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# DAILY *manna*

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GENERAL EDITOR

Rev Isaac Ong

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*Daily devotions for reading through the Bible*

Dear *Daily Manna* readers,

Blessed new year! If you have been a *Daily Manna* reader, let us begin our journey through the Bible again. If you are new to *Daily Manna*, we welcome you aboard. For those who have been reading the *Daily Manna*, you will notice that there are some changes. First, the layout has changed. There is now only one daily reading which will give you greater depth in the study of your Bible. Second, our focus over the next two years will be on the Old Testament.

Take it this way—after the first two years of having a bird’s eye view of the Bible, this time around, we will be diving deeper, focusing on the 39 OT books. It is our prayer that the nuggets of truth highlighted in the daily readings will help familiarise you with the Old Testament.

However, some things never change. We will still be reading through the Bible in two years. It is our prayer that reading through the Bible with the accompaniment of the *Daily Manna* will help you grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### ***A note to new Daily Manna readers***

In this book, you’ll find a reading plan that will guide you through reading the Bible in two years. *Daily Manna* highlights practical lessons from each day’s Bible passages to make your reading through God’s Word a meaningful experience. Over the next two years, our focus will be on the Old Testament. The aim is to give you a more in-depth study of the OT books with a focus on personal application. You will find in *Daily Manna* two scriptural passages, one from the Old Testament, and another from the New Testament. You will also find a simple exposition of the day’s OT passage.

#### ***A step-by-step approach***

1. Read the day’s Bible chapters assigned in *Daily Manna*.
2. Review the Bible chapters to get an overview of what you've just read.
3. Read the accompanying devotions in *Daily Manna* and reflect on the lessons learnt.
4. Pray and ask God to help you apply His Word to your life.

In His grace,  
**Pastor Isaac Ong**  
**Calvary B-P Church**

## BIBLE LESSON

### *Genesis 1*

#### LESSON

### Before the beginning

#### VERSE 1

*In the beginning God  
created the heaven and the  
earth.*

The first chapter of the Bible is also the chapter on the firsts of creation: the first light, the first darkness, the first atmosphere, the first seas, the first day, the first night, the sun, moon and stars, the first vegetation and the first creatures.

However, Genesis is not the beginning of everything. Before the beginning, there was God. The Bible does not prove God's existence; it merely asserts the existence of God. "In the beginning, God ..." [Genesis 1:1a]. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God [Psalm 90:2]. Before the beginning, there is the eternal God, Who has neither beginning nor ending; Who is totally independent; Who always was, always is and always will be.

Before the beginning, there is the Triune God. The fourth word in the Bible is *Elohim* in Hebrew. *Elohim* is a plural noun that is consistently used in connection with singular verbs. This fact is confirmed for us in verse 26 of the English translation, which reads, "God (*Elohim*) said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness ..." [v. 26]. These are the first hints of the Triune Godhead. The Trinity is one God in three Persons Who are equal in essence and yet distinct in their offices.

Eternity and trinity are difficult concepts to grasp because we cannot see beyond this temporal life. But by faith and in gratefulness we know that the infinite God can dwell in the hearts of finite men.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 1-2**

#### THOUGHT

**The God of the universe is also your God.**

### BIBLE LESSON

### *Genesis 2*

#### LESSON

### **The most important things**

#### VERSE 2

*And on the seventh day  
God ended his work which  
he had made; and he rested  
on the seventh day from  
all his work which he had  
made.*

Following the account of creation, Moses sets down for us two important aspects of life on earth: the first relates to God and the second, to our earthly companion.

God ended His work on the seventh day. He rested, blessed and sanctified it. There is no record that God blessed the other six days, making the seventh day unique. When God sanctified the seventh day, He set it apart for His own purposes. God rested on the seventh day not because He was tired from the work. God sanctified the seventh day so that the creation may remember the Creator.

Keeping the Sabbath holy would become part of the Ten Commandments. It was a humanitarian act to give rest to the labourers [Exodus 20:8–10]. It was also a covenant act between Israel and God [Exodus 32:12–17]. We keep the first day of the week holy because it is the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The day may have changed, but the spirit with which we are to observe the Lord's Day remains the same. We should cease from doing our own things and delight ourselves in the Lord [Isaiah 58:13–14].

In Genesis 2, we also see that Adam was given Eve, a “help meet for him” [v. 20]. Eve would be Adam's companion and delight. Marriage is not just for practical purposes; it is a mirror of God's relationship with us. In a marriage, the husband and wife are constantly reminded of the love that they should have for each other because of the sacrificial love that God has for us.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 3–4**

#### THOUGHT

**The two most important things in your life are your relationship with God and with your family. You can fail in any endeavour but not these two.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 3–4*

LESSON

**Tragedy in paradise**

**GENESIS 3:9**

*And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

After many good firsts in the first two chapters, Genesis 3 shatters the pristine pureness of Eden and thrusts creation in darkness. Nothing would ever be the same again after the knowledge of sin.

Eve was tempted by Satan. However, Adam was in full knowledge because he was with her [Genesis 3:6] and he partook of her sin. Once they disobeyed God, their eyes were open. As the serpent promised, they knew evil but in the sense of having first-hand experience of what it meant to disobey the perfect will of God.

Nobody had to tell Adam and Eve that they had done wrong; they knew. Suddenly, they were flooded with a sense of wrong. Before the Fall, there was joy, peace and communion with God. After that, there was guilt, distress and fear. David writes, “My iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head: therefore my heart faileth me” [Psalm 40:12].

Sin destroys innocence, and it creates a sense of estrangement from God. Adam’s first response was to hide from God [Genesis 3:8]. It was God Who came seeking for Adam, “Where art thou?” [Genesis 3:9]. The all-knowing God did not ask this question to get an answer. He knew where Adam was. God was asking about the spiritual state of Adam—“Where are you, Adam? Why are you staying away from me?” Hallelujah! “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost” [Matthew 18:11].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 5–6**

**THOUGHT**

**How good our Lord is when He left the 99 and came looking for me!**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 5–6***LESSON****From bad to worse****GENESIS 6:5**

*And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

**M**an, when left to his own devices, is like a dead fish swimming downstream. He goes from bad to worse. Adam’s sin of disobedience was followed by the sins of murder [Genesis 4:8, 23] and bigamy [Genesis 4:23]. The result of sin is death, and the phrase “and he died” in Genesis 5 bears that dreadful record. Regardless of the age of a person, the final inevitability is “and he died”.

One would have thought that the witness of death would have a sobering thought on the living. But it was not to be. This was the spiritual condition in Genesis 6, where sinful man just went from bad to worse. Here, God acknowledges that sinful human nature degenerates. The reason is that when sin grabs hold of a man’s heart and affection, the sins of one generation’s sins become the breeding ground for the sins of the next generation.

This provides a great challenge to the church and the covenant home. Because of society’s falling moral standards, we have come to the point where the definitions of good and evil are interchanged [Isaiah 5:20; Malachi 2:17]. God’s warnings in Genesis 6:5 preceded His judgement. Matthew tells us of a similar scenario soon coming, “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” [Matthew 24:37].

God’s heart was “broken” by men’s depravity that the only solution was to wipe out the whole human race and start all over again. He did it once in the Flood, and He will do it again by fire [2 Peter 3:10, 12].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 7**

**THOUGHT**

**Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. – 2 Peter 3:11**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 7*

**LESSON**

**The power of the  
Gospel of God unto  
salvation**

**VERSE 23**

*And every living substance  
was destroyed which was  
upon the face of the ground,  
both man, and cattle, and  
the creeping things, and  
the fowl of the heaven; and  
they were destroyed from  
the earth: and Noah only  
remained alive, and they  
that were with him in the  
ark.*

The flood was a universal flood. It rained for 40 days and nights. The water kept rising for another 110 days until it covered all the high mountains under the heavens. Except for those in the Ark, all flesh and every man died [v. 21–22]. It was a total and universal destruction of the earth. God carried out His judgement as He said in Genesis 6:13.

Satan would like us to believe that God is kind, loving and considerate. How could God be so cruel as to send to hell those who do not believe and accept His Son, our Lord Jesus, as their personal Saviour. A loving God cannot be so heartless, can He? Yet they forget that God provided an ark for Noah and His Son as the sinner’s Saviour. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” [1 John 5:12]. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” [Galatians 6:7].

We have seen the tremendous destructive force of hurricanes and typhoons on TV. God asked Noah to “come into the ark” [v. 1]. The ark was provided by God and was the only way against the great flood. Salvation is of the Lord.

When we are facing trials, troubles, crises or challenges, accept the Lord’s invitation, “Come unto Me.” “The Lord shut him in” [v. 16]. He protected Noah and his family. Surely in Christ, God will also shelter you from life’s storms.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 8–9**

**CHALLENGE**

**Preach the Gospel, in season and out of season.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 8*

**LESSON**

**Look unto Jesus**

**VERSE 16**

*Go forth of the ark, thou,  
and thy wife, and thy sons,  
and thy sons' wives with  
thee.*

After 150 days since the flood began, “and God remembered Noah ...”. This does not mean God had forgotten Noah. Rather, it means that God was paying special attention or personal care to Noah or acting on his behalf. Our God has promised that He will never forsake us [Hebrews 13:5]. He took action and water gradually receded. The earth was completely dried after 371 days.

Noah, his family and all the creatures in the Ark were kept safe during the flood. No life was lost. Noah obeyed God. He waited until God gave him instructions to move from the Ark. Noah trusted God completely.

The first bird to fly is always a lonely bird. Noah’s family was the only family on earth that followed God. The whole earth was corrupt. Noah trusted God and God delivered him. We may be the only ones in the family, among relatives, in school or in our working place who believe in God. Nevertheless, be strong and courageous, for God is with us and will not fail or forsake us [Joshua 1:6].

When Noah moved out of the Ark, it was a whole new world to him. There were so many things that he could do—look for a good land, build tents for his family and enjoy the fresh air. The world before him was full of new life and excitement. But the first thing Noah did was to build an altar and worshipped the God Who saved and protected him and his family. God accepted his worship and blessed him. Always put God as your first priority.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 10-11**

**THOUGHT**

**Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 9***LESSON****God blessed Noah****VERSE 1**

*And God blessed Noah  
and his sons, and said  
unto them, Be fruitful, and  
multiply, and replenish the  
earth.*

God was pleased with the offerings of Noah and instructed him and his sons to be fruitful and replenish the earth. Today, the world's population is more than six billion, and we can trace our lines back to Noah. We did not evolve. Neither can we trace our family tree back to apes.

God covenanted with Noah and all flesh that He would not destroy the earth by another flood, and He sealed it with the sign of the rainbow in the sky. When we see a rainbow appearing after rain, we should always remind ourselves of our God's grace and mercy. We can always find refuge and protection in Him in times of trial and tribulation.

But Noah drank wine and became drunk [v. 21]. There are many warnings against drunkenness in the Bible [Proverbs 20:1; 23:19–21, 29–35]. Drunkenness is disgraceful. It is not an exemplary behaviour for believers. Noah, after knowing of Ham's disrespectful act, cursed Canaan, the youngest son of Ham, to be a servant of servants. Bible commentators explained that in verses 25 to 27, Noah was prophesying the future of his children and their descendants. Indeed, history shows that Canaanites did serve under the descendants of Shem and Japheth [Joshua 9:27; Judges 1:28, 30, 33].

Noah lived 950 years and he died [v. 29]. There is no mention of his wealth, worldly fame or achievement, but his name is listed as one of the great men of faith.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 1-2**

**CHALLENGE**

**Make your life a channel of blessings to others.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 10*

## LESSON

**The Descendants of Noah**

## VERSE 32

*These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.*

In Chapter 9, God instructed Noah and his sons to “be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth”. Noah also prophesied the future of his children. To Shem, he said, “Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.” The Israelites, God’s chosen people, descended from Shem. To Japheth, he said, “God shall enlarge him and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.” The descendants of Japheth shall have the fellowship and the blessings of God given to Shem. The descendants of Canaan, the youngest son of Ham, shall be the servants of Shem and Japheth. Many descendants of Canaan became enemies of Israel.

Chapter 10 lists the descendants of Noah’s three sons and the nations established by them. There are 70 nations listed. This is not the complete list and deliberately arranged. Seventy is the number commonly used in the Bible. Historians and archaeologists managed to trace many of these nations to our modern countries.

Japheth is the ancestor of the Gentile nations [v. 5]. These are coastland people. In Scripture, all places beyond the sea from Judea are called isles [Jeremiah 25:22]. The descendants of Ham are located in Egypt, Palestine, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Eber, the great grandson of Shem, was called the father of all his children. From this line came Abraham and the Hebrew nation.

Note the phrase “after the tongue” [v. 5, 20, 31] is in anticipation of the confusion of languages in the Tower of Babel, and the dispersion of the people.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 3-5**

**CHALLENGE**

**May our homes be a house of worship, honouring and glorifying God.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 11*

## LESSON

**Our home in the New  
Jerusalem**

## VERSE 8

*So the Lord scattered them  
abroad from thence upon  
the face of all the earth: and  
they left off to build the city.*

After the Flood, God instructed Noah and his family to replenish the earth. However, the people stayed together. They were of one language and one speech [v. 1] but they were also one against God. Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, began to build his kingdom, which he called Babel, at Shinar, which was Babylon [Genesis 10:10; 11:2].

Here, they decided to build a city and a tower that would reach unto heaven [v. 2–4]. They wanted to build a name for themselves and enjoy their lives on the plain. In essence, they were accumulating wealth, fame and status, building mega enterprises, preparing for future generations and at the same time setting up their own gods.

This is exactly the lifestyle that Satan promotes today. He wants us to devote our lives, effort and time in pursuit of material wealth and iconic achievements to the extent that God becomes secondary or irrelevant. The tower “whose top may reach unto heaven” is generally accepted as a hyperbole. To be sure, it was a tall structure but the point in building the tower was that they people could make a name for themselves [v. 4]. Babel represents the world system, and worldly fame and success become our idol.

God waited for them to repent of their disobedience. When they did not, God judged. God intervened, confused their languages and scattered them abroad. The Bible warns us not to follow or love the world [Jeremiah 51:6; Revelation 18:4]. This world shall soon be gone. All its wealth and fame shall be gone, too.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 6–7**

## PRAYER

**Heavenly Father, please help us to seek things that are above, set aside every weight and sins that so easily beset us, and run the race that is set before us.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 12–13*

## LESSON

**Putting your faith to the test**

## GENESIS 12:10

*And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.*

By God's grace, Abraham was called out of idolatry. From Abraham and his seed, God would establish a people who would be His covenant people. God told Abraham what He would do for and through him if he would trust and obey God [Genesis 12:1–3]. Abraham took a big step of faith by forsaking his father's household and travelling to Canaan, an unknown land. However, his faith was soon tested in three areas—circumstances [Genesis 12:10], people [Genesis 12:11–13:4] and things [Genesis 13:5–18].

A famine in the land led Abraham to decide that he would go to Egypt. But this step of unbelief led to another problem—he had to please Pharaoh. From trust in God, Abraham soon resorted to scheming. All was revealed when God sent terrible plagues to Pharaoh's household.

It may seem that Abraham benefited from this incident as Pharaoh gave him wealth while Sarah was given a maid, Hagar. However, everything that Abraham had received from Egypt later caused problems. Because of their wealth, Abraham and Lot had conflict staying together and thus separated. Hagar, the Egyptian maid, later brought strife and sadness to the family.

God permits trials and temptations to prove and strengthen our faith. He is at work all the time—whether you realize it or not. The important question to ask is not “How can I get out of this?” but “What can I learn from this?” Choosing to depend on your own wisdom instead of leaning on God's promises will lead to trouble [1 Corinthians 3:18–20; Proverbs 3:5–6].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 8–9**

## THOUGHT

**A smooth sea never made a skilful sailor. – 1 Peter 1:7**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 14–15***LESSON****Choosing to receive  
God's blessings****GENESIS 14:19**

*And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.*

After 12 years of submitting to the kings of the four eastern territories, the kings of the five territories in the plain of Jordan decided to rebel. The uprising caused the four kings—led by Chedorlaomer—to attack the plain of Jordan. What seemed like a sure-win battle on the home ground of the five kings turned out to be a terrible disaster. They probably did not know their own land well as they fell in slime pits while their troops fled to the mountains. Lot, an inhabitant in Sodom, was also captured as a prisoner.

Although Lot had been unkind, Abraham showed brotherly love by risking his life to rescue Lot. He organized a rescue mission and went after the kings. Despite the small number of men Abraham had, they defeated Chedorlaomer. Abraham knew his victory had come from God.

After the battle, Bera, King of Sodom, and Melchizedek, King of Salem (peace), met Abraham. While Bera offered Abraham worldly goods in exchange for the people, Melchizedek offered bread and wine. Melchizedek means “king of righteousness”. Hebrews 7 and Psalm 110 refer to Melchizedek as a type of Christ, our “King of peace” and the “King of righteousness”. By accepting Melchizedek’s offer and rejecting Bera’s offer, Abraham had chosen to receive God’s blessings over the world’s offerings.

In all these, Abraham exercised faith in God and made the right choices. Likewise, God allows tough challenges and choices in our lives so that we will mature in our faith. When we make God’s Word our guiding light, we will see His blessings in our lives.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
JOB 10–11**

**THOUGHT**

**The final test of faith is not how much you believe, but how much you love. – Luke 10:27**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 16***LESSON****Helping God out****VERSE 3**

*And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.*

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
JOB 12-13**

God promised Abram, “I will make of thee a great nation” [Genesis 12:2]. Ten years on, Abram and Sarai remained childless. The long wait made them impatient. Sarai felt personally responsible for their childlessness: “The Lord hath restrained me from bearing” [v. 2]. In an effort to “help God out” in fulfilling the promise quickly, Sarai encouraged Abram to participate in a “surrogate mother” arrangement. Abram did not seek God’s will. He foolishly accepted his wife’s proposal and produced Ishmael with their Egyptian maid Hagar.

Their failure of faith has resulted in the never-ending conflict today between Jews and Arabs, who are both descendants of Abram: Ishmael and Isaac. The conflict can be traced back to Abram’s decision to “help God out”. When man chooses to go his own way, God sometimes steps aside to let him live with the consequences of disobedience. The effects of our sins may reach far beyond what we can ever imagine.

Faith means trusting in the promises of God despite problems, and knowing that with God all things are possible. Faith believes not only that God will give us what He has promised, but that He has determined the time and provided the means to accomplish His will in us. Conversely, a lack of faith makes us focus on the circumstances and assume that if God does not act within our time frame and within our expectations, He needs a “helping hand” from us.

God does not need our help. He wants to work through us.

**THOUGHT**

**It is easy to commit our way unto the Lord but difficult to trust in Him and wait till He brings it to pass.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 17***LESSON****Name changes****VERSE 5**

*Neither shall thy name  
any more be called Abram,  
but thy name shall be  
Abraham; for a father of  
many nations have I made  
thee.*

God is referred to as “the Lord” from Genesis 1–16. Abram heard Him refer to Himself by a new name, “the Almighty God,” in Genesis 17:1. To encourage Abram’s faith in the promise of descendants, God changed his name from Abram (an exalted father) to Abraham (father of a multitude).

The name “Abram” may already be embarrassing enough to a man who had only one child (Ishmael) born out of disobedience and faithlessness with a servant girl. It is almost preposterous for a lone-child father to be called “Abraham.” How could Abraham ever live up to his new name as the “father of many nations” in a culture where a man’s wealth was measured by the number of children that he had fathered? It was certainly not by Abraham’s own schemes, but only by the grace of God.

God also changed Sarai’s name to Sarah. There is only a slight difference between Sarai and Sarah, but it is an important difference. “Sarai” means “my lady”—which confines her dominion to just one family—but “Sarah” signifies “the princess of a multitude.”

There are many other wonderful name changes in the Bible. The Lord changed Jacob’s name to Israel [Genesis 32:28] and Simon to Peter [Mark 3:16]. God, too, has given believers many names—“saint in Christ Jesus” [Philippians 4:21], “children of God” [Romans 8:16], “sons of God” [1 John 3:2], “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” [1 Peter 2:9]. Our gracious Lord will accomplish the meanings of these names given to us—even if they seem far-fetched now.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 14–15**

**THOUGHT**

**It took Abraham a lifetime to grasp the meaning of one verse: “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee.”**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 18***LESSON****Abraham the intercessor****VERSE 24**

*Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?*

The angels were on their way to destroy Sodom because of the sins of the inhabitants, “but Abraham stood yet before the Lord”. From verses 23 to 32, Abraham interceded with God to spare the city if some righteous people were found. He turned out to be a skilful negotiator as he prevailed upon God to lower the number of righteous required, from 50 [v. 24] to 45 [v. 28], to 40 [v. 29], to 30 [v. 30], to 20 [v. 31] and, finally, to 10 [v. 32].

We might find it remarkable that Abraham even cared about the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. He could have pleaded with God to spare only his nephew Lot and his family. But he did not. Abraham’s heart was full of compassion even for the wicked in the cities.

Abraham’s negotiation skills offer us some pointers. His intercession was effective because he spoke of specific numbers with God, not in general terms. Often, our prayers are ineffective because we don’t ask God to help us with specific requests. Also, it is impossible to miss the persistence of Abraham in the way he interceded. He did not give up at 40 or 50 and told God to do as He pleased.

Read this: “Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes” [v. 27] and “Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak” [v. 30]. Abraham remained humble throughout his intercession with God. Nowhere in his conversation did he ask God “Why do You do this?” or “Why don’t You do that?”

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 16**

**THOUGHT**

**The heart of God was warmed by Abraham’s compassion. It was no selfish petition, but intercession for others.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 19*

LESSON

**Spiritual decline**

VERSE 1

*And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;*

Where was Lot when the two angels visited him? He was sitting in the gate of the wicked city of Sodom—a place of his heart's desire. He was very much at home with the people there, and he even held a prominent position of authority. He was walking in darkness and was conforming to the world. Lot became a friend of the world and this resulted in his spiritual decline.

How did Lot solve the problem when the Sodomites of the city demanded to have the two angels for their immoral purposes? He completely lost his moral values by offering his two virgin daughters in a desperate attempt to save his guests. Fornication for sodomy—that was Lot's evil way out! It was clearly evident that he was out of the will of God. One can never do evil that good may come of it.

Bear in mind that Lot chose to stay in Sodom. He was reluctant to leave the city of sin and had to be forcibly dragged out [v. 16]. He pleaded to stay in Zoar but finally ended up in a cave with all possessions gone except for a stock of wine, which led to his ultimate degradation of incest with his two daughters.

Remember Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon and Esther in Persia? Despite adverse circumstances they fulfilled divine purposes and were a blessing because they were in the will of God. Compare them with Lot. Are you walking by faith or by sight?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 17-18**

THOUGHT

**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ... – 1 John 2:15**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 20*

## LESSON

**Dishonouring God**

## VERSE 9

*Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.*

Abraham was up to his old tricks of lying again to save his own skin—the first time was in Egypt to Pharaoh [Genesis 12:13] and now to Abimelech in Gerar [v. 2]. This half-truth was worse than an outright lie, and Abraham was rebuked by heathens in both instances. He resorted to situational ethics because he failed to trust God for protection. By his doing so, he stumbled others to sin and almost caused the downfall of a kingdom. To top it all, this sin was repeated by his son, Isaac, at the same place and for the very same reason [Genesis 26:7].

How marvellous the grace of God is in dealing with the deceit of Abraham. He withheld Abimelech from touching Sarah and even referred to Abraham as a prophet who would pray for the heathen king [v. 7]. Abraham—the man of faith—lost his testimony though he judged that the people in Gerar were not God-fearing. Ironically, it turned out that Abimelech was a man of integrity and Abraham was one of deceit.

God overrules the affairs of men to ensure that His divine purpose will not be thwarted. He is in control of every situation and was gracious to bless Abraham in spite of his faithlessness. “If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself” [2 Timothy 2:13].

Honesty is indeed the best policy. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” [Matthew 5:16].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 19–20**

## THOUGHT

**Be thankful for our covenant-keeping God.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 21–22*

LESSON

**Faith and patience**

GENESIS 21:7

*And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.*

Who would have believed that Abraham and Sarah could have a son at the age of 100 and 90, respectively. God had promised to make Abraham a great nation [Genesis 12:1–3], given the land of Canaan to his descendants [Genesis 17:7] and multiplied them greatly [Genesis 13:15–17]. After 25 years of waiting patiently, God blessed the faithful couple with a son. This verse was Sarah’s reaction to this miracle.

Despite the advances in medical science, childlessness continues to be a problem today. For Sarah, no matter how hard she tried, she could not conceive for years. This was exacerbated by the fact that her husband Abraham was “father of many nations”, and that she had passed her childbearing age. Such was her desperation that she gave her maid Hagar to her husband and Ishmael, Abraham’s first son, was conceived. No matter how humanly bleak the situation is, God does not require human intervention. God keeps His promises in His own way and in His own time. Ishmael was not the chosen one to carry Abraham’s seed. Isaac was.

Human impossibility is proof of divine power. The birth of Isaac was significant because it was a fulfilment of God’s promise, a rewarding of the couple’s faith and patience [Hebrews 10:36], and a revelation of God’s power in accomplishing His purpose.

The next time you feel defeated and discouraged, and when you have come to the end of the road of your human capabilities, remember Abraham and Sarah and remind yourself that faith and patience go together.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 21–22**

CHALLENGE

**Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. – Ephesians 3:20**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 23–24***LESSON****God answers prayer****GENESIS 24:14**

*And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.*

In this chapter, we see Abraham's most trusted servant tasked to find a wife for his master's son, Isaac. He was instructed not to find a wife in the land of Canaan, where Abraham's family was currently dwelling, but in the country where Abraham came from—Mesopotamia. When the servant reached that place, he prayed and pleaded with God to direct him to the girl whom God had appointed. God answered his prayer, and Rebekah was the chosen wife for Isaac.

Have you even been given an impossible task? Abraham's servant was certainly caught in this situation. Not only was he given the responsibility to find a wife for Isaac, the criteria set was extremely high. She must be of the same faith, kind-hearted, a virgin and a lady who would be brave enough to immediately leave her family to be yoked with Isaac.

Rebekah was this special person. She not only served the servant water but also had the kind initiative to provide water for his 10 camels (a laborious feat even for a man to do). This action revealed all the qualities that would "qualify" her to be Isaac's wife. It was without a doubt a clear answer to the servant's specific prayer from our Almighty God.

How do you respond to a prayer miraculously answered? While most of us conveniently forget to thank God, the servant's response was an immediate thanksgiving prayer. Let this be a reminder that our God is faithful in answering prayers and we should always remember to thank Him.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 23–24**

**CHALLENGE**

**List out all your prayer requests on a notebook and you will be amazed to see how many of them have been answered.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 25*

LESSON

**God has a plan for everyone**

VERSE 23

*And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*

Isaac's wife, Rebekah, was initially barren but after Isaac entreated the Lord, Rebekah conceived not one child but two children. The Lord went on to say that the younger child will rule over the older one. Conception, birth and death are all not human incidents. Our Almighty God has a plan and a divine appointment for everyone.

Favouritism, especially within a family, always leads to problems. This is common today and throughout history. The Bible cites many examples. While it is wrong to show favouritism, we cannot say or expect to apply this principle to God. Was it fair that God chose Jacob over Esau even before they were born? Is it fair that God chooses to save only some people and not all? Is the doctrine of election fair and can we say that God is unrighteous? "God forbid. For He saith unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" [Romans 9:14–15].

Our finite mortal mind can never comprehend the actions and thoughts of an infinite God. There are some things that we must accept by faith. Trying to explain them could cause one to lose one's mind.

The right way is to acknowledge that God's ways are not our ways. Trust in Him "and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" [Romans 8:28].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 25–26**

PRAYER

**Mysteries, like the salvation of unborn children, the doctrine of election and the Holy Trinity, confound inquisitive Christians. Meditate on Romans 9:15 and let the Comforter grant you that peace of mind.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 26*

## LESSON

**Living faith does not lie**

## VERSE 7

*And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.*

**G**enuine faith in Christ is always tested by temptations within us. Sometimes, trials may also surround us. God allows testing to come into our lives so that He can bring out the best in us. When Satan tempts us, he will bring out the worst in us. The child of God goes through testing as part of the refining process [1 Peter 1:6–7].

It was Isaac's first serious test of faith when he arrived in Canaan because of a famine. He decided to go to Gerar, the capital city of the Philistines. This famine drove him to seek help from Abimelech. Since Rebekah, his wife, was fair and beautiful, Isaac planned to distract these men by saying that she was his sister. Isaac repeated the exact sin of his father, Abraham. Isaac turned to deception in order to protect himself out of fear of being killed by his pagan host.

Isaac succumbed to the fear of his safety and was later found out. Abimelech rebuked him and publicly embarrassed him for lying. Of course, Isaac admitted what he had done and why he told a lie. Obviously, he learnt from his father, Abraham, when he encountered similar problems.

The Lord cannot bless you for deliberately telling lies. Parents must think seriously how to live righteously for their children to emulate. As parents, we have the responsibility to help shape the world's future by the way we shape our children's life values. What kind of example are you setting for your children?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 27–28**

## THOUGHT

**Truth is always strong no matter how weak it looks and falsehood is always weak no matter how strong it looks. – Phillip Brooks**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 27*

**LESSON**

**Living faith does not  
plot**

**VERSE 8**

*Now therefore, my son, obey  
my voice according to that  
which I command thee.*

A good beginning does not guarantee a good ending. Many a God's servant would do well to pray, "Lord, help me to finish well." We may know of some believers who had lived exemplary lives and ended the race well. Sadly, this cannot be said of every Christian.

God told Isaac and Rebekah that Jacob the younger son would receive the covenant blessing [v.19–23]. However, Isaac acted otherwise. He knew that Esau had disqualified himself by marrying heathen women. Furthermore, Esau had despised his birthright and sold it to Jacob. Before Jacob died, all he wanted was to enjoy a savoury meal of venison. He instructed Esau to slay a deer to prepare it. Rebekah overheard their conversation.

Rebekah hatched a devious plan to obtain the blessing for Jacob by tricking her husband. Jacob did what his mother told him to do. He had to lie to his father again and again. The blessing was pronounced after a hearty meal. The deed was done and nothing could revoke the blessing. Jacob had to pay a heavy price for his deceit because living faith does not involve cheating and lying. Due to the absence of obedient faith, this family allowed trouble and disunity to break up their home. Isaac depended on his senses and rejected the way of faith, not willing to obey God's covenant with his family. Isaac was blessed with a great beginning but ended his life under a cloud.

Let us hold fast to our living faith and end our lives gloriously with the Lord.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 29–30**

**THOUGHT**

**Watch out and guard yourself from every kind of greedy desires. Read Luke 12:15**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 28***LESSON**  
**God's abiding  
presence****VERSE 16**

*And Jacob awaked out  
of his sleep, and he said,  
Surely the Lord is in this  
place; and I knew it not.*

**I**t was not enough that he was Abraham's grandson; Jacob had to establish his personal relationship with the Lord. Now that Jacob had received the covenant blessing it was important for him to marry the right woman. He started out on a long journey to Haran where his uncle lived. He headed northward all alone, at the same time fleeing from Esau. Jacob had to go by faith into this strange and dangerous country with an unknown future.

After travelling for three days, he rested for the night in Bethel. That night, he had a dream. He saw angels going up and down a ladder between heaven and earth. It was not an ordinary ladder for God was watching over him with His host of angels to guard and serve him.

Jacob also heard the Lord speaking to him. God spoke words of assurance to him. He promised to be with Jacob in whatever circumstances he was in. Today, God's holy presence is also with us, as promised in Hebrews 13:5b-6. On awakening, Jacob's first response was one of fear and surprise. He did not anticipate God's abiding presence there. As long as Jacob continued to trust and obey God, he had nothing to fear.

Jacob saw with his own eyes God standing above the ladder and heard Him speak words of blessings. God repeated the promises that He had made to Abraham and Isaac concerning His seed and the land. God promised to protect him and bring him back to his home in Canaan.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 31**

**THOUGHT**

**Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God. – Corrie ten Boom**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 29*

LESSON

**Every action has consequences**

VERSE 21

*And Jacob said unto Laban,  
Give me my wife, for my  
days are fulfilled, that I  
may go in unto her.*

Life is not a bed of roses. All of us have to make plans and choices. The decisions that you make in your life reflect your character and destiny. One wrong choice can have an effect on the remaining years of your life.

Jacob must have prayed for God's guidance during his long journey to his uncle Laban's house in Haran. While resting at the well, he saw Rachel with her sheep. That episode reminds us of Abraham's servant who went looking for a wife for Isaac. Jacob learnt that Rachel was Laban's daughter. Quickly, he moved the stone and helped her to water the flock.

Rachel's beauty thrilled Jacob's heart. It was love at first sight. Jacob later told his uncle about his plan for the future. Laban offered Jacob Rachel's hand in marriage in exchange for seven years in his service. A wedding feast was held after the seven years but Jacob discovered that Laban had given him Leah instead. Jacob was angry because he felt cheated. Jacob had to reap what he had sown. He who had deceived his father was himself deceived by his father-in-law. Jacob had to reap the fruit of his sin. We cannot sin with impunity.

Jacob had to work another seven years for Laban for Rachel's hand in marriage. No one likes to be a victim of deceit. However, all these years, God was moulding Jacob's character. Our God is a compassionate God. If we confess our sins in true repentance, God will forgive us [1 John 1:9], and through adversities, He will also refine us.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 32-33**

THOUGHT

**Make your thoughts and actions pleasing to God. Every choice that is displeasing to Him is the wrong choice.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 30–31*

LESSON

**Jacob’s hard work  
paid off**

GENESIS 31:42

*Except the God of my  
father, the God of Abraham,  
and the fear of Isaac, had  
been with me, surely thou  
hadst sent me away now  
empty. God hath seen mine  
affliction and the labour  
of my hands, and rebuked  
thee yesternight.*

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 34**

Jacob’s visit to Haran to find a wife took 20 years. Leah and Rachel continued to be jealous of each other and fight for Jacob’s love. While in Haran, Jacob already had 10 sons and a daughter. Six sons and a daughter were borne by Leah. Four other sons were borne by the maids Bilhah and Zilpah. Then the Lord remembered Rachel who bore a son, Joseph [Genesis 30:23]. When they returned to their homeland, Canaan, Rachel gave birth to a second son, Benjamin.

Jacob increased his flocks of sheep and goats through selective breeding at the expense of Laban. The Lord gave him success and blessed him with bigger and stronger flocks while Laban had weaker flocks. Many times, Jacob saw Laban’s under-handed practice and cheating ways. Laban changed his wages many times and gave him the hardest work to do but God blessed Laban because of Jacob.

You may also suffer similar situations in your place of work or at home, but God will remember you if you commit your problems to Him. Laban was ungrateful and had never thanked the Lord for Jacob at all. Jacob made it a habit to do more than was expected of him. When his flocks were attacked, he bore the losses rather than splitting them with Laban. What a testimony!

Jacob’s diligence eventually paid off. He was blessed with a wealth of flocks and sons. Be encouraged that God’s blessing upon you can “rub off” onto others.

**QUESTION**

**Are you prepared to make a habit of doing more than expected, especially in the Lord’s work?**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 32–33*

LESSON

**Winning God's  
favour**

GENESIS 32:26

*And he said, Let me go, for  
the day breaketh. And he  
said, I will not let thee go,  
except thou bless me.*

Even after 20 years of silence between them, Jacob was still afraid of Esau. Jacob was leaving Laban to meet Esau. Talk about “between the devil and the deep blue sea”—both were frightening prospects for Jacob. In these two chapters we read of Jacob’s contingency plans to defend his family against Esau’s revenge. Jacob divided his big family into two bands. All his schemes came to nought when he met a changed and very forgiving Esau.

Read Genesis 27 to understand the reason for Jacob’s fear of meeting Esau. Jacob relied on human strategy to resolve his problem. However, God was gracious enough to appear to him at precisely the right time before he met Esau. In Genesis 32:26, Jacob’s wrestling with the pre-incarnate Christ resulted in his receiving God’s blessing.

Just like Esau, sometimes we forget to pray but go ahead of God in our daily responsibilities. Even when we remember to pray, it feels like a struggle and we rush through it. Thank God that the Holy Spirit helps us in our infirmities [Romans 8:26].

Take comfort in the truth that God wants to bless you always. His blessing is yours for the asking. If you are an unbeliever, your response should be “Lord, save me” and pray the prayer of salvation. As a child of God, you must be prayerful at all times. How persistent are you as a prayer warrior? “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” [James 5:16b].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 35**

THOUGHT

**The Lord cannot fully bless a man until He Has first conquered him. – AW Tozer**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 34*

**LESSON**

**Tit for tat!**

**VERSE 13**

*And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:*

What a sad chapter in the history of Israel. The name of God is not mentioned at all in the book of Esther. Likewise, the name of the Lord is not found once in this chapter. What happened to Dinah brought shame and anguish to Jacob. Instead of taking charge, his sons took it upon themselves to avenge their only sister. Their pre-meditated plot was done deviously.

Sometimes the behaviour of the people of the world can put God's children to shame. Obviously, Shechem's raping of Dinah was sinful and wrong, yet he loved her enough to want to marry her. What Simeon and Levi did was deceitful, plotting against the whole tribe. They even justified their own actions [v. 31]. The only understandable reason for Simeon and Levi's actions was their love for their sister. However, that should not excuse the behaviour of anyone trying to act in God's stead.

The sins of the father can be seen in their children. No doubt Jacob recognized the scheming behaviour of Simeon and Levi in his own past behaviour. They were eager to wreak punishment upon Shechem. We must remember that vengeance belongs only to the Lord [Romans 12:19].

Disobeying God results in disastrous consequences. Jacob's settling in the city of Shechem and not going straight home to Bethel caused a slew of repercussions on his own family. His children were exposed to Shechemite influence. What we do will definitely affect our loved ones. Hence, be vigilant and live in obedience to God's Word.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 36-37**

**WARNING**

**Do not justify your behaviour by the wrong actions of others.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 35*

LESSON

**Countless blessings**

VERSE 11

*And God said unto him,  
I am God Almighty: be  
fruitful and multiply; a  
nation and a company of  
nations shall be of thee, and  
kings shall come out of thy  
loins;*

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 38**

Finally, Jacob was ready to do God's bidding. The fear of reprisal by the Canaanites against Jacob for the massacre of the Shechemites spurred him on. After removing idols from his home, Jacob built an altar of worship to God. Many events occurred along the way. First, Deborah (Rebekah's nurse) died, then Rachel in child-bearing and later Jacob's father, Isaac. Jacob also experienced the painful shame of Reuben's sin of incest [v. 22].

Innumerable blessings upon blessings befell Jacob. Read verse 5 again to see how God protected him. The Canaanites feared the God of the Israelites too much to pursue them. Our Lord kept Jacob safe to fulfil His covenant of raising a nation through him. All the promises in verse 11 came to pass later.

Our prayer-answering God is a covenant-keeping God. What He promised Jacob applies to you, too. As His child, you must be obedient in your walk with Him. Dare to trust and prove God Who promises an abundant outpouring of blessings for your obedience [Malachi 3:10].

Jacob the supplanter became known as Israel the prince. This new name signifies a changed lifestyle of obedience to God. When you become God's child, you receive a new name—Christian. Alongside this new nature come manifold blessings. Have you acknowledged our Lord Jesus as your personal Saviour yet? If you are already a believer, are you living a victorious Christian life? By God's grace, live godly lives and be blessed by Him richly.

THOUGHT

**Believers are children of the King of kings and Lord of lords.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 36*

## LESSON

**Where are you from?**

## VERSE 1

*Now these are the  
generations of Esau, who is  
Edom.*

This long chapter of Esau and his descendants is important in the history of Israel. Many of these generations of Esau are included in the genealogy in 1 Chronicles 1:35–54. It shows God’s faithfulness in keeping His promise to Abraham. Every individual is important to God.

It is interesting to note that “Esau” and “Edom” are mentioned over 200 times in the Bible. Compare this to “Jacob” and “Israel”, found over 2,000 times. The former were the latter’s avowed enemies. Esau’s son, Eliphaz, was Amalek’s father. Similarly, the Amalekites were enemies of Israel, too [1 Samuel 15].

Tracing family lineage can be tedious and painstaking. Likewise, reading this chapter requires patience and discipline. It may not seem important to a hurried reader. However, we must not forget that every word, verse and chapter in Scripture is important. Verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible extends to every jot and tittle. Hence, do not take God’s Word lightly.

Are you from a family that shows interest in family trees? How far would you go to find out where you are from originally? I know of a friend keen enough even to go to China to trace her family history. If you come from a Christian home, be thankful for your spiritual heritage. As a Christian individual, you belong to Christ, together with other believers. What a privilege to be related in this way [1 Peter 2:9–10]. Are you from God’s family? How many generations of believers are you from? Remember that this spiritual family lasts forever.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 39**

**CHORUS**

**Now I belong to Jesus, Jesus belongs to me—  
Not for the years of time alone, But for eternity.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 37***LESSON****Sibling rivalry****VERSE 4**

*And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.*

In this chapter, we read of jealousy and back-biting among siblings. Of all his many children, Jacob favoured Joseph the most. This resulted in hatred and envy, compounded even more by Joseph's two dreams. His brothers plotted his death but finally sold him to Midianite merchants who were headed for Egypt. Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh.

In today's world, Joseph would be known as a "tale-bearer". Negatively speaking, he was a snitch who reported the deeds of his older brothers to his father [v. 2]. However, Joseph was trying to be of help. Nevertheless, his innocent sharing of his dreams angered his brethren more. It was like pouring oil over fire.

Go back and read the first sentence in the first paragraph again. Many instances of sibling rivalry are mentioned throughout Scripture. It is nothing new [Ecclesiastes 1:9]. Right from the very beginning, in Genesis 4, we read of Cain's animosity towards Abel, resulting in murder. Joseph's very own father, Jacob, was also at odds with his brother, Esau.

Do you get along with your siblings? Perhaps you are the favourite of your parents. My youngest brother is, but he never lords it over us. Sometimes parents unwittingly show more love for one child over the other. They are human enough to love the more obedient one. As the favoured one in the family, how you conduct yourself before your siblings is important. Do not "rub it in" by being a spoilt brat. Relationships can sour then. Ask God to help you live peaceably with them.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 40**

**THOUGHT**

**God is no respecter of persons.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 38*

## LESSON

**The sins of a  
wayward young man**

## VERSE 24

*And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.*

A warning is sounded in this chapter. Even a believer can become worldly, seeking the pleasures, possessions and comforts of this life and ignoring God's Word.

Judah was a child of God's covenant. However, he left home, forsaking the influence of his godly father. He moved out into a worldly environment. He married a Canaanite. God's Word is against unequally-yoked marriages. Judah fathered three sons—Er, Onan and Shelah. He brought up his children in a wicked environment. He was spiritually blind, unable to see God at work. Judah gave Tamar as a wife first to Er. God killed Er because he was wicked [v. 7]. Tamar was then given to Onan; God killed Onan because he refused to marry Tamar [v. 10]. Judah's third son, Shelah, was then a boy. Judah promised that Shelah would marry Tamar when he grew up [v. 11].

Judah committed the sin of incest unknowingly with his daughter-in-law, Tamar. When Tamar disclosed that she was pregnant, he pronounced the sentence of death upon her. Judah condemned Tamar, but he was slow to judge himself.

How many of us are so ready to condemn sin in others while excusing our own? How quickly we judge others and forget how short we fall of the glory of God. How quickly we jump at the sins of others and ignore the fact that we, too, are sinners. Tamar's wish to have children was finally realized. She bore twins, Pharez and Zarah, the former becoming an ancestor of our Lord Jesus Christ [Matthew 1:3; Luke 3:33].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**JOB 41-42**

## THOUGHT

**True repentance results in forgiveness and  
cleansing of our sins.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Genesis 39–40*

LESSON

**The power of a faithful life**

GENESIS 39:9

*There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

Joseph was enslaved in Chapter 39 and then imprisoned in the next. Both chapters have to do with becoming stronger through blessings and trials. The Genesis account portrays Joseph as a very unusual young man. He possessed high morality and fidelity to God and his superiors. He was a servant in Potiphar’s (an officer of the Pharaoh) house. Potiphar had entrusted all that he owned to Joseph [Genesis 39:6]. Joseph was honest and trustworthy. The Lord was with him, prospering him. He served his master faithfully.

As Joseph ministered in Potiphar’s house, his master’s wife tried to seduce him. Joseph maintained his integrity, saying, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” [Genesis 39:9]. He refused to violate the trust of his master and his God. God’s grace enabled him to overcome temptation, but the decision cost him dearly.

To sin against God is to break His command, reject and despise His promises and mercies. So Joseph chose to suffer the trials of lies and false accusations. He was cast into prison unjustly. He suffered the loss of both his possessions and position [Genesis 39:19–20]. However, he became stronger through God’s presence, kindness and favour. He depended more and more upon God. As in Potiphar’s house, the Lord was with Joseph even in the prison [Genesis 39:2, 21].

Joseph was faithful at all times, in all places and under all circumstances. God wants us to be faithful. He wants us to stay the course and run the race for His glory until He calls us home.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 12–13**

THOUGHT

**The world crowns success. God crowns faithfulness.**

## BIBLE LESSON

### *Genesis 41–42*

#### LESSON

### **All these things are against me**

#### GENESIS 42:36

*And Jacob their father said  
unto them, Me have ye  
bereaved of my children:  
Joseph is not, and Simeon  
is not, and ye will take  
Benjamin away: all these  
things are against me.*

Joseph had been separated from his father, Jacob. Simeon was detained in Egypt as part of Joseph's plan. Now Benjamin was demanded as a ransom to secure his brother's release. Jacob also accused his remaining sons for the losses that he had suffered [Genesis 42:36].

At his door was a grievous famine. In his home, he had to bear with the losses of his sons. These problems were almost too much for the ageing patriarch to bear. Thus Jacob said in utter dismay, "All these things are against me." The bundles of money that Joseph returned in kindness to his father frightened him [Genesis 42:35]. In Jacob's mind it indicated that there was trouble ahead. He felt that everything had turned against him.

Grief may arise from false suppositions. Jacob was wrong about his situations. God was actually working everything out for good. God was preparing things to save both him and his family. Everything looked dark and bleak to Jacob. He was helpless in knowing what to do. There was a great need for Jacob to go before God to seek His help and strength, guidance and direction.

When everything seems to be going wrong, dwell on the truth that "all things work together for good to them that love God" [Romans 8:28a]. All things in this sinful world are against us but God. If God be for us, who can really be against us? Instead of complaining, let us confidently say that God is working for us.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 14–15**

#### PRAYER

**We thank and praise You that all things work  
together for our good.**

### BIBLE LESSON

### *Genesis 43*

#### LESSON

### **Bring these men home**

#### VERSE 16

*And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon.*

An aged Jacob faced the fact that unless he permitted his sons to return to Egypt for food, the family would starve. Judah promised Jacob that he would offer himself as the surety for Benjamin. Jacob sent gifts to the governor. He gave his choice possession. Jacob entrusted his sons' care to God Almighty. Often we are also helpless captives of our circumstances. At such times we can do what Jacob did—leave the outcome to God.

The brothers went to Egypt and stood with Benjamin before Joseph. No longer was Joseph in danger from his brothers. He could not reveal himself until he was satisfied that they had truly repented. From the time the famine began, the brothers were subjected to strict and thorough discipline. Conscience must be awakened, pity aroused, obedience rendered and humility instilled. Joseph was aware of all this and watched them closely without revealing himself.

Joseph saw Benjamin and he said to the ruler of his house, "Bring these men home" [v.16a]. This is the first reference to "home" in the Bible. "House," meaning all Noah's loved ones and possessions, occurred for the first time in Genesis 7:1. Joseph would feel very much at home as all his brothers gathered around the table for the first meal in 20 years.

Presently we are "at home in the body". The day to be home with Christ is not far away. Before long, reunion will be ours. Our heavenly home is a divinely guaranteed certainty, not a dream. Are you looking forward to settling there?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 16-17**

#### THOUGHT

**Make Christ the centre of your home.**

### BIBLE LESSON

#### *Genesis 44*

#### LESSON

### **Loyalty to one's family**

#### VERSE 17

*And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.*

Joseph instructed his steward to return the money to his brothers. Moreover, Joseph's silver cup was placed in Benjamin's sack of corn. Then Joseph ordered his steward to go after the brothers, accused them of stealing and then to bring them back to Joseph.

A search was made and they found the silver cup in Benjamin's sack of corn. Joseph told the brothers that all of them, except Benjamin, would be able to return in peace. But Jacob's sons stood together despite the chance to leave. Judah pleaded his case before Joseph, proving his love and loyalty to the family beyond any doubt. He was willing to sacrifice himself for them. He offered himself as a substitute for Benjamin according to his oath made to his father, Jacob. Their aged father would die, Judah pleaded, if Benjamin was not with them on their return trip.

The behaviour of Judah on behalf of their brothers indicated to Joseph that they had changed. They were not the opportunist brothers like before. They loved their father and protected one another. They confessed and repented of their sins. Joseph now knew that God had done a marvellous work in their lives.

The dealings of Joseph with his brothers are to a great extent the very pattern of God's dealings with believers. Through trials, adversities and pain, He convicts us of our sins, leading to confession and repentance. When tribulation has done its work, He confirms His love to us as what Joseph did with his brothers.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 18**

#### THOUGHT

**Let's bring our loved ones to the Lord at any cost.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 45***LESSON  
Forgive****VERSE 4**

*And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.*

It was a very emotional scene when Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers. Joseph told them not to grieve for the way they had ill-treated him. God had meant it for good [Genesis 50:20].

In His divine plan, God allowed Joseph to be sold into Egypt. As a result, Jacob's family could be preserved during the next five years of famine. The nation of Israel would be born, and through Israel God would give His Word, and the Saviour would come into the world. In this way, Joseph's brothers were used by God to fulfil His covenant with Abraham [Genesis 12:1–3].

Joseph instructed his brothers to bring their father, Jacob, and all their households and possessions to settle permanently in Goshen, Egypt. The land of Goshen was a fertile land due to the river that watered the area. Jacob's family and their descendants could live close to one another. He promised to provide for them [v. 9–11].

Note the magnanimity of Joseph's forgiveness. He said to his brothers: "Come near to me, I pray you" [v. 4a]. Joseph treated them now as though they had never ill-treated him. To say "I forgive but I cannot forget" is actually to hold a grudge in one's heart. Second, Joseph did not reproach his brothers. On the contrary, he encouraged them. He said, "Now, therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves" [v. 5a]. Third, Joseph showed his love in a practical way. He kissed all his brothers [v. 15]. He promised to provide for them and their children [v. 11].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 19**

**THOUGHT**

**But I say unto you, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." – Matthew 5:44**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 46***LESSON****God's faithfulness****VERSE 4**

*I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.*

After hearing the good news that Joseph was still alive, Jacob and his family packed up and moved to Egypt. On the way, Jacob stopped at Beersheba and offered sacrifices to God [v. 1]. In the vision God assured Jacob that He would make of him a great nation [v. 3]. To ensure that Jacob's whole family would live in Goshen, Joseph told them to let Pharaoh know that they were shepherds. Egyptian culture forbade the mingling of shepherds in their midst, so Pharaoh would allow them to stay in Goshen [v. 31–34].

The Lord kept His promise [v. 3]. The Israelites did become a great nation. They eventually returned to Canaan just as God had promised Abraham, and He kept His promise. He is the faithful God Who keeps His Word. He was with Israel all the way from Egypt to the Promised Land.

The book of Exodus tells us the story of Israel's slavery in Egypt for 400 years. By the time Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, the Jews numbered at least two million people, thus fulfilling the promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 15:13–16. The book of Joshua tells us the story of the Israelites entering and conquering the land of Canaan.

The Lord Jesus is called Emanuel. Emmanuel means God with us. He promised to be with His people (us) [Matthew 28:20]. He is with us in the trials of life [Isaiah 41:10]. Wherever we are, in the difficulties of life, Jesus is with us. Do you trust Him?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 20–21**

**THOUGHT**

**For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. – 2 Corinthians 1:20**

**BIBLE LESSON***Genesis 47*

## LESSON

**The wisdom of God**

## VERSE 13

*And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.*

As the famine became more severe, and the people ran out of money to buy their supplies, Joseph allowed grain to be exchanged for their cattle, and finally for their other possessions. By the time the famine ended, the people could resume their farming. Pharaoh possessed all the properties of the people in Egypt, except that of the priests [v. 22]. Joseph saved his family and the Egyptians from starvation. He also set up an economic system that enabled Pharaoh to have absolute control of the nation.

Where did Joseph get his wisdom to interpret the dream of Pharaoh? He got it from God [Genesis 41:25–32]. He believed that God would not lie. His words could be trusted. Therefore he told Pharaoh about the dream and its interpretation.

God indeed honoured His Word. The words spoken to Pharaoh really happened. God knows every situation and He knows everything about us. He knows our every trial and endurance. He knows how much we can bear [1 Corinthians 10:13]. We can trust Him for deliverance.

Take comfort in the truth of 1 Peter 5:7, “Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.” When you are bogged down by life’s pressuring trials, go to the Lord Jesus for strength. He is the only One Who truly understands what you are going through. Man can only sympathize with us to a certain degree. However, Christ as fully God and fully man can empathize with us completely, and He can and is willing to deliver us.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 22–23**

## PRAYER

**Ask God for wisdom in all that you do.**

### BIBLE LESSON

### *Genesis 48–50*

#### LESSON

### **Fear ye not**

#### GENESIS 50:21

*Now therefore fear ye not:  
I will nourish you, and  
your little ones. And he  
comforted them, and spake  
kindly unto them.*

The last three chapters of Genesis speak of the life of Jacob in his evening years. Jacob adopted the two sons of Joseph: Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons [Genesis 48:5]. As a result, the two sons were elevated to a position equal with his other sons. Joseph's descendants would receive a double blessing of the inheritance.

Obviously, Jacob took the rights of the first-born of Reuben and gave them to the two sons of Joseph. He blessed each of his sons, and made a prediction about each son's future [Genesis 49:3–28]. He died at the age of 147 and his body was buried in Canaan [Genesis 50:1–11].

After the death of Jacob, his whole family returned to Egypt with Joseph. Joseph's brothers were fearful that Joseph would take revenge on them. Could Joseph really forgive them of their misdeed towards him? But to their surprise, Joseph not only forgave them but he also took very good care of them and their families. His forgiveness was real and complete. He assured his brothers that they had nothing to fear and that he would continue to care for them.

Joseph's forgiveness demonstrates to us God's divine forgiveness. God has promised to forgive us of our sins when we believe in Jesus [John 5:24]. He has promised to forgive us when we confess our sins to Him [1 John 1:9]. This is the assurance God has given to us in His Word. God will forgive those who confess their sins and acknowledge Christ as their Saviour.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 24**

#### THOUGHT

**There is no fear in love ... – 1 John 4:18**

### BIBLE LESSON

#### *Exodus 1–2*

#### LESSON

### **God keeps His promise all the time**

#### EXODUS 1:20

*Therefore God dealt well  
with the midwives: and  
the people multiplied, and  
waxed very mighty.*

**E**xodus unfolds how God fulfilled His promise to Abraham that He would make a great nation out of his descendants, but they would have to go to a strange country. God promised Abraham that his descendants would be greatly blessed. From a family of 70, Israel became a nation of over two million in Egypt.

Pharaoh felt threatened and ordered the killing of every newborn Jewish boy. We read now of God's intervention in this evil plan. Not even the most powerful man in the land could frustrate God's plan. God is the Almighty.

God started His plan by sending a baby to accomplish a mighty work. This was true when He sent Isaac, Joseph, Samuel, John the Baptist and, the greatest of all, Jesus our Redeemer. The war against the powerful Egyptians began with the tears of a baby. God can use even the weakest things to defeat His enemies. Instead of being killed, Moses was adopted by the princess of Egypt and was looked after by his own mother, and she was paid for that.

Moses stayed in the palace for 40 years and was educated in the most advanced world system then. However, Moses knew that he was a Hebrew, not an Egyptian. He killed an Egyptian for justice. This was reported to the Pharaoh who wanted to punish Moses. God does not give us the authority to take justice into our own hands. Vengeance is of the Lord. God's work must be done in God's way. We are only His instruments.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 25**

#### Thought

**Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. – Deuteronomy 31:6**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 3***LESSON****God is with us at all times****VERSE 14**

*And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*

After having spent the first 40 years of his life in the palace of Pharaoh, Moses spent the next 40 years in the Midian desert. God has His purpose. In the first 40 years, Moses was trained in his mind. In the second 40 years, Moses was trained in his heart and soul, and this was to be the second phase in the training of Moses.

God spoke to Moses in the midst of a bush that was burning, but the bush was not on fire. Here, God told Moses that He had heard the cries of His children in Egypt, and He asked Moses to return to Egypt to deliver the Jews from Pharaoh. Was this God? Did He not know that Pharaoh was the great mighty king? The answer is that He is the great “I AM”—the name by which God would make His covenant with Israel and fulfil His promise to bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey.

Moses must have been afraid to return to Egypt because he had killed two Egyptians. Pharaoh might be strong but he was still human. He told Moses what he should do and say. He even told Moses that the Jews would not leave Egypt empty-handed but with gold and silver as well as all their belongings.

God never asked us to do anything impossible. God teaches us and takes care of every step that we take. We only need to be available and to listen to His commands.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 26**

**THOUGHT**

**God knows our sorrows and pains. He is always close to His children. Whatever problem you may have, be assured that God hears you when you pray and He will deliver you.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 4*

LESSON

**Be available and willing**

VERSE 31

*And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.*

Though Moses did not say that he was already too old at 80, he had many excuses. His first excuse was that he did not know God's name. God replied that He is "I AM". The second was that the elders would not believe him. God gave him three signs to convince the elders that Moses was truly God's chosen servant. Thirdly Moses said that he was not a fluent speaker. God reluctantly provided Aaron, Moses' elder brother, to do the job. Finally, he requested God to send someone else.

After having seen the burning bush, heard God speak, and received all assurances, Moses still asked God to send another person for the job. God knows us better than we know ourselves. Thus we must trust Him and obey His Word. He knows our weaknesses, and empowers us to carry out His will for His glory. The will of God will never lead you to a corner where the power of God cannot enable you. Our duty is to be available and be willing to serve.

While on the way to Egypt, God almost took Moses' life. He circumcised his elder son, Gershom, but not his second son, Eliezer. Moses' wife, Zipporah, saved the situation by circumcising Eliezer. Moses was responsible because he was the head of his house and he knew God's wish.

"For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" [1 Timothy 3:5].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 27**

THOUGHT

**Compare the difference. Moses said, "Send someone else." Isaiah said, "Send me." "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" [Isaiah 6:8]. What is your response?**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 5***LESSON****God has a higher plan****VERSE 1**

*And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.*

**W**e are in spiritual battle every day. Sometimes we are under pressure from the world to compromise. When Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, one of the most powerful kings in the ancient world, they went with confidence. However, like some earthly leaders today who are self-centred, the king refused and challenged the authority of Moses' God. Instead of letting the people go to worship God and hold a feast in the wilderness, Pharaoh increased the burden of their tasks. He withdrew the supply of straws but still demanded that the Jews produce the same amount of bricks.

This added burden of looking for straw to make the bricks greatly discouraged the Hebrews. Pharaoh had put the blame of the extra work on Moses, and the Hebrews in turn accused Moses of adding to their workload and bringing misery to their lives.

Moses was human, too. He struggled for answers. Why would God send him to Pharaoh and then have him reject God's proposal? Although he was discouraged, he did the right thing by speaking to God.

In those days, God spoke directly to Moses and Aaron. Today, we have the written Word of God. Then, Moses listened to God and obeyed. Today, we read the Bible and must obey. Then, Moses spoke to God. Today, we can pray to Him, too. Life is not plain sailing but we can be sure that God will never ask us to do something that does not bring glory to His name.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 28-29**

**THOUGHT**

**When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. – Deuteronomy 20:1**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 6*

**LESSON**

**God will deliver**

**VERSE 5**

*And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.*

Moses was sorely discouraged. He had to face the opposition from Pharaoh as well as the complaints of the Jews. God promised Moses that He would deliver the Jews out of Egypt but He did not promise Moses that his job would be easy. Doing God's job is never easy.

God encouraged Moses to call upon Him and speak to Him. God is gracious. He listens when we pray to Him. Our Lord Jesus has made it possible for us to approach God directly. (For this reason we are to pray in Jesus' name.)

God was not ignorant of the cries nor was He unconcerned with the suffering of His people. God did not delay His deliverance so that He could make the Jews suffer but He wanted them to see His power and glory in the execution of His deliverance plan. Shortly, Pharaoh and the Egyptians would be on their knees begging for the Jews to leave. The Jews would also be paid to leave. God knew all these would happen and everything was working according to His plan. God never fails, no matter what happens. Whenever we feel that God has abandoned us and does not really care, we need to remember to cast all our cares and burden on Him [Matthew 11:28–30].

Moses and the Jews had given up but God did not give up on them. Thank God that today He is still the same. Though we may have given up on God, be assured that He never gives up on His own.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 30**

**THOUGHT**

**When the going gets tough, the tough get going.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 7***LESSON****The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord****VERSE 3**

*And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.*

The plague of the River Nile turning into blood took place in full view of Pharaoh. It gave him a first-hand account of the power of God. God had intended for the plague to show Pharaoh that there is no other God like Him in all the earth. But when his magicians duplicated the plague, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to heed Moses' request.

The resistance of Pharaoh came as no surprise as God had already foretold it to Moses [v. 3]. God could have killed Pharaoh there and then with a word. He could have wiped the Egyptians from the face of the earth with just one plague. However, God chose to harden Pharaoh's heart and let the earthly king live on so that he would experience all the plagues and see for himself the power of the Almighty.

How could God harden Pharaoh's heart? God is like a potter, says Paul. A potter has every right to use the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour. Likewise, God has every right to show mercy to whom He wants to show mercy, and hardens whom He wants to harden [Romans 9:15].

The king's heart is, says Solomon [Proverbs 21:1], in the hand of the Lord and that He directs it like a watercourse wherever He pleases. Such is the God we worship: the sovereign One Who controls even the human heart for His own glory and for our good.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 31**

**HYMN****How Great Thou Art!**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 8–9*

LESSON

**God protects His  
own**

**EXODUS 8:23**

*And I will put a division  
between my people and thy  
people: to morrow shall this  
sign be.*

Six other plagues—frogs, gnats, flies, livestock, boils and hail—are recorded in these two chapters. In bringing on these plagues, God shows that He has absolute power over animals (frogs, gnats, flies and livestock), people (boils) and the forces of nature (hail).

At the heart of the plague, however, is the protection afforded to Israel. When the plague of flies broke out, no flies were found in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived. When the plague of hail occurred, no hail fell there either. And when the plague against livestock took place, no Israelite lost any livestock.

Why did God protect the Israelites? The reason is in God. He had made Israel His own special people [Exodus 6:7]. He had set them apart to observe His statutes and keep His laws [Psalm 105:45]. He had promised Abraham the land of Canaan as his special possession (though He had yet to fulfil that promise). He is doing that even now and He is doing it for His own namesake so that His name may be declared throughout all the earth.

Has not God made you His very own? Once He has set His heart on you as His object of love, He will guide you and protect you. He will discipline you and prepare you for life in heaven. On our part, we are to observe His statutes, keep His laws, worship Him, and acknowledge Him as the Maker of heaven and earth, and as the sovereign God Who controls everything.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 32**

THOUGHT

**Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. – Psalm 32:7**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 10–11***LESSON****Tell in the ears of thy son****EXODUS 10:2**

*And that thou mayest tell  
in the ears of thy son, and  
of thy son's son, what things  
I have wrought in Egypt,  
and my signs which I have  
done among them; that ye  
may know how that I am  
the Lord.*

The last three plagues—locusts, darkness and the death of all firstborn—unfold before us in these two chapters. In the plague of the locusts, God spoke and hordes of locusts came, devouring what little that was left of the crops after the hailstorm. In the plague of darkness, God blanketed Egypt in darkness. It was so dark that nobody could see or move except in the land where the Israelites lived. In the final plague, lives were lost. God killed all the firstborn of man and animal in Egypt but the Israelites were spared.

God could have smothered Egypt with just one blow. However, He chose to multiply it 10 times. This gave Him the opportunity to show His power. It also provides a visible record of the mighty deeds that He has done. He wants the future generations who do not have the opportunity to witness it to also know of His power. He commanded the Israelites thus to “tell in the ears of thy son and of thy son’s son”.

The God Who wrought those signs and miracles is the same God Who has delivered us out of the bondage of sin. Though we see no signs and wonders in our deliverance, the renewal of our hearts that led to our trusting in Him is a greater miracle. The peace that we enjoy—that the world cannot understand—is also a miracle.

Shouldn’t we “tell in the ears of thy sons and of thy son’s son” what God has done in our lives?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 33–34**

**THOUGHT**

**We are God’s witnesses to the ends of the earth,  
both by what we say and what we do.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 12*

LESSON

**The Passover Lamb**

VERSE 13

*And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.*

God wanted the Israelites to remember His act of deliverance from their slavery in Egypt. He instituted the feast of the Passover to be celebrated annually. At the heart of the feast is the Passover lamb, to be sacrificed and its blood applied on the doorframe.

What is so special about the Passover lamb? It is a type of Christ. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 5:7, speaks of our Lord as the Passover Lamb. When we examine certain aspects of the ritual, we can see why this is so. The lamb is a male without blemish, so is our Lord (1 Peter 1:19). The lamb is to be killed, so is our Lord, whose blood was shed on the Cross. The bone of the lamb is not to be broken, so is our Lord, whose bone was left unbroken on the Cross (John 19:36). The blood that they applied on the doorframe thus speaks of the blood of Christ, which must be applied to our hearts for God to pass over us.

The Israelites were not spared judgement in Egypt because they prayed or fasted. Like the Egyptians, they were sinners, fully deserving of divine wrath. They were spared because they heeded the word of Moses and took cover under the applied blood of the slain Passover lamb.

Although Christ shed His blood for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2), no one is saved from condemnation unless he heeds the call to repent and personally trusts Him as Saviour (John 1:12).

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 35**

THOUGHT

**And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. – Luke 24:27**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 13*

## LESSON

**Redemption comes at  
a price**

## VERSE 2

*Sanctify unto me all the  
firstborn, whatsoever  
openeth the womb among  
the children of Israel, both  
of man and of beast: it is  
mine.*

The Israelites were finally allowed to leave Egypt. This happened after the firstborn in all the Egyptian families died but those of the Israelite families were spared. However, they were spared not because they were more worthy or more righteous than the Egyptians but because they have obeyed God's command and personally applied the blood on the doorframe of their homes.

The deliverance, however, comes at a price. It was at the price of all the firstborn. From that time onwards, all the firstborn—people and animals included—belong to God and must be set apart for the Lord, or else redeemed. For animals, the firstborn were sacrificed to the Lord. For people, the firstborn must be redeemed or bought back by giving five shekels of silver to the Lord's work [Numbers 18]. The firstborn of unclean animals, such as the donkey, were either redeemed or put to death.

The redemption serves as an acknowledgement by the Israelites that their deliverance from Egypt comes at a price. Our deliverance from the bondage of sin comes at a price, too [1 Corinthians 6:20]. It was the price of the blood of our Lord Jesus, Who is the firstborn among us [Romans 8:29]. He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 36–37**

## THOUGHT

**Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.  
– 1 Peter 1:18, 19**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 14*

LESSON

**God can do the  
impossible**

VERSE 31

*And Israel saw that great  
work which the Lord did  
upon the Egyptians: and  
the people feared the Lord,  
and believed the Lord, and  
his servant Moses.*

This chapter records the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that He could prove His power and glory to Pharaoh, the Egyptians and the Israelites. After releasing the slaves, Pharaoh had a change of heart and decided to bring them back to Egypt.

When the Israelites saw the Egyptians hot after their heels, they lamented and blamed Moses for leading them to their imminent deaths [v. 11]. Despite their unbelief, God provided safety for them by opening up the Red Sea for them to cross on the dry seabed, and closing it when they had crossed, drowning Pharaoh's soldiers.

We see God's provision of safety and care for His people in the most awesome way. As God was leading His people to the Red Sea, Moses must surely have known that the route God was leading them was to a dead end. Still, he obeyed and did not question God, proving his faith in Him. God's provision for His people also proves to us today that God can do the impossible. Even when things look bleak, God can always provide a way out, if that is His will.

Let us learn to humble ourselves today and ask God for a way out in whatever difficulty we are in today. Let us trust in God, obey His will and accept the path He is leading us to. Let us face our difficulties or challenges with faith, that He would provide a way out for us.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 38-39**

PRAYER

**Dear Lord, fill me with the faith to trust that You will do the best for me.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 15*

## LESSON

**Praise God through songs**

## VERSE I

*Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.*

Chapter 15 starts with the whole nation of Israel singing a hymn of praise unto God for delivering them out of Egypt. The hymn had four stanzas: God's victory was announced [v. 1–5], God's weapons were described [v. 6–10], God's character was extolled [v. 11–16a] and God's promises were fulfilled [v. 16b–18].

However, the later part of the passage shows us that the Israelites went back to their old selves when circumstances changed and their faith was tested. They were three days into their journey and had no water, and they started bickering to Moses. God showed Moses a tree to make the bitter water at Marah sweet. After that, God led them to an oasis at Elim with 12 wells and 70 palm trees.

After the deliverance from Egypt, the Israelites raised their voices to sing a hymn of praise to God. There are many ways to praise God with our mouths: we can pray, give thanks, spread the Gospel, give testimony of His mercy and even sing to Him or about Him. Like the Israelites, we must be ready to praise God at all times. Singing is a mark of thankfulness – “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God ...” [Ephesians 5:19–20]

Thankful Christians are singing Christians.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 40**

## HYMN

**O give us homes where Christ is Lord and Master,  
The Bible read, the precious hymns still sung;  
Where pray'r comes first in peace or in disaster,  
And praise is natural speech to ev'ry tongue.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 16*

## LESSON

**Heavenly food**

## VERSE 4

*Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.*

The children of Israel resorted to murmuring against Moses and Aaron for their hunger. They complained that they lacked food, had no meat and would have been better off in Egypt without God but with their stomachs full than to die in the wilderness with God but empty stomachs. That same day, God told Moses that He would supply them with meat and bread.

For meat, God supplied quails and for bread, manna. He gave them these to show that He had heard their murmurings. However, He instructed them to gather according to His rate. Every household should only gather according to the number of occupants. No one should gather more or less. No one should keep the manna overnight (except for the Sabbath, where they were supposed to gather twice the daily ration). However, even with these simple rules, there were some who disobeyed.

Despite the Israelites' constant grouses and tantrums, God was merciful and acceded to their requests. Their complaint of insufficient water (Exodus 15) was heard and so was their complaint of insufficient food. The Israelites had nothing, except faith in God and gratitude for His goodness

Do we behave like the Israelites? Do we complain and grumble for things that we lack but show ungratefulness after getting them? We must remember that God is not our debtor. He is our Creator and Sustainer, and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being" [Acts 17:28a]. Our response is to obey Him.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 41**

PRAYER

**Give us this day our daily bread. – Matthew 6:11**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 17–18*

## LESSON

**Depend on God to  
fight our battles**

## EXODUS 17:11

*And it came to pass, when  
Moses held up his hand,  
that Israel prevailed: and  
when he let down his hand,  
Amalek prevailed.*

Leaving the wilderness of Sin, the Israelites camped in Rephidim. Once again, they complained because of the lack of water. In Exodus 17, the children of Israel had their first battle since leaving Egypt. In Exodus 18, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, visited him. Jethro was perplexed at the hordes of people gathering to seek counsel from Moses. The situation presented a heavy burden on Moses and dampened the spirit of the children of Israel. Jethro advised Moses to lighten his workload by delegating some responsibilities to others.

The Amalekites came and fought with the Israelites in Rephidim. The Amalekites did the despicable thing by attacking Israel from the rear where the weak and feeble were located because they did not fear God [Deuteronomy 25:17–18]. Likewise, Satan knows our weakest point and would constantly attack us there. We must therefore watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation [Mark 14:38].

Moses sent Joshua to fight with Amalek. When Moses held up his hands, Israel had the advantage. But when Moses' hands were weakened, the Amalekites had the upper hand. The lifting up of hands was a posture of prayer. Moses was declaring total dependence on the authority and power of God.

It was a physical battle but the outcome was determined by spiritual means. Just as Moses was interceding for Joshua, we are reminded that our Saviour in heaven is constantly interceding for us as we fight the battles of life. Like Moses, we should also rely totally on God to guide us.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 42**

## THOUGHT

**If God be for us, who can be against us? –  
Romans 8:31b**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 19–20*

## LESSON

**Which is the greatest Commandment?**

## EXODUS 20:20

*And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.*

The Israelites finally came to the wilderness of Sinai. God instructed Moses to say to the people that they were to be a “peculiar treasure” and “a chosen nation” if they would obey His voice and keep His covenant. God called Moses up to Sinai and warned that no other person or animal should breach the boundary of it, or they would surely die.

On the mountain, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. The first four commandments are God-ward while the remaining six are man-ward. After receiving the Commandments, Moses came down from the mount. The people were afraid of God because of the thunder and lightning but Moses said that the fear of God is that which would keep them from sinning.

The question is often asked, “Which is the greatest Commandment?” Rather than trying to discover which Commandment is the greatest, it would be far better to understand the nature and purpose of the Commandments. The Commandments is the Law, which is like a “mirror” that reveals our iniquities. We do not wash our dirt away in this mirror but in the blood of Jesus Christ.

If that be the case, what then is the purpose of the Law? It is God’s way of showing us our sins and stripping us of our self-righteousness so that we cry out for His mercy and grace. God gives His Holy Spirit to all who believe on His Son, and the Holy Spirit enables us to obey God’s will and therefore fulfil the righteousness of the Law [Romans 8:1–3].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 43**

## THOUGHT

**No one is above the law, only Jesus.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 21*

**LESSON**

**God is just**

**VERSE 1**

*Now these are the judgements which thou shalt set before them.*

God reveals His judgements to Moses, to be set before the children of Israel. These are the civil laws governing how man is to live with his fellow man: how he should deal with his servants and with his parents. There were laws on murder, kidnapping and other crimes against man's property. These judgements are to be administered by appointed judges and not by any private individual.

The punishments are more severe for wilful acts, as opposed to "accidental" ones (although we know that God is in control and nothing happens by chance). Our Lord Jesus highlights the act as well as the intent in Matthew 5:28: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Our God is holy and just, and cannot tolerate sin.

God is also omniscient and sees the sinful heart within every man [1 Samuel 16:7]. His justice demands that a man should receive what he deserves for his actions. To sinners, God's Word convicts them of their sinful ways so that they may repent and seek to get right with Him again [Galatians 3:24].

Are you weary and troubled because of sin? Here is an assurance from God's Word: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" [1 Corinthians 10:13]. Let us, therefore, confess our sins and get right with God today.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 44-45**

**PRAYER**

**Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. – Psalm 139:23-24**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 22*

LESSON

**God is gracious**

VERSE 27

*For that is his covering only,  
it is his raiment for his skin:  
wherein shall he sleep? and  
it shall come to pass, when  
he crieth unto me, that I  
will hear; for I am gracious.*

God continued to give to Moses various laws to be set for the children of Israel. Having gone out of bondage in Egypt, the children of Israel were led by God to the land that He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were a new nation, and every nation needed to have laws to govern its people.

Israel was also a new nation with a new King. God was their King, and after living under the oppression of Pharaoh, they now had a renewed relationship with the God Who spoke to their forefathers, and who was now leading them to their Promised Land.

In the giving of the Laws in Exodus 21–23, God revealed Himself and His nature to the children of Israel. Throughout the Scriptures, the wonderful attributes of God are also revealed to all who will hear His voice and trust in Him today. We see that God is holy and just, and cannot tolerate sin. More wonderfully, God is also merciful and gracious to those who are oppressed, and to those who are weak and needy, such as widows and fatherless children [v. 22].

Herein lies the hope and precious promise of every person who will put his trust in God: the Lord will hear when we cry unto Him and He will be gracious. In whatever situation, God will be merciful and gracious to us, working all things for good to those who love Him [Romans 8:28].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 46**

THOUGHT

**Justice is getting what we deserve. Mercy is not getting what we deserve. Grace is getting what we do not deserve.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 23***LESSON****Beware of the temptations of the world****VERSE 24**

*Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images.*

Besides telling the Israelites how to treat their fellow men, God also wanted them to have the right attitude towards Him. Israel was a nation without a land when they came out of Egypt, and had to establish their borders among the people who are already occupying the Promised Land. They risked being assimilated into the foreign cultures of the local inhabitants. Therefore, God forbade them to seek other gods that were being worshipped by the people there.

Instead of following the pagan customs and traditions, they were to honour God in all their activities. They were to remember their flight from Egypt in the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They were also to acknowledge God's blessings in their harvests (the Feast of Harvest) and all that they had gained from their lands (the Feast of Ingathering or Feast of Tabernacles). They were reminded that God demands total obedience. Only then would He bless them by driving out the foreigners, and giving them peace in the land that they occupied.

Similarly, we are reminded also that we are but pilgrims in this world. Although we live in this world, our hearts and minds should be focused on the coming kingdom of God. Do our words and deeds reflect this fact in our lives? We should acknowledge God in all our increases and be thankful to Him.

Are we a good testimony and witness for God in our school, workplace and home? We should also obey God and walk close to Him daily.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 47**

**THOUGHT**

**The Saviour beckons me from heaven's open door, and I can't feel at home in this world anymore.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Exodus 24*

**LESSON**

**Receiving the  
commandments of  
God**

**VERSE 3**

*And Moses came and told  
the people all the words  
of the Lord, and all the  
judgements: and all the  
people answered with one  
voice, and said, All the  
words which the Lord hath  
said will we do.*

After receiving the Laws, the Lord commanded Moses to come up to the mount again, with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and 70 elders. Before going up, Moses went to the children of Israel and shared with them all that the Lord had spoken to him. He then wrote the Laws down in a book for remembrance. To mark the occasion, Moses built an altar and offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. The blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled to seal the covenant.

We thank God for the Bible, His holy inspired Word, which is our inerrant and infallible guide. In it, God has revealed to us what He wants us to know, namely, what is right (doctrine), what is wrong (reproof), how to make the wrong right (correction) and how to keep doing right (instruction in righteousness) [2 Timothy 3:16].

Are we reading the Bible daily? If God has spoken, are you hearing His words daily, and obeying them? Only after we have received these from God's Word are we able to be effective servants for God, to be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" [2 Timothy 3:17].

The sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifices by Moses points us to the sacrifice that our Lord Jesus offered up on the Cross. We thank God for sending His only begotten Son to die for us. By the shedding of His precious blood, we who trust in Him are also sealed into the covenantal family of God.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 48**

**THOUGHT**

**What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 25***LESSON****God's pattern for  
worship****VERSE 9**

*According to all that I shew  
thee, after the pattern of the  
tabernacle, and the pattern  
of all the instruments  
thereof, even so shall ye  
make it.*

While the children of Israel were in Egypt, they did not have a place to worship God. Now that they were out of Egypt, God commanded them to prepare a tabernacle wherein they were able to worship Him. Moses and the children of Israel were commanded to gather the materials to build the tabernacle and the instruments for worshipping God. They were to offer their substances with a willing heart. Only then would God accept their offerings.

God's work must be done by God's people. This is still true today. When believers come together to give to the work of the church with willing and cheerful hearts, God will add His richest blessings to the church. Are you serving the Lord today?

Three main instruments of the tabernacle are described in detail here: the Ark of the Covenant, the table of shewbread and the golden candlestick. God was specific in every detail, including the dimensions of the objects, the type of material used and how they were to be handled. The children of Israel must follow precisely the plan laid out by God. They were to worship God the way God wanted them to, and not according to their own whims and fancies.

Similarly, our worship of God must also be according to the pattern laid down for us in the Bible. The focus of our worship is God Himself. In our worship, all praise and glory should be given unto Him. Do you go to church every Sunday to worship God?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**GENESIS 49-50**

**THOUGHT**

**Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name;  
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. –  
Psalm 29:2**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 26–27***LESSON****According to God's  
fashion****EXODUS 26:30***And thou shalt rear up the  
tabernacle according to the  
fashion thereof which was  
shewed thee in the mount.*

Moses continued to record the instructions he had received from God on how to build the tabernacle that would be the centre of Israel's worship. The tabernacle was to be built according to the fashion that God had shown Moses in Mount Sinai. This verse appears several times in the Bible [Exodus 25:9, 25:40, 26:30; Acts 7:44; Hebrews 8:5].

Moses was counselled by God Himself to construct the tabernacle "according to the fashion". He played no role in conceptualizing the structure. The precise and detailed instructions came directly from God. Every part of the tabernacle had to be made exactly according to His specific instructions, which Moses had to remember. In turn, Moses had to communicate this vision to the craftsmen who carried out the actual construction. In other words, Moses could not have remained silent about what God had shown him, or the work would never be done.

Similarly, God works the same way through our church leaders today. He gives them a vision of what should be done, and the leaders pass it on to the church members who would do much of the actual work.

We should also note that when Moses described the creation of the world in Genesis, he gave only a short and general account of it. But when it came to describing the tabernacle, he did it with the greatest of detail and accuracy imaginable. To Moses, God's sanctuary was far more precious than the world. Are we paying much attention to the house of God as well?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS I**

**THOUGHT**

**The Tabernacle and Temple of Jerusalem have been destroyed. They are replaced by the church our Lord Jesus builds.**

## BIBLE LESSON

*Exodus 28–29*

## LESSON

**Minister unto Me in  
the priest's office**

## EXODUS 28:41

*And thou shalt put them  
upon Aaron thy brother,  
and his sons with him;  
and shalt anoint them,  
and consecrate them, and  
sanctify them, that they  
may minister unto me in  
the priest's office.*

The phrase “minister unto me in the priest's office” is repeated six times in Exodus 28 and 29 to describe the ultimate purpose of priesthood. In the time of Moses, the high priest served as the mediator to help reconcile the Israelites to God by offering animal sacrifices.

Sometimes we wonder. On the Cross, our Lord Jesus said, “It is finished.” His precious blood has fully atoned for our sins. But then why does Romans 8:34 tell us that He is now seated at the right hand of God making intercession for us? The book of Exodus offers an explanation. Here we see a redeemed people—the Israelites—protected from judgement by the sprinkled blood of the lamb, reconciled unto God. Yet, a high priest was appointed to act on their behalf. Why?

Exodus 30 shows us that the priesthood was meant to maintain, not secure, the Israelites' relationship with God. The people were still subject to temptations and frequent failings. So a priest was needed to help them keep close to God. Therefore, priesthood has to do with fellowship. It is needed because believers, who have been bought with a price, still have their sinful nature. Paul said: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing ... For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do” [Romans 7:18–19]. Therefore, the priestly ministry of Christ remains essential because of our shortcomings.

Let us admire our loving God, Who understands our infirmities.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 2-3**

## THOUGHT

**Christ's death at Calvary has forever abolished the practice of animal sacrifice. He is our sacrificial Lamb.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 30*

## LESSON

**Ransom for life is the same for all**

## VERSE 15

*The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.*

God commanded Moses to take a census of Israelite males 20 years of age and older. An offering of half a shekel was to be collected from all who were numbered. The offering was given for atonement, a monetary ransom for the soul.

It is noteworthy that the same amount was required of all, be they rich or poor. This shows that all souls are equally precious in the sight of God. All have sinned and must be redeemed at the same price.

It was obviously not a competitive, freewill offering. No exemption was made and no excuse could be pleaded. The rich was not allowed to pay more, nor the poor less than the half shekel. The wealthy did not have an advantage over the poor. In other offerings, men give according to their abilities but on matters of atonement, all men stand equal. God is no respecter of persons—the souls of everyone are equally valuable. The rich have as much need of God as the poor, and the poor are as welcome to Him as the rich.

There may exist a vast difference in knowledge, ability, zeal or experience among believers but the ground of redemption is the same for all. Our ransom is the shed blood of Christ Jesus Who has paid in full for us the half shekel we owe. This is indeed a very blessed truth. But this also implies that there is an equal duty of believers to show their obedience to the Lord.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 4-5**

## THOUGHT

**We often dwell on what Christ's ransom has freed us from, so little do we think what His ransom has freed us for.**

## BIBLE LESSON

*Exodus 31*

## LESSON

**Rest and be refreshed**

## VERSE 17

*It is a sign between me  
and the children of Israel  
for ever: for in six days the  
Lord made heaven and  
earth, and on the seventh  
day he rested, and was  
refreshed.*

The Fourth Commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work” [Exodus 20:8–9] is echoed in verse 17, which says, “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested.” Our omnipotent God rested not because He was tired. He wanted to set a pattern for men to work and rest.

The Hebrew word “sabbath” means “rest” or “cessation from labour”. The Sabbath day is God’s gift to us. It allows us to rejuvenate our bodies, recharge our minds and renew and recommit ourselves spiritually. Do you wish that you can take a break from the hassle of life? Heed God’s command to take a day off every week from your busy work and study schedule.

Setting a special day aside from work is not an after-thought of God. It takes up four verses of explanation [Exodus 20:8–11]. It is obviously important in God’s scheme of things. The Lord’s Day is a day set aside for us to worship God and to feed and renew our spirits. It allows us the opportunity to hear His voice and respond appropriately.

The world might claim that the Bible is outdated and irrelevant. But here is a commandment from God that teaches us how to manage time, deal with stress, and keep a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Keeping the Lord’s Day allows our bodies to rest and recharge, our minds to reflect and refresh, and our spirits to renew and recommit.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 6**

## THOUGHT

**The wandering Israelites did not have to go out and gather manna on the Sabbath, the day of rest. God provided a double portion the previous day.**

## BIBLE LESSON

*Exodus 32*

## LESSON

**Aaron led by popular demand**

## VERSE 24

*And I said unto them,  
Whosoever hath any gold,  
let them break it off. So  
they gave it me: then I cast  
it into the fire, and there  
came out this calf.*

After Moses went up to Mount Sinai to meet God, the Israelites persuaded Aaron to make them a golden calf to worship. This episode happened because of the sinful impulse of the people. However, Aaron failed to see the need to restrain the Israelites. He gave in to their demands.

In Exodus 25:1–8, God instructed Moses to take a freewill offering to build the Tabernacle. Here, Aaron received an offering of gold to make an idol. While Aaron was not the instigator, he raised no objections as the Israelites proclaimed the calf to be their god. A true leader would have cried out, “This is idolatry!” But Aaron was not a true leader. He succumbed to popular opinion.

To make matters worse, when he saw how the people admired the calf, he went one step further by building an altar before it. He even offered to organize a worship service of the idol by proclaiming: “Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord” [v. 5]. It was bad enough to have created an idol in the first place but Aaron made it worse by foolishly thinking that the people could honour God through the golden calf.

It was definitely harder to stand firm for the Lord than to go along with the people. Aaron had chosen to take the easy way out. His sin was so great that “the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him” [Deuteronomy 9:20]. Here is a lesson for us: Where God’s ministry is concerned, it can be dangerous to just give people what they want.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 7**

## THOUGHT

**Our own ungodly inclinations will lead us to ruin. We must follow God’s way, not our own.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 33*

## LESSON

**God's remoteness  
and Israel's  
repentance**

## VERSE 2

*And I will send an angel  
before thee; and I will drive  
out the Canaanite, the  
Amorite, and the Hittite,  
and the Perizzite, the  
Hivite, and the Jebusite.*

**S**in always creates barriers between men and God. Israel wanted Aaron to fashion an idol for them so that they could feel assured that their "god" was with them. The idol did the opposite, threatening God to remove Himself from them.

At the very point of Israel's greatest sin, we once again see the grace of God to Israel. "I will not go up in your midst" [v. 3]. But God sent an angel who would go before the Israelites and lead them to Canaan [v. 2]. The presence of God was also manifested in "the tent" that Moses pitched "a good distance from the camp" [v. 7]. God's presence would only be manifested to Israel at a distance because of their sins.

Now, when God indicated that He would lead Israel into the blessings of Canaan, but from a distance, the Israelites mourned by not putting on their ornaments [v. 4]. The Israelites were no longer content with just a land of milk and honey, with a God Who was far removed.

There is a lesson for us to learn from the repentance of Israel. The Israelites mourned because they had only the trappings of prosperity but not the promise of God's presence among them. In our day and time, prosperity is touted as the proof of God's blessings. This is not true. Between material prosperity and God's presence, if you can have either one or the other, it is better to learn from the Israelites, put off the ornaments and seek the presence of God instead.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 8-9**

## PRAYER

**Dear Lord, grant us a heart that seeks after Your presence and glory always.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 34***LESSON****God's character****VERSE 27**

*And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.*

**G**od has revealed His character to us. The Lord God is merciful [v. 6], ready to forgive the sinner and relieve the needy. He is also gracious—kind and ready to bestow undeserved benefits and long-suffering—slow to anger, giving time for repentance, only punishing when it is needful. He is abundant in goodness and truth and all He reveals is infallible truth. All He promises is in faithfulness.

The Lord has mercy for thousands [v. 7]. He continually shows mercy to sinners. His mercy and goodness reach to the full and free forgiveness of sin. But He will not condone the guilty. Holiness and justice of God are part of His goodness and love towards all His creatures. None are pardoned except they repent and forsake sin. And none shall escape who abuse, neglect or despise this great salvation. God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children unto the third and fourth generation.

The Israelites sinned by worshipping the golden calf but they repented. God, in His mercy, established a new covenant with them [v. 10]. No one can conceal any act or even thought from the Lord God Almighty [Psalm 139]. God knows all about men and will deal with them on the basis of love and mercy and on righteousness and justice.

God wants your full affections to be His first. We are His creatures. A man who transfers his affections to another god provokes God's wrath and is set forth as His enemy.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 10-11**

**PRAYER**

**Lord Jesus, give me eyes of faith to see Your glory, a heart of love for You and zeal for Your kingdom and righteousness.**

## BIBLE LESSON

*Exodus 35–36*

## LESSON

**Rest, give and serve**

## EXODUS 35:21

*And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.*

We see the children of Israel bringing an offering unto the Lord, giving to Him of their substance [Exodus 35:21–29]. The giving was spontaneous—an outflow of a heart “stirred up”. We also see the appointed craftsmen actively engaged in the work of the Lord to build Jehovah’s dwelling place [Exodus 36:1–2]. There was cooperation in the Lord’s work, as even the women chipped in to help with cheerful hearts [Exodus 35:25–26].

But before all these, God commanded His people to rest on the Sabbath, when no work was to be done. Before we are fitted to work for Him, we must rest in Him. Before we can bring to Him, we must receive from Him.

The lessons are there. First, we have the Sabbath, the soul resting in God. Second, we have the freewill offering of the people. Thirdly, there was active work for the Lord. This puts service in its true perspective. It shows that acceptable service to God can only proceed from delighting ourselves in Him and the affections flowing forth unto Him. Only then can we truly “abound in the work of the Lord”. Anything else is either the outcome of restless energy, of the flesh, or merely “bricks” produced under the whip of taskmasters.

We, as believers, are constant recipients of God’s generous grace. He promises that if we willingly give of ourselves, He will enable us to have an abundance of resources for the work that He has called us to do [2 Corinthians 9:8].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 12**

## PRAYER

**Dear Lord, help me to be a joyful giver. May I offer all that is in me and all that I have to accomplish Your work.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 37–38***LESSON****Making of the Ark  
and Tabernacle****EXODUS 38:24**

*All the gold that was  
occupied for the work in all  
the work of the holy place,  
even the gold of the offering,  
was twenty and nine  
talents, and seven hundred  
and thirty shekels, after the  
shekel of the sanctuary.*

The account of the making of the Ark and the Tabernacle has spiritual significance. The Ark, the mercy seat and the cherubim [Exodus 37:1–9] together represent the glory of a holy God, the sincerity of a holy heart and the communion between them—in and by a Mediator.

The table on which the showbread was to be continually filled [Exodus 37:10–16] represented God's providence for all the creatures and for all believers—the bread of life. The candlestick, beaten of pure gold [Exodus 37:17, 22], signified the teaching and enlightening of the Holy Spirit. The golden altar [Exodus 37:25–29], on which incense was to be burnt daily, signified both the prayers of the saints and the intercession of Christ

On the altar of burnt offering [Exodus 38:1–7], sacrifices and gifts were to be offered in faith. A laver that holds water for the priests to wash in when they went in to minister [Exodus 38:8] signified the provision that is made in the Gospel of Christ for the cleansing of our souls from the moral pollution of sin by the merit and grace of Christ. The walls of the court being of curtains [Exodus 38:9–20] intimated that the state of the Jewish church itself was movable and changeable, and in due time to be taken down and folded up when the place of the tent should be enlarged, and its cords lengthened to make room for the Gentile world.

Through it all, we see how generous the people were and how faithful the workmen were. We ought to follow their good example.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
EXODUS 13–14**

**THOUGHT**

**We love Him because He first loved us, and we  
delight to give because He first gave to us.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 39*

## LESSON

**According to all that  
the Lord commanded**

## VERSE 32

*Thus was all the work of  
the tabernacle of the tent of  
the congregation finished:  
and the children of Israel  
did according to all that the  
Lord commanded Moses, so  
did they.*

The work of the Tabernacle was now complete and done “as the Lord commanded Moses.” The word “commanded” occurred ten times in Exodus 39 to remind us that the workers did what God had told them to do. The Lord had given them very detailed instructions concerning the entire work of the Tabernacle. There was no room for man’s expediency, common sense or human device. They did just as they were told—nothing more, nothing less.

The obedience of Israel in the building of the Tabernacle is recorded for our learning. We too have received a commandment from the Lord concerning the work that He has given us to do. His complete Word is now in our hands. If we desire God’s blessing, then His work must be done to conform to God’s Word. The approval of God—not of man—is what every servant of God must continually aim at.

Another application we can learn is that Israel brought the Tabernacle unto Moses, and Moses did look upon all the work [v. 33, 43]. Everything was brought before the mediator for his inspection. “For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” [2 Corinthians 5:10].

May the Lord find us faithful in our service and work for Him when He returns. That which has been done in full accord with God’s Word, though despised by man, shall be owned and rewarded by Him.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 15**

## THOUGHT

**May we be found faithful at His coming.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Exodus 40***LESSON****Filled with God's  
glory****VERSE 38**

*For the cloud of the Lord  
was upon the tabernacle by  
day, and fire was on it by  
night, in the sight of all the  
house of Israel, throughout  
all their journeys.*

The final chapter in Exodus records the dedication of the building and its content. Moses personally saw to it that every utensil was anointed and placed where it ought to be. God could not and would not dwell in the Tabernacle unless everything was done according to the pattern He had showed Moses on the mount.

Too many sincere people have tried to do God's work their own way and then asked God to bless it. But the Lord's ministry does not work that way. We need to first find out what God wants us to do and do it to obey His will and glorify His name. He will surely come and bless the work with His presence.

After everything and everyone associated with the Tabernacle was dedicated to the Lord, the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle and abode there [v. 34, 35]. In this closing chapter of Exodus, we behold God's grace to Israel. Despite Israel's murmuring and complaints, the sin of the golden calf and the broken tablets of stones, grace super abounded over sin. They needed only to keep their eyes on the Lord. He Himself will lead them by day and by night. What a wonderful finale!

Today, God does not live in buildings. Buildings are dedicated to God to be used as tools for His work and His workers. God dwells in His people and it is our responsibility to glorify God individually and collectively. Let us do everything according to God's will so that God's glory will be in our midst.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 16**

**PRAYER**

**Help me, Lord, to shine forth for You in all that I do, that others may see Christ in me.**

## BIBLE LESSON

*Leviticus 1*

## LESSON

**Why burnt offerings?**

## VERSE 3

*If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord.*

The word “Leviticus” is derived from the Latin Vulgate in line with Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, and it gives an account of the Levitical priesthood [Hebrews 7:11] and the sacrifices under its dispensation. That Moses is the author of the book is proved by Jewish tradition and affirmed by our Lord [Matthew 8:4, Leviticus 14:2]

God, Who had spoken from a burning bush, was now speaking to Moses out of the Tabernacle of the congregation [v. 1]. The Tabernacle was made according to God’s detailed instructions, and it was here that He dwelt and met with His people. After having entered into a covenant with them, the people were no longer treated as sinners alienated from God. A new relationship based on a blood-sealed covenant existed between them and God.

The burnt offering aims to restore the covenant and reconcile the relationship between man and God that was broken by sin and uncleanness. The objective of the ritual is for God to give atonement. The objective of the text is to regulate the ritual so that it would be acceptable to God. God allowed for three types of creatures to be sacrificed in the burnt offering, depending on the economic status of the person. The three types of sacrifices meant that no one was so poor that his sins could not be atoned.

A Hebrew sacrifice, like a Christian sacrament, possesses the inward and spiritual grace as well as the outward and visible sign.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 17-18**

## THOUGHT

**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. – Romans 12:1**

## BIBLE LESSON

*Leviticus 2*

## LESSON

**Christians are the  
salt of the earth**

## VERSE 13

*And every oblation of thy  
meat offering shalt thou  
season with salt; neither  
shalt thou suffer the salt of  
the covenant of thy God to  
be lacking from thy meat  
offering: with all thine  
offerings thou shalt offer  
salt.*

This chapter describes the ritual of meat offering [v. 1] “Meat” is the old English word for food and a better translation is “vegetable-offering” or “meal-offering”. There are in all five types of offerings: uncooked flour [v. 1], cakes baked in the oven [v. 4], cakes baked in the pan or griddle [v. 5], cakes baked on the frying pan [v. 7] and, finally, green ears of roasted corn [v. 14]. Leaven (yeast) and honey were not allowed to be added but salt was to be mixed in every offering.

Not using certain foods like yeast and honey does not mean that these foods are evil in themselves but rather for what they symbolize. Yeast, having fermenting qualities, is an agent of change and signifies corruption with which it is mixed. Honey was used by Israel’s heathen neighbours in their idolatrous rites, and the principle of separation is implied.

While yeast and honey were forbidden, salt was added to every meal offering [v. 13]. Salt adds taste and prevents corruption. The meal offering represents our Lord Jesus Christ as the Bread of life [John 6:32]. Adding salt signifies the savour of our Lord Jesus as an offering to the people. He is the Bread from heaven, savoured by men, and accepted by God. Every meal offering must have salt added to it, signifying the perpetuity of the covenant.

By way of application, believers are commanded to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth [Matthew 5:13]. Like our Lord Jesus, we must be a holy delight to the world, as well as a preservative against its corruption.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 19**

## THOUGHT

**Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. –  
Matthew 5:13**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 3***LESSON****Why peace offerings?****VERSE 1**

*And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offer it of the herd; whether it be a male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the Lord.*

Like Leviticus 1 and 2, this chapter contains three parts that follow a similar structure. The first relates to offering from a herd of cattle. The second [v. 7] and third [v. 12] parts describe offerings of a sheep and goat taken from a flock.

Each part starts by referring to the animal and then differentiates the role of the priest and the worshipper. The priest performs these functions relating to the altar and the worshipper deals with the animal.

The peace offering concerns God as the Creator and the Giver of all good things to us, and therefore these were divided between the altar, the priest and the worshipper, whereas the burnt offering concerns God as Himself—the best of beings—and therefore were wholly burnt. The parts of the meat that were not burnt on the altar were eaten in a sacred meal [Leviticus 7:15–16, 20]. This forms the conclusion of the peace offering.

The sacred meal in the peace offering is symbolic of the communion and peace between God and the worshipper. The sprinkling of the blood and the burning of the fat on the altar shows that the basis for the communion is the atonement that points to the reconciliation that believers obtain through Christ on the Cross. Therefore, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” [Romans 5:1b]. Paul reminds us that Jesus Christ was the perfect peace offering [Colossians 1:20]. By His death, all the believers are saved, whether before or after the Incarnation.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 20–21**

**THOUGHT**

**The Christian life should be a joyous one as commended by God, “..ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee” [Deuteronomy 12:7].**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 4–5***LESSON****Sins of ignorance and omission (I)****LEVITICUS 5:1**

*And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.*

A paraphrase of this verse is, “If you refuse to testify in court about something you saw or knew has happened, you have sinned and can be punished.” Leviticus 1 to 3 have to do with sacrifices of a voluntary nature. But in Leviticus 4, the sacrifices were offered for the sins of ignorance (negligence, oversights) and Leviticus 5:1–13, for sins of omission.

The sin mentioned in verse 1 was committed by way of omission. In this case, a person who knew the truth withheld the information because he was careless or he had unintentionally misspoken the facts. The lesson is that God is meticulous with regard to our lives. Sin is not just an active commission of an evil act. Failure to do good by way of neglect or omission is also sin. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” [James 4:17]

God is holy and cannot for a single moment dwell in the midst of sin and uncleanness. Yet He is compassionate. He made provisions for the poor [Leviticus 5:11] in accepting various types of sin offering, depending on the financial status of the person. What God wanted was not an extravagant sacrifice but that His people should draw near to Him to avail themselves of His forgiveness. Whatever type of sacrifices, God guarantees atonement and forgiveness of sins [Leviticus 5:10, 13] because, ultimately, all forgiveness hinges on the sacrifice made by Christ on Calvary.

Indeed, “the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart”.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 22**

**THOUGHT****Meditate on Hebrews 9:13.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 6–7***LESSON****Sins of ignorance and omission (II)****LEVITICUS 6:4**

*Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found.*

The first seven verses of Leviticus 6 is a continuation of the law of the trespass offering, which started in Leviticus 5:14. The first part [Leviticus 5:14–19] concerns trespasses about holy things and the second part [Leviticus 6:1–7], trespasses against a neighbour. Here, we find that stealing is more than just taking something from someone by fraud or violence. Failing to return something that does not belong to you or refusing to return it is also considered as theft. These are regarded as trespasses (sins) against God [Leviticus 6:2].

Before a guilty party made an offering to God, he had to make full restitution of the articles to the rightful owner with an additional 20 per cent of the values of the items. He was then required to bring a trespass offering as a token of sorrow and penitence for having hurt the cause of religion and of God. That trespass offering was an unblemished ram, which was to be made on the altar of burnt offerings. This penalty served as a mitigated fine and also reinforced the need to lead a righteous life before a holy God.

From Leviticus 6:8 to Leviticus 7:38, it appears that the material is a repetition of earlier chapters but it actually complements them. The preceding chapters were instructions for “worshippers” while the latter were for the priests, as it starts with, “Command Aaron and his sons” [Leviticus 6:9].

One of the significant instructions was maintaining the perpetual fire upon the altar, a symbol of the never-ceasing worship of God.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 23–24**

**THOUGHT**

**The church could learn from what is written in Leviticus. It describes the care, attention to detail, preparation of the worshippers (congregation) and priests (worship leaders) that make for God-honouring worship.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 8*

## LESSON

**Availability with God  
through Christ**

## VERSE 34

*As he hath done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.*

Everything in the ceremonial worship of the Old Testament was typical — designed by God to show us in type and picture the way of true, spiritual worship by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. God uses the priesthood for “image projection”, for showing us truths about ourselves and about Christ.

This is the God we serve. He redeems us through His own suffering. He has foreordained a ministry for every Christian. He provides us with all we need for service. He cleanses us and shows the world what He is like through us. God’s word to you today is to behold, look and see how great God’s love is for you — so great that He calls you His very own children.

Offer up a burnt offering each day, knowing that God has made you His and accepts you wholly as His. Offer up that sin offering each day, acknowledging the inadequacy of even your best efforts. Think of that oil flowing over Aaron’s head each day, the Holy Spirit filling you, enabling you to live and serve according to God’s plan. Know that you are equipped to minister to those deceived by sin, those who feel rejected and condemned.

Then you can be an effective priest — not a perfect person who lives by a list of rules, but a redeemed person whose conscience is clear before God, a priest who knows human frailty, a priest who offers the promise of God’s love to those who need it desperately.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 25**

## THOUGHT

**Have you discovered your priesthood? Go out and be God’s priest in this world.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 9*

## LESSON

**Permanent and  
unchanging is  
Christ's work for us**

## VERSE 23

*And Moses and Aaron  
went into the tabernacle  
of the congregation, and  
came out, and blessed the  
people: and the glory of the  
Lord appeared unto all the  
people.*

This chapter marks the initiation of Aaron as high priest, and his sons as witnesses, into the service of the priesthood. The Old Testament sacrificial system seemed permanent and enduring but it was, by its very nature, transitory. It pointed forward to the time when the system would be replaced by the work of Christ. The Old Testament sacrifices have been made obsolete by Christ not because they were worthless but because He Who is of greater worth has come.

Aaron is not our high priest. The weaknesses of the high priests of the Old Testament have been set aside for the permanence and perfection of Jesus Christ as our High Priest today. Aaron and those after him had to continually offer sacrifices. There was no end to the work they had to do for themselves even before they could think of others. Christ's death is the final voice; nothing more needs to be added.

God's glory is now being revealed, not with a fire that consumes an animal sacrifice, but with Christ's death on the Cross. God's fire fell on Him and now the Father's glory is being revealed in you, working through you.

There is never a moment in which Christ is not at work for you. There is never a point in time when He is not concerned for you and praying for you. He can save you completely and guarantee your eternal life because His work is now to see that what He has promised will be realized in you.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 26-27**

## THOUGHT

**The greatest need we have is for acceptance by the God Who made us.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 10***LESSON****Worship according to  
God's instructions****VERSE 2**

*And there went out fire  
from the LORD, and  
devoured them, and they  
died before the Lord.*

The very fire that had consumed the sacrifice now flashed out again to destroy the two sons of Aaron as they ministered. What they did was to substitute a kind of incense different from that which God had commanded. It did not seem a very major offence but it evoked immediate judgement from God and their lives were forfeited. Is God a vengeful judge, fierce and harsh, Who treats the slightest misstep with severe judgement?

When we approach God, His holiness is what is apparent and His honour is what is seen. God responds as He did to Nadab and Abihu because their worship distorted God's revelation of Himself. Their focus was on their contribution to God rather than God's gift of grace to them. They proclaimed to God that what they had to offer was sufficient. The sacrifice made appeared holy but it was one that was wholly their own. It had nothing to do with God.

We sometimes imagine that what pleases God the most is our own comfort and happiness, rather than making God our supreme source of comfort. Holiness is an understanding that God is completely different from us. He demands a perfection that we cannot return. Do we promote God's holiness and honour in our worship that we are sinners and He is gracious or do we promote our own holiness and honour by telling how much we love and honour Him? This distinction is important.

When it comes to approaching God, let us do so by the standards He has set for us in His Word.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 28**

**THOUGHT****God guards us from worshipping ourselves.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 11***LESSON****Perfecting holiness  
in the fear of God****VERSE 44**

*For I am the Lord your  
God: ye shall therefore  
sanctify yourselves, and  
ye shall be holy; for I am  
holy: neither shall ye defile  
yourselves with any manner  
of creeping thing that  
creepeth upon the earth.*

**H**ow we wish that every choice and every decision that we have to make comes to us in so clear-cut a manner that we can say, “It is clean or it is unclean” or “It is evil or it is good.” We sometimes wish that life were that simple, though it is not. However, there is one issue that is unambiguous—our relationship with God and where we will spend eternity.

God is holy, meaning to say that He sets the boundaries and distinctions between clean and unclean. He defines what we can and cannot do. We obey His rules because He is God, not because we have good reasons for it or the commands make sense to us. If God hates it, we ought to hate it. If God loves it, we must love it. What we do and what we don’t do is basically rooted in loving God and doing what He has commanded.

The theme of holiness remains constant. We may think of the rules that we have read as a means for protecting the holiness of God in the daily lives of the Israelites. The Law intertwined ceremonial purity with spiritual purity so that by keeping God’s Word a person can cultivate the heart of a true worshipper. Some of the rules may relate to hygiene or avoidance of pagan religious practices, but it is the purity of God’s people that is the deeper, underlying principle.

It is the purity of the soul that God is after.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 29**

**THOUGHT**

**Loving God! That is the motive for doing something.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Leviticus 12*

LESSON

**Fallen man—an unclean thing**

VERSE 7

*Who shall offer it before the Lord, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female.*

The simple-minded thinks, “If only I could go back and live life all over again, then I’ll get it right this time!” But it will not happen. This is why God has given us this very practical section in order that we might understand how to handle life.

Here we will find that many modern sanitary procedures are anticipated by the rules and laws laid down by Moses for the people of God. If these had been followed through the course of the centuries, many outbreaks of plague and epidemic would have been avoided — and still could be. Personal cleanliness is prevention against the diseases of the body. Likewise, spiritual purity is prevention against the sins of the soul.

God is not against childbirth, nor does He regard human birth as an inherently unclean event. The requirements were given to us in order that we will remember that since the fall of Adam every human being born into this world is born into a fallen race. God impresses this upon His people by this reminder that something connected with birth is unclean. Circumcision of the male baby is another reminder that something needs to be removed from the life inherited from Adam.

Finally, all this is cleared up and settled by means of a sacrifice. Again, God is teaching us that a death must come in. Life is at stake, and blood and death must intervene. The sacrifice cleanses.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 30**

THOUGHT

**With every birth, another sinner is brought into the world.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 13–14***LESSON**

**If God shows you  
your sin, it is because  
He has come to grant  
to you His grace**

**LEVITICUS 14:57**

*To teach when it is unclean,  
and when it is clean: this is  
the law of leprosy.*

**L**eprosy today cannot be adequately compared to the leprosy that God sent into the land of Canaan. That leprosy was both a horrible disease and one distinctly intended by God to be a picture of sin.

A man might have leprosy for several years before he showed any symptoms of the disease. It was not a disease in which the infected person knew immediately that he had contracted it. Untreated, the leprosy would spread deeper than the surface of the skin—beyond the infected person—and defile everything that the leper came into contact with. Everything that he came into contact with was finally burnt up, and the leper himself was condemned to live a life in the wilderness.

Sin is leprosy of the soul. It is that which is in us that defiles us. It is unseen and unfelt until it begins to consume us. But it is always present, secretly eating away from the inside. Sin makes a person bitter. Everything he touches and every person he meets is defiled by his presence. The sinner can never be an influence for good.

There is a difference between the disease of leprosy and the disease of sin. The consequences of the former are temporal but the consequences of sin are eternal. In the Old Testament, there is no remedy for the leper. But there is a cure for sin. There is a High Priest Who can deliver you. He takes you as you are and stoops down and says, “Look unto Me and be saved.”

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 31–32**

**THOUGHT**

**Sin eats away from the inside out, until life is gone.**

**BIBLE LESSON**  
*Leviticus 15–16*

LESSON  
**The Day of  
Atonement**

LEVITICUS 16:30

*For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.*

The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, is the most sacred day in the Jewish calendar. Only on this day could the high priest by himself enter the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was located and make atonement for the people. Leviticus 16 describes his tasks in detail, including what animals to sacrifice, where the blood was to be shed, where it had to be applied, for whom and why. The ancient rituals carried out by the high priest alone in the Old Testament times present a powerful picture of the role of the great High Priest to come, our Lord Jesus Christ. They carry many relevant lessons for Christians today.

Firstly, they teach us that God can only be approached in the way He dictates. Because He is a holy God, sinners cannot approach without a cleansing of their sins. There is also an absolute need for a Mediator Redeemer to go before Him to intervene for us.

Sin was ceremoniously transferred to an innocent goat in the Old Testament. This imagery indicates that God does not impute our sin to us because Christ has “become sin for us”, and taken the guilt and penalty that was ours. Thanks to our blessed Redeemer, our sins are removed from us, never to return.

The Day of Atonement is a reminder for us to walk daily with our Saviour and serve Him with zeal, and keep ourselves pure from the sins of this world.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 33**

QUESTION

**While the high priest was working hard, the people were ordered not to do any work [Leviticus 16:29]. Do you know why?**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 17*

## LESSON

**The preciousness of blood**

## VERSE 11

*For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*

**L**eviticus 17–20 deals with the practice of holiness in the everyday life of the Israelites. Leviticus 17 details the proper practice with regard to the handling of blood.

The blood of sacrificial animals must be sprinkled on the altar of burnt offering by the priest [v. 3–7]. The blood of all other sacrifices must not be poured out anywhere other than the altar [v. 8–9]. The blood of no animal can be eaten [v. 10–13]. Meat from animals that had died of natural causes or killed by other animals could not be consumed because the blood of these carcasses was not drained, and eating the meat of such animals made the person unclean and required washing [v. 14–16]. Any violation of these regulations would bring severe consequences.

One reason for these laws could be to keep the Israelites from following the pagan sacrificial practices of the Canaanites. A more important reason was to declare the preciousness of blood. It is only through the atoning blood of Christ [1 Peter 1:19] that believers are redeemed. Since blood is equated with life, we conclude that our lives are also precious in the sight of God—so precious that He is willing to pay the heavy price of His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to redeem us.

You must therefore reject any teaching that discounts or denies the power of the blood to save. Let no man deceive you into thinking that you can offer God anything of your own for your redemption.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 34–35**

## THOUGHT

**If we truly treasure the blood of Christ, we will not defile it by persisting in sin. – Hebrews 10:29**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 18***LESSON****Laws of sexual  
morality****VERSE 30**

*Therefore shall ye keep  
mine ordinance, that ye  
commit not any one of these  
abominable customs, which  
were committed before  
you, and that ye defile not  
yourselves therein: I am the  
Lord your God.*

As the children of Israel prepared to enter the Promised Land, God gave them a series of commandments regarding sexual morality. This chapter lists a number of sexual activities considered “unclean” or “abominable”. If they indulged in such sins, they would be defiling themselves [v. 24] and God would punish them severely. As a society, the land would vomit them out [v. 28]. As individuals, they would be put to death [v. 29]. Among the sins listed are incest, adultery, homosexuality and bestiality. The repeated phrase “uncover the nakedness” simply means “to have sexual relations with”.

Before God gave a command in any area, He first established a foundation for the whole matter [v. 2]. He declared this principle: “You belong to Me, you shall not do as the world does.” When the Jews entered Canaan, they would discover that the people there were unspeakably immoral. Israel would have to maintain a position of separation in order to please the Lord.

Today, the Church finds itself in a similar position. We are living in the midst of a tremendous moral revolution. New “belief-systems” are springing up everywhere. Most of our society is pleasure oriented. The mood is permissive and daring. Sex and pornography are everywhere. They permeate movies, television programmes, advertisements, music, magazines, books and even newspapers. Society, it seems, is obsessed with sex.

As God’s people, we have to be different. We must follow the Biblical standard of sexual morality and teach our children to do likewise.

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**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
EXODUS 36**

**PRAYER**

**Lord, please protect our children and us from  
this evil around us.**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Leviticus 19*

LESSON

**Commands for holy living**

VERSE 2

*Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.*

God's people are to be holy because He is holy. We are to take God's law seriously. In Leviticus 19, the Ten Commandments are applied to the various areas of life but they are not arranged in any discernible order. Besides the core precepts relating to God, His Name, His Sabbath and idolatry as spelled out in the Ten Commandments, this chapter gives many instructions relevant to society in general. For example, we are to respect our elders, show concern for strangers in our midst, care for the poor and needy [v. 9–10], exercise integrity in our business dealings, respect truth and property, shun sexual immorality, and get along with our neighbours.

We are to love our neighbours as ourselves, a commandment oft repeated by the Lord in the Gospels because “love is the fulfilling of the law” [Romans 13:10]. Furthermore, enchantments, wizardry, prostitution and all evil practices are strictly forbidden.

Modern society is plagued by numerous ills: turmoil in the business world, crime, violence, juvenile delinquency, moral decline, disrespect for authority, infidelity in marriage and broken homes. To those who know God's Word, all these are clearly the consequences of sin resulting from modern society's rejection of God's authority. They also signal our Lord's imminent return.

In the light of such an environment, the Bible's instruction to Christians is clear. Be watchful [Matthew 24, 25], lead holy lives [2 Peter 3:11] and serve Him with greater zeal because soon “the night cometh, when no man can work” [John 9:4].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 37–38**

THOUGHT

**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. – Ecclesiastes 12:13**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Leviticus 20*

**LESSON**

**Penalties of  
lawbreaking**

**VERSE 26**

*And ye shall be holy unto  
me: for I the Lord am holy,  
and have severed you from  
other people, that ye should  
be mine.*

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 39**

This chapter states the penalties imposed on those who broke God's laws. Fifteen of the offences carried the death penalty including striking or cursing a parent, blaspheming God, adultery, homosexuality and bestiality.

Opponents of the Bible have cited these penalties to argue that Old Testament teachings are no longer relevant, and even to accuse our God as being mean and vicious. But the truth is that our God loves mankind and values the eternal moral principles. The commandments and severe penalties are an expression of His holiness and righteousness. They give safety and dignity to mankind. Without order and punishment we would be creatures lacking responsibility and doing whatever we wanted. Our God, Who does not lie, declares that He has "no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" [Ezekiel 33:11a].

Many of the civil laws set out in this chapter and elsewhere in the Old Testament are no longer adopted by societies today. They were given to the nation of Israel, which held the unique status of being a theocracy ruled directly by God. These laws were meant to keep God's covenant people pure and separated from the evil nations around them. Most governments today are secular and adopt laws seeking primarily to reform criminals.

However, these Mosaic laws still have great practical value to Christians because they teach us about sin and righteousness. They convict us of sin and point us to Christ. We want to obey them from the heart.

**PRAYER**

**O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes! – Psalm 119:5**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 21***LESSON****A royal priesthood****VERSE 8**

*Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the Lord, which sanctify you, am holy.*

The past ten chapters have laws directed to the congregation of Israel. Now the divine Word came to the priests, God's ministers within the sanctuary. They were forbidden to mourn for the dead, except for closest relations. They shall not marry a whore or a divorced woman; their daughters shall not commit fornication, a crime punishable by death. There were also particular laws for the high priest: he shall not mourn for the dead, not even for his parents, or marry any woman but a virgin. The law also forbids priests with any blemish in them to be employed in divine service, though they might eat of the holy things.

The Levitical priests were to be blameless and without blemish, indicating the peculiar sanctity of their office and the holiness of Jehovah whom they represented among the people. The priesthood filled the gap between the holy God and sinful men. The offerings they presented were the means of securing divine fellowship at the Mercy Seat, pardon for national and individual offences.

Every son of Aaron by birth was a priest. So is every Christian by birth relationship connected to Christ. By virtue of his living relationship and life-union with the great High Priest, he is a "priest unto God". He has the highest enjoyment of priestly ministry and nearness to God.

So, as priests of God, let us be more intimately conversant with sacred things and keep ourselves from anything that may defile and diminish the honour of our priesthood.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**EXODUS 40**

**PRAYER**

**I pray Thee, O God, that I may be beautiful within. – Socrates**

**BIBLE LESSON**

*Leviticus 22–23*

LESSON

**Respect for things  
hallowed**

LEVITICUS 22:2

*Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me: I am the Lord.*

In Leviticus 22 we have diverse laws concerning the priests and sacrifices, all for the preservation of the honour of the sanctuary. They were forbidden to eat the holy things in their uncleanness. No stranger who did not belong to some family of the priests should eat of the holy things and the sacrifices offered must be without blemish.

The things that God hallows should be revered. To treat heedlessly any sacred thing profanes that name with which it is associated. If this applied to the altar offerings of the ancient tabernacle, surely it applies to our holy things, such as, the Scriptures, the Sabbath (Lord's Day), and the Sanctuary. The Divine name is linked to them, they are hallowed unto Him and must not be profaned.

The Bible deserves to be cherished as a hallowed book yet many neglect it. Many deride it. Many read it only to disobey it. The Lord's Day is not cherished as "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable". It is no more the Lord's Day; it is My Day. I do what it pleases Me. Our hearts are heavy when we enter the sanctuary of God but our feet are swift when we enter places of worldly entertainment. More forcibly, lives hallowed in consecration to Christ must not be profaned by fellowship with evil, lest it leads to "that holy name by which they are called being blasphemed."

Can we profane these and be guiltless?

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 1-2**

THOUGHT

**God abhors hallowed services by unhallowed souls.**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 24–25***LESSON****Penalty of blasphemy****LEVITICUS 24:16**

*And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.*

We read in this chapter of a violation of the Law against blasphemy, with the imprisonment, trial, condemnation and execution of the blasphemer. A son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, had a quarrel with a man of Israel. While striving with him in the camp, he blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed. Moses at once sought to learn the mind of the Lord concerning such an offence and the offender was stoned, as the Lord commanded Moses.

Blasphemy is slander and insult against the holy God, uttered with the intention to defame Him. It not only expresses the hatred of Him in the speaker's own heart but also aims at awakening in his hearer's mind an equal loathing of Jehovah and all His claims. It is held up in Scripture as an assault upon the dignity and sanctity of God's name (Preacher's homiletic).

Verily, he that despised Moses' law died without mercy. How terrible must be the doom of those who insult the grace of God in Christ Jesus and slight His redemption! If words of impiety were sufficient to bring death upon an offender, what shall be the consequence of a life of disobedience and persistent ungodliness.

Let us guard against anger for it impels to outbursts of wickedness. Allow unbridled speech and profanity will grow. Let us guard jealously the majesty of the Divine name. The camp of Israel and the Church of the living God cannot profane without incurring the wrath of God.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 3-4**

**PRAYER**

**Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. – David**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 26***LESSON****The blessing and the curse****VERSE 46**

*These are the statutes and judgements and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.*

Ceremonial institutions, social regulations and moral injunctions have thus far constituted the book of Leviticus. Now the focus is on prophetic promises and warnings concerning the nation of Israel.

In order to encourage the Israelites to keep the various statutes and commandments, many promises were made: plenty and peace, safety from enemies, and the presence of God with them. On the contrary, if they should despise and break His commandments, the most grievous things are threatened: diseases of body, destruction by their enemies, barrenness and unfruitfulness of the land, the sore judgements of wild beasts, famine, sword, and pestilence. Yet if repentance followed disobedience, God promises to deal kindly with them.

God's commandments are not grievous. He does not ask a hard thing in what He requires. Instead, His exceeding great and precious promises should encourage us to maintain a right relationship with Him by obedience and faith through the Lord Jesus Christ. They who fear the Lord shall not lack any good thing. However, wilful disobedience and open rebellion against His commandments will sink us to the lowest degradation and misery. He regards with abhorrence man's impious rebellion and scornful rejection against His goodness and grace that He will justly and certainly avenge it.

Sinners who return to the Lord in deep contrition and true repentance will receive infinite mercy again. "Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity!" Wondrous pity and grace abounding! How gratefully we should yield to Him our utmost in return for the riches of His grace.

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 5-6**

**THOUGHT**

**Blessings if we obey, curses if we disobey!**

**BIBLE LESSON***Leviticus 27***LESSON****Sacred vows****VERSE 2**

*Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the Lord by thy estimation.*

This chapter contains various laws concerning vows made unto the Lord—of persons, cattle, houses, fields and lands, with the exception of firstlings. These may be redeemable at a price made by the priest. However, nothing devoted to the Lord (for that was His already by the law), whether of man, beast or field, might be sold or redeemed.

Devout Jews who might be overly affected by their zeal consecrated these to the Lord only later to repent of such vows upon calm reflection. Yet God, while valuing the piety that led to such consecration, gently arrested the excess zeal that had carried them beyond prudence in their act of dedication, leaves room for redemption at a certain rate of what had been so consecrated. “God has made some sacred demands upon His people so emphatic as to necessitate implicit obedience; but beyond these absolute duties, there is a realm of liberty in which each may obey the incitements of gratitude and the spontaneity of love. A vow implies something beyond defined duty” (Preacher’s homiletic).

Should we or should we not vow? Circumstances would occur to prompt the utterance of special dedication of persons or property to the Lord, such as special blessings or extraordinary deliverances. Gratitude would suggest and duty would demand exceptional service.

Vows should be made cautiously, deliberately and conditionally. Vows made rashly are harmful in themselves and displeasing to God, whereas hesitancy in fulfilling the right vows will equally wound our own conscience and dishonour the Lord [Ecclesiastes 5:4–5].

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TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE  
IN 2 YEARS, READ  
**LEVITICUS 7**

**THOUGHT**

**Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. – Isaac Watts**