

DAILY PRAYER POINTS

SUNDAY – There is a reason the Lord has brought you to this new week. Pray that He will shine brightly through you so that everyone that comes across you this week may know His presence in you and be blessed by your words and actions.

MONDAY – Thank God for the strength and ability to serve Him each day through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit. Pray that we’ll all know God’s blessing and strength in serving the Lord with joy and thankfulness.

TUESDAY – Praise God that he loves us with a ‘love that surpasses all knowledge.’ pray that we would live a life worthy of his calling. (Eph.3:19)

WEDNESDAY – Ask God to help Session and the Committee of Management as we prayerfully plan for the future of St Andrew’s during an uncertain time within the PCQ and Australia, as a whole.

THURSDAY – Pray for **Stuart and Ruth Waugh**

FRIDAY – Continue to pray for those in need of God’s healing and comforting hand: Belinda Birch, Edith Collins, John Donnell, Jane Kippin, Kevin Petrofski Jr and Margaret Petrofski, and Dawn Robinson.

SATURDAY – Give thanks that in all circumstances our Heavenly Father knows our needs and supplies them richly to us in His Son and His Spirit.

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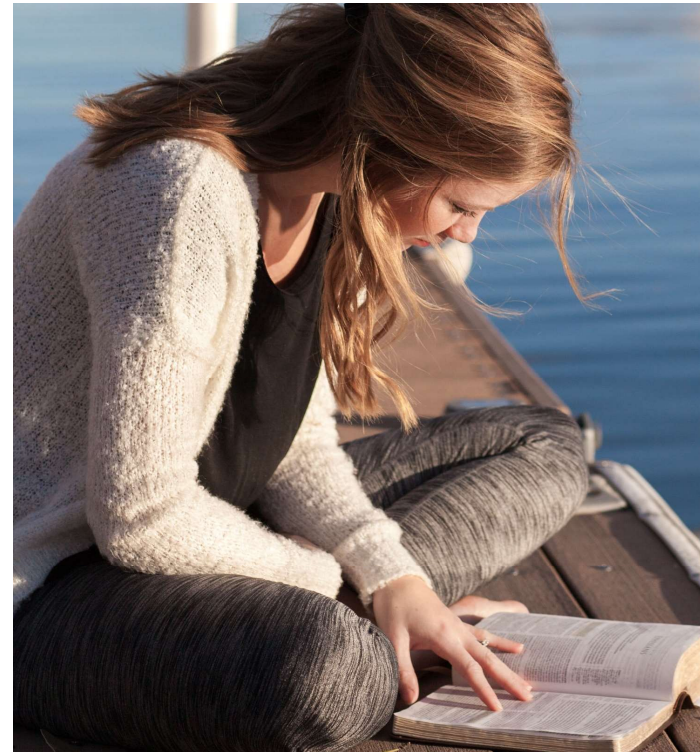
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THE ANCHOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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DAILY PRAYER POINTS

IN PRAISE OF GENESIS 10

By **MEREDITH VAN DER KLIP**

HAVE YOU EVER FOUND YOURSELF IN CERTAIN PARTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND WONDERED, “WHO ARE THOSE MOABITES?”

And while we’re thinking about this, who are the Amorites, the Jebusites, the Edomites—even the Canaanites—not to mention the countless other groups of people who never seem to be favourably disposed towards God’s people and whose names always seem to end in “-ite”?

THE ANCHOR

The end of the year is fast approaching, and soon enough those who read through the Bible using a reading plan, or who plan to do so in 2023, will find themselves at the beginning of January and very likely opening up Genesis. We will read about Creation and the Fall, Cain and Abel, and the story of Noah, finishing with the terrible story of Ham, son of Noah, who dishonoured his father and whose family line was thereafter cursed.

And then comes Genesis chapter 10—the account of the family lines of Noah's sons Japheth, Ham and Shem. It's a chapter that's very hard to read because it contains lengthy lists of long names of people and places that are foreign to the eye and hard to pronounce. Some brave souls will read through this chapter while others will settle with skimming their eyes over it. Some will skip it entirely, moving straight to Babel in chapter 11, and sadly for some, this will be the end of using a reading plan for another year.

But for those who press into Genesis 10 and read it closely there is a great reward, especially if you look carefully at the descendants of cursed Ham.

We see straight away in verse 6 that Ham's sons are Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan. Egypt and Canaan might sound familiar right from the get-go. Continuous, confirmed enemies of God's people.

We read on and learn in verse 8 that Ham's son Cush is the father of Nimrod, who was a mighty warrior. The first centres of his kingdom include Babylon

(who later removed the Southern Kingdom of Judah into exile at the end of 2 Kings) and Shinar (where the Tower of Babel was famously built in Genesis 11.) Among other places, Nimrod then extends into Assyria (who took over and exiled the Northern Kingdom of Israel midway through 2 Kings) and builds Ninevah (which happens to be the capital city of Assyria and is cast unfavourably into the spotlight in Jonah's story.)



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★ THE GOSPEL ★

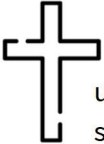
WHAT YOU NEED

THERE IS EVERYTHING IN THE GOSPEL THAT YOU WANT. DO YOU WANT SOMETHING TO BEAR YOU UP IN TROUBLE? IT IS IN THE GOSPEL: "AS THY DAYS, SO SHALL THY STRENGTH BE." DO YOU NEED SOMETHING TO NERVE YOU FOR DUTY? THERE IS GRACE ALL-SUFFICIENT FOR EVERYTHING WHICH GOD CALLS YOU TO UNDERGO OR TO ACCOMPLISH. DO YOU NEED SOMETHING TO LIGHT UP THE EYE OF YOUR HOPE? OH! THERE ARE JOY-FLASHES IN THE GOSPEL WHICH MAKE YOUR EYE FLASH BACK AGAIN THE IMMORTAL FIRES OF BLISS. DO YOU WANT SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU STAND STEADFAST IN THE MIDST OF TEMPTATION? IN THE GOSPEL THERE IS THAT WHICH CAN MAKE YOU IMMOVABLE, ALWAYS ABUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD. THERE IS NO PASSION, NO AFFECTION, NO THOUGHT, NO WISH, NO POWER WHICH THE GOSPEL HAS NOT FILLED TO THE VERY BRIM. THE GOSPEL WAS EVIDENTLY MEANT FOR MANHOOD: IT IS ADAPTED TO IT IN ITS EVERY PART. THERE IS KNOWLEDGE FOR THE HEAD; THERE IS LOVE FOR THE HEART; THERE IS GUIDANCE FOR THE FOOT.

[GLEANINGS - SPURGEON]

Our courage comes from this promise: if we believe God’s word and do it, God will make us as immovable as his word! “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock” (Matt. 7:24, emphasis added).

COMFORT

 Finally, when we have that Copernican-like revolution regarding the word of God and see it as central, immovable, and unchanging, it gives us not only confidence and courage but also a sweet comfort. How so?

If what God’s word says is true, then what God says about sinners and salvation is true, too. That means, what Jesus says to you and me is true: “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners” (Mark 2:17) “Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28) “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live” (John 11:25). Don’t overestimate the truth that can be packed into a children’s hymn: “Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so.”

This is where the psalmist takes us. Psalm 119 goes on, “Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations” (Ps. 119:89–90). Because God’s word does not change, you can rest your head on your pillow tonight and sleep knowing you are saved. He has promised his faithfulness to you, and he does not lie or change his mind. Just like the stars in the sky are not going anywhere, neither are God’s promises. Even on cloudy nights when you can’t see the stars, they are still there. That’s like God’s word. It’s true on the days it’s easy to believe. It’s true on the days it’s not so easy to believe. It’s true today.



So be confident, dear Christian. You are not following a fantasy or a farce, but a firmly fixed word that will not be moved. Be courageous to stand up for it, for when you do, you stand on the firmest foundation there is. And be comforted, for just like his word, God’s faithfulness endures to all generations.



In verse 13, we learn that Ham’s son Egypt is the father of the Kasluhites, from whom the Philistines were descended. We know Goliath of course, that most famous of Philistines, but the five Philistine cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron were a constant source of annoyance to the people of Israel throughout the Old Testament.

And in verse 14 we discover that Ham’s son Canaan is the father of Sidon (think Tyre and Sidon) and the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites and Hivites, among others—all of the Canaanite nations that Israel was tasked with removing from the Promised Land under Joshua.

See how many of the cities, nations and tribes—bothersome at best and outright enemies at worst—were descended from cursed Ham.

Once your detective eyes are cued-in, and you’re upskilled and excited to persevere with next year’s reading plan, also look out for Genesis 19 (where we find the terrible backstory to the Moabites and Ammonites), Genesis 21 (for the origins of the Ishmaelites, sometimes known as the Midianites) and Genesis 25 (where we meet Edom).

These genealogies are a key that unlocks so much of the Old Testament and paves the way for the New Testament. Nearly all of the enemies of God are introduced in Genesis (most of them in Chapter 10) and knowing their origins helps us to better understand so much of what happens beyond Genesis.

Read it, enjoy it, learn from it and press on continuing to read difficult and hard parts of the Bible.



GIFTS AND OFFERINGS

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SEE HOW MANY OF THE CITIES, NATIONS AND TRIBES—BOTHERSOME AT BEST AND OUTRIGHT ENEMIES AT WORST—WERE DESCENDED FROM CURSED HAM.

MONTH OF PSALMS

BIBLE READING PLAN

The psalms are the beautiful songs of the Hebrew people. Whether you're searching for a little sliver of peace amidst uncertainty or strength during a trying time you can find it in the Psalms.

WEEK 3 | ☐ Day 15 **Nature** Psalm 50, 104, 147, 148 ☐ Day 16 **Peace** Psalm 23, 133, 119:161–168 ☐ Day 17 **Power of God** Psalm 68, 93, 135
 ☐ Day 18 **Praise** Psalm, 65, 98, 138 ☐ Day 19 **Prayer** Psalm 17, 20, 102
 ☐ Day 20 **Protection** Psalm 59, 62, 124 ☐ Day 21 **Safety in God** Psalm 11, 16, 142, 46 ☐ Day 22 **Rejoicing** Psalm 30, 47, 97 ☐ Day 23 **Righteousness** Psalm 1, 15, 112.

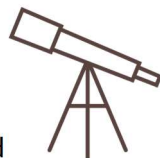
THREE BLESSINGS OF A WORD-CENTERED LIFE.

By **JONATHAN LANDRY CRUSE**

IN THE MID-16TH CENTURY, A CATHOLIC CLERIC, MATHEMATICIAN, AND ASTRONOMER NAMED NICOLAUS COPERNICUS LOOKED UP INTO THE NIGHT SKY AND MADE A FASCINATING—AND CONTROVERSIAL—DISCOVERY: Even though it looked like everything up there was moving, it was the earth that was moving, not the Sun or the stars in the sky. In honour of how that discovery transformed the sciences, we have appropriately called it the Copernican Revolution. It changed the way we all view the world—literally.

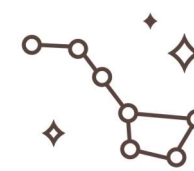
Around the same time, a similar revolution was happening in Germany and other parts of Europe with the recovery of the doctrine now known as sola Scriptura—the understanding that the word of God is central. God's word is as immovable as the sun or stars. The Scriptures tell us: "Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens" (Ps. 119:89). That recognition can only ever be revolutionary.

We could use a similar revolution or reformation today, couldn't we? We live in a day when the self stands at the center of the universe, and everything else must orbit around



it. That's the prevailing assumption of modern man. But what happens when you recognize, receive, and rejoice in the reality that God's word is firmly fixed like the sun in the heavens? Let me suggest three things.

CONFIDENCE



First, a word-centered life will give you confidence. Christians need that. Every day, the media, our workplaces, and our circles of family and friends offer a "new" take on reality that questions everything from the meaning of marriage to the meaning of pronouns. It's natural for us to ask, Are we antiquated? Do our views need to be updated and adapted to get with the times? Fixing our faith on the firmly fixed word of God gives us confidence that even as culture changes, God's word will not. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). If we cling to God's word, no matter how confused our world might be, and no matter what others may say, we can be confident we're not crazy. We have a sure and steady guide for faith and life.

COURAGE

From our confidence in the reliability and unchangeability of God's word will come a courage to live it out. It's one thing to believe God's word is true in the face of the lies of the world; it's another thing entirely to stand up in society and claim, "I believe it, and I'm going to live what it says, no matter what you think or do." That requires a supernatural boldness and integrity.

The prophet Elijah in 2 Kings 1 is a good example of how we're meant to live. Elijah, representing God's word through the prophetic office, has just announced judgment on Israel's king. The king doesn't like it, so he sends fifty soldiers to go and arrest Elijah, who is sitting atop a hill. The men find him and say, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.'" But Elijah will not budge. It's a great picture, isn't it? Just as the word of God will not come down from its place in the heavens, the man of God's word won't come down from that hill. Likewise, we—the people of God's word—must not come down and cave when the world wants us to render a different verdict. That takes courage.

