

CONNECTING THE DOTS. . . .

How important is it to connect the dots between the OT and the NT?

Jesus thought it was important:

Luke 19:41-44 – Jesus weeps over Jerusalem

He declares that their house will be desolate

They missed the time of their visitation

The road map was in front of them – they didn't pay attention – they didn't connect the dots

Luke 24:13-27 – after the resurrection – Jesus appears to the two on the Rd. to Emmaus. . . .and He lambasts the two men for not – connecting the dots!

Connecting the dots is all about seeing God's overall plan for man and the earth!

From man's perspective – a dot is a toss-away. To God, it's CRUCIAL.

Perspective is key.

From whose perspective are we viewing the world, our lives, our days, our moments?

“From whose perspective” makes all the difference!

From whose perspective are we reading and studying Scripture?

Ground rules for this class – viewing Scripture – understanding Scripture – laying hold of the Scripture – FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE. How? By understanding the context.

What does “context” mean? Understanding the verse in its setting. From the passage or two before and after the passage we're studying? Yes – but moreso from the setting of the ENTIRE BIBLE. What does that require of us? We need to know the overall picture of the Bible – God's overall plan.

Did you know that there are approx. 350 direct quotes or clear allusions from the OT found in the NT book of Revelation alone! This amounts to approx. 15 OT references per chapter!

Great doctrinal truths are developed in the OT. For example, significant revelations concerning the attributes of God are recorded. It is the OT that gives us our basic understanding of God's majesty, His power, His holiness and sovereignty, His justice and mercy.

Thinking through some “dots”. . .

Can you imagine what a believer in the early Church must have thought when he/she read through the first four chapters of the Gospel of John?

The first readers of that Gospel were primarily Jewish. (The Gospel was written circa 80-90 AD. The first believers in Jesus were Jewish). (Matt. 15:24; Acts 2; Acts 10 – Cornelius; door open to the Gentiles)

They would've said that it parallels the book of Genesis:

We have the “Creation” account in Genesis. In John 3 we have the “New Creation” explained by Jesus to Nicodemus.

- Genesis tells us that God walked the earth – and Adam heard Him in the Garden (Gen. 3:8).
 - The Gospel of John tells us in the first chapter that the Word became flesh – once again God walked the earth.
- In Genesis, God’s Spirit moved on the water and brought forth the Creation (Gen. 1:2).
 - In John 3, those who will enter the kingdom of God are those who are born of the water and the Spirit (John 3:5). The Spirit moved on the water (those born of water – referring to natural birth) to bring forth the New Creation.
- In Genesis, God spoke the Creation into existence (Gen. 1:3). Psalm 33:6, “By the WORD of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.”
 - In John, we see that the WORD was made flesh (John 1:1, 14). The Word is Jesus. In Col. 1:16 we read that Jesus created.
- In Genesis, mankind sinned and man was separated from God and the creation was cursed. God promised to restore both man and the earth (Gen. 3:15).
 - John 3 speaks of being born again – reconciled to God – NOT alienated from God – NO LONGER SEPARATED from God when we receive forgiveness of our sin through Jesus. (We are sinners by nature [Rom. 5:12-“. . . sin entered the world through Adam and death through sin and death spread to all men because all have sinned.”], by birth [Psa. 51:5 – “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”], and by choice [Rom. 7:13-20 – Paul tells his readers that that which he hates, he does, and that which he desires to do, he doesn’t do]).
 - Romans 8:21-23 – “. . . the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption. . . .” – delivered from the curse!

Are we seeing connections between the OT and NT?

Back to the dots between the Gospel of John and Genesis:

- On the third day of Creation in Genesis, God performs a miracle with water.
 - In John 2:1, the wedding at Cana is on the third day. Jesus changes water into wine.
- God began His plan for man with the marital union of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:18-23).
 - Jesus began His public ministry (following His baptism and temptation) at a wedding in Cana.

Within Scripture we see Creation/New Creation/Re-Creation

Why is this important?

God has a PLAN that He has set forth to ACCOMPLISH. What is that plan?

REDEMPTION/RESTORATION

More dots. . . . How do we know that Jesus is God? By connecting the dots between the OT and NT. How do we know about GOD?

I AM:

- Exodus 3:14 – I AM has sent you to them
 - Jesus does declare that He is God during His ministry:
 - John 8:58 – before Abraham was, I AM.
 - John 8:24 – if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins.
 - John 18:1-6 – arrested in the garden; “I AM” – they fell back.

Jesus told the Jewish leadership that Moses wrote of Him – in the first five books.

Jesus chastised the two men walking to Emmaus on the day of His resurrection for not knowing the prophecies. He opened the Scripture to them which told of Him – the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets (Luke 24:25-27, 44).

Did you know that when the Tabernacle was constructed in the wilderness, God told the children of Israel to camp around each side of the Tabernacle – 3 tribes on the east, 3 tribes on the north, 3 tribes on the south, and 3 tribes on the west – Numbers 2.

The tribes were to then “move out” when the Shekinah glory of God lifted up and led them – they moved out in this same format. . . IN THE SHAPE OF A CROSS!

The tribe of JUDAH led the way – on the east side – and the DOOR of the Tabernacle faced East!!!

Who was to come from Judah? Jesus!

Who is the DOOR? THE way to God?

The implements in the Tabernacle were set up in the shape of a cross!

More dots between the OT and NT:

- The tree of life is in Genesis 2:9; 3:22, 24.
 - The tree of life is in Revelation 22:2 – in the New Jerusalem – the Eternal State.
- In Genesis 49 we find Jacob’s prophecy to the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - In Revelation 7 and 14, we find the twelve tribes.
- In Genesis 37:9-11 we are told of Joseph’s vision of the woman with the stars. (Rachel – the wife of Jacob – Jacob – father of the 12 tribes – Israel)
 - In Revelation 12:1-2 we are told of the woman with the stars. The context: Israel. Satan coming against Israel in the latter half of the Tribulation.
- In God’s plan there are only two men: the first Adam (I Cor. 15:45a) and the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45b). When you are physically born, you were born of Adam. When you are born again, you are born of the “last Adam,” who is Jesus. (See also Romans 5:12-19)
 - Why? The curse needed to be reversed/removed.
 - A human brought sin into the world. There needed to be a human resolution to the sin issue. Jesus is the God-man – 100% God/100% man.

- As man He was able to shed blood; as God, His blood was without sin and could pay the price.
- Note: both Adam and Jesus were brought into the world directly by God without procreative agency. (JESUS was NOT created. He is God! Jesus created – Col. 1:15-16.)
- We need the ENTIRE picture – OT and NT – for Scripture to make sense!!

For consideration:

- The Redeemer was promised to reverse what Adam had done.
 - Satan comes to Jesus holding out the same three temptations into which Adam and Eve fell: the lust of the eyes (Gen. 3:6 – pleasant to the eyes; Matt. 4:3 – turn stones to bread), the lust of the flesh (Gen. 3:6 – the tree was good for food – it would satisfy hunger; Matt. 4:5-7 – Satan told Jesus that angels would protect Him), the boastful pride of life (Gen. 3:6 – the fruit would make one wise; Matt. 4:8-10 – Satan tempted Jesus with power prior to the cross)
 - The first Adam fell into sin. Jesus did not succumb to the temptation. He overcame what the first Adam was overcome by.

To further consider:

- In Genesis we have the garden with God, Satan, and a naked man (Adam). God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden (Gen. 3:23-24) and placed cherubim (angels) at the east of the garden. A flaming sword turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.
 - **Yet**, there was the promise of salvation given in the garden (Gen. 3:15).
- John 18 – Jesus entered the garden; Judas entered the garden (Satan had already entered Judas – Luke 22:3); naked man is also in the garden (Mark 14:51).
 - The tomb in which Jesus was buried was in the garden. It is through our RISEN Messiah – Who conquered death – that we have salvation!

In synagogues on the Sabbath following Passover – the day prior to Resurrection Sunday (in synagogues today and in Jesus’ day), the Song of Solomon was/is read. Jewish people call the Song of Solomon “the Holy of Holies”.

- Song of Solomon 4:6 – “Until the cool of the day, when the shadow flees away, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.” The Bridegroom was anointed for burial – to die for the bride.
- Song of Solomon 5:1 – “I have come to my garden, my sister, my spouse. . . .” – which many interpret an invitation to his garden.

The day following the Sabbath of Passover week was the Feast of First Fruits (Lev. 23:9-14). It commemorated the first harvest – (barley harvest). Jewish mindset: as God has given us the first harvest, surely He will give us the next harvest (wheat).

- The day after the Song of Solomon was read in synagogues, when it was still dark, the high priest would go into the Kidron Valley. He would wait, while it was still dark, for the first pinpoint of light to come up on the back of the Mount of Olives (in the east). When he saw the first pinpoint of sunlight, he would ceremonially harvest the first stalks of grain. These were the first fruits.
- All four Gospels tell us that the resurrection was at the very “crack of dawn” – while it was still dark (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). The very hour of the very day of the year when the high priest was bringing the first fruit into the Temple, harvesting the first fruit, Jesus rose from the dead. I Cor. 15:20, 23 – Jesus is our first fruits. His resurrection guarantees the resurrection of believers in Him.

In the garden, man falls, the curse is placed on man and the earth in the garden, but in the garden the promise of salvation/redemption is given.

In a garden, Jesus was crucified – “Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb. . . .” (John 19:41).

John 20:1 – Mary Magdalene came to the garden. In the garden, the curse came upon Eve first (Gen. 3:16-17ff). So, the good news of Jesus’ resurrection came to a woman first.

(Folded napkin/face cloth – in Biblical times, when carpenters were given a commission to build something, they would hang a cloth at the work site. They would use that cloth to remove perspiration. When the work was finished, they would take that cloth and fold it and leave it.)

Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping (John 20:11-12). When she looked into the tomb, she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. What do we picture? The Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat on top of the Ark. (The Ark held the broken law [Ex. 25:21]). The Mercy Seat – which is a type of Jesus – sits between the broken law and God!

The Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Holy of Holies in the Temple.

John 20:16 – as Mary was weeping and telling whom she thought was the “gardener” that her Lord had been taken away and she didn’t know where they had laid Him. If the “gardener” had carried Him away, Mary asked him to tell her. Jesus responded with, “Mary!”

Here, we might say, is a welcoming into the garden – as “the Beloved” welcomed His bride in the Song of Solomon 5:1.

In Genesis, in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden.

Following the crucifixion and resurrection, the door is open.

The Bible devotes several chapters to the Creation. The remainder of the Bible speaks to God’s restoration of man and the earth - the New Creation and the Re-Creation (Millennial Kingdom; New heavens and new earth).