

## Prayer

Speak to me Lord in the quiet moments offered by this day. Touch me when I need to be reminded to turn to You and choose Your way. Encourage me to exercise the gifts and graces You have given me, as a child of God. Walk beside me all the way, Your wisdom ever present in what I do and say. Thank You, Lord Jesus Christ: AMEN

## Other Prayer Suggestions

### Weekly Theme: Manufacturing

*We will pray this coming week for the many different faces of manufacturing industry. Pray today for any industries that are major employers near to where you live.*

### On-going prayers

- *Pray for the U.N. and all who serve others through its agencies*
- *Pray for Israel and Palestine, and pray for God's will to be done*
- *Give thanks for the guiding hand of God on your life*

## Meditation

*(speaking to yourself about priorities)*

Keep going, my soul, keep pressing on:

When Satan speaks to twist the meaning of what you hear,  
Fall back on the Word, your sure dependable defence.

When others seek more of your time than you can honestly give,  
Put Christ and family first, and work from sure foundations.

When the church of God appears all too dull, and uninvitingly slow,  
Remember its inherent power awaiting the Spirit's release.

When Christ gives you more to do than you've ever done before,  
Fear nothing, act in faith, trust Him and speak your heart.

When you become enthused by the glory of earthly success  
Give it all back to God; no tithe will do, give it all.

Keep pressing on, my soul, the future always comes  
For the future He has awarded you is good. Yes, it is good.

## Bible Study - 2 Samuel 5:6-12

<sup>6</sup> *The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, 'You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off.' They thought, 'David cannot get in here.'*<sup>7</sup> *Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.*<sup>8</sup> *On that day, David said, 'Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those "lame and blind" who are David's enemies.' That is why they say, 'The "blind and lame" will not enter the palace.'*

<sup>9</sup> *David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward.*<sup>10</sup> *And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.*

<sup>11</sup> Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David. <sup>12</sup> And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

## Review

David was now King of all Israel. He had previously ruled Judah for seven years from the city of Hebron in the far south, but his new position required him to find a capital city that was not part of either the northern or the southern tribal lands. If David made one of the Judean or Israelite cities his capital, he could have been accused of favouritism, and a bad start to his reign.

In this light, David's choice of Jerusalem was a stroke of genius. The city was a stronghold Joshua had failed to capture from the Jebusites in the initial invasion of the Promised Land (Joshua 15:63), largely because it was a well fortified city in difficult terrain. Jerusalem was also a very ancient city, probably the site of 'Salem', the city of King Melchizedek, to whom Abraham brought tribute (Gen 14:18) as a priest of 'God most High', generations before. The city was in the extreme north of Judah, on the border with Ephraim (a dominant northern tribe), and very close to Benjamin (the tribe of King Saul). As a capital city, it would serve the purpose of uniting the whole of Israel, having no history of occupation by any of the Israelite tribes. Also, the name Jerusalem means 'city of peace', though the name may have its origins in the name of the 'Jebusites' who occupied the city before the time of David ('Jebu' + 'Salem').

For David, Jerusalem represented a formidable fortress, the occupation of which would tax his military ability. Many had tried to take the city before, but had failed. It appears that some kind of myth had arisen about the invincibility of the city, and we find it in scripture within the talk about the 'lame and the blind'. As we read the story ourselves, the references seem odd, especially where it says that 'lame and the blind' are David's enemies (5:8). It is likely, however, that the myth was something to the effect that the city was so naturally invincible that even the lame and the blind could defend it (as in verse 6).

The Jebusites taunted David with this myth (5:6) when he approached the city. David, however, managed to take the city by using a water shaft that went right into the middle of the city and attacking it from within rather than approaching from outside. The Jebusites were so sure that they could not be dislodged, they were not properly defended within the city itself, and once David's men had surprised the city and taken it, you can imagine the taunts they would have made to the Jebusites; the 'lame and the blind' who were supposedly capable of defending the city! This, along with the fact that no Gentiles (the Jebusites were Gentiles) would have been allowed into David's palace or the Tabernacle (see 2 Samuel 6) explains the references to the blind and the lame in verse 8.

This scripture represents no offence to real 'blind and lame' people and does not indicate any pre-existing prejudice on the part of David. Neither is there any commandment of the 'Torah' (law) of the Old Testament that prevents anyone with a physical defect from worshipping God (though there is a law preventing priests with defects from offering sacrifices – Lev 21:17ff). At the time of Jesus, scribal law, not scriptural law, prevented the lame and the blind from entering the Temple (see Peter's healing of the lame man at the door to the Temple Acts 3:1-10), and Jesus healed both the lame and the blind as signs of the Kingdom of God. In doing this, Jesus indirectly criticised scribal law, and not David's attitude to the Jebusites (the blind and the lame) of this story.

We are told briefly in our passage that after David captured the city, he built up the city and added to its fortifications and structure (5:9). One of the first neighbouring states to recognise the importance of what was happening in Israel and Judah was the wealthy city

state of Tyre, the great trading centre for the whole region. The people of Tyre were not war-like people and their power was commercial, not military, and the fact that David established a relationship with the king and people of Tyre indicates the state of peace that now came on the entire region now that Israel and Judah were united. True, David had many more enemies to fight and borders to secure, but his ally in Tyre proved to be a significant connection for the future of the Kingdom, establishing a trade link which was eventually used by his son Solomon for the building of the Temple (1 Kings 5).

The establishment of Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel and Judah, a fortress set on a hill on the border between north and south, was clearly a defining moment for David, and for all God's people.

## Questions (for use in groups)

1. How important is Jerusalem to the church today, and should we be involved in the complex disputes about its ownership??
2. What does Jerusalem symbolise for Christians today, as Jerusalem, or as 'Zion'?
3. Discuss in your group whether peace enables God's work to be done, or whether God must work in the world before peace can come about?

## Discipleship

### Personal comment:

*At the time, it is often not clear what the consequences of our actions will be. Sometimes we do things imagining they are of great importance, and sometimes we do not see how God will use them at all. For example, David may well have not been aware of the significance of Jerusalem beyond his time. It is important for us to realise, however, that if we are walking with the Lord, then He will use what we do in ways that we cannot foresee. I was not aware, for example, how significant the word 'prayerandbiblestudy' would become when I decided to buy the domain name! Yet the important thing is to walk with the Lord and keep close to His will. He will do the rest.*

### Ideas for discipleship programme

- *Fast and pray for the 'peace of Jerusalem', and for the 'New Jerusalem' (Rev 21:2) God will establish when He comes in glory.*
- *Make the effort to look up as much as you can about the history of Jerusalem in any reference books you can find, or other resources such as the internet.*

## Final Prayer

Lord Jesus, touch our lives with Your love and compassion, and as we receive from You, may we be empowered to be Your messengers of peace, love and compassion for others. May we always be willing to share the blessings we have received: AMEN