

## STUDY GUIDE

**Monday, May 25** - Do you ever wonder what a memorial is all about? When you read the Bible, you find that God likes to mark special events with a memorial, a visible reminder. He gave Noah a rainbow as a reminder of God's covenant with man. He gave the Passover feast to serve as a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. And when God gave the law to Moses; God wrote it on two tablets so His people could see them and remember. In 1 Samuel 7:12, Samuel put up a big stone marker to remind everyone "Thus far the Lord helped us." Have you ever done that? Have you ever made a reminder of something God has done for you? When you look at it, you remember that God has helped you in the past and will help you again. Today is one of those reminders. Memorial Day is a special day set aside to remember that God has protected us. He has used many of our ancestors to serve and give the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. So remember to remember!

**Tuesday, May 26 - Read Hebrews 13:1-8** The changeless character of our Lord Jesus Christ affirms and encourages us to live a life of brotherly love, hospitality and contentment. We have to persevere in love (v 1). Love needs perseverance as much as faith needs perseverance. Hospitality (v 2), when fully displayed, results in charity, kindness and compassion and we do well if we heed Christ's words: 'He who receives you receives me' (Matthew 10:40-42). Further, make it a point to identify with the suffering members of the body of Christ (v 3). Sexual immorality and love of money belong to the same category of the sin of covetousness (vs 4-5; Exodus 20:17). A greedy person can never be happy, but the opposite of covetousness is contentment. 'However, this carefree contentment is not an irresponsible improvidence; it springs from an intelligent trust in God and acceptance of his promises' (vs 5b-6; F. F Bruce). Every church has a beginning and a past and it is good to remember its pioneers of faith. If you have been long in the church, you would know someone who has faithfully completed the race. We should always emulate what they have done and thank God for them. As we consider the past and the present and look towards the future the changelessness of our Lord Jesus Christ stabilizes us. He is the past sacrifice, a present intercessor and the coming and final consummation. The earth may quake and the mountains tumble, but fear not for our God is an ever-present help (Psalm 46:1).

**Wednesday, May 27 - Read Hebrews 13:9-25** While the 'old city' (Jerusalem) has rejected Jesus (v 12a), we now look forward to the 'new Jerusalem', the heavenly city that is to come. Meanwhile, we must identify with Jesus to 'suffer outside the city gate'. We need to come out of our 'shelter' and 'safety' and to serve, worship, obey, submit and pray (vs 13-19). Physical and material things such as ceremonial food and earthly altar are of this world. We have the sacrifice of Christ signifying our 'altar' which speaks of faith and grace. And by faith we are receiving a city which is to come (v 14b) and it is unshakeable (12:28). As the Jews felt secure inside the camp (Judaism), likewise, the followers of Jesus may feel secure in their comfort zone and dare not venture out to do great things for God. Therefore, we must constantly have the 'coming city' in view and continually worship Him and offer our sacrifice of thankful praise (v 15). This is to be accompanied by our unreserved and unashamed witness in acknowledging His name (v 15b) and in compassionate service (v 16). There is no obedience without submission and vice versa (v 17). Whether leader or follower, we are all ultimately accountable to Jesus and we serve to please Him. A request for prayer is a sign of humility and dependence on God. (vs 18-19). More so when we know that He is a God who gives peace and love (v 20). He is able to equip us (v 21) if only we let Him. The sooner a man realizes his mortality, the sooner he looks to the city that is to come.

**Thursday, May 28 - Read Deuteronomy 28:12** Financial bondage is not God's plan for His people. (Nor is it a good plan for any nation!) Whoever you are in debt to, you are the servant of. God doesn't want you, His child, to be the borrower; He wants you to be the lender. God doesn't want you to be the tail; God wants you to be the head. God wants to bless His people above all the nations of the world, and He wants to give His people financial freedom. But so many people don't have financial freedom—they're in financial bondage. The devil wants to keep you in bondage, and he doesn't care what kind of bondage you're in. Are you in financial bondage? God wants you out of that so you can serve Him freely. Today we are blessed to have a number of godly Christian ministries guiding believers to sound, biblical teaching, and freedom from debt. If you are under financial stress, contact one of them today. The Lord Jesus said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

**Friday, May 29 - Read James 1:26** We must watch what we say because one word builds upon another, and it can get worse—you'll have the snowball effect. You say, "Well, I can't control it." You're a liar. You can control it, and I can prove it. For example, sometimes a husband and wife are just snarling, fighting, snapping down each other's throat when right then the phone rings. They answer so sweetly, "H-e-l-l-o." You can control it. And you'd better learn to control it. If you don't, you're going to be out of control. Memorize Proverbs 29:20: "Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him."

*Adapted from: <http://www.su.org.my>; [joniandfriends.org](http://joniandfriends.org); [lwf.org](http://lwf.org)*