

UNDERSTANDING THE “ONE STORY” OF SCRIPTURE

Week 1 – JROC - Comprehending Eternity!

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I read of a Bible Teacher instructing men who were being trained to pastor in rural settings in the US. This Bible Teacher told his students, “I’m going to convince you that the Bible is one unified story.” WHY would that be important?

God tells us that He knows the end from the beginning. Isa. 46:10 – GOD tells us...*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,’*

The Bible Teacher training the Pastors in rural settings in the US then elaborated – very simplistically, “We need to see how Scripture actually works!” What does that mean? How does that look?

- Understand Who God is - His attributes – all Who He is.
- God declares His sovereignty and control over history.
- He announces the end from the beginning, showing His omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence.
- God lays out His plan for mankind!!! Plan A!
- God lays out His storyline: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration – from eternity past through eternity future.

- God's purpose will stand, regardless of circumstances.
- God's purpose reassures believers of His faithfulness to His promises.
- It encourages us to trust in God's plan, even when we cannot see it unfolding.
- How to understand the Bible: it's God's word; we are to understand it literally; we are to understand it the way God INTENDED us to understand it (authorial intent NOT our own intent!); we are to understand the historical and cultural settings.
- The doctrine of the authority and inerrancy of Scripture: the God-breathed Scriptures (II Tim. 3:16) are wholly true in all things that they assert in the original autographs and therefore function with the authority of God's own words.

How are the above bullet points significant? Why are they simplistic?

We are charged to place our faith in God

Hab. 2:4 – *The just shall live by faith!* (Those who are justified – who are declared righteous!)

Heb. 11:13-16 - *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

The one passage of Scripture below will lead us to other passages of Scripture – before and after!? WHY? To underscore that there is indeed “one story” of Scripture! And, to help us to comprehend eternity – eternity past and eternity future!

PROMISE OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER/IMMERSER

⁵ There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. ⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

⁸ So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹ according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

¹³ But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴ And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. ¹⁶ And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

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

¹⁹ And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. ²⁰ But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

²¹ And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. ²² But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

²³ So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. ²⁴ Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid

herself five months, saying, ²⁵ “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

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BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER/IMMERSER

⁵⁷ Now Elizabeth’s full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. ⁵⁸ When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER/IMMERSER

⁵⁹ So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. ⁶⁰ His mother answered and said, “No; he shall be called John.” ⁶¹ But they said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name.” ⁶² So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called. ⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, “His name is John.” So they all marveled. ⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. ⁶⁵ Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶ And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, “What kind of child will this be?” And the hand of the Lord was with him.

ZACHARIAS’ BENEDICTION/PROPHECY

⁶⁷ Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: ⁶⁸ “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, ⁶⁹ And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, ⁷⁰ As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, ⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, ⁷² to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, ⁷³ the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: ⁷⁴ To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. ⁷⁶ “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, ⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, ⁷⁸ Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; ⁷⁹ To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

