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**Weekend Manna: FRED SAID**

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

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**Current archive for 2025**

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**Weekend of 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Galatians Chapter 3: *God's promise is for us all to enjoy***

Paul wrote, "God's promises were given to Abraham. They were also given to his seed. It does not say, 'seeds' which means many people. It says, 'seed' which means one person. And that one person is Christ... The Law came [430 years] after this promise. But the Law does not remove God's covenant and promise. The covenant had already been made by God. So the Law does not do away with the promise. The great gift that God has for us does not depend on the Law... God gave it to Abraham as a free gift through a promise... The Law was added because of human sin. And it was supposed to control us until the promised seed [Jesus the Christ our Messiah] had come." (Galatians 3:15-19)

Therefore, the Law was given to show God's people their sinfulness when they had failed to obey God's will.

The future blessing God promised to Abraham through his 'seed' was for everyone. All the prophets said that the blessing would come through 'the seed of Abraham'. This blessing remains for all to enjoy now. Paul wrote elsewhere, "Now is the time of God's favour (blessing). Now is the day of God's salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2) He knew this truth better than anyone. He proved for himself that the promise of God to Abraham referred to salvation in Christ alone. This is for all who believe He is the Son of God.

On three long missionary journeys, Paul preached 'Jesus Christ and the resurrection' to both Gentiles and Jews (Acts 17:18). Many Gentiles as well as Jews believed in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit came upon those believers as He had on the Jewish disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2:4; 10:44-45). Paul reported this blessing for the Gentiles to the leaders in Jerusalem. James, the brother of Jesus, said, "The words of the prophets are in agreement with this." (Acts 15:15) James took the words of the prophet Amos and used them to speak of the blessings of Abraham coming to Gentiles who believed in Israel's Messiah (Amos 9:11-12). The blessing that James spoke of was that Gentiles could be children of God and equal with God's people, Israel. All new believers are 'citizens of a new community' and come to God out of every nation.

Extracted from "LIVING BY FAITH IN CHRIST ALONE" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2024.

**Weekend of 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Ephesians Chapter 6. *The full armour of God***

Paul described the different pieces of armour worn by Roman soldiers. He did this to explain each piece of spiritual armour we need from God to win the battle of faith (6:14-17):

- *The belt of truth.* A belt held the soldier's cloak tightly round him. It held some of the other pieces of armour in place. Our armour enables us to be free to move but ready to resist the lies of the enemy with the truth from God. Reading the Bible confirms God's word within us and makes us ready to defend our faith and overcome doubts and fears.
- *The breastplate of God's righteousness.* In faith, we receive and put on His righteousness. Let us never doubt that we have been made righteous in the sight of God through the sacrifice of His Son for our sins. Satan tries to make us feel weak and unworthy. We must always remember that God has made us righteous because Jesus was punished in our place.
- *Our shoes to take the Good News of salvation everywhere.* Christians know the Good News of Jesus Christ and carry it in their heart. They are sure of what Jesus has done for them and must be prepared to take the message of God's salvation plan to all people.
- *The shield of faith.* The Roman shield turned aside all arrows from the enemy. It was large enough to protect the whole body. Paul compared Satan's attacks to flaming arrows. When we lift up our shield of faith we can trust in God's power to protect us.
- *The helmet of salvation.* The helmet stops the enemy from destroying us by attacking our heads and our minds. Our salvation leads to divine thoughts and eternal life which Satan cannot take away from us.
- *The sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.* The soldier takes his sword for when he is in danger. It is used to attack and to defend. The Bible is like a sword and our greatest weapon against Satan. We stand firm and use the Word of God against him. God's word defeats Satan. Speak God's truth and Satan will withdraw (James 4:7).

Notice that Paul requests his readers to put on ALL God's armour (6:11,13). We are often weak in body, mind or spirit. We need each piece of God's spiritual armour. If one piece is missing, then Satan will find a way in to attack us. So put on the full armour of God each morning. You will notice the difference in overcoming the attacks of the devil. Others will notice the change in your lives.

Extracted from "PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2018, 2024.

## **Weekend of 18/19<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

### **Philippians Chapter 4: *Be of one mind***

Paul told his readers how to live to please God. If they followed his example, they would stand firm in the strength of the Lord (4:1). Then they would be examples to others. Paul called their godly lives "my joy and crown." He loved them very much.

However, two women in the church could not agree. This caused trouble in the church and Paul asked the leaders to help these two women settle their argument. "I want them to agree with each other because they belong to the Lord" (4:2). The Holy Spirit brings unity in a group. This happens when each person holds to the truth and lives a holy life. He wanted all of them to know God's peace (2:2).

Personal matters must be settled by each believer. Leaders must speak against any wrong teaching or sin in the lives of the believers. Paul was careful to note that "their names are all written in the Book of Life" (4:3; Revelation 3:5). This means these two women were born again by the Spirit of God.

Paul told them again to be joyful and "rejoice in the Lord always" (4:4). This is a command to be obeyed. At times we may be sad and mourn. We may get upset and disagree with others at times. But God's word commands us to forgive and be joyful in the Lord for all that He has done for us.

"Let everyone see how gentle you are." And he wanted them to live believing that the Lord is coming soon" (4:5). If God is at work in us, we can be gentle towards all persons. When we love other believers, we are gentle even in correcting them. This is most important for church leaders.

Paul also wrote, "Do not worry about anything. Tell God about everything. Ask and pray and give thanks to Him" (4:6). Satan wants us to worry. But God wants us to enjoy His peace in our hearts (4:7). Instead of worrying, we are told to pray about everything "giving thanks to God" (4:6). If we do this, we have God's promise: "the peace of God...will guard your hearts and your minds because you belong to Christ Jesus" (4:7). Those without Jesus have no true peace in their hearts. God's peace is so amazing, it "can never be completely understood."

Extracted from "PHILIPPIANS AND COLOSSIANS" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2023.

### **Weekend of 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

#### **The Letter of James: *The Jewish believers in Christ cared for by James***

Five men have the name 'James' in the New Testament part of the Bible. Most scholars believe that the James who wrote this letter was one of the sons in Joseph and Mary's family. He was born after the Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus the Christ, whose Hebrew name is Yeshua the Messiah. The name of James is first in the list of the four half-brothers of Jesus. All the four sons of Joseph and Mary were born after Jesus: James, Joseph, Simon and Judas (Matthew 13:55).

James became the leader of the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. His letter was written soon after AD 60 to all the Jews in Jerusalem and the world who believed in Jesus. At that time they were called 'followers of the Way' or 'believers and disciples of Jesus'.

The scattered congregations of believers at the time of James were linked together under the power of the Holy Spirit which God established on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. This was the day when the disciples met together in an upper room for the Spirit to arrive as Jesus instructed (Acts 1:4). He said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem" (1:8). This was the same day that Peter preached about Jesus the Christ to the thousands of Jewish visitors from all over the world in Jerusalem. 'Godly Jews from every country in the world were staying in Jerusalem' (2:5). This was the beginning of the New Testament congregations of believers in Jesus Christ:

- The devout Jews travelled home from Jerusalem back to their Jewish communities, sharing the amazing news preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost about Jesus the Jewish Messiah.
- In Jerusalem 'about 3000 people joined the believers that day' (2:41). They were mostly Jews.
- Later, Philip, then Peter and John, took the good news to Samaria (8:4-25). This began to fulfil the promise of Jesus, "You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria" (1:8).

The number of Jewish believers grew rapidly. Later still, Paul and other apostles took the Good News about Jesus to the Jews and non-Jews in other nations around the world making a further fulfilment of the promise of Jesus.

Extracted from "THE LETTER OF JAMES" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2024.

### **Weekend of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025**

#### **Revelation Chapter 1: *The seven lamps and seven stars in John's vision of Christ***

The seven golden lamp stands (Revelation 1:12,20) are a picture of the light of Christ dwelling among the seven churches listed in verse 11. Lamp stands were important in the Temple worship and were made exactly as God described (Exodus 25:31-40). The victorious Christ walked amongst these churches as the light of the world. Everywhere that Christians meet together in His name, Jesus says, "I am there with them" (Matthew 18:20).

Jesus walks among the churches:

- to bring unity, discipline and love;
- to encourage them, comfort them, empower them;
- to cleanse and purify His own people;
- to convict them of sin and to call them to repentance;
- to be with His Church always, even to the end of time (Matthew 28:20).

The vision of Christ, the Son of God, is described by John as 'like a Son of Man' (Rev. 1:13). He is the great prophet of God mentioned in the Old Testament writings (Psalm 8:4-5; 80:17; Isaiah 56:2 and over 90 times in the books of Ezekiel and Daniel). He wore a long robe with gold across His chest.

The vision of Christ included the seven stars held in His right hand. This means He holds the seven churches in His right hand which is the hand of power. Also a sharp double-edged sword came out of His mouth. This is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17) which shows His power both to protect and to convict the righteous of sin (Rev. 1:14-16). It cuts deep inside us to separate God's truth from man's ideas.

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## **Weekend of 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

### **Genesis Chapter 7: *A flood covers the Earth***

Then God shut the door of the ark. The day Noah was shut up in the ark, it began to rain. This was the first time that it rained on Earth. Also the waters from the deep parts of the oceans came up and flooded the land. Also, the waters trapped below the oceans burst out (7:11). Soon, a large part of planet Earth was covered with water and the ark floated on the water, close to the mountain tops.

Many of the mountains tops were covered with water and all living creatures died except fish. We notice the force of these words:

- 'Every living thing...' (7:21).
- 'Everything on dry land that had the breath of life that moved on Earth...' (7:22).
- 'Every living thing on the face of Earth...' (7:23).

Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark (7:23). Noah did not know where he was. His life was in God's hands. This is a great example of a man's faith. When we trust ourselves to God, He takes care of us (1 Peter 5:7). For over 100 years, Noah obeyed God by building the ark ready for the day of the Flood. He kept faith in God.

For 150 days Noah waited for God to 'remember' him. 'The ark floated on the surface of the water' (Genesis 7:18). Noah did not try to steer the ark. In the same way, a Christian is lifted up above the evil, as our heavenly Father cares for us. We can trust Him to be in control of our lives.

#### **Talk about this:**

1. Why was God sorry that He had created people (6:6,13)?
2. What stopped God from destroying all the people and animals (6:8)?

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## **Weekend of 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

### **Genesis Chapter Genesis 16: *Sarah tries to give Abraham a son***

Ten years after Abraham and Sarai left Haran, Abraham still had no promised son and heir. The story continues with Hagar, an Egyptian slave woman in Abraham's house. Abraham and Sarai treated Hagar well but she was a slave girl to Sarai. At this time it was a common thing for slave girls to have children for their mistresses. Sarai gave Hagar to Abraham so that Hagar could have a son to give to Abraham and Sarai.

God gave Abraham a clear picture of the nations that would come through Hagar's son, Ishmael. He would be a wild man and whose sons would not fear anyone. They would not be friendly to their relatives (16:12). They would become a great nation (17:20). They would fight many tribes including many of Abraham's future family (25:18). Yet God would protect Ishmael's family through all the centuries. This shows the love of God to all nations.

Later, God told Abraham His promise about Ishmael (Genesis 17:20). God also spoke to Hagar about Ishmael in Genesis 21:17. God began to fulfil His promises about Ishmael in 25:12-18. The Arab nations descended from Ishmael and from the later sons of Abraham through his second wife Keturah. That is why the Arabs look to Abraham as their father just as the Jews do. The early Christians also looked to Abraham as their father because they all had the same faith in Yahweh, the one true God.

However, the fighting within Abraham's family continues to this very day. But Jesus taught His followers to love one another, even their enemies (Matthew 5:43-44). He taught this from the Old Testament: "Love your neighbour as you love yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). We should pray that all nations will come to believe in Yahweh, the LORD God Almighty, who created the world (Ezekiel 38:23). His Son, Jesus Christ, is our Saviour, the Messiah. Many Arabs and Jews believe that Jesus is the Son of God but most believe He was only a prophet. Pray that they will come to know the truth about Jesus. The truth will set them free (John 8:36). Then they will be saved by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus and care for one another in love, in peace and with compassion.

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## **Weekend of 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**

### **Genesis Chapter 29: *Jacob meets Rachel***

Jacob continued his journey until he came to the land of the eastern peoples (where Abraham used to live). He saw a well in a field and so he sat down (29:2). Shepherds with their sheep were resting nearby under the trees.

Jacob asked the shepherds if they knew his uncle Laban. They said they knew him. They then pointed to Laban's daughter Rachel who was bringing her father's sheep to the well for water (29:5-6).

When he saw his cousin he was full of joy. He went over to the well, rolled the stone away... and gave water to his uncle's sheep. Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep loudly (29:10-11).

Jacob told Rachel that he was Rebekah's son. She ran to the house and told Laban. Laban 'hurried to meet him and hugged Jacob and kissed him. Laban said to him, "You are my own flesh and blood" ' (29:13-14). It was many years since there had been any contact between the two families. Laban took Jacob into his family. Sadly, this family no longer worshipped the God of Abraham.

Laban was as cunning as Jacob had been with Esau. He saw how Jacob could help him with his sheep. After one month, he asked Jacob to work for him. By this time, Jacob was in love with Rachel. "I will work for you for seven years," he told Laban, "in return for your younger daughter, Rachel" (29:18). (Laban had two daughters. Leah was the elder and Rachel the younger. Leah was not so pretty as Rachel.)

Jacob was faithful in everything that he did for Laban. After seven years, Jacob asked Laban for Rachel to be his wife.

Laban called all the family together and they planned a week-long wedding feast. That night, when the feasting ended, Laban played a trick on Jacob. He gave Leah to Jacob as his wife, instead of Rachel. Laban said, "It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter before the older one" (29:26).

Jacob then remembered the bad trick that he had played on his father, Isaac! Jacob did not fight back. He trusted God, because he fully believed God's promise. Laban gave Rachel to Jacob as his wife. But he had another trick to play on Jacob. "You will have to work for another seven years," he told Jacob (29:27).

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

## **Weekend of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025**

### **Genesis Chapter 47: *Joseph and the family of Jacob stay in Egypt***

The people in Egypt and in Canaan were suffering because of the famine. But Joseph continued to sell the food he had stored in Egypt. He took payment for it and brought the money to Pharaoh. When the people had no more money they came to Joseph and said, "Give us food. Why should we die? ... Our money is all gone" (47:15).

"Then bring your cattle," said Joseph. "I will sell you food for your cattle" (47:16).

The following year they came to Joseph and said, "There is nothing left to give you except our bodies and our land. Buy us and our land in exchange for food ... then we and our land will belong to Pharaoh" (47:18,19).

So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh.

"You have saved our lives," they said to Joseph (47:25).

Egypt became a powerful nation, but its people became slaves to Pharaoh (47:25-26).

Meanwhile, the children of Israel settled in the north of Egypt (47:27). There was plenty of water and grass for their flocks. They built homes and had many children over the next 400 years.

Jacob lived for another 17 years. He died in Egypt when he was 147 years old (47:28).

Before he died, Jacob asked Joseph to make a promise to him (47:29). He said, "Do not bury me in Egypt ... carry me out of Egypt." Joseph promised to bury his father in Canaan where his parents and grandparents were buried.

In this way, Jacob reminded Joseph and his brothers that their true calling was to serve the God of Abraham and Isaac in Canaan, the land that God promised to give them.

Joseph was sold as a slave but became the servant and saviour of Jacob's family while in Egypt. It was part of God's plan for the descendants of Abraham who are the nation of Israel. He was their servant and saviour 1700 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, our 'Servant King'.

Extracted from "JOSEPH" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2002, 2018, 2023.

### **Weekend of 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

#### **Exodus Chapter 5: *What Moses said to God and what God said to Moses***

Moses complained to God, "You have not saved Your people!"(5:23). He failed to believe that God does not give up on those whom He has called and chosen.

Moses said to God (5:22-23):

- "Why are you bringing more trouble on the people of Israel?"
- "Why did you send me back here?"
- "I have done what you told me to do."
- "I have spoken to Pharaoh using your special name."
- "Pharaoh has brought even more trouble on the people."
- "You have not saved your people at all!"

God did not complain to Moses. He knew what Moses said was true. Instead, He confirmed what He had promised (6:1-8):

- "You will see what I will do to Pharaoh through My power."
- "Pharaoh will let the people of Israel go. Not just for three days. He will drive them out of his country!"
- "I am the same God who talked to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, though they did not know my special name, Yahweh."
- "I promised to give them the land of Canaan."
- "I know how much the people of Israel are hurting because they are slaves in Egypt, and I heard them crying."
- "I have not forgotten My promise."
- "Tell the people of Israel, I am Almighty God."
- "I will make them free."
- "I will punish the Egyptians."
- "You will be My own special people and I will be your God."
- "I will show you that I am Yahweh your God."
- "I will bring you to the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Extracted from "THE BIRTH OF GOD'S NATION" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2007, 2012, 2021.

### **Weekend of 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

#### **Numbers Chapter 21. *Israel begins to possess the Promised Land***

The new generation of the Children of Israel on their way to the Promised Land vowed to Almighty God, "If you deliver these enemies into our hands we will give them over to You to totally destroy." Their destruction was total (21:1-3). They were not attracted by the immoral behaviour of those around them. They did not buy cheap food offered to idols nor were they seduced by 'free love' and risk the punishment of the God Almighty.

As the Israelites moved further north, they faced the feared Amorite warriors who lived in the Promised Land.

Amorites were the largest tribe in the land of Canaan. They had descended from Canaan, the son of Ham, who was one of the three sons of Noah. They lived from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea as God promised (Deuteronomy 11:24). The king of the Amorites would not let the people of Israel pass through his kingdom. They went to war with Israel. God told Moses, "Do not be afraid" (Numbers 21:34). So the people of Israel captured many of the cities of the Amorites. Then they began to live in them. They took over the land for themselves (21:35).

Balaam was not a prophet of God. He was a witchdoctor. He offered food to idols and worshipped demon spirits. He could work magic and people knew he had demonic powers. People were afraid of him. If he did not like someone, he would curse them. King Balak of Moab saw the camp of Israel. The Israelites were not like any people King Balak had ever seen before. He heard how they had fought his neighbours and killed their kings. Would the Israelites come over to his land and kill him also? He was so frightened he did not know what to do. At this time, God warned Balaam, "You must not put a curse on these people because I have blessed them" (22:12). Several times Balak tried to force Balaam to curse the people of Israel but God



allowed only a blessing. So Balaam and Balak went home (24:25) and there was no war between Israel and Moab.

Extracted from "THE GROWTH OF GOD'S NATION" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2001, 2003, 2006, 2012.

### **Weekend of 22<sup>nd</sup>/22<sup>rd</sup> March 2025**

#### **Joshua Chapter 6: God's plan for the destruction of Jericho**

The writer of the book of Joshua describes the amazing miracles in the story of the battle of Jericho. He tells us God's plan to destroy the huge walls of Jericho.

The enemies of Israel were afraid as they waited. But they knew that the God of Israel had taken them safely through the Red Sea and across the River Jordan. The gates of the city were shut tight. No-one went out or came in (6:1). But the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Joshua was with His people:

- God promised, "I have delivered Jericho into your hands" (6:2).
- God told them, "March around the city once each day for six days" (6:3).
- God's Presence went with His army and the priests went in front with the Ark of God (6:4).
- The priests blew their trumpets but the soldiers who followed them were quiet except for the noise of thousands of marching feet (6:4,13).
- On the seventh day, the priests and the people were told to march round the city seven times blowing their trumpets (6:4).
- The terrifying trumpet blasts were followed by loud shouts of victory (6:5).
- "The walls of the city will fall down and every man will go straight in" (6:5).

Joshua told the people this plan of God. They marched silently round the walls of Jericho and came back to their camp for six days. He reminded the people: "Do not give a war cry, do not shout, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!" (6:8-11.) This silence helped to increase the fear in the enemy. It made the Israelites even more dependent on God and not on the excitement of hearing victory cries.

Joshua also told the two spies to save Rahab and her family (6:17, 22-23).

The watchmen on the walls of Jericho looked down. They watched the Israelites marching round the city. It made them very afraid.

Joshua told the people of Israel that they must not carry anything away from Jericho. God would punish them if they did take anything away. God's plan to destroy all evil in the land began at Jericho. God planned to destroy the evil people and their false religion and their gods and their heathen jewellery (6:17-18). The silver, gold and metal objects were kept for the LORD's house (6:19).

Our merciful God waited seven days before He closed the door of Noah's Ark (Genesis 7:10). The same God of mercy told the people to march around Jericho for seven days before He destroyed the city. Like the city of Nineveh, God also gave Jericho time to repent (Jonah 3:4-5).

God has no pleasure in war or in people who make war. When people reject Him, they bring the punishment which they deserve upon themselves.

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

### **Weekend of 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

#### **1 Samuel Chapter 2: *Hannah's song of praise.***

Hannah's song of praise to God is also called a prayer. Many of the Psalms are prayers of praise. Three years before, Hannah had prayed without speaking words aloud. Now she wanted everyone to hear what God had done for her. Hannah's song of praise to God is now known to the whole world.

Hannah suffered shame through being childless. And all around her, men and women failed God. This included Eli the High Priest and his sons. Yet Hannah kept her faith. God lifted her up. She praised and worshipped God in bad times and in good times. She took God seriously.

Our own praise to God will lift Him up for everyone to know about Him. Remember to praise the name of God at all times and before all people.

God is judge of sinners, and the nations are in His hand. He allows good and evil to serve His purposes. It was not only a time of much disobedience by God's people but also much persecution by

the Philistines, which God allowed. Those who do not obey His commands will come under His judgment. God will judge everyone fairly by what they have done (Romans 2:6).

The first ten verses of Chapter 2 tell us the words Hannah prayed to God at Shiloh. God opened her eyes to understand what had happened in her life. The Jews still use these verses for teaching and blessing the people of God today.

Hannah sang words of thanks and greater understanding, including words of prophecy. Her song also looked forward to Israel's 'Anointed One', Jesus the Christ, Israel's Messiah.

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

### **Weekend of 4th/5th April 2025**

#### **1 Samuel Chapter 9: *Samuel meets and anoints Saul as King of Israel***

This is the story of how God, in His mercy, heard the cries of His people. He saved them from the Philistines and arranged for the prophet Samuel to meet Saul.

God chose Saul to be Israel's king. He was from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel. He was not known to most of the people. When his father's donkeys ran off, Saul took a servant with him and went to look for them, but they did not find them. They came near to Samuel's town. Saul wanted to go back home. "My father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us" (9:5).

His servant replied, "There is a man of God here in Ramah. Everything he says comes true... Perhaps he will tell us what way to go" (9:6). Samuel was High Priest in Israel, but Saul did not know him. Saul agreed to go.

Before Saul and his servant reached the top of the hill, Samuel met them. They did not know him so they asked, "Please tell us where the house of the seer [prophet] is" (9:18). The day before, God had told Samuel: "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man. He is from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the king of My people Israel. He will save them from the power of the Philistines. I have seen how much my people are suffering. Their cry for help has reached Me" (9:16). When Samuel saw a man coming towards him, God spoke to Samuel again. He said, "He is the man I told you about. His name is Saul. He will govern My people" (9:17).

Saul approached Samuel at the gate of the town. He asked Samuel, "Can you please show me the seer's house?" (9:18). "I am the seer," Samuel replied. "Go on up to the high place ahead of me. I want you and your servant to eat with me today. Tomorrow morning I will send you on your way. Do not worry about the donkeys you lost three days ago. They have already been found" (9:19-20).

Then Samuel told Saul his father's family will meet the needs of all Israel (9:20). Saul replied, "I am from the smallest tribe of Israel. My family is the least important in the whole tribe of Benjamin. Why do you say such a thing to me?" (9:21). God often raises up people who are not important. He sees what is possible by looking into people's hearts. "Then Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the [eating] room. He seated them at the head table. About 30 people were invited" (9:22).

After that, Samuel talked with Saul on the roof of Samuel's house (9:25). The next day, Samuel anointed Saul as future king of Israel.

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

### **Weekend of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

#### **1 Samuel 31: *Saul is defeated in battle***

King Saul fought his last battle on Mount Gilboa. 'The Philistines kept chasing Saul and his sons. The fighting was heavy around Saul.' ...Saul and his three sons died together that same day' (31:3-6).

Brave men of Israel from Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to their King. They travelled through the night to Beth Shan and took down Saul's body and the bodies of his sons. Then they honoured their King with a proper burial. They fasted (did not eat) for seven days (31:12-13). They remembered the good things Saul did and trusted in God's mercy for all who disobey Him at times.

The path of sin always leads down, down, to a sad end. Saul did not honour God in his later life and he was killed by God's enemies along with his sons.



David was not perfect, but he always repented of his sin and went on following God. His life teaches us a great lesson: when you fall into sin, do not stay down. Get up, confess your sin to God and He will forgive you. Then go on your way rejoicing.

At the time of Samuel and Saul, God was laying a foundation for the future of Israel. At the time of Samuel and David, He used David to defeat the Philistines who were later destroyed for ever by King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 BC. At the time of Samuel and David, God was laying a foundation not only for the future of Israel but for Israel's Messiah. Through David's family line, Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit to Mary.

God's chosen king prepared the way for God's chosen Messiah, the Saviour of the world!

Extracted from "SAMUEL AND DAVID" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2000, 2022.

### **Weekend of 26th/27<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

#### **Mark 5: *Jesus brings peace to a man with demons***

Jesus and His disciples travelled by boat to the region of the Gerasenes (5:1). This was on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. The caves there were used for burying dead people. A man lived in the caves. Evil spirits lived inside him. They were demons that made him violent and angry. The people tried to put him in chains but he broke them. He screamed night and day and cut himself (5:3-5).

The man saw Jesus get out of the boat. He ran up to Jesus and knelt down in front of Him (5:6). The evil spirits knew who Jesus was. The man shouted, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God, what do you want with me? Promise before God that You will not hurt me!" (5:7). Evil spirits know who Jesus is. They know that Jesus has authority over them and they fear Him (James 2:19). Jesus ordered the demons to leave the man (5:8)...

The people were afraid. Before, they were afraid of the man with the demons. Now they were afraid of the power of God. So they begged Jesus to go away (5:17).

The man wanted to go with Jesus and the disciples. Jesus did not let him. He said, "Go home to your family and friends. Tell them how much the Lord has done for you. Tell them how He has been kind to you" (5:18-19). Now he could witness to his family what Jesus had done for him. The man also witnessed to people in the Ten Cities on that side of the Sea of Galilee. They were amazed (5:20). These people were not Jews but gladly they received the Good News of Jesus, Israel's Messiah. After this amazing ministry, Jesus returned to the other side of the lake where the Jews lived (5:21).

Often envy, witchcraft, drugs, alcohol or gambling destroy family life. These things make people cruel. They allow evil spirits to control their lives. Only the power of Jesus Christ can drive these demons out. Evil spirits are not afraid of us. They are afraid of Christ's Holy Spirit power in us. Only Jesus can cast out evil and give a spirit of love and self-control (2 Timothy 1:7).

This man came freely to Jesus. But he was only truly free when Jesus cast out the demons.

Extracted from "THE GOOD NEWS TOLD BY MARK" Bible teaching commentary by Fred Morris, © 2001, 2008, 2016.

### **Weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

#### **Mark Chapter 12: *The religious leaders ask Jesus a trick question***

The parable of the tenant farmers was a clear warning that some of the religious leaders were not obedient to the LORD God Almighty nor believing in His long-promised Messiah.

Soon after this, they made their plans to arrest Him and kill Him. They did not believe that Jesus had authority to say these things (Mark 11:28). They did not know or believe that God had given Jesus authority.

Some Pharisees and Herodians met together and tried to trap Jesus by His words and answers (12:13). They did not agree with each other about religious laws and state laws. However, they untied together against Jesus because they knew that the people did not like the taxes they had to pay to the Romans. So they asked Jesus what He thought about the Roman tax.

Jesus knew they wanted to trap Him. If He said "Yes, pay the tax" the people would be angry. If He said "Do not pay the tax" these leaders would report Him to King Herod. So He said to them, "Why are you trying to trap [test] Me? Bring Me a coin" (12:15).

They gave Him a silver coin. Roman coins had an image of the face of the Roman Emperor Caesar on them.

"Whose picture is this?" He asked. "Caesar's", they replied (12:16).

Then He said to them, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God" (12:17). By this, Jesus showed that there are many ways in which we can obey our leaders and government without going against God's laws. They were amazed at His answer. Even hypocrites can believe that Jesus teaches the truth from God. We too must never ignore the ungodly nor the self-righteous, as God wants to save them too, even when they unite together against us.

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