

UNDERSTANDING THE “ONE STORY” OF SCRIPTURE

Week 4 – JROC – Understanding Christmas! Pt. 3

November 2, 2025

Luke 2:25-32 - Simeon connects Jesus' birth to the Hebrew Scriptures. Simeon was a just and devout Jewish man in Jerusalem waiting for the “Consolation of Israel.” ??? What does that mean? Consoling! WHOM?

The Hebrew Scriptures from Genesis 9:18 through Malachi – through the four Gospels – and well into the book of Acts is focused on Israel! At Pentecost, primarily Jewish people came to faith in Jesus – on the Jewish Feast of Weeks (Shavuot). How many, “about 3,000” (Acts 2:41; Ex. 32:28). REMEMBER: the Church, the body of Christ, is comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus! All of whom remain Jews and Gentiles!

The Church continues through to Jude in the NT. And then there's Revelation! Do we realize that Zechariah, Isaiah, Daniel, and other prophets speaking of Israel address END TIMES? Isa. 66:22 - *For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,*” says the Lord, *“So shall your descendants and your name remain.*

WHY is Israel so SIGNIFICANT? To whom was the Messiah promised? (Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6; Psalms 2) Through whom would the Messiah come? (Gen. 12:3; John 4:22; Gal. 4:4) AND, in Gen. 18:18 we read that God has promised to use Israel as an instrument of blessing for the WORLD!!!

Do we read of the “Consolation of Israel” in Scripture?

Isa. 40:1-2 – *Comfort, yes, comfort My people!*” Says your God. ² *“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.”* The “Consolation of Israel” had come to be used as a Messianic title – speaking of the Jewish Messiah.

The previous 39 chapters of Isaiah were filled with a strong tone of judgment and warning. Isaiah 39 ended with announcing the coming Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, and the exile of the kingdom of Judah! Beginning with Isaiah 40 the tone shifts to being predominantly full of comfort and blessing, full of the glory of God. From Isa. 40 through to Isaiah 66 – we read of the Messiah and the theme is consolation.

Zacharias knew full well about the Promised One of Israel, the Messiah...which is why we read SUCH A MESSIANIC benediction from Zacharias as he blessed his newborn son, John...the Immerser!

...BECAUSE...Elizabeth, Zacharias' wife had been visited by Mary who had been told by the Angel Gabriel... *you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.* ³² *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.* ³³ *And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.* (Luke 1:31-33).

When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary...*the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.* ⁴² *Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!”* ⁴³ *But*

why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

Isa. 40:3-5...of whom are we reading following Isaiah speaking to brethren including his fellow prophets about comforting Israel? Isaiah – written 700-800 years before Jesus’ incarnation. Zacharias knew this passage!!

In Isa. 40:3-5- *The voice of one crying in the wilderness:*

“Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; ⁵ The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” It’s JOHN!!!

Isaiah has been called the Bible in miniature – “one story”!

The Bible contains how many books? 66:

Isaiah 1 through Isaiah 39 – speak of the message of the OT.

How many books are in the OT? 39

Isaiah 40 through Isaiah 66 – speak of the message of the NT.

How many book are in the NT? 27

39 + 27 = 66 books!!!

God the Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that he, Simeon, would not see death before he had seen God’s anointed, the Messiah.

Luke 2:27 – Simeon *came by the Spirit into the Temple...* at the very moment when Mary and Joseph had brought Jesus into the Temple to be circumcised (Luke 2:21)...Simeon took Jesus up in his arms and blessed God... Simeon clearly understood that the birth of this baby began with the eternal purpose of God – even before the world was created.

Luke 2:36-38 - Coming in that instant, when Simeon had lifted Jesus in his arms and praised God, was Anna, the prophetess who had been a widow for approx. 84 years, never departing the Temple in Jerusalem, but serving God with fastings and prayers night and day. Anna gave thanks to God and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

When Zacharias was offering incense on the altar of incense in front of the veil before the Holy of Holies – there were people outside the Temple who were praying. Here is such evidence of the “one story” of Scripture – connecting what God had promised from – Gen. 3:15 – to the days immediately prior to Jesus’ incarnation.

Simeon, Anna, Zacharias, and Elizabeth represent those watching and waiting for the fulfillment of God’s promises in His plan of redemption through the Messiah. They represent a faithful remnant who recognize God’s promise fulfilled in Jesus, each empowered by the Spirit to witness to the Messiah’s arrival Praise God that we can read of them in His Word – those who mark the transition from promise to fulfillment in REDEMPTION.

