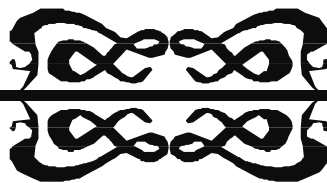


# Jesus, The Messiah

## The Complete Story

A mini study in the  
**Understanding the Bible Series**

by Cindy Zeigler



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Try picking up a good long novel, and opening up the book two-thirds of the way into it. Begin reading there, but only read about 100 pages. Then close the book and try to tell the complete story, which covers approximately 2,000 pages in the whole.

Could you do that?

Would you stop there?

Or (if it was a particularly good story, and even perhaps involved you personally), wouldn't you want to go back into the beginning of the novel and see where the story began? Wouldn't you want to know the why and how-comes of it all?

But in reality, in the telling of *this particular Story*, most people seem happy enough just to know that there was a Son

- Born to a virgin
- Born on a cold night in Bethlehem
- Born in a town where there was no room in the inn
- About Whom the angels sung to some few shepherds
- Whom the shepherds made haste to find.

Never mind that this birth had so long ago been prophesied in Ancient Manuscripts. Never mind that most of the facts of which people are annually reminded are found in prophetic statements made hundreds, even thousands of years prior to the events which are celebrated year after year.

Perhaps there are some few people who know of events beyond the story of His birth. Perhaps there are some who know that while His birth had so long been prophesied, His death had also been prophesied in the same Ancient Manuscripts so long ago. And that this death was to be a murderous act at the hands of the very ones to whom He came.

Yet lingering questions beg for answers:

- Why did Jesus *have to come* to the earth?
- Why did He *have to be born to a virgin*?
- Why did He *have to die*?

Even further questions:

- Is He really coming again?
- How will He come?
- How do we know?

Will you go back to the beginning of the story and see if you can find the answers to these questions within the passages found on the pages of the Ancient Book? Will you look at the full scope of the story of JESUS, THE MESSIAH through this five week study? I invite you and challenge you to do that.

Welcome!

*Cindy*

# Notes from Introductory Lecture





## Lesson One — His Forerunner

*Day One — Reading the Familiar Story*  
*Day Two — Gabriel's Appearance to Zacharias*  
*Day Three — Gabriel's Appearance to Mary*  
*Day Four — Zacharias' Prayer and Prophecy*  
*Day Five — John the Baptist*

This week we will study the part of Messiah's story that we are already familiar with — the birth of His forerunner. But in doing so we will pay particular attention to some detail that is often glossed over without a second thought. Let's begin.

### Day One — Reading the Familiar Story

Before we begin, why don't you ask the Lord to help you in your study today? Ask Him to open your eyes so that you might see things that heretofore you may have missed?

Today we will begin reading the account given to us in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke, which is printed in the Appendix<sup>1</sup>. Spend good study time on this. The story may be so familiar to you that you may be tempted to skim over important facts. Pay attention to what you are reading! I have left wide margins for you to make careful observations of the text. Make any notes of interest in the margins. If you have enough time, it would be a good idea to read it through a couple of times.

Do the reading now.

We'll spend the next few days covering the various sections of what you have read today. As you go your way, and before you close, why don't you ask the Lord to help you meditate on what you have read today?

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<sup>1</sup> If you would like, you may want to tear these sheets out, cut off the fray, staple them together, and keep them in your book. Sometimes, loose sheets make it easier to handle. Just an idea.

## Day Two — Gabriel's Appearance to Zacharias

Begin your day of study in prayer.

Today we are going to go back to the reading from yesterday's work and catch a few of the specific details. In doing so, we will be rereading various sections of the large passage. Pull out those sheets now.

Go back and reread Luke 1:5-20. Write out the names of the three main characters in this portion of the story.

1)

2)

3)

List as many details as you can about Zacharias and Elizabeth.

Now we need to go back to the pick up the details of what the angel told Zacharias. Please go back to vv. 13-20, and reread it.

What are the specific things that the angel prophesied concerning the son that Zacharias and Elizabeth would have? Make a list of the points. Especially note the prophecy in v. 17.

What was Zacharias' obvious and immediate concern about the message, which the angel gave? Write out what his question was.

What was the angel's answer addressing Zacharias' concern?

Within this dialogue, the angel quotes from Malachi 4:5-6. Read the following passage.

**Malachi 4**

**5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”**

You may not have realized it, but these two verses are the *last two verses in all of the Old Testament!* Thereafter, God was silent for 400 years! For 400 years! Imagine! After God had called Abraham, and subsequently had spoken to the people through the prophets for the previous 1,600 years or so, He became silent.

And here in our reading of Luke chapter one, God *remembers* the very last thing He spoke to Israel. And God sent the angel, Gabriel, to speak to a man whose name was Zacharias (who was *chosen by the casting of lots* to go into the Temple that very day) to let His people know that *He remembered* what He had previously said, and was now getting ready to begin bringing Old Testament prophecies to pass.

**Oh, by the way! Do you know what Zacharias’ name means? The name “Zacharias” means “God Remembers.”**

(Pause for a moment, and ponder the greatness of God’s Word!)

Do you think it was coincidental that a man whose name means “God Remembers” was chosen by the casting of lots to go into the Temple the very day that God sent Gabriel with the first message in 400 years to His people, only to repeat what He had last said?

Now that should cause you to take a pause and breathe deeply, and realize what all is going on in these opening verses in the Book of Luke.

Neither is it coincidental that God would send His angel with this message to Zacharias and Elizabeth, a couple who, heretofore had been barren, and now — in their old age — they were to become the parents of a son who would be the prophet sent to prepare the way for the Messiah.

Does the description old *and advanced in age* remind you of another couple who was barren and beyond the years of childbearing, who also bore a son in their old age? Who would that be?

Exactly! Abraham and Sarah had a son in their old age after being barren. There are at least six instances wherein God mentions the fact that Abraham and Sarah *were advanced in age* prior to having the son of promise. God moves matters beyond the natural — removing man from the equation completely — and then supernaturally intervenes; something seen throughout Scripture. And it seems that God wants us to take notice of this fact.

**Genesis 17**

**17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”**

**Genesis 18**

**11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. 12 And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” 13 And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?’**

**Genesis 21**

**2 So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.**

**...5 Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.**

**...7 And she said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”**

**Genesis 24** (Abraham’s servant speaking to Abraham’s family when he was searching for a wife for Isaac)

**36 “Now Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master in her old age; and he has given him all that he has.**

Now reread Luke 1:6, 7.

Undoubtedly, Zacharias and Elizabeth knew the story of Abraham and Sarah. Undoubtedly, they would have put things together — even the fact that the angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias with a message concerning their son being the forerunner of the One of Whom the whole of Scripture is about.

Do you have any comments on what you have learned in these two days of study?

**Oh, by the way! Do you know what Zacharias’ wife’s name, Elizabeth, means? It means “God of the Oath.”**

We’ll take a break for today, though we have covered only the beginning points of the story. What we have studied today should cause you to ask, “Well *exactly what* does ‘God remember?’” What ‘oath’ would He want to call attention to? Think about that as you go your way. Tomorrow we will examine it. See you then.

## Day Three — Gabriel’s Appearance to Mary

Yesterday we realized that it was no coincidence that Zacharias, a man — whose name means “God Remembers” — was chosen by the casting of lots to go into the Temple to burn incense on the particular day that God had sent His angel, Gabriel, with a message for His people, Israel. And the message He sent through His angel to His people had to do with the very last thing that God had spoken to Israel about 400 years prior. He had promised to send a prophet, a forerunner, before sending the Redeemer — a forerunner who would make ready the way of the Lord.

The text tells us that when Zacharias had completed his priestly duties, he went home. “And after these days, Elizabeth became pregnant.” Then, in the sixth month (of Elizabeth’s pregnancy), God sent the angel Gabriel to another person. This time, he was sent to a *young virgin*, whose name was Mary. Go back to the text in Luke chapter one and reread vv. 26-38.

In this passage, special attention needs to be given to the seven prophecies within the text that Gabriel specifically mentioned concerning Mary’s Baby spoken of in Luke chapter one.

**31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.”**

What are the seven prophecies concerning this conception?

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

Go back through this list and put a check mark by each prophecy that will be fulfilled **literally** (i.e., a fulfillment that would *literally* take place in time and space).

Now let’s look again at the interchange between Mary and Elizabeth. Reread Luke 1:39-55 now.

The text reveals that Mary and Elizabeth believed *all* that the angel had told Mary would be fulfilled literally. Check out Luke 1:45. What did Elizabeth say to Mary?

The phrase Gabriel used concerning Mary's Son — that He would “be called Son of the Most High” — was referring back to a promise God had given King David in II Samuel chapter seven. In fact, look at the phrase in Luke 1:32 and see the prophecy immediately following the announcement of this title. What prophecy does Gabriel give in connection with this title?

Let's look at the promise given to David by God through the prophet Nathan.

**II Samuel 7**

**12 “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me...**

How does the passage in II Samuel relate to what Gabriel told Mary about her Son? Give details.

Mary asked a question concerning these things in v. 34. What was the question?

What was Gabriel's answer (v. 35)?

When the angel departed, Mary made haste to visit Elizabeth. Read the simple detail given in v. 41 and compare it to v. 15. What comparison do you make here?

Now let's look at Mary's prayer of praise as spoken to Elizabeth in Luke chapter one. Reread vv. 46-55. This section of Scripture is absolutely filled with references to the prophets.

After you have reread this section, what is the last thing Mary praises God for in v. 54 and 55? Write it out verbatim.

In vv. 31-33, we see that the angel spoke to Mary about her son being the Son of God, and that God will give to Him “the throne of His father David.” Now, in vv. 54 and 55, Mary says, “In remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his offspring forever.”

Let’s look to see what God had spoken to Abraham, to which Mary would be referring.

#### **Genesis 17**

**1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. 2 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly.” 3 And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, 4 “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.**

**7 “And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”**

**....15 Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!” 19 But God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.**

What connection can you make between what the angel said to Mary, what the Prophet Nathan spoke to David, and what God had spoken to Abraham and his offspring? Write down what connections you can make.

Now go back again to the text in Luke chapter one. Zacharias was struck mute when he questioned the angel as to how it could be that he and his wife would have a son in their old age. As evidenced by the angel’s response to him, Zacharias displayed a lack of faith in God’s ability to perform such an action. That spoken of Zacharias and Elizabeth in Luke 1:6 — both walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord — would reveal that both knew the Old Testament Scriptures. In this respect, Zacharias would surely have known that God had previously performed such a feat with the birth of Abraham and Sarah’s son, Isaac. And due to Zacharias’ lack of faith in God’s ability to give them a son in their old age, he was struck mute from that time until eight days after the baby was born.

When it came time to circumcise the boy and to name him, Zacharias’ tongue was loosed, and he could speak (1:57-66). Immediately Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to praise God and to prophesy over his son. He said in vv. 68- 79:

**“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
for He has visited us  
and accomplished redemption for His people,  
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant —  
As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old —  
Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, and  
FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US;  
to show mercy toward our fathers,  
and to remember His holy covenant, the oath  
which He swore to Abraham our father,  
to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,  
might serve Him without fear,  
in holiness and righteousness  
before Him all our days.**

**“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS;  
to give to His people the knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins,  
because of the tender mercy of our God,  
with which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us  
TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH,  
To guide our feet into the way of peace.”**

Before we continue, would you mind reading through Zacharias’ prayer of prophecy and praise a few times? I would like you to be familiar with it, as we look at some Old Testament passages, to which Zacharias undoubtedly was referring? Please do that rereading now.

Let’s look back at what God “spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old.” Find the word “remember,” and draw a circle around it. Then draw a line under exactly what it is that God remembers. Now write out verbatim what God remembered.

There is more to this, which we will continue to see as we study. That is enough for the day. Mediate on these things. See you tomorrow.

## Day Four — Zacharias’ Prayer and Prophecy

Let’s begin today by going back to Zacharias’ prayer of praise and reread what he said.

With that in mind, let’s peruse some Old Testament passages which have to do with this oath, which Zacharias mentions concerning God’s holy covenant with His people. But before we get to the oath per se, we must understand *why there was a need for such an oath*. We must understand something at the very beginning of Scripture, which, if these beginning things are overlooked, then succeeding *facts may*



*altogether not make much sense.* So let's go back to the opening chapter of God's Word and see what God says about creating man in the first place.

### Genesis 1

**26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."**

According to what God said, what was His *very purpose* for creating man?

And what was man to rule over?

Man was to rule over the domain over which Satan was originally created to rule. A study in this area of God's revelation to man reveals that Satan is the "god of this world [Lit., 'age']" (II Cor. 4:4), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2); and he has been so since his creation, when he was created the anointed cherub who covers the earth (Ezek. 28:14). But Satan fell at a point in time in eternity past, and God created man to rule in his stead.

It's easy to see that God's purpose has not yet been fulfilled. It's also easy to see that, if God plans something, His plan will not be thwarted. So why was His plan not immediately fulfilled? Write out what you think.

God's plan was not immediately fulfilled due to Satan's intervention, resulting in Adam's sin in the Garden; but to show that God's plan will ultimately be fulfilled, He gave a promise of redemption to the very one who had brought about man's fall — Satan. In speaking to Satan, immediately after the fall of the man, God said:

### Genesis 3

**15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."**

Without spending too much time on all of this (which certainly should be done at some point in time), suffice it to say that even Adam's fall resulted in not only his own disqualification to fulfill his created purpose, it also resulted in the entire human race being disqualified to fulfill man's created purpose. But again, God's plan will not ultimately be thwarted.

God began to bring about His plan of redemption. He promised that there would come a Seed of the woman, Who would ultimately put down the enemy, and, having that victory, God would then place man back in a position wherein he could fulfill his created purpose. And throughout the pages of Scripture, we can clearly see that plan, not only as it progressively unfolds but as it is also ultimately fulfilled.

Now go back and reread the prayer of praise spoken by Zacharias, eight days after his son had been born. See if the prayer of praise makes more sense to you now. Notice that it really does have its basis in what has happened since the beginning of mankind.

Today we are perusing some passages that progressively deal with God's unfolding plan. As you read through these next passages, underline the portions of these passages which seem to be that which Zacharias was referring to concerning the oath made by God.

The first several passages deal with the things God spoke to Abraham.

#### **Genesis 12**

**1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**

#### **Genesis 17**

**4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.**

**...7 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."**

#### **Genesis 22**

**16 and [God] said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."**

Thus far, list the details concerning the oath given to Abraham:

Now let's look at further revelation given to King David:

#### **II Samuel 7**

**12 "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me..."**

What did God promise David?

And to show that David understood the promise, read what David later wrote<sup>2</sup>:

**Psalms 132**

**11 The LORD has sworn to David, A truth from which He will not turn back; “Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne. 12 If your sons will keep My covenant, And My testimony which I will teach them, Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever.” 13 For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation. 14 This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it. 15 I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her needy with bread. 16 Her priests also I will clothe with salvation; And her godly ones will sing aloud for joy. 17 There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed. 18 His enemies I will clothe with shame; But upon himself his crown shall shine.”**

Now let’s look at a few of the very many places wherein the prophets wrote of the promises God made about the coming Messiah — the One Who would bring God’s plans and purposes concerning man and the earth to pass.

**Isaiah 9**

**2 The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.**

**Isaiah 40**

**3 A voice is calling, “Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley...**

**Isaiah 42**

**7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon, And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.**

**Jeremiah 23**

**5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness.’**

**Jeremiah 30**

**10 ‘And fear not, O Jacob My servant,’ declares the LORD, ‘And do not be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity. And Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, And no one shall make him afraid.**

**Malachi 3**

**1 “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.**

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<sup>2</sup> This is only one of *very many* Psalms wherein David wrote of the promise given to him.

**Malachi 4**

1 “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.” 2 “But for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. 3 And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,” says the LORD of hosts. 4 “Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. 5 Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”

We can also find references to these things in the New Testament. Here are a few of the places which refer back to the oath God gave as well as the prophecy concerning the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth.

**Acts 2 (Peter to the Council)**

29 “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE...

**Acts 26 (Paul to King Agrippa)**

17b ...the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.’

**Hebrews 6**

13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, “I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU, AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.” 15 And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. 16 For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. 17 In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, 18 in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Compare this sampling of passages to what Zacharias said in his praise at the circumcision of his son.

This all should cause us pause to ponder how great God’s Word is! See you tomorrow.

## Day Five — John the Baptist

This week we have studied the events leading up to and including the birth of John the Baptist. We have learned that he was born to parents who were in their old age, and who had heretofore been barren. John's father's name means "God Remembers," and his mother's name means "God of the Oath." We have also seen that his conception and birth was foretold by the angel Gabriel, and fulfilled several Old Testament prophecies.

Today we are going to peruse the life, message, and death of John the Baptist. We will be doing a good amount of Bible reading today. Please do not read these passages in the rote way that (sorry to say) so many of us have been taught to read Scripture. Read it as if you are reading a personal letter written to you, by God, for so you are. Read these passages with expression and passion. Understand that these Words are not just old, dusty Words written nearly 2,000 years ago, but that these Words are alive, and the very personification of Truth!

### John's message and ministry:

#### Matthew 3

**1 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 3 For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'"**

What was the message John brought?

According to this passage, why did John tell the people to repent?

#### Mark 1

**1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; 3 THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'"**

**4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. 6 And John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey. 7 And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals. 8 I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."**

**9 And it came about in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; 11 and a voice came out of the heavens: "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased."**

What had Isaiah the Prophet prophesied, which Mark quotes here in vv. 2 and 3?

Whose voice came out of heaven? What did the Voice say?

What was the message John brought?

According to this passage, what was John privy to witness and hear?

### **Luke 3**

**1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins;**

### **John 3**

**23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they were coming and were being baptized. 24 For John had not yet been thrown into prison. 25 There arose therefore a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him."**

**27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing, unless it has been given him from heaven. 28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' 29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. And so this joy of mine has been made full. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. 32 What He has seen and heard, of that He bears witness; and no man receives His witness. 33 He who has received His witness has set his seal to this, that God is true. 34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure. 35 The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. 36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."**

Summarize what John said of Jesus:

Jesus' witness of John:

**Matthew 11**

**1** And it came about that when Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. **2** Now when John in prison heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples, **3** and said to Him, "Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?" **4** And Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: **5** the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM. **6** And blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over Me."

**7** And as these were going away, Jesus began to speak to the multitudes about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? **8** But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' palaces. **9** But why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet. **10** This is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.' **11** Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. **12** And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. **13** For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. **14** And if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come. **15** He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Summarize what Jesus said of John:

John's death:

**Matthew 14**

**3** For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. **4** For John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." **5** And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they regarded him as a prophet. **6** But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. **7** Thereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. **8** And having been prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." **9** And although he was grieved, the king commanded it to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests. **10** And he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. **11** And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl; and she brought it to her mother. **12** And his disciples came and took away the body and buried it; and they went and reported to Jesus.

After these things, Jesus appeared to three of His disciples, Peter, James and John, in His kingdom glory. This event was later to be used by the Holy Spirit in both Peter's and John's writings, but for our purposes today, I want you to see what Jesus said to them after the event on the Mount of Transfiguration concerning John the Baptist. (This will further be discussed in the video lecture.<sup>3</sup>)

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<sup>3</sup> The video lecture will be an important element in this study this week. If you cannot attend your class, or

**Matthew 17**

**9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.” 10 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”**

**11 And He answered and said, “Elijah is coming and will restore all things; 12 but I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” 13 Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.**

Essentially, what are the disciples asking Jesus after this experience?

What did they understand Jesus to be saying (v. 13)?

Now before you get carried away with that thought, let’s consider the inference here. There are some who believe this inference indicates that Jesus was saying that John the Baptist was, in fact, Elijah. But can that be so? If that is so, then we would have to consider reincarnation as a possibility, which of course, it is not possible. So let’s go back to what the angel said to Zacharias.

**Luke 1**

**16 And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”**

What does the text say?

Does that imply that John *will be* Elijah?

We do know that the angel did quote from the prophet Malachi. As we have seen, this is where the quote comes from:

**Malachi 4**

**5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”**

Elijah was an Old Testament prophet ministering mostly during the reign of the wicked King Ahab. He was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot, without experiencing death. Elisha witnessed the event. If you would like to read about it, read I Kings 17-19 and II Kings 1, 2.

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if you are not in a class where they have the lecture video, you may want to consider having a CD or DVD sent to you. You can make a request via email at [kseeker1@aol.com](mailto:kseeker1@aol.com).



According to this passage, when is God going to send Elijah back to the earth?

What will God do through the future ministry of the Prophet Elijah?

Let's reread a portion from Matthew chapter eleven.

**Matthew 11**

**12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. 13 For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. 14 And if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come. 15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.**

But God knew that, though John was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah, the nation as a whole *did not "care to accept" Elijah*. As a whole, the nation did not repent from their sinfulness, and in fact, rather than repenting and accepting their Messiah and His message, they crucified Him and rejected His message. And so God did smite the land with a curse about 37 years after the crucifixion.

In 70 AD, the land was ransacked, the Temple was destroyed, the Jews were scattered. For nearly 2,000 years the land remained cursed, so to speak. Only in recent years has the land come back into the world's focus, and that is for the purpose of allowing end times prophecies to come to pass. Elijah, one who did not see death, will yet be sent back to this earth. And he will be sent back to earth, not through being born a second time, but rather through God simply sending him back, with the message of repentance, and preparation for the *second coming* of the Messiah.

And so, it was not Elijah whom God sent prior to Christ's first coming. It was the son born to a man whose name means "God Remembers" and a woman whose name means "God of the Oath." John appeared "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Lk. 1:17). Note what John said of himself:

**John 1**

**19 And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20 And he confessed, and did not deny, and he confessed, "I am not the Christ." 21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." 22 They said then to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" 23 He said, "I am A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,' as Isaiah the prophet said."**

And if you remember, Elijah has come back to the earth once already at the transfiguration of Christ on the mount, when both Moses and Elijah appeared to the Lord and were talking with Him about the crucifixion. But yet once again, God will indeed send this prophet back — the one who had taken up in a fiery chariot without seeing death!

Think on these things. See you in class.

## Notes

## Lesson Two — His Birth

*Day One — The Record of His Birth*

*Day Two — Descendent of David*

*Day Three — Joseph's and Mary's Lineage to David*

*Day Four — The Virgin Birth*

*Day Five — The Root and the Offspring of David*

Last week we studied the prophecies and the birth of the forerunner of the Messiah — John the Baptist. We realized that his birth had been prophesied by the prophets and announced by the angel Gabriel. The child who had been prophesied and announced as the forerunner was born to older parents who had heretofore been barren.

God, after being silent before His people for 400 years, finally sent Gabriel to a man whose name means “God Remembers” who repeated the very last thing which had been recorded by the very last prophet, Malachi. Evidently, God wanted His people to know that *He remembered the oath* (the meaning of Elizabeth’s name) that He had spoken to Abraham and his descendants, and He was about to begin the process of fulfilling the oath concerning the Messiah. And the son born to Zacharias and Elizabeth was the one to announce the coming of Messiah.

This week we are going to look into the details surrounding the birth of the Messiah. Although within the pages of this study, you will be looking at many familiar passages of Scripture, hopefully you will see some of them in an expanded light, so to speak. Hopefully you will see how these passages fit into an overall picture of Scripture, which to a great extent, has been ignored when these passages are reviewed year after year at Christmas time.

We’ll begin this week by once again looking at some of those familiar passages. Why don’t you pray for a keen understanding of the things which you are about to read?

### Day One — The Record of His Birth

For our time today, we are simply going to read the details concerning the birth of the Messiah from a few chapters in the gospels. First, turn in your Appendix and read Matthew chapter one. Make any observational notes in the margins.

Now continue with Luke chapter two; then Matthew chapter two, in that order. When you are done, if you would like, you can write out any observations you make in each of the chapters in the spaces provided.

## Matthew Chapter One

## Luke Chapter Two

## Matthew Chapter Two

We'll consider some specific passages from these chapters throughout the remainder of the week. See you tomorrow.

## Day Two — Descendent of David

In our reading both yesterday and last week, there were several places wherein references were made to David. For our purposes today we need to notice these references in particular. A few of the passages are printed here.<sup>1</sup> As you read through these passages, underline the phrases which have to do with David.

### **Matthew 1**

**1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

### **Matthew 1**

**20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.**

### **Luke 1**

**27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.**

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<sup>1</sup> By no means is this an exhaustive list of references concerning the fact that Jesus is the Son of David.

**Luke 1**

**32 “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David...**

**Luke 1**

**69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant —**

**Luke 2**

**4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,**

**Luke 2**

**11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**

**Luke 3**

**31 the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,**

**John 7**

**42 “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”**

**Romans 1**

**3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh,**

**II Timothy 2**

**8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel,**

All in all, what are your impressions of these references concerning Jesus Christ and David? What seems to be the overriding point in these passages?

During David’s reign, God used the prophet Nathan to give David some very important information about his lineage. Study the passage<sup>2</sup> below and carefully outline the detail of it in the chart provided.

**II Samuel 7**

**8 “Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over My people Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. 10 I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, 11 even from the day that I commanded judges to be**

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<sup>2</sup> This passage is repeated in the historical account given in I Chronicles 17:11-14.

over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. 12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom.

Fill in the chart with the information from this passage.

**What God had already done  
for David:**

**What God would yet do  
for David:**

**II Samuel 7**

11 ...The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. 12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”””

God is referring to a descendant of David. Make notes as to any new promises made to David and the promises concerning David's descendant.

**Promises Concerning David's  
Descendant:**

**New or Repeated Promises  
to David:**

David understood exactly what God had told him through the Prophet Nathan. In fact, David wrote about the promise in many of his Psalms. Here are just two examples of the subject he would often refer to in the Psalms. (And shouldn't he? What a promise was made to David!)

**Psalm 89**

**3 "I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, 4 I will establish your seed forever, and build up your throne to all generations."**

**Psalm 132**

**11 The LORD has sworn to David, A truth from which He will not turn back; "Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne. 12 If your sons will keep My covenant, and My testimony which I will teach them, Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever."**

As you can see, there was a condition attached to the promise of his sons and their sons being able to sit on David's throne. Write out what the condition was.

We'll study more about the birth of David's descendent tomorrow. See you then.

## Day Three — Joseph's and Mary's Lineage to David

Begin your study in prayer. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to His truth.

Today we are going to look closely at the lineage of Jesus, back to David, both through the line of Joseph and the line of Mary. First we will cover Joseph's line, as it is recorded in Matthew chapter one; then we'll cover Mary's line as it is recorded in Luke chapter three.

**Matthew 1**

**1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

Following this opening verse of the New Testament, Matthew traces Jesus' roots back to Abraham through David. From yesterday's study, why do you think this is important enough to be the absolute first verse for the entire New Testament?

Now notice a bit more information. Continuing in Matthew chapter one:

**5 and to Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab; and to Boaz was born Obed by Ruth; and to Obed, Jesse; 6 and to Jesse was born David the king. And to David was born Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah; 7 and to Solomon...**

From your previous Biblical knowledge, briefly write out what you know about the following people or couples:

## Salmon and Rahab

## Boaz and Ruth

## David and the wife of Uriah (Bathsheba)

## Solomon

Now let's fast-forward (keeping within the passage that has recorded Joseph's lineage) and jump down to v. 16:

**16 and to Jacob was born Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.**

Look closely and note how carefully Matthew recorded the facts. Christ's *legal right* to the throne *had to be* traced to David, through Solomon. Jesus' earthly father *had to be* a descendent of David's son Solomon. And we see in the Gospel of Matthew that Joseph was descended from Solomon.<sup>3</sup>

Yet the conditional clause must be remembered. Even as David was dying, he called Solomon to his bedside, and charged him with the responsibilities of the king.

### I Kings 2

**1 As David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying, 2 "I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. 3 And keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn, 4 so that the LORD may carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'...**

And later the record clearly reveals that David's son, Solomon, fully knew this condition, for early in his reign, he specifically recalled the condition. Underline the condition which Solomon spoke:

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<sup>3</sup> If you want to see the complete record of Joseph's lineage back to David through Solomon, see Mt. 1:1-16.



**I Kings 8<sup>4</sup>**

**25 “Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Thy servant David my father that which Thou hast promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way to walk before Me as you have walked.’**

Sad to say, Solomon *did not* remain faithfully obedient to the Lord God, so once Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, succeeded Solomon to the throne, the kingdom divided, and eventually Solomon’s blood line no longer remained on the throne. Herein is a portion of the record.

**I Kings 11**

**1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, “You shall not associate with them, neither shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.” Solomon held fast to these in love. 3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. 4 For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. 6 And Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. 8 Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.**

**9 Now the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, 10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not observe what the LORD had commanded. 11 So the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant. 12 Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”**

Briefly describe what Solomon did.

Briefly describe what God did as a result of Solomon’s actions.

Yet, because of God’s promise to David (conditional though it was), and David’s walk of repentance and obedience, the *legal right* to the throne *had to come* through David’s bloodline, in spite of Solomon’s

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<sup>4</sup> This quote is exactly repeated in II Chronicles 6:16.

disobedience. And according to the passage in I Kings chapter eleven, Solomon's blood line *would not* continue to have right to the throne, though the legal right to the throne would have to come through Solomon.

Does this present a problem? Not to the God of all promises! God knew just how He would resolve this issue, all the while maintaining His absolute integrity, keeping His promise to David (due to faithfulness), as well as maintaining His judicial side of the conditions, which He had previously set forth.

In other words, the legal right to David's throne would, of necessity, come through Solomon, David's son who succeeded him on the throne; yet, Solomon lost the right for his own descendancy to remain on the throne due to his disobedience. So the question is: How would one of David's descendants, through Solomon's lineage, sit *legally* on David's throne as God had promised, and not be Solomon's direct descendent (i.e., a descendent through Solomon's blood line)?

It is easy to see that Joseph was a descendant of David through the lineage of Solomon. But Joseph was not *the physical father* of Jesus Christ, the Promised Son of David; he was *the adopted father*. And through this scenario, Joseph's Son, even though adopted, would have the *legal right* to the throne of David.

With the legal right to the throne settled, how would the one ascending David's throne also be a blood descendant of David, but not through Solomon, since Solomon lost the right to have one of his descendants remain on the throne?

In Matthew chapter one, it can be seen that Christ's lineage is traced back to David through Joseph's father, Jacob, with his lineage going back to David through David's son, Solomon (Mt. 1:6, 16). But an altogether different lineage is traced back to David in Luke chapter three, running Christ's lineage back to David through Joseph's *father-in-law*, Eli, with his lineage going back to David through *another* of David's sons, Nathan. Read it below:

### Luke 3

**21 Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased." 23 And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being supposedly the son of Joseph, the son of Eli...**

**...31 ... the son of Nathan, the son of David...**

It is said here that Jesus is "supposedly" the son of Joseph, who is the *son of Eli*, not the son of Jacob as in the Matthew account.

Let's look at the phrase, "being supposedly the son of Joseph" in v. 23. The Greek word *nomizo* — translated *supposedly* — is derived from the Greek word *nomos*, which is the word for *law*. Therefore the use of this word in the Greek gives a connotation of something being *looked upon in a legal sense*, or *deemed in a legal sense*. So according to this passage, Jesus was deemed, *in a legal sense*, to be the son of Joseph. Then at this point in the text, the lineage traced back to David is different here in the Gospel of Luke than it was in the Gospel of Matthew.

Notice that Joseph was *the son of Jacob* in Matthew's gospel; and the lineage from this point back to David is the lineage going back to David *through Solomon*. But notice in Luke's gospel that it is stated of Joseph that he was the *son of Eli*. This lineage goes back to David through David's son Nathan. This lineage runs the ancestry of Joseph back to David through his *father-in-law*, Eli — Mary's father. In other words, this

lineage is actually *Mary's blood line* back to David through David's son, Nathan, *who was a son also born to David by Bathsheba*.<sup>5</sup> And this could be done *legally*, because Joseph's father was, deemed *by law*, Eli (being Mary's father, or Joseph's father-**in-law**). And Jesus was born to Mary, who had conceived by the Holy Spirit, and adopted by Joseph, Mary's husband.

So now we see how Jesus' *legal right* to the throne of David is through Joseph (Jesus' adopted father), through Solomon; and His blood line to the throne of David is through Mary who is actually from David's blood line through David's son, Nathan, who, as we have seen, was also born to David by Bathsheba.

Amazing! God is so wonderful!

#### Acts 13

**22 "And after He [God] had removed him [Saul from the throne], He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.' 23 From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus...**

We'll close today with this passage from the Prophet Isaiah.

#### Isaiah 11

**1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.**

Jesse was David's father. David was the father of both Solomon and Nathan, by Bathsheba. Joseph was descended from Solomon; Mary was descended from Nathan. Jesus was born to Mary, the wife of Joseph.

There you have it!

We will continue this tomorrow.

## Day Four — The Virgin Birth

In the past three days, we have perused the Scriptures which detail the birth of the Messiah. We have seen how the marriage of Joseph and Mary was the perfect line of descendance through which the Messiah could come, in order to properly and completely fulfill prophecy. With all of this in mind, we will now go back to the record of His birth and catch some of the specific details. Go back to your Appendix and reread Matthew 1:18ff.

Briefly write out the specifics about the record you just read.

According to v. 24, what does it say of Joseph and Mary's relationship until Jesus was born?

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<sup>5</sup> **I Chronicles 3:5 And these were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four, by Bathshua [Bathsheba] the daughter of Ammiel...**

Let's talk about *the need* for a virgin birth. Why was it necessary that the Messiah, the prophesied Son of God (II Sam. 7:14) to be born to a *virgin*? Let's look at it.

The first stated promise of a Redeemer, spoken by God to Satan, referred to "the seed of the *woman*," not the seed of the man. Let's read about it.

### Genesis 3

**15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."**

What does the text say God will put between Satan and the woman?

What will happen to the seed of the woman?

What will happen to Satan?

From your knowledge of Scripture, what does the term "bruise him on the heel" refer to?

In Genesis 3:15, what might the absence of a reference to the man infer here?

In addition to this, it had been prophesied that the Savior would be born to a virgin. Read about it from the pen of the Prophet Isaiah:

### Isaiah 7

**14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.**

Now look back at Matthew 1:23 and see what the name *Immanuel* means. What does the text say it means?

So why was it absolutely necessary for the Messiah to be born to a virgin? It was necessary because the *sin of Adam* was imputed to *all* of Adam's offspring. After Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, his entire lineage would be tainted with a sinful, fallen nature. And, simply stated, this could not be the nature of God the Son.

At the beginning, man was created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26), but now —

### Genesis 5

**1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived one**

**hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.**

In v. 1, what does this text say about the description of Adam in his creation?

In v. 3, what does the text say about the description of Seth?

Yes, from the moment of Adam's sin, every individual born to a man and woman (which includes all individuals save one — the One born to a virgin) would be born with Adam's fallen nature. God had told Adam in the Garden that when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would surely die. And as a result of Adam's actions nearly 6,000 years ago, death has been a continuous condition all of mankind. However, God has provided a way out.

**I Corinthians 15**

**21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.**

And so we see,

**Romans 5**

**2 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...**

And to show how that this condition of mankind has continued from Adam even until now, we will read a very short passage that states it in clearly! In speaking to the Church at Ephesus, Paul also speaks to us, saying —

**Ephesians 2**

**1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins...**

But there came One whose seed did not come *through man*. A virgin conceived and bore a Son — the Son of God. Thus, the first man, the first Adam sinned, and through him every single individual born has been born dead in trespasses and sin. But later there came the Second Man (I Cor. 15:47), the Last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), and *in Him*, all will be made alive.

**Romans 5**

**18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.**

But Jesus coming to die for the redemption of mankind was *not the only reason for His coming*. Remember what we read and studied last week from Luke chapter one.

**Luke 1**

**31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God**

**will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.”**

On page 13 you wrote out the seven parts of this message which was given to Mary by the Angel Gabriel. Look back at those seven parts now, and write out how you are seeing this picture fit together.

With these things in mind, read another prophesy given to Isaiah, concerning this One born to a virgin..

**Isaiah 9**

**6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.**

In your own words, relate this prophecy to what the Angel told Mary.

Read Luke 2:1-13. Write out a brief summary of what took place, particularly noting the references to David.

That's it for today. I hope you are seeing a large picture beginning to take shape.

## Day Five — The Root and the Offspring of David

Today we will complete our study on the birth of the Messiah. I know that we have already read through Matthew chapter two, but there are some details which need our attention today. Before we begin today, why don't you pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon you, to give you clarity and understanding of His Word?

Now go back to your Appendix and read Matthew 2:1-12, then write out a brief synopsis of what you read.

Look specifically at what the wise men from the East said when they arrived in Jerusalem. They asked a question, and then they made a statement. First, what was the question?

Second, what was the statement?

Why would the appearance of a star cause these wise men from the East to come looking for the One born King of the Jews? What is significant about this star? And what did it imply? For the answers to these questions, let's read from the Book of Numbers. This is the section where the Prophet Balaam (who had gone astray from the Lord's way, and had gone his own way [Nu. 22:32]), had been commissioned by Balak, the king of Moab, to curse God's people. Though, for monetary gain, Balaam was willing to curse God's people, God would only allow Balaam to bless them. In the end, the statement God proclaimed through Balaam was this —

**Numbers 24**

**15 And he [Balaam] took up his discourse and said, “The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, And the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, 16 The oracle of him who hears the words of God, And knows the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, yet having his eyes uncovered. 17 I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob<sup>6</sup>, And a scepter shall rise from Israel...  
... 19 One from Jacob shall have dominion...”**

Essentially, in this section, what did God say through Balaam?

We'll talk about the star in a moment. But first, let's look at the scepter. According to v. 17, from where will it rise?

So, why do you think the appearance of a star moved these wise men to come looking for “He who has been born King of the Jews”?

Progressive revelation proved to be even more specific than simply revealing that the scepter would rise *from Israel*. Scripture further describes the scepter as rising through Jacob's son, Judah. It had been recorded in Genesis chapter forty-nine, that at the end of Jacob's life, he prophesied over each of his sons, telling them what would befall each of them.

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<sup>6</sup> God changed Jacob's name to Israel (see the end of the verse).

**Genesis 49**

**1 Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what shall befall you in the days to come. 2 Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father...**

When he got to his fourth son, Judah, Jacob said:

**8 “Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s sons shall bow down to you. 9 Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.**

List what Jacob said to his son, Judah.

Now let’s peruse some passages that deal with this scepter.

**Psalm 60<sup>7</sup>**

**7 “Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter.**

That the One to hold the scepter will come from Judah is apparent; but what does a scepter imply?

**Psalm 45**

**6 Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Thy kingdom.**

**Psalm 110**

**2 The LORD will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, “Rule in the midst of Thine enemies.”**

**Hebrews 1**

**8 But of the Son He says, “THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.**

Putting all of this together, what is being inferred by all of this? What does holding a scepter imply?

Now let’s deal with the appearance of the star. Compare what the wise men from the East said in Matthew 2:1, 2, about the star to what was said by Balaam concerning Israel in Numbers 24:17.

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<sup>7</sup> Psalms 108:8 is a repeat verbatim.



Most likely, the wise men were descendants of the dispersed Jews who had been exiled to Babylon from the Southern kingdom more than 600 years prior, living in “the East” at the time of Christ’s birth. And because of their lineage, they would have undoubtedly been aware of the many prophecies concerning the birth of the Messiah. And with this knowledge of Scripture, they would have known what the star implied. Evidenced by their words, they knew!

And those who should have “known” in Jerusalem had an interesting reaction to what these men said. Look at what is said in Matthew 2:3. Along with Herod, who was troubled about the star?

It is understandable that Herod was troubled, but why “all of Israel with him”? What attitude did this portend on the part of Israel at the time of Christ’s birth?

After the wise men came to Herod, questioning him about the One born king of the Jews, Herod called the chief priests and scribes, and asked them where the Christ was to be born. What did they say in response to Herod (Mt. 2:5, 6)?

The chief priests and scribes knew the prophecy that came from the Prophet Micah. Micah wrote:

**Micah 5**

**2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”**

Now this is interesting! Back in the Book of Ruth, it was from Bethlehem that Naomi and her family left during a time of famine, and traveled to the land of Moab. It was in Moab that both of Naomi’s sons took wives for themselves, Ruth and Orpah. And it was back to Bethlehem that Naomi and Ruth traveled years later, after Naomi’s husband and sons had died. And it was in Bethlehem that Ruth began working in Boaz’s field, and where Boaz later took Ruth for his wife, and where they bore a son named, Obed.

Does the name Obed ring any bells for you? Look back at Matthew 1:5, 6. What does it say?

Now read the last few verses in the Book of Ruth.

**Ruth 4**

**17 And the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi!” So they named him Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David. 18 Now these are the generations of Perez: to Perez was born Hezron, 19 and to Hezron was born Ram, and to Ram, Amminadab, 20 and to Amminadab was born Nahshon, and to Nahshon, Salmon, 21 and to Salmon was born Boaz, and to Boaz, Obed, 22 and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse, David.**

Are you beginning to see how the complete story of JESUS, THE MESSIAH fits together?

We'll end our study this week with two verses from the Book of the Revelation. When John had been called into the heavens, into the Lord's Day, he realized that a heavenly search was taking place for One worthy to break the seals in chapter five. Underline v. 5 when you come to it.

**Revelation 5**

**1 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look into it. 4 And I began to weep greatly, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look into it; 5 and one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."**

Relate what is said in v. 5 to what we have learned today. How does it all go together?

Now we will read the very last Words spoken by Jesus Christ in all of Scripture. It is found on the very last page in the Bible. Jesus says:

**Revelation 22**

**16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star."**

What do you think He means when He says that He is *the root and the offspring of David*?

Think on these things. I'll see you in class.

## Notes



## Lesson Three — His Life

*Day One — The One of Whom Moses and the Prophets Spoke*

*Day Two — Christ's Introduction into Public Ministry*

*Day Three — The Messianic Message*

*Day Four — Miraculous Signs*

*Day Five — His Last Week*

In the past two weeks we have looked at the details concerning the forerunner of Messiah, John the Baptist, as well as the birth of the Messiah. This week we will spend some time looking at the life of the Messiah. In doing so, we will naturally include His actions and His words. What did He do? What message did He bring?

Please remember to continually ask the Lord for insight and wisdom. Also ask Him to fill you with His Spirit, as you confess to Him anything that He prompts you to confess. Why don't you stop and do that now?

Are you ready? Let's get started.

### Day One — The One of Whom Moses and the Prophets Spoke

This week we will peruse passages that reveal the life and work of Jesus Christ. Because there is so much information on this subject, it would be impossible to cover it all in one week's time. So for our purposes this week, we will glimpse particular facets of the overall picture, and realize that we could not possibly cover it in full.

First we will look at an event in the Scripture which I have already referred to my lectures; but I want to bring attention to the event again so that you can look at what is written and study through it carefully. It is an event which took place on Resurrection day.

Jesus taught a lesson to two disciples that we need to learn as well. These two disciples were setting out on a seven-mile journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus on Resurrection day. Their hearts were downcast because of recent events, i.e. the crucifixion of the One they had hoped would redeem Israel, and the report that He had been seen alive. Without their knowing Who He was, Jesus began walking and talking with them. He

questioned them as to their thoughts and conversation. Their response to His query concerning recent events revealed a very definite lack of understanding of the way the Old Testament Scriptures were put together. This lack of understanding (something which should not have been the case for these disciples), evoked this response from Jesus:

**Luke 24**

**25 And He said to them, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**

Write out what the disciples had missed in their understanding of Scripture, and how Jesus corrected their mistake.

Do you know what portion of the Old Testament Moses wrote? It was the first five books of the Bible. So essentially, Jesus began at the beginning of the Scriptures and continued on from there, teaching the disciples about Himself, which He could do from *any part of Scripture*. (See if that isn't what is stated by Jesus' words.)

According to this passage, how pervasively should we see Jesus in these five books, and in the books of all the Prophets?

The events of that day continued. Jesus and the two disciples arrived at the destination, and the two men asked Jesus to stay with them. He complied. Even yet, they did not recognize Him. Then, as they sat down to eat —

**Luke 24**

**30 And it came about that when He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. 32 And they said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?”**

At what moment did they recognize Who He was?

Here is a question to ponder — Keeping within the context of what Jesus had just revealed to His disciples about the Scriptures, why do you think they recognized Him *at that moment*?

When the disciples understood what Jesus was showing them about the Scriptures, what effect did it have on them (v. 32)?

Once Jesus broke bread with them, they recognized Who He was, and then He disappeared from their sight. The two had come to realize (through what Jesus had just taught them), that *the key to understanding Old Testament truths* is this: that *the whole* of the Old Testament is about some facet or revelation of Jesus Christ. And the result of grasping this key had a result in their hearts concerning Scripture — it caused their hearts to burn within them!

At once, the two disciples made their way back to Jerusalem to let the other disciples know that they had seen Jesus alive. Once there, while the two disciples were relating their encounter with Jesus to this larger group, Jesus appeared in their midst, and spoke with them. Here is how He ended His discourse with the larger group:

**Luke 24**

**...44 Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures...**

According to this passage, where are the places in Scripture that Jesus said one could go to find all things that are written about Him?

In showing them that this is the way to view Scripture, what did He do for them (v. 45)?

Although all of Moses’ writings deal with the Christ (as we have just seen), let’s look specifically at something Moses said to the second generation of the Children of Israel, as they were about to enter the Promised Land. In the midst of a rather lengthy dissertation, Moses said:

**Deuteronomy 18**

**15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. 16 This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’ 17 And the LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well. 18 I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him...”**

Essentially, what did Moses prophesy?

The fulfillment of this prophecy spoken by Moses can be easily ascertained through Jesus’ Own words.

**John 8**

**28 Jesus therefore said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.**

**John 12** (Jesus speaking)

**49 “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. 50 And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”**

**John 17** (Jesus speaking to the Father)

**...8 for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them; and they received them, and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me...**

Relate what Moses had told the Children of Israel to what Jesus told the people.

As we have seen the complete Old Testament is about the Lord Jesus Christ. And in order to see that the people during Christ's day recognized this fact, let's read a few verses wherein such statements are made.

**John 1**

**45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”**

**John 4** (The Samaritan woman at the well)

**25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.”**

**Matthew 16** (His disciples answering Christ's question, “Who do people say that I am?”)

**14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

**Acts 3** (Peter speaking to the Men of Israel)

**22 “Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you. 23 And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ 24 And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. 25 It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.’ 26 For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways.”**

What can you learn about Jesus from the previous passages?



Now, let's bring these things to the present and relate them to the future.

#### **Hebrews 12**

**25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. 26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." 27 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.**

What responsibility does this put on you, personally?

As we close for the day, do you have any thoughts or questions you would like to write down?

See you tomorrow.

## **Day Two — Christ's Introduction into Public Ministry**

With the past weeks of study and with what we saw yesterday, we can now begin to look at the life of Christ. Since we know that Jesus Christ is the One spoken of by Moses and all the prophets, we can now look to see what His mission and message was. But while looking at Jesus' mission and message, there are things we must remember. We must remember that:

- Man was created to rule.
- Man lost the right to rule, due to Adam's sin.
- All mankind is affected by Adam's sin, as the fallen nature is passed through the seed of the man.
- Jesus Christ was prophesied from the beginning, in many ways.
- Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, was born to a virgin, through God's Spirit overshadowing her; God is His Father.

With those things in mind, let's go to the beginning of Christ's public ministry. We will be reading large portions of Scripture today in the various gospels. I have the Scriptures formatted in such a way that you will be able to make study notes in both margins. Just spend the day studying through these passages, asking the Holy Spirit to allow you to see what He wants you to see.

#### **Luke 3**

**1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to**

**John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. 5 EVERY RAVINE SHALL BE FILLED UP, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW; AND THE CROOKED SHALL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; 6 AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.’”**

**7 He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’ for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”**

**10 And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, “Then what shall we do?” 11 And he would answer and say to them, “Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise.”**

**12 And some tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” 13 And he said to them, “Collect no more than what you have been ordered to.”**

**14 And some soldiers were questioning him, saying, “And what about us, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages.”**

**15 Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, 16 John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” 18 So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to the people.**

What had John been sent to do?

According to v. 15, what kind of state were the people in?

What does John say of the One to come after him?

### **Matthew 3**

**13 Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” 15 But Jesus answering said to him,**

**“Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him. 16 And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”**

What happened after Jesus was baptized? Give details.

### **John 1**

**32 And John bore witness saying, “I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. 33 And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’ 34 And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”**

**35 Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”**

**37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 And Jesus turned, and beheld them following, and said to them, “What do you seek?” And they said to Him, “Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?” 39 He said to them, “Come, and you will see.” They came therefore and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. 40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means Christ). 42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).**

**43 The next day He purposed to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.” 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 And Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.”**

When John saw Jesus coming to him, what did he call Jesus?

Relating this information to what we studied yesterday, what do you think John meant when he said that?

What did Andrew say to his brother, Simon, about Jesus?

What did Nathaniel say of Jesus?

After Jesus had been baptized by John...

#### **Matthew 4**

**1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"**

**5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"** 7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

**8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"** 11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

**12 Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. 14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15 "THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES — 16 THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND TO THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED." 17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

Who led Jesus into the wilderness to be tested by Satan?

Throughout this forty day period, who tempted Jesus?

It is recorded that Satan twice asked Jesus the same question. What was the question?

Then what was the third recorded temptation?

Once Jesus came out of the wilderness, and settled in Capernaum, from that time on, what did Jesus begin to preach (v. 17)?

In closing our study today, what have you learned about the introduction of Christ's public ministry?

## Day Three — The Messianic Message

As we have already seen, the message of the forerunner of Christ — John the Baptist — was a message of repentance. Below are his first recorded words in the Gospel of Matthew. When you come to his quote, underline what John says.

### Matthew 3

**1 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven (lit., *the* heavens) is at hand."**

At this point in your understanding, what do you think is the meaning of John's words?

Immediately following Jesus' baptism by John, God speaks from heaven concerning Jesus. Underline what He said.

### Matthew 3

**16 And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."**

In order to understand the import of God the Father's statement and in order to understand what the Jews knew this statement to mean, it *must* be related back to the prophecy given in II Samuel 7:12-14a, which we looked at on pp. 29, 30. Relate God's statement in Matthew 3:17 to God's statement in II Samuel 7:14. What is obvious?

In Matthew 3:17, the statement spoken from heaven is clearly the fulfillment of what was previously stated by God through the prophet Nathan to David in II Samuel. This statement from heaven reveals that Jesus

is the One Who was David's descendant; the One Who would sit on David's throne; and the One Who would have an everlasting kingdom. Remember Jesus came to the Jews as their King! And as such, He came to offer them *the kingdom of the heavens*. We must understand what it means that which is meant by the title "the Son of God," as well as understand what it means that the kingdom of the heavens is at hand. We must not gloss over these things and let them slip by without understanding the true meaning. (We'll discuss this in more detail in the lecture.)

Sometime after Jesus' baptism and His 40 days of testing in the wilderness, John was taken into custody. When Jesus heard this news, He began preaching the same message that John had preached. Underline His words in both passages below.

**Matthew 4**

**17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ...23 And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom...**

**Luke 4**

**41 And demons also were coming out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Son of God!" And rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ. 42 And when day came, He departed and went to a lonely place; and the multitudes were searching for Him, and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from going away from them. 43 But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose." 44 And He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.**

Go back and underline the statement Jesus made in v. 43. According to Jesus' Own words, for what purpose did Jesus come?

According to these two passages, what message did Jesus bring to the Jews? Compare it to the message John had been preaching.

According to Matthew 4:23 and Luke 4:44, to whom did He give the message? How do you know?

From the passage in Luke chapter four, what did the demons say of Jesus?

For the following three years Jesus did public ministry. He walked the streets of Jerusalem and the surrounding regions, continuing to take a very specific message to the Jews. It was a message *concerning*

*the kingdom of the heavens*, which has its roots in the *unconditional* covenant made with Abraham (which was related to the *conditional* covenant made with Abraham's physical descendants, through Moses at Mt. Sinai). For the most part, the Old Testament, in dealing with irrevocable promises made to Abraham and to His descendants, dealt with the *earthly land* and the Jews having an inheritance in that land. Though the Abrahamic covenant was unconditional and irrevocable, an *individual's participation* in the promises of this covenant was fully conditional upon each person's willingness to obey the law — the Mosaic covenant.

Again, the Old Testament had to do with the earthly portion of the kingdom. But now Christ came to Israel (Abraham's descendants) with an offer for the heavenly kingdom. Now Jesus' message had to do with the heavenly portion of the kingdom, conditioned upon adherence to His commands. Jesus came offering a better inheritance, based upon a higher standard of obedience than that seen in the Mosaic Law. (For examples, compare the portions of the Mosaic Law with Christ's commands in Mt. 5:20-32.)

The message of the New Testament had to do, not with this earthly land, but with the second realm of the kingdom promised to Abraham's descendants. It had to do with *the heavenly portion* of the kingdom, which can easily be seen as one peruses the pages of the New Testament. God's first-born son, Israel, was in a position to receive a double-portion of the inheritance! And both realms of the kingdom make up the double-portion — the heavenly realm and the earthly realm.<sup>1</sup>

(It is an interesting study to look at a red-lettered edition of the Bible and see what was uppermost on Jesus' mind in His last week on earth prior to His death [even His entire public ministry, for that matter]. He gave the message that He was sent by the Father to give.)

It becomes very obvious that the focus of His message concerned offering the kingdom of the heavens to Abraham's descendants — the only ones on earth who were in a position to be made such an offer. They were the people of God, the only people who had access to the Living God, and the only people who were descendants of the one to whom the promises were given. God was their king. Jesus was God in the flesh; and He had come to offer the kingdom of the heavens to them. In obedience, they only needed to repent from their sinfulness and receive their King and accept the offer of the heavenly kingdom.

Tomorrow we'll see how they responded to this offer. And we will continue to study these things as we work through the next several weeks of study.

That's it for today! Have a nice one!

## Day Four — Miraculous Signs

As we begin our work in today's study, it must be remembered that the New Testament is simply the on-going flow of the Old. To be sure, one cannot fully understand either Testament apart from the other; the two form one continuous story. And this is evident by the fact that, as we have already seen, the Old Testament closes with the exact message that the angel brought to Zacharias at the point when God began to speak to His people again after 400 years of silence. (Compare Mal. 4:5, 6 with Lk. 1:17.) This is not coincidental!

And this type of thing can be seen over and over again when comparing the Old and New Testaments. One way this can be seen is in the message that Jesus brought to Israel (being the identical message that John

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<sup>1</sup> This area of study is covered in greater detail in the Bible study entitled UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE — BIBLICAL SURVEY, which is available from Seeking the Kingdom Ministries.

the Baptist also brought). The message, “Repent...” was reflective upon something which the Prophet Isaiah had spoken against Israel some 700 years prior. By Divine inspiration, Isaiah rightly spoke:

**Isaiah 1**

**2 Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, “Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me. 3 An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master’s manger, but Israel does not know, My people do not understand.”**

**4 Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him. 5 Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts, and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil.**

According to vv. 5-6, what is the condition of Israel?

It was in the midst of Isaiah’s ministry to the Southern Kingdom that the Northern Kingdom was taken captive and exiled in 722 BC by the Assyrian king, after many prophets had been sent to them, calling them to repentance; but they would not listen to God’s Word. Exile and captivity was the result for the lack of righteousness on the part of the people in the Northern Kingdom. God had previously told them would be the case (*cf.* Deut. 28:15ff; Lev. 26:14-39).

God sent prophets to both Northern and Southern Kingdoms<sup>2</sup>, warning them also of sure captivity and exile if they continued to walk in rebellious ways. In fact, what Isaiah said in the passage above only reflects upon the words spoken by God through Moses to the second generation when He told them of their sure outcome if they walked in disobedience. Moses had previously warned:

**Deuteronomy 28**

**35 “The LORD will strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.**

Slightly over 100 years after the Northern Kingdom had been taken into captivity by Assyria, the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, came into Israel in the three waves of attack and deportation (605 BC; 597 BC; 586 BC), so to speak, exiling the Southern Kingdom to Babylon. Their captivity lasted for 70 years, at which time Cyrus’ decree went forth stating that Jews in Babylon could go back to Israel and rebuild their Temple, city and wall.

Then for another 100 years or so, God continued to send prophets to speak God’s Word to Israel, but for these succeeding 100 years Israel continued to disobey God and disregard His Word. Finally, God sent the last prophet, Malachi, who spoke God’s Word to the people during Nehemiah’s day. Finally, God had said all He was going to say; and silence ensued for the next 400 years, until the angel was sent.

And the fact that nothing had changed with Israel’s condition during *or after* Isaiah’s ministry is not difficult to ascertain at all. Israel was sick with sin; and in this sin-sick condition, the message opening up the New Testament is John’s message of repentance to the nation, with a view to healing contingent upon repentance — “Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand.”

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<sup>2</sup> Remember that the Kingdom of Israel had been divided after Solomon died. Ten tribes of Israel made up the Northern Kingdom, and two tribes made up the Southern.



Also the fact that Jesus went about the countryside calling for repentance while healing the sick was indicative that Israel, as a nation, *was sick from the sole of their feet, to the crown of their head.*

(The healing of a physically sick person formed a *sign* which pointed to the fact that Israel as a nation could experience *spiritual healing*, conditioned upon national repentance.)

Jesus went throughout the land of Israel preaching the kingdom of God and performing miraculous signs and healing people from various sicknesses. All of this was not without purpose. The Apostle John specifically laid out eight signs throughout his gospel, after which he stated the reason *why these things* [these signs] *had been written down.* In a moment we'll peruse a few of the eight signs, but notice this first. After giving the eighth sign, he wrote:

**John 20**

**30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.**

It must be remembered that a *sign* points to something yet future. With the condition of Israel being such as it had been stated in Isaiah 1:2-6, and the message of repentance being spread throughout the land, according to John's own words, why did he write this gospel?

Since it is a Jew who requires a sign (I Cor. 1:22), compare v. 30 with v. 31, *what was written* so that they may believe?

At this point in your understanding, what does it mean to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"?

John goes on to say that there were many more things that Jesus did. He wrote:

**John 21**

**24 This is the disciple who bears witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written.**

What was the implication John made through saying that "the world would not contain the books"?

Out of all the miraculous signs that Jesus performed, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John chose eight signs to tell about in his gospel. The passages wherein each of the signs are spelled out are printed for you in the Appendix under the heading EIGHT SIGNS IN JOHN. For the remainder of today's study, will you find this section in your Appendix and read through all of, or part of, the eight signs? There is space below for notes to be taken on the details of each of the signs. Things to note in these spaces are the answers to the question: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

If time allows you to study through all eight signs, please do so! If not, choose a couple of the signs and work through them. Then, at your weekly meeting when you come together as a group perhaps *all* the signs will have been studied and each can be discussed. We'll deal with these signs to large extent in the lecture this week.

FIRST SIGN:

SECOND SIGN:

THIRD SIGN:

FOURTH SIGN:

FIFTH SIGN:

SIXTH SIGN:

SEVENTH SIGN:

EIGHTH SIGN:

## Day Five — His Last Week

Thus far we have glimpsed the messages which were brought by both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. Both brought an identical message to God's people — the only people on earth who could have been offered this specific message. The message had to do with *repentance* and *the kingdom of the heavens*. We have also seen that Christ's public ministry was one of miraculous signs of healing, portending the need of national healing through repentance.

Today we will look at a few events which took place during the last week of Christ's public ministry, exactly prior to His death. We'll begin on the first day of that week. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Look to see what the crowds were saying on this day —

### **John 12**

**12 On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."**

### **Matthew 21**

**8 And most of the multitude spread their garments in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees, and spreading them in the road. 9 And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!" 10 And when He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the multitudes were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."**

### **Mark 11**

**8 And many spread their garments in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. 9 And those who went before, and those who followed after, were crying out, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!"**

### **Luke 19**

**37 And as He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 38 saying, "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"**

From all four gospel accounts, what seems foremost in the minds of the Jews this first day of Christ's last week?

This type entry into Jerusalem would certainly have reminded many, if not all of the Jews about an event which had been recorded in the Scriptures concerning David's son, Solomon. Read an excerpt from I Kings about the day Solomon was coronated as king over Israel. The Jews would certainly have gotten the innuendo. And the leadership didn't like it all!

#### **I Kings 1**

**32 Then King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came into the king's presence. 33 And the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. 34 And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel, and blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne and be king in my place; for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." 36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! Thus may the LORD, the God of my lord the king, say. 37 As the LORD has been with my lord the king, so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David!"**

**38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. 39 Zadok the priest then took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" 40 And all the people went up after him, and the people were playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth shook at their noise.**

Then there was also a prophecy spoken by the Prophet Zechariah, which prophesied of this event:

#### **Zechariah 9**

**9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**

As Jesus entered into the city that first day of the week on a donkey, numerous things began to take place in rapid succession. It seems that the hatred on the part of the leadership toward Jesus grew daily. Just a few weeks prior, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the leaders had already decided to look for an opportunity to kill Him. (So adamant had they become in desiring to kill Jesus that they even sought to put to death the one whom Jesus raised from the dead — Lazarus.) With the events of this first day of the week of Passover (i.e., His riding into the city on a donkey, and the cries of the crowds), they looked for a way to kill Him all the more!

Early in this particular week of Passover, Jesus spent the days walking through the streets teaching the crowds and answering the Pharisees accusations, talking much about the kingdom of the heavens. But in the evenings, He would retreat with His disciples and continue to teach them, as He encouraged them, again talking much about the kingdom of the heavens. Of course, in His omniscience, He knew His time was growing shorter by the day.

At some point in the final weeks of Christ's public ministry, the leaders — speaking on behalf of the nation of Israel — crossed over the line. There had previously been a defining moment in Matthew chapter twelve when the leaders attributed Jesus' power to perform miracles to Satan. As a result, in His last week prior to His death, Jesus withdrew the offer of the kingdom of the heavens, which He had been making to them for the previous three years. Let's read about it.

#### **Matthew 21 (speaking to the Pharisees)**

**33 "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A**

**VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey. 34 And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. 35 And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. 36 Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. 37 But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize his inheritance.' 39 And they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40 Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?"**

**41 They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons."**

**42 Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'? 43 Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. 44 And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."**

**45 And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. 46 And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet.**

Who does the landowner represent?

What did the landowner do with the vineyard?

What did the tenants do?

When did the landowner send his son?

What did the tenants do with the son and why?

Then Jesus asked the next question, "When the landowner comes, what will he do with the tenants?" How did they answer?

What will the landowner do with the vineyard?

Does the landowner have the right to do this? Why?

What does v. 43 imply that the vineyard represents?

Why will the vineyard be taken from the tenants and given to another people? What are these other people to do?

This is exactly what happened. Due to the continuous unrepentant state of the leadership of the Jews, and their sway over the people, Jesus withdrew the offer of the kingdom of the heavens from the Jews and would make the offer to a new man, a new creation, the Church.

As a result of a lack of repentance on the part of the majority of the leadership and their holding sway over the people, they connived to kill their King. And the very crowd who had begun the week singing praises to the “Son of David” as He rode into the city on a donkey, had another cry —

**Mark 15**

**12 And answering again, Pilate was saying to them, “Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?” 13 And they shouted back, “Crucify Him!”**

**14 But Pilate was saying to them, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify Him!” 15 And wishing to satisfy the multitude, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified.**

Next week we will study the death of Jesus Christ. See you then.

## NOTES

## Lesson Four — His Death

*Day One — How Death Entered the World*

*Day Two — The Need for Jesus to Die*

*Day Three — Immediate Events Leading up to His Death*

*Day Four — His Death*

*Day Five — His Post-resurrection Ministry*

Last week we briefly perused the life of Christ. We looked at His message and His mission, and ended the week of study by glancing at the last few days of His life prior to His death. This week we will look closely at the prophecies and events leading up to and including His death. Before we go to the facts concerning the death of Christ, we must see how death entered the world. Death was not the pre-determined, eventual condition of man at his creation. When God created Adam, He did not create him *to die*. Quite the opposite! God created man to live — eternally. In fact He created man to rule.

### Genesis 1

**26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ... 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”**

But a series of events ensued that brought about the immediate spiritual death of Adam, and his eventual physical death. And through him, death entered the world. However, God was not taken by surprise by the scenario that ensued. God knew from eternity past what history would reveal in time and space. God knew in eternity past that Adam would sin, and that He would have to send His Son to die on the cross for mankind, redeeming man from eternal death.

So what happened? Let’s look at it.

## Day One — How Death Entered the World

After God spoke the purpose for man and created him, He put the man in a garden and gave him several commands. God told Adam, in Genesis chapter two that disobedience to a particular command would result in death.

### Genesis 2

**15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.” 18 Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”**

After the command was given to Adam, God took a part of Adam’s body and formed a helper suitable for him. Adam called the new creation “Woman,” for “she was taken out of the man.” Shortly thereafter a series of events took place, which led to death.

Satan, taking on the form of a serpent, sought to bring about the man’s demise through deceiving the woman. His success in this attempt allowed him to maintain his original position — that of ruling over the earth, which had been his position since his creation and appointment by God (Ezek. 28:11-15).

We are given scant details of what took place in this deception of the woman. Here is what we have:

### Genesis 3

**1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.’” 4 And the serpent said to the woman, “You surely shall not die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 When the woman saw that the tree [of the knowledge of good and evil] was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.**

This is the single incident which caused sin to enter the world, and death through sin. While there is much to learn from these passages at the beginning of God’s revelation to man, our main focus in this study is to understand *how death entered the world*. So let’s compare Scripture with Scripture, and read how Paul explained what happened:

### Romans 5

**12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...**

According to this passage, what happened?

Following the event recorded in Genesis chapter three, God began to verbalize His eternal plan of redemption. He called all three individuals — the man, the woman, and Satan — into account. In the end, God spoke the following to Satan (the god of the age, the very one who brought about the fall of man):

### Genesis 3

**15 And I will put enmity<sup>1</sup> between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”**

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<sup>1</sup> **en-mi-ty**: the feeling that enemies have toward each other; hate. *Syn.* hostility, hatred.



Who shall bruise whom on the head?

Who shall bruise Whom on the heel?

This is a prophecy spoken by God to Satan concerning the ultimate ordeal between the One Who would redeem mankind and the one responsible for bringing sin into the world (by deceiving the woman).

God had created the man and woman to rule over the earth in Satan's stead (Gen. 1:26-28), and they were tested to prove their worthiness to rule. With sin, and death through sin, they would not be able to fulfill their created position. But again, remember that God was not taken by surprise by these events, and His plan would not be thwarted. In the end, His plan will be fulfilled — man will yet fulfill his created position.

But he will not be able to rule *until he is able to live eternally* again!

It is at this point where we must understand that Jesus came to die on the cross in our stead. We must understand how all of this fits together. We just looked at a succinct and brief description of how death entered the world, as given by Paul in Romans chapter five. Now let's see what Paul goes on to say toward the end of Romans chapter five, as he explains the God-given means of redemption.

#### **Romans 5**

**15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. 17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. 18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. 20 And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

How do you see this all fitting together? Briefly describe.

The man fell because of the scheme of the original ruler, and as a result of that sin, man died. Since the man could not attain to his created position in a fallen state, according to the *eternal plan*, God sent the "second Man" (I Cor. 5:47), "the last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45), the only begotten Son of God, born as the Son of Man to a virgin so that through His death and resurrection, He could redeem mankind from the grip of death thereby extending eternal life back to man, placing him back into a position wherein he could take the rulership of the earth from Satan and rule as God had intended. (Whew! That is a lot to comprehend!)

And so, Jesus — the Son of God, the Son of Man — had to die. And in His death, His heel would be bruised through crucifixion; but also in His death, the head of Satan would be bruised (*lit.*, crushed). Satan was dealt a mortal blow in the death of Christ, the ultimate result of which is yet to be realized.

Now look back at Genesis 3:15, and see how this all fits together.

If you care to, would you write out a brief summary of what you learned today? It may be good to verbalize these things in your own words.

## Day Two — The Need for Jesus to Die

We have seen how sin entered the world and death through sin. We've also seen that sin not only brought about death, but it also disqualified the man and woman to rule over the earth. Now, with Adam disqualified to fulfill his created purpose, God began to reveal His redemptive plan from eternity past, that of sending His Own Son, born of a virgin, to die in man's place, in order to redeem man out of the state of eternal death.

Today we are going to peruse a string of passages that brings into focus the fact that *man's sin did not result in God setting aside His original purpose for man*. These passages reveal the ways and means God would bring this purpose to pass. Within the means itself, Jesus had to die in man's stead. (This will be included in the topic of this week's lecture.)

Knowing that the entire Bible reveals *all the details* given by way of Divine revelation to man concerning the ways and means of man's redemption, in this study we can only focus on a skeletal framework of the overall picture.

We'll begin at the beginning with a brief review of passages, and lead into the need for Christ to die. First, go back to the bottom of page 63 and reread the passage from Genesis chapter two.

Summarize this passage:

Now go to page 64 and reread the passage from Genesis chapter three. What happened?

Now reread at the bottom of the page, concerning what God said to the serpent. Summarize this passage:

Okay. With that as a brief review, let's pick up our skeletal framework of how God revealed the outworking of His plan.

**Genesis 12** (God's beginning revelation to Abraham.)

**1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**

Underline the last sentence of v. 3, then summarize this passage:

**Genesis 17** (God continued His revelation to Abraham.)

**4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.**

**...15 Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 "And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."**

Underline the last phrase in both v. 6 and v. 16, then summarize this passage:

**Genesis 35** (God speaking to Abraham's grandson, Jacob)

**10 And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel<sup>2</sup> shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel. 11 God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from you. 12 And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you."**

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<sup>2</sup> The name *Israel* means "one who fights (or strives) with God and man, and has prevailed." The name is derived from the Hebrew word "*sarah*," which means "*to fight*." "*Sarah*" also means "princess." The KJV translators translated the name Israel to mean "a prince that has power with God." Jacob's twelve sons became the Twelve Tribes of Israel, or the Children of Israel, making up the nation *who has power with God, or the nation who will rule with God*.

Underline the last phrase in v. 11, then summarize this passage:

**Genesis 49** (Abraham's grandson, Jacob, prophesied over each of his twelve sons prior to his death. This is what he spoke to Judah.)

**8 "Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.**

Underline the first half of v. 10, then summarize this passage:

In the course of God's progressive revelation to Abraham, God promised him that his descendants would be sojourners and enslaved for 400 years (Gen. 15:13), and then brought out of slavery in order to be taken into the land, which God had promised to Abraham. Since God's Word always holds true, 400 years after Isaac was born, God brought Abraham's descendants out of their enslavement in Egypt. It was the night of Passover.

#### **Exodus 12**

**1 Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 "This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves...**

**... 5 Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. 7 Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses ...**

**...11 it is the LORD'S Passover. 12 For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments — I am the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 14 Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.**

Summarize this passage:

And so, God brought Abraham's descendants out of bondage, *in order to take them into the land* He had promised to Abraham. As is stated, He did so with purpose. Read what His purpose was.

**Exodus 19** (God told Moses what to say to the Children of Israel upon their arrival at Sinai.)

**“...4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”**

Underline the first phrase in v. 6, then summarize this passage:

At Sinai, God formed the nation of Israel into a kingdom which lasted from the time at Sinai (Ex. 40) until the Babylonian captivity, some 800 years. God ruled as King in the nation’s midst until the people desired a king, like the other nations (I Sam. 8:5-7). Saul came into the picture and was made king over Israel (I Sam. 9). Due to a series of events in Saul’s 40-year reign, God raised up David to be the *second king over Israel*. During David’s reign, God gave a prophecy to David through the Prophet Nathan concerning one of David’s descendants. We have already studied the promise and have seen that David understood this promise well. (If necessary, turn to pp. 29, 30 for a review.)

In II Samuel chapter seven, God said that He Himself would be a Father to David’s Descendant, and that David’s Descendant would be the Son of God. Then there are untold numbers of prophecies concerning how God would bring forth His Son, but today we will look at two specific ones.

**Isaiah 7**

**14 “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.**

**Isaiah 9**

**6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.**

Underline the third phrase of v. 6 and all of v. 7, and then summarize these passages:

Although we have previously briefly studied the fulfillment of both II Samuel 7:14 and Isaiah 9:6, 7, let’s glimpse a few New Testament verses again.

**Matthew 1**

**1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

**Luke 2**

**4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.**

**Luke 2 (Remarks made by Simeon and Anna)**

**28 then he [Simeon] took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 “Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thy word; 30 For my eyes have seen Thy salvation, 31 Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Thy people Israel.”**

**...38 And at that very moment she [Anna] came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.**

In Matthew 1:1, what two men are named as the ancestors of Jesus Christ in the very first verse of the entire New Testament?

Now summarize these passages:

With one exception at the age of twelve, the events of the first thirty years of Christ's life are not recorded in Scripture. But finally the stage is set and something happened! God spoke from heaven. Imagine the scene!

**Luke 3**

**21 Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased.”**

Summarize this passage:

Thus far we have reviewed the fact that although man was created to rule, he disqualified himself, as well as all his offspring, through his fall. As a result, God promised a Redeemer. We have also seen that God promised to bring forth kings from Abraham's lineage (through Sarah), reiterating the promise to his grandson, Jacob. Then we witnessed the fact that through one specific descendant of Jacob — King David — God promised to send His Own Son, Who would be The Eternal King, sitting on an eternal throne.

But lo! When the Son of God arrived on the scene, God's Own people refused His message, rejected Him as King, and crucified Him. But all of this was part of God's plan. Through Jesus' death, God redeemed mankind from the bondage of sin, and the grip of death.

We will read only two of the many passages which reveal this.

**Romans 5**

**8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

**1 Peter 3**

**18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;**

Do you have any thoughts about today's lesson? What have you learned?

## Day Three — Immediate Events Leading up to His Death

Today and tomorrow we are going to read through large portions of Scripture, perusing the details of the events leading up to and including Christ's death. Though the other gospel writers record a variety of these events, we will focus mainly on the details given through the Gospel of Matthew. I have left a wide right hand margin, for you to write out notes, as you desire. Spend a good amount of time studying through these passages, as there is a lot to notice.

TWO DAYS PRIOR TO HIS DEATH

NOTES:

**Matthew 26**

**1 And it came about that when Jesus had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, 2 "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be delivered up for crucifixion." 3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; 4 and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth, and kill Him. 5 But they were saying, "Not during the festival, lest a riot occur among the people."**

**6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, 7 a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it upon His head as He reclined at the table. 8 But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste? 9 For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." 10 But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. 11 For the poor you have with you always; but you do not always have Me. 12 For when she poured this perfume upon My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. 13 Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be spoken of in memory of her."**

14 Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, 15 and said, "What are you willing to give me to deliver Him up to you?" And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Him.

THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS DEATH

NOTES:

Matthew 26

17 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" 18 And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'" 19 And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

20 Now when evening had come, He was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. 21 And as they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." 22 And being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord?" 23 And He answered and said, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the bowl is the one who will betray Me. 24 The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." 25 And Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said it yourself."

26 And while they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. 29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

30 And after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

31 Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED.' 32 But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." 33 But Peter answered and said to Him, "Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away." 34 Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you that this very night, before a cock crows, you shall deny Me three times." 35 Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You." All the disciples said the same thing too.

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. 38 Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." 39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt." 40 And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? 41 Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but



the flesh is weak.” 42 He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy will be done.” 43 And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44 And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. 45 Then He came to the disciples, and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Arise, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!”

47 And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up, accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. 48 Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, “Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him.” 49 And immediately he went to Jesus and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and kissed Him. 50 And Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you have come for.” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. 51 And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 52 Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen this way?” 55 At that time Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. 56 But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples left Him and fled.

57 And those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. 58 But Peter also was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome. 59 Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, in order that they might put Him to death; 60 and they did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, 61 and said, “This man stated, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.’” 62 And the high priest stood up and said to Him, “Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?” 63 But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” 64 Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN.” 65 Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; 66 what do you think?” They answered and said, “He is deserving of death!” 67 Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, 68 and said, “Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?”

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a certain servant-girl came to him and said, “You too were with Jesus the Galilean.” 70 But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about.” 71 And when he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl

saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." 72 And again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." 73 And a little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; for the way you talk gives you away." 74 Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!" And immediately a cock crowed. 75 And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, "Before a cock crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

We'll call it a day! I know there was a lot of reading to do today. But I'm sure you didn't have anything more important to do during this time. Right? ☺

## Day Four — His Death

Yesterday we read the details from the Gospel of Matthew leading up to the day Christ died. As has been mentioned, the other gospel writers also gave details, with the complete story being told in the compilation of the four gospels (along with the O.T. word picture as seen in the types and antitypes, as well as all the prophecies on the subject). If time permits, you may want to read all the accounts given in the gospels. But again, for our purposes today, we will use the account given by Matthew to study the details of Christ's death.

THE DAY CHRIST DIED

NOTES:

### Matthew 27

1 Now when morning had come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death; 2 and they bound Him, and led Him away, and delivered Him up to Pilate the governor.

3 Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" 5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. 6 And the chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." 7 And they counseled together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. 8 For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, "AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET by the sons of Israel; 10 AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD, AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME."

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." 12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer. 13 Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" 14 And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so that the governor was quite amazed. 15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the multitude any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16 And they were holding at that time a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 When therefore they were gathered

together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 18 For he knew that because of envy they had delivered Him up. 19 And while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him." 20 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes to ask for Barabbas, and to put Jesus to death. 21 But the governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22 Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let Him be crucified!" 23 And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" 24 And when Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." 25 And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children!" 26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. 28 And they stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30 And they spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. 31 And after they had mocked Him, they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

32 And as they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross.

33 And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, 34 they gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink. 35 And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots; 36 and sitting down, they began to keep watch over Him there. 37 And they put up above His head the charge against Him which read, "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." 38 At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left. 39 And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, 40 and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." 41 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him, and saying, 42 "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. 43 HE TRUSTS IN GOD; LET HIM DELIVER Him now, IF HE TAKES PLEASURE IN HIM; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" 44 And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him.

45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?" 47 And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, "This man is calling for Elijah." 48 And immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. 49 But the rest of them said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him." 50 And Jesus cried

out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. 51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split, 52 and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. 54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” 55 And many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, 56 among whom was Mary Magdalene, along with Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

57 And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him. 59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. 61 And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the grave.

62 Now on the next day, which is the one after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, 63 and said, “Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I am to rise again.’ 64 Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, lest the disciples come and steal Him away and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last deception will be worse than the first.” 65 Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how.” 66 And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.

Do you have any thoughts?

While you go your way today, think on these things. God’s grace and mercy towards us is unfathomable!

## Day Five — His Post-resurrection Ministry

Again today we will read large portions of Scripture concerning the *post-resurrection* ministry of Christ, *not* confining ourselves only to Matthew’s gospel, but we will gather the details given by other New Testament writers as well. The focus of the scope of Christ’s message is brought to bear once again in His forty-day ministry prior to His ascension to glory. Let’s look to see what it is.

We'll begin by a very succinct statement of the overall forty days at the beginning of the Book of Acts. Then we will fill in some of the details from the various gospels.

**Acts 1**

**3 To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.**

According to this verse, what was the topic of teaching during this forty-day time period?

Peter gave a powerful message to the Men of Israel on the Day of Pentecost — fifty-three days after the crucifixion of Christ, which was fifty days after the resurrection of Christ, and ten days after the ascension of Christ. Here is part of what Peter said:

**Acts 2**

**22 “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know — 23 this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. 24 And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. 25 For David says of Him, ‘I WAS ALWAYS BEHOLDING THE LORD IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN. 26 THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL ABIDE IN HOPE; 27 BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. 28 THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; THOU WILT MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH THY PRESENCE.’**

**29 “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. 32 This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. 34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, 35 UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.”‘ 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.”**

Essentially, what did Peter quote from David's writings about the Christ in vv. 25-28? In this quote, what had David said about the resurrection?

What does Peter remind the men of Israel about the promises given to David in v.v. 30, 31?

What did Peter remind them that God had said to the Lord in vv. 34, 35?

Now let's look at a few of the specific post-resurrection appearances of Christ. First, He appeared to the women at the tomb, early in the morning on the first day of the week.

**Matthew 28**

**1** Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. **2** And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. **3** And his appearance was like lightning, and his garment as white as snow; **4** and the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. **5** And the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. **6** He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. **7** And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going before you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." **8** And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. **9** And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they shall see Me."

**...16** But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. **17** And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. **18** And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

In v. 18, what were the first things Jesus said to His disciples?

What did Jesus instruct the eleven disciples to do?

Also, that same day Jesus appeared to the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus. On pages 45 and 46, we covered the discussion which ensued on the road to Emmaus between the two disciples and Jesus on Resurrection Day, recorded in Luke chapter twenty-four. Do you remember what the essence was of Jesus' teaching to the two disciples that day? What was it?

Later that day, back in Jerusalem, Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples in Luke 24:36ff. We have also glimpsed this appearance in a previous week of study, which followed the events that took place on the

road to Emmaus and the breaking of the bread as the two reclined at the table with Jesus upon their arrival at Emmaus. Here is what is recorded of this appearance.

**Luke 24**

**33 And they [the two disciples] arose that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, 34 saying, "The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon." 35 And they began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.**

**36 And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst. 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 And while they still could not believe it for joy and were marveling, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish;**

**43 and He took it and ate it before them. 44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."**

What did you learn from the details of this appearance?

At another time, Jesus again appeared to the disciples,

**John 20**

**26 And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."**

In John chapter twenty, what had Thomas come to believe?

By the fact that Jesus could eat with the eleven, as seen in Luke chapter twenty-four, and that Thomas could place his finger into the wounds in His hands and his hand in His side, as seen in John chapter twenty, what is revealed about Jesus' resurrected body?

What did Jesus say was true for someone who believed without seeing?

Keeping in mind the overall scope of what we have studied from God's Word in the past four weeks, what do you think the resurrection from the dead has to do with? Why is it important?<sup>3</sup>

Paul dealt with some of this in his letter to the Corinthians:

**I Corinthians 15**

**1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.**

In summary of these things, John ends his gospel with a thought in chapter twenty, which is expressly repeated at the end of chapter twenty-one.

**John 20**

**30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.**

**John 21**

**24 This is the disciple [John] who bears witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written.**

According to John 20:31, why did John write his gospel?

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<sup>3</sup> This will be covered in greater detail in this week's lecture.



From what you have studied in the past four weeks, what does it mean that Jesus *is the Christ, the Son of God?* (This is of immense importance!)

We'll end today at the place where we began today, for the remainder of the passage leads us into our final week of study.

#### Acts 1

**3** To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. **4** And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; **5** for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

**6** And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" **7** He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; **8** but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." **9** And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. **10** And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; **11** and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

According to v. 6, what seemed to be the foremost thought on the minds of the disciples after Jesus had spent forty days with them? Why was this so?

Summarize what the angels said to them upon Jesus being taken up.

We will pick up the story here next week. But for now, may I encourage you? You are doing a great job! Keep studying God's Word, for there is nothing more important than this!

## Notes



## Lesson Five — His Return

- Day One — The Coming Kingdom – Is it Figurative or Literal?*  
*Day Two — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 1*  
*Day Three — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 2*  
*Day Four — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 3*  
*Day Five — Having an Abundant Entrance*

In the past four weeks of study we have looked at the various aspects of the Messiah. We have look at

- The forerunner of the Christ,
- The birth of the Christ,
- The life of the Christ, and
- The death of the Christ.

This week we are going to look at a few (of the many) passages in Scripture dealing with the return of Christ and His coming Kingdom. The one thing to remember this week is something Peter said concerning prophecy. In making reference to the prophecies concerning the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in chapter one of his second letter, Peter said:

### **II Peter 1**

**20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**

And this is just what we will do — we will understand that it doesn't matter what any one man says about prophecy — or what any one Church or denomination might say about prophecy, for that matter — it only matters what the Word of God says about it! Therefore, we'll take a brief look at prophecy concerning the coming Kingdom, by briefly comparing Scripture with Scripture, thereby building a framework of Truth concerning the return of the Messiah.

Please remember to pray as you proceed forward with study. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth.

## Day One — The Coming Kingdom — Is it Figurative or Literal?

The second epistle written by Peter presents the matter of the coming Kingdom in a most concise, overall manner. In II Peter chapter one, Peter tells his readers *how to have a more abundant entrance* into this Kingdom (the topic of study on Day Five this week); and in speaking of these things, Peter says that, as long as he is alive, he will always be ready to remind his readers of things pertaining to the coming Kingdom (1:12-14); and the reason he would continue to remind them of these things is so that after his death, these things would be so ingrained in their hearts that they would *never* be able to forget them (II Pet. 1:10-15). Then he goes on to say:

### II Peter 1

**16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” — 18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.**

**19 And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. 20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**

In making known to them “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,” what did Peter say he “did not follow”?

According to the passage, how was it that he could say that he “did not follow cleverly devised tales”? How was it that he could *make more sure* (v.9) the issue concerning the power and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? What had happened (vv. 16-18)?

Let’s look at the specific event to which Peter was referring in the passage above. Printed below is the extended passage, which will give us some insight into this specific event to which Peter refers in his second letter. Read through the passage carefully, noting points of interest in the margin. Then we will deal with some questions concerning the passage.

NOTES:

### Matthew 16

**24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. 26 For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY**

**MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS<sup>1</sup>. 28 Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”**

**Matthew 17**

**1 And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. 2 And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. 3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.**

**4 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” 5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!” 6 And when the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were much afraid. 7 And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.” 8 And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, except Jesus Himself alone. 9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, “Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.” 10 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” 11 And He answered and said, “Elijah is coming and will restore all things; 12 but I say to you, that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” 13 Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.**

According to Jesus’ Own words in Matthew 16:24, what does it take for a person to “come after (or follow)” Christ? In other words, what does it take to *become a disciple of Christ*?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

It is evident in vv. 24-26, that Jesus is dealing with the way a person lives his life in this present age, with a view towards the coming age. As you can see, in this passage, Jesus was speaking to His disciples, *not* explaining to them *how to be saved* (that would be redundant), but rather how to *become His disciples*. Jesus is speaking to saved men, telling them what it takes *to follow Him*.

According to Jesus’ Own words in v. 27, *why* are Christians to do these things?

After this discourse, what happened six days later, or on the seventh day?

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<sup>1</sup> In the NASB, capital letters indicate that the phrase is being quoted from the Old Testamen. Some cross references to this quote in the OT are: Job 34:11; Ps 62:12; Pr 24:12; Jer 17:10; 32:19; Da 7:10; Mt 25:31; 26:64; Mr 8:38; Lu 9:26; Ro 2:6; 1Co 3:8; 2Co 5:10; 1Pe 1:17; Jude 1:14; Re 2:23; 22:12.

Think about this for a moment. Jesus lays out a particular order of events in these verses. Note the order:

- In vv. 24-26, He speaks of the present time and how we are to live if we want to follow after Him.
- Then in v. 27, He refers to a future time, i.e., coming judgment of believers.
- Then in v. 28, He refers to a time that will follow the judgment, i.e., His coming Kingdom.

Then there is an event which takes place in 17:1-3 that depicts the culmination of these things — the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Kingdom glory.

Now let's look at the prophetic implications of this passage. With this chronology in mind, go back and reread Matthew 17:1-13. Then answer the following questions.

According to Matthew 17:1, who were the disciples who did not see death before they saw “the Son of Man coming in His kingdom”?

Where had Jesus taken them in order for them to witness this?

Describe Jesus' appearance.

What two men appeared with Jesus at this moment?

What happened in v. 5?

From what we have studied, what would God's Words imply about Jesus? For the answer, we need to remember what God had told King David in II Samuel 7:13-14a. (We studied this on pp. 29-31.) In your own words, relate what God the Father said on the holy mount to what He had previously told David.

Pause for a moment and think about that which these three young men were able to experience. What an effect it had on them! According to v. 6, how did this affect the disciples?

This event had effected these disciples to the point that James, the brother of John, suffered martyrdom for his faith, and the other two, John and Peter, wrote about this event in their writings (John 1:14; II Pet. 1:16-18).

After the moment of transfiguration was over, what was the discussion between Jesus and the disciples all about?

Very shortly after this event, Jesus was crucified. Three days later, He rose from the dead. Forty days later He physically ascended into heaven. Let's read about His ascension.

#### Acts 1

**9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; 11 and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."**

Now relate all of this back to what Peter said in his second letter in 1:16-21. What correlation do you see?

With just these few passages in mind, do you think God is intending the Church to view this coming Kingdom as figurative or literal?

That's it for the day. I wish we could just keep going, but time constrains us. For the remainder of the week, we will be looking at passages which have to do with the coming Kingdom. Please continue to pray for a greater understanding.

See you tomorrow.

## Day Two — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 1

Yesterday we perused just a couple of New Testament passages which reveal the obvious literalness of the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. But these few passages in the New Testament are not all we have to go on. No, the Bible — in both Testaments — is replete with information concerning the literal coming Kingdom of God's Beloved Son, and the necessity of our believing it! Scripture says that we would *do well* to keep our eyes open to these things in Scripture. In fact, even in the midst of the text which we studied yesterday in II Peter, Peter says as much to his readers:

**And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts (II Peter 1:19).**

May we do just that — pay attention to the prophetic word!

Today and tomorrow we are going to delve into some Old Testament passages concerning the prophecies of the coming Kingdom in the Book of Daniel. These passages are specifically dealing with prophecy *as it relates to the nation of Israel*.

The difficult thing is to limit this study to only some few passages, and to only these days of homework. But, hopefully, you will see that this brief study of the coming Kingdom will propel you forward to study many passages beyond the ones dealt with in these five days.

The Prophet Daniel records some very important prophecies concerning five kingdoms. The Book of Daniel gives insight into a portion of the history of mankind known as “The Times of the Gentiles.” It spans history from the exile of the Jews into Babylon at the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar to the time Jesus comes back and sets up His Kingdom, though the present dispensation (positioned in an interim time between the death of Jesus and the seven year Tribulation) is not seen in the prophecy.

Daniel was one of the young men taken into exile from his homeland in Jerusalem to Babylon. During Nebuchadnezzar’s reign in Babylon, through various means, God began the process of revealing to Daniel details concerning five world-wide kingdoms, with the most emphasis placed on the fourth and fifth kingdoms throughout the entire book. The first, second and third kingdoms, specifically named in the book, have already taken place in history — the Babylonian kingdom (2:32a, 37-38; 5:18-27; *cf.* 7:4), the Medo-Persian kingdom (2:32b, 39b; 28, 31; 5:28-30; *cf.* 7:5; 8:3-4, 20; 11:2a), and the Grecian kingdom (2:33, 39b; 7:6; 8:5-8, 21-25; 9:20; 10:20; 11:2b-4). Daniel’s writings began during the Babylonian kingdom, and continued into the Medo-Persian kingdom, but his prophetic writings did not stop there; he wrote about times to which he was not witness i.e., the third — the Grecian kingdom, as well as the fourth and fifth kingdoms, which, even today are yet future. Some references concerning the fourth kingdom — a world-wide kingdom<sup>2</sup> — found throughout the Book of Daniel are 2:33, 35a, 40-43; 7:7-8, 11, 19-26; 8:9-14; 23-26; 9:26b-27; 11:5-12:1; and to the fifth and final kingdom are 2:34, 35b, 44; 7:13, 14, 22, 27.

In Daniel chapter two, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that was very disturbing to him, and he sought to find someone who could tell him the dream and interpret it for him. Finally, Daniel was brought before the king, and could relate to the king, both the dream to the king and its interpretation. We’ll drop into the story at this point.

#### **Daniel 2**

**27 Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians, nor diviners are able to declare it to the king. 28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed. 29 As for you, O king, while on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place. 30 But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any other living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.**

**31 “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. 32 The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. 34 You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the**

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<sup>2</sup> Scripture deals with the fourth kingdom in the sense of separate kingdoms which form a one world kingdom (cf. Dan. 2:35; 7:27; Rev. 11:15).



**whole earth. 36 This was the dream; now we shall tell its interpretation before the king.**

Go back and underline what God had made known to Nebuchadnezzar in the first sentence in v. 28?

Now underline the related thoughts in v. 29. Is there any question that God is revealing things that are to take place in the future?

Is there any indication that any part of this should be interpreted figuratively rather than literally?

And it should be no surprise that the interpretation of these things is given within the text of the Book of Daniel:

#### **Daniel 2**

**37 “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory; 38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold. 39 And after you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. 40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces. 41 And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. 43 And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. 44 And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. 45 Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true, and its interpretation is trustworthy.”**

Go back to vv. 40-44. What is the given time frame when God will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor left to another people?

And in v. 45, what specifically had God made known to the king?

Is this to be taken literally or figuratively? What makes you think so?

One of the major ways in which God teaches His people through His Word, is by initially laying out something, then repeating it over and over again, adding details to what had initially been given. We can see examples of this throughout the Book of Daniel. Over and over again, God gives information concerning five world-wide kingdoms. Much information can be ascertained about these things by simply

studying the Book of Daniel, comparing verses within the book. Then more information concerning these things can be ascertained by studying other Scriptures and bringing it all to bear. Further study and a look back in history would reveal that, at the present time in which we live, three of the five kingdoms have taken place. The fourth and fifth kingdoms are yet future.

While God began His revelation concerning the specifics of these kingdoms through King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, He continued to give Daniel more and more information throughout the span of Daniel's life. Some years later, during the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar's son — Belshazzar — Daniel had dreams and visions, which added more detail to the prophecy that God had previously revealed to and through Daniel.

For example, in chapter seven, God revealed to Daniel more information concerning the five great kingdoms, four through the use of metaphors (i.e., the four beasts), and the fifth and final kingdom being set up by One Who looked "like a Son of Man<sup>3</sup>." The four beasts are described as:

- A lion which had the wings of an eagle (representing the Babylonian kingdom);
- A bear (representing the Medo-Persian kingdom);
- A leopard with four wings and four heads (representing the Grecian kingdom); and finally
- A dreadful, terrifying and extremely strong beast which was different than the previous ones (representing the kingdom immediately prior to the fifth and final kingdom being set up.)

This last beast had ten horns, and an eleventh horn came up from among the ten, having eyes, like the eyes of a man, and was uttering great threats. After some time passed, Daniel saw a vision of thrones being set up and the "Ancient of Days" taking His seat, with myriads (of angels) attending Him, and books being opened. Judgment was about to be passed upon this fourth kingdom, exactly prior to the time when the fifth and final kingdom would be set up — the Kingdom of the Son of God, the Son of Man. Again here in the book of Daniel, the emphasis is placed on the fourth and fifth kingdoms. Let's pick up at this point and read Daniel's words:

#### **Daniel 7**

**7 "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. 8 While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts. 9 I kept looking until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow, And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. 10 A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened. 11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time. 13 I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations, and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass**

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<sup>3</sup> This vision was prior to God's Son coming in the likeness of sinful flesh, being born to a virgin. Hence the description — "One *like* a Son of Man."

**away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.**

Check out the mid-section of v. 13, and compare it to Acts 1:9 on p. 89. What do see by way of comparison?

According to this passage, what happened at the end of the fourth kingdom?

In v. 14 of the passage, Who was given something and what was He given?

Does this description seem to describe a literal kingdom or a figurative one? What makes you think so?

And as we have previously seen through Peter's second letter, the prophecy is *not to be interpreted by any one man*. Daniel, *as he was carried along by the Holy Spirit*, gave ample interpretation. Continuing in Daniel chapter seven,

**15 As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. 16 I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17 'These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. 18 But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.' 19 Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, 20 and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates. 21 I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.**

And even more detail to the meaning is given! We are not left to our own imagination on these things in prophecy!

**23 Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One,**

**and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. 26 But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. 27 Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'**

Write out all you have learned about the fourth king and kingdom from v. 19 forward.

Again, what happens at the end of the fourth kingdom?

Look at the mention of time in v. 22. Have the saints possessed the kingdom yet?

Give evidence from the text that the fourth kingdom has not yet taken place.

What activity is taking place in Daniel 7:10, 22, and 26?

Who will receive the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms in verse 27?

According to vv. 17, 23, 27, where are these kingdoms?

Within the Book of Daniel, the details of these kingdoms and the events leading up to and including the final two kingdoms in particular are revealed through:

- A dream given to Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign (2:29-35).
- The interpretation to this dream (2:36-45)
- A vision given to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar's reign (7:11).
- A second vision given to Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar's reign (8:23-25).
- In answer to Daniel's fervent prayer during the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede (i.e., the Angel Gabriel's appearance and message to Daniel [9:21, 26-27]).
- In a message given to Daniel during the third year of the reign of Cyrus, the Persian, again given to Daniel through the Angel Gabriel (chp.10).

Whew! That is enough for the day. Think on these things. See you tomorrow.

## Day Three — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 2

In yesterday's homework, there was a lot of information to chew on. I am afraid that today may be the same. Would you pray again for understanding?

We have seen that prophecy is *not left up to any one man's interpretation* (II Pet. 1:20); rather prophecy is given throughout Scripture from start to finish through the pens of *men who were inspired by God*; and only in viewing prophecy together as a whole, can one begin to come into the correct interpretation of prophecy. Daniel is an integral part of an overall understanding of prophecy. And the various portions of the Book of Daniel must be viewed together, as God lays out the detail to and through this prophet.

Today we will look at sections in Daniel chapters nine and ten. Leading up to our passages today, Daniel had come to realize that God had given the prophet Jeremiah the number of years in which the desolation of Jerusalem would be accomplished (9:2). Daniel had come to realize that God had specified that there would be *exactly seventy years* that Israel would be in exile. In realizing this, Daniel began to pray and confess his own sins and the sins of his people (9:1-19). It was at this time that God sent the Angel Gabriel to give Daniel *a time-specific prophecy*. In fact, the time specified in this prophecy also had to do with the number *seventy*. Let's read it:

### Daniel 9

**20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering, 22 And he gave me instruction and talked with me, and said,**

**“O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision. 24 Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. 25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”**

What is the overall specified time-frame given in this prophecy?

The Hebrew word for *weeks* in vv. 24, 25, and 27 is the word that literally means *sevens*. So the angel was speaking of a total of seventy ( $7+62+1=70$ ) sevens, and in this text it literally means 70 periods of seven years, or 70 seven-year periods.

Then these 70 seven-year periods are divided into three portions:

- A 7 seven-year period (or 49 years)
- A 62 seven-year period (434 years)
- A 1 seven-year period (7 years)

Adding these years together brings a total of 70 seven-year periods or 490 years.

It is important to notice that these time periods are dealing with a particular group of people. According to v. 24, about whom has this prophecy been decreed?

And certain things have been decreed to happen within the total 70 seven-year time periods. According to God's inspired Word in vv. 24, what six specific items will be accomplished in this time period?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)

According to v. 25, what event will begin the 70<sup>th</sup> seven-year period?

A decree by King Artaxerxes, the king of the Medo-Persian kingdom, went forth in about 444 B.C. to restore and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. From this point in time to 33 A.D., using the Jewish calendar year of 360 days, taking away the beginning portion of the 444 B.C. and the ending portion of 33 A.D., you would come up with a total of 483 years. This makes up the 7 seven-year periods plus the 62 seven-year periods, totaling 69 seven-year periods equaling 483 years. Between the 69 sevens and the 70<sup>th</sup> seven, the text says that the Messiah will *be cut off*. The phrase *cut off* means *to destroy*, or *to kill*. Obviously, this would be referring to the Messiah being crucified in 33 AD. The last seven-year period of Daniel's revelation concerning his people remains to unfold in time. This will be the final seven-year period exactly prior to the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

According to the passage, after the Messiah is cut off, in the middle of v. 26, who will make a firm covenant with the many for the last week?

There is something of extreme importance to notice here. Verse 25 deals with the end of the sixty-nine sevens; and v. 26 deals with things that come after the 69 seven-year periods. According to the middle of v. 26 through the end of the passage, what are the events which will take place?

The last seven-year period refers to the time of the coming Tribulation decreed for Daniel's people. And when comparing Scripture with Scripture, the Tribulation immediately precedes the Millennium, the thousand-year reign of the Christ on the earth. Because of Israel's rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah, the time clock, so to speak, for these 70 seven-year periods was halted at the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> seven-year period, at which time God ushered in the present dispensation — the dispensation of the Church in which God is dealing with the Church, not Israel. But once the Church is raptured, God will then turn and begin dealing with Israel once again; and the last seven-year period for Israel (Daniel's people) will begin — the seven-year Tribulation. While this long separation between the 69<sup>th</sup> week and the 70<sup>th</sup> week cannot be seen in the Book of Daniel, it can be seen in other places in Scripture<sup>4</sup>. Information of this specific angelic visitation ends there, though, God continued to reveal more to Daniel concerning the details and chronology of future events.

The dream of the magnificent statue, which Daniel interpreted for King Nebuchadnezzar in chapter two deals with the same five kingdoms that Daniel's vision in chapter seven deals with, which is the same that his second vision in chapter eight deals with, which is the same as the messages that the angel gave to Daniel in chapters nine and ten, which is the same that the remaining chapters in the Book of Daniel deals with. All of these chapters put together, along with several other places throughout Scripture — in particular the Books of Esther, Ruth, and Revelation — deal with the prophetic chronology of events. All in all, we have a detailed explanation of the events leading up to and including the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I hate to end here, but time and space curtails more immediate study in this workbook. May I encourage you to study on your own? The benefit of personal Bible reading and study cannot be measured!

See you tomorrow.

## Day Four — Prophecies Concerning the Coming Kingdom, Part 3

As we have seen in our previous weeks of study, John the Baptist came in the power and spirit of Elijah, with the message of repentance, with a view to the Kingdom of the Heavens. But the nation of Israel refused the message and crucified the Messiah. We have also seen that the Prophet Elijah himself *will return* to the earth in order to announce the coming of the Messiah, just prior to His setting up His Kingdom.

Throughout this five-week study, we have seen that the best place to begin a study of prophecy (or a study of any Scriptural topic for that matter) is at the beginning. We have seen that one must go back to Genesis and begin there to build the picture.

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<sup>4</sup> A good study to do in order to see *how the chronology of prophetic events is given in Scripture* would be UNDERSTANDING THE PICTURE OF MARRIAGE available through Seeking the Kingdom Ministries. Email address is [kseeker1@aol.com](mailto:kseeker1@aol.com). This Bible study deals with the coming marriage of Christ and His Bride and the chronology of events leading up to that marriage.

After God performed particular acts with respect to the earth over a six day period of time, He rested on the seventh day. Let's look at what is said about this seventh day.

**Genesis 2**

**1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. 2 And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.**

Write out everything God said about the seventh day.

In essence, God has laid His foundation for all revealed Truth in the first thirty-four verses of His Word. And the time-frame for the basis of this foundation is seen in the seven days spoken of in these first thirty-four verses of the Bible, wherein there are six days of work and a seventh day rest.

Later in Scripture, *after God delivers His people out of slavery*, God gives the seventh day Sabbath rest to His people as a sign, pointing to something future.

**Exodus 31**

**12 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 13 “But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14 Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15 For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death. 16 So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.’**

**17 “It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.” 18 And when He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.**

Go back and underline the word *sign* in vv. 13 and 17. What is the sign between God and Israel?

When God gives His people a sign, the sign itself points to something future. The sign of the Sabbath was to point God's people to something yet future. And according to these verses, what would happen to a person who did not observe the Sabbath rest (a sign)?

Do you think God is serious about His people being mindful about a coming Sabbath? What makes you think so?



For the remainder of our study today, we are going to look briefly at a few passages having to do with the coming Sabbath rest *as it relates to Israel*. Then we will briefly look at a few passages that have to do with the coming Sabbath rest *as it relates to the Church*. (The difficult thing is to limit the number of passages concerning these things, because the Bible is replete with passages dealing with this topic, both for Israel and the Church. It is difficult to choose which passages to look at when there are so many from which to choose!)

There are some specifics that must be understood concerning the Day of Rest, the Millennium, the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, with respect to *His people — Israel*. This is a time of peace and righteousness on the earth, which has not yet happened. Please read these passages *with a mind to understand*. (I ask you to read it in this way because, for some reason, it seems easy to read passages from Scripture in such a rote way, so as to read words without understanding. Don't allow yourself to do that, even if you have to read aloud to prevent it! These are exciting passages about a very exciting time!)

#### NOTES:

##### **Zechariah 14**

**1 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. 2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. 5 And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! 6 And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. 7 For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.**

**8 And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. 9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. 10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. 12 Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. 13 And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. 14 And Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered,**

gold and silver and garments in great abundance. 15 So also like this plague, will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey, and all the cattle that will be in those camps.

16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. 18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 19 This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 20 In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD'S house will be like the bowls before the altar. 21 And every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

#### Isaiah 62

1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, And her salvation like a torch that is burning. 2 And the nations will see your righteousness, And all kings your glory; And you will be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the LORD will designate. 3 You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, And a royal diadem in the hand of your God. 4 It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken," Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate"; But you will be called, "My delight is in her," And your land, "Married"; For the LORD delights in you, And to Him your land will be married. 5 For as a young man marries a virgin, So your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will rejoice over you.

6 On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; All day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; 7 And give Him no rest until He establishes And makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. 8 The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm, "I will never again give your grain as food for your enemies; Nor will foreigners drink your new wine, for which you have labored." 9 But those who garner it will eat it, and praise the LORD; And those who gather it will drink it in the courts of My sanctuary.

10 Go through, go through the gates; Clear the way for the people; Build up, build up the highway; Remove the stones, lift up a standard over the peoples. 11 Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth, Say to the daughter of Zion, "Lo, your salvation comes; Behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." 12 And they will call them, "The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD"; And you will be called, "Sought out, a city not forsaken."

#### Isaiah 65

18 "But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I

create Jerusalem for rejoicing, And her people for gladness. 19 I will also rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying. 20 No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Shall be thought accursed. 21 And they shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build, and another inhabit, They shall not plant, and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My chosen ones shall wear out the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, And their descendants with them. 24 It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

What have you learned about the coming Kingdom for the nation Israel?

Now let's look at a couple of passages which describe the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e., Day of Rest, the Millennium, or the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth with respect to *His people—the Church*.

Let's read what is in the Book of Hebrews about these things.

#### Hebrews 4

**1** Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. **2** For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. **3** For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. **4** For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, "AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS"; **5** and again in this passage, "THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST." **6** Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, **7** He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS." **8** For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. **9** There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. **10** For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

**11** Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.

The author relates the future Day of Rest back to two different times in history. He relates it back to the days when God redeemed Israel out of bondage in Egypt, taking them out of one land and into another, wherein they were to have rest from their enemies, if they but obeyed (*cf.* Heb. 3). And also the author relates the Day of Rest back to the opening verses in the Book of Genesis when God rested from His work (4:4).

Is the day of rest mentioned in Hebrews chapter four dealing with a time that is past or yet future for the people of God? How can you tell?

What do you think that means for you personally? (Seriously, think about this, and write out your thoughts.)

Now let's jump forward in the Book of Hebrews to another portion which deals with the future coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **Hebrews 12**

**22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. 25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. 26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." 27 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.**

Again, in relating the coming Kingdom back to what took place in Israel, what do we have to look forward to?

Peter tells us how the Day of the Lord *will begin* and how it *will end*, and how *long it will last*. In this passage, Peter is warning his readers that in the last days mockers will come, questioning *the promise* and *the timing* of the return of God's Son (II Pet. 3:3). He warns his readers not to forget certain things that they had previously understood, but could forget!

#### **II Peter 3**

**8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is**

**as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.**

Keeping in mind that this passage is dealing with the promise of Christ's return (v.3), according to this passage, how long with the Day of the Lord last?

How will the day begin?

How will the day end?

I hate to end our study for today, but I have kept you long enough. You have enough meat to chew on for one day. As you go, think on these things.

## Day Five — Having an Abundant Entrance

Perhaps the questions you should be asking yourself on this last day of the study are:

- 1) What is it that I need to be mindful of?
- 2) How purposeful should I be concerning these things?
- 3) What can I be doing now that might affect my entrance into the kingdom?

Good questions. In order to find answers for these type questions, the best place to go is to the Word of God. We are not left to our own imagination to answer these questions. Peter has given us a list of things that we are to diligently add to our faith, *if we desire an abundant entrance into the coming Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ*. I have reformatted the passage to possibly help in understanding.

Peter says:

### II Peter 1

**5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.**

**8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. 10**

**Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal <166> kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.**

Before we deal with the qualities which should be diligently added to your faith (qualities listed in the passage above), let's look at the first phrase in v. 5 and relate it to vv. 8-11. According to this passage, what must happen in your life in order for you *to be fruitful*?

And if these qualities are lacking in your life, according to v. 9 what will happen to you?

But if these qualities are increasing (v. 8) and you are practicing these things (v. 10), what two things will happen to you?

1)

2)

Something needs to be understood about v. 11. It has to do with the English word *eternal*. Let's look at it. It is translated from the Greek word *aionios*, which is an adjective derived from the Greek noun *aion*. Here are some possible definitions for the noun *aion* <165>:

Aion

- 1) for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity
- 2) the worlds, universe
- 3) period of time, age

This can mean: an age; by extension, perpetuity (also past); by implication, the world; specially (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future)--age, course, eternal, (for) ever (-more), (n-)ever, (beginning of the, while the) world (began, without end).

The English word "age" is from the Greek word "aion" which means:

- 1) a lifetime: the period of an individual's existence on earth
- 2) a segment of time: such as this present age or the age to come
- 3) a very long time: such as the age of mankind
- 4) perpetuity of time: eternity (especially if used in plural form)
- 5) occasionally--aion is translated "world" or "universe"

Then the definition for the adjective form of the noun *aionios* <166>:

Aionios

- 1) without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be
- 2) without beginning
- 3) without end, never to cease, everlasting

This is the adjective form of the noun *aion* <165>. The noun and adjective *cannot* have two different meanings. VINES translates this word as describing duration, either undefined but not endless...or undefined because it is endless.

For further study, there is an article in the Appendix entitled ETERNITY—IS IT ETERNAL OR IS IT AGE-LASTING?

Now back to the last question. Peter *is not saying* that you will never sin! In fact, in order to see exactly what he is talking about, we can go to the end of his letter.

### **II Peter 3**

**17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

What does Peter not want you to fall from?

Since this is at the end of Peter's second letter, and he ends with a warning about falling from "your own steadfastness," he surely would have implied within the text of his letter what he means by this warning. If you would peruse the entire letter, you would see, without doubt, that Peter is referring to a steadfastness with respect to the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Also the Apostle Paul refers to Christians being in a race, from which he says that he, himself, could be disqualified. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, it is easy to see that God wants us finish the race well. In order to do that, we, individually, must stand steadfast. And Peter tells us in this short epistle how to do that. Let's go back to the beginning portion of the letter, and think through the qualities that we must be *diligently* adding to our faith. Reread I Peter 1:5-11 printed at the beginning of today's lesson.

First of all, from where does faith come? With v. 5 in mind, let's see what Paul says us in the Book of Romans about faith:

### **Romans 10**

**...17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.**

According to Paul, from where does faith come? (When answering that question, remember what the name *Christ* means.)

Now back to what we need to be adding to our faith.

What would it look like to *diligently supply* moral excellence to your faith?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* knowledge to your moral excellence?

Where would you go to get the knowledge that Peter is talking about?

Why do you think Peter would list moral excellence before knowledge?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* self-control to your knowledge?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* perseverance to your self-control?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* godliness to your perseverance?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* brotherly kindness to your perseverance?

What would it look like to *diligently supply* love to your brotherly kindness?

And in the end, again what does Peter say will be the result in your life if these things are diligently added to your faith?

As we come to the close of this study, I would like to leave you with the last thing Jesus speaks in the entire Word of God. He says:

**Revelation 22**

**12 “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”**

**...16 “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star.”**

And so there you have it!

Now you know.



NOTES:



# Appendix

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# Luke 1

1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word have handed them down to us, 3 it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; 4 so that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. 7 And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years.

8 Now it came about, while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. 11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. 12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear gripped him.

13 But the angel said to him,

“Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother’s womb. 16 And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

18 And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this for certain? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.”

19 And the angel answered and said to him,

“I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. 20 And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which shall be fulfilled in their proper time.”

21 And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. 22 But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them; and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them, and remained mute. 23 And it came about, when the days of his priestly service were ended, that he went back home.

24 And after these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant; and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, 25 “This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked with favor upon me, to take away my disgrace among men.”

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. 28 And coming in, he said to her,

“Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

29 But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. 30 And the angel said to her,

“Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.”

34 And Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” 35 And the angel answered and said to her,

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. 36 And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God.”

38 And Mary said, “Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

39 Now at this time Mary arose and went with haste to the hill country, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it came about that when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 And she cried out with a loud voice, and said, “Blessed among women are you, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 And how has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.”

46 And Mary said: “My soul exalts the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed. 49 For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And holy is His name. 50 AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM. 51 He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. 52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. 53 HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; AND SENT AWAY THE RICH EMPTY-HANDED. 54 He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy, 55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his offspring forever.” 56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and then returned to her home.

57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she brought forth a son. 58 And her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her. 59 And it came about

that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him Zacharias, after his father. 60 And his mother answered and said, “No indeed; but he shall be called John.” 61 And they said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name.” 62 And they made signs to his father, as to what he wanted him called. 63 And he asked for a tablet, and wrote as follows, “His name is John.” And they were all astonished. 64 And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God. 65 And fear came on all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea. 66 And all who heard them kept them in mind, saying, “What then will this child turn out to be?” For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant — 70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old — 71 Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; 72 To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, 73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, 74 To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. 76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; 77 To give to His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, 78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us, 79 TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace.”

80 And the child continued to grow, and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.



# Luke 2

1 Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And in the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. 10 And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

15 And it came about when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." 16 And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17 And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

21 And when eight days were completed before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “EVERY first-born MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD”), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, “A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES, OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS.”

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, 28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 “Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thy word; 30 For my eyes have seen Thy salvation, 31 Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Thy people Israel.” 33 And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed — 35 and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. And she never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. 38 And at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. 39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth. 40 And the Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him....

# Matthew 1

1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. 2 To Abraham was born Isaac; and to Isaac, Jacob; and to Jacob, Judah and his brothers; 3 and to Judah were born Perez and Zerah by Tamar; and to Perez was born Hezron; and to Hezron, Ram; 4 and to Ram was born Amminadab; and to Amminadab, Nahshon; and to Nahshon, Salmon; 5 and to Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab; and to Boaz was born Obed by Ruth; and to Obed, Jesse; 6 and to Jesse was born David the king. And to David was born Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah; 7 and to Solomon was born Rehoboam; and to Rehoboam, Abijah; and to Abijah, Asa; 8 and to Asa was born Jehoshaphat; and to Jehoshaphat, Joram; and to Joram, Uzziah; 9 and to Uzziah was born Jotham; and to Jotham, Ahaz; and to Ahaz, Hezekiah; 10 and to Hezekiah was born Manasseh; and to Manasseh, Amon; and to Amon, Josiah; 11 and to Josiah were born Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. 12 And after the deportation to Babylon, to Jeconiah was born Shealtiel; and to Shealtiel, Zerubbabel; 13 and to Zerubbabel was born Abihud; and to Abihud, Eliakim; and to Eliakim, Azor; 14 and to Azor was born Zadok; and to Zadok, Achim; and to Achim, Eliud; 15 and to Eliud was born Eleazar; and to Eleazar, Matthan; and to Matthan, Jacob; 16 and to Jacob was born Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. 17 Therefore all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the time of Christ fourteen generations.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. 19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly. 20 But when he had

considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 “And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.”

22 Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 23 “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.” 24 And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took her as his wife, 25 and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

# Matthew 2

**1** Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, **2** “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him.” **3** And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born. **5** And they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet, **6** ‘AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER, WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.’” **7** Then Herod secretly called the magi, and ascertained from them the time the star appeared. **8** And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, “Go and make careful search for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, that I too may come and worship Him.”

**9** And having heard the king, they went their way; and lo, the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them, until it came and stood over where the Child was. **10** And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

**11** And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. **12** And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their own country by another way.

**13** Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise and take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him.” **14** And he arose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed for Egypt; **15** and was there until the death of Herod, that what was

spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, “OUT OF EGYPT DID I CALL MY SON.”

16 Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its environs, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi. 17 Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, 18 “A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, WEeping AND GREAT MOURNING, RACHEL WEeping FOR HER CHILDREN; AND SHE REFUSED TO BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY WERE NO MORE.”

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 20 “Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” 21 And he arose and took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he departed for the regions of Galilee, 23 and came and resided in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

## The Eight Signs in John

### FIRST SIGN:

#### John 2

1 And on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; 2 and Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the wedding. 3 And when the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what do I have to do with you? My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." 6 Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the headwaiter." And they took it to him. 9 And when the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, 10 and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when men have drunk freely, then that which is poorer; you have kept the good wine until now."

11 This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

### SECOND SIGN:

#### John 4

40 So when the Samaritans came to Him, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of His word; 42 and they were saying to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world." 43 And after the two days He went forth from there into Galilee. 44 For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. 45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast. 46 He came therefore again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain royal official, whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee,

he went to Him, and was requesting Him to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. 48 Jesus therefore said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe." 49 The royal official said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." 50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he started off. 51 And as he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living. 52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. They said therefore to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." 53 So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"; and he himself believed, and his whole household. 54 This is again a second sign that Jesus performed, when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

#### **THIRD SIGN:**

##### **John 5**

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes. 3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, waiting for the moving of the waters; 4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted. 5 And a certain man was there, who had been thirty-eight years in his sickness. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, "Do you wish to get well?" 7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me." 8 Jesus said to him, "Arise, take up your pallet, and walk." 9 And immediately the man became well, and took up his pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day.

#### **FOURTH SIGN:**

##### **John 6**

1 After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). 2 And a great multitude was following Him, because they were seeing the signs which He was performing on those who were sick. 3 And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. 4



Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 Jesus therefore lifting up His eyes, and seeing that a great multitude was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?" 6 And this He was saying to test him; for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. 7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little." 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted. 12 And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost." 13 And so they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten. 14 When therefore the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is of a truth the Prophet who is to come into the world."

**FIFTH SIGN:**

**John 6**

15 Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. 16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, 17 and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. And it had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18 And the sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. 19 When therefore they had rowed about three or four miles, they beheld Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. 20 But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." 21 They were willing therefore to receive Him into the boat; and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

**SIXTH SIGN:**

**John 9**

1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him. 4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is

coming, when no man can work. 5 "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, 7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). And so he went away and washed, and came back seeing. 8 The neighbors therefore, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?" 9 Others were saying, "This is he," still others were saying, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the one." 10 Therefore they were saying to him, "How then were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam, and wash'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight." 12 And they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." 13 They brought to the Pharisees him who was formerly blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. 15 Again, therefore, the Pharisees also were asking him how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 They said therefore to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet." 18 The Jews therefore did not believe it of him, that he had been blind, and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight, 19 and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?" 20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21 but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he shall speak for himself."

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed, that if anyone should confess Him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. 23 For this reason his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." 24 So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." 25 He therefore answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

26 They said therefore to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" 27 He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?" 28 And they reviled him, and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29 "We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where He is from." 30 The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes. 31 "We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing, and does His will, He hears him. 32

“Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 “If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.” 34 They answered and said to him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” And they put him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had put him out; and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” 36 He answered and said, “And who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” 37 Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.” 38 And he said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped Him. 39 And Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and that those who see may become blind.” 40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and said to Him, “We are not blind too, are we?” 41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

#### SEVENTH SIGN:

##### John 11

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 And it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3 The sisters therefore sent to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” 4 But when Jesus heard it, He said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it.” 5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6 When therefore He heard that he was sick, He stayed then two days longer in the place where He was. 7 Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” 8 The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?” 9 Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 “But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” 11 This He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awaken him out of sleep.” 12 The disciples therefore said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. 14 Then Jesus therefore said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, 15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him.” 16 Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.” 17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off; 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother. 20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him; but Mary still sat in the house. 21 Martha therefore

said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother shall rise again." 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies,

26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world." 28 And when she had said this, she went away, and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here, and is calling for you." 29 And when she heard it, she arose quickly, and was coming to Him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. 31 The Jews then who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32 Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit, and was troubled, 34 and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 And so the Jews were saying, "Behold how He loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him who was blind, have kept this man also from dying?" 38 Jesus therefore again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you, if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" 41 And so they removed the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hearest Me. 42 "And I knew that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people standing around I said it, that they may believe that Thou didst send Me." 43 And when He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." 44 He who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings; and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

#### **EIGHTH SIGN:**

##### **John 20**

1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. 2 And so she ran and came to Simon Peter,

and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." 3 Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they were going to the tomb. 4 And the two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter, and came to the tomb first; 5 and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. 6 Simon Peter therefore also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he beheld the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the face-cloth, which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb entered then also, and he saw and believed. 9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

10 So the disciples went away again to their own homes. 11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; 12 and she beheld two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. 13 And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." 14 When she had said this, she turned around, and beheld Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means, Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her.



## Eternity — Is it Eternal or is it Age-Lasting?

There is no single word in the Greek language that expresses the idea of eternity. The writers of the New Testament, however, had several different ways they could indicate the thought of *eternity* in the Greek language. The Greek mind thought in terms of “ages” —

- the past ages (**plural** [eternity past]),
- the present age (**singular** [Man's Day]),
- the age to come (**singular** [the Messianic Era]), or
- the ages of the ages (**plural** [eternity future]).

## Eternal

The idea of “eternity” (a noun) or “eternal” (an adjective form of the noun) can be expressed in one of three different ways in the Greek text of the New Testament:

1) One way in which the Greek writers could express “eternity” or the idea of “eternal” was through a double use of the Greek noun *aion*, with the noun used in a **plural form** both times (each use of the noun preceded by the definite article “the” and introduced by the preposition *eis* [meaning “into,” “unto,” or “with respect to”]). Thus, the Greek phrase *eis tous aionas ton aionion* would be literally translated “unto [or, ‘with respect to’] the ages of the ages,” and is often translated in English texts “forever and ever.” The use of a plural form of the noun *aion* (i.e., *aionas*) duplicated in this manner would indicate “endless ages,” or “eternity.” Two of the passages which use this phrase are Hebrews 13:21 and 1 Peter 4:11.

**Hebrews 13:21 “...equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”**

**1 Peter 4:11 “Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”**

2) Another way in which the writers of the New Testament expressed the idea of “eternity” (noun) or “eternal” (the adjective form of the noun) was through simply using the plural form of the noun, *aionas*. In this form of usage, the plural noun would be preceded by the preposition *eis* “with respect to” and the definite article *tous* “the” — *eis tous aionas*, literally meaning *with respect to the ages*, and translated “forever.” This would be a somewhat shortened form of the preceding double use of the plural noun *aionas* and would express, essentially, the same thing as above.

Two examples are found in Romans 9:5 and Romans 11:36:

**Romans 9:5** “whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.”

**Romans 11:36** “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

3) And yet another way in which the New Testament expressed the idea of “eternity” or “eternal” is through *the context of the passage* wherein the idea of eternity is expressed. Although *the singular form of the noun or adjective is used*, the context itself must be relied upon to reveal that the idea of plural ages (eternity) was intended in the text. Examples of this are found in the following passages:

**I Peter 1:24** For, "ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, 25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ABIDES FOREVER [singular form]." And this is the word which was preached to you.

**Romans 16:25** Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal [singular form] God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever [plural form]. Amen.

In these instances, the use of the word *aion* or a form thereof, is singular; yet it is obvious that the intention of the use of the word is eternal — it is the context which makes it obvious. In the first example of the use of the singular form, “but the Word of the Lord abides forever” is juxtaposed to things in nature which obviously do not abide forever. And in the second example of the use of the singular form, “eternal God” is self-evident — God is eternal.

## Age-Lasting

However, in many instances in the New Testament the *singular form* of the word *aion* was intended to indicate the idea of a *singular age*, or *age-lasting*, as opposed to the idea of a *plurality of ages* or *eternity*.

One way in which the idea of a singular age can be seen, again, is through the *context of the passage*. The context of the passage itself can indicate that “age-lasting” was the idea intended when the Greek writers used the singular form of the word *aion* (even though the English translators have mis-translated the word, thereby indicating plural ages). Some good examples of this problem with the English translation can be seen in the following passages.

**Hebrews 5:5** So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE”; 6 just as He says also in another passage, “THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER [*aion*] ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”

**Mark 10:17** And as He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and began asking Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal [*aionios*] life?”



The context of both of these passages would reveal that the subject matter at hand would be dealing with *the age to come*, not with *eternal ages*. In the first passage, Jesus will be a King/priest after the order of Melchizedek, during the coming age. The passages, which deal with Christ as a King/Priest, deal with the age to come — or the Millennial Era — not with the eternal ages. This is true throughout all of Scripture.

In the next passage, Mark chapter ten, a man asks Jesus about how to receive his inheritance in the age (*aion*, singular) to come. The fact that the inheritance — not the free gift — being the issue at hand is one of the indicating factors that the passage is dealing with the singular age to come, not with eternal life. The man asked what *he must do*; and Jesus spoke of obedience. Jesus' answer had to do with things beyond simple faith, relative to eternal salvation. His answer had to do with things concerning the man's work performed through faithful obedience. Note that "faith" is involved throughout, though connected with works (*cf.* Heb. 11:6). The inheritance in the coming age (singular age) has to do with a reward for obediently serving the Lord (*cf.* Col. 3:23-25). Keep the man's question within the context of Jesus' answer and it becomes easy to see that the free gift of *eternal* life is **not** the issue at hand, but rather life in the age to come. The conclusion of the passage leaves nothing to question.

**Mark 10:29** Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, 30 but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age [aion] to come, eternal [aionios] life.

Here the translators correctly translated the singular noun, "and in the age to come"; but when it came to the exact use of the same singular noun forming an adjective, for unknown reasons, they indicated a plural use, "eternal life." Obviously the noun and its adjective form hold exactly the same intent. It should read, "and in the age to come, age-lasting life."

## Salvation — Eternal or Age-Lasting

As pertaining to salvation, the Greek New Testament writers dealt with different aspects of salvation. Sometimes they dealt with salvation with respect to eternity, and other times they dealt with salvation with respect to the coming age.

- The former (salvation with respect to eternity) would deal with the free gift of eternal life; the latter (salvation with respect to the age to come) would have to do with the prize, or the inheritance, in the coming age.
- The former necessitates faith based on the finished work of Jesus Christ, with no works involved; the latter necessitates faithfully *working out* one's own salvation with fear and trembling.
- The former has to do with the present age extending into the ages (plural) to come; the latter has all to do with our actions during the present age (singular), with the result of these actions having to do with the age to come (the Messianic Era).

The key to properly interpreting which aspect of salvation any given passage is dealing with is determining if the passage is dealing with faith alone based on the finished work of Jesus Christ (pertaining to the free gift), or if the passage is dealing with an individual's works, emanating out of faithfulness, connected with the reward of the inheritance. If the passage deals with faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ and the gift of eternal life, then the passage is dealing with the salvation which we presently possess and the ages (plural) to come — the free gift. But if the passage is dealing with an individual's actions, connected with

loss or gain, then it is dealing with a salvation which is yet to be revealed and the reward in the age (singular) to come. One is eternal; the other is age-lasting.

The most concise example of a passage which deals with faith and the gift (of eternal life) is found in Acts chapter sixteen.

**Acts 16:30 “...Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved...”**

Due to the fact that this passage has to do with faith in Jesus Christ and nothing additional, it has to do with *eternal* salvation — life which begins at the moment of faith and extends into the ages (plural) to come.

But there are many passages in the New Testament, which deal with the future salvation, the salvation which is to be inherited (Heb. 1:14); this is the salvation which, has to do with the coming age, and the kingdom of Jesus Christ (*cf.* I Pet. 1:1-10). Along with the noted cross references, Matthew 19:29, Galatians 6:8, and I Timothy 6:12 are a few of the passages dealing with life in the age (singular) to come. Yet, woefully, the translators translated the singular form of the Greek word into the English as “eternal” in these passages, which has contributed to confusion among Christians concerning salvation.

Notice *works* connected with *aionios* life in these passages.

**Matthew 19:29 “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal [*aionios* (lit., age-lasting)] life.”**

**Galatians 6:8 “For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal [*aionios* (lit., age-lasting)] life.”**

**I Timothy 6:12 “Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal [*aionios* (lit., age-lasting)] life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”**

These passages are dealing with works, not faith alone.

In conclusion, there are two aspects of salvation that must be understood:

- 1) There is an aspect of salvation which we presently possess through faith alone — the free gift for all of eternity, and
- 2) There is an aspect of salvation towards which we are to strive — the potential profit or loss connected with the coming age.

This confusion must be set straight if we are to properly understand the intent of the inspired New Testament writers concerning our salvation.