

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS’ LIFE ON EARTH
Week 6 – JROC - He MUST!
March 26, 2023

While I’ve mentioned several times that the chronology of Jesus’ last week is debatable... do you know what I’ve found by reading articles concerning Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection... **OR**... what I’ve **NOT** found? While there is a plethora of historical documents and archaeological documents and Evangelical sermons concerning Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, there have only been a few that include God’s calendar for the Jewish people which are based on the dates of FEASTS OF THE LORD!

You have a chart on the Feasts. This is from Leviticus 23 – Scripture – God-breathed – inspired by the Holy Spirit. Is Leviticus 23 truth? Based on three of the spring feasts that God gave to Israel, I have only run across a few articles that teach us the chronology for Jesus’ last week on earth!

Chronology from “Lamb Selection Day” through to the Resurrection:

Nisan 10 - He **MUST** fulfill Ex. 12:1-2 – lambs to be taken into homes on 10th of Nisan; Ex. 12:5 – begin to scrutinize for blemishes

Nisan 11 through Nisan 13 – He **MUST** fulfill Ex. 12:5 – continue to scrutinize

Nisan 14 - He **MUST** fulfill Ex. 12:6 – spotless lamb(s) killed at twilight

Nisan 15 - He **MUST** fulfill Isa. 53:9 & Matt. 27:59-61- buried in a grave

Nisan 16 - He **MUST** fulfill Matt. 12:40 - remain in the grave 3 days/3 nights

Nisan 17 – He **MUST** fulfill Gen. 8:4 & Lev. 23:9-1 – rise from the dead

AND JESUS DID FULFILL THE SPECIFIC FEASTS ON THE SPECIFIC DAY!!

**(NOTE: THE ABOVE DATES ENCOMPASS: PASSOVER; UNLEAVENED BREAD;
FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS)**

We know that everything about Jesus’ suffering is eternally triumphant... because it has been God’s plan from eternity past. Rev. 13:8 – Jesus is *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. And we must read it/study it from God’s perspective!

We can rejoice with Jesus in the cross. The author of Hebrews, writing to Jewish people in the first century, told his readership in Heb. 12:2 to focus on Jesus, Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame... for us!! We need to abide in Jesus’ JOY!

Have you been envisioning Jerusalem in Jesus’ day? Over 2.5M Jewish people from the known world converged upon Jerusalem to celebrate Passover which speaks to freedom and deliverance. They had enough of Rome! In Jesus’ day tensions were high in the land. The Roman authorities were on the alert esp. at Jewish religious holy days. The people were stirred up. The Jews were filled with thoughts of a conquering King Messiah. Many longed for the Messiah Who would put an end to ROME!

Some did not want the Messiah. These “some” had power and they didn’t want any Messiah – even if Jesus was THE Messiah. They didn’t want His coming on the scene messing up their status... taking away their power (John 11:48; Acts 4:16)!

Jewish zealots wanted to take matters into their own hands and overthrow the Gentile empire that was oppressing Israel - Rome. Yet, we read in Scripture of God stirring the hearts of several of the Jewish rulers (Jn. 12:42) and many of the Jewish populus coming to faith in Jesus.

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Why wasn't the entire country going after Jesus in faith - believing He is the Messiah? Had agendas trumped truth? Had their experience trumped their knowledge of God?

And Jesus came into Jerusalem by way of the Mount of Olives! Did they remember that the glory of God had departed from the temple and up the Mount of Olives in Ezekiel's day? In His entry into Jerusalem at "Lamb Selection Day," Jesus, after being hailed as King by many, returned to the temple to the Court of the Gentiles. In the Second Temple (Zerubbabel's which was enhanced by Herod) there were four separate "courts," separated from one another and each designed for a different purpose: the Court of the Gentiles, the Court of the Women, the Court of Israel (or the Court of Men), and the Court of Priests.

The Court of the Gentiles was the outermost courtyard and the only area of the temple where non-Jews were allowed. As its name implies, the Court of the Gentiles was accessible to Gentiles, foreigners, and those who were considered impure. There, worshippers could mill about, exchange money, and buy animals for sacrifices. It was from the Court of the Gentiles that Jesus, on two occasions (John 2:11-12; Matthew 21:17-23), drove out the money changers, declaring, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers" (Matthew 21:13).

Might Jesus have driven out all those who bought and sold in the temple and overturned the tables of the money changers because God had called Israel to be a witness to the Gentile nations and they were not reflecting Who God is in this outer course where exorbitant prices were charged for the change of money and for the sacrifices? In Isa. 56:7 God called the temple a House of prayer for all nations. ALL nations! ALL the Gentile nations!

In Jesus' day the outer court of the Gentiles was marked off from the inner court where the Jewish people were permitted to go. The separation was noted as "the middle wall of partition" (Eph. 2:14). Beyond this no Gentile could go. The Jewish people had erected a boundary fence, the "Soreg," between the Court of the Gentiles and the Court of the Israelites with a warning - an inscription promising death to any non-Israelite who passed beyond it into the Court of the Israelites

What were the Jewish people thinking when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey? Did they want HIM? There were those, however, who were riveted on

the Kingdom of God. And, the Messiah, they believed, was a means to an end. What about us? Do we want God or do we only want His blessings?

Were you aware that when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, He rode in on an unbroken colt of a donkey. Mk. 11:2 and Lk. 19:30 tell us that it was a colt on which no one had sat! It was untamed! Who is this Man Who would ride on such an animal? The Creator of that animal! The Creator of the universe! Perhaps this is a foreshadowing of Millennial conditions on the earth that we find in Isa. 11:6 - *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young*

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goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And, on that day, “Lamb Selection Day” before Passover, Jesus told the Jewish people that they did not know the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44). The Jewish people had been told through the prophet Daniel 9:25 as we mentioned last week.

The book of Daniel then teaches in Dan. 9:26 that the Messiah would be cut off...He would die before the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD. The Jewish people had been given the time when the Messiah would come. And, Jesus came and died before 70 AD. He came at the prophesied time. What a wonderful truth that we can share with our Jewish friends!

But the nation of Israel, as a whole, missed the time of Jesus’ visitation – His coming as Messiah the Prince (Dan. 9:25).

Do we realize that we’ve been given the time of the death of the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures?! Do you see the significance of grasping the big picture of the Bible?

Moving toward Jesus’ crucifixion, do we ever ask, why did it have to be this way? Why was the will of God through the Messiah, His beloved One, so severe? The battle rages. Sin is ugly. Sin destroys. Spiritual warfare is in full play...the Seed of the woman against the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15)

God’s plan was being fulfilled. And, at the cross there was a clash! This is how we need to understand it.

WHY did Jesus have to die? When we ask such a question, are we wondering why God couldn’t find “another way” to forgive our sins? Might we be implying that the way He has chosen is not the best course of our action and that some other method would be better. If we are, how are we then defining a “better method”? One that seems right to us?

We need to hold unto the truth that before we can come to grips with anything God does, we have to first acknowledge that His ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts...they are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8). In

addition, Moses, in Deuteronomy 32:4, reminds us that “*He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God Who does no wrong, upright and just is He.*”

At His last Passover Seder, Jesus shared the redemption story with His disciples. He shared the first Passover in Egypt when God physically delivered the children of Israel from bondage through the blood of the spotless lambs that were slain. At His last Seder on earth, Jesus revealed that His death is the basis for deliverance from bondage to sin and the basis for eternal life.

At the Passover Seder Jesus recounted the story as only He could do. And then He fulfilled it on the cross!

At His last Seder, Jesus confirmed that the Kingdom of God that was promised to Israel will be in the future – in the Millennial Kingdom. Matt. 26:29 - *I say to you,*

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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.

We read in Matt. 26:30 – *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.* Traditionally, every Passover Seder ends with a song. Often Psalm 115 through Psalm 118 is sung. Psalm 118:24 – *‘This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!’* This is what they sang as Jesus made His way to the Garden of Gethsemane and ultimately to the cross for us.

John 18:1 – Jesus and His disciples went out *over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.* “Kidron” means *dusky, gloomy.* The Brook Kidron has been called the Black Brook. WHY? The blood from the altar in the Temple where 256,500 lambs were slaughtered at Passover drained into the Kidron Valley into the Brook.

Between the temple and the garden was the Kidron Valley – a wadi (a wash or ravine) that was dry except for the heavy winter rains, when it could become a pretty wild river.

Josephus wrote of the 256,500 lambs that were slain at the Passover in Jesus’ day. What a tremendous amount of blood drained from 256,500 lambs along with the water used in the ritual cleansings in the temple. From the altar where the blood from the lambs was splashed, there was a channel down to the Brook Kidron and through that channel the blood of the Passover lambs was carried away to the Kidron Valley, outside the temple mount walls. Perhaps the Valley and the Brook were named Kidron which means “black” or “gloom” because of its blood-stained riverbed and banks.

What were Jesus’ thoughts as He walked across that brook? Was He thinking of the blood that He would shed the next day – the blood shed for us?

We’ve seen many “types” of Jesus in the Hebrew Scriptures. We know from reading Lev. 16 that the Lord’s goat and the scapegoat at Yom Kippur were types of

the Messiah in His work of redemption. In Lev. 16, the scapegoat carried the sins of the people of Israel away to the wilderness...not to be seen again.

When the second temple was built after the Jewish people returned to Israel from exile, there was a two-tiered bridge spanning the Kidron Valley from the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives. Along this bridge on the Day of Atonement each year a goat symbolically bearing the sins of the people walked. Following Jesus' last Passover Seder with His disciples – He walked this way...the way of the scapegoat. The scapegoat was the sin-bearer that removed the sins of the people of Israel!

John 18:1 - over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.

Matt. 26:36-38 - Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, 'Sit here while I go and pray over there.'³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.³⁸ Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.'

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As we move forward to Jesus' crucifixion, let's consider the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection. As the Church, when do we celebrate Resurrection Sunday? "Easter is observed *on the Sunday following the first full Moon that occurs on or after the March equinox according to the Old Farmers' Almanac!*

From its earliest days, the Church annually celebrated the anniversary of Jesus' resurrection at Passover. The first believers in Jesus were Jewish. The early Church was primarily Jewish. When Constantine became Emperor, one of the purposes of the Council of Nicea in 325 was to settle the date of the resurrection. Constantine did not want Easter to be celebrated on the Jewish Passover. The Council of Nicea accordingly required the feast of the resurrection to be celebrated on a Sunday and never on the day of the Jewish Passover.

What about Jesus' crucifixion? Jesus was crucified on Passover – the 14th of Nisan. Jesus' death has been celebrated by the Church on a Friday. The 14th of Nisan on the Jewish calendar does not always fall on a Friday. Passover is celebrated according to God's calendar which is recorded in Lev. 23! (This year within the Jewish community, Passover begins at sundown on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, and ends at sundown on Thursday, April 13, 2023)

Where do we go with this? How do we understand the text? We need to grasp what was transpiring in Jesus' day. I'm emphasizing studying the Gospels through understanding how the Jewish people celebrated according to the OT Scriptures. Jesus' Bible was the OT!

Did Jesus and His disciples and the Jewish people in their day follow the Jewish calendar? YES!!! So, the timing of the crucifixion and the resurrection need to be calculated according to the Jewish calendar in Lev. 23.

The Gospels place Jesus' death the day before a Sabbath! And so, if we observe Jesus' crucifixion on Friday at 3 p.m., He would have only been in the grave for two nights. What did Jesus tell the scribes and the Pharisees?

Matt. 12:40 - *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

We read of Passover on the 14th of Nisan when the lambs would be killed (Lev. 23:4-5; Ex. 12:6).

We read of Unleavened Bread which begins on the 15th of Nisan, the day following the killing of the lambs (Lev. 23:6). AND, the people were to observe the first day of Unleavened Bread as a “holy convocation” and they were to do no work. It was a Sabbath (Lev. 23:7). It didn't need to fall on a Saturday. It needed to fall on the 15th of Nisan!

John 19:31 - *...because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

Jesus was crucified on the day before the “High Day/High Sabbath.”

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“Preparation Day” was the day before the Sabbath. But, this Sabbath when Jesus was crucified, was a “High Sabbath” – celebrated on the first day of Unleavened Bread.

My view is that Jesus was crucified on Thursday, Friday was the “High Sabbath,” and the next day was the regular Sabbath followed by Sunday when He rose from the dead..

In some of the articles I've read over the years and sermons I've heard, there are few – very few - who write or speak about the “High Sabbath” that week when Jesus was crucified.

John the disciple spoke of the “High Sabbath”

To simplify:

We know that the tomb was found empty on the first day of the week as noted in each Gospel – Sunday. (Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1-2) Resurrection Sunday!

The Saturday before Sunday was the regular Sabbath.

According to John 19:31, the day before the regular Sabbath was a “High Day” – no work was to be done. It was a “High Sabbath” which fell on Friday of the year Jesus was crucified. (Read Lev. 23:6-7 – 15th of Nisan)

The day before the High Sabbath was Passover, the 14th of Nisan, (Lev. 23:4-5) when Jesus was crucified – on Thursday.

I'm suggesting...

14th of Nisan began Wednesday at sundown the year Jesus was crucified

After sundown – Jesus' last Passover Seder, time in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest, Jesus' trials

Thursday morning on the 14th of Nisan – Jesus' crucifixion ON the day of Passover – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Passover lambs were slain in the Temple. Jesus' died at 3 p.m. – still the 14th of Nisan. At this time Jesus' was in Sheol/Hades (the grave – Abraham Bosom's side [Luke 16:19-23] “Paradise” [Luke 23:42-43]).

1st day in the grave

15th of Nisan (Matt. 27:57) at sundown, Thursday night – Jesus' body was buried in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb.

1st night in the grave

15th of Nisan on Friday BEFORE sundown – Jesus' body remained in the grave

2nd day in the grave

16th of Nisan at sundown, Friday night – Jesus' body remained in the grave

2nd night in the grave

16th of Nisan, Saturday BEFORE sundown – Jesus' body remained in the grave

3rd day in the grave

17th of Nisan at sundown, Saturday night – Jesus' body remained in the grave

3rd night in the grave

John 20:1 - *Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.*

HE IS RISEN!!!!

Israel is facing the most dangerous reality since the Yom Kippur war in October of 1973.

Three vectors should be watched:

1. Globally - the new axis of China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia giving Iran friendship, acceptance, and legitimacy.
2. Regionally - Iranian proxies from the north (Hezbollah), the east (Iranian backed militias in Syria), and the south (Hamas & Islamic Jihad in Gaza and the Houthis in Yemen).
3. The inner crisis within Israel that weakens the military, where the liberal left that is protesting the judicial reform is calling for citizens not to go to their reserve duty.

Report Confirmation: SBC Quarterly Report | April-June 2023

The following person has been submitted SBC Quarterly Report | April-June 2023:

- **Cathy Wilson**

First Name

Cathy

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Spouse First & Last Name (if applicable)

Bob Wilson

Please share a story about someone you are either sharing the gospel with or who you have seen be impacted by the gospel through your ministry.

As we are continuing to present "The Chosen" episodes at one of the retirement centers in Scottsdale with a large Jewish population, followed by a 1.5 to 2 hour discussion, GOD has given us GRAND "come to Jesus" moments. One of the Jewish women told us recently during our group discussion w/ several other Jewish non-believers, "I'm so thankful for the Bible studies and the episodes of "The Chosen" as they are giving me a better understanding of Jesus and telling me of my next step in belief." We talked further re: her placing her faith in Jesus. She was hesitant. The next week she opened our Bible study with, "Why don't Jewish people believe in Jesus or like Him?" I, of course, told her that the first believers in Jesus were Jewish, the early Church was Jewish, the disciples of Jesus were Jewish, and Jesus is Jewish...and that today there are well over 250,000 Jewish believers in Jesus on this planet!! Another Jewish resident at this retirement community has been attending the Bible study and watching "The Chosen" episodes for several months - after a Rabbi told her not to do so!!! And, her son who lives in Sedona has been joining us as well!!! I asked this woman during the discussion last week if she believed that Jesus is the

Messiah. She hesitated and then replied, "I don't know." One of the Jewish men then blurted out, "Jesus is not the Jewish Messiah." I asked him if he has read the Hebrew Scriptures. His answer: "No." I filled the class in on the profile of the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures (once again). This man (who carries a "Peace with God" tract in his walker) backed down, admitting he was wrong. When I mentioned that Jesus is the King of the Jews, there was more moderate outrage from the Jewish man. I read Scriptures from the OT. He settled down again. Back to the Jewish woman who doesn't know if Jesus is the Messiah, she is open to Jesus. She also made the statement that Jewish people don't believe in Jesus. Shared again that many Jewish people are believers in Jesus. She hung around to discuss further.

Please list your goals for the next quarter, April - June, 2023

Continuing to present Passover Seders in the Valley and near Tucson. Very exciting Passover Seder at a church on the Salt River Indian Reservation last week. Continuing to teach "The Last Week of Jesus' Life on Earth" at the SBC Tues. a.m. Women's Bible study. Preparing to present a Passover Seder to the women at the Tuesday a.m. classes on 4/11 - and to those whom they will invite (prayerfully Jewish non-believers(. Following up with Jewish non-believers who attended the Chanukah/Christmas Celebration. Beginning to meet with Pastors re: how to share Jesus with Jewish people. Continuing to teach a Sunday a.m. class at SBC. Will be teaching the Major and Minor Prophets. Jewish non-believers are attending the Sunday a.m. class at SBC. Praying toward teaching an elective class re: the story of Scripture bouncing off Dr. Mark Yarbrough's excellent seminar which he taught the end of February at SBC. Talking with a church in Paradise Valley re: their hosting a Bible study for Jewish non-believers in the Paradise Valley/Biltmore area. Presenting episodes from "The Chosen" at a clubhouse in a Paradise Valley townhouse complex. Connecting with a former Chasidic Jewish man who is watching "The Chosen." Discipling Jewish believers. Preparing lessons for the fall 2023 semester under SBC's Women's Bible studies re: Jesus as our Great High Priest and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Bible studies at retirement centers across the Valley will continue during the summer. Scheduling church meetings in the Sept./October timeframe in New Mexico and AZ.

Please list the progress made on your goals from the current quarter, January - March 2023

Completed the writing of and teaching of ongoing lessons at various locations between January and March. Passover Seders have begun: March 12th through April 12. Presenting episodes of

"The Chosen" at various locations with discussions following. Visiting one-on-one with Jewish non-believers, Discipling of Jewish believers continues.

How has God been moving in your work?

Stores noted above. More openness on the part of believers, including Pastors, and Jewish non-believers re: understanding the big picture of the Bible. My life has been more impacted with Jesus' finished work on the cross as I'm studying and teaching "The Last Week of Jesus' Life on Earth" And, this I'm sharing with Jewish non-believers in league with Passover...how it's all connected. Additional Bible studies are popping up. Our Arcadia Bible study with younger Jewish women, not yet believers in Jesus, has moved to the SBC Cafe! An SBC man who is attending a Jewish study group (traditional - NOT Messianic) has been attending our Sunday a.m. class and is sharing the handouts of the lessons with others. He is seeing, for the first time, the connecting of the OT with the NT. It's his desire to begin a Bible study in his neighborhood among believers. Bible studies have been taught elsewhere using this semester's study - "The Last Week of Jesus' Life on Earth,"

Prayer A.

As always - the salvation of Jewish people in my life including: Phyllis, Jeannie, Ruth, Burt, Roz, Joyce, Ann, Harriet, Meg, Bunnye, Dora, Amy, Emily, Albina, Bella, Jerome, Max, Alan, Shirly, Adele, Diane, Rabbi Mendel....

Prayer B.

God's direction re: additional outreaches and volunteers to come alongside.

Prayer C.

Continued understanding of the Word of God. God's joy to occupy my heart!

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this report. It helps us to know how best to support and pray for each of you!

If you have any questions please contact at globaloutreach@scottsdalebible.com.

Report Confirmation: SBC Quarterly Report | Jan-March 2023

The following person has been submitted SBC Quarterly Report | Jan-March 2023:

- **Cathy Wilson**

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Spouse First & Last Name (if applicable)

Bob Wilson

Please share a story about someone you are either sharing the gospel with or who you have seen be impacted by the gospel through your ministry.

A Jewish woman who has been attending one of our Bible studies for over five years has been impacted by "The Chosen" episodes we've been showing quite regularly. During our discussion of one of the episodes, with 15 people in the group (many Jewish non-believers), she remarked, "Everyone is looking for the One." I asked, "Who is the One?" Her reply, "God or His representative." I asked, "What are they doing?" She replied, "They are seeking." I asked this woman, "Are you seeking?" Her immediate response was, "YES. And, I should be asking God!" I then had a one-on-one with this woman and asked, "What are you seeking?" "The Truth." I told her that Jesus is THE way THE truth and THE life. She listened intently. Asked her if she could place her trust in Jesus. I asked her to pray - she seemed a bit hesitant. I told her I would pray the words aloud that she could repeat from her heart - and I did. I spoke with her yesterday and she asked many more questions about Jesus and belief and faith. I continued to let her know about Jewish people at our church who are now believers in Jesus. She said, "Oh, so they converted?" Told her I don't use the word convert. Told her that they placed their faith (God-given) in Jesus for forgiveness for all eternity. Told her that they believe in the Promised One of Israel, the Messiah, in Whom all the prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures point. She continued to thank me for our visit and our conversation (all about JESUS). ANOTHER Jewish

woman whom I met at our Chanukah/Christmas Celebration approx. 5 years ago...she and I have been communicating regularly on the phone (she is fearful of Covid). We always talk about Jesus. A few weeks ago she LISTENED when I again shared the Gospel. Her response, "I believe in all you're saying." We're going to soon be meeting one-on-one to study the Bible. ANOTHER Jewish woman told us that she was no longer going to attend our Bible study - as she talked with a Rabbi (!!) and she doesn't want to be confused. The next week - she joined us and has been ever since! She has been intently listening and has invited others!

Please list your goals for the next quarter, January - March 2023

Write lessons for and teach the Tues. a.m. women's Bible study at SBC: "The Last Week of Jesus' Life On Earth." Write lessons for and teach the Sun. a.m. "Continuity of Scripture" class at SBC. Write lessons for and teach Bible studies at retirement centers with Jewish people. Schedule and present Passover Seders at churches. Attend training for outreach into the Chasidic community - specifically reaching Chasidic women. Continue presenting episodes from "The Chosen" at a condo complex in Paradise Valley - as an outreach into the community. We always follow-up with discussions. Continue presenting episodes from "The Chosen" at retirement centers with large Jewish populations - following up with discussions. Continue following up with people who attended the recent Chanukah/Christmas Celebration and filled out comment cards.

Please list the progress made on your goals from the current quarter, October - December 2022.

Completed the Fall Tour under Chosen People Ministries - speaking in churches re: how the fall feasts of the Lord point to the Messiah. Spoke at IBC/Indian Bible College in Flagstaff and shared an outreach idea with the students - reaching out to the Jewish NAU students! Mentoring continues along with discipling Jewish believers Presented the 18th annual Chanukah/Christmas Celebration at Grace Chapel on 12/11/22.

How has God been moving in your work?

Stories noted above. The 18th annual Chanukah/Christmas Celebration - over 200 people attended including over 20 Jewish non-believers, plus 5 Ethiopian Jewish people, and 5 Muslim Afghani refugees. We shared Jesus with each. During the program, a Jewish believer shared his testimony and was well-received! I shared for 20 minutes re: how Chanukah and Christmas are connected from the Scriptures, focused on Jesus and His profile

found in the Hebrew Scriptures, and extended an invitation during prayers. One of the Jewish non-believers attending who had pushed back on me several times at the Bible study I taught in her retirement community, sought me out following the program and told me she wants to talk with me further and that I should schedule a visit with her. Another Jewish non-believer from another retirement facility asked if I would visit her! Several people express interest in attending the Sunday a.m. class at SBC. Several wrote on their comment cards, "God's power was truly on display!" And for this, we had been PRAYING!

Prayer A.

Salvation of the Jewish people in my life, including, Meg, Max, Burt, Phyllis, Jeannie, Roz, Bunnye, Ruth Ann, Tammy, Dora, Amy Emily, Shiry, Haja, Natasha, Albina, Bella, Nada, (Roza, Kristina - growth in their walk with the Lord!), Maya, Raphael, Meryl, Mike, Yona, Rabbi Mendel, Rabbi Bonnie....

Prayer B.

Priorities within the ministry!

Prayer C.

That God might cause my heart to understand His word. That God might occupy my heart with His joy.

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this report. It helps us to know how best to support and pray for each of you!

If you have any questions please contact Jim Brannon at jbrannon@scottsdalebible.com.

This is a prayer request from my sister whose daughter lives in England:

Subject: prayer request

From my daughter in England who started a petition last year to protect parental sovereignty in homeschooling:

Next Wednesday (3/22) at 3p GMT I'll be meeting online with the MP in charge of parliamentary petitions. He wants to informally meet me as the author of the petition to be debated the following Monday. He's a conservative and slurred by Wikipedia as a misogynist and anti-woke and a practicing Christian, so he's probably not a bad guy. Can you pray for the meeting to go well and be fruitful? I'm primarily interested in finding out why he as the head of the petitions committee has chosen to debate something that seems to me to be now moot. Perhaps it isn't; perhaps he's on our side. And then please pray for the debate in parliament Monday 27 March about home education. It's on the rise in the UK and the beast is not happy about that at all.

God's Plan Through History: The Redemption and Restoration of the World

Sundays: April 16, 2023 through April 30, 2023

11 a.m.

Week 1

(interaction invited)

Who is God?

How Should we Understand His Word?

The Goal of History

God is transcendent. He is above time and space.

God created the heavens and the earth.

God created man and placed man in time and space.

Immediately following sin entering the world, God revealed the resolution for sin: the Seed of the Woman.

God's Plan is ALWAYS Plan A!

God will restore everything that was lost at the fall: the earth and man (Rom. 8:19-23)

Through progressive revelation, Scripture teaches an unfolding of God's plan for the world.

The Structure of Scripture

How do the five books of Moses, the books of Israel's history, the poetry books, the major prophets and the minor prophets relate?

AND, why does it matter?

Questions & Answers

Week 2

(interaction invited)

God Has a Plan and Purpose (Isa. 14:24)

The four "plots" within the Story of Scripture:

Creation

Fall

Redemption

Restoration

God loves the nations (Gen. 12:3; Gen. 18:18)

God created the nation of Israel (Deut. 32:8-12; Isa. 43:1). WHY?

Why are the children of Israel called the chosen people?

What is the connection between Israel and the nations?

Salvation throughout the Bible – ONE WAY!

Questions & Answers

Week 3

(interaction invited)

The Biblical Covenants

 Unconditional

 Conditional

Ramifications of the Biblical Covenants

Redemption

Restoration

Genesis 1 begins with God as Creator/King of the universe and man as God's image-bearer who is created to "rule" and "subdue" the earth for God's purposes and glory (Gen. 1:26-28).

Revelation 22, in the new heavens and the new earth, declares that God and the Lamb are on the throne and God's people are ruling in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:3, 5).

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS’ LIFE ON EARTH

Week 6 – He MUST!

February 28, 2023

In our study of Scripture, we are to lay hold of “authorial intent.” What does that mean? Did God mean what He said in the Scripture? God inspired the authors to write what He intended for them to write as God’s plan was unfolding. We are not to place upon any text of Scripture an allegorical/spiritual meaning based on - ??? Based on what we think? According to what?

Not only *can* we take the Bible literally, but we *must* take the Bible literally. This is the only way to determine what God really is trying to communicate to us. Jesus quoted from the OT and it was always clear that He believed in its literal interpretation. Jesus cited from 14 different OT books: Genesis (Mk. 10:

The disciples took Jesus' command literally and went throughout the known world of that time preaching the gospel of Christ and telling them to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

When we decide which parts of the Bible are to be interpreted literally, we elevate ourselves above God. The Bible is God's Word and God meant it to be believed “literally and completely.

While I’ve mentioned several times that the chronology of Jesus’ last week is debatable... do you know what I’ve found by reading articles concerning Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection...**OR**...what I’ve NOT found? While there is a plethora of historical documents and archaeological documents and Evangelical sermons concerning Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, there have only been a few that include God’s calendar for the Jewish people which are based on the dates of FEASTS OF THE LORD!

You have a chart on the Feasts. This is from Leviticus 23 – Scripture – God-breathed – inspired by the Holy Spirit. Is Leviticus 23 truth? Based on three of the spring feasts that God gave to Israel, I have only run across a few articles that teach us the chronology for Jesus’ last week on earth!

Chronology from “Lamb Selection Day” through to the Resurrection:

Nisan 10 - He **MUST** fulfill Ex. 12:1-2 – lambs to be taken into homes on 10th of Nisan; Ex. 12:5 – begin to scrutinize for blemishes

Nisan 11 through Nisan 13 – He **MUST** fulfill Ex. 12:5 – continue to scrutinize

Nisan 14 - He **MUST** fulfill Ex. 12:6 – spotless lamb(s) killed at twilight

Nisan 15 - He **MUST** fulfill Isa. 53:9 & Matt. 27:59-61- buried in a grave

Nisan 16 - He **MUST** fulfill Matt. 12:40 - remain in the grave 3 days/3 nights

Nisan 17 – He **MUST** fulfill Gen. 8:4 & Lev. 23:9-1 – rise from the dead

AND JESUS DID FULFILL THE SPECIFIC FEASTS ON THE SPECIFIC DAY!!

(NOTE: THE ABOVE DATES ENCOMPASS: PASSOVER; UNLEAVENED BREAD;
FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS)

We know that everything about Jesus' suffering is eternally triumphant...because it has been God's plan from eternity past. Rev. 13:8 – Jesus is *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*. And we must read it/study it from God's perspective!

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We can rejoice with Jesus in the cross. The author of Hebrews, writing to Jewish people in the first century, told his readership in Heb. 12:2 to focus on Jesus, Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame...for us!! We need to abide in Jesus' JOY!

Have you been envisioning Jerusalem in Jesus' day? Over 2.5M Jewish people from the known world converged upon Jerusalem to celebrate Passover which speaks to freedom and deliverance. They had enough of Rome! In Jesus' day tensions were high in the land. The Roman authorities were on the alert esp. at Jewish religious holy days. The people were stirred up. The Jews were filled with thoughts of a conquering King Messiah. Many longed for the Messiah Who would put an end to ROME!

Some did not want the Messiah. These "some" had power and they didn't want any Messiah – even if Jesus was THE Messiah. They didn't want His coming on the scene messing up their status...taking away their power (John 11:48; Acts 4:16)!

Jewish zealots wanted to take matters into their own hands and overthrow the Gentile empire that was oppressing Israel - Rome. Yet, we read in Scripture of God stirring the hearts of several of the Jewish rulers (Jn. 12:42) and many of the Jewish populus coming to faith in Jesus.

Why wasn't the entire country going after Jesus in faith - believing He is the Messiah? Had agendas trumped truth? Had their experience trumped their knowledge of God?

And Jesus came into Jerusalem by way of the Mount of Olives! Did they remember that the glory of God had departed from the temple and up the Mount of Olives in Ezekiel's day? In His entry into Jerusalem at "Lamb Selection Day," Jesus, after being hailed as King by many, returned to the temple to the Court of the Gentiles. In the Second Temple (Zerubbabel's which was enhanced by Herod) there were four separate "courts," separated from one another and each designed for a different purpose: the Court of the Gentiles, the Court of the Women, the Court of Israel (or the Court of Men), and the Court of Priests.

The Court of the Gentiles was the outermost courtyard and the only area of the temple where non-Jews were allowed. As its name implies, the Court of the Gentiles was accessible to Gentiles, foreigners, and those who were considered impure. There, worshippers could mill about, exchange money, and buy animals for sacrifices. It was from the Court of the Gentiles that Jesus, on two occasions (John

2:11–12; Matthew 21:17–23), drove out the money changers, declaring, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers” (Matthew 21:13).

Might Jesus have driven out all those who bought and sold in the temple and overturned the tables of the money changers because God had called Israel to be a witness to the Gentile nations and they were not reflecting Who God is in this outer court where exorbitant prices were charged for the change of money and for the sacrifices? In Isa. 56:7 God called the temple a House of prayer for all nations. ALL nations! ALL the Gentile nations!

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In Jesus’ day the outer court of the Gentiles was marked off from the inner court where the Jewish people were permitted to go. The separation was noted as “the middle wall of partition” (Eph. 2:14). Beyond this no Gentile could go. The Jewish people had erected a boundary fence, the “Soreg,” between the Court of the Gentiles and the Court of the Israelites with a warning - an inscription promising death to any non-Israelite who passed beyond it into the Court of the Israelites

What were the Jewish people thinking when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey? Did they want HIM? There were those, however, who were riveted on the Kingdom of God. And, the Messiah, they believed, was a means to an end. What about us? Do we want God or do we only want His blessings?

Were you aware that when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, He rode in on an unbroken colt of a donkey. Mk. 11:2 and Lk. 19:30 tell us that it was a colt on which no one had sat! It was untamed! Who is this Man Who would ride on such an

animal? The Creator of that animal! The Creator of the universe! Perhaps this is a foreshadowing of Millennial conditions on the earth that we find in Isa. 11:6 - *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.*

And, on that day, “Lamb Selection Day” before Passover, Jesus told the Jewish people that they did not know the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44). The Jewish people had been told through the prophet Daniel 9:25 as we mentioned last week.

The book of Daniel then teaches in Dan. 9:26 that the Messiah would be cut off...He would die before the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD. The Jewish people had been given the time when the Messiah would come. And, Jesus came before 70 AD. He came at the prophesied time. What a wonderful truth that we can share with our Jewish friends!

But the nation of Israel, as a whole, missed the time of Jesus' visitation – His coming as Messiah the Prince.

Do we realize that we've been given the time of the death of the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures?! Do you see the significance of grasping the big picture of the Bible?

Moving toward Jesus' crucifixion, do we ever ask, why did it have to be this way? Why was the will of God through the Messiah, His beloved One, so severe? The battle rages. Sin is ugly. Sin destroys. Spiritual warfare is in full play...the Seed of the woman against the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15)

God's plan was being fulfilled. And, at the cross there was a clash! This is how we need to understand it.

WHY did Jesus have to die? When we ask such a question, are we wondering why God couldn't find "another way" to forgive our sins? Might we be implying that the way He has chosen is not the best course of our action and that some other

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method would be better. If we are, how are we then defining a "better method"? One that seems right to us?

We need to hold unto the truth that before we can come to grips with anything God does, we have to first acknowledge that His ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts...they are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8). In addition, Moses, in Deuteronomy 32:4, reminds us that "*He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God Who does no wrong, upright and just is He.*"

At His last Passover Seder, Jesus shared the redemption story with His disciples. He shared the first Passover in Egypt when God physically delivered the children of Israel from bondage through the blood of the spotless lambs that were slain. At His last Seder on earth, Jesus revealed that His death is the basis for deliverance from bondage to sin and the basis for eternal life.

At the Passover Seder Jesus recounted the story as only He could do. And then He fulfilled it on the cross!

At His last Seder, Jesus confirmed that the Kingdom of God that was promised to Israel will be in the future – in the Millennial Kingdom. Matt. 26:29 - *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.

We read in Matt. 26:30 – *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.* Traditionally, every Passover Seder ends with a song. Often Psalm 115 through Psalm 118 is sung. Psalm 118:24 – *'This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it'*! This is what they sang as Jesus made His way to the Garden of Gethsemane and ultimately to the cross for us.

John 18:1 – Jesus and His disciples went out *over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.* “Kidron” means *dusky, gloomy.* The Brook Kidron has been called the Black Brook. WHY? The blood from the altar in the Temple where 256,500 lambs were slaughtered at Passover drained into the Kidron Valley into the Brook.

Between the temple and the garden was the Kidron Valley – a wadi (a wash or ravine) that was dry except for the heavy winter rains, when it could become a pretty wild river.

Josephus wrote of the 256,500 lambs that were slain at the Passover in Jesus' day. What a tremendous amount of blood drained from 256,500 lambs along with the water used in the ritual cleansings in the temple. From the altar where the blood from the lambs was splashed, there was a channel down to the Brook Kidron and through that channel the blood of the Passover lambs was carried away to the Kidron Valley, outside the temple mount walls. Perhaps the Valley and the Brook were named Kidron which means “black” or “gloom” because of its blood-stained river bed and banks.

What were Jesus' thoughts as He walked across that brook? Was He thinking of the blood that He would shed the next day – the blood shed for us?

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We've seen many “types” of Jesus in the Hebrew Scriptures. We know from reading Lev. 16 that the Lord's goat and the scapegoat at Yom Kippur were types of the Messiah in His work of redemption. In Lev. 16, the scapegoat carried the sins of the people of Israel away to the wilderness...not to be seen again.

When the second temple was built after the Jewish people returned to Israel from exile, there was a two-tiered bridge spanning the Kidron Valley from the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives. Along this bridge on the Day of Atonement each year a goat symbolically bearing the sins of the people walked. Following Jesus' last Passover Seder with His disciples – He walked this way...the way of the scapegoat. The scapegoat was the sin-bearer that removed the sins of the people of Israel once a year!

John 18:1 - *over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.*

Matt. 26:36-38 - *Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, 'Sit here while I go and pray over there.'*³⁷ *And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.*³⁸ *Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.'*

As we move forward to Jesus' crucifixion, let's consider the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection. As the Church, when do we celebrate Resurrection Sunday? "Easter is observed on the Sunday following the first full Moon that occurs on or after the March equinox according to the Old Farmers' Almanac!

From its earliest days, the Church annually celebrated the anniversary of Jesus' resurrection at Passover. The first believers in Jesus were Jewish. The early Church was primarily Jewish.

When Constantine became Emperor, one of the purposes of the Council of Nicea in 325 was to settle the date of the resurrection. Constantine did not want Easter to be celebrated on the Jewish Passover. The Council of Nicea accordingly required the feast of the resurrection to be celebrated on a Sunday and never on the day of the Jewish Passover.

What about Jesus' crucifixion? Jesus was crucified on Passover – the 14th of Nisan. Jesus' death has been celebrated by the Church on a Friday. The 14th of Nisan on the Jewish calendar does not always fall on a Friday. Passover is celebrated according to God's calendar which is recorded in Lev. 23! (This year within the Jewish community, Passover begins at sundown on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, and ends at sundown on Thursday, April 13, 2023)

Where do we go with this? Why is there a difference?

Firstly, non-Jews are not following the Jewish calendar – we're not following the Feasts of the Lord in Lev. 23.

Did Jesus and His disciples and the Jewish people in their day follow the Jewish calendar? YES!!! So, the timing of the crucifixion and the resurrection

need to be calculated according to what transpired when Jesus was crucified and resurrected!

The Gospels place Jesus' death the day before a Sabbath!

And so, we observe Jesus' crucifixion on Friday. BUT, if Jesus died on Friday afternoon, then He would have only been in the grave for two nights.

What did Jesus tell the scribes and the Pharisees?

Matt. 12:40 - *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

Do we take Jesus at His word?

Let's look at Lev. 23:6-7. We read of Passover on the 14th of Nisan when the lambs would be killed (Ex. 12:6 - *Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th of Nisan, the day following the killing of the lambs. AND, we NEED to note that people were to observe the first day of Unleavened Bread as a "holy convocation" and they were to do no work. It was a Sabbath. It didn't need to fall on a Saturday. It needed to fall on the 15th of Nisan!

John 19:31 - *...because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*

In some of the articles I've read over the years and sermons I've heard, there are very few who write or speak about the "High Sabbath" that week when Jesus was crucified.

"Preparation Day" was the day before the Sabbath. But, this Sabbath when Jesus was crucified, was a "High Sabbath" – celebrated on the first day of Unleavened Bread.

My view is that Jesus was crucified on Thursday, Friday was the "High Sabbath," and the next day was the regular Sabbath followed by Sunday.

The Jewish day begins at sundown based on the creation:

Gen. 1:3-5 - *Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.*

I'm suggesting...

14th of Nisan began Wednesday at sundown the year Jesus was crucified

After sundown – Jesus' last Passover Seder, time in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest, Jesus' trials

Thursday morning on the 14th of Nisan – Jesus' crucifixion ON the day of Passover – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Passover lambs were slain in the Temple. Jesus' died at 3 p.m. – still the 14th of Nisan. At this time Jesus' soul was in Sheol/Hades.

1st day in the grave

15th of Nisan (Matt. 27:57) at sundown, Thursday night – Jesus was buried in Joseph of Arimathea’s tomb.

1st night in the grave

15th of Nisan on Friday BEFORE sundown – Jesus’ body remained in the grave

2nd day in the grave

16th of Nisan at sundown, Friday night – Jesus’ body remained in the grave

2nd night in the grave

16th of Nisan, Saturday BEFORE sundown – Jesus’ body remained in the grave

3rd day in the grave

17th of Nisan at sundown, Saturday night – Jesus’ body remained in the grave

3rd night in the grave

John 20:1 - *Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.*

HE IS RISEN!!!!

QUESTIONS

What was new to you? WHY is it new?

So what? Is this significant? If so, WHY?

If you’re marveling at God, WHY?

What are your questions?

Did you have V8 moments?

Is this worthy of sharing? How will you share this lesson?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 6 with Bible references.

Continue in your journal. Note your V8 moments. Note what impacted you and why.

With whom will you share this aspect of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection? To whom (a non-believer perhaps) may it be striking?

Read Week 7 when you receive it.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS’ LIFE ON EARTH
Week 4 – His Hour Had Not Yet Come
February 14, 2023

Could the disciples have been so honored that this Rabbi Jesus called them when perhaps, in their youth, they had been rejected by a Rabbi whom they wanted to follow? There was great love and respect for Jesus. Yet, was there confusion as there was so much rejection by many toward this Messiah? Didn’t everyone desire the Messiah’s deliverance? The disciples were growing close to Jesus but they didn’t understand all that He was doing.

Let’s comprehend more of Jesus’ journey toward His final week...

The Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the “pilgrim feasts.” God commanded all Jewish men to attend 3 feasts annually (Deut. 16:16). This Feast of Tabernacles in Jesus’ life proved to be intense! WHY? Jesus was walking toward His HOUR...the hour of His death. But, it was not yet His hour.

This Feast of Tabernacles marked an important turning point in the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus proclaimed the truth of God to those who gathered. There were over 2 million people in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus spoke boldly. John 7:25-26 - *Now some of them from Jerusalem said, ‘Is this not He whom they seek to kill?’ 26 But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ?*

John 7:28-30 - *Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, ‘You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. 29 But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.’ 30 Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.*

Great conflict was generated by Jesus’ words. Jesus climaxed His teaching among the 2 million plus with an invitation, *If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.* Jesus gracious invitation brought varying responses.

- John 7:40 - *many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, ‘Truly this is the Prophet’*
- John 7:41 - *Others said, ‘This is the Christ.’ But some said, ‘Will the Christ come out of Galilee?’*
- John 7:42-43 - *‘Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?’ 43 So there was a division among the people because of Him. What divided them? Knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures vs. no knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures.*

- John 7:44-46 – There were those who wanted to seize Jesus to deliver Him to the authorities (chief priests and Pharisees), but when asked why they were unable to do so, they answered, *'No man ever spoke like this Man!'*

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Matt. 16:21 – *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. From what time?* From the Jewish nation's rejection of Jesus spoken out by the Jewish religious leadership [Matt. 12]. From the time Jesus began to focus on instructing His disciples (Matt. 13-16).

Matt. 17 – Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him up to a “high mountain.” This unnamed mountain is what we call the Mount of Transfiguration today. On this mountain *Jesus was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus* (Matt. 17:2-3).

At the transfiguration, the three disciples had a glimpse of the glory that Jesus had before the Incarnation and that He would have again.

In the Luke 9:28-31 passage re: the Transfiguration we're told a bit more re: Moses and Elijah's conversation with Jesus – Jesus took ... *Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. ³⁰ And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.* Why are Moses and Elijah speaking with Jesus? Moses represents the Law and Elijah represents the Prophets. What's Jesus' connection with Moses and Elijah?

Jesus did not destroy the Law...He fulfilled the Law (Matt. 5:17)...Jesus fulfilled the Law in DYING and paying the penalty for our sin.

John 19:30 – Jesus cried out from the cross, “It is finished!” and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

The Law could NEVER redeem.

Rom. 3:20 - *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

Rom. 8:3 - ...*what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

Jesus fulfilled His first coming prophecies proclaimed by the Prophets. Focus specifically on Psa. 22 and Isa. 53 re: Jesus crucifixion and resurrection.

As we follow Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, His final journey to Jerusalem, let's look at His path/route. Following the Mt. of Transfiguration and onward....

Matt. 17:22-23 - *Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And they were exceedingly sorrowful.*

Matt. 17:24 - ²⁴ *When they had come to Capernaum – remaining in Galilee and continuing to teach.*

Luke 17:11 - *Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.*

During this time in which Jesus was awaiting His final appearance in Jerusalem, Jesus ministered in Perea, "beyond the Jordan." (See map). During this time tragedy fell

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on a Bethany household where good friends of Jesus, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived. NOTE: There are two Bethany's – one near Jerusalem (John 11:1) and one "beyond the Jordan" - Bethabara (John 1:28). Perea was the name of the region "beyond the Jordan." Lazarus became seriously ill. Mary and Martha turned to Jesus for help. They sent a message to Jesus which simply relayed, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." They made no specific request. Jesus' response to the message...He told the disciples, *This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it* (John 11:4). We have a very clear declaration of the deity of Jesus as He referred to Himself as the Son of God.

⁵ *Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. REALLY?? WHY? Jesus tarried to demonstrate that He is indeed the Son of God!*

What is God doing in your life/in my life that seems to be a "REALLY?" moment?

⁷ *Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? Was Jesus telling the disciples that this was not yet His hour? Daylight remained...my work has not ended.... ¹¹ These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I*

may wake him up.” ¹² Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” You don’t have to make that dangerous trek with so many against you just to wake up Lazarus! ¹³ However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.” From Jesus’ statement we understand that this miracle was not designed to be a public demonstration but rather authentication to the disciples. And yet...did word spread? ¹⁷ So when Jesus came (to Bethany), He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Was there a significance re: the fourth day?

Jewish tradition taught that the dead body is not *truly and finally* dead until the fourth day. In the Talmud (Rabbinic commentary) it is written that The soul hovers around the body for three days after death, hoping for re-entrance. But once the body starts to decompose and the corpse changes color, the soul knows there is no going back and departs once and for all. This is extra-biblical Jewish tradition. Scripture nowhere teaches this. But if it reflects the popular opinion or teaching of many Jews back then, it may give added significance to the emphasis on Lazarus being in the grave for four days. Lazarus was dead! Had Jesus resurrected him on day two or three, it could have been cause for some to wonder whether it was merely a resuscitation of some sort instead of a true resurrection. At four days, the period of mourning was in process.

¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. ¹⁹ And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. ²⁰ Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹ Now Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if You had been here,

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my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You’ ²³ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ ²⁴ Martha said to Him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’ Martha didn’t understand that Jesus would raise Lazarus from the dead then and there. Martha’s words acknowledged her understanding of the OT. ²⁵ Jesus said to her, ‘**I am** the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’ Jesus declared to Martha that resurrection and eternal life were in Him. ‘Do you believe this?’ Jesus challenged Martha not to debate but to believe! Jesus presented Himself as the champion over death. ²⁷ She said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.’ Martha declared that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the Anointed One. And, Jesus is God in human form among us! From what she knew/believed in the OT, Martha could proclaim that she believed. ²⁸ And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, ‘The Teacher has come and is

calling for you.’ The Teacher has come – among His followers Jesus was designated as “the Teacher.” Of the 90 times Jesus was addressed directly in the gospels, 60 times he was called Teacher. himself used the term when he said, “You call me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I am” (John 13:13). Martha spoke of Jesus as “the” Teacher. Jesus is recognized as incomparable. He is not like any other Teacher! How significant it is for a woman to use this term for Jesus? The Rabbis refused to instruct women!

³² Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” Similar words to Martha’s; no reproach from Jesus perhaps because Mary showed an attitude of devotion and submission by kneeling in adoration before the Lord.

³³ Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴ And He said, ‘Where have you laid him?’ They said to Him, ‘Lord, come and see.’ ³⁵ Jesus wept. Jesus’ tears were not tears of sorrow for Lazarus. Jesus knew He would raise Lazarus from the dead. Tears perhaps because He was bringing Lazarus back into this fallen world? Tears perhaps because there was much sorrow over death due to sin! ³⁶ Then the Jews said, ‘See how He loved him!’ ³⁷ And some of them said, ‘Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?’ These seem to be words of genuine sorrow and sympathy. Might they have been truly sad that, Jesus, in all His greatness, could do nothing for Lazarus at this point. Are they perhaps questioning Jesus’ power...asking if Jesus has the power to raise Lazarus from the dead?

³⁸ Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself (groaning (Gk - this phrase literally means to snort like a horse implying anger and indignation. Such deep emotion seized Jesus! in Himself - “And troubled Himself.” deliberately summoned up in Himself the feelings of indignation at the havoc wrought by the evil one and the agony of sin, Jesus was angry

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and troubled at the destruction and power of the great enemy of humanity: death. Jesus would soon break the dominating power of death (Heb. 2:14).

Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone’ – lift up the stone. The stone sealing Lazarus’ tomb was not a stone that was rolled away. At Lazarus’ tomb it appears that the cave’s mouth was closed by a large closely-fitting stone which required the strength of many men to move it. Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench (as in a decaying corpse), for he has been dead four days.”

⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?' Was Martha doubting after she had confessed belief? ⁴¹ Then they took away (to raise up; to lift up) the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴² And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.'

⁴³ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb with a loud decisive tone of authority. Jesus spoke to a dead body as if Lazarus were alive because He is God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did ([Romans 4:17](#)). We need to marvel continually at the power of God Almighty! ⁴⁴ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go.' The One Who is the resurrection and the life revealed His authority over death by summoning Lazarus from the grave. The one who was dead and could not hear so that he could not respond came out of the grave.

Lazarus did not come out by his own power but by the power of the One Who had commanded him to come out. Jesus performed this miracle to support the faith of the disciples in His person and His power in the face of the opposition of the nation that shortly would put Him to death.

⁴⁵ Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. News of the raising of Lazarus quickly spread throughout Jerusalem and came to the attention of the chief priests who were Sadducees, and the Pharisees. A meeting of the Sanhedrin was called. The Sanhedrin was the ruling body of Israel. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, 'What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.'

What are we observing in these two verses? What is this council voicing? They acknowledged Who Jesus is and their own agenda was standing in the way of their believing in Him! The Holy Spirit had convicted them. The Sanhedrin knew the truth of the Messiah as the Holy Spirit had revealed Him and His work to them. They rejected and in so doing they blasphemed against the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 12:31-32 – Jesus had told the Jewish religious leadership when they rejected Him as the Messiah...when they rejected what they knew to be true!!! ...*the*

blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. ... whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

The restoration of Lazarus proved beyond any shadow of doubt that Jesus was the Messiah. The evidence was so great that the Sanhedrin said, *If we let Him go on like this, everyone will believe in Him.* The Sanhedrin thought that if the nation accepted Jesus as Messiah and He set up a kingdom as He said He would do, Rome would move to crush this kingdom and the nation would be destroyed,

John 11:49-52 - ⁴⁹ *And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing at all, ⁵⁰ nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.'* ⁵¹ *Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, ⁵² and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.*

The High Priest proposed that it would be better for Jesus to die than for all of them to die at the hands of Rome. This was formally presented to the Sanhedrin.

Caiaphas did not realize the prophetic significance of these words: Jesus would die for the Jewish nation and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God.

While Caiaphas proposed the death of Jesus as a solution to the immediate political problem, God purposed His Son's death as a solution to the problem of the sin of the whole world.

⁵³ *Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. ⁵⁴ Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.*

What a curious reversal of custom: Normally the authorities go after killers on the loose, but here they were concerned about someone who went around raising the dead.

Ephraim was north of Jerusalem, close to Samaria.

**

Typical tombs in Jesus' day were caves or excavations cut into a rocky cliff. An opening into the side of a cliff might lead into a crypt of several rooms used by different families. There would be an outer chamber and an inner chamber. In the outer chamber the body would be laid out on a waist-high bench or shelf cut into the rock and be prepared.

The Jewish custom was not to embalm the body but to use the spices to counteract the repulsive odors from decomposition of the body. They would wrap the body in cloth/linen cloth/swaddling cloth and add spice in the layers and folds.

The Jews did not wrap the body tightly like Egyptian mummies, but loosely with the head wrapped separately. And so, Lazarus could move out of the tomb before he was unwrapped.

The first burial noted in Scripture is that of Abraham, interred (laid to rest) in the tomb of Sarah, his wife, later followed by their children and grandchildren. (Machpelah – tomb/ cave of the Patriarchs – Gen. 23:17-18; Gen. 25:9-10).

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Archaeologists have found family burials in caves and rock-hewn tombs from the OT period with over 100 individuals interred in a single tomb.

After the flesh of the corpse had decayed, the bones were collected and placed into a repository hewn beneath one of the burial benches. Ossuaries were often used – chests in which the bones of decayed corpses were collected.

The poor could not afford a rock-hewn tomb. The poor were buried in common graves dug into the soil (II Kings 23:6; Jer. 26:23) or buried in vertical shafts within designated fields (Potters Field – Matt. 27:7).

QUESTIONS

Any V8 moments?

What impacted you?

How did Jesus impact you?

How can you explain Jesus to someone from John 11?

What's the "So what?" re: this lesson? What has impacted you?

What are your questions?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 4 with the Bible references.

Add to your journal noting what you're learning and how it's impacting you.

Esp. during this season leading to Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday and Passover, share this lesson or part of it with someone.

Read Week 5 when you receive it.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS’ LIFE ON EARTH

Week 3 – Appointed Times!

February 7, 2023

Understanding Scripture: Genesis 22

Genesis 22: ram/lamb?

Why do we find a ram in Gen. 22 in the midst of much focus on a lamb/the lamb?

Let’s observe, ask questions, and discover answers.

Basic observations from the text...from Gen. 22: (tool: lexicon: blueletterbible.org)

- Isaac asked *where is the lamb for a burnt offering?* Lamb in the Hebrew is *se* (pronounced “say”)
 - A lexicon search on “lamb” in Gen. 22; Ex. 12; and Isa. 53 – the passages in our study last week – the “lamb” is *se* - Gen. 22; Ex. 12; Isa. 53
 - God promised Abraham a lamb – *se*. God promised to provide Himself the lamb (Gen. 22:8) – *se*.
 - Does God deliver on His promises? Yes...ALWAYS!
 - Therefore, God will provide Himself the *se* in the future. If He didn’t... He is not faithful!
 - There is a future re: the lamb noted in Gen. 22.
 - Other than offered in certain sacrifices for 1500 years, we don’t see a future of the ram. We don’t see a ram in the throne room of God in Rev 5 or in the eternal state in Rev. 22.

Using a Bible dictionary, NOT a commentary, I read that there are numerous species within the sheep category. The ram is one of the species but there are differences.

- Different Hebrew words: Lamb – *se* (say); Ram – *a ’yil* (a-yiel)
- Lamb – young sheep (Ex. 12:3 – the Passover lambs taken into homes in Egypt for the first Passover were to be spotless, a male of the first year)
- Ram – *ayill* – mature sheep w/ horns (Gen. 22:13 – *a ram caught in the thicket by its horns*)

The question remains...WHY was the ram sacrificed in this passage? The first verse gives us a clue! Gen. 22:1 - *Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!”*

- Why is God testing Abraham? We need to understand what was occurring in Abraham’s life esp. in his relationship with God.
- To “test” carries with it the intent to prove.
- WHY would God need to TEST Abraham? Was Abraham always compliant? Did Abraham always obey God without any issues?

- Abram – went down into Egypt (Gen. 12) after seemingly not consulting God (famine)...after God promised Abram land, seed, blessing!
- Abram told Sarai to lie to Pharaoh in Egypt! AND, then lie to Abimelech in Gen. 20 under similar circumstances.
- Abram had an issue with God in Gen. 15 re: God NOT YET giving Abram the son of promise! Abram was demanding God to do something re: His promise of a

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Son for Sarai and Abram! Abram's tone in Gen. 15 seems to indicate that he was annoyed with God!

- Abraham questioned God when God stated that His covenant would be made through Isaac. Gen. 17:18 - *And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"* – Why can't you carry out Your promise through Ishmael?
- It appears that this sacrifice was a test for Abraham due to Abraham's doubting God/offending God. What sacrifice would appease God?

Within the various sacrifices in the Torah (Lev. 1:1-7:38) there are three voluntary sacrifices and two mandatory sacrifices. The mandatory sacrifices: sin offering - for the common person: a lamb was offered. trespass offering – exclusively a ram was offered as a trespass offering. And, a trespass offering was offered as a reimbursement to the offended party! (Lev. 5:15-16; Lev. 6:1-6)

I'm suggesting that this is why a ram is mentioned. Abraham offended God. There needed to be restitution. It seems that God showed Abraham this through placing a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. Was the sacrifice of the ram necessary? Yes as Abraham had offended God!

And, the difference between the ram and the lamb highlights why the Jewish people were to look forward to the "Lamb of God"...why lambs were sacrificed during the first Passover (Ex. 12)...why the Suffering Servant, Jesus, was led as a lamb to the slaughter (Isa. 53:7)...why John the Immerser could proclaim, *Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world!* (John 1:29).

AND, it was THE PROMISE of the LAMB OF GOD, not the ram, coming from our FAITHFUL GOD which gives us the directive/impetus to look forward to HIM - the LAMB (*se*) that would be PROVIDED in the area of Mount Moriah!

**

We so often hear "The Passion of Christ"! The word "passion" is from the Latin word, *pati*, which simply means "to endure" or "to suffer." Jesus' suffering was real. Jesus felt the nails! Jesus...fully man/fully God! Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, *My Father, if it is possible, may this cup (speaking of His destiny) be taken from Me* (Matt. 26:39). In Scripture "cup" often speaks of judgment. NOTE: Psa. 116:13 speaks of the cup of salvation. In Jesus' prayer to God the Father, Jesus knew that the cup of blessing could

only be poured out for the salvation of many if He would first drink the cup of God's judgment on all humanity.

In the garden we see Jesus in anguish. In Lk. 22:44 (Dr. Luke wrote Luke) we're told that His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. In Matt. 26:38 & Mk. 14:34 we read of Jesus' anguish in these words, *My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death*. There is a medical condition that produces the symptoms described and explains Luke's mention of blood. Hematidrosis is a rare, but very real, medical condition that causes one's sweat to contain blood. The sweat glands are surrounded by tiny blood vessels that can constrict and then dilate to the point of rupture. The cause of hematidrosis is extreme anguish.

Jesus, as Immanuel, God in the flesh, knew *all that was going to happen to Him* (John 18:4). He knew He was going to be betrayed by one of His disciples. He knew He was about to undergo several trials where all of the witnesses against Him would lie. He

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knew He would be flogged nearly to the point of death before they pounded the nails into His flesh. He knew the prophetic words of Isaiah that He would be beaten so badly that He would be "disfigured beyond that of any man" and "beyond human likeness" (Isa. 52:14).

Crucifixion was considered to be the most painful and torturous method of execution ever devised and was used on the most despised and wicked people. In fact, so horrific was the pain that it was described as *excruciating*, a word which literally means "from the cross."

Jesus came to earth for the purpose of laying down His life for us. Yes, anguish... but JOY because He is God! And so we read in Heb. 12:1-2 - ... *let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the **joy** that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame....* The cross didn't just "happen." He came to die on the cross! Rev. 13:8 - Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. This was God's plan. Isa. 53:10 - it pleased the Father to bruise the Son if He, the Son, Jesus, rendered Himself an offering for sin! We can further state that Jesus' passion was a settled purpose!

**

Jesus is the Lamb of God... Paul called Him our Passover as He is the perfect Passover Lamb, ...*indeed Christ, our Passover* (the sacrifice of Pesach/Passover), *was sacrificed for us* (I Cor. 5:7). Pesach in Hebrew means to pass over; the root: to spread the wings over; to protect. What is the connection between Passover and Jesus? Why do Gentile believers present Passover Seders? What's the big deal? What is all this Passover reflection?

The Feasts of the LORD speak to God's plan of redemption/salvation that impacts the world! For our lesson today, we're going to focus on the Feast of Passover.

NOTE: There are four columns. Each Feast is noted in the first column. The second column - moving across the page - tells us why the feast is commemorated in Israel's

history. The third column tells us how each feast is fulfilled in Jesus! The fourth column tells us about the application of each feast to believers as it relates to our salvation.

God gave Israel seven Feasts which are divided according to the spring feasts and the fall feasts. The Jewish “religious” year begins in the spring with Passover. The spring feasts speak to Jesus’ first coming. These four spring feasts have been fulfilled.

The fall feasts speak to Jesus’ second coming. The fall feasts have not yet been fulfilled.

The Hebrew word for feasts is *mow-ed* which means APPOINTED times. “Appointed times” means that these feasts are FIXED – they are not going to change. The word “appointed” in Hebrew also encompasses an appointed place and an appointed meeting... God meeting with man. God desired to draw near to the children of Israel and to have them draw near to Him. What a beautiful picture of God’s heart!

PASSOVER is the first feast that God gave the Jewish people. Passover is significant. Passover impacts the world which includes us!! CONSIDER: whenever we attend church, Sunday school, Bible study...it’s because of Passover! WHY? HOW?

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PASSOVER historically commemorates the first Passover in Egypt when God delivered the children of Israel from bondage to slavery in Egypt after following His instructions in Ex. 12 to kill spotless lambs and apply their blood. When the unblemished lambs were slaughtered and their blood schmeered on the doorposts and lintels of their homes – and God passed over those homes with the blood applied – God ransomed/rescued/delivered the people in each home with the lamb’s blood applied to their door.

The Fulfillment of Passover is the crucifixion of the Messiah Jesus.

The Application of Passover is redemption...freedom from the bondage of sin forever because we are declared righteous by God (II Cor. 5:21)!

Lev. 23:4 - *These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.* Jesus fulfilled Passover. He died at the appointed time...on Passover.

Jesus’ passion was a settled purpose – settled from eternity past (Rev. 13:8):

Gal. 4:4 - *...when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.*

Jesus was prophesied to be born (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6). He was to enter this world as a Jewish man (Dt. 18:15-18 – one of Moses’ brethren). Jesus is from the lineage of King David (Gen. 49:10 [of the tribe of Judah]; Matt. 1:1 – *Son of David, Son of Abraham*). Being born “under the law,” Jesus perfectly obeyed the law. Jesus declared that He came to fulfill the law, all 613 commandments (Matt. 5:17).

Jesus obeyed Deut. 16:16! Deut. 16:16 speaks of what Jewish people called the pilgrim feasts.

Deut. 16:16 - Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses (II Chron. 6:6 – I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there): at the Feast of Unleavened Bread (interchangeable w/ Passover), at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.

No matter where a Jewish man lived in the known world, he was to travel to Jerusalem three times a year, at the pilgrim feasts. Many brought their families (Luke 2:41).

While Jesus spent much time away from Judea during His ministry...away from Jerusalem due to the growing hostility, as a faithful/obedient Jewish man, as the Messiah, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the “pilgrim” feasts. We read of Jesus escaping from those who wished to stone Him/harm Him. BUT, now was the hour!

And so we read, Matt. 16:21 - *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

From what time? What had transpired?

Matt. 12 – the Jewish religious leadership had rejected Jesus as the Messiah.

Matt. 13 – Jesus began instructing the disciples regarding what would transpire between His first coming and His second coming when He would not be on the earth.

Matt. 14 – Jesus continued to instruct His disciples looking toward their ministry. Continued intense hostility grew against Jesus.

5

Matt. 16:21 is the first time in the Gospel of Matthew that we read of Jesus telling His disciples He was going to Jerusalem...to die. He outlined the sequence of events:

- He must go to Jerusalem, the appointed place of sacrifice: Jerusalem (Mount Moriah – chosen by Jehovah; the threshing floor depicting both separation and judgment).
- He must suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and teachers of the law.
- He must be killed.
- He would be resurrected the third day.

What was the response on the part of the disciples?

Matt. 16:22 *Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!’*

Peter took Jesus aside from the other disciples. The word translated “rebuked” means to reprove, censure, or warn in order to prevent an action from happening. Peter most adamantly sought to prevent Jesus from going to Jerusalem...to prevent Jesus from dying on the cross!

Jesus’ reply to Peter was stronger. Jesus...*turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense (a trap; a snare) to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.’* (Matt. 16:23)

Why did Jesus address Peter as Satan? Peter was expressing Satan's desire...to prevent Jesus from going to the cross to become a sacrifice for the sin of the world. In the temptation/the testing of Jesus in the wilderness following Jesus' baptism, Satan had offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. Satan had offered Jesus a throne without a cross.

Why would Peter rebuke Jesus? Earlier in Matt. 16, Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. In Peter's mind, based on the teaching of the Rabbis at that time and on many OT Scriptures regarding the Messiah revealing Himself as the conquering King (Isa. 9:6-7; anointed Conqueror (59:21; 61:1-3; 61:10-62:12; 63:1-6; - cross reference), the disciples believed that Jesus would not die...that His full presence would be manifested...that He would manifest Himself in all His glory and cast off the burden of Rome.

The Hebrew Scripture teaches that the Messiah will reign but, by His death, He must provide for the redemption of sinners. Suffering was not a cup that could be taken from the Son. Jesus laid His life down for us to be reconciled to God...to be forgiven...to be placed into a right relationship with God...to be saved from the wrath of God because of our sin!

Jesus is our perfect Passover Lamb who died at the appointed time, in the appointed place, in the appointed way!

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ISAIAH 59 – Reality Check

Enduring Word – David Guzik

The sin God sees.

1. (1) The problem of God's people: what the cause is *not*.

Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened,

That it cannot save;

Nor His ear heavy,

That it cannot hear.

a. **Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save:** God's people wondered why God did not seem to rescue them from their trials. They wondered if perhaps God had diminished in strength – if His **hand** had become **shortened**. Isaiah the prophet assures them that this is not the case.

i. This touches on one of the greatest problems in practical theology: how can there be a God of love and all power when there is human suffering? If we loved someone and had the power to end their suffering, wouldn't we do it? Isaiah addresses those who wondered if God wasn't all-powerful, and that is why their suffering continues.

ii. Rabbi Harold Kushner wrote a remarkably wide-selling book titled *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (1981). It sold more than four million copies and was on the *New York Times* best-seller list for a whole year. The whole point of his book is to say God is all-loving but not all-powerful, that God is good, but not sovereign. So, when bad things happen to good people, it is because events are out of God's control. Kushner advises his readers to "learn to love [God] and forgive him despite his limitations." This certainly is not the God of the Bible, because **the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save**. Isaiah simply says, "**Behold** this. See this."

b. **Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear:** Perhaps the problem isn't that God lacks power. Perhaps He lacks *knowledge* of our problem or *interest* in our problem. But this isn't the situation at all, as Isaiah reminds us. God's **ear** is not **heavy**. He can **hear** us just fine.

2. (2) The problem of God's people: what the cause *is*.

But your iniquities have separated you from your God;

And your sins have hidden His face from you,

So that He will not hear.

a. **But your iniquities have separated you from your God:** The problem isn't with God's power, His knowledge, or His interest. The problem is with our **iniquities**. Sin has **separated you from your God**.

i. In what way does sin separate us from God? Sin does not necessarily separate us from the *presence* of God, because God is present everywhere ([Psalm 139:7](#)) and even Satan can have an audience with God ([Job 1:6](#)). Sin does not separate us from the *love* of God, because God loves sinners ([Romans 5:8](#)). But sin still does separate.

·Sin separates us from *fellowship* with God, because at least at the point of our sin, we no longer think alike with God.

·Sin separates us from the *blessing* of God, because at least at the point of our sin, we are not trusting God and relying on Him.

·Sin separates us from some of the *benefits of God's love*, even as the Prodigal Son ([Luke 15:11-32](#)) was still loved by the father but didn't enjoy the benefits of his love when he was in sin.

·Sin separates us, in some way, from the *protection* of God, because He will allow trials to come our way to correct us.

ii. How easy it is for us to blame our problems on everything except our **iniquities**! We will even *blame God* before seeing that the problem is with us! We will deny *who God is* before seeing that the problem is with us.

b. **And your sins have hidden His face from you:** This explains why God's people no longer felt the face of the LORD shining on them ([Numbers 6:25](#)). It was their **sins**, not the inability of God to hear, or His lack of interest in hearing.

i. This helps us understand – at least in a small way – the cry of Jesus from the cross, *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* ([Matthew 27:46](#)). As Jesus stood in the place of guilty sinners, there was some way in which the face of God the Father was **hidden** from Him. Not in an ultimate, absolute sense; but in some way. But that was for *our sins*, not His own.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS’ LIFE ON EARTH

Week 1 – This is Such a Strange Way to Save the World

January 24, 2023

PRAY

WELCOME to our last semester in the Gospel of Matthew which will include Mark, Luke, and John as well.

How many of you are new to this study on Matthew?

How many of you are sitting where you want to sit?

How many of you want to sit elsewhere...perhaps in another room – in another class?

We’re all going to get to know each other and pray for each other and LEARN together...

AS WE ASK GOD TO CAUSE OUR HEARTS TO UNDERSTAND HIS WORD!!!

THANK YOU ALL FOR SHOWING UP!

That’s SIGNIFICANT!

PRAISE GOD THAT HE HAS SHOWN UP – and we are WAITING ON HIM TO FILL OUR HEARTS AND LIVES WITH HIMSELF...

Debbie & Judy – are our room set-up/breakdown/go to ladies. Please get to know them! THANK YOU, Debbie & Judy!

Table Leaders – will you stand up.

Your individual leaders are here to lead you in the discussion questions during table time...

...and to lead you in prayer for one another.

Each table is a community.

I encourage you to settle into one group!!!

If you might want to find another table, you can do so next week. BUT PLEASE don't be WANDERING from table to table – a different table for a different week.

Attendance sheet – so that your leaders know how to get in touch with you.

If you don't have an Email, please jot down the Email of someone you know to whom I can Email the handout each week... someone you know who can get that handout to you. Perhaps they live next door, in your neighborhood....

Handouts – it has always been my intention to Email to you the handout for the lesson of the week...the FRIDAY evening before the next class on Tuesday.

I ENCOURAGE you to read the handout that you receive via Email – BEFORE the class.

How many of you have studied during a Bible study the final week of Jesus' life on earth?

PRAY

RECORD

WHY DID YOU SIGN UP FOR THIS CLASS?

HOW MANY OF YOU READ THE BLURB FOR THIS CLASS BEFORE YOU SIGNED UP? Loaded question!

Let's look at the blurb...

Jesus' last week on earth was certainly the most significant week of His life...as without His death and resurrection, no one, Jew or Gentile, could be saved. This final week is also dynamic as many OT prophecies were fulfilled. As we seek to know Jesus more intimately and to marvel anew at Who He is, we will understand the "why" of His triumphal entry, the "why" of His last Passover

Seder, the “why” of His arrest and trials, the “why” of His crucifixion, His resurrection, and ascension.
My prayer is that we will fall in love with Him...perhaps like never before...perhaps for the first time.

**

What do we know about Israel’s history found in Scripture?

What do we know about God’s plan of redemption?

What do we know about Biblical prophecy?

What do we know about God?

Perhaps this semester we will be called upon BY GOD...TO KNOW...about Israel’s history from Scripture, TO KNOW about God’s plan of redemption from Scripture, TO KNOW about Biblical prophecy from Scripture, and TO KNOW ABOUT THE TRUTH OF GOD – from Scripture!

The SIGNIFICANCE of JESUS’ INCARNATION – God becoming flesh - will NEVER be lost! (PAUSE!!)

WHY am I speaking of Jesus’ incarnation? The decorations for the celebration of Jesus entering the world are packed away in boxes and stored – wherever we may store them without basements and attics in AZ!

Are they packed away?

Last semester I mentioned the significance of Jesus’ birth - the big picture of His being born in Bethlehem Ephrathah.

The message given to the Shepherds – of the Lamb of God – at His first coming.

The message given to the Magi – of the Reigning King of Israel – at His second coming.

Do you remember that lesson?

If you weren't with us last semester, have you realized that the message given to the Shepherds revolved around Jesus' first coming and that the message given to the Magi revolved around His second coming?

The significance of Jesus' incarnation speaks to the big picture of the Bible!!

The significance of what we call "Christmas" includes the cross!

A Pastor was chided by some for preaching the cross in his "Christmas" sermon. Congregation members commented, "You're taking away my joy at "Christmas" by preaching the cross!"

The Pastor replied, "You would have no joy at Christmas if there was no cross!"

The cross...the payment for our sin ETERNALLY!

If the cross is not the focal point throughout Scripture, where would we be? ETERNALLY LOST!

AND SO, let's consider when we read...

Psa. 22:14-18 - I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones.

They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.

Crucifixion!

Crucifixion as written by King David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, 1,000 years prior to Jesus' crucifixion on Golgotha, the place of the skull....

Is something about what I just said causing you to PAUSE? Perhaps what I just read from Psalm 22 is not calculating - in fact, it might be SMACKING you (in Bronx lingo)?

My response would be as I look at Psalm 22 and KNOW SCRIPTURE, "WHAT? HOW CAN THIS BE? AND YET...."!!! ABOUT WHAT am I speaking?

HOW DOES THE CROSS COMPUTE in Jesus' final week?

What was the Jewish capital punishment? STONING!

The cross must be in the picture for prophecy to be fulfilled.

In God's grand theme according to Scripture, according to His appointed times, the Messiah must die on the day of the Feast of Passover, at God's appointed time (Lev. 23:5 - *On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD's Passover.*) And, the Messiah must be led as a Lamb to the slaughter (Isa. 53:7) – being pierced through for us – during the times of the Gentiles – under the rulership and oppression of Rome!

Crucifixion was Rome's brutal capital punishment. The right to impose Jewish law including the capital punishment of stoning, had been rescinded!

When Jesus was tried, Jewish religious leaders went through the Roman governor, Pilate, since they had no legal right to inflict capital punishment. When Pilate told the Jews to try Jesus according to Jewish law, they responded, "We have no right to execute anyone" (John 18:31 - *Then Pilate said to them, 'You take*

Him and judge Him according to your law.’ Therefore the Jews said to him, ‘It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,’

And so, the spikes and the cross beams that were used to bring criminals to judgment under Rome – were awaiting Jesus!
(Lucado) This is part of Jewish history in the Hebrew Scriptures!

If you were asked to teach “The Last Week of Jesus’ Life On Earth,” where would you begin? (OBSERVATIONS)

WHAT IS WRAPPED UP IN THIS STUDY? When you hear “The last week of Jesus’ life on earth” – what comes into your mind? (WHITE BOARD)

(REMEMBER, WORSHIP, ANTICIPATE)

That’s what we need to focus on throughout the Bible! WHY?

Because God told the Jewish people to REMEMBER what He had done for them, WORSHIP Him continually, and ANTICIPATE what He would do....

While the REMEMBER is the backstory – what leads up to everything beyond, WORSHIP is continual – how the people were to live and serve God, and to ANTICIPATE is the excited expectation in the GOD Who is, Who was, and Who is to come.)

When John the Apostle, in his elderly years, ministering in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey, to 7 churches...when John was banished to the isle of Patmos by Emperor Domitian for his, John’s, testimony of faith in Jesus...Domitian loved to punish his enemies by ISOLATING them.

When John was ISOLATED, Who should appear to John in his isolation? The glorified Christ!!!! NO MORE ISOLATION! JESUS IS HERE! HOW GLORIOUS IS THIS??

Jesus told John, *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,* 'says the Lord, *'Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty.'* (Rev. 1:8)

"I am" – Ex. 3:14 – I am Who I am – Yahweh/Jehovah – the self-existent One; sufficient unto Himself; eternal sovereign of the universe.

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Among the Jewish rabbis, it was common to use the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet (alef/tav) to denote the whole of anything, from beginning to end. This statement of eternity could apply only to God!

Jesus was at the beginning of all things (John 1:1 – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*) and will be at the close. Jesus is the ETERNAL Son of God!

The "Alpha and Omega" identifies Jesus as the God of the OT (Isa. 41:4; Isa. 44:6; Isa. 48:12).

Jesus is found in the first verse of Genesis (*In the beginning, God*. . .Elohim [plurality in the Godhead]) and in the last verse of Revelation, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen* (Rev. 22:21).

Who is and Who was and Who is to come...the Almighty – In the Gk. - pän-to-krä'-tör - the ruler of all.

Here is a reference to God's name from Ex. 3:14-15 – "I AM that I AM" – the all sufficient One, the self-existent One, our ETERNAL God.

In Hebrew, Almighty is *Shaddai* – the all sufficient One. *Shad* – breast. The many breasted One – the nurturing One. Jer. 23:5-6 – BRANCH – LORD – Jehovah our righteousness.

Jesus used "I AM" seven times in John's Gospel and ten times in Revelation.

The readers of Revelation, which include us, have been greeted with a glorious salutation from our blessed Lord. Later,

In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John proclaimed that *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy* (Rev. 19:10b). This means that the true purpose of prophecy is to provide testimony to the person and program of Jesus Christ.

Because we know Who He is, we can know Who He was and Who He is moving into the future.

C.C. Ryrie, who served as Professor of Systematic Theology and Dean of Doctoral Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, said, "Prophecy is designed to unfold the loveliness of Jesus."

In our Bible studies we cannot remove ourselves from prophecy – nor do we wish to do so!

And that prophecy is not only Messianic prophecy related to Jesus' first coming that has already been fulfilled...it is also prophecy that is yet to be fulfilled – re: Jesus' Second Coming! (He HAD to die!)

We also need to remember the plot line of Scripture:
CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

WHY? Because through Jesus' dying to redeem us from bondage to sin, and Rom. 8:
(foundation of end times message – week 3 OLIVET DISCOURSE)

comes to life knowing that

In the course of my praying toward this study and how to teach what we know as the passion of the Christ, I rec'd a sweet email from a friend who shared, *I've been having such precious time with Jesus these last few weeks and feeling so grateful for 2022 and looking forward to all the hope and promises of walking intimately with Jesus in 2023.*

Have we been rejoicing in precious time with Jesus as we read His word?

As we studied Jesus' ministry from the beginning of Matthew – from His introduction to Israel at His baptism in the Jordan, to the Spirit driving Him into the wilderness to meet Satan face-to-face, to calling His disciples, to traveling to Galilee (the Galilee of the Gentiles [fulfilling Isa. 9:1-2 & fulfilling Isa. 49:6]

...to setting up His command post, shall we say, at Capernaum, to traveling beyond Israel to Gentile lands to perform miracles among the multitudes, to

...as we are reading all this Scripture, have we been enjoying Jesus' PRESENCE as we walk alongside Him? Have we been caught up in knowing His tenderness, His teaching? Have we realized Jesus' denial of self? Has His denial of self – of His making of Himself no reputation – impacted us?

As we perhaps put ourselves in the disciples' sandals, did we know of future events? If we did, how so? How do we grasp the disciples' understanding of Jesus?

We have the luxury of hindsight, don't we?

But, we can ask God to please show us as we read His word, what it was like for the disciples, for the people in Jesus' day, for both Jews and Gentiles, to comprehend this Jesus.

I believe it's in Scripture for us to read!

What did the people know at that time about this One Who came from such lowliness and entered into such chaos – into a world of violence and darkness? What did Jesus' disciples know - His disciples who were His followers, His students, His closest friends?

AND, what if the people in Jesus' day, including the disciples, had walked with Him and grown to love Him, KNOWING that His time with them on earth would be short-lived due to His death...are we getting a glimpse of that?

How does God want us to read the Gospel accounts?

How does God want us to read the entire Bible?

A story is told of a young teenager who was cast as Jesus in a pre-resurrection play. The play focused on Jesus' crucifixion.

Of all the lines he spoke, he most vividly remembers, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (God sacrificing His Son who is 100% God/100% man – Who feels forsaken in His humanity – but is not. [Remez. Psa. 22/23/24]).

This boy, now grown, in thinking of the rehearsals and his actual performance, recalls how his words bounced off the stained glass windows. There was no meaning because there was no understanding.

The Pastor who functioned as the Director said, "Try it again." The young teenager tried it again.

And then the Pastor said, "Say it like you mean it."

This continued throughout the rehearsal.

The boy never did deliver those words of Jesus correctly – he never delivered those words with meaning – because he didn't know the meaning!

This same boy, now married, shared that he walked into the living room just as the movie his wife was watching ended. She was sitting on the couch crying.

“Are you OK?” he asked.

She nodded.

“Is something wrong?”

She shook her head.

“Then why are you crying?”

She replied, “I guess you had to see the whole thing.”

Isn't it true that when you miss most of the story and only walk in for the finale, you're not usually moved to tears?

We read passages, chapters, books of Scripture and we don't know the lead-in – we don't know the background – what led up to a particular account.

Back to the young boy who was cast as Jesus in the pre-resurrection play. . . when he came to faith in Jesus. . . he understood. He makes this statement: “To understand Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, to really get it, you need to experience the whole story – enter the darkened theater, take your seat, and watch the story unfold. Because the empty tomb doesn't make sense without the cross, the cross doesn't make sense without the manger in Bethlehem, and the manger doesn't make sense without the Garden of Eden. It's all one story. And only when you finally untangle it, see its scope, and enter it for yourself do you realize that the story has finally entered and, at last, untangled you.”

(Story, Steven James, p. 18)

Q&A

The Jewish Roots of Christianity
JROC – Week 2 – ONE STORY
January 15, 2023

*Heb. 12:1-2 - Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who **for the joy** that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Fulfilled Messianic Prophecies:

<https://scottsdalebible.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Messianic-Prophecies-Fulfilled-CHART.pdf>

<https://printer.gotquestions.net/GeneratePF?articleId=44665>

Why do we need the Messiah?

*Ecc. 7:20 - For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.
Isa. 64:6 - But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;*

The profile of the profile of the Messiah is in the Hebrew Scriptures. Why is that significant?

The Bible is ONE STORY/ONE NARRATIVE.

From the book of Genesis in the Hebrew Scriptures through to the book of Revelation in the New Testament, God revealed Himself and declared throughout the Bible His provision of coming to know Him through the Jewish Messiah, Jesus!

In the book of Genesis we read of
CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

These four words describe the plot of the entire Bible in reference to God's relationship with mankind!

CREATION – God created the heavens and the earth. God created man who is the crowning point of God's creation (Gen. 1 & 2). Man was created in the image of God (will, intellect, emotions). Man was created to have dominion – to co-rule the earth as God's representative. Man was created to nurture and serve the earth.

Man and God experienced a daily encounter in the Garden of Eden – the physical Garden of Eden.

God declared His creation good/very good.

Gen. 1:31 - Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

God had given Adam and Eve everything BUT told them NOT to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. .. for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die (Gen. 2:17).

2

SIN – Sin (falling short of God’s glory [Rom. 3:23]) entered the world when Satan (the devil, the accuser, the adversary) entered the Garden of Eden and caused Eve and Adam to doubt God – to rebel against what God said!

When sin entered the world man was separated from God. Death is a separation. There was spiritual death – there was no fellowship with God. And, there was physical death – their physical body began to deteriorate.

“death” – separation – physically, spiritually, eternally!

Gen. 3:1-13 - *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”* ² *And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”* ⁴ *Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”* ⁶ *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. (Adam and Eve took it upon themselves to fix the problem of sin)* ⁸ *And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?”* ¹⁰ *So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”* ¹¹ *And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”* ¹² *Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” (blame game)* ¹³ *And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” (blame game).*

Gen. 3:15 – and IMMEDIATELY after man sinned, God PROMISED HIS PLAN OF REDEMPTION – His plan of rescuing man...His plan of DELIVERING man from this separation from Himself – through the Messiah – Who was called “the Seed of the woman” at this time.

GOD’S PROMISE OF HIS PLAN OF DELIVERANCE WAS BECAUSE MAN HAS A NEED.

Man needs to be BROUGHT BACK INTO RELATIONSHIP WITH God!

Gen. 3:15 - *And I will put enmity between you (Satan – accuser; adversary) and the woman, and between your seed (offspring through semen) and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

In Gen. 3:15 we note judgment and promise! Satan will be defeated at the cross (Heb. 2:14) because of the PROMISE of the Messiah's suffering for our sin. Gen. 3:15 lays out for us the ultimate defeat of Satan through the ONE Who would come – be BORN into this world - and RESOLVE the SIN ISSUE!

3

This prophecy also gives the first hint of the virgin birth, declaring the Messiah – the Deliverer – would be the Seed of the Woman, but not of the man. And this prophecy speaks of the Messiah suffering.

Why did God make this promise to man in the first book of the Bible?

God's plan is ALWAYS Plan A!!

NOTHING can thwart God's Plan!

God promised to rescue man from being separated from Him. WHY?

God DESIRED to have a relationship with man for all eternity!

God created man to have dominion, to co-rule – to represent God on the earth (Gen. 1:26-28)

Man brought sin into the earth.

The Messiah is the God/man – fully God/fully man. (virgin birth; no transmission of sin; the Messiah is God - Isa. 9:6 – Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace).

He must be man so that He can shed His blood.

Gen. 3:21 - *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

Lev. 17:11 – *the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar for the atonement (covering) of your soul. It is the blood that makes atonement for your soul!*

It was through the blood of the Passover lambs at the first Passover by which God REDEEMED/DELIVERED the children of Israel from bondage to slavery in Egypt – and brought them to the land of promise!

REDEMPTION – purchasing out of bondage to sin; a price needed to be paid. *You know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold. ...But with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19).*

GOD provides the solution for sin (Gen. 3:15) the story of which is then unfolded throughout Scripture through to Revelation 19.

We do not strive to get to God. Good works is NOT the way to God.

God has come to us through the Messiah!!

RESTORATION – GOD has promised that He will return His creation - the heavens and the earth and man – to the conditions before sin entered the world! (Romans 8:20-23).

THE BIBLE IS ONE STORY/ONE NARRATIVE
CREATION SIN REDEMPTION RESTORATION

January 2023

GOD SHOWED UP!!!!!!

We had been praying for God's power to be realized at the 18th annual Chanukah/Christmas Celebration on 12/11/22 at SBC/Scottsdale Bible Church! And, indeed He was hugely in our midst! Thank you for praying with us! Over 200 people attended including over 20 Jewish non-believers, five Ethiopian Jewish people, and five Muslims from Afghanistan! There was much conversation with all our visitors following the program. Language could have posed a barrier...but, there were no obstacles! Of the over 20 Jewish non-believers, two have invited me to visit with them! One Jewish woman who lives at a retirement center where I had been teaching Bible study for approx. 5 years (but she never attended the Bible study), asked me via a note, to meet with her face-to-face. Another Jewish woman who never gave me the time of day while teaching Bible study at her retirement center, approached me following the Chanukah/Christmas outreach and asked me to knock on her door! Praise God! Many of the comment cards filled out expressed that God's power was on display! Follow-up with others who attended the Chanukah/Christmas outreach is continuing!! In fact...

...God brought 6 visitors to our Sunday a.m. class this past Sunday including 4 who attended the Chanukah/Christmas Celebration, and a Jewish non-believer and his believer neighbor. The neighbor had called SBC toward the end of December and asked about the Jewish ministry. The front desk connected the man with me. Through Email this man shared that his elderly Jewish neighbor had expressed a desire to attend a "lecture on Christ." Both attended and God gave us a great conversation prior to and following the class. During the class I shared a pointed profile of the Messiah from the Hebrew Scriptures. And, we went on from there understanding what "Messiah" means and our NEED (both Jew and Gentile) for the Messiah. The Jewish man is inviting his wife to join us next week! I asked my new Jewish friend if he believes that Jesus is the Messiah. His response: "This is why I'm here. I want to learn. I am a student."

More Jewish non-believers are attending the weekly Tuesday afternoon Bible study at a large retirement community. Continual conversations address how God through Jesus the Jewish Messiah transforms lives. Several are asking for the truth from the Word of God...prophecies...baptism through Jesus (!!)...forgiving others...and more! In mid-December, God gave me another "come to Jesus" conversation with Pearl who was in rehab at the time. I asked her if she could place her trust in Jesus as her Messiah, as God, for her salvation. While she didn't want to pray the words after me, she expressed interest in hearing the words that she could pray to God. I prayed those words aloud. This past week she shared at the Bible study that she is very thankful for our classes and the episodes from "The Chosen." Pearl then announced, "The episodes about Jesus are helping me understand my next step in believing." Pearl and I talked further following the study. Joan, who had been warned by a Rabbi, continues expressing interest in hearing more about Jesus as well.

Thank you for your faithful prayers that empower the ministry, and for your gifts that keep me in the field! I praise God for your ESSENTIAL PARTNERSHIP!!! Marching onward together as GOD CONTINUES TO SHOW UP, overwhelming us with His power!

For His glory,

JANUARY 8, 2023

SING –

PRAY

Welcome back...

Welcome to our class, The Continuity of Scripture, for the first time!

Anita Lang

Faith Grey

(Linda – returning to AZ 1/21/23)

Brandon Smith

Hugo Arias & Jerome

Any others?

Some of you are expecting a “lecture”.

Some of you have questions from what I shared during the “Chanukah/Christmas Celebration” that was presented on 12/11.

At the outset of the event in December, some who attended might very well have been wondering –

“Chanukah/Christmas??? You can’t have both. Pick one!”

At the end of the program, on the part of many the connection was understood.

Bottom line: Jesus the Messiah celebrated Chanukah... Jesus the Messiah entered the world as God with us...on the day we celebrate as Christmas.

I had mentioned during the Chanukah/Christmas Celebration on 12/11/22 that I teach classes connecting the dots between the Hebrew Scriptures and the NT – and that I teach against anti-Semitism.

WHY?

During the Chanukah/Christmas event I shared that in the Hebrew Scriptures we are given the profile of the Messiah.

WHY?

THE CONTINUITY OF SCRIPTURE

January 3, 2023

The Messiah

God had promised the Messiah to the world through the Jewish people (Gen. 12:3)...and God laid out approx. 300 ways for the Jewish people to recognize the Messiah when He came.

- The Messiah would be born (Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6). He would come into the world through the Jewish line (Dt. 18:15-18)
- The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem Ephrathah (Micah 5:2 - *But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.*)
- The Messiah would perform miracles (Isa. 35:5-6). He would heal the lame. He would heal the blind. He would cast out demons (Zech. 13:2).
- The Messiah would be crucified (Psa. 22; Isa. 53).
- The Messiah would rise from the dead (Psa. 16:10)

WHO IS THIS?

Jesus – Yeshua (Heb. – God is salvation).

When we say, “Jesus Christ,” we are actually saying, “Jesus the Messiah.”

Messiah comes from the Hebrew word *mashiach* and means “anointed.” The root word for the Hebrew word, *mashiach*, means “to smear.” Oil was smeared on the forehead to anoint a person for a specific function in Israel. Anointing was a picture of, a sign that God was consecrating or setting apart that person for a particular role in serving Him.

In the OT, those “anointed”:

prophets – I Kings 19:16

priests – Lev. 4:3; Lev. 8:12

kings - I Sam. 9:27-10:1; I Sam. 16:1, 12-13; I Kings 1:39

2

There were many who were anointed in OT times...anointed as prophet, priest, or king.

BUT, the OT prophesied a coming Deliverer to redeem Israel (Isaiah 42:1; 61:1-3). This Deliverer the Jews called “THE Messiah” – THE anointed One, “His Anointed” (Psa. 2:2).

And, “THE” Messiah would fulfill the roles of a prophet, priest, and king – Jesus fulfills all three roles!

...PROPHET – the prophets from the Bible had a WORD from God – a MESSAGE from God.

Jesus is the Word (Jn. 1:1 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word is God”

...PRIEST – Priests offered up sacrifices to God.

Jesus offered up HIMSELF – for the sin of the world.

...AND Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice for SIN!

...KING – Jesus will be returning at His physical Second Coming in the future as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. 19).

“Anointed” in the Greek language is *Christos* or, in English, *Christ*. The name “Jesus Christ” is the same as “Jesus the Messiah.”

Why is there the need for the Messiah? Because man sinned!

When I noted the PROFILE of the Messiah, from where did I take the Biblical passages?

From the HEBREW SCRIPTURES!

Isn't that most INSIGHTFUL?

In fact, Jesus' Bible from which He read during His ministry on earth – His Bible was the OT/the Tanakh/the Hebrew Scriptures!

Let's step back.

Many of you know that I so ENJOY interaction! WHY?
(and I LOVE to ask that question WHY?)

I may be going on and on – sharing information with you that – you might NOT understand. If I don't give you time for YOU to ask the WHY question – how are you going to learn!?!??

The Bible is ONE STORY/ONE NARRATIVE.

(Inspiration – II Tim. 3:16 – *ALL Scripture is inspired by God/God-breathed. God revealed HIMSELF in Scripture. ...and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof (rebuke; reprimand), for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*

II Pet. 1:20-21 - *that no prophecy (teaching/instruction) of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

The Bible is protected from human error in its original manuscripts by the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Deut. 18:18-19 - *I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.* Matt. 1:22-23 - *So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”*

The Bible speaks for itself. It claims to be the Word of God over 2,000 times.

The Bible is comprised of 66 books written over the timeframe of 1500 years – written by 40 authors, 39 of whom were Jewish, from three continents (Israel [Asia]; Africa [Egypt]; some parts of Europe [Asia Minor – modern day Turkey; Greece; Italy [Rome]]).

The Bible was written in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic [Dan. 2:4 – Dan. 7:28], and Greek).

In the book of Genesis we read of
CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

CREATION – God created the heavens and the earth. Man was the capstone of God’s creation...the crowning point of God’s creation.

Man was created in the image of God (will, intellect, emotions). Man was created to have dominion – to co-rule the earth as God’s representative. Man was created to nurture and serve the earth.

Man and God experienced a daily encounter in the Garden of Eden – the physical Garden of Eden.

God declared His creation good/very good.

Gen. 1:31 - *Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

SIN entered the world when Satan entered the Garden of Eden and caused Eve and Adam to doubt God – to REBEL against what God said!

God had given Adam and Eve everything BUT told them NOT to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. ...*for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die* (Gen. 2:17).

When sin entered the world man was SEPARATED FROM GOD. There was spiritual death – there was no fellowship with God. And, there was physical death – their physical body began to deteriorate.

“death” – separation – physically, spiritually, eternally!

Gen. 3:1-13 - *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”*

² *And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the*

midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." (blame game)

13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (blame game).

Read through the end of Gen. 3....

Gen. 3:15 – and IMMEDIATELY after man sinned, God PROMISED HIS PLAN OF REDEMPTION – His plan of rescuing man...His plan of DELIVERING man from this

separation from Himself – through the Messiah – Who was called “the Seed of the woman” at this time.

GOD’S PROMISE OF HIS PLAN OF DELIVERANCE WAS BECAUSE MAN HAS A **NEED**.

Man needs to be BROUGHT BACK INTO RELATIONSHIP WITH God!!!!!!!!!!

Gen. 3:15 - And I will put enmity between you (Satan – accuser; adversary) and the woman, and between your seed (offspring through semen) and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

In Gen. 3:15 we are given the PROMISE of the ultimate defeat of Satan through the ONE Who would come – be BORN into this world - and RESOLVE the SIN ISSUE!

God announced that Satan would wound the Messiah (**you shall bruise His heel**), but the Messiah would crush Satan with a mortal wound (**He shall bruise your head**).

The **heel** is the part within the serpent’s reach. Jesus, in taking on humanity, brought Himself near to Satan’s domain so Satan could strike Him.

It is thought that the bruise on the Messiah’s heel speaks of Jesus’ crucifixion – the nailing of His feet to the cross as well as His hands/wrists.

This prophecy also gives the first hint of the virgin birth, declaring the Messiah – the Deliverer – would be the Seed of the Woman, but not of the man.

WHY DID GOD MAKE THIS PROMISE TO MAN?

God’s plan is ALWAYS Plan A!!

NOTHING can thwart God’s Plan!

God promised to rescue man from separation from Him!!

God DESIRED to have a relationship with man for all eternity!

Man brought sin into the earth.

Man must be the resolution.

The Messiah is the God/man – fully God/fully man. (virgin birth; no transmission of sin; the Messiah is God - Isa. 9:6 – Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace).

He must be man so that He can shed His blood (Gen. 3:21; Lev. 17:11 – *the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar for the atonement (covering) of your soul. It is the blood that makes atonement for your soul!*)

It was through the blood of the Passover lambs at the first Passover by which God REDEEMED/DELIVERED the children of Israel from bondage to slavery in Egypt – and brought them to the land of promise!

Thus, God gave the children of Israel the sacrificial system! (1500 years [Moses – 1500 years before Jesus; no temple in Babylon – so minus 70 years. BUT then the sacrificial system ceased in 70 AD when Rome destroyed the Temple])

We note from Gen. 3:15 that the Seed of the woman would suffer – His heel would be bruised.

REDEMPTION – purchasing out of bondage to sin; price paid; ransom price. *You know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...But with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19).*

In the Old Testament economy, ransoms were paid for various reasons, such as freeing slaves. The last use of “ransom” in the Old Testament, however, seems to foreshadow the New Testament concept. *“I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death” (Hosea 13:14).*

But to whom was the ransom of Christ to be paid? Not to the devil, of course, or to any human king. It can only have been paid

to God Himself, for He had set “the wages of sin” to be “death” (Romans 6:23).

GOD provides the solution for sin (Gen. 3:15) the story of which is then unfolded throughout Scripture through to Revelation 19.

We do NOT strive to get to God. God has come to us!

RESTORATION – return to the conditions before the fall! *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

Isn't it amazing that the spiritual death of Adam and Eve occurred immediately? Immediately there was separation from God. And this separation was not one imposed by God; it was initiated by men.

The spiritual death experienced by Adam and Eve is the same as that of today. It is the alienation of man from God. And it is that which man himself chooses.

Adam and Eve hid from God.

Gen. 3:8 - *And they heard the sound/voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God....*

In the original Aramaic text, the word for sound/voice is MEMRA – which means “Word.” The Rabbis have taught that the Memra is the same as God yet distinct! (John 1:1 – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*)

And GOD sought them out! While the serpent's question was designed to bring about the fall of man, God's questions seek reconciliation and restoration with man.

Notice that no questions are asked of the serpent. There is no intention of restoration for this creature. His doom is sealed. We observe so but don't know that as yet from only knowing Genesis 1 through the middle of Genesis 3.

Gen. 3:9-10 - *Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?' ¹⁰ So he said, 'I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.'*

Adam didn't offer God much, did he, in the way of confession of sin? God probed more deeply perhaps seeking an admission of wrongdoing.

Gen. 3:11 - *Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?*

Gen. 3:12-13 - *Then the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.' ¹³ And the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'*

Adam blames God and Eve...Eve blames the serpent!

How "mankind" this is!

God FIRST speaks out against the serpent.

Gen. 3:14 - *So the LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; (God knowing that the beasts would come under the curse – Rom. 8:19-22) on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust All the days of your life.*

The serpent was demoted from an upright position, perhaps, to that of crawling on his belly and eating dust.

But God had already made creeping things that crawled on their bellies and called them "good" (Gen. 1:24-25). Is this demotion for the reptile or for???

Might this speak to a curse on an enemy, an adversary (Satan) that is vanquished...who must lie face down before his conqueror?

Did God address this judgment on the power behind the serpent!

AND – ever since the curse on Satan, while we think he is victorious at times – Satan is the servant of God – Satan does not work independently of God – Satan is a DEFEATED FOE!

God then speaks to the power behind the serpent – Satan

Lucifer exercised his will against God and so God tells the adversary...

Gen. 3:15 - *And **I will** put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

Of course we know that the serpent is Satan, *the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world* (Rev. 12:9)

What do we understand re: Gen. 3:15?

- This is a verse of judgment and PROMISE! God curses the physical serpent and then the adversary, Satan, which provides HOPE for Adam and Eve!
- “Enmity” is used several times in Scripture as a blood feud (Num. 35:21-22; Eze. 25:15) which is a long lasting bitter conflict.
- The hatred will be between the seed (descendants) of the serpent (“many” seed), followers of Satan, and the Seed of the women, followers of God. Conflict enters the world between the two distinct groups. Spiritual warfare.
- The context then moves to the future.
- The word “seed” in Hebrew (*zarah*) is a masculine noun. Regarding the woman, we need to note that a woman does not have a seed. “Seed” in Hebrew means semen! A woman has an egg. The influence of a man is not noted in this verse. Adam is not brought into this equation.
 - Could this be speaking of a supernatural human birth?
 - Is there a hinting of a virgin birth?
- The hatred/enmity extends in the future to the “Seed” of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The “Seed of the woman” is noted as “He.” We definitely see an individual.
- The actions of the “He” in the future are the result of the bruising.
- The serpent will receive a head wound – a mortal wound – death/ destruction.

- The Seed of the woman will receive a wound on His heel; this is not a death wound. But, the Seed of the woman will experience suffering. To what is this pointing?
- In the midst of the context of SIN, IMMEDIATELY God provides THE resolution for sin. In the midst of judgment there is a promise. This is the first promise we see in Scripture about an individual Who appears to be the resolution for sin. Gen. 3:15 has been called *protoevangelium* which means the “first gospel”. “Gospel” is good news! What is the good news from God? Against the backdrop of sin and judgment, God promised hope in the provision of “the” resolution of sin.
- The first Messianic prophecy declares that “the” resolution, the Messiah, will be born of a woman, not a man. This runs contrary to the Biblical norm. Male descendants, exclusively, are recorded in the Biblical genealogies – other than in Matthew 1.
- AND the first Messianic prophecy clearly teaches us that the Messiah would SUFFER. The first Messianic prophecy doesn’t tell us He would first come as a conquering King. He would SUFFER. He would be one of us – He would be human. AND the first Messianic prophecy seems to suggest that this would be a supernatural birth (virgin birth) because a woman does not have a seed (zerah - masculine noun meaning semen!)
- God’s judgment begins with “I will”! We read in Isa. 14:13-14 that Lucifer had expressed his desires through five “I will’s” – the fifth one: “I will be like the Most High”! We see conflict ensuing between the will of Almighty God and the will of a defeated foe!!! Spiritual warfare has begun!

QUESTIONS?

- Why was the coming Savior not called the offspring of the man? Most races trace the lines of inheritance through the male. To answer this question we must leap over thousands of years and read what is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah. For this reason the sovereign master [God] himself will give you a confirming sign. Look, this young woman [virgin] is about to conceive and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him Immanuel. ([Isaiah 7:14](#)).

○ Beginning with the earliest genealogies in Genesis 5 and 10, through the first nine chapters of I Chronicles, to Matthew 1 and Luke 3 (among many others) virtually all of them are lists of men's names. Matthew 1, however, does list 5 women (Tamar, [having prostituted herself], Rahab [a prostitute], Ruth [a Moabitess – hated the Jewish people], Bathsheba [an adulteress; her name isn't mentioned], and Mary [not held in high esteem after being found with child]. 4 of them were Gentiles. Many strikes against these women in JESUS' lineage!!!! He is the Savior of ALL who place their trust in Him!

Regarding God's plan, we need to know that God CREATED – He revealed Himself. Man responded in rebellion. Man sinned against God!

Think of the first two events of the 4 word plan/design/pattern:
CREATION FALL

Following the FALL, God promised REDEMPTION and RESTORATION.

How was God to bring about REDEMPTION? Through the REDEEMER. Who is...JESUS.

The PROMISE-PLAN of God – His plan of redemption on earth unfolds from the third chapter of Genesis through to the end of Revelation!

Each aspect of the Messiah and His work (we need to know what Jesus' mission/function/role has been) has been linked into an ongoing stream of announcements in Scripture.

What we're going to call the PROMISE-PLAN of God formed one continuous message placed into Israel's history!

We need, in our study, to remember that the gospel which means good news is not something God hid until Jesus came in the flesh. After Adam's fall, God shared the seeds of a plan He had already worked out before time began.

AND consider that God's mercy, grace, love, holiness, justice, faithfulness, immutability (He does not change) are brilliantly displayed against the backdrop of sin!

Gen. 3:15 is the announcement of a prolonged struggle, perpetual antagonism, wounds on both sides yet a mortal wound/destruction on the side of Satan, and victory for the Seed of the woman.

This verse encompasses both a curse and a PROMISE. The first PROMISE of a coming Messiah in Scripture comes in God's rebuke of Satan which speaks to Satan's ultimate destruction. The Messiah was to come to both destroy Satan and to deliver man from under Satan's dominion (Matt. 4 – Satan tempting Jesus in the wilderness, offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world; II Cor. 4:4 – the god of this world; II Kings 6:8-18). This theme continues through the NT.

- The destruction of Satan gives Adam and Eve HOPE even in their punishment. There is no redemption for Satan. The judgment placed upon Adam and Eve are softened by the promise of deliverance. Eve will suffer birth pangs in bearing children, but this pain will be eased by the knowledge that the "Seed" of the woman to come will cause Satan's destructions. The woman's "Seed" will be Satan's destroyer.
- Gen. 3:20 - *And Adam called his wife's name Eve, (for the first time) because she was the mother of all living* – because there was HOPE.

This verse is a prophecy concerning the Messiah in that Jesus, Who came in the flesh, Who was born of a woman (who doesn't have a seed), is bruised on the heel at the cross. In Gen. 3:15, while there is a "hinting" at the virgin birth, the Messiah's humanity is emphasized. Yet, we're going to consider something fascinating in Gen. 4:1

This prophecy does, however, lay the groundwork for the Messiah as 100% God/100% man (hypostatic union).

"Ancient" Jewish commentators, prior to 1100 AD, acknowledged a prophecy regarding the Messiah in Gen. 3:15. "Eve had respect to that seed which is coming from another place. And who is this? This is Messiah the King." (*Bereshit Rabba 23* – a Rabbinic commentary on Genesis).

Gen. 3:15 teaches that the Messiah will suffer in the process of defeating Satan. We read of the suffering Servant in Isaiah 53:5 – *He was bruised for our iniquities.* Isa. 53:10 – *It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.*

Satan was dealt a death blow at the cross. What seemed like Satan's moment of triumph when Jesus was crucified, was actually his greatest defeat. Jesus rose from the grave and conquered man's greatest oppressor - death.

Heb. 2:14 - ...through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.

The “place of the skull” has an interesting history. This location of Jesus’ crucifixion is called both Calvary and Golgotha. The Greek word κρανίον (kran-ee-on), translated as Calvary, means skull that part of the skeletal frame known as the cranium. The word Golgotha is a Hebrew word which also means skull...better known as the “place of the skull.” Why was Jesus crucified on a hill known as the place of the skull?

In Genesis 3:15 we have the first prophecy of the coming of the Lord Jesus to be the Savior of mankind: “And I will put hostility between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

The crushing of Satan’s head is our first clue as to why Jesus was crucified on Calvary, the place of the skull. Moses prophetically writes that there will come a time when the future seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent.

Gen. 3:15 is the announcement of a prolonged struggle, perpetual antagonism, wounds on both sides yet a mortal wound/destruction on the side of Satan, and victory for the Seed of the woman.

You might’ve observed, “I see NO reason for this being called a Messianic prophecy!”

Do you realize that there are no verses in Scripture which state, “Now what you’re about to read is a Messianic prophecy!”

AND SO, one of the statements/challenges that we may hear from a Jewish person who is not yet a believer in Jesus – who is fairly knowledgeable about his/her Judaism is “If Jesus is really the Messiah, and if he is so important, why doesn’t the Torah speak of him at all?”

Whether or not one accepts a passage as Messianic depends largely on how one understands the person and the work of the Messiah!

There were Jewish people in Jesus day and Jewish people today who only understand the Messiah as KING Messiah Who would bring peace to the earth.

In reading Isa. 11:1, 10 - *There shall come forth a Rod (shoot [life]) from the stem (trunk) of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow (be fruitful) out of his roots... Who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.* In other words, there will be peace!

Some Jewish people would label Isa. 11 as a Messianic prophecy as it fits their belief/view/agenda re: the Messiah – Who the Messiah would be – what His work will be.

Jewish people who are still looking for the Messiah and who accept Isa. 11 as Messianic, when they are presented with Isa. 53...their response often is, “This is not Messianic.”

WHY? Because in Isa. 53 we have an individual who SUFFERS and dies! “That’s not what the Messiah will do. That is not the Messiah’s work. NO – the Messiah is a conquering King!”

KNOW THIS – ultraorthodox/Chassidic – there will be a suffering Messiah – Messiah Ben Joseph, son of Joseph, Joseph who suffered in the pit and in Egypt...who will die and resurrect and become Messiah Ben David, son of King David – the KING!

Sounds like the same person to me. The same Messiah. One Messiah...two comings.

The point I’m attempting to emphasize is that as students of the Bible we need to know the person and COMPLETE work of the Messiah!

What are the works of the Messiah? (heal, redeem, die, resurrect, ascend, at right hand of God, High Priest, return for us in the rapture, return physically to judge and to set up His kingdom...)

With the COMPLETE work of the Messiah in mind, OH MY, look what Gen. 3:15 is telling us – against the backdrop of sin – Adam and Eve rebelling against God – and we IMMEDIATELY see the resolution for sin – the One Who would come and reign as King first? NO!!!

The ONE Who would SUFFER for sin – the ONE Who would be in battle against an adversary – the ONE Who would bruise/crush the adversary’s head – a mortal wound will happen to this adversary – and the “Seed of the woman” will FIRST SUFFER!!!!!!

The first Messianic prophecy clearly teaches us that the Messiah coming in the flesh (EMMANUEL – GOD in the flesh) would SUFFER.

The first Messianic prophecy doesn't tell us He would first come as a conquering King. He would SUFFER. He would be one of us – He would be human. AND the first Messianic prophecy suggests rather strongly that this would be a supernatural birth (virgin birth) because, again, a woman does not have a seed (zarah - masculine noun meaning semen!)

Perhaps you're wondering why this prophecy is so vague?

- Think of the fellowship Adam and Eve enjoyed with God prior to the serpent entering the garden. What did God discuss with them? He gave them responsibilities. Did he further discuss their role in nurturing and serving the creation?
- Did Adam and Eve understand that God, with Whom they walked, was the Creator of the universe and that He is almighty?
- Did God expound further on His command to Adam re: not eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
- What did Adam and Eve teach their children?

Genesis 3 goes on to tell us of God's judgment on the woman and on the man and the curse on the earth. (children will be born and sin will be passed on to each individual) (women's desire to rule over man but man will rule over her)

“Return to the ground.” Man, because of sin, was changed immediately. He was separated from God, and, became liable to all the sufferings and miseries of life, and to death. And, man was ashamed.

Gen. 3:7 - Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings

Gen. 3:21 - the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. In lieu of the fig leaves they crafted for themselves

The first physical death should have been the man and his wife...but it was an animal. WHY? What message was being declared?

- Someone sins – there must be death. (Rom. 6:26 – *the wages of sin is death*)
- We're understanding a substitutionary death in this verse. An innocent animal taking the place of one who sins.
- And, we're understanding that blood was shed.

How much did Adam and Eve realize – if anything?

Gen. 3:20 Gen. 3:20 – Adam calls his wife Eve – for the first time. Eve means living. There is HOPE.

Gen. 4:1 gives us Eve's response when she gave birth to her first son, Cain.

Gen. 4:1 - *Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, 'I have gotten a man: Jehovah.'*

This is what I have heard over the years – that the verse reads this way in the Hebrew. (Gen. 4:1 (NKJV) *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, 'I have acquired a man even the LORD.'*

Others state that Eve said, *'I have gotten a man from Jehovah.'*

From the first translation, *I have gotten a man: Jehovah*, Eve appears to have understood from the prophecy in Gen. 3:15 that the serpent would be defeated by a God-Man (supernatural birth “hinted” at) and that she gave birth to Jehovah.

Some have rendered it, *I have gotten a man, even the Lord*

I must say that Eve is taking God at His word. She understood God's promise. The timing, however, wasn't God's timing! Eve was believing that the promise was fulfilled immediately!

She believed that Cain, her first child, was the promised God-Man.

If the translation is indeed, *I have gotten a man: Jehovah*, from Gen. 3:15 we understand that God's antidote for sin would be HIMSELF coming in the flesh.

Eve was soon to realize, after Cain killed Abel, that Cain was not the One Who would carry out the promise of God.

From the book of Genesis in the Hebrew Scriptures through to the book of Revelation in the NT, God revealed Himself and declared throughout the Bible HIS PROVISION of coming to KNOW Him – through the Jewish Messiah, Jesus!

I'm suggesting that there are two sentences

God told Moses *let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them* (Ex. 25:8).

JESUS THE MESSIAH

In my experience over the years, I have to say that I find that many Gentile believers have a very limited understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures. I also find that these fellow believers are very open and even thirsty and eager to know more of the foundations of the faith in the Old Testament that lead to the New Covenant that all of us as believers, Jewish or Gentile, live under.

I'm not trying to say that the New Testament is less important than the old, but the old is also not less important than the new. **The fact is that the thing that makes the New Testament new is that there is an old one!**

So, a really good way to look at this is to realize that when Jesus taught, laying out His messianic credentials, He never ever used the New Testament. He never preached from the New Testament. It was always from the Hebrew Scriptures (OT). Case in point - from the book of Luke.

Luke 4:16-21

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, **to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.**” And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, **“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”**

Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, is reading from Isaiah 61:1-2a, and He is telling those in the synagogue on Shabbat (all Jews - what else would you expect?), that He is the fulfillment of that specific Old Testament prophetic Scripture. That was the whole purpose of his first coming: **“to proclaim the good news, to proclaim liberty, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”**

Notice, He didn't complete verse 2: **“And the day of vengeance of our God.” That will happen at His Second Coming.**

When Jesus, or even the apostles for that matter, refer to the Scriptures in the first century, it was always the Old Testament. A couple of more examples of Jesus referencing the Old Testament. In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus was tempted by the devil three times.

In every temptation, Jesus responded to the devil out of the Torah, specifically Deuteronomy 8:13, 6:13, and 6:16.

Also, in Luke 24:13-27: This is after the resurrection and two of Jesus' disciples are walking on the Road to Emmaus. While they were walking, Jesus drew near and began walking with them, but they didn't recognize him. He asks them what they are talking about. One of them asks him if he is the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn't know what has happened in the past few days. And Jesus says, “What things?” (I would love to have seen the look on His face when He asked THAT question.) And so, they go on to explain, Luke 24:19-24:

...And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. **But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.** Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”

Luke 24:19-24:

And now Yeshua opens up to them in vv. 25-27, and note specifically what He taught them and from where He taught them:

And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” **And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.**

I grew up believing that the New Testament was for Christians and the Old Testament was for Jews. And by the way, the majority of both groups believe that! But Jesus, the Jewish Messiah brought both the old and the new seamlessly together. If that is how Yeshua taught (not to mention the Apostles), how could we ignore or disregard a part of the Bible that is obviously so important? It’s impossible to understand the New Testament without a basic understanding of the Old Testament. It is like showing up to the second act of a two-act play, having missed the entire first act.

My Jewish people believe, as I did, that the Old Testament is their book and the New Testament is the Christian Bible. One of my mentors many years ago, Zola Levitt, said that the New Testament without the Old is like a roof with no house under it.

Yet, we are still not quite sure how to share the Messiah from the Old Testament. It is time to bridge the gap for both Jews who live life rejecting the Jesus they don’t know, and for Christians to build the foundation under that great roof so that both Jews and Gentiles can become the “one new man” that Paul wrote to the Ephesians about.

Next time we will look at some of the specifics of why Gentile Christians need to know the Old Testament by taking a look at **Jesus in Genesis.**

[**LISTEN TO A PODCAST**](#)

LEARN

MATTHEW 3

New King James

START with

Happy New Year. How is this year going to be different?

Cathy had planned to be here but she has whatever is going around. She shared with us that she had had a conversation with someone who has been SEEKING!

She asked, “What are you seeking?” They answered with, “I’m seeking TRUTH.”

Our Scripture passages today are going to speak to the TRUTH of GOD’S WORD!!!!

There is ONE truth.

If you there is more than one truth – well, you tossed the definition of TRUTH right out the window. TRUTH, by its definition, is EXCLUSIVE!!!!

Isa. 40:1-3 (read) -

700-800 years before Jesus was born, God told His prophets to speak COMFORT TO ISRAEL!

YES – Israel had sinned – we ALL have sinned.

God is HOLY and He must deal with sin. Israel had SINNED. We read that throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

God had PROMISED ISRAEL the Messiah Who would come to take away their sin – REDEEM their sin.

This is what is promised in Isa. 40:1-3 – 700-800 YEARS before the Messiah came.

God wanted Israel to know **WHEN** the Messiah – Whom He had promised to Israel would come!!!

AND WE FIND THE FULFILLMENT OF ISA. 40:3 IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW!!!!

Matt. 3:1-6 (read)

(Then HIGHLIGHT Matt. 3:1-3)

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.’”

God sent John to the Jewish people as the fulfillment of what we read in Isa. 40:3!!!!

This is based on God’s TRUTH.

This is based on God’s love!

This is God’s COMFORT!

JOHN was the HERALD for the MESSIAH!! John told the Jewish people who gathered at the Jordan River for a MIKVEH – to be cleansed!!!! WHY! Because the Messiah HAD COME!

REPENT – means to CHANGE YOUR MIND about Who God is (he is HOLY) and Who you are (individually) – we are SINNERS IN NEED of God Who has PROMISED to free us from our bondage to sin!

God is ALMIGHTY GOD OF THE UNIVERSE WHO is KING forever (Psa. 10:16; Psa. 47:2 – [read]).

God is the King of Israel (Isa. 44:6 – [read])!

God has a relationship with Israel through Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; Gen. 15....).

God has called the ENTIRE NATION OF ISRAEL to enter into a relationship with Him.

MANY individuals in Israel had come into a relationship with God through FAITH IN GOD AND HIS PROMISES (Heb. 11; read Heb. 11:13) (Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel....)

These MYRIAD of individuals noted in Heb. 11 recognized Who God is (HOLY/SOVEREIGN KING/ALMIGHTY) and

who they were...sinners who called on God to cleanse them from their sin through the PROMISE OF THE MESSIAH WHOM GOD WOULD SEND!!!

JOHN WAS TELLING THE PEOPLE TO PREPARE THEIR HEARTS TO RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE MESSIAH'S FORGIVENESS OF SIN!!!!

Matt. 3:13 – **AND THEN JESUS CAME!!!!!!** Jesus came as the fulfillment of Isa. 40:3 promised 700-800 years in the past.

(GO into when the Messiah was first promised in Gen. 3:15!!!!!!
ISA. 53!!!!!!!!!!!!)

The Hebrew prophet, Isaiah, asks in Isa. 53:1 – “Who has believed our report?” In other words, there were those who was NOT believing in what was so CLEARLY – IN NEON – PROCLAIMED in Isa. 53.

What about people today? Are we believing?

Are YOU believing?

We're talking about an INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

And, as far as the nation of Israel is concerned – GOD IS CALLING UPON THE NATION OF ISRAEL AS A WHOLE TO BELIEVE IN THE MESSIAH WHOM HE PROMISED TO THEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We're highlighting the TRUTH of the HEBREW SCRIPTURES based on GOD'S LOVE!

The description of John in Matt. 3:4 RESONATED with the Jewish people. This is how their well-loved prophet Elijah dressed. AND, Elijah called Israel to repent...and Elijah hung around the Jordan River.

WOW! Can you imagine the STIR that John was causing?! THE PEOPLE LISTENED AND RESPONDED!

Read Matt. 3:5-6 - ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

What about us as we read these words in Scripture?

(DON'T READ MATT. 3:7-12!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)

AND JESUS CAME!!!

The Messiah Jesus came to identify with man.

Read Matt. 3:13-17

Jesus did not go through a mikveh to be cleansed. The Messiah is sinless. He is God.

The Messiah came to identify with man and to REDEEM – free us from bondage to sin – to come to DIE for us.

WHAT VALUE JESUS THE MESSIAH has placed upon us!!!!

AND GOD THE FATHER AND GOD the HOLY SPIRIT PROCLAIMED THEIR MESSAGE TO THE WORLD RE: JESUS THE MESSIAH.

Matt. 3:16-17 - When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and BEHOLD, the heavens were opened to Him, and ^[b]He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Derreck mentioned as an intro that this year was going to be different re: the Christmas program (as it was NOT "Winter Wonder"). Michelle - they began, very artistically, from before creation, moving through Adam and Eve, the curse, Satan, sin, God choosing Abram, the patriarchs, the kings of Israel, Assyrian, Babylon, the return to Israel from exile, the 400 years of silence (which I believe was 430 years of silence for several reasons), to the birth of Jesus and the angels. Sad to say, some people left the worship center. I'm PRAYING that, among those who stayed, there will be many questions - and that we can be in the mix of answering. OK - so in the sound booth, Paul came up to me and asked, "Are you Cathy?" PRAYING that perhaps he might be among us in sharing the big picture. I'm PRAYING that Derreck singing about Jerusalem weeping (!!!) will Phyllis tomorrow. I visited her in rehab. Asked her if she could place her trust in Jesus. I asked her to pray - she seemed a bit hesitant. I told her I would pray the words that she could repeat from her heart. I spoke with her yesterday and she asked many questions about Jesus and belief and faith. I continued to let her know about Jewish people at our church who are now believers in Jesus. She said, "Oh. so they converted?" Told her I don't use the word convert. Told her that they placed their faith (God-given) in Jesus for forgiveness for all eternity. Told her that they believe in the Promised One of Israel in Whom all the prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures point. She continued to thank me for our visit and our conversation (all about JESUS).

Verse [Isaiah 41:14](#). ***Fear not, thou worm Jacob*** — In the rabbinical commentary on the five books of Moses, *Yelamedenu*, it is asked, Why are the Israelites called a *worm*? To signify, that as the worm does not smite, that is, *gnaw* the cedars, but with its mouth, which is very tender, yet it nevertheless destroys the hard wood; so all the strength of the Israelites is in prayer, by which they smite the wicked of this world, though strong like the cedars, to which they are compared, [Ezekiel 31:3](#).

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 10 – The Incarnation of Jesus from the Hebrew Scriptures

November 16, 2021

THE CHRISTMAS STORY HAS been so sanitized and romanticized over the centuries that even Hollywood—as jaded a culture as can be found anywhere—fails to capture the gritty pathos that surrounded Jesus' arrival. Truth be told, even some churches annually idealize the birth of our Savior. Yet it was *anything* but ideal.

Jesus came to identify with us.

Jesus was born into CHAOS.

Jesus was born into a dark and violent world!

6 BC was a lousy time to live in Judea.

What was happening in and around the time of the incarnation – Jesus' – God in the flesh – born in Bethlehem Ephrathah? (WRITE ON BOARD)

Can we relate to the chaos?

What was happening?

- The times of the Gentiles – the Roman Empire began ruling and oppressing Israel in 46 BC.
- And there was inner corruption in Israel. Since there was no king from David's line, the High Priest was the highest office. YET, the person placed in the High Priest's position (Simon Maccabee) – was UNQUALIFIED. Simon was NOT from the correct line of the priesthood - the line of Zadok (Num. 25:).
- And, there were those within the Hasmonean Dynasty who were officiating as King while acting as the High Priest. The Torah comes against the King also serving as the High Priest ()

The world of Jesus was NOT the OT Hebrew world!!!!

- Israel was multicultural.
- There was much Greek influence
 - LXX – the Septuagint – the Hebrew OT was translated into koine Greek – and could then be universally read.
 - BUT – Greek philosophy was taught to the point where it was being forced upon the Jewish people. God was NOT at the center of Greek

philosophy! Man was at the center of everything in Greek philosophy – not God!!!

- The more conservative-minded Jews (Hasidim – “separatists”) opposed Hellenism and became the Pharisees.
- Those willing to adopt “the Greek way of life” became Sadducees (no resurrection; no angelic beings).
- Neither the Pharisees nor the Sadducees are mentioned in the OT!
- After the Assyrians carried away the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC, they, the Assyrians, resettled Israel with conquered people from other nations!
 - REMEMBER – God had chosen Israel to be witnesses to the world. Now Israel was carried away to the Gentiles AND Gentiles were being settled in Israel.
 - After the Prophet Malachi’s warnings, for 430 years God did NOT send a prophet to speak words of warning to Israel...AND THEN, after 430 years, THE SILENCE WAS BROKEN!

And the people MARVELED!

Are we marveling? Marvel – adoration; delight, esteem, reverence, wonderment (full of wonder!)

To “marvel” means to be filled with wonder and amazement. Would that give you joy – God’s joy?

When I know about the world into which Jesus was born, I can better understand the Gospels...the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation becomes MORE CLEAR...I can better GRASP Jesus’ teachings...I can REJOICE...I can MARVEL AT WHAT God is doing and continuing to do even TODAY!

AND, I STAND IN AWE OF GOD!!!

The SAME GOD is on HIS THRONE!!!! May we continue to stand in AWE OF HIM!

Can we say that “IDEAL” is NOT a word that we, from a human perspective, can use to describe Jesus’ birth – the surrounding politics, religious beliefs, the actual delivery of the SON OF GOD?

BUT GOD had inspired the Prophet Malachi to write in 430 BC...

Mal. 3:1 - ‘Behold, I send My messenger (John), and he will prepare the way before Me (before GOD!). And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the

*Messenger of the covenant (the Messiah), in whom you delight.
Behold, He is coming, ' says the LORD of hosts.*

Of whom is Malachi speaking? John the Immerser...

AND, Isaiah wrote of John the Baptizer, the Immerser...

In Isa. 40:3-4 - we read of John as the “voice of one crying in the wilderness” – prepare the way of the Lord – make straight a highway for our God.

At the Jordan River in Jesus' day, John was telling the children of Israel to prepare their hearts for the Messiah.

When do we first read about John? Isa. 40:3-4 and Mal. 3:1.

And, so we read in Luke 1:5 - *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah.* (I Chron. 24 – the divisions of Aaron (the HP in Moses' day)...and the divisions of the priests under Aaron's sons, Eleazar and Ithamar. It appears that the first 16 divisions mentioned in I Chron. 24, Abijah being the 8th division – came under Eleazar.) *His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.* Both husband and wife were from the priestly tribe.

What does Zacharias mean?

REMEMBERED BY GOD!

How AMAZINGLY APPROPRIATE!!!!

After 430 years of “silence,” of GOD NOT sending even one prophet to warn the Jewish people...after 430 years of the Jewish people hanging on to Malachi's words – that the Messiah would come!

At the time of Jesus' birth, there were Jewish people were living in the excitement of the coming of the Messiah.

Are we living in the excitement of the Second Coming of the Messiah?

What are we celebrating at Christmas?

The birth of the PROMISED MESSIAH. The birth of the One Whom God had promised to the children of Israel.

God gave the Jewish people the sacrificial system to cover their sins. God promised that the Messiah would be the ULTIMATE SACRIFICE for sin – for the sin of the world!

Who were the people looking for the Messiah? The Jewish people.

What did the world – both Jewish people & Gentiles – know about Christmas – at the time of the first Christmas? Do you ever think about that?

Did the people at that time say, “Oh, it’s nearly Christmas – I need to get out my decorations. I need to order that fruit cake I saw at the bakery. Oh – and then there are all those Christmas cards I need to arrange to distribute; I think the caravan of camels will be coming by my tent next week.”

NO!

How then did they “celebrate”?

There was something far greater than tinsel and fruit cake and cards at that time in Biblical history – there was MESSIANIC EXPECTATION/FERVOR.

There was a longing for the Messiah!

The Jewish people were living in the excitement – in the expectation - of the coming of the Messiah.

Who were the ones looking for, longing for, and anticipating the Messiah? THE JEWISH PEOPLE!

Why? Because God had promised that the Messiah would come and deliver them and give them the Kingdom that God had promised to them – with the Messiah ruling and reigning. BUT FIRST, the Messiah had to come to die for sin!

He had to fulfill the role as the suffering Servant (Gen. 3:15; Psa. 22; Isa. 53)

Christmas is the fulfillment of what God had promised in the OT.

Christmas is the continuation of the OT promises of God re: SALVATION!

The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah.

And He came! AND – He’s coming again.

Are WE – as His followers – as believers in Jesus - living in the excitement of the SECOND COMING of the Messiah?

Again - what do we celebrate at Christmas?

We celebrate the birth of the PROMISED MESSIAH – the PROMISED ONE OF ISRAEL – the ONE WHOM GOD promised to the Jewish people – and to the Gentiles (Gen. 12:3 – “all the families of the earth will be blessed”; Isa. 49:5-6 – the Messiah Jesus would restore Israel AND be a LIGHT to the Gentiles.

(Chosen People – Dt. 7; given the law; witness people [Isa. 43:10]; instrument of blessing for the world [Gen. 18:18]; channel through whom the Messiah would come [Gen. 49:10; Num. 24:17; Dt. 18:15-18; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6...]; Dt. 5:29 – “Oh, that they would have such a heart that they would fear Me...”; Dt. 30:1-6 – when you return to the Lord, He will bring you into the land from all the lands to which you’ve been scattered and... *the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live*; Psa. 33:12 – “Blessed is the NATION whose God is the Lord”; Jer. 3:14 – “...return to Me I am married to you”; Isa. 54:5 – “For your Maker(s) is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name;” Jer. 31:31ff; Isa. 55 – return to Me (as a nation!)

We read of the first promise of the Messiah – of Jesus – in Genesis 3:15!

Before the birth of Jesus (in 6 BC; Herod died in 4 BC; Jesus was born 2 years before Herod died), we read in the book of Luke the birth announcement of John the Baptizer/Immerser.

You know of John.

The Hebrew Scriptures speak of purification rites in Leviticus 15 (cleanliness; holiness). John’s immersion of the Jewish people into the Jordan River was a mikvah unto repentance.

...the angel Gabriel was sent by God to tell Zacharias that he would have a son who would be named John.

And John would be the HERALD for the Messiah. John would ANNOUNCE the Messiah – JESUS - Who would come as the ULTIMATE SACRIFICE for sin. At Jesus’ first coming – He came to die for sin. He is THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE (the perfect Passover Lamb).

Do you know WHEN the announcement of John’s birth was given to Zacharias? The angel Gabriel came to Zacharias who was serving in the Temple in Jerusalem at the time of SACRIFICE!

How fitting is that?
What a message God proclaimed to the world. We have
a sacrifice theme laid out for us at Jesus First Coming!

John prophesied in the Tanakh/the Hebrew Scriptures

As we read through the Christmas accounts in Matthew and Luke, we're told that the people in Judea – in Israel - were discussing all that was transpiring prior to Jesus' birth (Luke 1:21; Luke 1:63; Luke 2:18) AND – they were MARVELING at the happenings.

They knew about the Messiah from the Tanakh. And, the events of the 430 years following Malachi were inciting more anticipation for the DELIVERER!

MARVEL – I love that word!

It means AWESTRUCK!

- Are we MARVELING as we walk with God at this time?
- Are we MARVELING at what God is doing NOW in setting the stage for Jesus' Second Coming?
- Are we MARVELING at what God is doing in our lives – in changing us and molding us to be more like Him?

I would like to challenge all of us – ME included – to go beyond any hum drum feelings that we might be experiencing at this time (this season can be difficult for many) - to put aside the distractions, and the not too good (from our perspective) circumstances. (We might not think the circumstances are great; but if GOD is in control – AND HE IS – He has a reason for them).

I would like to challenge all of us to ask God to give US- HIS perspective – so that we can truly focus on Him. May He give us His joy as we CELEBRATE the birth of our LOVELY MESSIAH.

You know what, let's go beyond CELEBRATING this Christmas – let's MARVEL at our GREAT GOD – at His REVELATION of Himself and at His PROVISION of SALVATION through the Messiah Jesus!!

Turn with me to Luke 2:8-12.

The Christmas accounts from Luke and from Matthew – speak to Jesus' FIRST COMING and His SECOND COMING! They do! We're going to see that today.

We read in Luke 2:4 that Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem...to be registered for the worldwide census decreed by the Romans...and Mary his betrothed wife was with child

Luke 2:8-12

Now there were in the same country (in the area of Bethlehem) shepherds (Jewish shepherds) living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

What does this mean to us in 2021 in ARIZONA?

This doesn't make much sense unless you know what was written about the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures.

And so we're going to understand Christmas from the Hebrew Scriptures!

Firstly, why would an ANGEL OF THE LORD appear to shepherds? Shepherds were the lowest of the low!

(Angels – Dt. 33:2, Psa. 68:17; Acts 7:53; Heb. 2:2 – at Sinai;

Josh. 5:14-15 – the Man who came to Joshua as Joshua was looking at Jericho...the Commander of the LORD of hosts – *sabaoth* – armies of angels)

These Jewish shepherds were under a rabbinical ban since they were living in the fields. What does that mean?

Because they were with their flocks in the field 24/7 (no 5 o'clock alarm signaling them to go home) they couldn't obey the regulations in the Jewish Law re: washings, and purification rites, and foods. They were looked down upon by the Rabbis – by the Jewish community.

So – here are the Jewish shepherds – NOT highly esteemed – lowest of the low (!!!), scorned and rejected by their own people – visited by an angel of ALMIGHTY GOD.

I LOVE God's sense of humor!

AND, what a MESSAGE God is sending to the world - God's grace reaches down to the lowest of the low – to EVERYONE.

God's grace reaches down to you and to me!

Where were the shepherds watching their flock?

Luke 2:8 – in the “same country” (v. 4) – in the Bethlehem area.

Where was Jesus born?

“In Bethlehem,” you might respond. “We sing ‘O Little Town of Bethlehem.’”

Think with me about the prophecy that foretold where the Messiah would be born.

Micah 5:2 - *But you, Bethlehem **Ephrathah**, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.*

The Jewish prophet Micah wrote – through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God – that the One Whose days are from everlasting – the Messiah Who is ETERNAL...Who is God...would come forth from Bethlehem - ????? NO!

Specifically “Bethlehem Ephrathah”

“OK, if you’re going to get particular”

GOD is a GOD of the particular – of the DETAIL.

Why does Scripture speak of Bethlehem Ephrathah? (All Scripture is inspired of God – II Tim. 3:16) Is this important?

Firstly, there were 2 Bethlehems in Israel. . .

One in Galilee – 6 mi. NW of Nazareth (Josh. 19:10, 15 – in the listing of cities given to the tribe of Zebulun) and this Bethlehem – in Judea.

And the Bethlehem in Judea is where Jesus was born.

BUT - Micah 5:2 specifically tells us that Jesus, the One to be Ruler in Israel – the One Who is Eternal - would be born in Bethlehem Ephrathah.

- Ephrathah means FRUITFUL.
- Ephrathah was the ancient name of Bethlehem.
- Ephrathah in Jesus’ day was just to the north of where the people lived, It was still part of Bethlehem.
- Ephrathah was the northern part of Bethlehem - on the road to Jerusalem.
- ...Jerusalem -
 - Where God had placed His name (II Chron. 6:6)
 - Where the Temple had been constructed which was the FOCUS of the worship of God!

(We know from Genesis 35:16-20; 48:7 – points to a place one mile north of present day Bethlehem and 4 miles from Jerusalem.)

EPHRATHAH was close to Jerusalem!!!!

Does Ephrathah have SIGNIFICANCE? Yes!!!

This is CRUCIAL: sheep that were destined to be sacrificed in the Temple in Jerusalem had to be tended/kept within a certain radius of the Temple in Jerusalem. Ephrathah was in that radius.

This ruling was made by the Rabbis. This was the ruling in Jesus' day. Shekalim chapter 7:4 – from the Mishnah in the Talmud. Mishnah – collection of the oral law.

God had given the Jewish people the sacrificial system so that their sins could be covered – so that they could approach God...UNTIL the MESSIAH, the ULTIMATE SACRIFICE would come into the world.

Scripture tells us in Micah 5:2 that JESUS came into the world in the part of Bethlehem known as Ephrathah – where only sheep that were going to be sacrificed in the Temple were kept!! (24/7; sacrifices year-round – morning and evening. Ex. 29:38ff; Num. 28:3-4)

This is the Christmas message! It is a message of SACRIFICE!

AND, in Ephrathah there was a tower – a watch tower (Isa. 62 – I have set watchmen on the tower to give Him no rest until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth – v. 7)

...called the Tower of the Flock – for those sheep that would be sacrificed.

...a tower that would serve as a fortress – as protection for these sheep that would be sacrificed – protection from wild animals and from thieves wandering in the area.

Alfred Edersheim (Jewish believer now with the Lord) wrote a classic book entitled “The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.” In Book 2/Chapter 6 of this classic work, Edersheim records the writings of the Rabbis re: the Tower of the Flock: “It will be the place where the Messiah will be revealed.”

MIGDAL – Hebrew for “tower”. Root word: “to become great”!

EDER – Hebrew for “flock”.

We find Scripture that tells us about that watch tower in Genesis 35:21 and in Micah 4:8.

Jacob's wife, Rachel, gave birth to Benjamin (second child) at the site of/ the location of the Tower of the Flock. And, in giving birth to Benjamin, Rachel died.

Rachel's name means “ewe” – a mama sheep. (Not a coincidence) A foreshadowing....

Ewes – mama sheep – were brought to the Tower of the Flock to give birth to lambs that would be sacrificed.

Because of Rachel's death in this area, Bethlehem became known as a place of sorrows.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem Ephrathah. At His first coming Jesus would suffer and die.

Micah 4:8 mentions the Tower of the Flock and tells us that the kingdom comes to the tower of the flock. What does that mean?

Who will bring the Kingdom to this earth? The King of the Kingdom...JESUS!

Could this be where Jesus was born?

(Rabbi Mike Short - **[Unto thee shall it come]** (Literally, "unto thee shall it come (NOTE: The Masorethes seem rightly to have marked this by the accents), and there shall arrive etc.") He saith not at first what shall come, and so raises the soul to think of the greatness of that which should come. The soul is left to fill up what is more than thought can utter. "Unto thee," (literally, quite up to thee) No hindrances should withhold it from coming. Seemingly it was a great way off, and they in a very hopeless state. He suggests the difficulty even by his strength of assurance. One could not say, "it shall come quite up to thee," of that which in the way of nature would readily come to any one. But amid all hindrances God's Might makes its way, and brings His gifts and promises to their end. "And there shall arrive." He twice repeats the assurance, in equivalent words, for their fuller assurance (NOTE: Rup.), "to make the good tidings the gladder by repeating and enforcing them."

[The "first or former, dominion."] The word often stands, as our "former"(NOTE: So, the former time, (Isa. 8:23) deeds, (2 Chron 9:29; 16:11; 20:34) king, (Num 26:26) tables, (Ex 34:1) benefits, (Ps 89:50) days, (Deut 4:32; 10:10) kings, (Jer 34:5) prophets, (Zech 1:4; 7:7,12) temple, (Ezra 3:12; Hag 2:3,9). See Ges. Thes. p. 1251), in contrast with the "later." It is not necessarily "the first," strictly; and so here, not the "dominion" of David and Solomon exclusively. Rather the prophet is placed in spirit in the later times when the kingdom should be suspended, and foretells that "the former dominion," that is, that of the line of David, should come to her, not in its temporal greatness, but the line itself. So the Angel said, "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever" (Luke 1:32-33).

[Kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem] that is, a kingdom, which should not be of her, but which should come to her; not her's by right, but by His right, who should merit it for her, and, being King of kings, makes His own, "kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Rev 1:6).

The Jews themselves seem to have taken these words into their own mouths, just before they rejected Him, when they hoped that He would be a king, such as they wished for. "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the Name of the Lord" (Mark 11:10). And in a distorted form, they held it even afterward (NOTE: Targum, "And thou, O Messiah of Israel, who art hid on account of the sins of the congregation of Israel, to thee the kingdom will come," (see the sense found in the Septuagint, Vulgate, Aquila, Symmachus, Syriac) and thence obtaining the sense "hidden," in reference to their fable that He was born before the destruction of the temple and hidden by God). (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) by BibleSoft)

Looking back at the text, Jacob was mourning over death of his beloved Rachel. With the tears still fresh in his eyes, he pitched his tent in Migdal Eder the place where, in the future, a special Lamb would be born to comfort Jacob. He would be born where the sacrificial lambs were raised, and would one day offer Himself for the sins of Jacob. He would die an atoning death in the city of God, Jerusalem, and would rise from the dead. Then, as the years multiply and Jacob's trouble would increase, He would always be there to save and deliver Jacob from trials. Finally some time in the future, this Lamb who was once born near Migdal Eder, will return to Jacob's troubled land and miraculously deliver his descendants who will be besieged by their enemies.

The Lamb will reveal Himself. Then take His rightful place, He will be seated on His throne as the glorious Son of David, as the greatest King of Israel. He will tend the sheep of the house of Jacob and all of those from the nations who have come to reside in that house. Thus, Jacob will finally be comforted from all of his troubles, trials, and heartaches. There will be no more mourning and tears from Migdal Eder. The lowly Lamb, who was incarnated there, will be Jacob's Comforter, and King, and Shepherd and Messiah forever and ever.

PERHAPS Mary (Miriam) and Joseph traveled to this Tower of the Flock after they were told that there was no room at the inn (Luke 2:7).

Bible commentators and historians have speculated – they've guessed at where Jesus was born. Some have suggested a stable; Scripture doesn't tell us that He was born in a stable. Some have suggested a cave; Scripture doesn't tell us that He was born in a cave.

I'm suggesting that Jesus was born in this Tower of the Flock. Scripture doesn't specifically state that Jesus was born in the Tower of the Flock; HOWEVER, Scripture points to that possibility – from what we've read in Scripture (Gen. 35:21/ Micah 4:8)

Scripture does tell us that Jesus was laid in a manger.

There were mangers – feeding troughs - in this Tower of the Flock – for all the lambs that would be sacrificed.

The Tower of the Flock was well-known in the Jewish culture. It was part of the sacrificial system.

Jesus came at His first coming to sacrifice Himself.

Something to ponder.

Consider if Mary gave birth to Jesus in this Tower of the Flock where SACRIFICE was the focus – what a MESSAGE God was proclaiming to the world – here is My Son - the perfect Lamb of God Who will be sacrificed for sin!

PERHAPS Jesus was born in the Tower of the Flock.

Proverbs 18:10 – He, JESUS, is a strong Tower!

Again, something to ponder. (OY – now I have to change my nativity scene. I’ve got to start building a tower!)

And then we read in this passage, Luke 2:8-12, that the GLORY OF THE LORD shone around the shepherds.

The Glory of God, as seen by man, is God’s manifested presence. *Kavod* – weighty-ness – His character, His attributes, His reputation.

In the OT God chose to manifest Himself in the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day as He led the people through the wilderness.

The glory of God filled the tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem.

We read of the glory of God departing from the temple in Jerusalem in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 10, because of the abominations in the Temple (!!).

HE’S BACK – the glory of God is back – at Jesus’ birth?

John 1:14 – *The Word was made flesh and dwelled (He tabernacle) among us and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten (unique one; not created) of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Can you imagine how brightly the glory of God shone that night when the angel spoke to the Jewish shepherds who knew about the GLORY of God?

I do believe that all the lights in the Valley couldn’t compare.

AND YET – many didn't see!!!!

We don't read of people spilling out of their homes – flooding into the streets – to see what was causing this brilliance in the sky – this BLAZING!

The angel spoke to the shepherds of “good tidings of great joy...”

Why would this be so special? Why such an emphasis on “good tidings” and “great joy”?

The Jewish people had been oppressed for about 900 years. They hadn't had “good tidings” in a long while. They hadn't had much joy!

Isa. 41:27 tells us that the Messiah will bring good tidings at His first coming! “I will give to you Israel One Who brings good tidings.”

These good tidings speak of forgiveness of sin. That truly is GREAT JOY!

This is such a CELEBRATION! (who needs tinsel and fruitcake and cards?)

And these good tidings would be for ALL people – both Jews and Gentiles. God's plan of salvation is offered to the WORLD!

The Angel told the shepherds, “...there is born to you this day...in the City of David...” – the ancient Bethlehem where King David was born – “...a Savior Who is Messiah the Lord.”

Was that important?

The Jewish shepherds knew that the Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah – a descendant of King David (II Sam. 7 – the Davidic Covenant; Jer. 23:5; Psalms).

The angel told the Jewish shepherds a Savior would be born.

A Savior? Why would that be important to the Jewish people? Being “saved” sounds so Christian!

Being saved is a very Jewish teaching in the OT!

God told the Jewish people in Isaiah 46:13: *I will place salvation (Yeshua) in Zion – Jerusalem for Israel My glory.*

Isa. 45:22 – *God told Israel, “Look to Me and be saved”!*

Isa. 45:15 & 21 – The God of Israel is the Savior (the One Who rescues, delivers)

Isa. 64:5 – (You are indeed angry for) ...*we have sinned and we need to be saved.*

Isa. 33:14...16, 17 – those who will dwell on high...who will see King Messiah... will be those who have their sin forgiven!

Do you know the Hebrew word for salvation?

YESHUA!

Luke 2:11 tells us that the Savior - the One Who will bring salvation – Who will rescue – is the Messiah.

Born? The Messiah would be born? YES!

Isa. 7:14 - *A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel* (God with us; God in the flesh)

Isa. 9:6 - Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Then we have in the angel's message the mention of a SIGN.

What is the sign? The Babe would be wrapped in swaddling cloths.

Luke 2:12 – *And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.*

And, of course we say in 2019 in AZ: “Glorioski – there it is. That’s THE sign!”

“THAT’S the sign???”

“The angel said it was the sign.”

“HOW is that the sign?”

ALL babies were wrapped in swaddling cloths so that their limbs would be straight.

How are they, the shepherds, going to find this special baby – this Savior - wrapped in swaddling cloths if ALL babies were wrapped this way at birth?

Think OT/Hebrew Scriptures. . .

Think of what God required of the Jewish people re: sacrifices? The sacrifices had to be without BLEMISH.

Guess what? Are you ready for this?

Lambs born to ewes in the place where the sacrificial lambs were kept (in the tower of the flock) --were wrapped in swaddling cloths. WHY?

How many of you have watched the birth of a lamb?

Animals coming into the world are not MELLOW, are they? They're kicking and flailing – and bruising themselves.

Guess what? They would no longer be eligible for temple sacrifice.

“Give it time. The bruises will heal in a few weeks/months”

Lev. 22:27 – lambs, goats and bulls were eligible for sacrifice at 8 days old!

The lambs destined for Temple sacrifice had to be wrapped in swaddling cloths! So that they wouldn't bruise – so they would be without blemish!

Another “take”: First of all, the hills of Bethlehem (as shown) raised sheep for sacrifice in the Temple in Jerusalem. When a lamb was born, it was wrapped in strips of cloth for a while to keep its feet from the ground. It started life specially treated, since it was destined to be a holy sacrifice. On the other hand, such treatment was not practiced for human infants. Thus, a good translation of Luke should not give the impression that the “swaddling band” or “strips of cloth” was an ordinary receiving blanket. Rather, wrapping the baby Jesus in these strips of cloth set him apart in an unusual way as destined for sacrifice, like the lambs.

This Christmas a new story related to be the birth of Jesus was brought to my attention. According to the story, many of the lambs to be offered at the temple in Jerusalem came from nearby Bethlehem. The law of Moses required every lamb that was sacrificed to be free from any defect. The shepherds- or priests, depending on which version of the story you find- would examine the lambs very carefully. To protect the sacrificial lamb from injury it was tightly cocooned in blankets or strips of cloth- it was swaddled. Then the swaddled lamb was laid in a stone feed trough, a manger, to protect it from harm.

The newborn lambs would be wrapped tightly... swaddled... in specially designated temple cloths, and they would be laid in a manger to keep them contained while they were being examined for blemishes. At the appointed time, the shepherds would separate the lambs, selecting only the firstborn males that were without mark or blemish, and would lead them to Jerusalem, where they would be purchased by people wanting to present a sacrifice before the Lord to atone for their sins.

When the angel appeared to the shepherds in the fields, he told them that they would find the newborn King wrapped in swaddling cloths and laying in a manger. They knew exactly where He would be found, because swaddling cloths were only used in one particular location, and for one particular purpose... Migdal Eder, the place where sacrificial lambs were wrapped and examined for perfection before being set apart for the slaughter that would atone for sin and make peace with God. Three decades later, the apostle John pointed out his cousin Jesus and said “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”. And more than two millennia later, Jesus is still taking away the sins of all who accept His sacrifice that makes peace between them and God.

As part of the sign we read that the Babe was to be found lying in a manger – feeding trough for animals.

(wrapped in swaddling cloths; lying in a manger)

Talk about a lowly birth! (Isa. 11:1 speaks of the lowly birth of the Messiah)

Here then we have in the account of the shepherds, two images of lowliness and humility - the shepherds who were shunned by their community, and in lowliness the Messiah came.

Luke 2:13-14. . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on EARTH, peace toward men on whom God’s sovereign pleasure rests.” And then the angels departed.

Did the shepherds say “Ho hum. Just another night on the job. Wonder what Sarah gave me for a midnight snack.”

NO – this was a V8 moment for them!

Luke 2:15 – let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass – that has happened – it’s real – what the angel said is TRUE! - which the **LORD HAS MADE KNOWN TO US!**

“To us” – the lowest of the low. God is GRACIOUS!

When God made Himself known to you – were you excited?

Did the angel tell the shepherds where to find the Baby? NO!

Did the shepherds ask? NO!

“Well” – you might say – “the Babe was in a manger. How many mangers could there have been?” A LOT!

In digging into history books I found that MANY of the homes in these towns had mangers.

When people traveled, they traveled with their livestock. There were no PET RESORTS!

If you lived at that time and your relatives and friends visited – you accommodated them AND their animals!

Mangers could be as simple a ledge protruding from the wall inside the house. Hay would be placed on that ledge – for the livestock.

Mangers could be found in side-rooms in homes.

And, oftentimes there were mangers in the “livingrooms – in the main room of a home. Animals were kept in many of the homes. Check out I Sam. 28:24 (Witch of EnDor) – she had a fatted calf in her house. Check out Judges 11:31 (Jephthah) – he made a vow to God for deliverance. . . “Whatever comes out of the doors of my house, I will offer it up as a burn offering” (he expected an animal to come out of his house – NOT his daughter).

Animals were kept in homes. Mangers were in homes!

The shepherds might’ve had to comb the entire city looking for this baby in a manger. BUT – I don’t think they did – and they did indeed arrive at the right place.

Luke 2:16 tells us that they came with HASTE and found Mary and Joseph and the Babe.

I believe they knew exactly where to find the Babe because they knew the prophecies in the Scriptures – in Micah – they knew where the sacrificial lambs were birthed and kept...BECAUSE THESE WERE THE SHEPHERDS THAT TOOK CARE OF THE SACRIFICIAL LAMBS!

I’m suggesting that they found Him, Jesus Who is our strong tower (Prov. 18:10; Psa. 61:3; Psa. 144:2) in that watch tower in Bethlehem Ephrathah – in the Tower of the Flock!

The tower where the sheep were born – the sheep DESTINED FOR TEMPLE SACRIFICE...this tower might very well have been the birthplace for Jesus Who came first as the Suffering Servant – the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

The account of the shepherds in Luke speaks to the Messiah Who came as the LAMB OF GOD/the ultimate sacrifice – Who came to die for our sins at His first coming.

He’s coming again, isn’t He?

Time has gone by – and we’re waiting – and MARVELING!

Scripture speaks to a GAP between the Messiah’s first coming and His second coming. We know about that GAP. We’re in the GAP! We’re looking for Jesus’ any moment return – His imminent (upon us) return.

Let’s return to the Christmas account – but in the book of Matthew.

We're going to look at the Magi – who appear on the scene following a GAP – a gap of possibly two years from the time of Jesus' birth – two years from the shepherds' visit to find the infant Jesus.

AND, we see the wise men visiting Jesus with a different “agenda” than the agenda of the shepherds.

The JEWISH shepherds were told by the angel – He's here – the One you've been expecting – and the shepherds came to the family when Jesus was born. They found Him as a NEWBORN lying in a manger (Luke 2:12, 16).

The wise men weren't Jewish – they were Gentiles. The GENTILE wise men saw the star when Jesus was born BUT it took them time to travel across the desert from Persia to Bethlehem? NO! They traveled first to JERUSALEM (Matt. 2:1) – the city where King David reigned and where the Messiah will reign as King at His second coming.

*Psa. 2:6-7 - I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion.
7 I will declare the decree: ... You are My Son,*

*Psa. 2:12 – Kiss the Son lest He be angry with you and you perish in the way...
blessed are those who put their trust in Him.*

God does NOT give His glory to another – Isa. 42:8.

At Jerusalem the wise men encountered Herod who told them to go to Bethlehem – and they did and . . .

They found Jesus in a house – NOT lying in a manger (Matt. 2:11). AND, He was a “Child,” not a baby (Matt. 2:11).

Let's look at

Matt. 2:1-2 - Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men (we're not told how many) from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star (kochav – blazing) in the East and have come to worship Him.'

Hmmm...Gentiles came to worship the King of the Jews!

AFTER the birth of Jesus, wise men from the East came to – JERUSALEM! These wise men (and we don't know how many there were; the text doesn't tell us) – traveled to JERUSALEM – to find the KING of the Jews! That was their agenda. They were looking for a King.

The shepherds found Jesus as the LAMB of God Who would be sacrificed! When was Jesus sacrificed as the LAMB of God? At His first coming.

The Magi looked for a King. When does Jesus come as King? At His second coming.

We know there's a GAP between Jesus' first and second coming.

There's a GAP between the shepherd's visit and the visit by the wise men.

Who were these wise men? These Magi – these wise men were NOT kings. They were KING MAKERS. The wise men LOOKED for kings! (It has been historically documented)

We read about the wise men in the book of Daniel in the OT. They, the wise men, were known as those who interpret dreams (Dan. 2:1-4). HOWEVER, they could not interpret King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. (They couldn't deliver on the king's request)

How had they heard about the King of the Jews?

About 500 years previous to this time, the Jewish people from the Kingdom of Judah were in exile in Babylon.

King Nebuchadnezzar was the King of Babylon at the time. He had captured many of the Jewish people including Daniel.

You've read about Daniel – and the book of Daniel - ?

DANIEL, who was a faithful Jewish boy, was able to interpret King Neb's dream. And because of that,

Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, put Daniel in charge of the wise men. GOD gave Daniel the ability to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dreams.

Daniel became the CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR/master over the wise men (Dan. 2:48).

Daniel wrote – in the book of Daniel - about when the Messiah would appear in Israel (Dan. 9:26 – before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD)). Do you think he might've shared that with the wise men? I believe so. And that information was passed down from generation to generation among the Magi – the wise men.

Fast forward – to the time of the wise men's visit to Jerusalem to look for the king of the Jews. History teaches that their king, the Persian king, got thrown out and that the wise men were looking for a new king. And so they traveled to JERUSALEM to find the ONE

they had heard about from their ANCESTORS through Daniel – the ONE WHO would be the King of the Jews – JESUS!

King Herod and the Jewish scribes directed the Magi to Bethlehem – but they didn't go with the Gentile King makers to find the Promised One of Israel!!!

And, they brought the child gifts:

Gold – symbolizing royalty – this Child Who will be King!

Frankincense – speaks of deity – this Child is God! frankincense was used on the altar of incense (in front of the Holy of Holies) in the Temple. Frankincense was a sweet aroma to God.

Myrrh – was used to embalm the dead – this Child will die and be laid in a tomb!

These gifts truly depict the Messiah Who is God (represented by frankincense), the Messiah Who would die for sin (rep. by myrrh), and the Messiah Who will return and reign as King (rep. by gold).

In the Christmas accounts in Luke with the shepherds, and in Matthew with the Magi, we see God's plan of salvation in a way that we might've not before seen.

We so clearly see Jesus' two roles – the Suffering Messiah, the LAMB of God – and the Conquering King. We see His two comings: His first coming to suffer and die; His second coming to reign as King.

Are we MARVELING at God's AMAZING plan?

Are we fervently/excitedly anticipating His ANY MOMENT RETURN FOR US?

AND, when Jesus returns, He's coming as the LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, the root of KING DAVID (Rev. 5:5)!!!

CHANUKAH!

- Happy Chanukah – the Feast of Dedication; the Festival of Lights.
- We are thankful that God DELIVERED the Jewish people at Chanukah! God is faithful to His promises.
- If there had been no Chanukah there would be no Christmas.
- Daniel teaches that the Messiah would come before the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD.
- Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, is the Light of the world. Jesus celebrated Chanukah. Jesus authenticated Chanukah.

CHRISTMAS!

- What a glorious time to celebrate the One Who came through the Jewish line because of God's unfailing promises to Israel.
- What a glorious time to celebrate Jesus' first coming to die for "my sin," and to anticipate His second coming to reign as King!
- And let us praise God together in proclaiming GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST. We are celebrating His plan for both Jewish people and Gentiles that we see unfolded in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Matthew 8

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. ² And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” ³ Then Jesus put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

Jesus Heals a Centurion’s Servant

⁵ Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, ⁶ saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.” ⁷ And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” ⁸ The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this *one*, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does *it*.” ¹⁰ When Jesus heard *it*, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! ¹¹ And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ¹³ Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, *so* let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that same hour.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

¹⁴ Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

Many Healed in the Evening

¹⁶ When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, ¹⁷ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore *our* sicknesses."

The Cost of Discipleship

¹⁸ And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. ¹⁹ Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."
²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head."
²¹ Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

²³ Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴ And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. ²⁵ Then His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" ²⁶ But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the

sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷ So the men marveled, saying, “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

Two Demon-Possessed Men Healed

²⁸ When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed *men*, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” ³⁰ Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. ³¹ So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.” ³² And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. ³³ Then those who kept *them* fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what *had happened* to the demon-possessed *men*. ³⁴ And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged *Him* to depart from their region.

Matthew 8

New King James Version

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

Fw: Fw: World Market Product Review - Torani Pumpkin Pie Syrup



CW

Cathy Wilson



To: •

Cathy Wilson
Fri 11/18/2022 1:01 PM

From: Dennis Nelson (Cost Plus World Market) <support@worldmarket.zendesk.com>
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2022 11:25 AM
To: Cathylouwilson <cathylouwilson@live.com>
Subject: Re: Fw: World Market Product Review - Torani Pumpkin Pie Syrup

I went ahead and reissued them. Give it 24 hours and you can access them by logging into your account. You can print them if able, otherwise, I believe you can save them to your phone. Let me know if you need me to set a password for you.

--

Dennis
Customer Experience
World Market Home Office

On Mon, October 31 at 11:06, Cathylouwilson wrote:
Dennis,

In reference to the \$25.00 shopper reward which you have credited my account, how do I access my account online which will include the \$25.00 shopper reward? The staff at the World Market in Scottsdale, AZ told me that I need to find the shopper reward on my account online. Have not been successful locating it. Do I need to

create an account? When I've mentioned my account at the cashier in the past, I give them my telephone # which is all they need.

Thanks, Dennis,

Gifts for Table Leaders

11/15/22

Nancy Coughran

Marian Newman

Mary Whaley

Wendy Vesling

Grace Hyde

Jill Cooper

Marlie Dunn

Diane Paisley

Deanne Rice

Emilie Lethieri

Kathy Shumard

Linda Smith

Joni Otto

Joyce Hayes Locker

Mary Furniss

Jeanne Woodward

Helen Filby

Sheila Graham

Sarah Bamford

Nancy McLees

Matthew 5:1-12

5 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. **2** Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

3 “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.

10 Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. **12** Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Tumeric cream and flaxseed oil – for wrinkles

1 TBS. turmeric in a saucepan
Add TBS. of cornstarch
Add ½ cup water
Mix the ingredients well
Put on low heat
Stir mixture without stopping

Put turmeric cream in a bowl and divide into two parts

Add 1 TBS aloe vera gel to section 1
Mix well
Add 1 tsp coconut oil
Keep mixture in glass jar
Up to 15 days in refrigerator

Apply this turmeric cream to face and neck
Leave on skin for 30 minutes and then wash it off – two times each week
Can use it as a moisturizer daily

Flaxseed oil – which will promote collagen
1 TBS flax seeds
½ cup water
Boil for 10 min.
Cool Slightly
Pour into cloth and filter – pouring out liquid
Add second part of turmeric cream
Mix – it will become gelatinous
Add 1 tsp almond oil OR 1 Vit E capsule
Keep mixture in clean glass jar
Up to 7 days in refrigerator
Apply to face before going to bed
Massage until well absorbed
Leave on until morning and then wash it off
Repeat every evening
==

SBC Women's Bible Study
Winter/Spring Semester 2023 1/24/23 – 3/28/23

BLURB

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW - THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS' LIFE ON EARTH

Jesus' last week on earth was certainly the most significant week of His life as without His death and resurrection, no one, Jew or Gentile, could be saved. This final week is also dynamic as many OT prophecies were fulfilled. As we seek to know Jesus more intimately and to marvel anew at Who He is, we will understand the "why" of His triumphal entry, His last Passover Seder, His arrest and trials, His crucifixion, His resurrection, and ascension. My prayer is that we will fall in love with Him...perhaps like never before...perhaps for the first time.

Jesus' Passion

What is Passion Week – GotQuestions

And breakdowns

Enduring Word – Guzik

Blueletterbible

Begin with

Matt. 19 and Luke 18 & 19 - ?

<https://itisfinished.blog/2017/04/10/lamb-selection-day/>

<https://www.chosenpeople.com/the-last-week-of-jesus-part-1/>

Certainly, it was the most significant week of His life from our human perspective, as it includes the account of His death and resurrection, without which no one, Jew or Gentile, could be saved. The last week also includes various teachings that are also especially significant. It is not that one part of Scripture is any more important than another, but as a person draws closer to their death, they tend to speak of that which is most important to them.

This final week is also important because so many Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled during this time—prophecies involving His death for sin and His resurrection.

This study is merely an attempt to highlight some of the events of Jesus' last week and to explain these events in light of Old Testament prophecy and, where applicable, Jewish tradition and customs.

<https://www.chosenpeople.com/the-last-week-of-jesus-part-3/>

<https://www.chosenpeople.com/the-last-week-of-jesus-part-4/>

<https://www.chosenpeople.com/the-last-week-of-jesus-part-5/>

Where was Jesus between His Death and Resurrection? GotQuestions

THE FALL FEASTS OF ISRAEL

The Feast of Trumpets/Yom Kippur/The Feast of Tabernacles

Cathy Wilson/Chosen People Ministries – 9/25/22

God, Who is above time and space...created time – the sequence of events – to serve as the arena where the heavenly meets the temporal...where God meets man.

God gave the children of Israel a holy calendar. It is through this calendar of feast days that the Jewish people were to recognize that God is the Lord of every moment and that He must rule over every second of their lives.

The Hebrew word for feast is *mow-ed* which means “appointed time” which means that these feasts are fixed – they are not going to change. God does not change – Malachi 3:6 – “I am the Lord, I change not.” “Appointed time” also means to meet by appointment. God’s desire is to meet with us! What a beautiful picture of God’s heart! God is a personal God Whose desire is to meet with msn for relationship, for fellowship, and to teach man His plan for us individually and for the world! And, He does so through the feasts.

Lev. 23:4 - These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. These appointed times are to be proclaimed as holy (set apart for its intended purpose) assemblies/gatherings.

In *Lev. 23:2* - God calls the feasts **MY** feasts. They belong to God; they reflect Who God is!

God has laid before us His plan which will never change. And, we see a timetable in God’s plan of redemption. And, it is through the Feasts of the Lord that God the Father pointed the children of Israel to the Messiah, God the Son!

The spring feasts point to the Messiah’s first coming. The fall feasts point to the Messiah’s physical Second Coming to earth.

What does Rosh Hashanah mean? I don’t find “Rosh Hashanah” in the Bible. Because those two words are NOT in the Bible! Rosh Hashanah” means *head of the year*. Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year. The Jewish New Year began at sundown 9/25/22! The new year will be 5783. How has the Jewish community arrived at 5783? My understanding is that Rabbis have taken the dates of the people (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, King David, etc.) noted in the Tanakh/the OT and have gone back to the fourth day of creation when the sun and moon were created and came up with the calendar year.

The fall feasts all take place on the Jewish calendar in the 7th month of Tishri which is in the Sept./Oct. timeframe. Seven speaks to COMPLETION. The fall feasts speak to Israel’s PURGING, their REDEMPTION and RESTORATION. The fall feasts find their fulfillment in the Tribulation, Jesus’ physical Second Coming, and the Millennial Kingdom!

Lev. 23:23-25 - Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. ²⁵You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.’

2

Rosh Hashana is known – BIBLICALLY – as the Feast of Trumpets. My Jewish friends don’t know about the Feast of Trumpets. They know Rosh Hashanah.

At sundown on the first evening of Rosh Hashanah the shofar, the ram’s horn, is blown from synagogues to gather the Jewish community together. God has been gathering and will continue to gather the Jewish people to the land of Israel.

The trumpet has also been blown in Jewish history for the purpose of:

- Signaling the children of Israel re: impending danger (Amos 3:6; Jer. 6:1; Eze. 33:6)
- Calling them to war (Judges 3:27; II Sam. 20:1).
- The shofar was blown when a king ascended to his throne.
- The trumpets were also blown as a call to REPENTANCE. It was a call to the dead to arise and live again – to wake them up from sin to regeneration through repentance.

There are many contrasts within the feast of Rosh Hashanah. On the surface it is a happy time for Jewish people. They eat apples and honey for a sweet year. They are not focused on eternal life. They are focused on living another physical year here – on this earth. **YET** - the Jewish community believes that at Rosh Hashanah all Israel appears before God as KING in anticipation of personal judgment. Rosh Hashanah is a time of reflection and teshuvah/repentance for Jewish people. They consider the sins of the previous year. They are called to repent and to look ahead to the next feast which is Yom Kippur/the Day Atonement which they hope will bring restoration. Their hope is based on good works!

The Jewish community believes when the shofar is blown, three books are open in heaven:

- The book of the completely righteous
- The book of the completely wicked
- The book of the intermediates

The completely righteous are immediately inscribed in the book of life.

The completely wicked are immediately inscribed in the book of death.

The intermediates (average persons) are kept in suspense from Rosh Hashanah until the Day of Yom Kippur.

Jewish mindset - If their good deeds outweigh their bad, they are then inscribed in the book of life – MAYBE – for the next year – for ONE year – of PHYSICAL LIFE!

On the Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur which occurs 7 days following Rosh Hashanah – when the shofar is blasted at the end of the High Holy Days – THE BOOKS ARE SLAMMED SHUT and their fate is sealed.

How is a person to know into which book they'll be inscribed? If reconciliation (a relationship w/ God) is based on mitzvahs – on good deeds – how good is good enough? The Jewish prophet, Isaiah, wrote in Isaiah 64:6, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. . . .” in God's sight. There's no assurance of eternal life when you're basing your hope on good works.

3

In the synagogues on Rosh Hashanah, Genesis 22 is read. Genesis 22 is the account of God instructing Abraham to take his son, his only son whom he LOVED (the father taking the son whom he LOVED) to the region called Moriah and to offer him as a sacrifice. In Gen. 22:8 we read that Abraham told Isaac that God would provide HIMSELF – the lamb. God HIMSELF would be the Lamb! What was caught in the thicket as a substitute for Isaac? A ram. What happened to the lamb? GOD HIMSELF was that lamb Who was sacrificed on Passover in 30 AD (give or take a year). And that Lamb, the perfect Son of God, GOD the Son, the Messiah Jesus provides forgiveness forever to those who believe in Him. That Lamb, Jesus, rescues us from the wrath of God against sin. He rescues us from an eternity apart from God – in hell. We need to get right with God/to be reconciled with God – to be TRANSFORMED.

When we acknowledge Who Jesus is, GOD, and acknowledge who we are – sinners... and BELIEVE in Him TRUST in Him, submit to Him, God will restore us to a right relationship with Him WHEN we accept His forgiveness through HIS provision – through the blood of the Messiah Jesus. This is what we need to share with Jewish people.

JESUS is missing in Rabbinical Judaism today. True repentance and the gift of forgiveness forever is missing in what the Rabbis are teaching.

On the Jewish Feast of Trumpets the shofar is blown and the people assemble. It is a holy day of gathering for repentance.

God is gathering His people into the land of Israel for a time of repentance. The Hebrew Scriptures call this time – the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7). Jacob's name was changed to Israel. Israel means “striving with God.” I'm suggesting that this time of Jacob's trouble is what we know as the Tribulation.

Eze. 20:33-34, 37-38 - God told Israel, surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. ³⁴ I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out... ³⁷ “I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; ³⁸ I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country

where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

During the Tribulation...God...

Mal. 3:3 - *...will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.*

During the Tribulation for Israel – those who don't know Jesus, there will be purging and refining. God will prepare them for the Messiah's Second Coming.

Lev. 23:27 - *the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement* - - which is known in Hebrew as Yom Kippur.

4

How does THE DAY OF ATONEMENT fit into end times?

Lev. 16 tells us what God instructed the Jewish people to do EACH YEAR at this most solemn holy day. Lev. 16 tells us that each year Israel offered a BLOOD SACRIFICE on that day. Aaron, the High Priest, sacrificed a bull for his sins and his family's sins. Aaron then took two goats. The Lord's goat was killed and its blood sprinkled on the MERCY SEAT in the Holy of Holies making atonement for the sanctuary. Aaron then placed his hands on the scapegoat and confessed over it the sins of Israel. The sins of the people were placed on this scapegoat. What's a "scapegoat" in modern language? One who takes the blame for wrongdoings of others.

The scapegoat at Yom Kippur was then led into the desert/into the wilderness by "a suitable man" who would escort the scapegoat. Tradition teaches that this man would bring the scapegoat to a precipice over which the scapegoat was thrown to its death. The scapegoat not returning to the camp typified that the sins of Israel had been COVERED – ATONED FOR.

The OT speaks of ATONEMENT – a covering for sin. In the OT we read that the animal sacrifices would COVER sin. Heb. 10:4 – the blood of bulls and goats could NEVER take away sin.

BUT GOD was going to make a NEW COVENANT with the people – the Messiah would come and TAKE AWAY SIN (Jer. 31:31-34).

John 1:29 – *Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.*

There is a tradition noted in the Talmud, NOT inspired Scripture...the Talmud is Rabbinic commentary – and Rabbis debating one another. The Talmud states that a scarlet ribbon was tied to the horn of the scapegoat and a scarlet ribbon was also attached to the door of the tabernacle in the wilderness and then to the door of the temple in

Jerusalem. As the scapegoat was led into the wilderness, that ribbon turned white – indicating to the Jewish people that their sin had been COVERED/ATONED FOR.

The Rabbis then make mention of something very odd occurring. They have written in the Talmud that 40 years BEFORE the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD...40 years before 70 AD – that would be 30 AD. What happened in 30 AD? In 30 AD – the Rabbis wrote – that scarlet ribbon stopped turning white!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WHY? The ULTIMATE SACRIFICE had been made. There was NO LONGER the need to sacrifice animals!!!

What is occurring within the Jewish community during Yom Kippur today? The way of atonement – through the blood – is not followed. Lev. 17:11 – God required blood for the atonement of sin. Are God’s instructions to be OBEYED? YES! Have they been obeyed at Yom Kippur today? NO! Therefore, there is not even atonement, not even a covering for sin, during the Day of Atonement in what the Rabbis are teaching today.

Those of us who have acknowledged our sin and have placed our trust in JESUS – JESUS Who REDEEMS us – WHO TAKES AWAY OUR SIN – we are ASSURED of ETERNAL LIFE with GOD!

5

The fulfillment of Yom Kippur: in the END TIMES, how glorious that Scripture tells us that Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice for sin, will return at His physical SECOND COMING on the day of Yom Kippur and it will be the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:9-10; Isa. 61:1-3).

God will mercifully pour His Spirit upon the one third of the Jewish people who are alive at the end of the Tribulation. Two thirds of the Jewish population will die during the Tribulation (Zech. 13:8-9). When God pours out His Spirit on the Jewish people still alive, they will MOURN for Jesus (Zech. 12:10) and He will return:

Zech. 13:8-9 - *“That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, I will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; and each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’ ”*

Zech. 14:8-9 - *And in that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, ...⁹ And the LORD shall be King over all the earth... And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.*

These verses are speaking of Jesus’ physical Second Coming.

We’ve come to the last feast

The Feast of Tabernacles – which is also called the feast of booths, the feast of ingathering, the feast, and the season of our rejoicing. .

In Ex. 25:8 God told the Jewish people He desired to dwell with them. We see this promise of God dwelling with man throughout Scripture.

AND, as a visual aid...God instructed the children of Israel in the wilderness – on their way to the Promised Land - to dwell in booths called sukkahs (woven) for 7 days.

Sukkahs were temporary dwellings w/ leafy roofs. The rooves with palm branches allowed the Israelites to look up – see the sky/the heavens – and acknowledge GOD – and THANK HIM for His provisions, protection, His shelter.

These flimsy booths symbolized man's need to depend upon God for EVERYTHING!

We find the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Millennial Kingdom - the Messianic Kingdom - when God dwells with man - when Jesus will establish His Kingdom and will rule and reign from King David's throne for 1,000 years in Jerusalem (Rev. 20).

The Feast of Trumpets looks forward to a gathering and judgment during the Tribulation and ultimately repentance.

Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement looks forward to restoration at Jesus' Second Coming. Because of Israel's restoration – they will rejoice at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Isn't that always God's way – judgment, repentance, restoration – REJOICING in what HE has done!

In Jesus' day the Feast of Tabernacles had grown to a festival of grand proportions. Jerusalem was crowded with Jewish pilgrims.

The water-drawing ceremony had become part of the Feast in Jesus' day. An assigned Levitical priest, accompanied by a throng of worshippers, descended to the Pool of

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Siloam and filled his golden pitcher w/ water while the people chanted from Isa. 12:3, "Therefore, with joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation."

The crowd then returned to the Temple from the Pool of Siloam and the priest circled the altar and poured the water into a silver basin upon the altar while the crowds chanted the words of Psalm 118:25, "O Lord, do save, we beseech Thee." (Hallel [praise]).

On the last day of the feast the priest would once again draw the water but instead of circling the altar once, he would circle it 7 times while the crowd continued to call out to God to save them. Messianic fervor was heightened due to the oppression by Rome. The cry for a DELIVERER was constant.

Israel was an agricultural society. This was a water drawing ceremony. Rain was seen as necessary for the life of their crops. Yes, they were crying out for rain – but they were also crying out for deliverance for them as a people. This water drawing ceremony held a significance much deeper than the agricultural implications.

Water represents the Holy Spirit. The water drawing pointed to that day when, according to Joel 2:28, God would rain His Spirit upon the children of Israel. (Eze. 36:25 – "I will sprinkle you with clean water.") The people were crying out for salvation – they were crying out for deliverance – they were crying out for the Messiah..

On the last day of the feast, after the water was poured, there was a hush as the people listened. For what? They listened for the wind.

Jesus had told Nicodemus, the Teacher of Israel, that he must be born again. Jesus said, *The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you cannot tell from where it comes and where it goes. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit.* The invisible wind brings visible results – so it is with the Holy Spirit. They listened for the wind. . . . for the Holy Spirit of God!

At this point in the ceremony, amongst thousands of worshippers who were silent – waiting upon God to deliver His Spirit - a young Rabbi stepped forward and proclaimed, (John 7:37-38) “If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”

Jesus – God incarnate – God in the flesh – dwelling among men – offered Himself at this great feast – the Feast of Tabernacles - the feast which finds its fulfillment in God dwelling with us! The message of the Feasts is all about Jesus. AND - He continues to offer Himself to those who have not yet acknowledged their sin and placed their trust in Him for their salvation. WHAT a PRIVILEGE – what an ABSOLUTE JOY it is to share JESUS with all people – FOR GOD’S GLORY!

Rev. 21:1-3 John the Apostle wrote, *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor*

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crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

Rev. 21:22-27 - In the New Jerusalem, the Apostle John **22** *saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. ²⁴ And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. ²⁵ Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). ²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. ²⁷ But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.*

From: notifications@azre.gov <notifications@azre.gov>
Sent: Saturday, October 1, 2022 6:01 AM
To: Robert Wilson Jr <bob@phoenixtoysoldier.com>
Subject: ADRE License Expired

Dear Real Estate Professional,

Your license has expired and you are not legal to practice any activity requiring an active real estate license.

You have one year from your expiration date to apply for late renewal to avoid license termination. Remember, if you intend on retaining your real estate license, you must complete continuing education courses and record them through our online system before submitting your license renewal application. If you choose to activate your license once it is renewed, you may initiate a hire through the online system.

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THE CHRONOLOGY OF END TIMES EVENTS

THE RAPTURE

The rapture of the church is the event in which God “snatches away” all those “in Christ” who have been placed into the body of Christ by the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus). I Cor. 12:13 - *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.* God will resurrect all believers “in Christ” who have died, give them glorified bodies, and take them from the earth, along with all living believers, who will also be given glorified bodies at that time.

The rapture is described primarily in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18, 1 Corinthians 15:51–52, and in John 14:1–3. The rapture appears to be the next event in the eschatological timeline. The rapture is imminent; no other biblical prophecy needs to be fulfilled before the rapture happens.

The second coming of Jesus is in two “phases.” The rapture is to be distinguished from the physical second coming of Jesus. At the rapture, the Lord comes “in the clouds” to meet us “in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). At the physical second coming, the Lord descends to the earth to stand on the Mount of Olives, resulting in a great earthquake followed by a defeat of God’s enemies (Zechariah 14:3–4).

The word *rapture* does not occur in the Bible. The term comes a translation of the Greek word *harpazo*. The Greek word *harpazo* (found in I Thess. 4:17) means seize by force; *snatch* up, suddenly and decisively; taken by an *open display* of force. The concept of the “carrying off” or the rapture of the Church is clearly taught in the NT and we see foreshadowings of the rapture in the OT (Enoch; Elijah).

FOLLOWING THE RAPTURE/IN HEAVEN:

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST/THE BEMA SEAT

Rom. 14:10–12 - *For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ....¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*

II Cor. 5:10 - ¹⁰*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

In context, it is clear that both passages refer to believers in Jesus, not unbelievers. The judgment seat of Christ, therefore, involves believers giving an account of their lives to Christ. Believers, when standing before the Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10), will be judged according to their works since coming to Jesus. This judgment does NOT determine whether they are saved or lost. That has already been determined by Christ's sacrifice on our behalf (1 John 2:2) and our faith in Him (John 3:16). Our sins – the sins of those who have placed their trust in Jesus – were judged at the cross. All of our sins are forgiven, and we will never be condemned for them (Romans 8:1).

This judgment will determine the reward or loss of reward for service on the part of each individual believer. Worthwhile eternally valuable activities will be rewarded (including motivation!); useless activities will suffer loss (I Cor. 3:15).

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

According to Revelation 19:7, the bride, (the Church/the body of Christ) has made herself ready. In Revelation 19:8 she is given fine linen which is said to be “the righteous acts of the saints.” The marriage (marriage ceremony) takes place in heaven after the Judgment Seat of Christ, directly before the second coming.

FOLLOWING THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH/ON EARTH:

THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST

After the church is taken out of the way (2 Thessalonians 2:7–8), a satanically empowered man will gain worldwide control with promises of peace (Rev. 6:1-2 – first seal...one who sat on a white horse with a bow and no arrows and a crown [laurel wreath not a diadem or a royal crown] on his head; Rev. 13:1ff – the beast (the antichrist) arises from the sea; Daniel 9:27 – the antichrist makes a covenant with the many). The antichrist will be aided by another man, called the false prophet, who heads up a religious system that requires worship of the antichrist (Revelation 19:20).

THE TRIBULATION

A period of seven years (Dan. 9:27) in which God’s judgment/wrath is poured out on the entire world (Rev. 6 through 18) - on sinful humanity – for rebellion against God (Zeph. 1:15, 17, 18; Joel 3:12-14; Rev. 6:16-17). The tribulation will occur on earth during the time that the Church is in heaven (Rev. 3:10). The tribulation is a time of intense trouble (Dan. 12:1). It is a time of intense evangelism (Rev. 7:9-17)! The Tribulation will be unprecedented in its affliction, and unprecedented in its evangelism. It will be culminated by the personal return of Jesus Christ to earth (Rev. 19). The Tribulation will begin with the signing of a peace treaty with Israel by the antichrist, the man of sin, the beast of Revelation 13 (Dan. 9:26-27).

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

At the midway point of the seven-year Tribulation, the antichrist will break his covenant with Israel. The antichrist will set himself up in the Temple in Jerusalem exalting himself and demanding worship (Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:4). The remnant of Jewish people will flee into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God (Petra? Isa. 63:1 – Bozrah/Edom in the Jordan). “They” shall feed the Jewish people there for one thousand two hundred and sixty days – 3.5 years (Rev. 12:6). A great persecution breaks out against all those who believe in Christ (Daniel 12:11; Mark 13:14; Revelation 12:17).

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

At the end of the Tribulation, all the nations of the world will gather for war against Israel (Zech. 12:1-9; Zech. 14:1-3; Rev. 16:12-16) with the intent of destroying Israel. Armageddon means “Mount of Megiddo,” referring to a location approx. 60 miles north of Jerusalem. This is the site for the final battle of mankind prior to Jesus’ second coming. The battle of Armageddon involves multiple phases.

JESUS' PHYSICAL SECOND COMING

Jesus will return to earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords at His second coming. He will fulfill prophecy. He will proclaim the day of vengeance of our God (Isa. 61:2). He will engage in battle against those coming against Israel. The antichrist and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire. He will judge the Gentile nations. He will restore the nation of Israel (the 1/3 left). He will bind Satan. He will set up His kingdom on earth.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

Christ will judge the survivors of the Tribulation, separating the righteous from the wicked as “sheep” and “goats” (Matthew 25:31–46). The righteous will enter the Millennial Kingdom in mortal bodies; the wicked will be cast into “everlasting punishment.”

THE BINDING OF SATAN

Satan will be bound and held in a bottomless pit for the next 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1–3).

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

At Jesus' second coming, following Armageddon and the judgment of the nations, Jesus will establish His kingdom in Jerusalem. Jesus will reign from King David's throne in Jerusalem in the Millennial Temple for 1,000 years. The Millennial Kingdom will be a time of relative peace and prosperity on earth (Psa. 2; Isa. 11; Isa. 60-62; Revelation 20), and evangelism (Zech. 8:23). Animal sacrifices will be offered in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40–48; Mal. 3:3).

THE LAST BATTLE

At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released from his prison (bottomless pit) for a short time. He will deceive the nations once again. A rebellion against the Lord will ensue; however, the rebellion will be quickly defeated (Revelation 20:7–10). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, never to reappear.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

All non-believers in the grave will be brought forth. All the wicked from all eras of history will be resurrected to stand before God in a final judgment (Revelation 20:11–15). The verdicts are read, and all of sinful humanity is cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).

THE ETERNAL STATE

God completely remakes the heavens and the earth. It is at this time that God wipes away all tears and there will be no more curse, pain, death, or sorrow. The New Jerusalem descends from heaven, and the children of God will enjoy eternity with Him (Revelation 21–22).

World Market Product Review - Torani Pumpkin Pie Syrup

DN

Dennis Nelson (Cost Plus World Market) <support@worldmarket.zendesk.com>



To:

•

Cathywilson

Tue 8/30/2022 1:57 PM

Hello Cathy,

I am so sorry to hear about this. Just as a precaution, can you send me a picture of the expiration date and the lot code if there is one on the bottle? I would like to notify the product merchant of your experience. Also, I have added a \$25.00 shopper reward to your account, which will be available for use within the next 24 hours. If you're unable to use it and it expires, just let me know and I will add it back for you. I hope you're feeling OK and you're having a wonderful day!

Best,

--

Dennis

Customer Experience

World Market Home Office

CW

Cathy Wilson



To:

•

Cost Plus World Market

Wed 8/31/2022 6:07 AM

Thank you, Dennis,

I accessed your Email late last night. I so appreciate your concern and consideration!

There is not an expiration date or code on the bottle.

Thank you for the \$25.00 shopper reward. I will not be able to make it to **World Market** today. I'm hoping to shop at **World Market** between tomorrow, 9/1, and Sunday, 9/4/22.

Cathy



DN

Dennis Nelson (Cost Plus **World Market**) <support@worldmarket.zendesk.com>



To:

•

Cathylouwilson

Wed 8/31/2022 7:59 AM

No problem, Cathy. And no rush. You have 60 days. If it expires, just let me know, and I'm happy to add it back for you.

Best,

--

Dennis

Customer Experience

World Market Home Office

On Wed, August 31 at 6:07, Cathylouwilson wrote:

Thank you, Dennis,

I accessed your Email late last night. I so appreciate your concern and consideration!

There is not an expiration date or code on the bottle.

Thank you for the \$25.00 shopper reward. I will not be able to make it to **World Market** today. I'm hoping to shop at **World Market** between tomorrow, 9/1, and Sunday, 9/4/22.

Cathy



Cathy Wilson

Wed 8/31/2022 8:59 AM

THANK YOU! Cathy

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW – THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH – Fall 2022

“...whoever reads, let him understand” Matt. 24:15b

Week 1 – JROC - Set My Heart To Understand

September 18, 2022

BLURB

"The Gospel of Matthew; The Olivet Discourse." We are going to dig into the backstory from Scripture itself regarding end times. What has God revealed to us in His unfolding of the big picture of Scripture that will give us an understanding concerning the WHY of end times?

Basic Consideration:

“End times,” “end of time,” “time of the end,” etc. – those labels regarding a specific timeframe are in the Bible! (Dan. 8:13-17; Dan. 12:4; Dan. 12:1-2, 9, 13; II Tim. 3:1-7; I Pet. 1:20....) We should most definitely know about “end times.” WHY? II Tim. 3:16 - All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

All Scripture is GOD-BREATHED – these are God’s VERY WORDS! Profitable – beneficial, having much of an advantage. For doctrine – learning/teaching. Reproof – to prove – what we are learning; to test – what is being said - which leads to conviction. Correction – toward RESTORATION – to be placed in a right relationship with God (righteousness). Instruction (full scope of training/education) in righteousness – speaking of being placed in a right relationship with God – for all eternity!

Heb. 1:1-2 – tells us *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers* (ancestors; forefathers; fathers who came before) *by the prophets* (who spoke of the promise of the Messiah), has in these last days spoken to us by His Son.

Do we desire to understand prophecy? WHY?

Do we desire to understand eternity? Eccl. 3:11 - *He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.*

WHY is this so – that these in-depth conversations about end times occur?

Could it be because we read in Eccl. 3:11 – *He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their*

hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

King Solomon whom God inspired to write the book of Ecclesiastes – Solomon understood (REMEMBER – Solomon was given WISDOM from God!)...Solomon understood that man has an AWARENESS and a LONGING for the eternal...and that GOD has put this in our hearts.

Can we say that eternity is in our hearts because we are made in the image of our ETERNAL GOD?

And so, we yearn for ETERNITY!

...except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end - ??????

Could this mean that while man longs for eternity, end times prophecy is yet-to-be-fulfilled!!

And so we continue to yearn.

How many times have we cried out – esp. of late – “Maranatha...come Lord Jesus”? Maranatha is an Aramaic word meaning, “O Lord Come!”

Because there is “Yet-to-be-fulfilled” prophecy, and because God is moving our world forward, we can see Scripture yet-to-be-fulfilled played out on the world stage. BUT do NOT base your view of end times on newspaper headlines.

We MUST base our view of the last days on SCRIPTURE and realize that God is indeed SETTING THE STAGE to FULFILL prophecy.

What do you think of chronological charts?

Helpful?

BUT if we get fixated on a chart – and try to remember various segments/phases of end times events and place them where we seem to remember them on the chart...

...WE ARE NOT THINKING THROUGH THE BIBLE!
WHY?

Because we haven't asked that one-word questions when we've studied end times? WHY?

We should be thinking through the Bible – not just walking through the Bible.

If you were asked to explain end times, what would you say? More importantly, perhaps, where in Scripture would you begin?

PONDER that question! We're going to return to it.

Let's look again look at the second sentence in the blurb for our class.

What has God revealed to us in His unfolding of the big picture of Scripture that will give us an understanding concerning the WHY of end times?

In thinking of this second sentence of the blurb, I'm reminded of Pastor Kevin Yule's charge to us in his sermon on 8/7/22 – "We need to understand each page of Scripture" – keeping II Tim. 3:16 in mind.

HOW DO WE BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND???

The title of this - our first week...

"Set My Heart to Understand" – this was a prayer to God...it was Daniel's prayer to God – asking God to cause him to set his heart to understand what God was REVEALING to Him – through visions and also from the scroll of Jeremiah – Jeremiah chapter 25. which spoke of the 70 years of exile which the Jews from the kingdom of Judah had been carried away into – in Babylon – that these 70 years would accomplish what God had intended when He chastised His people by sending them into exile.

How many of you have studied Daniel? Read Daniel?

How many of you have understood Daniel?

Daniel, a faithful Jewish young man, was taken into captivity by the Babylonians in 605 BC. There were three deportations of Jewish people from the kingdom of Judah to Babylon: 605 BC, 597 BC, and 586 BC. In 586 BC the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed. The Jewish people were taken into exile due to their disobedience – in not observing one of God's laws (the Sabbath law of the land) along with their idol worship!

But Daniel was a faithful Jewish young man – a man of prayer. A man who loved God!

Had God warned His people? YES – through several prophets. God reveals His way. AND, God has ALWAYS provided the way to approach Him and have a personal relationship with Him.

I've asked many of my Jewish friends who don't believe in Jesus if they believe that God is a personal God. MANY tell me that they do not.

And, I share with them...

God walked with Adam and Eve.

God called Abram to follow Him to a land that He/God was going to give to Abram and the to the great nation He/God would make of Abram.

God brought Abram outside one night and said, *'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.'* And He said to him, *'So shall your descendants be.'*

God visited Abraham in his tent and told Abraham that He/God was going to use Abraham and his descendants as an instrument of blessing for the world. God called Abraham His friend!

God spoke to Moses and when Moses asked to see God's glory, God put Moses in the cleft of a rock and covered Moses with His hand so that Moses would not die from seeing God face-to-face.

God led the 2M+ children of Israel out from bondage in Egypt to the land of promise.

And, after not obeying God's command to drive out all the Canaanites _____, the Angel of the Lord whom I am strongly suggesting is a pre-Bethlehem/pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus told the children of Israel

BUT the Angel of the Lord continued to appear to the Israelites...

And Daniel, before Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, was taken to Babylon and was used MIGHTILY by God esp. in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar.

When reading the scroll of the prophet Jeremiah, Daniel was an older man...and he was still in Babylon.

We're told this in Daniel 9. Jeremiah, and Daniel were contemporaries, along with Ezekiel.

Jer. 25: 8-11 - Because you have not heard My words, ⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, 'says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. ¹⁰ Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹ And this whole land (Israel) shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

At the time that Daniel was reading Jer. 25, the Jews had been in Babylon – close to 70 years!

Let's look at Daniel 9

Dan. 9:2-3 - ...in the first year of Darius reign I, Daniel, understood by the books (the scrolls....) the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. (Jeremiah, inspired by God, recorded that the children of Israel would remain in EXILE in Babylon for 70 years [for every year they did not obey God...for every year out of 490 years – that they did NOT allow their land to lie fallow according to the law of God found in _____]) ³ Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

This revelation in the scroll of Jeremiah was HEAVY on Daniel's heart.

The Jewish people in the Kingdom of Judah had been carried away into exile because of disobedience.

God had promised Israel RESTORATION if THE NATION OF ISRAEL REPENTED.

As Daniel read the scroll about the 70 years, he knew that those 70 years would be soon – perhaps two years away.

You might not know this but in the Hebrew Scriptures God told the Israelites – the Jewish people – the nation with whom He has a covenant – that, AS A NATION, they needed to repent before they would be blessed and possess the land God had already given them (possess – not be driven out).

God told them, the Israelites, the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that they needed to change their mind – they needed to return to God before the Messiah would come and

set up the Kingdom of God on earth (blessings in Lev. 26 and Deut. 28; Deut. 30:1-6)

And, in thinking of God's promise of restoration upon the repentance of Israel, Daniel cried out to God in confession on behalf of his people and on behalf of himself.

Daniel 9:20-21 - *Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹ yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering (the time that the evening offering would have been offered to God if the temple was still standing in Jerusalem)*

Daniel's prayer is interrupted by a visit from the angel Gabriel. I LOVE this "interruption"!!! Years ago God SPOTLIGHTED – in my mind and heart - three words in Dan. 9:22.

Dan. 9:22-23 - *And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, 'O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³ At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, (GOD hears our prayers and requests) and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision....*

GOD SENT GABRIEL TO DANIEL WHO WAS SEEKING GOD – TO GIVE DANIEL **SKILL TO UNDERSTAND**. Isn't that SO REVEALING? GOD WANTS US TO UNDERSTAND what He is unfolding for us in this world!

Speaking of REVEALING – it was about that time that God SO CLEARLY showed me that HE gives us skill to understand – that He wants us to understand and provides the understanding – it was about that time that, in studying to teach the book of Revelation that I came across the meaning of the Greek word for Revelation – APOCALYPSE – which means a DISCLOSURE, it means TO REVEAL!

How many times have you heard people say, “I can’t read Revelation. I don’t understand it”?

How many times have you spoken those words?

What vision? Daniel’s 70th week prophecy – the BACKBONE of all end times prophecy!

Backbone of all end times prophecy? What does that mean?

The backbone stabilizes our body structure and supports the body weight. The backbone/spinal column serves to keep the body balanced and upright.

Firstly, Daniel’s 70-week prophecy concerns Israel, the Messiah, and the Antichrist...it addresses “end times.”

This prophecy is the foundation of end times prophecy. Therefore, all end times prophecy taught in Scripture MUST align with Daniel’s 70-week prophecy.

We will look at Daniel’s 70-week prophecy, but not at this time. We’re going to be focusing on understanding.

WHY?

Because there might be many of us who don’t understand end times prophecy. Many of us who have questions about end times prophecy. That would include ALL of us, I’m sure!

Is understanding end times prophecy critical?

God sent the angel Gabriel, while Daniel was praying, to give Daniel SKILL TO UNDERSTAND the prophecies, the visions about the end of days!

Gabriel told Daniel in Dan. 8:19 that he, Gabriel was making known to Daniel what will happen in the latter time of the indignation for at the appointed time the end shall be...and that Daniel was greatly beloved – greatly delighted in!

Gabriel reiterates “understand” in speaking with Daniel.

Guess that’s important?!

In Dan. 10:10-14 – re: prophecies concerning the empires of Persia and Greece - ¹⁰ *Suddenly, a hand touched me (“me” being Daniel), which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands.* ¹¹ *And he said to me, ‘O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you. ...’ While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.* ¹² *Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.* ¹³ *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.* ¹⁴ *Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”*

Daniel 10:12 – Daniel had set his heart to understand, and to humble himself before God,

Because you set your heart to understand what GOD WILL do...thanking Him for WHO HE IS...

...God graciously gives us understanding of His word!

Daniel 9:2 – he fell on his knees – “since you set your heart to understand and to chasten yourself, that God...

The world is changing...and doing so exponentially quickly/rapidly. We need to understand what GOD is doing – what He has already revealed! GOD WANTS US TO UNDERSTAND!

“Yeah, but we’re told that the secret things belong to God – so God wouldn’t expect us to understand everything – because we can’t.”

Deut. 29:29 - *The secret things belong to the LORD our God, **but** those things which are **revealed** belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

God never declares *everything* to man. There are secrets God has, and will always have. He has the right to have secrets, because He is God.

What God does **reveal** in His word is MASSIVE and we need to bow before Him, worship Him, and ask Him to grant us

understanding in what He has revealed – realizing that 27-33% of what He has revealed in His word is FOR THE FUTURE!!!!

PROPHECY IS BASED ON WHO GOD IS AND WHAT HE HAS ALREADY REVEALED IN HIS WORD!!!

What does it mean to have your heart set on something?

It means you want it – that something – more than anything else!

Are we setting our hearts on understanding God's word?

WHY am I focusing on UNDERSTANDING God's word in the first lesson of our semester on Matthew 24?

In our study of Matthew 24 which has been labeled "The Olivet Discourse" because Jesus spoke from the Mt. of Olives to his disciples re: the future for Israel and the world...Jesus WARNED OF DECEPTION at the outset of His instructions to the disciples.

False teachers in Jesus' time...moving forward to TODAY! Whether the false teachers, know it or not, they are DECEIVING people – after having been deceived themselves!

Our SETTING OUR HEART TO UNDERSTAND – ASKING GOD TO GIVE US SKILL IN UNDERSTANDING is BASED on WHO GOD IS

AND WHO BELIEVERS IN JESUS/FOLLOWERS OF JESUS are IN HIM!!!!

Unless the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel is properly understood, the great prophetic discourse of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 24-25, Mark 13, and Luke 21 will be misunderstood, as will the greater portion of the book of Revelation." [Note: Feinberg, p. 117.]

We need to understand WHO GOD IS – HIS GLORY – ALL THAT HE IS – HIS ATTRIBUTES – ALL HIS ATTRIBUTES WHICH NEVER CHANGE.

IMMUTABILITY – THE TRUTH THAT GOD DOES NOT CHANGE – IS ONE OF GOD'S ATTRIBUTES.

Malachi 3:6 – *I am the LORD, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*

Is that a new verse to us?

How many times have I heard people ONLY quote the first part of this verse?

How many times HAVE I ONLY quoted the first part of this verse? MANY!!

OBSERVE the second part of v. 6 of Malachi 3 – *therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*

God is saying to Israel, if I was given to change, if I a changing God, if I have evolved...if I took back what I've promised to you – you, Israel, would be toast!!!! Look at how often Israel DISOBEYED GOD!!!!

The proof that God does not change...that His promises will be delivered/God does not take back His promises to Israel...

...Israel continues to exist and Scripture tells us that God will RESTORE Israel!

**WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHO GOD IS...FROM
GOD'S PERSPECTIVE – FROM WHAT HE HAS
PROCLAIMED/DECLARED IN HIS WORD!**

INCLUDE IN WEEK ??? - AND WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD IS DOING!

Re: viewing Scripture from “God’s perspective,” CONSIDER:

- God called Jesus to what seemed to be disaster – from the human perspective.
- Jesus called His disciples to see Him suffer and be put to death. He led them to the place where their hearts were broken.
- Ten of the disciples were martyred. John was exiled on the Isle of Patmos. Judas, we know, betrayed Jesus.
- From every standpoint but God’s, Jesus life was an absolute failure.
- BUT, what seemed to be failure from man’s standpoint was a TREMENDOUS TRIUMPH from God’s perspective, because God’s purpose is never man’s purpose.
 - Have we come to that conclusion in our walk with the LORD?

ARE WE READY TO ASK GOD TO SET OUR HEARTS TO UNDERSTAND?

Week 2 ????

Regarding what GOD is doing...TODAY...

WE SEE EVENTS IN THE SHORT TERM...BUT WHAT GOD IS DOING IN THE LONG TERM – WHICH IS DECLARED IN SCRIPTURE - TELLS US THAT WHAT WE SEE HAPPENING TODAY IS TOTALLY IN GOD’S HANDS!

Prophecy is such a GRAPHIC warning for those who are not born again, not saved, not redeemed, for those who do NOT have a personal relationship with God through JESUS THE MESSIAH – forgiveness for sins through Jesus’ shed blood on the cross!

- We know that there are those people who do not believe the Bible is the Word of God... so what about prophecy?
- And, there are those who don’t believe in God.
- We need to know to whom we are sharing – we need to LISTEN to them – and share Scripture lovingly!

Understanding prophecy is such an EVERLASTING HOPE for those who ARE INDEED born again, saved, redeemed, forgiven of our sins through Jesus! Watching and waiting for Jesus' return for us – we who are believers - brings us such PEACE and JOY! AMEN? AMEN!

Prophecy - (noun) what it is - at its most basic definition is “a message from God.”

To Prophecy – (verb) an action - to proclaim a “message from God.”

What we have labeled as “Biblical prophecy” – is a message from God which can include passages about God's plan, His decrees concerning the future and His plan of redemption and restoration for those who are REDEEMED, and His plan of judgment for those who do not have a personal relationship with Him through Jesus the Messiah, God the Son!

UNDERSTANDING “Biblical prophecy” speaks to WHO God is and that HE IS FULLY IN CONTROL!

II Pet. 1:21 - *For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, through human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.* The Bible is NOT the product of human effort. The prophets at times wrote what they could not fully understand (I Pet. 1:10-11). But they were faithful to write what God revealed to them.

“...carried along by the Holy Spirit” – God the Holy Spirit superintended them so that, using their own individual personalities, and vocabulary, they recorded God's word without error. The prophecies of Scripture are, therefore, inspired, God-breathed (II Tim. 3:16), and inerrant, i.e. without error (Psa. 119:160; Psa. 117:2; John 17:17).

According to Deut. 13, the prophet must not direct people to follow other gods. According to Deut. 18:22 - whenever the prophet says something about future events, those events must come to pass. If the prophet promotes the worship of false gods, or if his predictions fail to come to pass, then he is a false prophet.

In Rev. 19:10 we are told, *And I (John the Apostle) fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

What does this mean? Prophecy always bears witness to Jesus...from Scripture – from the truth that God has already revealed to us in His word. (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:4-11, 28). Prophecy is proclaiming the truth of God.

AND...we must focus on the truth that **GOD IS NOT giving new revelation to people today (Rev. 22:18).** The canon (ruler; what has been determined to be the word of God) of Scripture is closed. **GOD HAS SPOKEN** through His word and our job is to “contend” (athletic/wrestling mat analogy; root word – “to agonize”!!)...”to contend earnestly” (with all effort) for the faith/the truth that was once delivered/ entrusted to the saints (Jude v. 3) through Scripture.

BELIEVERS have been entrusted with the word of God – to know it and to share it. That is a MASSIVE responsibility.

We are NOT to seek further revelations from God. We are not to seek revelations outside of Scripture that people tell us that they’ve been given!

CONSIDER: the completion of the Bible impacts the nature of the gift of prophecy. That’s why if we believe there are people who can foretell a message from God – that is NOT found in Scripture – that is NOT Biblical!

The Bible contains ALL the revelation we need for life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3).

God’s word contains the truth we need.

God’s word presents the wisdom we need to know to properly apply His truth.

AND, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth, comfort us, and teach us (John 16:5-15).

Heb. 4:12 – *The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword.*

The truth that the word of God is perfect and complete means that we are to rely on the Bible for guidance. We are NOT to rely on prophets, prophetic hotlines, prophetic readings, prophetic prayer/intercession which seeks to ascribe to the pray-er power and privilege that have no foundation in Scripture. Those who engage in prophetic prayer believe they are acting as conduits for God and making their prayers “prophetic.”

Prophecy of which we’re speaking in our class includes...

Biblical prophecy which foretells the future, explaining positive or negative results of future events. It may bring joy or fear/foreboding. It is typically very specific re: what will occur and the affect on someone or something. Biblical prophecy is always accurate and present. And what GOD prophesies always occurs! Several examples: The universal flood (Gen. 6); Joseph’s dreams (Gen. 37:5-10); Isaiah 53; Psalm 22; Matt. 24; II Peter 2 & 3; I Thess. 4:13-18

In considering further the significance of Biblical prophecy, - Messianic prophecy – spoken by God and the OT prophets looking

forward to Jesus' first coming - is HUGELY SIGNIFICANT as the fulfillment of those Messianic prophecies in Jesus that we read in the NT VALIDATES WHO GOD IS AND THAT HIS WORD IS INERRANT – WITHOUT ERROR!

- Jesus fulfilled the Messianic prophecy that spoke of His first coming.
- And we understand Messianic prophecy concerning Jesus' first coming literally. They were fulfilled in history!
 - Jesus has yet to fulfill the Messianic prophecies about His physical Second Coming.
 - AND, we need to remember that just as Jesus LITERALLY fulfilled the prophecy pointing to His first coming, He will LITERALLY fulfill the prophecy pointing to His second coming.

NOT Prophetic prayer, etc. – where the pray-er believes they are praying the very words of God into the world, acting as conduits for God's word and making their prayers “prophetic” – carrying God's message!

- Scripture teaches that the answer to our prayers is NOT dependent on any “prophet” in this world. There is only one Mediator between God and man – Jesus (I Tim. 2:5) Is “prophetic prayer” biblical? NO!

The truth of Biblical prophecy and our confidence in and dependence upon Biblical prophecy is based on WHO God is based on Scripture!

Bible prophecy (Biblical prophecy) is falling on hard times – it HAS BEEN falling on hard times.

How many of you have spoken to people who don't know about prophecy? More concerning is that there are those who don't care about prophecy.

So many – even within the Evangelical world – are focused on the world NOW. That is what is considered a ONE WORLD VIEW.

The 2-world view is Biblical – having an eye on the world to come which impacts how we should live now...and the quality of life now.

I could give you a chart but.... How many charts do you have tucked away in a file? Can you remember the sequence? I realize that some of you can remember very well.

BUT, having a chart in your head, rattling off the sequence of “end times” events – how is that going to help you UNDERSTAND the BIG PICTURE of the Bible?

The phrase “end times” in the Bible does NOT always refer to the same end times EVENTS!!!!!!!!!!!!

Does that blow your mind? Any thoughts? (WHITE BOARD)
PONDER that!!! We'll come back to that statement.

(INSERT - ?? BIG PICTURE: In Scripture – ALL of Scripture – with what people is God interacting? Whom is He addressing?)

Firstly, there was “mankind.”

And then mankind was divided into the nations – 70 nations [Gen. 10/Gen. 11].

Scripture then tells us that Israel was CREATED [Gen. 12 – call of Abram; Deut. 32:8-9 - *When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. 9 For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance. Isa. 43:1*] to bless the nations [Gen. 12:3; Gen. 18:18].

And so there were Gentiles and Jews [of those two groups some were redeemed and some were not redeemed – in terms of being born again*]

When the Church was birthed at Pentecost – we have Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus in the body of Christ.

In the Bible, God is dealing with nations, Israel, and the Church.

There are plans for each entity.

*I'm using the term “born again” in reference to salvation in the Messiah since Jesus used “born again” when He spoke with Nicodemus in John 3:3. Nicodemus was THE teacher in Israel. According to Hebrews 11 the # of OT saints (REDEEMED/BORN AGAIN Jewish people) amounted to “so great a cloud of witnesses.” There weren't just five born again Jewish people in the OT – not just 20...50...100...there was a GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES!)

For now, consider that the most SIGNIFICANT part of any study in the Bible – along with any study on eschatology/end times is UNDERSTANDING WHY....

SO, firstly...

WHY has God given us prophetic truth? (Approx. 27% of the Bible – a bit over a quarter of the Bible!!)

Bible prophecy shows us Who is in charge.

Bible prophecy demonstrates that God is FAITHFUL!!!! God has ALWAYS delivered on His promises! It has been estimated that at least one half of all biblical predictions have already been fulfilled precisely as God had declared (You might wish to check out John Barton Payne's, *The Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*)

Biblical prophecy is SIGNIFICANT. SIGNIFICANT means remarkable, outstanding, momentous, extraordinary! I love THE

word SIGNIFICANT. It speaks of VALUE! ---what is the SIGNIFICANCE of Bible Prophecy? GOD’S PLAN...GOD’S GOAL!

God’s goal – His loving desire for mankind and the earth, the UNIVERSE to be RESTORED.

Do we UNDERSTAND this Biblical principle?

How many of you are following me? How many are NOT?

Bible prophecy teaches us that GOD EXISTS, and HE/GOD is in control of history.

The purpose of prophecy is given to us in Scripture. We read the following in the Book of Isaiah. Isa. 46:9-10 - *Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,’* How AMAZING are those two verses. We can STAND and PRESS FORWARD based on WHO God is – based on what we read from these two verses!!!

The most SIGNIFICANT part of any study in Scripture... INCLUDING a study on prophecy/eschatology/end times... concerning Jesus’ first coming and His physical Second Coming – is UNDERSTANDING “WHY”!!!!

WHY there will be a rapture, WHY there will be a tribulation, WHY there will be judgment, WHY there will be a Millennial Kingdom, WHY the heavens and the earth will pass away and MELT, and WHY there will be an Eternal State/the New Jerusalem...

ARE WE READY TO SET OUR HEARTS TO UNDERSTAND?

Rustin (7/31/22) highlighted II Tim. 3:16 – ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God...is God breathed

Kevin Yule (8/7/22) – in bouncing off II Tim. 3:16 – shared that Paul told Timothy in passing the baton, so to speak, on to Timothy that he, Timothy (and this encompasses the Church/we are part of the Church) – that Timothy – that WE are to teach ALL Scripture.

AND, we are held accountable – in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ – to do so.

Kevin shared that we are held accountable to understand every part of “this book” – said as he held up the Bible!!!!

II Tim. 3:16 - *ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God (God-breathed) and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction (training/discipline) in righteousness.*

The Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, charged Timothy...

II Tim. 4:1-5 – *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **2** Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. **3** For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; **4** and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. **5** But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

Most Relevant Bible Verses About Understanding...

...from which you can cross reference and discover additional verses

Luke 24:45

Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

Job 12:13

“With Him are wisdom and might;

To Him belong counsel and understanding.

Psalms 136:5

To Him who made the heavens with skill,

For His lovingkindness is everlasting;

Psalms 147:5

Great is our Lord and abundant in strength;

His understanding is infinite.

Proverbs 3:19

The Lord by wisdom founded the earth,

By understanding He established the heavens.

Jeremiah 51:15

It is He who made the earth by His power,

Who established the world by His wisdom,

And by His understanding He stretched out the heavens.

Proverbs 2:6

For the Lord gives wisdom;

From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

1 Kings 4:29

Now God gave **Solomon** wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.

Job 38:36

“Who has put wisdom in the innermost being

Or given understanding to the mind?

Isaiah 32:3-4

Then the eyes of those who see will not be blinded,

And the ears of those who hear will listen.

The mind of the hasty will discern the truth,

And the tongue of the stammerers will hasten to speak clearly.

Daniel 1:17

As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams.

Daniel 2:21

“It is He who changes the times and the epochs;
He removes kings and establishes kings;
He gives wisdom to wise men
And knowledge to men of understanding.

Daniel 9:22

He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding.

Romans 15:21

but as it is written,
“They who had no news of Him shall see,
And they who have not heard shall understand.”

Isaiah 52:15

Thus He will sprinkle many nations,
Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him;
For what had not been told them they will see,
And what they had not heard they will understand.

1 John 5:20

And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Proverbs 2:5

Then you will discern the fear of the Lord
And discover the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Isaiah 43:10

“You are My witnesses,” declares the Lord,
“And My servant whom I have chosen,
So that you may know and believe Me
And understand that I am He.
Before Me there was no God formed,
And there will be none after Me.

Jeremiah 9:24

but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the Lord.

Q&A TIME

QUESTIONS

What does setting our hearts to understand God’s word mean?

WHY is it significant?

What do you desire to learn from this class?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 1’s handout with references.

Read Matthew 23:37-39. Jot down questions.

Read Matthew 24. Make observations and jot down questions.

Read Week 2’s handout when you receive it.

MESSIAH IN THE OT

Week 8 – The Davidic Monarchy & the Messiah

October 29, 2019

Ruth 4 – RESTORATION/OBED

We traveled with Naomi, who represents Israel, from disobedience (?) to unbelief. We read of her bitterness which seemed to be a heart cry. We saw her amazed at Boaz. At the end of the book we are told that Naomi, who represents Israel, is RESTORED through her grandson, OBED whose name means “SERVE.” Israel will be RESTORED at the end of the Tribulation as the one-third who are left alive at that time come to faith in the Messiah Jesus as God pours out His Spirit on them – and they realize Who Jesus is and they mourn for Him. Jesus will return to establish His kingdom on earth, to rule and reign from Jerusalem. AND, in the Millennial Kingdom/the Messianic Kingdom, Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus will SERVE God. The book of Ruth truly presents God’s entire plan of redemption for the world.

From the account of redemption in the book of Ruth...redemption for both Jew and Gentile through the kinsman redeemer...we are moving to a time of transition in I Samuel toward the monarchy with a king ruling. The last word in the book of Ruth is “David” - King David! In David is the hope of a Messianic King and a Messianic Kingdom (II Sam. 7:12-16).

Genesis tells us that God is Sovereign of the universe. He is the absolute Ruler. He is the Creator of the world and of LIFE!

Ex. 19:6 – at Sinai God told Moses to speak to the children of Israel, *And you shall be to Me (God – I Who am KING) a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.* *These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.* “A kingdom” – this is God’s kingdom...*you shall be to ME a kingdom of priests* – God is the King. The Bible lays out God’s plan for the nations through the nation of Israel. *You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests* - priests represent the people to God. Israel was called by God to represent the nations to God! When King Solomon of Israel dedicated the Temple to God (the house of prayer for all nations), King Solomon made an offering, on behalf of Israel for the nations! God will use 144,000 Jewish evangelists during the Tribulation to share God’s plan re: redemption with the nations (Rev. 7). God will use the two Jewish witnesses during the Tribulation as well (Rev. 11). God will use Jewish believers during the Millennium to witness to those from the nations (Zech. 8:23) who don’t yet know God. At Mt. Sinai God gave the people the law. God is King and the people...His subjects.

Broadly speaking, the kingdom of God is the rule of an eternal, sovereign God over all the universe. Passages in Scripture that show that God is the undeniable Monarch/King of all creation include:

Ex. 25:17, 21-22 - God, as King, legislated to the children of Israel from His throne – from the mercy seat.

Psa. 103:19 – *The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.*

2

Dan. 4:3 – King Nebuchadnezzar declared about God, *His kingdom is an eternal kingdom.*

Rom. 13:1 - *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

When we speak of the Kingdom of God, we begin by stating that GOD RULES! Everything in creation is under the UNIVERSAL Kingdom of God. God is KING!

How do the KINGS fit into the big picture of the Bible, the history of Israel...how do the Kings speak to the Messianic theme in the Bible? What does God convey in Scripture regarding the human kings? Scripture so clearly establishes that none of the human kings is “the” Anointed...”the” Messiah. The human kings about which we read in the Hebrew Scriptures present the need for the greater King – the greater King David – the Anointed One, the Messiah. And so Israel continued to watch and wait for the Messiah, the King. The Messianic theme, therefore, continues. I & II Samuel, I & II Kings, and I & II Chronicles and the exile to Babylon set the stage for the ultimate King – the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

What do we know about “the” King, the One Who is to come?

- Gen. 49:10 – *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.* The symbols of rule and authority (the “scepter”) were given to Judah. The Messiah, “Shiloh,” (He Whose right it is) would serve as King from the tribe of Judah, the Kingly tribe.
- Num. 24:17 – Balaam’s prophecy - *I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel....*
- Deut. 17:

We see a future King! When will Jesus reign as King? At His physical Second Coming when He establishes His 1,000 year Kingdom on earth and sits on the throne of David (Acts 2:29-30) in Jerusalem. Jesus came LITERALLY (not figuratively) – in history – to earth - at His first coming. THEREFORE, Jesus is going to return LITERALLY (not figuratively) – to earth - at His second coming. The literal rule of the

Messiah Jesus on the earth during the Millennial Kingdom is taught in the Tanakh/OT (Dan. 2:44; Dan. 7:13-14....).

Who is the first king we meet in I Samuel? King Saul. Was Saul a glitch? In considering Saul, we need to look at Perez who is mentioned at the end of the book of Ruth.

Ruth 4:12 - *May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman.* Perez is the illegitimate son of Tamar and Judah (Gen. 38). Perez's twin brother, Zerah, was born first. But Perez "broke through." (Gen. 38:27-30) Perez was unexpected. NOTE: Jesus was the unexpected Messiah. Jesus did not fit the requirements of the Messiah that the Rabbis expected! In the case of an illegitimate son, there could be no inheritance for ten generations (Deut. 23:2). In Ruth 4:18-21 we read of ten generations from Perez to King David: *Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron; ¹⁹ Hezron begot*

3

Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; ²⁰ Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; ²¹ Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; ²² Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

When Israel clamored for a king and Samuel anointed Saul, do we realize that Saul was not from the kingly tribe of Judah? Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. Perhaps Samuel was led to Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, because the curse on Perez' line (Perez – from the tribe of Judah) had not as yet expired. And, why was David chosen in lieu of his brothers who appeared more kingly! King David foreshadows WHOM? Jesus. Jesus did NOT come on the scene in the traditional kingly fashion. Why? He didn't first come as King. He came as the suffering Servant. We know from Gen. 3:15, the solution for sin Who is the REDEEMER, He, the REDEEMER, HAD to come as the suffering Servant first.

As we move on to I & II Samuel, let's continue to understand what was transpiring in Israel's history.... I Samuel 3:1 - *...the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.* I Samuel is in the time of the Judges. Conditions in those days: the hardness of hearts among the people of Israel and the corruption of the priesthood under Eli. AND, the ark of the covenant, which represented GOD, was captured by the Philistines!

When do we first read about "the" King in I Samuel? From the lips of a woman who was barren because *The LORD had closed her womb* (I Sam. 1:5b, 6b). Hannah cried out to God promising that if He would give her a male child, she would give this child to the Lord all the days of his life. God gave Hannah a son whom she named Samuel which means "heard by God" – as God had heard Hannah's prayers (I Sam. 1:20). Samuel became one of the most important figures in the history of God's promise-plan of redemption. Samuel introduced the time of King David - the King to whom God promised the everlasting kingdom.

Hannah's prayer after she and her husband, Elkanah, took Samuel to the tabernacle at Shiloh... I Sam. 2:1-10 – *My heart rejoices in the LORD; my horn (strength) is exalted in the LORD. I smile at my enemies, because I rejoice in Your salvation. ²No one is holy like the LORD, for there is none besides You, nor is there any rock like our God.... ¹⁰ ...The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to His King, and exalt the horn of His anointed.*” Who is the central figure? GOD – Jehovah and His King, the Messiah (His anointed)! “Anointed” literally means “smeared.” When a prophet, priest, or king was anointed in Biblical times, they were SMEARED with oil! In Hannah's prayer. We first see Jesus as “the Messiah” in Scripture in Hannah's prayer.

In Samuel's day, God revealed that the exalted King Who was to come is the Messiah (I Sam. 2:10). In Samuel's day, however, the people could not wait for God's timing and insisted instead that He/God give them a king NOW. And, the king had to be like the kings to which the nations/the Gentiles were subject!

I Sam. 8:6-9 - *But the thing displeased Samuel. So Samuel prayed to the LORD. ⁷And the LORD said to Samuel, 'Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you;*

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for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. In response to the demand from the people (I Sam. 8:4-6, 20), God instructed Samuel to anoint Saul (I Sam. 8:10-19). When the Lord rejected Saul as king, God looked for a “man after his own heart” (I Sam. 13:14). That man was David, the eighth son of Jesse, ten generations from Perez!

The predominant Messianic theme in I & II Samuel is the Davidic Covenant (II Sam. 7:12-16). The Davidic Covenant is an unconditional covenant made between God and David through which God promises David and Israel that the Messiah Jesus would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever. The Davidic Covenant is unconditional because God does not place any conditions of obedience upon its fulfillment. The surety of the promises made rests solely on God's faithfulness and does not depend at all on David or Israel's obedience. God reaffirms the promise of the land that He made in the Abrahamic Covenant. II Sam. 7:10 - *Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more.* The promise continues and expands...

II Sam. 7:12-14 - *When your days (David) are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his Father; and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him (King Solomon) with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.* What began as a promise that David's son Solomon would be blessed and build the temple turns into the promise of an everlasting kingdom.

II Sam. 7:16 - *And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.* Another Son of David would rule forever and build a lasting House. This is a reference to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, called the Son of David (Matt. 21:9). II Samuel 7 speaks of God's promise to Israel through David, sets the tone for the PROMISE-PLAN of God throughout the rest of the OT.

Psa. 89:30-37 - *If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, ³¹ If they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, ³² Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes ³³ Nevertheless, My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him (David), nor allow My faithfulness to fail. ³⁴ My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. ³⁵ Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: ³⁶ His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; ³⁷ It shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky. Selah*

Though the LORD had to severely discipline David's descendants, He promised never to remove His covenant from the house of David. The Davidic Covenant is unconditional in its final outcome.

II Sam. 7:18-19 - *Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: "Who am I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹ And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord GOD; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. Is this the manner of man, O*

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Lord God? "A charter for all humanity," or "a revelation for mankind" - the continuation of what we have in Gen. 12:3 – God's plan of redemption is for the world. This is the law of man. This is a declaration rather than a question. God's covenant promise is for an eternal kingdom whereby the entire world of man shall be blessed through the coming Seed of David.

IMMERSE: KINGDOMS

Week 9 – What the Law Didn't Allow, God's Grace Allowed – Ruth 2 & 3

August 7, 2022

ENTER BOAZ – who comes from Bethlehem and greets his employees with. . .

Ruth 2:4 - . . . 'The LORD be with you!' And they answered him, 'The LORD bless you!'

We see a positive relationship between employer and employees. This seems to be very unusual for days in the time of the Judges when there was virtual chaos in the land.

AND BOAZ sees Ruth, asks his servant about her (Ruth 2:5-6). Boaz gives instructions to Ruth — *‘You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. ⁹ Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.’* In Boaz calling Ruth, “My daughter,” it appears that there might be a large age gap between them. Boaz offers Ruth water from the vessels. Bible scholars have written that the privilege of drinking out of water jars was not customarily extended to gleaners. The gleaners were the lowest of the low. But we see grace being extended to Ruth.

Ruth 2:10-12 - *¹⁰ So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, ‘Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?’ ¹¹ And Boaz answered and said to her, ‘It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. ¹² The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.’*

Ruth had come under the wings of the God of Israel. She had come to faith in Him. In Ex. 19:4, Deut. 32:11-12, Eze. 16:8 – we see that this word “wings” speaks of God’s covenant relationship with Israel. He has carried them on eagles’ wings, He has spread His wing over them and entered into a marriage relationship with them.

Isa. 56:6 - *the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants.* (Matt. 23:37; Psa. 57:1)

Ruth 2:13-16 – Ruth was satisfied from Boaz’ provision. Jesus satisfies. Boaz is going beyond the letter of the law in his directions to the young men.

Ruth 2:17-18 - *So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. An ephah was about 30-40 lbs. This speaks to abundance! ¹⁸ Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied.* Ruth shares with Naomi from that which has satisfied her!

Naomi asks where Ruth had gleaned! Didn’t she know as Boaz was a brother of Elimelech – a kinsman.

Ruth 2:20 – *‘Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!’ ... ‘This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives.’* Ruth, the

Gentile, introduced Boaz, a Jewish man, to Naomi, who is Jewish! (Rom. 11:11)

Ruth 2:21-22 - Ruth the Moabitess said, 'He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'²² And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, 'It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not ^{is}meet you in any other field.'²³ So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

At the end of Ruth 2, we have the end of the harvest time. Harvest time is the season of abundance/of grace. The Church age is the season of grace! At the end of Ruth chapter 2, the wheat harvest is completed.

Ruth remained with her mother-in-law from the barley harvest through to the end of the wheat harvest. VERY SIGNIFICANT!

In Ruth 3 we find Ruth in a most secure spot.

Ruth 3

Ruth 3:1-2 – Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, 'My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?'² Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.' Naomi is telling Ruth that since Boaz is our relative, you have the right, Ruth, to approach him. He is a kinsman-redeemer and can redeem you! He can marry you. Naomi is telling Ruth to propose marriage to Boaz! Naomi tells Ruth to go to the threshing floor. Threshing in Hebrew means “to trample”. Many times a threshing roller with metal studs was used to break up the grain. The threshing roller was called a Tribulum. Tribulation! Threshing in Scripture pictures God’s judgment. In Ruth 3 we find Ruth in a very secure spot during the threshing scene which represents the Tribulation in God’s plan which occurs after the season of grace!!

Naomi tells Ruth how to approach Boaz to get him to exercise his responsibility as her kinsman-redeemer. *Ruth 3:3 - Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor;*

“Wash yourself” speaks about purification for marriage (Eze. 16:9-10) when God spread His wing over Israel – when He entered into a covenant with Israel. In Ezekiel 16 we read that God washed Israel and anointed her with oil and clothed her and took her to Himself – He was married to Israel – “You became Mine.” (Jer. 3:14 – “I am married to you.”) Naomi then tells Ruth to notice the place where Boaz lies down and uncover his feet and wait for him to tell you what you should do. “Uncover his feet” – in the culture of that day, this was understood as an act of total submission. A servant would lay at his master’s feet waiting for the next command. Ruth obeys Naomi. Where was the

submissive Ruth during the threshing scene – during the tribulation? At the feet of Boaz who is a type of Jesus.

Ruth 3:8-13 - *Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. ⁹ And he said, 'Who are you?' So she answered, 'I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative.'*¹⁰ Then he said, 'Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go

after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. ¹² Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. ¹³ Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a

close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning.'

Boaz is seeking Ruth's protection. While he's not the closest relative, he will approach the brother who is the closest relative and tell him of his duty. And if the closest relative will not perform, Boaz will perform the duty. Boaz LOVES Ruth! Ruth remains at his feet until morning and leaves before it is light. Boaz gives Ruth a measurement of barley...seemingly as a message for Naomi. Upon receiving the measurement of barley, Naomi assures Ruth that Boaz will not rest until he takes care of the matter re: the closest relative.

Who is this kinsman closer to Elimelech?

Kevin & Rustin,

Firstly, congratulations, Kevin, on your daughter's marriage!!! If I was Jewish, I would say, "Mazel Tov." But, since I'm Gentile, I'll wish you and your family "Mazel Tov" anyway (!!??).

Thank you, both, for your messages on II Timothy. So timely what with our study on Judges through the Immerse: Kingdoms series. We've been discussing false teaching/apostasy in our Sunday a.m. class.

Rustin, I appreciate your sharing your responses to those who ask you why SBC isn't focusing on the prophetic books in Scripture, i.e. Ezekiel, Daniel, Revelation. That was helpful for me to know...as many people ask me why SBC isn't delving into these OT books. I agree with you: 1) we're NOW in the last days and have been since Jesus ascended into heaven; 2) as such we should be living every moment of every day for the Lord according to His word, knowing that these events are going to transpire (II Pet. 3:10-13); and 3) Scripture does indeed tell us not to date set. It's insightful that Daniel's 70th week prophecy, the backbone of "end times" prophecies, sets the timeline from Nehemiah 2:9 up until Jesus' triumphal entry - but then there's the gap. And, we're in that gap before the 70th week.

I teach from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, I & II Thessalonians, Revelation and.... Teaching from the major and minor prophets is crucial in terms of coming face-to-face with the glory of God, knowing WHO HE IS, comprehending His holiness and justice, His grace and mercy. God's faithfulness in "still choosing Israel"(Isa. 14:1) following their drastic veering from Him is AMAZING and speaks volumes regarding His faithfulness to us. The prophetic books cause us to come to grips with God's plan for Israel which, of course, impacts the rest of the world! With those attending the classes, I share my view and the views of others. I encourage them to be Bereans and check me out. If they have a different view from mine - that's fine; however, supporting their view with chapter and verse is crucial. And, I hold myself to that requirement as well.

The classes I teach on "end times" delve into the backstory, presenting the big picture of the Bible (creation...fall...redemption...restoration). We also ask and answer from Scripture...WHY the rapture, WHY the Millennial Kingdom, what do end times look like for Israel, what do end times look like for the Church (apostasy - Matt. 13; Jude), how did the Rabbinical Jewish understanding of the Messiah impact the Jewish thinking during the Second Temple timeframe, etc. (It was interesting hearing your research into the Targum on Exodus 7:8-13, Rustin). In teaching on Matthew 24 during the upcoming fall semester of the women's Bible studies at Shea, we're going to look at the disciples' mindset re: the ages of time and how the Messiah would manifest Himself at the end of the ages, the unconditional covenants and their fulfillment, why Israel is Jehovah's adulterous wife, why the Church is the bride of Christ, what does that label mean, what

difference does it make, who is the bride in Rev. 21, why do we see the tree of life in the New Jerusalem...and more...as we understand how it all fits into the big picture of the Bible.

Two of us had a conversation with a Pastor about 20 years ago - asking if we could hold a "Thank God for Israel" day at the church. The Pastor replied with, "No." He then said, "Israel is in the land in unbelief." I had no clue at that time re: how to respond. I was in the absorbing stage of understanding God's plan for Israel from Scripture. Suffice it to say, the book of Ezekiel is very clear re: God bringing Israel back to the land in unbelief (Eze. 20:33-38; Eze. 22:17-22; Eze. 36:24-27ff)...purging them...and then pouring out His Spirit on those left alive at the end of the tribulation (Zech. 12:10). We need to know these truths.

One of my Jewish friends came to faith in Jesus after hearing how He fulfilled all the Messianic prophecies re: His first coming - in the prophetic OT books. Recently I mentioned "end times" to a Jewish non-believer with whom I was meeting. A four-hour "come to Jesus" visit ensued! We continue to communicate.

I have been praying about assembling a Pastors' forum that might meet once every six months or so. WHY? Israel isn't popular. Jewish people aren't popular. Jewish missions isn't popular! I LOVE Jewish people and I LOVE sharing Jesus with them from the Hebrew Scriptures - and teaching Gentile believers to do the same. I have a burden to share this with Church leadership. Would you support such a forum? I would so appreciate dialoguing with you two.

Thank you for your consideration!

Blessings,

Cathy

MEETING: Kevin Yule/Rustin Rossello
“Jewish Stuff”
8/17/22

You two are an anomaly! Thank you for welcoming me to sit down and visit with you about “Jewish stuff”.

Isn't it IRONIC that while the Jewish people were known as the people looking for the Messiah, they have been known for the last two millennia as the people who do NOT believe in Jesus?!!

AND YET, Biblically, we know that God will RESTORE Israel (throughout Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel....) (NOT all will be saved [Zech. 13:8-9; Remnant: Isa. 1:9; Isa. 6:13; Rom. 11:5 – there will always be a remnant). Isa. 14:1 – “God will still choose Israel”;

Missionary luncheon – perhaps about 15 years ago – the speaker – a Missionary in Jordan – was asked about the land – who will receive/occupy the land in Israel – HOW WOULD THE LAND ISSUE BE DETERMINED? “By whatever is fair and equitable.”

Went home and poured through the Scripture. God led me to Eze. 35:

“Understanding the OT,” or "The Significance of Ebal and Gerizim," or "The Significance of the Blessing" or "The Eschatology of National Israel"

July 24, 2022

Understanding all 66 books of Scripture demands a consistent hermeneutic (interpretation). Understanding all 66 books of Scripture demands knowing the context and knowing the recipients /the readership. (Michelle - our Email back and forth re: what "Dunkin' Dan" and Rustin said last Sunday began the investigation - anew. “Believe” ...AND confessing sin?? NO – John 1:12; John 3:16; Rom. 10:9-10; John 6:39 – this is the work of God – that you may believe; John 8:24 – if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sin; John 20:31 – these things are written that you might believe and believing that you might have life.

Over 15 years ago I attended a workshop. Fred Chay had invited Jody Dillow. I asked Jody a question about repentance. He told me repentance is only for Israel. ????

I began observing moreso the blessings and curses in Lev. 26 and Deut. 28. It appears that Deut. 30 speaks of blessings that will be realized in the Millennial Kingdom.

In the OT God tells Israel to return/turn to Him. They are His covenant people. They had been labeled “redeemed” – delivered (from Egypt) and yet God calls them a sinful nation in Isa. 1.

In the OT God speaks of individual salvation – Gen. 15:6 – for Jews (the remnant) and Gentiles. There is only one way of individual salvation – by grace through faith in God’s revealed message which always points to the Messiah. The basis of salvation/being born again/born anew/born from above: Jesus’ shed blood on the cross!

God speaks of national salvation for Israel which will not occur until after the tribulation (Zech. 12:10). And, we know from Zech.

12:10 and John. 3:3 – that the requirement for Israel to enter the kingdom of God is to be born again!

CW to check out “Repent” – blueletterbible.org – Matt. 3:2 and Matt. 4:17.

Curses and blessings – check out Woods’ comments on how the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant do not contradict.

Corporate Israel – Daniel’s prayer in Daniel 9...”we.” (ALSO – Daniel “I set my face toward the Lord God.” Dan. 10:12 – I set my heart to understand”

Corporate Israel – Isaiah 53.

Matt. 24 – Jesus addresses Israel.

Two gatherings of Israel (re: the curses and blessings)
For purging (Eze. 20:33ff; Eze. 22:17ff)
For blessing (Matt. 24:31)

God’s declaration to Israel: Shuvah Yisrael – TURN/RETURN

J. Dwight Pentecost’s book, “My Kingdom Come” – pp. 101ff and 109ff.

Does God still speak?

“God told me to tell you...” “I have a word from the Lord for you.” “I am a prophet of God.” “I know what the Bible says, but God spoke to me and...”

Claims like the above are increasingly common these days. Sadly, most people who say them do not understand how dangerous they are. Claiming direct revelation from God is essentially putting yourself in a place of equal authority with the Word of God. If God speaks, it is always going to be 100% inerrant, authoritative, true, holy, and perfect. If God truly told you to tell me something, I better listen or I am in direct rebellion against God.

The problem with this idea that God is directly speaking to people, and through people, today, is the fact that the messages attributed to Him are everything but inerrant, authoritative, and true. They are almost always a jumbled mess of confusion, inconsistencies, and outright contradictions of the Word of God. Far too often, “God told me...” is in reality, “I think...and I think God would agree with me...therefore, I am going to tell you that God told me...”

In response to this, many argue that God no longer speaks outside of His Word. Period. Never. The Bible is the complete and sufficient Word of God that gives us everything we need to be saved and walk with God ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](#); [Hebrews 4:12](#)). Therefore, there is no need for any further revelation from God. God does not speak. Rather, God has spoken.

This is the viewpoint I was taught in Bible College and Seminary. This is still the viewpoint that I strongly lean towards. Admittedly, it is a very comforting position. It means I can ignore all the claimed messages from God. It frees me from having to use biblically informed discernment in separating truth from error in supposed messages from God. The problem for me is ... I do not see solid biblical evidence on which to claim God *NEVER* speaks today.

Interestingly, even those who hold the “God never speaks” position seem to allow for exceptions to the rule. For example, stories of people in closed countries having dreams/visions that result in them coming to faith in Christ seem to be accepted, even rejoiced over. Accounts of people in third world countries being told to go to such and such a place at such and such a time to speak with God's messenger, only to bump into a missionary at the exact place and time, are accepted as amazing miracles of God. The justification for the exception is usually something along the lines of, “Well, God only

does stuff like that in places where they don't have access to the Bible.”

Hmm. Where does the Bible say that God works differently based on whether a person has access to the Bible? And, the fact that the United States has tens of millions more Bibles than Yemen does not mean the average American is significantly more biblically literate than the average Yemeni. One could argue that with the massive amount of false doctrine being propagated in the United States that the United States is more in need of corrective direct revelation from God than most third world countries. I just don't see a solid biblical or reasonable basis for the “God only does stuff like that over there” argument.

So, where does that leave us? To be honest, I am not completely sure.

I firmly believe that the Bible is the perfect and complete Word of God. It contains everything we need to know to follow God's will for our lives. While it does not give specific instructions related to the personal situations and decisions we face, it does provide all the wisdom we need to be able to make right judgments in those situations and decisions.

With that in mind, I do not see any reason for God to “supplement” His Word with additional revelation. But, at the same time, there is nothing in the Bible that indicates God *NEVER* speaks today. I do not know the mind of God, and therefore I do not claim to know every reason why God might say something to someone ([Isaiah 55:8-9](#); [Romans 11:34](#)).

What I do know is this: if God were to speak today, what He said would be in perfect agreement with His Word. God does not contradict Himself. God does not change His mind. Compare any supposed message from God with God's Word, and if the message in any way is in contradiction or disharmony with God's Word, reject the message. If you think God has spoken to you, but are unsure about it, ask Him for confirmation ([Judges 6:36-40](#); [1 Samuel 3:1-10](#)). Seek wise counsel from men and women of God whom you respect and trust ([Proverbs 11:14](#); [15:22](#)).

Above all, understand that God speaking is a miracle, not a normal. Even in the Bible, God speaking directly to people, whether through an audible voice or a “still small voice,” is rare. We would all benefit from spending far more time on what God has said instead of on what God might be saying.

SBC – Young’s Mom’s
Questions re: Israel and Jewish People
6/30/22

Questions/answers not addressed at time of meeting:

Why was the Temple in Jerusalem never rebuilt after the second temple was destroyed in 70 AD?

Please know that answers will vary depending upon the branch of Judaism.

- Ambivalence. The ultraorthodox are of the opinion that the rebuilding of the Temple must be a communal/corporate obligation.
 - Reform Jewish people coming to America call synagogues “temples” which is indicative of their no longer looking forward to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Synagogues have replaced the temple. Orthodox Judaism considers this usage inappropriate as it does not consider synagogues a replacement for the temple in Jerusalem.
 - The obligation to rebuild the temple may apply only when the majority of the Jewish nation resides in Israel. As of May 2, 2022, out of the 15.2 million Jewish people in the world, 46% reside in Israel.
 - In addition, the obligation to rebuild the temple may apply only when there is a Jewish king or prophet.
 - The “status quo,” an unwritten agreement exists by which Israel abides, which forbids Jewish people to pray on the Temple Mount. The Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem does not wish to come against this status quo. Israel does not wish to agitate the Muslims!

How are we to best understand God’s command for the Israelites to wipe out an entire people group, including women and children, or the death of family members for their father’s sins? (Korah’s rebellion, devoting entire nations to destruction)

- I’m going to answer the question with a question...What about the universal flood which destroyed all people aside from 8 in Noah’s family? What about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah?
- Some are teaching that God, in His commanding the children of Israel to utterly destroy the Canaanites, was using non-literal hyperbolic language! Hyperbole means an overstatement/exaggeration. We are being told by these teachers that what God is saying cannot be taken literally because these were overstatements and exaggerations on the part of God!
- GOD had a reason for His literal command to utterly destroy the Canaanites. God had chosen Israel – they are the “apple of His eye” (Deut. 32:10) which means He has been protecting Israel. God did NOT want them to be influenced in any way by the pagan practices of these Gentile nations!

- *Deut. 9:3 - ...understand today that the LORD your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire (!!!! Can we comprehend???) He will destroy (to exterminate; to cause to perish) them and bring them down before you; so you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has said to you. God called Israel to partner with Him in winning the battles (as we'll see in Joshua 6 – the battle of Jericho).*
- God called Israel to be a unique army (Israel was called an army in Numbers – as they traveled through the wilderness...
- *Num. 1:2-3 – In speaking to Moses... God told Moses to ...take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually, ³from twenty years old and above—all who are able to go to war in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies.*
- God used those of military age as an army of judgment against the Canaanites and their culture which were so DEPRAVED – to the point of sacrificing their children to their gods! Archaeologists have unearthed much documentation which records the Canaanites involved in idolatry, sodomy, bestiality, sorcery, and child sacrifice.
- WHO is our God? He is holy!! God is just! God hates sin!!! God attacks sin. God MUST deal with sin!
- *Rom. 1:18-20 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress (hold down) the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹because what may be known of God is manifest (evident) in them, for God has shown it to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse....*
- Mankind is without excuse. God has revealed Himself. God is just...He is holy. God must deal with rebellion against Himself.
- Sin is a cancer...it grows...it devours life. When we discover cancer, do we want it to be treated aggressively?
- Why did God command the destruction of the Canaanites, women and children included?" Why would God have the Israelites exterminate an entire group of people, women and children included?
- This is a difficult issue. We do not fully understand why God would command such a thing, but we trust God that He is just – and we recognize that we are incapable of fully understanding a sovereign, infinite, and eternal God.
- We must remember that God's ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:9; Romans 11:33-36). We have to be willing to trust God and have faith in Him even when we do not understand His ways. (Read I Sam. 15:1-3, 9).

- God knows the future. God knew what the results would be if Israel did not completely eradicate the Amalekites.
- If Israel did not carry out God's orders, the Amalekites would come back to trouble the Israelites in the future.
- Saul claimed to have killed everyone but the Amalekite King Agag (1 Samuel 15:20). Obviously, Saul was lying. A couple of decades later, there were enough Amalekites to take David and his men's families captive (1 Samuel 30:1-2). After David and his men attacked the Amalekites and rescued their families, 400 Amalekites escaped. If Saul had fulfilled what God had commanded him, this never would have occurred.
- Several hundred years later, a descendant of King Agag, Haman, tried to have the entire Jewish people exterminated in the Persian Empire – all 127 provinces stretching from Ethiopia to India. (We read this in the book of Esther). Haman was “found out” and hung on the gallows. And Haman's 10 sons were killed as well, as well as his 10 sons. (God used Esther and Mordecai to rescue the Jews from annihilation)
- In regard to the Canaanites, God commanded, “Completely destroy them... otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God” (Deuteronomy 20:16-18).
- The Israelites failed in this mission, and exactly what God said would happen occurred (Judges 2:1-3; 1 Kings 11:5; 14:24; 2 Kings 16:3-4).
- Our focus should be on trusting God even when we do not understand His ways. We also must remember that God looks at things from an eternal perspective and that His ways are higher than our ways. God is just, righteous, holy, loving, merciful, and gracious. How His attributes work together can be a mystery to us – but that does not mean that He is not who the Bible proclaims Him to be – just, righteous, holy, loving, merciful, gracious.
- Gen. 15:13-16 – When God cut the covenant with Abram who was placed in a deep sleep, God told Abram, *Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs (in Egypt), and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.* (Ex. 12:40-41 – total of 430 years; Acts 7:6 – of the 430 years, the Jewish people were afflicted/in bondage for 400 years) ¹⁴ *And also the nation whom they serve (Egypt) I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions* (the Egyptians gave the children of Israel articles of gold and silver, and clothing – Ex. 12:35). ¹⁵ *Now as for you (Abram), you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.* ¹⁶ *But in the fourth generation* (“generation” ppl. living within a period of time-according to the LONGER LIFE SPANS at that time. Connect v. 13 and v. 16 – the “fourth generation” mentioned in Gen. 15:16 appears to equate to 400 years) *they (your descendants) shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites* (title of a people used interchangeably with the Canaanites) *is not yet complete.*” The sins of the Amorites/Canaanites had NOT reached its height in the days of Abram. But it had after the exodus and wilderness

wanderings – when the Jewish people would enter the land of promise. Thus, God commanded the children of Israel to destroy them.

- God's words are NOT overstatements...God's words are NOT exaggerations.
 - God's word is TRUTH (John 17:17).
 - Psa. 119:160 – the ENTIRETY of God's word is TRUTH!
 - Psa. 117:2 – the truth of the LORD endures forever!
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Report Confirmation: SBC Quarterly Report | Summer 2022

The following person has been submitted SBC Quarterly Report | Summer 2022:

- **Cathy Wilson**

First Name

Cathy

Last Name

Wilson

Email

cathylouwilson@live.com

Does the Ukraine situation affect what you are doing?

While the Ukraine travesty hasn't directly affected our ministry, we have been regularly praying for those we know who are ministering the Ukrainian people - including Ukrainian Jewish people.

How are you doing personally, and what encouragements/discouragements are you facing?

Doing well personally. The spring and summer months have been full to overflowing. I've never known a lull during each year within Jewish ministry. Encouragements: new Bible study opportunities opening up with volunteers assisting; a teaching/forum opportunity at a new church, for me, in Paradise Valley which is exciting as I've been praying about a regular Bible study being established in the PV/Biltmore area among primarily Jewish non-believers; GREAT sessions among Jewish non-believers as we're regularly viewing and discussing episodes from "The Chosen" series;

Discouragements: continuing comments from believers who don't understand where the Jewish people "fit in." Comments: "Aren't all Jewish people saved?" "I believe God is finished with the Jewish people and that the Church is the True Israel"!!!!!! These comments are nothing new. God has used these voices within the Church to impassion me further to teach God's plan for Israel and God's plan for the Church - and that there is ONLY one way of salvation - by grace through faith in Jesus alone!!!!!

How have you seen God at work?

At one of the retirement center where I teach weekly, while visiting with the residents in their dining room an hour before we were going to view one of the episodes of "The Chosen," one of the Jewish women, "P", who is excited about our Bible study and who attends regularly, told me that she's on the fence about God because to her, the Bible stories seem IMPOSSIBLE to be true. Re: her view that the Bible stories are "impossible," I responded with - "Impossible to us - but NOT to God. We need to see, read, understand the Bible from God's perspective." She seemed to agree. Following watching "The Chosen" that day, during the discussion, a Jewish woman who claims to be an agnostic was quoting several script lines from the episode including one of Jesus' parables. She loves the writing and the acting. My friend, "P," who is "on the fence," asked if Simon Peter's life was changed after meeting Jesus! All the residents acknowledged the difference between those who were seeking Jesus and those who were not. After "P" told me that what she reads in the Bible seems impossible, the episode we view presented Jesus performing the miraculous catch of fish, Matthew's comment re: the miracle, "This is IMPOSSIBLE." So - I reminded "P" of our conversation at lunch. She understood and smiled. Another resident asked about Jesus' Second Coming. "P" asked how will we know Jesus has returned. I spoke about the Rapture, AGAIN, and told them it was for Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus. I told "P", "If you place your trust in Jesus as your Messiah, you will be taken up with us at the Rapture. If you don't, when we who trust Jesus for our salvation don't return to the Bible study, you'll know that Jesus has come for us in the Rapture. And, then you'll need to be aware of Turkey, Russia, Iran invading Israel....and times of trouble like never before seen." Because Jesus told four of the fishermen to follow Him in the episode we viewed, I shared what discipleship looked like between the Rabbis and their students at that time in comparison to how and why Jesus called His disciples. HUGE difference! And there was more that was shared.

How are you growing spiritually? What is going on in your

soul?

God recently laid on my heart the Prophet Daniel's desire. In Daniel 10:12 we read that Daniel set his heart on understanding God's word and he humbled himself. WOW!!!! That has hit me!!! And, it has been my cry to God! While I've always taught that the angel Gabriel was sent to Daniel to give Daniel skill in understanding - this truth has impacted me moreso! What is on my soul - that I might always be diligent in studying the Word of God and teaching it accurately!

Prayer A.

Please pray that the theater at the retirement center where we are scheduled to present the next episode of "The Chosen" next Tuesday, 7/5, will be available!! I was told yesterday that the theater is temporarily closed! I'm going to call the Engaged Life Director on Monday, 7/4, (difficult day as it's the Fourth of July) to find out if we can have access to the theater!!!! Praying for NOTHING to stand in the way of the showing of "The Chosen"!

Prayer B.

Salvation of "P," and all the other Jewish people and the Gentile non-believers who are attending the Bible study at the Scottsdale retirement center...at the retirement center at 7th St. & 8th St...at the retirement center at 19th Ave. & Bethany Home Rd.

Prayer C.

A Bible study to begin in the Paradise Valley/Biltmore area among many Jewish non-believers.

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this report. It helps us to know how best to support and pray for each of you!

If you have any questions please contact Jim Brannon at jbrannon@scottsdalebible.com.

My name is Cathy Wilson I am a full-time missionary and Branch Leader in AZ with Chosen People Ministries. God has called me to share Jesus with Jewish people and to equip believers to do the same.

Our Bible studies across the Valley which are focused on Jesus are attracting Jewish people.

I would love to talk with you about what GOD is doing in Jewish lives for His glory.

BRANCHES OF JUDAISM

Jewish Denominations

Also sometimes referred to as streams, movements or branches — are the principal categories of religious affiliation among American Jews. The denominations are mainly distinguished from one another on the basis of their philosophical approaches to Jewish tradition, and their degree of fidelity to and interpretation of traditional Jewish law, or halacha.

Outside North America, the non-Orthodox streams of Judaism play a less significant role, and in Israel the vast majority of synagogues and other Jewish religious institutions are Orthodox, even though most Israeli Jews do not identify as Orthodox.

Even within North America, the role of the movements has diminished somewhat in recent years, with growing numbers of American Jews and Jewish institutions identifying as “just Jewish,” nondenominational or transdenominational.

The 3 Largest Jewish Movements

Reform Judaism

A participant marching with the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism in the Women’s March in Washington, Jan. 21, 2017. (Jason Dixson Photography/Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism via Flickr)

ADVERTISING

The largest affiliation of American Jews, some 35 percent of Jews identify as Reform. The movement emphasizes the primacy of the Jewish ethical tradition over the obligations of Jewish law. The movement has traditionally sought to adapt Jewish tradition to modern sensibilities and sees itself as politically progressive and social-justice oriented while emphasizing personal choice in matters of ritual observance. **Major institutions:** Union for

Reform Judaism, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institution of Religion, Religious Action Center, Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Conservative Judaism

Raising the Torah scroll during morning services at Camp Solomon Schechter, a Conservative Jewish overnight camp in Tumwater, Washington, 2002.

Known as Masorti (traditional) Judaism outside of North America, Conservative Judaism sees Jewish law as obligatory, though in practice there is an enormous range of observance among Conservative Jews. The movement has historically represented a midpoint on the spectrum of observance between Orthodox and Reform, adopting certain innovations like driving to synagogue (but nowhere else) on Shabbat and gender-egalitarian prayer (in most Conservative synagogues), but maintaining the traditional line on other matters, like keeping kosher and intermarriage.

(While it continues to bar its rabbis from officiating at interfaith weddings, the movement has liberalized its approach to intermarriage somewhat in recent years.) About 18 percent of American Jews identify as Conservative. **Major**

institutions: Jewish Theological Seminary, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Rabbinical Assembly, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies.

Orthodox Judaism

Orthodox Jews are defined by their adherence to a traditional understanding of Jewish law as interpreted by rabbinic authorities over the centuries. Hallmarks of Orthodox religious life include strict observance of Shabbat (no driving, working, turning electricity on or off, or handling money) and of kosher laws. Though numerically the smallest of the big three — some 10 percent of American Jews identify as Orthodox— Orthodox Jews have larger than average families and their offspring are statistically more likely to remain observant Jews.

Unlike the Reform and Conservative movements, which have a recognized leadership that sets policy for movement-affiliated institutions, Orthodox Judaism is a looser category that can be further subdivided as follows:

Modern Orthodox

Also known as centrist Orthodoxy, this movement was an effort to harmonize traditional observance of Jewish law with secular modernity. Its ideal is summed up in the motto of its flagship institution, New York's Yeshiva University: Torah Umadda (literally, Torah and secular knowledge). **Major institutions:** Yeshiva University, Rabbinical Council of America, Orthodox Union.

Haredi (or Ultra) Orthodox

Chabad-Lubavitch Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz, right, Mussie Alperowitz, left, and their two daughters walk in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, 2016. (Eliyahu Parypa/Chabad.org)

Typically marked by their distinctive black hats (for men) and modest attire (for women), haredi Orthodox Jews are the most stringent in their commitment to Jewish law and tend to have the lowest levels of interaction with the wider non-Jewish society. One major exception is Hasidic Judaism's Chabad-Lubavitch sect, which is known for its outreach to the wider Jewish community. Haredi Orthodox Jews, who are represented in the United States by Agudath Israel of America, can be further subdivided into two principal groups:

Hasidic

Hasidic Jews are heirs of the spiritual revivalist movement that began in Eastern Europe in the 18th century and, drawing on the Jewish mystical tradition, emphasized direct communion with the divine through ecstatic prayer and joy in worship. There are a number of distinct sects, most headed by a charismatic rabbi, or rebbe, including Chabad, Satmar, Ger and Skver.

Yeshivish

Sometimes also known as Litvish, these haredi Jews are heirs of the mitnagdim (literally “opponents”) who rejected the the rise of Hasidic Judaism in Europe. These Jews traditionally emphasized the intellectual aspects of Jewish life, particularly rigorous Talmud study for men. Yeshivish derives from the word yeshiva, or religious seminary.

Open Orthodox

The newest subset of Orthodoxy, Open Orthodox was founded in the 1990s by the New York Rabbi Avi Weiss. Its adherents, who consider the movement a reaction to a perceived shift to the right among the Modern Orthodox, generally support expanded roles for women in spiritual leadership and more openness to non-Orthodox Jews. Major Institutions: Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, Yeshivat Maharat

Smaller Denominations

Reconstructionist Judaism

Following the thinking of its founder, Mordecai Kaplan, Reconstructionism holds that Judaism is the evolving civilization of the Jewish people. Its adherents hold varying opinions about the extent to which Jewish law, particularly the mitzvot, are obligatory. The movement is quite religiously progressive: Kaplan was the first American rabbi to preside over a public bat mitzvah celebration — for his daughter, Judith, in 1922 — and the movement’s rabbinical seminary was the first to accept openly gay students. The movement’s major institution is the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, based outside Philadelphia.

Jewish Renewal

Jewish Renewal combines the ecstatic prayer of Hasidic Judaism with a contemporary ethos of gender egalitarianism, environmental consciousness, progressive politics and appreciation of religious diversity. Its spiritual father was the late Rabbi Zalman Schachter-

Shalomi, who was born into a Hasidic family in Europe but dabbled freely in the 1960s counterculture.

Humanistic Judaism

Founded in 1963 by Rabbi Sherwin Wine, this movement offers a “nontheistic” Judaism that is not based on divine revelation. Humanistic Jews celebrate Jewish culture, history and holidays without reference to God and emphasize a rationalist, human-centered ethics.

Pamala has been a TREASURE to all of us here! Most of all Pamala was a JEWEL in the hand of Yeshua as He used her mightily in so many lives!

Yesterday I listened to “I Enter Into the Holy of Holies.” Pamala was riveted on that praise hymn. She flagged to “I Enter Into the Holy of Holies” a few years ago at our Passover Seder. It was POWERFUL!!!

HOW MUCH MORE POWERFUL – Pamala’s seeing Yeshua face-to-face. Can we even comprehend?

Perhaps they are flagging together!

How Pamala LOVED Yeshua...and she let everyone know!

No matter how much pain and weakness she was experiencing, Pamala LIVED A TRIUMPHANT LIFE in Yeshua.

“Thanks be to God Who always causes us to triumph in Messiah Yeshua and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”

That was Pamala’s earthly life.

Thank You Lord, for allowing our paths to cross!

Let the weight of Your glory cover us. Let the life of Your river flow. Let the truth of Your kingdom reign in us. Let the weight of your glory flow.

6/19/22

Dave Woods asked for prayer for a member of his men's study group whose family is suffering attacks from Satan. Please pray for his friend, who is also named Dave, that God would protect him and his family from the evil one.

Bobby Wilson is seeking wisdom from the Holy Spirit on how to help the homeless during these times of new and difficult circumstances. Pray that the Holy Spirit would act as a Counselor for Bobby and help provide his needed insight to the situations that need answers.

Please keep Al McClain in your prayers for peace and joy while he continues to walk this unexpectedly long journey towards a resolution to the eye pain he is suffering in his left eye. Ask God to provide the right surgeon at the right time. May Al be a great witness to his medical team(s) of God's love through his interaction with them.

I had a chance to talk with Pam Harper after class on Sunday and she said she had an MRI on her hip so the results will help determine when she can have her hip replacement. She knows that the surgery will help relieve the pain that she is suffering from. She said it is hard to sit due to the pain and she feels a lot better reclining or laying down. Pray that she will soon be able to have this surgery and be on the road to recovery and NO PAIN!! When we talked it was really important to her that we remember to pray for her friend Joan also who is having testing in preparation for carpal tunnel surgery.

Please continue to pray for:

Gordon Palmer (Age 98) who was recently moved into Brookdale Manor on No. 64th St. with his wife Lou. Gordon has Stage 4 lung cancer and the prognosis is not good. Pray for good care for Gordon and peace for both Gordon and Lou as they walk through this time together.

Please pray for Sue Walters' sister who is waiting to be scheduled for kidney surgery to determine if a lesion is malignant and can be removed or if the Kidney needs to be removed. Pray that God would work in a mighty way...that there would be no cancer!!

Candy Woolf's friend Dena and her missing daughter Ally to get help. Pray for Dena that she would be comforted and be able to cast her anxiety on God. And for Ally that God would protect her body and mind. Also, please

continue to pray for Candy's sister, Sonja, who fell again last week. Pray that she would get strength in her foot and that she wouldn't fall again.

Doug and Pam Emes have a dear family member, Joanne Boyt, who recently found out she has an aggressive breast cancer. Joanne needs our prayer, for healing, for comfort for herself and her family; for wisdom for her doctor/medical team.

Please remember Richard Wells this week. Pray for him and his sister Carol who recently had surgery for breast cancer. Pray that she is recovering well and that God would be providing strength for Carol, Richard and their whole family during this difficult journey.

Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thess 5:17-18 NASB

Thank you, all, for remembering each other in your time with the Lord!