

The NLT Bible suggests Hebrews was probably written not long before the destruction of Jerusalem which happened in 70AD by Paul or one of his co-workers. This would place its writing around the time that another wave of persecution started for the Christians when Nero was the Emperor of Rome.

There is no one reliable source to tell us exactly what happened, but it is generally believed that the Christians were blamed for setting the great fire of Rome in 64AD and a wave of persecution followed when many Christians were put to death. Ellen White writes in *Great Controversy*, "Christians were falsely accused of the most dreadful crimes and declared to be the cause of great calamities – famine, pestilence, and earthquake... They were condemned as rebels against the empire, and pests to society."

"Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or burned alive in the amphitheatres. Some were crucified; others were covered with the skins of wild animals and thrust into the arena to be torn by dogs..."



"The catacombs afforded shelter for thousands. Beneath the hills outside the city of Rome, long galleries had been tunnelled through earth and rock; extending for miles beyond the city walls. In these underground retreats the followers of Christ buried their dead; and here also, when suspected and proscribed (banned), they found a home."



Hebrews 11 is known as the faith chapter, listing great men and women who triumphed by faith. But finishes by saying, "There were others who were tortured... Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated... They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground." Hebrews 11:35-38<sup>NLT</sup>  
Did the Author of Hebrews witness the persecution? We don't know, but what we do know is that those who ran, hid or died for their faith have a much greater reward waiting for them in heaven. Satan could not win by persecution.

## A Rough Start for King David

### Sabbath

Last week when we learnt about the warnings God had given about having nothing to do with mediums, witches or anyone who claimed to talk to dead people.

Do your parents or teachers ever give you warnings? YES / NO

Draw a line to match the warning with what might happen.

Walk - don't run!	You might get run over by a car
Don't walk	You will get cavities in your teeth
It's time for bed.	You might get hurt
No more sweets.	You might slip and hurt yourself
Obey the rules.	You'll be tired (and your body and brain won't grow as much as they should)

With Saul dead, the people of the tribe of Judah crowned David king; but Abner, Saul's army general, convinced the remaining tribes to crown Saul's last Son, Ish-Bosheth, instead.



Joab, the son of David's sister, was also the leader of David's army and they met Abner and his army at the pool of Gibeon. Abner suggested a fight, one on one and they each chose 12 men but it was a trap and a fierce battle followed, with David's army chasing Abner's away. Joab's brother Asahel started chasing Abner and would not stop even though Abner warned him to many times; finally, Abner killed him.

Joab's army lost a total of 20 men that day, including Asahel and the twelve who died on the initial battle field, but 360 Benjamites from Abner's army died that day.

## Sunday

The Bible does not say how long the civil war lasted, except it was a long time; somewhere between two and seven years. During this time several sons were born to David: Amnon whose mother was Ahinoam, Daniel (or Kileab) to Abigail of Carmel, Absalom whose mother was Maakah, the daughter of King Talmi of Geshur, Adonijah to Haggith, Shephatiah to Abital and Ithream whose mother was Eglah. As you can see, David now had at least six wives! - But as mentioned before, marriage wasn't seen as God intended and was often used to show treaties, which is probably why David married Maakah the daughter of King Talmi and may well be the case with some of the others too.

Several years later Abner had an argument with Ishbosheth and in anger, promised to take the kingdom and give it to David. But when Joab heard that Abner had come to see David, he sent a message calling Abner back and murdered him because he was still angry about his brother even though he had been killed in battle. David was very upset at Joab's treachery and pronounced a curse on Joab's family.

Not long after this, two captains from Ishbosheth's army, hoping to gain favour with David, assassinated Ishbosheth while he was sleeping. When they proudly told David what they had done, he was horrified and ordered their own execution.

After that delegates from remaining tribes came to Hebron and asked David to become their King.

Now Hebron is located in the territory of Judah in the southern part of Israel, making a long trip for those from the eastern and northern tribes to visit the King. So David decided to move his head quarters to the more central location at the city of Salem, also called Jebus. The only problem was that Salem, a strong walled city, was still occupied by the Jebusites - you might remember Melchizedek, the High Priest of God whom Abraham paid tithe to. David and Joab captured the city by entering through the water tunnel. And David setup his kingdom in Salem, which became known as "Jerusalem, the city of David."

## Friday

Have you ever noticed that even when you are making good choices and obeying God, things still seem to go wrong at times? In fact, many people have noticed that more things seem to go wrong when a person is doing something special for God.

Satan knew that a king like David who worshipped God and encouraged the people to follow God would do a lot of good. He would be able to influence the entire nation, so Satan did everything he could to try to stop it.

Even today, Satan is doing everything he can to discourage God's workers and stop God's work. We need to make sure that we stay close to God no matter how busy we are, this will help us to recognise Satan's attacks.

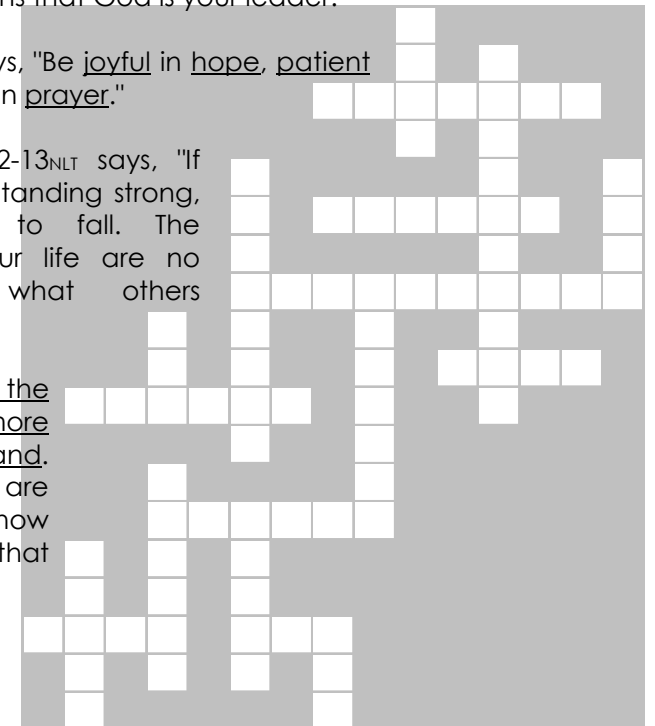
James 4:7<sup>NIV</sup> says, "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Some versions say to humble yourself. To submit to God means that God is your leader.

Romans 12:12<sup>NIV</sup> says, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

1 Corinthians 10:12-13<sup>NLT</sup> says, "If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience.

And God is faithful.

He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.



## Thursday

Your parents and teachers **should** be teaching you to think of the consequences, before you act. They might have the power to stop some of the consequences while you are a child, but this is not good, because what will happen when you are an adult? Unscramble the words to find out.



Always late → SLOE BOJ  
 Drink and drive → RAC DENTACCI  
 Stealing → TOCUR or LIJA  
 Overspending → SOLE SHOUE or ARC  
 Fighting → ROUTC or AJIL  
 Not eating vegetables → ABD LEHHAT



Learning to make good choices now will help you to make good choices when you are an adult. But do you know what the MOST IMPORTANT choice you will ever make is? Cross out these things you will have to choose from the grid and then write the remaining letters (left to right, top to bottom) on the lines below to find out.

T	M	O	A	S	K	J	E	S	U	S	T	O	S	F
A	O	B	E	D	I	E	N	C	E	V	E	Y	O	R
U	N	F	R	O	M	S	I	L	N	T	O	A	S	I
K	E	J	E	S	U	S	P	O	R	T	S	S	T	E
O	Y	S	A	V	E	H	Y	T	O	U	F	R	O	N
M	S	I	N	T	O	O	A	H	O	U	S	E	S	D
K	J	E	S	J	U	E	S	E	T	O	S	A	V	S
E	Y	B	O	O	K	S	O	S	C	H	O	O	L	U
F	R	A	O	B	M	S	I	N	T	A	O	A	S	K
J	E	N	S	U	S	T	O	S	A	I	V	E	Y	O
U	F	K	R	O	M	S	I	C	A	R	N	T	O	A
S	K	J	E	S	U	S	T	O	S	A	V	E	Y	O
R	U	L	E	S	U	F	R	O	M	S	I	N	T	V

Bank, books, car, clothes,  
 friends, hair, house, job,  
 money, obedience, rules,  
 school, shoes, sports, TV

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## Monday

When the Philistines heard that David had been crowned King, they mobilised their armies and came to attack. The Lord told David to place his army near the poplar trees, then God made the sound of many marching feet to scare the Philistines and David's army was victorious.

David decided to move the Ark of the Lord from the house of Abinadab, where it had been kept since being returned by the Philistines to Jerusalem. He called his best troops together; and all the people of Israel celebrated with music and singing.



Now, God had given the Israelites careful instructions about caring for the Ark. Whenever the Sanctuary was to be moved, the priests would first cover the Ark, and then men from the tribe of Levi were to carry it. (See Numbers 4:5, 6; Deuteronomy 10:8)

But instead of obeying God's instructions, David arranged to move the ark as the Philistines had done. A brand new ox cart was built and everyone watched as the Ark was brought from Abinadab's house and loaded onto the cart. As the procession started, Abinadab's sons, Uzzah and Ahio, walked proudly beside the Ark. All of a sudden, one of the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah dared to place his hand on the Ark and fell down dead! David was so upset. They cancelled the procession and took the Ark to the nearby house of Obed-edom.



For three months the Ark remained there, and God blessed their household. Then David again called the people together. This time they watched as the Ark was carried, and with shouts of joy and many sacrifices, it was finally brought to Jerusalem.

## Tuesday

Things seem to be going great. They can now safely live in Israel; their families grow as children are born; David is crowned king of Judah, he is seeking God's will at every step and God is definitely leading. But then Abner, Saul's general decides to crown Saul's remaining son as king - even though as Abner himself says later in 2 Samuel 3:17, the other tribes wanted to make David their king.

Why did God let Abner crown Saul's son? And then when Abner was ready to have them crown David, why did God let Joab kill Abner? Why did God allow all the years of civil war to happen? Why do bad things happen to good people, especially when they are working for God?

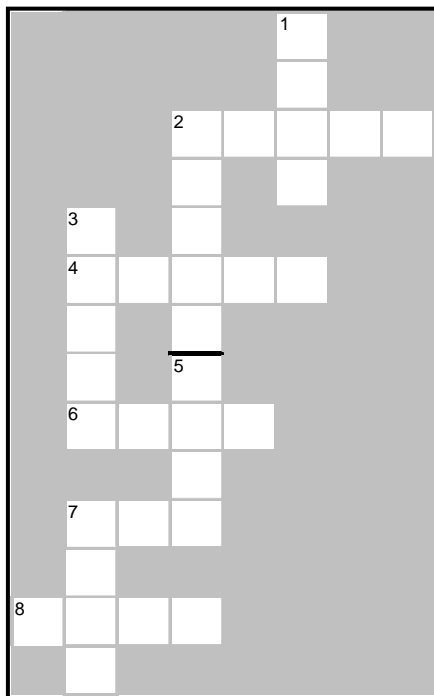
We won't know all the answers until we get to heaven and can ask God but we can know some of them. Use the following verses to complete the crossword.

1 Peter 5:8<sub>NLT</sub>, "Stay alert! Watch out for your great \_\_\_\_\_ (4a), the \_\_\_\_\_ (3d). He prowls around like a roaring \_\_\_\_\_ (6a), looking for someone to devour.

Job 1:12<sub>NLT</sub>, "All right, you may test him," the \_\_\_\_\_ (5d) said to \_\_\_\_\_ (2a)."

Mark 13:13<sub>NLT</sub>, "And everyone will \_\_\_\_\_ (1d) you because you are my followers. But the one who endures to the end will be \_\_\_\_\_ (2d).

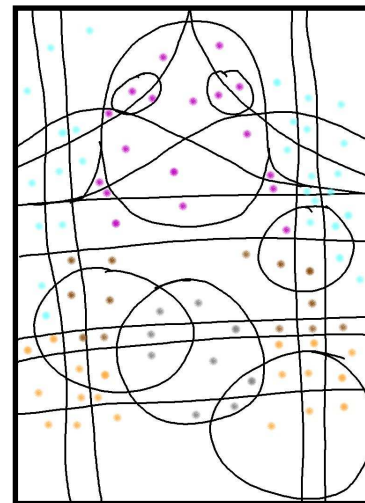
Romans 8:28<sub>NIV</sub>, "And we know that in all things \_\_\_\_\_ (7a) works for the \_\_\_\_\_ (7d) of those who \_\_\_\_\_ (8a) Him..."



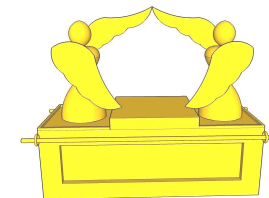
## Wednesday

Instructions for carrying the ark were given to Moses in Numbers 4:5-6 and Deuteronomy 10:8.

How did they move the ark?



How were they supposed to move it?



Have you ever helped run something? Maybe something at Church or something at School; perhaps you had to help with the lights or the PA, or maybe you had a speaking or singing part. Did you have to wear a uniform?

Do you remember how proud you felt to have an important job?

Do you remember wondering if people were watching you?

I wonder if that is how Uzzah felt; he was important, his family had been caring for the Ark of God, and now everyone would be able to see him doing this important job of looking after the Ark of God!

⌂	K	↑	ε	⌂	→	°	⌂	π	X	⌂	⌂	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
★	⌂	⌂	±	⊗	↗	♣	●	⌂	☾	★	⌂	
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

