



JULY 30

GCC 2021 READING PLAN

Judges 13

Acts 17

Jeremiah 26

Mark 12

The Unsaved Christian 15

PRAY:

Father show us who you are. Show us your person, your power, your purposes. Overwhelm us with a knowledge of you that penetrates our minds and imbeds itself in the deepest recesses of our hearts. Let this knowledge so change our hearts that it results in our lives being lived in light of who you are, what you have done and what you say is true about us in Jesus Christ.

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Questions:



AS YOU READ THROUGH TODAY'S PASSAGES REFLECT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

What are some things revealed in these passages about the person and character of God? Who is he? What is he like?

What are some things that God has done to reveal who he is?

Who are you in light of God's work? What is it that God is saying about you?

How should knowing who God is, what he has done and what he says about you change how you live?



The Birth of Samson

13 And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, so the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

² There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. And his wife was barren and had no children. ³ And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, ⁵ for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." ⁶ Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. I did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name, ⁷ but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.' "

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom you sent come again to us and teach us what we are to do with the child who will be born." ⁹ And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. ¹⁰ So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Behold, the man who came to me the other day has appeared to me."

¹¹ And Manoah arose and went after his wife and came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I am." ¹² And Manoah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be the child's manner of life, and what is his mission?" ¹³ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. ¹⁴ She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe."

¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Please let us detain you and prepare a young goat for you." ¹⁶ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD." (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.) ¹⁷ And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?" ¹⁸ And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?" ¹⁹ So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to the one who works wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

²¹ The angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. ²² And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." ²³ But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these." ²⁴ And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

ACTS 17

Paul and Silas in Thessalonica

17 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." ⁴ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. ⁵ But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd. ⁶ And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, ⁷ and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus." ⁸ And the people and the city authorities were disturbed when they heard these things. ⁹ And when they had taken money as security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Paul and Silas in Berea

¹⁰ The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. ¹² Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. ¹³ But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds. ¹⁴ Then the brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there. ¹⁵ Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.

Paul in Athens

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." ²¹ Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

Paul Addresses the Areopagus

²² So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for

" 'In him we live and move and have our being';

as even some of your own poets have said,

" 'For we are indeed his offspring.'

²⁹ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

³² Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." ³³ So Paul went out from their midst. ³⁴ But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

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JEREMIAH 26

Jeremiah Threatened with Death

26 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD: ²“Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the LORD all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word. ³It may be they will listen, and every one turn from his evil way, that I may relent of the disaster that I intend to do to them because of their evil deeds. ⁴You shall say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, ⁵and to listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently, though you have not listened, ⁶then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.’ ”

⁷The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. ⁸And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, “You shall die! ⁹Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, ‘This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant?’” And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

¹⁰When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king’s house to the house of the LORD and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. ¹¹Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, “This man deserves the sentence of death, because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears.”

¹²Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, “The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. ¹³Now therefore mend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will relent of the disaster that he has pronounced against you. ¹⁴But as for me, behold, I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. ¹⁵Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears.”

Jeremiah Spared from Death

¹⁶Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, “This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.” ¹⁷And certain of the elders of the land arose and spoke to all the assembled people, saying, ¹⁸“Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and said to all the people of Judah: ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts,

“ ‘Zion shall be plowed as a field;

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Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,

and the mountain of the house a wooded height.'

¹⁹ Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and did not the LORD relent of the disaster that he had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring great disaster upon ourselves."

²⁰ There was another man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this city and against this land in words like those of Jeremiah. ²¹ And when King Jehoiakim, with all his warriors and all the officials, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death. But when Uriah heard of it, he was afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt. ²² Then King Jehoiakim sent to Egypt certain men, Elnathan the son of Achbor and others with him, ²³ and they took Uriah from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who struck him down with the sword and dumped his dead body into the burial place of the common people.

²⁴ But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah so that he was not given over to the people to be put to death.

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MARK 12

The Parable of the Tenants

12 And he began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country. ² When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. ³ And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ Again he sent to them another servant, and they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. ⁵ And he sent another, and him they killed. And so with many others: some they beat, and some they killed. ⁶ He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ⁷ But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' ⁸ And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. ⁹ What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰ Have you not read this Scripture:

" 'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;

11 this was the Lord's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

¹² And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away.

Paying Taxes to Caesar

¹³ And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. ¹⁴ And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" ¹⁵ But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." ¹⁶ And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." ¹⁷ Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.

The Sadducees Ask About the Resurrection

¹⁸ And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question, saying, ¹⁹ "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. ²⁰ There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. ²¹ And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. ²² And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. ²³ In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife."

²⁴ Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? ²⁵ For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ²⁶ And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? ²⁷ He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong."

The Great Commandment

²⁸ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. ³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.

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Whose Son Is the Christ?

³⁵ And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? ³⁶ David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared,

" 'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet." ' "

³⁷ David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?" And the great throng heard him gladly.

Beware of the Scribes

³⁸ And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces ³⁹ and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁰ who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

The Widow's Offering

⁴¹ And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³ And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. ⁴⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

THE UNSAVED CHRISTIAN BY DEAN INSERRA

Finish Chapter 15 of The Unsaved Christian. Work through the discussion questions at the end of the chapter.

JOURNAL A PRAYER TO THE LORD FROM YOUR READING TODAY.