks, and then He acts. He makes a promise, and then He keeps it. He has commanded me to bless Israel. He has given them His blessing. And I cannot change it."

1 Timothy 4:7-16 gives some of Paul's advice to Timothy. "Train yourself to be godly. Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come... 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 those things. Teach them. Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young. 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."

Thank You Father God for persevering and sustaining us in Your Word to be a godly and physical blessing to others, especially Your people Israel. Thank You for our salvation in Christ their Messiah. Amen.

5th September 2022.

Exodus 20 records the Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai. "Do not put any other gods in place of Me... Do not bow down to them or worship them... Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God... Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy.... Honour your father and mother... Do not commit murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not give false witness against your neighbour. Do not long for anything that belongs to your neighbour." Moses told the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to put you to the test. He wants you to have respect for Him. That will keep you from sinning."

Acts 2:31-41 records the Apostle Peter's address in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. "David saw what was ahead. So he spoke about the Christ rising from the dead. He said that the Christ would not be left in the grave. His body would not rot in the ground. God has raised this same Jesus back to life. We are all witnesses of this. Jesus has been given a place of honour at the right hand of God. He has received the Holy Spirit from the Father. This is what God had promised. It is Jesus who has poured out what you now see and hear... You nailed Jesus to the cross. But God has made Him both Lord and Christ." When the people heard this, their hearts were filled with shame... "All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." About 3,000 people joined the believers that day.

Thank You Father God for reminding us to be obedient to Your Ten Commandments and to be faithful in witnessing that You sacrificed Jesus as punishment for our sins and raised Him from death to bless us with Your salvation and Holy Spirit power. Help us to obey and witness to Your glory this day! Amen.

6th September 2022.

Psalms 86:11-17. David speaks his petitions to God and testifies, "Lord, teach me how You want me to live. Then I will follow Your truth. Give me a heart that doesn't want anything more than to worship You. Lord my God, I will praise You with all my heart. I will bring glory to You forever. Great is Your love for me. You have kept me from going down into the grave... You are a God who is tender and kind. You are gracious. You are slow to get angry. You are faithful and full of love. Turn to me and show me Your favour. Give me strength and save me. Prove Your goodness to me. Then my enemies will see it and be put to shame. Lord, you have helped me and given me comfort." Four hundred years later, the prophet Malachi confirmed God's intention. "They will belong to me," says the LORD who rules over all. "They will be my special treasure. I will spare them just as a loving father spares his son who serves him. Then once again you will see the difference between godly people and sinful people. And you will see the difference between those who serve Me and those who do not." (3:17-18.)

Galatians 2:20-21. Paul gives thanks and testifies, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who lives. Christ lives in me. My faith in the Son of God helps me to live my life in my body. He loved me. He gave Himself for me." To the Philippians church Paul said, "Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord!" (3:1).

Thank You, thank you, heavenly Father for these examples from Scripture again and again of the holy and righteous and loving attitude of the saints that have gone before as examples to us all. Forgive our doubts and fears and disobedience and make us faithful servants in Your Kingdom, as a testimony to you. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

7th September 2022.

Jeremiah 28 records the period when Israel followed the teachings of the false prophet Hananiah. He promised that the exiled Jews would be back in Jerusalem within two years and all would be well. Jeremiah warned the people against Hananiah and that same year the false prophet died. The next five chapters are devoted to the truth from God revealed through His chosen prophet Jeremiah who wrote to the exiles in Babylon. He comforted them but prepared them for a long stay in exile and to settle down in peace and obedience to the will of God. In this way a new generation of believers would grow up and eventually return to the Promised Land as a redeemed people, who were forgiven and special to God Almighty. Jeremiah repeated his earlier warning, "Do not let the [false] prophets among you deceive you" (29:8).

1 Timothy 5:24-25. "The sins of some people are easy to see. They are already being judged. Others will be judged later. In the same way, good works are easy to see. But even good works that are hard to see cannot stay hidden."

Heavenly Father, open our eyes to see the sins of people who do wrong. Open our ears to understand what is true and what is false teaching for today and for our future needs. Forgive us for looking for "quick fixes" and enable us to put right what has gone wrong with the foundations of our society. We invite You to pursue a process of perfection in Your people that sets a high standard whilst suffering the consequences of our sins and the sins of others. Redeem us to do "good works" and revive us in the power and compassion of Your Holy Spirit to prepare the way for the promised Kingdom of Christ. Meanwhile, "do not let the false prophets deceive us". Amen.

8th September 2022.

Numbers 22:21-41 records the famous story of Balaam, Israel's false prophet, who went to give Balak, the king of Moab, advice. His donkey tried three times to stop him from travelling because it saw an angel of the LORD God Almighty blocking the way. Then God enabled the donkey to speak and tell Balaam. Balaam saw the angel and bowed down to him. The angel told Balaam to continue on his journey "but speak only what I tell you" (22:35). God gave Balaam five messages to give to Balak and peace was restored between the two nations (chapters 23-24). Sadly, this led to some of the men of Israel being seduced by the women of Moab who invited them to worship their gods and join in sexual sins (25:1-3).

Acts 7:30-39. Stephen told the Jewish leaders, "An angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush... There he heard the LORD's voice... 'I have seen My people beaten down in Egypt and heard their groans. I have come down to set them free.' ...God Himself sent Moses to rule the people of Israel and set them free... Moses led them out of Egypt. He did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and for 40 years in the desert. Moses spoke to the people of Israel. 'God will send you a Prophet who will come from your own people.' Moses received living words to pass on to us. But our people refused to obey Moses... In their hearts, they wished they were back in Egypt."

Heavenly Father, thank You for these reminders of how You saved your people many times and yet they disobeyed You and were easily seduced by other gods and worldly living. Forgive us when we listen to false prophets and disobey Your "living words" and Your Messiah. May we speak and do only what You tell us. Amen.

9th September 2022.

Ruth Chapter 1 is the beginning of the story of Ruth who became the wife of Boaz. He was an ancestor of King David and the family line that led to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and of Joseph who became his wife. Ruth was a foreigner to Israel from Moab. She married a son of Naomi and Elimelech who moved temporarily from Israel to Moab during the time of a serious drought. Ruth's

first husband died and she chose to journey to Bethlehem in Israel with Naomi who wanted to return home to her people. Ruth told Naomi, "Your people will be my people and your God will be my God" (1:16). In this way, she chose to walk in the light of the truth of Almighty God and is an example to us all to this day of personal faith in God and of God's faithfulness to all believers.

Galatians 3:26-29 reminds us of famous words of Paul. "You are all children of God by believing in Christ Jesus. All of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ as if He were your clothes. There is no Jew or Greek. There is no slave or free person. There is no male or female. Because you belong to Christ Jesus, you are all one. You who belong to Christ are Abraham's seed. You will receive what God has promised."

Father God, we see from Your truth in Scripture how things worked out for those who put their trust in You. Thank You for the record of what happened when a foreign woman put her trust in You. We praise You for Your delight in choosing her to be the ancestor of Jesus, whom we believe was born as Your Son through the intervention of Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for the eternal welcome and promise we have as sons and daughters of Abraham, whatever our background. Help us to know what it truly means to be "clothed with Christ". For His sake who took our punishment for sin. Amen.

12th September 2022.

Habakkuk 3 gives the final prayer of God's prophet around 620 BC. "LORD, I know how famous You are. I have great respect for You because of Your mighty acts. Do them again for us. Make them known in our time. When You are angry, remember to show us Your tender love [mercy, NIV]." Habakkuk concludes with his famous words, "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Saviour" (v.17-18, NIV).

1 Corinthians 2:6-10. "The words we speak to those who have grown in the faith are wise. Our words are different from the words of the wise people or rulers of this world. People like that are not going anywhere. No, we speak about God's secret wisdom. His wisdom has been hidden. But before time began, God planned that His wisdom would bring us heavenly glory. None of the rulers of this world understood God's wisdom. If they had, they would not have nailed the Lord of Glory to the cross. It is written, 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has known what God has prepared for those who love Him' (Isaiah 64:4). God has shown it to us through His Spirit. The Spirit understands all things. He understands even the deep things of God."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your love for us. In these sinful days, "when You are angry, remember to show us Your tender love and mercy" so that we can continue to "rejoice in the LORD". Thank you for Your indwelling Holy Spirit promised by Jesus our Saviour for all who believe He is the Son of God. Help us then to follow divine wisdom, not worldly wisdom. Amen.

13th September 2022.

2 Kings 6&7. This was the time when God's prophet Elisha was blamed by the king for a terrible famine in Samaria. However, the king admitted later that God Himself had allowed the siege that caused the famine. Then Elisha said to the king, "The LORD says, 'About this time tomorrow, you will be able to buy seven quarts of flour for less than half an ounce of silver at the gate of Samaria.' " The king's officer spoke to the man of God. He said, "Suppose the LORD pours food down on us, could what you are saying really happen?" Elisha answered, "You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it!" That night God stopped the siege by causing the enemy to run away in panic and leave everything behind them. But the officer who doubted the word of God was trampled to death at the city gate by the crowds running for the food that was left behind.

Acts 7:33-38 in Jerusalem over 900 years later, Stephen said "The Lord said to Moses, 'I have seen My people beaten down in Egypt and heard their groans. I have come down to set them free.' God Himself sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt. He did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and for 40 years in the desert. This is the same Moses who spoke to the people of Israel, 'God will send you a Prophet. He will be like Me. He will come from your own people.' "

Thank You merciful Father for setting Your people free around the world as in Egypt 3500 years ago and as in Samaria 2900 years ago and as in Ukraine today. Thank You for sending us Your greatest Prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ, who promised Holy Spirit wisdom to those who believe. May

world leaders and their officers read Your word and learn to admit that You are in control! Help us not to fear or to doubt Your compassion and power. Amen.

14th September 2022.

Nehemiah 3 records the rebuilding in detail of the walls of Jerusalem in 445 BC. Nearly everyone took part from the least to the greatest including priests (v.1,28) rulers (v.12,15), goldsmiths (v.8,31) and many named individuals including the daughters of Hallohesh (v.12). Sadly, the noblemen of Tekoa refused to "put their shoulders to the work" (v.5). This chapter is followed by the record of opposition from Sanballat and Tobiah (4:1-3). Much of the work was finished that year and the people were able to meet inside to hear the writings of Moses read out (8:1) and to have times of worship and confession with prayer (9:1-5).

John 14:15-31 records the teachings of Jesus who mentions the word "love" many times. "If you love me, you will obey what I command. I will ask the Father. He will give you another Friend to help you and to be with you forever. The Friend is the Spirit of truth... He lives with you, and He will be in you... You will know that you are in Me, and I am in you. Anyone who has my commands and obeys them loves Me. My Father will love the one who loves Me. I too will love him. And I will show Myself to him... Anyone who loves Me will obey my teaching. My Father will love him. We will come to him and make our home with him. Anyone who does not love Me will not obey My teaching... But the world must learn that I love the Father."

Heavenly Father, show us how to rebuild our towns and cities with a focus on reading Scripture and "worship and confession with prayer". May this be founded in love for Jesus our Saviour, knowing that He suffered much because of Your love for us. Through Your Spirit, help us to ignore the opposition and "put our shoulders to the work" of rebuilding Your Church in love for You and each other. For Christ's sake and glory. Amen.

21st September 2022.

Isaiah 12. This follows the chapter giving the prophecy of the coming Messiah who will judge the world in righteousness. "In days to come, the people of Israel will sing, 'LORD God Almighty, we will praise You. You were angry with us. But now Your anger has turned away from us. And you have brought us comfort. Surely, You are the One who saves us. We will trust in You. Then we will not be afraid. LORD, You give us strength. We sing about You. LORD, you have saved us.' ...Give thanks to the LORD. Worship him. Tell the nations what He has done. Announce how His name is honoured. Sing to the LORD. He has done glorious things. Let it be known all over the world."

2 Corinthians 13:4-5. "It is true that Christ was nailed to the cross in weakness. But He lives by God's power. In the same way, I share His weakness. But by God's power I will live with Him to serve you. Take a good look at yourselves to see if you are really believers. Test yourselves. Don't you realise that Christ Jesus is in you? Unless, of course, you fail the test!"

We thank You heavenly Father that both Isaiah and Paul brought the Good News of Jesus Christ to the needy. Enable us whilst there is time to "let it be known all over the world". We are physically weak but help us to believe that "by God's power I will live with Him to serve" others. We are amazed how the Gospel is spreading in many places today. Forgive us for the times we make You angry when we fail to uphold Your truth and to witness in Holy Spirit strength with compassion. Help us to prepare ourselves and others for the return of our Saviour in glory. Amen.

22nd September 2022.

Isaiah 22:8-11 records the words from God when Jerusalem was under siege. "You depended on the weapons in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. You saw that the City of David had many holes in its walls... You picked out the weaker buildings in Jerusalem. You tore them down and used their stones to strengthen the city walls against attack. You built a pool between the two walls... But you didn't look to the One who made it all possible. You did not pay any attention to the One who planned everything long ago."

Luke 10:38-42 records the time when Jesus and His disciples visited the home of Martha. This was at a time when the Romans occupied Jerusalem. Her sister Mary sat at the Lord's feet listening to what He said. Martha was busy [distracted] with all the things that had to be done. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, my sister has left me to do the work by myself. Do you not care? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered. "You are worried and upset about many

things. But only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better. And it will not be taken away from her."

Almighty God, enable us to see the true situation we live under regarding the occupying forces of evil that surround us. As at the time of Isaiah and Jesus, help us to "pay attention to the One who planned everything long ago". Forgive us when our attention is attracted away from You by many things to improve our living standards. Forgive us when we are distracted from the words of Jesus. Prepare us with Your truth so that we can prepare others to walk in the light of that truth and be saved and blessed. For His sake who died to save us from sinning and yielding to the lifestyle of others who do not know You or Your Spirit of truth. Amen.

23rd September 2022.

Micah 4 says "other nations worship and trust in their gods but God's people will worship and obey Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty. He will be our God for ever and ever" (v.5). Micah went on to say, "The LORD declares, 'The time is coming when I will gather those who are disabled. I will bring together those who were taken away as prisoners. I will gather those I have allowed to suffer. I will make the disabled my faithful people. I will make those who were driven away from their homes into a strong nation and I will rule over them'" (v.6-7).

Acts 13:13-52. 'Paul ... went to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath day they entered the synagogue. The Law and the Prophets were read aloud. The synagogue rulers sent word to Paul. "Do you have a message of hope for the people? If you do, please speak." Paul stood up and said, "Men of Israel, and you non-Jews who worship God, listen to me!"' (v.13-16). Paul then preached the Good News of Jesus Christ (v.17-41). The outcome at that time was 'the word of the Lord spread through the whole area. But the Jews stirred ... up the men who were leaders in the city. They tried to get them to attack Paul and Barnabas. They threw them out of that area. Paul and Barnabas went on to Iconium. [However] the believers were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit' (v.49-52).

Lord Jesus, we look forward to the time when all people "will worship and obey the LORD God Almighty". We ask this for Your sake, because You suffered so much to take the punishment for our sins. Praise God for His love and mercy for us, which includes the disabled, the prisoners and those who have suffered persecution. May we be "filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit". Amen.

26th September 2022.

Ezekiel 29-32 records God's prophecy against Egypt around 580 BC. He compares Pharaoh and his people to the fine cedar trees of Lebanon which are easily destroyed by fire. In His sadness for sinful Egypt, He lamented for them. "The day of the LORD is near... a time of doom for the nations" (30:3). This included a list of nations who were allies of Egypt at that time "who will fall and their proud strength will fail" (30:5-6). "Then they will know that I am the LORD God Almighty" (30:8).

Luke 11 records the Lord's Prayer to remind us daily: to worship God; to pray for His Kingdom to be established on Earth; to provide us with food; to forgive our sins; to encourage us to forgive the sins of others; and protect us from temptation. Jesus then gives an example of how to be good neighbours and good fathers. Finally, "Ask, and it will be given to you. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you. Everyone who asks will receive. He who searches will find. And the door will be opened to the one who knocks... Even though you are evil, you know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will your Father who is in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Heavenly Father, thank You that in Jesus we know how to live righteously. Thank you that through His sacrifice on our behalf we have the wisdom, power and compassion of the Holy Spirit living in us. May we teach, live and shine forth Your truth so that individuals, families, neighbourhoods and whole nations will know Your blessing even at "a time of doom for the nations". Encourage us to seek and praise You daily in repentance. May we be quick to forgive and to help others. May we grow in faith to "ask, seek and knock" as we prepare the way for our Saviour's return. Amen.

27th September 2022.

Judges 8:28-35 records the time of peace in Israel under Gideon's leadership. This lasted for 40 years. However, 'As soon as Gideon had died, the people of Israel joined themselves to the gods that were named after Baal. Israel was no longer faithful to the LORD. They worshiped Baal-Berith as

their god. They forgot what the LORD their God had done for them. He had saved them from the power of their enemies who were all around them. Gideon had done many good things for the people of Israel.'

Matthew 24 records the teachings of Jesus regarding the signs of the 'end of the age'. "Keep watch. You do not know on what day your Lord will come. You must understand something. Suppose the owner of the house knew what time of night the robber was coming. Then he would have kept watch. He would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready. The Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him."

Dear Father God, we sense more than ever we are at the 'end of the age'. Forgive us when we quickly forget the examples of godly men like Gideon. May we never forget the peace under Your righteous leaders of the past and wander away from the truth they upheld. Thank you for the warning of Jesus our Saviour to "keep watch" and safeguard what You have blessed us with. We rejoice that the Good News of Jesus is spreading in many places in the world. Help us all to be faithful and understand through Your Spirit the signs of the times so that we know how to pray for the leaders of today. Prepare us to boldly witness and support what is good and honour those who are faithful to Your word at times of great trouble and disobedience as we watch for our Lord to come. Amen.

28th September 2022.

Psalm 51 reveals the heart of King David after God's prophet Nathan accused him of adultery. "O God, show me Your favour in keeping with Your faithful love. Because Your love is so tender and kind, wipe out my lawless acts. Wash away all of the evil things I have done. Make me pure from my sin. I know the lawless acts I have committed. I cannot forget my sin. You are the one I have really sinned against. I have done what is evil in Your sight. So You are right when you sentence me. You are fair when you judge me. I know I have been a sinner ever since I was born... I know that You want Your truth to be in my heart. You teach me wisdom deep down inside me" (v.1-6). "Cleanse me! ...Blot out my sins! ...Create in me a pure heart! ...Restore me to the joy of Your salvation!" (v.7-12). David then declares how, in God's mercy, he will serve Him and be an example for good to all whom he can influence.

Revelation 3:10-12. Jesus said, "You have kept my command to put up with [endure] anything that happens. So I will keep you from the time of suffering that is going to come to the whole world. It will test those who live on Earth. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have! Then no-one will take away your crown. I will see to it that those who overcome will be pillars in the temple of my God... I will write the name of my God on them."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your mercy to those who repent. Deliver us also from the guilt of sinning. Thank you for revealing Your truth to open our eyes to both good and evil. Create in us new hearts full of purity and joy to serve You and those whom we can influence for good. Thank You Lord Jesus for the privilege of being tested in our faithfulness to You. Help us to endure and overcome all things in times of suffering as we await Your return. Amen.

29th September 2022.

Exodus 20-23. When Almighty God spoke out His Ten Commandments from the mountain top, 'the people saw the thunder and lightning. They heard the trumpet. They saw the mountain covered with smoke. They trembled with fear and stayed a long way off. They said to Moses, "Speak to us Yourself. Then we will listen. But do not let God speak to us. If he does, we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to put you to the test. He wants you to have fear [respect] for Him so that you will keep from sinning" ' (20:18-20). Then God gave Moses detailed instructions about idols and altars, fair treatment of servants, punishment due for injuries or mistreatment, care of property and various laws of social justice, together with the Sabbath laws and the annual festivals.

1 John 2 contains the writings of Apostle John. "My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin" (2:1). He then warns his readers, "Do not love the world or anything in it. If you love the world, love for the Father is not in you" (2:15). He also warns, "Dear children, we are living in the last days. You have heard that the great enemy of Christ is coming. But even now many false teachers have already come. That's how we know that these are the last days" (2:18). He further warns, "Remain joined to Christ. Then when He comes, we can be bold. We will not be ashamed to meet Him when He comes" (2:28).

Heavenly Father, thank You for the many words of truth, advice, warnings and punishment we deserve. Thank You that in Jesus Christ we have eternal salvation through the sacrifice He made on our behalf. May we follow Your guides to righteous living to "keep from sinning" and continue to fear and respect You so that we will "not be ashamed to meet Jesus when He comes". Amen.

30th September 2022.

Exodus 20 gives some of the thoughts and reasons of God Almighty for His Ten Commandments. "Do not bow down to them [idols] or worship them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God. I punish the children for the sin of their parents. I punish the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those who hate me. But for all time to come I show love to all generations who love me and keep my commandments" (20:5-6). Also, "Honour your father and mother. Then you will live a long time in the land the LORD your God is giving you" (20:12).

Colossians 3. Paul lists some of the wrong ways of our old lives mentioned in the Ten Commandments (3:5-9). He then gives his own rules for holy living, "so that what you know has the Creator's likeness... as God's chosen people... So put on tender mercy and kindness... Be gentle and patient with each other... Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you... Put on love... Let the peace that Christ gives rule in your hearts... and be thankful... Let Christ's word live in you like a rich treasure. Teach and correct each other wisely... Sing with thanks in your hearts to God... through Christ" (3:10-17).

Heavenly Father, thank you for the teachings of Moses and Paul to understand more of Your mind and heart and love and purpose and provision for Your "chosen people". Help us and our families to love You and keep Your commandments so that You can bless each generation in the land where You lead them to live. Help us to show all our relatives and friends Your love, mercy, kindness, gentleness, patience and forgiveness. Grant us the peace of Christ and the desire to rejoice with thanks to You in our hearts. Amen.

3rd October 2022.

Psalms 55. King David said, "Listen to my prayer, O God! Pay attention to my cry for help! Hear me and answer me! My thoughts upset me. I'm very troubled." (v.1-2.) "Fear and trembling have taken hold of me. Panic has overpowered me. I said, "O for the wings of a dove! Then I would flee away and be at rest." (v.5-6.) "LORD, destroy and confuse the plans of sinners... Their hearts and homes are full of evil." (v.9,15.) "But I call out to my God. And the LORD saves me. Evening, morning and noon I groan and cry out. And He hears my voice." (v.16-17) "Turn your worries over to the Lord. He will keep you. He will never let godly people fall. But You O God, will bring sinners down to the grave." (v.22-23.)

James 5 warns the wealthy sinners and encourages the suffering believers. "You have lived an easy life on earth. You have given yourselves everything you wanted. You have made yourselves fat like cattle that will soon be slaughtered." (v.5.) However, "Brothers and sisters, be patient until the Lord comes... You must stand firm. Do not find fault with one another. If you do, you will be judged. Think about the prophets who spoke in the name of the LORD. They are an example of how to be patient when you suffer." (v.7-10.) James concludes with the advice to pray and praise, also confess and seek healing and other miracles. Lastly, a reminder, "Anyone who turns a sinner from going down the wrong path will save him from death." (v.13-20.)

Thank You God for these inspiring words of David and James given in times of great need. Do not let us "flee away" from our ministry but instead stop "sinners from going down the wrong path" as we prepare the way for our Saviour's return, with much praying, praising and miracles. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

4th October 2022.

Isaiah 65 & 66 gives the words of God regarding judgement, salvation and hope in the future. The Lord condemned those who turn their backs on Him (65:1-7). However, God told Isaiah "Sometimes juice is still left in grapes that have been crushed. So people say, 'Do not destroy them. Some good juice is still left in them.' That is what I will do for the good of those who serve Me. I will not destroy all of My people." (66:8). Then God tells Isaiah, "I will create new heavens and a new earth. The things that have happened before will not be remembered... So be glad and full of joy forever because of what I will create. I will cause others to take delight in Jerusalem. They will be filled with joy when they see its people. And I will be full of joy because of Jerusalem. I will take

delight in My people." (65:17-18). "The person I value is not proud. He is sorry [humble] for the wrong things he has done. He has great respect for My word." (66:2).

Matthew 23:37 to 24:1-14 records the words of Jesus. "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! You kill the prophets and throw stones in order to kill those who are sent to you. Many times I have wanted to gather your people together. I have wanted to be like a hen who gathers her chicks under her wings. But you would not let Me!" (23:37). "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. It will be a witness to all nations. Then the end will come." (24:12-14).

O Lord our God, thank You for the warnings recorded by Isaiah and Matthew. Thank you for Your love revealed in Jesus and His "delight in Jerusalem" and His Good News of salvation for all who trust in Him. Renew the "good juice" of Your Spirit within us and help us to "be a witness to all nations". In His name we ask. Amen.

5th October 2022.

Jeremiah 30 is the prophesy from God to Jeremiah referring to His forgiveness for His special people and their return to the Promised Land and also about their promised Messiah or 'second David'. "A new day is coming. At that time I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from where they have been taken as prisoners. I will bring them back to this land. Long ago I gave it to their people to have as their own." (30:3). "At that time I will break the yoke off their necks. I will tear off the ropes that hold them. People from other lands will not make them slaves anymore. Instead, they will serve Me. And they will serve David their king. I will raise Him up for them. I am the LORD their God... Israel, do not be terrified. You can be sure that I will save you... Your people will have peace and security again... I am with you. I will save you. I will completely destroy all of the nations among which I scatter you. But I will not completely destroy you. I will correct you. But I will be fair. I will punish you in a way that is fair and right." (30:8-11). These words had a longer-term meaning when Israel rejected their Messiah and suffered much persecution in the 20th Century followed by restoration.

Philippians 1:12-14. Paul says, "What has happened to me has really helped to spread the Good News... I am being held by chains because of my stand for Christ. All of the palace guards and everyone else know it. Because I am being held by chains, most of the believers in the Lord have become bolder. They now speak God's word more boldly and without fear."

Heavenly Father, thank You for making us aware of Your punishment and persecution of believers along with Your provision and purpose in establishing Your Kingdom on earth. May our commitment to spreading the Good News encourage others to do the same. Amen.

6th October 2022.

Joshua 1:1-9 (NIV) describes what happened after the death of Moses on the way to the Promised Land of Canaan for the children of Israel. God told Joshua: (1) "I will give you every place you set your foot." (2) "No-one will be able to stand up against you." (3) "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Then the LORD said three times to Joshua, "Be strong and courageous" so that he would become a successful leader and enable the people to inherit the land. He must not get discouraged, "For the LORD your God will be with you."

Revelation 22:7-12 records the words of Jesus to the people of God. "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book... 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."

Thank you Father for these words of encouragement to extend Your Kingdom on Earth whilst surrounded by the growing evil of mankind and the impact of climate change which we have caused. Grant us success in all we do in Your name and lift us up when we get discouraged in seeking to do what is good. Help us to remember, "the LORD your God will be with you." Enable us to live in readiness for the return of Jesus our Saviour and teach others the Gospel and "the things about to happen" so that many more will be ready to worship Him on Earth or in Heaven. Amen.

7th October 2022.

1 Chronicles 23. King David gathered all the leaders together including 38,000 Levites. They would work in the Temple of Solomon or serve as gatekeepers. Last but not least, "4,000 of them will praise the LORD with the instruments of music I have provided for that purpose" (23:5). All the Levites "stood every morning to thank and praise the LORD. Also every evening" (23:30).

Mark 2:13-17 records the calling of Matthew by Jesus. He was also known as Levi but he was not a Levite. 'Jesus saw Levi sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow Me," Jesus told him... Later, Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house. Many tax collectors and their friends were eating with Him and His disciples... Some teachers of the Law who were Pharisees saw Jesus eating with 'sinners' and tax collectors. So they asked his disciples, "Why does He eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" Jesus said to them, "Those who are healthy do not need a doctor. I have not come to call the righteous to follow Me. I have come to call sinners.'" ' This is the only mention of Levi (Matthew) in the Bible but we know he cared for those who were despised by the Jewish leaders. As a follower of Jesus, he cared for the people whom Jesus cared for. He also kept careful records of the teaching of Jesus and wrote Matthew's Gospel.

Father God, we thank You for explaining the role of the Old Testament Levites who made music and worshipped You daily in a way that was close to Your heart. We thank You for the role of Levi in the New Testament, caring for those who were close to the heart of Jesus our Saviour. We also thank You for his skills in recording Your truth and events in the ministry of Jesus whilst on Earth. Help us to worship You and have a heart like Yours and also to take note of important teachings to lead others into eternal salvation. Amen.

10th October 2022.

Psalm 145. A psalm of King David, ancestor of Mary, the mother of Jesus our Saviour. "The LORD is righteous in everything He does. He is loving toward everything He has made. The LORD is ready to help all those who call out to Him... He satisfies the needs of those who have respect for Him. He hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all those who love Him. But He will destroy all sinful people. I will praise the LORD with my mouth. Let every creature praise His holy name for ever and ever."

Matthew 13:47-52. Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a net. It was let down into the lake. It caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they gathered the good fish into baskets but threw the bad fish away. This is how it will be on judgment day. The angels will come. They will separate the people who did what is wrong from those who did what is right. They will throw the evil people into the blazing furnace... Every teacher of the Law who has been taught about the Kingdom of Heaven is like the owner of a house. He brings new treasures out of his storeroom as well as old ones." By this time all twelve disciples of Jesus were learning how to apply the Old Testament Law to prepare for the New Testament teachings about the Kingdom of Heaven established through the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, thank You for the insights you gave Your servant David as an example of true devotion and obedience to what You planned for Your people Israel and their Messiah our Saviour. Thank you for fulfilling the Law You gave through Moses in the life and ministry of Jesus. Help us, while there is time, to prepare the way for His return, by teaching us how You will judge the Earth in righteousness to establish Your Kingdom. Amen.

11th October 2022.

Jeremiah 30:14-24. God tells His people that enough is enough! "I have punished you as if I were very mean. That is because your guilt is so great... And you have committed many sins. That is why I have done all of those things to you" (30:14-15). "But I will heal your wounds" (30:17). "So you will be My people and I will be your God." (30:22.) "In days to come you will understand this" (30:24).

Hebrews 13:1-6. "Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to welcome strangers. By doing that, some people have welcomed angels without knowing it. Remember those in prison as if you were in prison with them. And remember those who are treated badly as if you yourselves were suffering. All of you should honour marriage. You should keep the marriage bed pure. God will judge the person who commits adultery. He will judge everyone who

commits sexual sins. Do not be controlled by love for money. Be happy with what you have. God has said, 'I will never leave you. I will never desert you.' (Deuteronomy 31:6.) So we can say boldly, 'The Lord helps me. I will not be afraid. What can a mere man do to me?' (Psalm 118:6,7.)"

Father God, in the days to come, help us to understand the punishment we deserve and confess our guilt before You. Thank you that You are our God and we are Your people. May we love our brothers and sisters in the faith and be ready to welcome strangers as if they are angels in disguise. Help us to show compassion to the suffering including those in prison and to remain faithful to our marriage partners and not to desire riches. May we witness boldly to Your faithfulness and provision in all things through Christ our Saviour. Amen.

12th October 2022.

Numbers 16 records the miraculous intervention of God Almighty when some of the children of Israel rebelled against Moses on the way to the Promised Land. Korah and 250 of the Israelite leaders met Moses and told him, "You have gone too far! The whole community is holy... And the LORD is with them. So why do you put yourselves above the LORD's people?" When Moses heard what they said, he fell with his face to the ground. Then he spoke to Korah and all of his followers. "In the morning the LORD will show who belongs to Him. He will show who is holy" (16:3-5). The following day the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Separate yourselves from these people. Then I can put an end to all of them at once." Moses fell down with his face to the ground. "Will you be angry with the whole community when only one man sins?" Then the LORD spoke to Moses. "Tell the community to move away from the tents of Korah" (16:21-24). Then the ground under them broke open. It swallowed up all of Korah's men (16:31-33).

Revelation 22:10-12. Jesus said, "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."

Father God, grant us wisdom to discern who is holy and who is unholy and move away from evil in these days for You to deal with in Your way and in Your time. Keep us faithful in doing what is right in the hope of our eternal reward and the salvation of others. Thank You for the love and power of Christ at work in our midst as we await His return. Amen.

13th October 2022.

2 Kings 9 records the time when King Jehu destroyed Jezebel, the wicked wife of Ahab, and her son Joram. He also destroyed much of the idol worship in the land of Israel. "How can there be peace as long as all the idolatry and witchcraft of Jezebel abound?" (9:22, NIV). Her body was eaten by wild dogs as prophesied by the prophet Elijah (9:34-36).

1 Timothy 6:11-21 gives Paul's final instructions to 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. You were chosen for it when you openly told others what you believe... Obey completely until our Lord Jesus Christ appears. Then no-one can find fault with 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... Give honour and power to Him forever. Amen! Command people who are rich in this world not to be proud. Tell them not to put their hope in riches. Wealth is so uncertain. Command those who are rich to put their hope in God... Tell them to be rich in doing good things. They must give freely. They must be willing to share. In that way they will put riches away for themselves. It will provide a firm basis for the next life... Timothy, guard what God has trusted you with. Turn away from godless chatter. Stay away from opposing ideas that are falsely called knowledge. Some people believe them. By doing that they have wandered away from the faith."

Father God, forgive any obsession with getting rich and getting richer. Help us instead to do good deeds for the needy in genuine love. Also, help us to turn them away from "godless chatter" and "false knowledge" and any modern forms of "idolatry and witchcraft" in these last days before Christ returns. For His sake. Amen.

14th October 2022.

Nehemiah 1:2-7. Whilst in exile in Babylon, Nehemiah received a visitor from Jerusalem. "I asked him about the Jews who were left alive in Judah... He said to me, 'Some of the people... are

back in the land but are having a hard time. People are making fun of them. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down.' When I heard about those things, I sat down and wept. For several days I was very sad... I prayed, 'LORD, You are the God of Heaven. You are a great and wonderful God. You keep the covenant You made with those who love You and obey Your commands. You show them Your love... See how Your people are suffering. Please listen to me. I am praying to you day and night... We Israelites have committed sins against you... We have not obeyed the commands, rules and laws You gave Your servant Moses.' "

Luke 6:46-4. Jesus said to His followers, "Some people come to Me and listen to Me and do what I say... They are like someone who builds a house. He digs down deep and sets it on solid rock. When a flood comes, the river rushes against the house. But the water cannot shake it. But here is what happens when people listen to My words and do not obey them. They are like someone who builds a house on soft ground instead of solid rock. The moment the river rushes against that house, it falls down. It is completely destroyed."

Heavenly Father, please forgive the sins of Your people. We have disobeyed Your commandments. We have suffered the result of building our lives and nation on a poor foundation. Teach us again the truth that will be our rock in times of destruction, persecution and punishment around us. Help us rebuild our lives and our nation and worship and obey You and prepare ourselves and others for Christ's return. Amen.

17th October 2022.

Leviticus 22:1-10 describes the importance of cleanliness for men who served Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty, as priests in the tent of meeting on the way to the Promised Land and later in the tabernacles and in Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. This included infectious diseases and moisture from any bodily discharges or from touching anyone else who was unclean including dead bodies and unclean creatures.

Revelation 2:11-17 gives warnings from Jesus to the New Testament churches after His resurrection. "Those who have ears should listen to what the Holy Spirit says to the churches. Those who overcome will not be hurt at all by the 'second death' [in Hell]... I know that you live where Satan has his throne. But you remain true to Me. You did not give up your faith in Me... But I have a few things against you. You have people there who follow the teaching of Balaam [who] ate food that had been offered to statues of gods. And they committed sexual sins. You also have people who follow the [false] teaching of the Nicolaitans. So turn away from your sins! If you don't, I will come to you soon. I will fight against those people with the sword that comes out of My mouth... I will give hidden manna to those who overcome. I will also give each of them a white stone with a new name written on it."

Heavenly Father, we note the high standard of mental, physical and spiritual cleanliness you expect of Your people, especially of priests and other leaders. Thank You that Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, warned His followers about new and old sins and habits that hinder our fellowship with You and other believers. Cleanse and purify us through Your Holy Spirit power for the sake of Christ's church on Earth. Amen.

18th October 2022.

Job 5:17 (NIV). Good advice was given to Job by one of his friends when Job was in great despair. "Blessed is the person whom God corrects. So do not despise the discipline of the Almighty."

1 Timothy 6:11-15 (NIV). Advice is also given by Paul, Timothy's trusted mentor. "But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in His own time."

We thank You heavenly Father, for the apostle Paul, who understood much more of Your truth than Job's dear friend. Earlier we read how Paul advised that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (6:6). Help us to avoid seeking after worldly riches and pleasures and be content with living righteous lives, rejoicing in the opportunity to grow in faith and endurance even in times of suffering or need, whilst showing love and gentleness to others. Help us to fully believe You are in

control and nothing can separate us from Your love and from the eternal salvation promised through the sacrifice of Your Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

19th October 2022.

Exodus 20:1-21 records God's Ten Commandments given to Moses. "Have no other gods before Me. Do not make for yourself any idol to worship. Do not misuse the name of Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty. Remember the Sabbath day. Honour your father and mother. Do not commit murder or adultery nor steal or give false witness against your neighbour. Do not envy your neighbour's house, wife, servants, or anything that belongs to them." God added, "I show love to all those who love Me and keep My commandments" (20:6). The people were afraid, so Moses told them, "Do not be afraid. God has come to put you to the test. He wants you to have respect for Him. That will keep you from sinning" (20:20).

Matthew 5:17-19 gives these instructions from Jesus after His teaching to be "salt and light in the world". "Do not think I have come to get rid of what is written in the Law or in the Prophets. I have not come to do that. Instead, I have come to give full meaning to what is written. What I am about to tell you is true. Heaven and earth will disappear before the smallest letter disappears from the Law. Not even the smallest stroke of a pen will disappear from the Law until everything is completed. Do not break even one of the least important commandments. And do not teach others to break them. If you do, you will be called the least important person in the Kingdom of Heaven. Instead, practice and teach these commands."

Heavenly Father, thank you again for Your Bible containing Your Truth confirmed by Moses and Jesus our Saviour. Thank You that our sacrifice in obedience is nothing compared to "the love You show all those who love You and keep Your commandments". Thank You that we have nothing to fear unless we fail to obey. Enable us to be "salt and light in the world". Amen.

20/10/22.

Isaiah 11-16. The prophecy about Israel's coming Messiah and times of much praise to God in Chapters 11 and 12 is followed by God's judgement on Israel's neighbours at that time (700 BC). Chapters 13 to 15 express God's anger against Babylon in the far east, Assyria to the north, the Philistines to the west and Moab in the near east. Chapter 16 brings messages of hope in their Messiah. "A [Son of] Man from the royal house of David will sit on Judah's throne. He will rule with faithful love. When He judges, He will do what is ... right." (16:5.)

Philippians 9-21. Paul says, "I pray that your love will grow more and more. May it be based on knowledge and understanding so you will know what is best. You will be pure and without blame until the day Christ returns. You will be filled with the fruit of right living produced by Jesus Christ... bringing glory and praise to God." (1:9-11.) "Brothers and sisters, here is what I want you to know. What has happened to me has really helped to spread the Good News. One thing has become clear. I am being held by chains because of my stand for Christ. All of the palace guards and everyone else know it." (1:12-13.) "I know that you are praying for me. I also know that the Spirit of Jesus Christ will help me. So no matter what happens, I am sure I will still be saved. I completely expect and hope that I will not be ashamed in any way. I am sure I will be brave enough. Now as always Christ will be lifted high through my body. He will be lifted up whether I live or die. For me, life finds all of its meaning in Christ. Death also has its benefits. (1:19-21.)

We praise You heavenly Father for the confidence Paul had in Christ in the midst of trouble. Thank you that all of Isaiah's prophecies for Israel and their Messiah came true to bless the world through Jesus Christ. Amen.

21st October 2022.

Isaiah 13:19-20 gives the prophecy regarding the destruction of Babylon nearly 2750 years ago. "The city of Babylon is the jewel of kingdoms. It is the glory and pride of the Babylonians. But God will destroy it just as He did Sodom and Gomorrah. No one will ever live in Babylon again. No one will live there for all times to come. Arabs will never set up their tents there. Shepherds will never rest their flocks there." This remains true to this day as it does for Sodom and Gomorrah.

Luke 9:28-36 describes the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain top when Moses and Elijah appeared and God spoke to them. "Jesus went up on a mountain to pray. He took Peter, John and James with Him. As he was praying, the appearance of His face changed. His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Moses and Elijah, appeared in shining glory. Jesus and the two of them

talked together. They spoke about his coming death in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions... saw Jesus' glory and the two men standing with Him. Peter spoke. "Master," he said to Him, "it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters. One will be for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He didn't really know what he was saying. While Jesus was speaking, a cloud surrounded them... A voice came from the cloud. "This is My Son, and I have chosen Him. Listen to Him." When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone.'

Father God, we reflect on these amazing miracles of your intervention in the affairs of mankind. We are encouraged to ask for Your intervention today to destroy what is evil and reveal what is good through the words of Your Son our Saviour. Encourage us to read, meditate and obey His word every day. For Your glory. Amen.

24th October 2022.

Deuteronomy 11 instructs again and again the children of Israel to love and obey the LORD God Almighty when they enter His Promised Land (v.1,13,26,32). God promises there will be rains in season and provision of harvests and pasture land (v.14-15). He warns against worshipping foreign gods which will provoke His anger (v.16,17). He suggests His instructions are not only fixed in their minds but tied to their foreheads and door-frames and gate-posts (v.18,20) as well as teaching them to their children (v.19).

1 Timothy 5:1-3. Here Paul instructs Timothy to love and respect other believers. "Do not tell an older man off. Make an appeal to him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as if they were your brothers. Treat older women as if they were your mothers. Treat younger women as if they were your sisters. Be completely pure in the way you treat them. Take care of the widows who really need help."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your word that instructs us again and again to love and obey You in order to live in the ample provision of your promises to believers. Encourage us to have copies of your word on display in our homes and gardens lest we wrongly enjoy opportunities to worship other gods or adopt the unholy lifestyles of alien faiths or non-believers. May we also love and respect our fellow believers, caring for them as needed and offering them our love with pure thoughts and motives. For Your glory in our land as we fight against the wicked work of anti-Christ. In the name of Jesus we ask. Amen.

25th October 2022.

Proverbs 30:5-9. "Every word of God is perfect. He is like a shield to those who trust in Him. He keeps them safe. Do not add to His words. If you do, He will correct you. He will prove that you are a liar. Lord, I ask you these things. Do not refuse me before I die. Keep lies far away from me. Do not make me either poor or rich, but give me only the bread I need each day. If you don't, I might have too much. Then I might say I do not know You. I might say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or I might become poor and steal. Then I would bring shame to the name of my God."

Mark 12:13-17. 'The religious leaders sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus. They wanted to trap him with his own words. "Teacher, we know you are a man of honour. You don't let others tell you what to do or say. You do not care how important they are. But you teach the way of God truthfully. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?" Jesus knew what they were trying to do. "Why are you trying to trap me? Bring me a silver coin. Let me look at it." They brought the coin. He asked them, "Whose picture is this? And whose words?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. And give to God what belongs to God." They were amazed at Him.'

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He asked them, "Whose picture is this? And whose words?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. And give to God what belongs to God." They were amazed at Him. ' Father God, forgive us when we try to make decisions based on human wisdom. Help us to be thankful with what you provide and at the same time respect the system of wages, benefits and taxes that support society without seeking ways to cheat and grow rich at the expense of others. Help us to trust in You and not be trapped by the lies and greed and selfishness of others. Prepare us to be grateful for our daily bread and give back to others what is fair. Grant us divine wisdom and righteousness. Amen.

26th October 2022.

1 Chronicles 5 records the history of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh in the Promised Land of the people of Israel. It is often forgotten that these three tribes were exiled into Assyrian countries within 150 years of arriving in Canaan and never returned. "They were not faithful to the God of their people. They joined themselves to the gods of the nations of the land and worshiped them. God had destroyed those nations to make room for His people" (5:25-26).

2 Corinthians 12-13. Paul says, "I have been speaking with God as my witness... Dear friends, everything I do is to help you become stronger. I am afraid that when I come I will not find you as I want you to be... I am afraid there will be arguing, jealousy and fits of anger. I am afraid you will separate into your own little groups... and cause trouble... Then I will be sad about the many who sinned earlier and [yet] have not turned away from uncleanness, sexual sins and wild living" (12:19-21). "Take a good look at yourselves to see if you are really believers. Test yourselves. Do you not realise that Christ Jesus is in you?" (13:5).

Heavenly Father, we read afresh today of the sinfulness of Your special people who early on in their "rest" in the Promised Land, prostituted themselves to the customs of the people who used to live there. In your mercy, You used this as a warning to the rest of Your people before You were forced to send them, too, into exile later on to Babylon. Help us to heed these warnings and the warnings of Paul and of Christ Himself, not to sin and not to cause factions or indulge in foolish and unholy behaviour or fantasies. Save us from ungodly individuals and leaders in the Church of Christ, for His sake who took the punishment for our sins. Amen.

27th October 2022.

Nehemiah 9:5-8. After their return from exile in Babylon, the new residents of Jerusalem met together and said, "LORD, may Your glorious name be praised. May it be lifted high above every other name... You are the one and only Lord. You made the heavens. You made even the highest [distant] heavens. You created all of the stars in the sky. You created Earth and everything that is on it. And you made the oceans and everything that is in them. You give life to everything. Every living being in Heaven worships You. You are the LORD God. You chose Abraham. You brought him out of Ur in Babylonia... You knew that his heart would be faithful to You. And You made a covenant with him. You promised to give to his children after him a land of their own. It was the land of the Canaanites... You have kept your promise because You are righteous."

Revelation 22:12-17. "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. 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... The Holy Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' Let those who hear say, 'Come!' Anyone who is thirsty should come. Anyone who wants to take the free gift of the water of life should do so."

Lord Jesus send us Your Spirit of power, compassion and inspiration for this day and age to obey and await Your coming. Amen.

28th October 2022.

Psalms 102 begins with a plea. "O LORD, hear my prayer. Listen to my cry for help. Do not turn your face from me when I am in trouble but pay attention to me. When I call out for help, answer me quickly... The days of my life are like an evening shadow. I dry up like grass!" (v.1-2). It continues with praise in faith and hope. "But You, O LORD, are seated on Your throne forever. Your

fame will continue for all time to come. You will rise up and show deep concern. The time has come for You to show favour. The nations will worship the LORD. All of the kings on Earth will respect His glorious power... He will answer the prayer of those who do not have anything. He will not say 'No' to their cry for help. Let this be written down for those born after us. Then people who are not yet born can praise the Lord!" (v.12-18).

1 Timothy 4:9-13 by Paul to Timothy. "Here is a saying you can trust... 'We have put our hope in the living God. He is the Saviour [physically and spiritually] of all people. Most of all he is the Saviour of those who believe.' Command those 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."

Father God, thank You that these things have been "written down for those born after". "O LORD, hear my prayer" and grant me the privilege of offering You "praise in faith" as we "put our hope in the living God". May we in turn teach others these truths and seek more and more comfort and guidance from "reading Scripture out loud to one another". Amen.

31st October 2022.

Exodus 21:1-6 provides a basis of fair treatment for servants and labourers which is still relevant for today. A contract should be offered by their master for six years, after which the person is free to go and their partner also. If the servant or labourer loves their master and chooses to remain employed, then a contract should be offered for life.

3 John 2-12 provides a basis for encouraging believers and fairly judging those who lead the church badly. "Dear friend, I know that your spiritual life is going well. I pray that you also may enjoy good health. And I pray that everything else may go well with you. Some believers came to me and told me that you are faithful to the truth. They told me that you continue to live by it. That gave me great joy. Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the believers. You are faithful even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. Please help them by sending them on their way in a manner that honours God... We should work together with them for the truth. I wrote to the church. But Diotrephes... refuses to welcome other believers. He also keeps others from welcoming them. Dear friend, do not be like those who do evil. Be like those who do good. Anyone who does what is good belongs to God. Anyone who does what is evil has not really seen or known God."

Father God, thank You for these examples of putting our trust in others to do good and to remain committed to each other. May we be forgiving of employers and leaders who are unfair and pray for wisdom to help them to walk in the light of Your truth in scriptures old and new. Help us to live godly lives and seek to be an example to others of our Lord and Saviour and to pray for them. Amen.

1st November 2022.

Nahum 3 [NIV] records God's warning of the fall of Nineveh. "How terrible it will be for Nineveh! It is a city of blood, full of liars and filled with stolen goods! (v.1). "I will treat you with contempt. I will make you a spectacle" (v.6). "Nothing can heal your wounds; your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you will clap their hands at your fall from power. Who has not felt your endless cruelty?" (v.19).

Luke 21:5-36 gives the teaching of Jesus on the 'end of the age'. "Keep watch! Be careful that you are not fooled. Many will come in My name and say, 'The time is near!' Do not follow them. Do not be afraid when you hear about wars and about fighting against rulers. Those things must happen first. But the end will not come right away. Nation will fight against nation. Kingdom will fight against kingdom. In many places there will be powerful earthquakes. People will go hungry. There will be terrible sicknesses. Things will happen that will make people afraid... People will arrest you and treat you badly... All this will happen to you because of My name. In that way you will be witnesses to them. But make up your mind not to worry ahead of time. I will give you words of wisdom. None of your enemies will be able to withstand them or oppose them. Even your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends will hand you over to the authorities. They will put some of you to death. Everyone will hate you because of Me" (21:8-12).

Heavenly Father, forgive us for not declaring and standing up for Your truth. Spare us the prospect of being made a spectacle, with nations "clapping their hands at our fall from power". Help

us not to worry and stand firm and not become victims of "endless cruelty". May we trust in Your wisdom as Jesus warned His followers. Amen.

2nd November 2022.

Amos 9:8-15 records the words of God's prophet in 787 BC, fulfilled in 597 BC and again in AD 70. "I am the LORD. My eyes are watching the sinful kingdom of Israel. I will wipe it off the face of the earth. But I will not totally destroy the people of Jacob... All of the sinners among my people will be killed with swords." (9:8-10). However, Amos also brought a message of restoration from the LORD, fulfilled around 530 BC and again in AD 1967. "The time will come when I will rebuild David's fallen tent... I will rebuild what was destroyed... Then my people will take control of those who are left alive and will also possess all of the nations that belong to Me. A new day is coming... I will bring My people Israel back home. I will bless them with great success again. They will rebuild the destroyed cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink the wine they produce. They will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land." (9:11-15).

Luke 5:1-11 records the calling of the first disciples of Jesus. He said to Simon "Go out into deep water. Let the nets down so you can catch some fish." They caught a large number of fish, so many that their nets began to break... He and everyone with him were amazed at the number of fish they had caught. So were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who worked with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will be fishers of men."

Heavenly Father, as we look forward to the return of Jesus our Saviour, help us to take seriously Your calling to be "fishers of men" around the world. Forgive us as the Church of Christ becomes weak through seeking affluence. Open our eyes to see our calling and the fulfilment of events in Israel today as Your people await the coming of their Messiah. Amen.

3rd November 2022.

1 Samuel 9 gives the story of God's prophet Samuel meeting Saul before anointing him as King of Israel. Saul had been looking for his father's lost donkeys and his servants suggested they should enquire of the LORD by talking to Samuel. 'Now the LORD had spoken to Samuel the day before Saul came. He had said, "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man. He is from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the 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." When Samuel saw a man coming towards him, the LORD spoke to Samuel again. He said, "He is the man I told you about. His name is Saul. He will govern my people" (9:15-16).

1 Corinthians 4:14-17. Paul says, "I am not writing this to shame you. You are my dear children, and I want to warn you... I became your father by serving Christ Jesus and telling you the Good News. So I am asking you to follow my example. That is the reason I am sending Timothy to you. He is like a son to me, and I love him. He is faithful in serving the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in serving Christ Jesus. And that agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church."

Father God, teach us Your way to appoint and trust Your chosen leaders for meeting the needs of today. Forgive us when we are influenced by the ungodly 'wisdom' of certain people around us. See our suffering and hear our cry. Save us from "the powerful hand" of our enemies. Send us spiritual leaders who will prepare us for the difficult times ahead and enable us to live in the hope of Christ's return and our eternal salvation. For the sake of Him who died for us. Amen.

4th November 2022.

Job 25-27 records the advice given by one of Job's friends. "God is King. He should be feared... Is there anyone His light does not shine on? How can human beings be right with God? How can mere people really be pure?" (25:2-4). Job continues to complain and refuses to admit he is wrong. "God has not treated me fairly. The Mighty One has made my spirit bitter. You can be sure that God lives... As long as I have life and God gives me breath, my mouth will not say evil things. My lips will not tell lies. [But] I will never admit you people are right. Until I die, I will say I am telling the truth. I will continue to say I am right. I will never let go of that. I will not blame myself as long as I live" (27:2-6). Psalm 73:21-24 testifies to God, "My heart was sad and my spirit was bitter. I didn't have any sense. I didn't know anything. I acted like a wild animal towards You. But I am always with You. You hold me by my right hand."

2 Corinthians 1:8-11 gives Paul's testimony. "We were having a lot of trouble. It was far more than we could stand. We even thought we were going to die. In our hearts we felt as if we were under the sentence of death. But that happened so that we would not depend on ourselves but on God. He raises the dead to life. God has saved us from deadly dangers and will continue to do it. We have put our hope in Him. He will continue to save us. You must help us by praying for us."

Father God, thank you for the testimonies of Paul and the psalmist Asaph. We admit we feel self-justified at times by complaining like Job when we are in trouble or depressed. As with Paul, may our walk with You be with the confidence we have in our salvation through Christ alone. Keep us humble as we seek the prayer support of others. Amen.

7th November 2022.

Judges 4 to 8 (NIV) records the time of God's prophetess Deborah when "all Israel did evil in the eyes of the LORD God Almighty" by worshipping local gods. However, the people of Israel "cried to the LORD for help" when they were threatened by the king of Canaan (4:1-3). God saved them through Barak leading an army to defeat their enemies. Deborah sang a song of praise for the leaders and people of Israel who offered themselves to the LORD (5:1-3). But again, the Israelites "did evil in the eyes of the LORD God Almighty". God allowed the Midianites to persecute Israel until they "cried out to the LORD for help" (6:1-6). God sent another prophet to warn Israel who then sent an angel to appoint Gideon as a mighty warrior (6:7-12). The LORD prepared Gideon to defeat the Midianites with just 300 men (7:1-8). But after the death of Gideon, the people "did not remember the LORD their God who had rescued them from the hands of their enemies" (8:33-35).

Colossians 1:9-14 (NIRV). "We have not stopped praying for you ... We pray that God will give you spiritual wisdom and understanding to lead a life that is worthy... We want you to bear fruit in every good thing you do and grow to know God better... We want you to be patient and never give up. Be joyful as you give thanks to the Father... He has brought us into the Kingdom of the Son He loves. Because of what the Son has done, we have been set free. Because of Him, all of our sins have been forgiven."

LORD God Almighty, help us to "remember the times when You rescued us from the hands of our enemies". Encourage us to testify "what Your Son has done ... all of our sins have been forgiven". Thank You Jesus. Forgive us for the times we choose not to remember and turn back to sinning, at risk of You allowing the persecution we deserve. Amen.

8th November 2022.

Ecclesiastes 11 encourages us to "cast our bread upon the waters" or as we would say today: "Nothing ventured means nothing gained!" However, the writer reminds us to be aware that "disaster may come upon the land" so we should avoid spending all our time in developing just one activity, or as we would say today: "Do not put all your eggs in one basket in case they all get damaged!" (v.1-2). Nor should we wait for the right conditions to venture forward in life. We would say today: "The farmer who waits to be certain of the weather will never plant or harvest anything!" (v.3-6). To do well in life through helping others, it requires faith in our living God. (Extracted from the Old Testament Bible Commentary by Thomas Hale, colleague of Fred Morris.)

Mark 3 records how Jesus ordered evil spirits not to talk about Him (v.11-12). He went up a mountainside to get away from the crowds with the twelve disciples He chose. He called them His apostles to do the task of preaching and gave them authority to drive out demons (v.13-15). Going back down, the crowds returned, even stopping them from eating. His mother and half-brothers heard about what He was doing and set out to take charge of Him, believing he was out of His mind (v.20-21). Then some Jewish leaders arrived from Jerusalem and accused Him of being possessed by Beelzebub. Jesus retorted, "How can Satan drive out Satan?" (v.22-23).

Heavenly Father, we see how the ministry of Jesus was hindered by crowds, evil spirits, religious leaders and family members. Thank You that Scripture reveals how He acted in faith regarding His calling to save and heal and appoint apostles, despite the risk of personal disaster, in order to produce a harvest of believers in the Good News. Help us to venture forward in life with faith in our own calling and ministry. Amen.

9th November 2022.

Joshua 3:9-11 records the time of the crossing of the River Jordan into God's promised land of Canaan around 1450 BC. Joshua spoke to the people of Israel. He said, "Come here. Listen to

what the LORD your God is saying. You will soon know that the Living God is among you. You can be sure that He will drive out the people who are now living in the land. He will do it to make room for you... The Ark will go into the Jordan River ahead of you. It is the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of the whole Earth." ' "

James 2:17-24 says, "Faith, if it doesn't cause us to do good works, is dead! But someone will say, 'You have faith [but] I do good works.' Show me faith that doesn't do good works. And I will show you faith by what I do. You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that and tremble! Do you want proof that faith without good works is useless?" James goes on to say, that Abraham believed God. God accepted Abraham because he believed. So his faith made him right with God" (Genesis 15:6). "So you see that a person is made right with God by what he or she does. It doesn't happen only because of what he believes."

Thank You heavenly Father for the Bible evidence of the outcome of faith in You, our living God, and the need for us all to act in faith. So we look to examples of Abraham and Joshua as great men of faith, but also to Your people who believed, and acted out their faith by crossing the River Jordan and inheriting Your Promised Land. Encourage us to heed the advice of James, the brother of Jesus, who late in life believed and brought salvation to many others to prove that "the Living God is among you". May we remember "a person is made right with God by what he or she does". Amen.

10th November 2022.

Joshua 4:10-18. 'The priests who carried the Ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan River... just as Moses had directed Joshua. All of the people went across quickly... About 40,000 men ready for battle went across in front of the Ark of the Lord to the flatlands around Jericho. They were prepared to go to war. That day the LORD honoured Joshua in the eyes of all of the people of Israel. They had respect for Joshua as long as he lived just as much as they had respected Moses. Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, "Command the priests to come up out of the Jordan River carrying the Ark where the tablets of the covenant are kept." So... the priests came up out of the river carrying the Ark. As soon as they stepped out on dry ground, the water of the Jordan began to flow again.'

Revelation 22:14-16. Jesus revealed to John, "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."

Thank You Father for the amazing account of the entry into the Promised Land of Canaan of Your special people Israel, who survived 40 years in the desert through obedience and faith in You and in Moses and Joshua. Thank You that the evil Canaanites were destroyed and for Your assurance today that evil will no longer prevail at the end of the age when Jesus our Saviour returns in glory. Raise up leaders of faith to prepare the way and encourage us to witness to others to repent and "wash their robes" whilst there is time. Amen.

11th November 2022.

Isaiah 49 records the words of God's people, "The LORD has deserted me. The LORD has forgotten me." But the LORD God says, "Can a mother forget the baby who is nursing at her breast? Can she stop showing her tender love to the child who was born to her? She might forget her child. But I will not forget you. I have written your name on the palms of My hands" (49:14-16). "Those who put their hope in Me will not be ashamed [disappointed, NIV]" (49:23).

1 Timothy 1:3-11. Paul advises Timothy to stay where he is in Ephesus, a sinful city. "I want you to command certain people not to teach things that are untrue... Things like that cause people to argue instead of doing God's work. His work is done by faith. Love is the purpose of my command. Love comes from a pure heart. It comes from a good sense of what is right and wrong. It comes from faith that is honest and true. Some have wandered away from those teachings... But they do not know what they are talking about... True teaching agrees with the glorious Good News of the blessed God. He trusted me with that Good News."

Thank You Father God for the reassurance of Your words through Isaiah and Paul. We admit there are times when we feel "The LORD has forgotten me." Thank You for the mental picture You have given us that "You have written our names on the palms of Your hands". May we persevere

where we are and not try to run away from the evil that surrounds us. Help us to establish the full truth of Your word. Help us to live a life of faith and love from a pure heart. May we boldly declare You have not forgotten us and, like Paul, we have been trusted with proclaiming and living the "glorious Good News" of Jesus Christ. For His sake who died for those who believe He is the Son of God and will return soon in glory. Amen.

14th November 2022.

1 Samuel 17:37-47 records David's preparation for killing Goliath the giant, who was mocking Israel at that time around 1060 BC. David told King Saul, "The LORD saved me from the paw of the lion... He will save me from the powerful hand of this Philistine too." David rejected Saul's offer of armour. 'Then David picked up his wooden staff. He went down to a stream and chose five smooth stones... Then he took his sling in his hand and approached Goliath... Goliath looked David over... and despised him. He said to David, "Why are you coming at me with sticks? Do you think I am a dog?" The Philistine called down curses on David in the name of his god... David said to Goliath, "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 the LORD who rules over all. He is the God of the armies of Israel... This very day the LORD will hand you over to me... Then the whole world will know there is a God in Israel." '

James 3:9. "No one can control the tongue. It is an evil thing that never rests. It is full of deadly poison. With our tongues we praise our Lord and Father. And with our tongues we call down curses on people. We do it even though they have been created in the image of God."

Heavenly Father thank You for the reminder through Your servant James that we so easily lose control of our tongues! Forgive us for any wrong thoughts and words that act like a curse on Your people. Help us to speak in faith only as You direct, especially to those who are intent on weakening or destroying our faith in You. Prepare us, as You did David, that our words and actions are "in the name of the LORD who rules over all" so that "the whole world will know there is a God in Israel" and at work through Your Son, Israel's Messiah and our Saviour. Amen.

15th November 2022.

2 Kings 6:8-23 records the story of God's prophet Elisha at the time of the king of Aram who was at war with Israel. Elisha gave many instructions from God to the king of Israel where to move to avoid the king of Aram (6:8-10). This angered the king of Aram who gave orders to capture Elisha. Elisha told his servant, "Do not be afraid. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha showed him a vision of the heavenly forces that were watching over them (6:13-16). When the enemy came to capture Elisha, he prayed to the Lord God Almighty to temporarily blind them, which enabled Elisha to lead them into the camp of Israel. (6:18-19). 'The king of Israel saw them. So he asked Elisha, "Should I kill them?" Elisha answered, "Do not kill them. Put some food and water in front of them. Then they can eat and drink and go back to their master." After they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them away... So the soldiers from Aram stopped attacking Israel's territory' (6:21-23).

Revelation 22:9-12. At the end of the book of Revelation, John is warned by an angel of God, "Worship God! 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."

Father God, open our eyes to see what You are doing in these last days. Thank you for the heavenly forces that are watching over us in the midst of evil people. Show us how to respond to our enemies in love by putting our trust in You and Your Son our Saviour as we all await His judgement. Amen.

16th November 2022.

Psalms 145:17-21 repeats for us once more the words of God's servant David. "The LORD is right in everything He does. He is loving toward everything He has made. The LORD is ready to help all those who call out to Him. He helps those who really mean it when they call out to Him. He satisfies the needs of those who have respect for Him. He hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all those who love Him. But He will destroy all sinful people. I will praise the LORD with my mouth. Let every creature praise His holy name for ever and ever."

Philemon 4-7. Here, Paul, a prisoner in Rome, writes to his "dear friend" Philemon. "I always thank my God when I remember you in my prayers. That is 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 and encouragement because, brother, you have renewed the hearts of God's people."

Father God, thank You that in addition to supporting his Christian brother Philemon in prayer, Paul encourages him to share his faith in the Good News of Christ our Saviour. This is because he knows from experience, in doing this he will have a more complete understanding of "every good thing we have in Christ". Thank You for famous people like King David who witness that God will "help all those who call out to Him" and "who really mean it" and "have respect for Him" and "who love Him". Thank you too for relatively unknown people like Philemon who demonstrate their "faith in the Lord Jesus" and "love for all of God's people". Help us to "be active in sharing what [we] believe" so that we too can give "great joy and encouragement" to those who pray for us. Amen.

21/11/22.

Psalm 147 (NIV) declares "How good it is to sing praises to our God" and confirms how He builds up His people, restores families in exile and heals the broken-hearted" (v.1-3). The psalmist also declares that "the LORD God Almighty delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love" (v.11). He concludes with thanks for the revelation of God's words, laws and decrees given to His chosen people.

Philippians 2:1-4. Paul's letter written in prison to the church in Philippi sought assurance they will "stand firm with one purpose... to spread the teachings of the Good News of Jesus Christ" (1:27). He then seeks assurance that the church members will be united in love. "If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, comforted by His love, with sharing in the Spirit in tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

We praise You God our Father for Your heart's desire to "restore families in exile and heal the broken-hearted". May we "put our hope in Your unfailing love" and give thanks "for the revelation of Your words, laws and decrees". Help us also to heed the advice from Paul to "stand firm with one purpose... to spread the teachings of the Good News of Jesus Christ". And to share with other believers in unity "having the same love, being one in spirit and mind" and "in humility value others above yourselves". So come, Holy Spirit, into our gatherings and make us strangely aware of your love and purpose at work in our midst, including spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. Amen.

22nd November 2022.

Genesis Chapters 20 to 24 record God's Ten Commandments given to Moses 3500 years ago which have never been withdrawn or changed. This is followed by other guidelines for righteous living regarding: avoiding idolatry; treatment of servants; penalties for injury, kidnapping or death; guidelines for redemption, justice and restitution; safe keeping of property and care of animals with penalties for accidental damage or injury; various other guidelines with laws of justice and mercy; celebration of annual feasts. This is followed by God's promise to send His angel to walk before His people as they journey forward to receive what God has prepared for them (23:20-33) and also the importance of the sacrificial "blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words" (24:8).

John 19 records the fulfilment of prophecy regarding the death of Jesus. "They divided My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing" (John 19:24; Psalm 22:18). "Not one of His bones will be broken" (John 19:36; Psalm 34:20). "They will look on the One they have pierced" (John 19:37; Zechariah 12:10). They took the body of Jesus and laid Him in a new tomb in a graveyard (John 19:38-42; Isaiah 53:3-9). This happened on the Day of Preparation for the Sabbath (John 19:42), two days before the resurrection of Jesus (John 20).

Father God in Heaven, thank You for these key writings by your faithful servants Moses and John. Thank You that Jesus came to fulfil the Old Testament laws and covenant and renew Your covenant with Your people Israel and with all who put their trust in Him as Saviour. May we

understand and spread this Good News to prepare the world for His second coming. Please send Your angel before us to receive Your promised rest! Amen.

23rd November 2022.

Proverbs 5:22 to 6:3 says, "The LORD watches a man's ways. He studies all of his paths. A sinner is trapped by his own evil acts. He is held tight by the ropes of his sins. He will die because he refused to be corrected. His sins will capture him because he was very foolish. My son... Do not be trapped by what you have said. Do not be caught by the words of your mouth. Instead, do something to free yourself. Do not fall into your neighbour's hands. Do not be proud. [Humble yourself, NIV]. Go, make your appeal to your neighbour."

Luke 7:11-17 tells the story of Jesus when He was filled with compassion for the widow who lost her only son. 'Jesus went to a town called Nain... He approached the town gate. Just then, a dead person was being carried out. He was the only son of his mother who was a widow. A large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, He felt sorry for her. So he said, "Do not cry". Then He went up and touched the coffin... "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk. Then Jesus gave him back to his mother. The people were all filled with wonder and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help His people." This news about Jesus spread through the whole country.'

Dear God, thank You for the story revealing the compassion of Jesus and His readiness to act in the power of Your Spirit. Forgive our foolish thoughts and words and help us to remember that You "watch our ways". Keep us free from sin and humble and ready to care for our neighbours and others we know or meet near and far. Grant us the compassion and power of Your Holy Spirit both to do and to witness about the works of Jesus "to help God's people" and to know Your "Great Prophet" personally. Amen.

24th November 2022.

1 Kings 6 describes King Solomon's work of building the Temple of the LORD God in Jerusalem. 'A message came to Solomon from the LORD. "Now you are building this temple, follow My orders. Keep My rules. Obey all of My commands. Then I will make the promise I gave your father David come true. I will do it through you. I will live among My people Israel. I will not desert them" ' (6:11-14).

Jude wrote to believers in the first century AD warning them, "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 deny Jesus Christ is our only Lord and King" (v.4). Jude told them, "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 the people who separate you from one another. They do only what comes naturally. 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" (v.17-20).

Thank You Father God for these warnings from Old and New Testaments to "obey all of My commands". We know how Your people disobeyed You and sinned and were ruled over by ungodly people after Your Temple was built. And today, members of the Church of Jesus our Saviour are disobeying Your commandments and following their ungodly desires. Help us to live and speak Your truth of the Good News of Christ in these days where You are allowing ungodly people to rule over us and even persecute us. Do not desert us but hear our prayers of confession and use us to extend Your Kingdom. For Christ's sake who died for us. Amen.

25th November 2022.

Job 10:19 to 11:7 expresses the feelings of many people today: "I wish I had never been born!" (10:19). Job's friend Zophar tried to counsel him with his limited understanding of Job's time of testing and the eternal redemption plans of Almighty God. He said, "I wish God would speak and answer you. I wish He would show you the secrets of [His] wisdom. True wisdom has two sides. God has forgotten some of your sins! And do you [really] know the deep mysteries of God?" (11:5-7).

1 John 2:28 to 3:3 assures us, "Dear children, remain joined to Christ. Then... you 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 [in Christ]" (2:28-29). "How great is the love the Father has given us so freely that we can be called children of God! ... [However], He still hasn't let us know what we will be. But we know that

when Christ appears, we will be like Him. We will see Him as He really is. He is pure. Everyone who hopes to be like Him will be made pure, just as He is pure" (3:1-3).

Father in Heaven we thank you for the assurance that as believers and followers of Christ, You have not only "forgotten some of our sins" but forgiven all our sins "that we can be called children of God!" Forgive us for those times we doubt, like Job, in our limited wisdom and understanding of Your forgiveness and how amazing You are! Thank You that You planned from the beginning of time to call us, purify us and test us as we walk in faith to receive our salvation in Christ alone. Help us to be a blessing to You and to those around us as we share one of "the mysteries of God" in Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

28th November 2022.

2 Chronicles 29 (NIV) records how Hezekiah became King of Israel at the age of 25 in the year 726 BC. In the first month of his reign he opened the doors of the Temple of the LORD God Almighty in Jerusalem and repaired them. He brought in the priests and Levites (29:1-4). The king then gathered the officials together and they went up to the Temple to worship the LORD and offer sacrifices (29:20). 'As the offering began, singing to the LORD also began, accompanied by trumpets and instruments... They sang praises with gladness and bowed their heads and worshipped' (29:27-30). 'So the service of the Temple of the LORD was re-established. Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced at what God had brought about for the people, because it was done so quickly' (29:35-36).

Jude verses 17-21 (NIRV) says, "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 the people who separate [divide] you from one another. They do only what comes naturally. 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."

Heavenly Father we again praise You for the freshness of Your word – new every morning. Help us to ignore and reject the persecution of those who cause division in the churches through ungodly behaviour and teachings. Raise up leaders who will promptly re-establish Your truth and encourage us "because it was done so quickly". Amen.

29th November 2022.

Ezekiel 28:24-28. These three verses declare, in the year 569 BC, God's plan for Israel in preparation for the first coming of their Messiah in Jerusalem. "The people of Israel will no longer have neighbours who hate them... Then Israel will know that I am the LORD and King... 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... My people will live there in safety. They will build houses. They will plant vineyards... Then Israel will know that I am the LORD their God."

Luke 5:1-11 records the time when Jesus, Israel's Messiah, began His ministry on Earth. 'The people crowded around him and listened to the word of God. Jesus saw two boats at the edge of the water... He got into the boat that belonged to Simon. Jesus asked him to go out a little way from shore. Then He sat down in the boat and taught the people. When He finished speaking, He turned to Simon, "Go out into deep water. Let the nets down so you can catch some fish" ' (5:1-4). Then followed the miracle of catching two boats-full of fish. 'Everyone with Him were amazed at the number of fish they had caught... Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch people." Then they left everything and followed Him' (5:9-11).

Father God, we know that tragically, many of God's special people rejected their promised Messiah at His first coming with disastrous results. Thank You that Simon Peter and his friends accepted Jesus as Israel's Messiah and through their witness, many millions have been and are being saved for eternity with You. Prepare Israel and us all to welcome Jesus as Messiah at His second coming! Amen.

30th November 2022.

Exodus 33. The people of Israel had sinned on the way to the Promised Land by worshipping a golden calf instead of Almighty God (Chapter 32), God told Moses, "Leave this place... Go up to the land I promised with an oath to give to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I said to them, 'I will give it to

your children after you.' I will send an angel ahead of you. I will drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Go up to the land that has plenty of milk and honey. But I will not go with you. You are stubborn. I might destroy you on the way." Wherever they went, Moses put up a tent outside the camp to meet personally with God (33:7) One day, Moses asked God to "remember that this nation is Your people". Then the LORD promised Moses and the people, "I will go with you" (33:13-14).

Luke 21:5-36 records how the disciples of Jesus glorified the Temple in Jerusalem. He said, "The time will come when not one stone will be left on another" (21:5-6). Then Jesus warned them about the "last days" regarding false prophets, wars, earthquakes, famines, diseases, persecution and "fearful great signs from Heaven" (21:10-26). He also told them to "stand firm" (21:19) and "watch and pray" (21:36) in order to stand before Him when He returns in "great glory" (21:27,28,36).

Father God, thank you for Your many warnings in Old and New Testaments to obey and worship You. Forgive us for glorifying man-made objects and buildings and putting our trust in what mankind has created. Prepare us for the end times and grant understanding of what is happening around us. Enable us to "stand firm" and prepare the way for the second coming of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Go with us and remain with us. Show us those whom You have called to lead us in these days as we "watch and pray". Amen.

1st December 2022.

Leviticus 3 instructs the Israelites in various voluntary offerings including the Fellowship Offering, also known as the Peace Offering, to bring forgiveness of sins and provide peace and fellowship with the LORD God Almighty. They must "present before the LORD an animal without defect". Its blood must be "sprinkled on all sides of the altar" (3:1-2). Then the priests must prepare it and burn the fatty parts on the wood of the altar "as an offering made by fire, with an aroma pleasing to the LORD" (3:5). The remainder of the animal was then shared between the priests and the people.

Hebrews 10:1-7 says, "The Law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming. It is not the real things themselves. 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. If it could, the sacrifices would have stopped being offered. The worshipers would have been made clean once and for all time. They would not have felt guilty for their sins anymore... It is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. So when Christ came into the world, he said [to God His Father], 'You prepared a body for Me. You were not pleased with burnt offerings and sin offerings. Here I am. It is written about Me in the scrolls [Psalm 40:6-8]. O God, I have come to do Your will.' "

Thank You Father God for Your amazing sacrifice through Jesus our Saviour to replace the sacrifice of "an animal without defect", "once and for all time". Thank You that through the sprinkling of His blood, this has brought everlasting "forgiveness of sins and peace and fellowship with the LORD God Almighty". May we never forget the cost in suffering on the cross to take our punishment for sin. Amen.

2nd December 2022.

Genesis 27:1-40 gives the story of how Jacob deceived his father Isaac to secure God's blessing on himself instead of his older twin brother Esau. 'Esau heard his father's words. Then he began crying loudly and bitterly. He said to his father, "Bless me! Bless me too, my father!" But Isaac said, "Your brother came and tricked me. He took your blessing." Esau said, "He has cheated me two times! First, he took my rights as the oldest son. And now he's taken my blessing! Haven't you saved any blessing for me?" Isaac answered Esau, "I've made him ruler over you... So what can I possibly do for you, my son?" Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!" (27:34-40.) Over 20 years later Jacob met Esau in friendship but chose to live away from his brother in Sechem where he bought land and dedicated an altar to the LORD God of Israel (Gen. 33:16-20).

1 Corinthians 1:26-31. "Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when God chose you. Not many of you were considered wise by human standards. Not many of you were powerful... But God 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 brag 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."

Free us Heavenly Father from controlling others and the control of others. We choose instead to live lives dedicated to You and blessed by You. Amen.

5th December 2022.

Psalm 38 describes a process of confession through the words of King David. "My heart pounds. My strength is gone" (v.10). "LORD, I wait for you to help me. LORD my God, I know you will answer" (v.15). "I admit that I have done wrong. I am troubled by my sin" (v.18). "O LORD, do not desert me. My God, do not be far away from me. LORD my Saviour, come quickly to help me" (v.21-22).

1 John 2:16-27 compares sinful people with the righteous. Worldly people "boast about what they have and what they do. All of this comes from the world. It does not come from the Father. The world and its evil longings are passing away. But those who do what God wants them to do live forever" (v.16-17). John then reminds his readers, "You have received the Spirit from the Holy One and all of you know the truth" (v.20). John then warns and encourages believers. "Make sure that you do not forget what you have heard from the beginning. Then you will remain joined to the Son and to the Father. That is what God has promised us. We have eternal life. I am writing these things to warn you about those who are trying to lead you down the wrong path. But you have received the Holy Spirit from God. He continues to live in you. So you do not need anyone to teach you. God's Spirit teaches you about everything. What He says is true. He doesn't lie. Remain joined to Christ, just as you have been taught by the Spirit" (v.24-27).

Lord Jesus, teach us what is right through the Holy Spirit You have given to each true believer. May Your anointing remain on us Your people, so that we may know we are "joined to the Son and to the Father" and have the promise of eternal life. Forgive the times of sin, fear and doubt that cause us to plead, "Do not desert me!" Amen.

6th December 2022.

Ezekiel 10 [NIV] describes the vision given to Ezekiel in 594 BC at a time when Israel had sinned greatly and the LORD vowed "I will not look on them with pity or spare them but will bring down on their own heads what they have done" (9:10). Ezekiel looked and "saw the likeness of a throne of sapphire over the heads of the cherubim... A cloud filled the inner court. Then the glory of the LORD rose above the cherubim and... the court was full of the radiance of the glory of the LORD" (10:1-4). "I looked and I saw beside the cherubim four wheels, one each side of the cherubim... each wheel intersecting a wheel [wheels within wheels]" (10:9-10). As in the earlier vision described in Ezekiel Chapter 1, each wheel was free to move in any direction that the Spirit of God directed and they were full of eyes to symbolise the all-seeing presence of God's Holy Spirit at work on Earth. "Then the glory of the LORD departed from the Temple and stopped above the cherubim. While I watched, the cherubim rose from the ground and the wheels went with them. They stopped at the East Gate and the glory of God was above them" (10:18-19). It was a full 20 years before the glory of the Lord returned to the Temple (Chapter 43).

Revelation 22:12 gives the words of Jesus, "Behold I am coming soon!" Jews and Gentiles alike believe their Messiah will come through the East Gate to the Temple.

Heavenly Father, forgive us for "bringing down upon our own heads" Your departure from believers who have sinned and disobeyed You in these days. Forgive us so that Your Spirit once again will move freely among us as "wheels within wheels". Prepare us for the return of Jesus our Messiah and Saviour through the East Gate and encourage us to share this Good News as we watch and wait. Amen.

7th December 2022.

Psalm 72 records David's prayer for his son, the future King Solomon. "O God, give the king the ability to judge fairly. He is Your royal son. Help him to do what is right. Then he will rule Your people in the right way. He will be fair to those among Your people who are hurting... He will save the children of those who are in need. He will crush those who beat others down" (72:1-4). "Give praise to the LORD God, the God of Israel. Only He can do wonderful things. Give praise to His glorious name forever. May His glory fill the whole Earth. Amen and Amen" (72:18-19).

Philippians 3:12-17. Paul 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 do not consider that I have taken hold of it yet. But here is the one thing I do. 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. God will make it clear to you but let us live up to what we have already reached."

Grant us Heavenly Father to respect those who reign over us. Help them to "do what is right" and "treat fairly those who are hurting" and also their "children in need". Then all people will "give praise to Your glorious name" and "Your glory will fill the Earth". May we continue to put our trust in Christ Jesus and what He is doing in us. We acknowledge we are not perfect. But enable us to "forget what is behind us" and "live up to what we have already reached." When our thoughts and beliefs differ to others, make the way forward clear to us so that we may "win the prize You have appointed". Amen and Amen.

8th December 2022.

Leviticus 3 reminds us again that God's people (before the perfect sacrifice of Christ our Saviour) should "present before the LORD an animal without defect." This was offered to the priests to "sprinkle the blood against the altar" (v.1-2). Then the fatty parts were burnt on the altar to provide "an aroma pleasing to the LORD God Almighty" (v.5). The remainder of the sacrificed lamb or goat was shared amongst God's people as a blessing.

Hebrews 2:10-18 declares that God "has made the One who saved them perfect because of His sufferings" (v.10). "Jesus became human like us in order to die for us. By doing that, He could destroy the one who rules over the kingdom of death, that is the devil" (v.14). "And then He could pay for the sins of the people by dying for them. He Himself suffered when He was tempted. Now He is able to help bless others who suffer when tempted" (v.17-18).

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the amazing truth revealed in Old and New Testaments that You chose to use the suffering and sacrifice of a perfect lamb for the salvation of Your people. Thank You that Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, "sprinkled His blood" and died for us to destroy the works of Satan. Thank You that His sacrifice became "an aroma pleasing to the LORD God Almighty" in order to "pay for the sins of the people". Thank You that "He is able to help bless others who suffer", which fulfils more perfectly what happened when "the sacrificed lamb was shared amongst God's people as a blessing". Forgive us when we yield to temptation instead of suffering in faith. Do not withhold Your blessings promised through the death and resurrection of Jesus our Lord. Enable us also to offer our own personal sacrifices as "an aroma pleasing to the LORD God Almighty". For Christ's sake. Amen.

9th December 2022.

Jeremiah 27 demands that God's punishment for His people in exile under Nebuchadnezzar must be completed, even down to carrying the last remains of their Temple in Jerusalem to Babylon. "They will remain there until the day I come for them" (v.22). Meanwhile, God tells them they must settle down in exile under their ruler in Babylon. "Then you will live" (v.12). If they disobey Nebuchadnezzar it would be like disobeying God. God also tells them not to listen to false prophets (v.16) but to learn to trust in Him. They must not value their lost Temple more than God Himself. During their exile in Babylon, history records that the Jews learned to trust once more in the LORD God Almighty.

James 5:7-12 advises us, "Brothers and sisters, be patient until the Lord comes. See how the farmer waits for the land to produce its rich crop... 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... People who do not give up are blessed. You have heard that Job was patient and seen what the LORD God finally did for him. He is full of tender mercy and loving concern."

Heavenly Father, help us to trust You in these difficult days, even if we are displaced or have lost much we value. Help us to discern what is false and respect what You have allowed for our short-term experiences under persecution, punishment or suffering for our redemption. Restore our faith

and readiness to witness the Gospel with compassion to the lost whom we have contact with. May we not give up but prove Your blessings even in adverse circumstances. Amen.

12th December 2022.

Joshua 16 records that the Israelites did not drive all the Canaanites out of the Promised Land. The tribes of Benjamin and Judah did not drive out the people who occupied Jerusalem on their borders (16:63). This did not happen until King David conquered Jerusalem 400 years later (2 Samuel 5:6-10). During those 400 years, Israel sinned by worshiping the gods of the Canaanites. When David took over the city around 1040 BC, it became known as the City of David and still is today.

2 Peter 3 records Peter's words of the return of Christ and the end of the world as we know it. "In the last days people will make fun of the truth. They will follow their own evil longings. They will say, 'Where is this return He promised?' ...By God's word the heavens and [planet] Earth of today are being reserved for fire. They are being kept for the day when God will judge. Then ungodly people will be destroyed... He is patient with you. He doesn't want anyone to be destroyed. Instead, he wants all people to turn away from their sins. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief... God will judge the Earth and everything in it. So everything will be destroyed. And what kind of people should you be? You should lead holy and godly lives. Live like that as you look forward to the day of God... We are looking forward to a new Heaven and a new Earth. Godliness will make its home there. All of this is in keeping with God's promise."

Heavenly Father, thank You for reminding us that for many years Your people suffered because they failed to obey your commands and drive out evil people from their midst. But Your purposes prevailed to establish Your rule in Jerusalem. Help us to speak out against evil today and prepare for the end of the age and the return of Christ our Saviour. For His sake who died for us to be saved eternally. Amen.

13th December 2022.

Leviticus 22 covers the principles of holiness and cleanliness required for personal sacrifices to the LORD God Almighty, which applied to the priests as well as the people. "This is because God is perfect and His servants must seek for perfection in all they do. With the help of the Holy Spirit we will be able to lead the lives that please God and bring honour to His name" (The Applied Old Testament Commentary by Thomas Hale, commended by Fred Morris).

1 Timothy 4:7-14 advises "Do not have anything to do with godless stories and silly tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly. Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and [hope for] the life to come... 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 those things. Teach them. Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young. 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... do not fail to use the gift the Holy Spirit gave you."

Dear Father in Heaven, thank you for these teachings which apply to leaders and all believers alike. Thank You for "the principles of holiness and cleanliness required" in our service for You and Your people, whether we are young or mature in the faith. Dear Lord Jesus, help us to lead lives that please God and bring honour to His name, in the new birth You have given to us through the sacrifice You made on the cross for our salvation. Help us to use the gifts Your Holy Spirit has given for perfecting our personal sacrifices in holiness and cleanliness. Amen.

14th December 2022.

Psalms 37 encourages us "not to be upset by evil people" but to "trust in the LORD God Almighty" (v.1,3). The psalmist tells us to "delight in the LORD... commit your life to Him... be still and wait patiently for Him... and keep from being angry" (v.4-5,7-8). Also to "turn away from evil and do good... Wait for the LORD to act and live as He wants you to do" (v.27,34). "The LORD saves those who do what is right [who are righteous (NIV)]. He is their place of safety when trouble comes" (v.39).

Philippians 4:4-9 also encourages us to "be joyful [rejoice] because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful. Let everyone know how gentle you are. The Lord is coming soon. Do not worry about anything. Instead, tell God about everything. Ask and pray. Give thanks to Him. Then

God's peace will watch over your hearts and your minds because you belong to Christ Jesus... Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true. Think about what is noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect [praise]...The God who gives peace will be with you."

Father God, we thank You for these words of faith and encouragement. We praise You for the peace and trust and patience You give us. May we "delight in the LORD" more and more as we joyfully commit our lives to You and wait on You to do what is right. Thank You that we belong to Jesus and experience His peace, compassion and power at work in our lives. May our thoughts be pure and lovely and gain Your respect and praise and that of others to Your glory. Help us not to be upset by evil people and keep us safe in times of trouble. Provide for our needs and those for whom we have a responsibility. Enable us to wait patiently for Christ's return as we turn our backs on temptations to sin. Amen.

15th December 2022.

Psalm 146. "Praise the Lord... I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Do not put your trust in human leaders... They cannot save you... Blessed are those who put their hope in the LORD their God. He is the Maker of Heaven and Earth and the oceans. 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 outsiders who live in our land. He takes good care of children whose fathers have died. He also takes good care of widows. But He causes evil people to fail in everything they do... Praise the LORD."

Matthew 13:11-17. Jesus said, "You have been given the chance to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven. It has not been given to outsiders. Everyone who has that kind of knowledge will be given more... If anyone does not have that kind of knowledge, even what little he has will be taken away from him... They look, but they do not really see. They listen, but they do not really hear or understand. In them the words of the prophet Isaiah come true. 'You will hear but never understand. You will see but never know what you are seeing. The hearts of these people have become stubborn... Otherwise, they might turn to the LORD, and then He would heal them.' (Isaiah 6:9,10) But blessed are your eyes because they see. And blessed are your ears because they hear."

Lord Jesus, help us to follow You more closely so that we will hear and see and understand the truth of Father God at all times and be healed and saved. Help us to believe, for Your sake who suffered and died for our pardon and full salvation. Amen.

16th December 2022.

Psalm 150 provides the Who? Where? Why? and How? of a believer who lives to honour Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty. "Praise the Lord. 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. Praise the Lord."

Matthew 21 is where Jesus warned the religious leaders, "What I am about to tell you is true. Tax collectors and prostitutes will enter the kingdom of God ahead of you. John came to show you the right way to live. And you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. You saw this. But even then you did not turn away from your sins and believe him" (v.31-32). After telling another parable, Jesus warned His sceptics, "So here is what I tell you. The Kingdom of God will be taken away from you. It will be given to people who will produce its fruit."

Thank you again Father God for Your righteous words of the psalmist and of Your prophet John and of Your Son our Saviour, Jesus the Christ. May we live lives honouring to You in praise and worship, with much joyful sounds of singing and musical instruments! We thank You that You welcome the lowest people in society and warn leaders of church and state to "produce the fruit of the Kingdom of God". May we follow Your modern-day prophets who are preparing the way for Christ's return to bless all who honour Your truth from the beginning of time. Amen.

19th December 2022.

Psalm 30:6-12. "LORD, I called out to you. I cried to You for Your favour. I said, 'What good will come if I die? Can the dust of my dead body praise You? Can it tell how faithful You are? LORD,

hear me. Show me your favour. LORD, help me.' You turned my loud crying into dancing. You removed my black clothes and dressed me with joy. So my heart will sing to You. I cannot keep silent. LORD, my God, I will give You thanks forever."

1 Timothy 3:1-7 gives Paul's teaching. "Here is a saying you can trust. If anyone wants to be a leader in the church, his desire is to do a good [noble, NIV] work for God and His people. A leader must be free from blame. He must be faithful to his wife... He must show self-control. He must be worthy of respect. He must welcome people into his home. He must be able to teach. He must not get drunk. He must not push people around. He must be gentle. He must not be a person who likes to argue. He must not love money. He must manage his own family well. He must make sure that his children obey him and show him proper respect... The leader must not be a new believer. If he is, he might become proud... The leader must also be respected by those who are outside the church. Then he will not be put to shame."

Father God, thank You for Your mercy shown to Your people. Encourage us to share with others the goodness of Your favour. As we mature in our experience and faith in You, equip us to be good leaders in line with Paul's advice: teachers who are sober, self-controlled, gentle, avoiding arguments, not desiring riches, not proud, successful in marriage and family matters and of good standing inside and outside the fellowship of believers. And keep us singing praises to You! Amen.

20th December 2022.

Jeremiah 36 describes the time when Jehoiakim, the son of the faithful Josiah, was king of Judah. The LORD God told his prophet Jeremiah, "Take a scroll. Write on it all of the words I have spoken to you. Write down what I have said about Israel, Judah and all of the other nations. Write what I have said to you from the time of King Josiah until now. The people of Judah will hear about all of the trouble I plan to bring on them. Maybe then they will turn from their evil ways. If they do, I will forgive their sins and the evil things they have done." (36:2-3.) The scroll was taken to the king who listened to them being read out then burnt them piece by piece. (36:21-23.) 'So Jeremiah got another scroll... He wrote down all of the words that were on the scroll King Jehoiakim had burned up in the fire.' (36:32.) Jeremiah was thrown into prison for a long time. He warned the new king that Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Babylonians because of their sins against God Almighty. (37:16-17).

John 8:31-40 gives the words of Jesus in Jerusalem over 600 years later. "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth. And the truth will set you free... I know you are Abraham's children. But you are ready to kill Me. You have no room for My word. I am telling you what I saw when I was with my Father. You do what you have heard from your [earthly] father... I am a man who has told you the truth I heard from God. Abraham didn't do the things you want to do."

Thank You Lord Jesus, that Your truth from Almighty God has set us free and enabled all believers to become true children of Abraham. Help us to be bold like Jeremiah and proclaim the truth of God whatever the cost. Amen.

21st December 2022.

Ezekiel 18:21-32. Six hundred years before Jesus Christ suffered crucifixion for our sins, God promised righteousness and salvation for His people Israel. "Suppose a sinful person turns away from all of the sins he has committed and he keeps all My rules. Then you can be sure he will live. He will not die. None of the sins he has committed will be held against him. Because of the godly things he has done, he will live. When sinful people die, it does not give Me any joy. But when they turn away from their sins and live, that makes Me very happy... But the people of Israel still say, 'What the Lord does isn't fair.' People of Israel, what I do is always fair. What you do is not. I will judge each of you in keeping with what you have done. Turn away from your sins! ...Then sin will not bring you down... Let Me give you a new heart and a new spirit. Then you will be faithful to Me... So turn away from your sins. Then you will live!"

Revelation 3:11-12 gives the words of Jesus Himself: "I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have. Then no one will take away your crown. I will see to it that those who overcome will be pillars in the temple of My God... I will write the name of My God on them. I will write the name of the city of My God on them. This is the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from My God... Those who have ears should listen to what the Holy Spirit says to the churches."

Thank You Father God for Your mercy over the centuries to those who obey You and live righteously. Thank You for Your purpose and provision in Christ alone through His birth, life and death as Son of Man and Son of God to take the punishment we deserve for sin. Thank You for the promise of eternal life in the new Kingdom of God. Keep us ever watchful in these last days. Amen.

22nd December 2022.

Psalm 136 is the famous psalm which honours God our Creator and Saviour for His goodness and love "which endures for ever" as God of gods and Lord of lords (v.1-3). God is worshipped as Creator (v.4-9) and deliverer from slavery in Egypt (v.10-15) and saviour from the tribes in His Promised Land of Canaan for Israel (v.16-22). It ends with testimony and praise. "Give thanks to the One who remembered us when things were going badly for us. He set us free from our enemies. He gives food to every creature. Give thanks to the God of Heaven." (v.23-26.)

Ephesians 5:8-21. Paul says, "Live like children of the light. The light [of Christ] produces what is completely good, right and true. Find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the acts of darkness... It is shameful even to talk about what people who don't obey do in secret. But everything the light shines on can be seen. Light makes everything clear. That is why it is said, 'Wake up, sleeper. Rise from the dead. Then Christ will shine on you.' So be very careful how you live. Do not live like people who are not wise. Live like people who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity. The days are evil. So don't be foolish. Instead, understand what the Lord wants. Do not fill yourself up with wine. Getting drunk will lead to wild living. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit. Speak to each other with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. Always give thanks to God the Father for everything. Give thanks to Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Follow the lead of one another because of your respect for Christ."

Father God, we thank You for Your love "which endures for ever". And we thank you for the "light of Christ" at work upon us and within us. Wake us up and shake us up and make us up, to live how You have called us to live. Amen.

23rd December 2022.

Exodus Chapters 7 to 11 record the ten plagues suffered by the Egyptians at the time of Moses because of Pharaoh's sinful stubbornness to refuse to "Let My people go!" Each time he agreed to let them go into the desert to worship, God hardened his heart and brought more suffering on his people. But the plagues did not cause any suffering to the people of Israel.

James 4:4-12 says, "Don't you know that to be a friend of the world is to hate God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Don't you know what Scripture says? The Spirit that God caused to live in us wants us to belong only to God. Do you not think Scripture has a reason for saying that? God continues to give us more grace. That is why Scripture says, 'God opposes those who are proud. But he gives grace to those who are not.' So obey God and 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 [to rejoice]."

Heavenly Father, open our eyes to see what You are doing, both in allowing what is evil and in planning what is good. May our leaders repent in all honesty and stop proudly asserting themselves in their own strength. And may we Your people repent and reject worldly living so that Your Spirit at work in us can do the things that "belong only to God". Do not withhold Your mercy and grace so that we are able to boldly "obey You and stand up to the devil" without having to suffer the punishment due for others. We thank You for the salvation we have through Christ's suffering for our sins. Amen.

26th December 2022.

Exodus 36 describes the call by Moses for everyone to make gifts of materials for constructing the portable tabernacle to be used in the journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land of Canaan. After a while, the people had to be restrained since there was more than enough to do the work (36:7). After the construction, the woodwork was overlaid with pure gold which had been sacrificed by the people as an offering to God (36:38). It was all deliberately designed to reflect the wonder and greatness of God Almighty. A curtain screened off the area where only Moses and the High Priest were allowed to enter and meet with God Himself. It was a similar

curtain that was split in two when Christ was crucified, symbolising that God was now approachable by everyone, since Christ had suffered the punishment all people deserve for their sin and disobedience.

Luke 16:9-15 gives the words of Jesus. "Use the riches of this world to help others. In that way, you will make friends for yourselves. Then when your riches are gone, you will be welcomed into your eternal home in Heaven... You cannot serve God and money at the same time." The Pharisees loved money. They heard all that Jesus said and made fun of him. Jesus said to them, "You try to make yourselves look good in the eyes of other people. But God knows your hearts."

Father God we note the genuine generosity of your people at the time of Moses in sacrificing their possessions for the sake of worshipping You at the tabernacle in the wilderness. We also note the words of Jesus to "use the riches of this world to help others". Also His condemnation of the Pharisees who were greedy for money. Help us to live generously in these days and trust You for our needs. Amen.

28/12/22.

Proverbs 31 ends in praising wives who are of noble character and are "worth far more than rubies". "She loves to work with her hands... She gets up while it is still dark. She provides food for her family... She opens her arms to those who are poor and reaches out her hands to those who are needy... She speaks wisely. She teaches faithfully. She watches over family matters. She is busy all the time... Her children stand up and call her blessed. Her husband also rises up, and he praises her. He says, 'Many women do noble things. But you are better than all the others.' Beauty fades, but a woman who has respect for the LORD should be praised... Let everything she has done bring praise to her."

2 Peter 1:15-21. "I hope that you will always be able to remember these things after I am gone... We told you about the time our Lord Jesus Christ came with power... With our own eyes we saw Him in all his majesty. God the Father gave Him honour and glory: 'This is My Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with Him.' We ourselves heard the voice that came from Heaven. [Also] the word of the prophets was made more certain... It will shine until the day Jesus returns. Then the Morning Star will rise in your hearts. Above all, here is what you must understand. No prophecy in Scripture ever came from a prophet's own understanding. The Holy Spirit guided the prophets as they spoke. So prophecy comes from God." Peter then warns about false prophets.

Help us heavenly Father to value what You have established from the beginning – the special purpose of marriage between man and woman for the sake of righteous family values. May we also value the writings of Your Old Testament prophets who continue to shine the light of Your truth about Jesus the Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Protect our children from unrighteous teaching. Amen.

29/12/22.

Jeremiah 29:1-9 records Jeremiah's instructions. "I, the prophet Jeremiah, sent a letter from Jerusalem... The LORD who rules over all speaks to all those He forced to go from Jerusalem to Babylon. He says, 'Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce. Get married. Have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons. Give your daughters to be married. Then they too can have sons and daughters. 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... Do not let the prophets trick you. Do not be fooled by those who claim to have secret knowledge... All of them are prophesying lies to you in My name.' "

Philemon verses 6 to 16 record Paul's instructions. "I pray that you will be active in sharing what you believe. Then you will completely understand every good thing we have in Christ... I make an appeal to you for my son Onesimus. He became a son to me while I was being held by chains [in Rome]. Before that, he was useless to you. But now he has become useful to you and to me. I am sending Onesimus back to you... You can have him back but not as a slave. Instead, 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."

Heavenly Father, thank You for these well-preserved records of Jeremiah and Paul. Help us to hear Your truth from Your chosen leaders and not listen to what others might say or think. May we settle down and live lives according to your purpose and provision wherever we are and whatever we do, to Your glory and for the blessing of others around us. So guide and prosper all who live in exile today and may we welcome them in our midst. Amen.

30th December 2022.

Psalms 93 & 94 (NIV). "The LORD reigns. He is robed in majesty and armed with strength. Your throne was established long ago. You are from all eternity. The seas have lifted up. Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea, is the LORD [as at the time of Noah's Flood]. Your statutes, LORD, stand firm [which were promised to Noah's great-grandson, Abraham, and confirmed to Moses]. Rise up, O Judge of the Earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve. How long, O LORD, will the wicked be jubilant? Does He who fashioned the ear not hear? Does He who formed the eye not see? Blessed is the one You discipline, O LORD, the one You teach from Your Law. For the LORD will not reject His people. He will never forsake His inheritance. Judgment will again be founded on righteousness, and all the upright in heart will follow it."

Acts 13:26-33. Paul said, "Listen, brothers, you children of Abraham! Listen, you Gentiles who worship God! This message of salvation has been sent to us. The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus... By finding Him [Christ] guilty, they made the prophets' words come true, read every Sabbath day. The people and their rulers had no reason at all for sentencing Jesus to death. But they asked Pilate to have Him killed. They did everything that had been written about Jesus. Then they took Him down from the cross. They laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead... We are telling you the Good News. What God promised our people long ago He has done for us, their children. He has raised up Jesus."

Thank You heavenly Father for these Bible records of Your truth. Help us to believe and preach and live them "whilst there is time" for the sake of the "upright in heart" You are calling into the Kingdom of Christ. Amen.