

PSALMS 60.2—62.6

to the rock that is
than I.
u hast been a refuge
e,
tower from the enemy.
well in thy tabernacle
er:
ake refuge in the covert
wings. [Sé'lah
u, O God, hast heard
ows:
ast ¹⁰given me the heri-
of those that fear thy
it prolong the king's life;
ars shall be as many
ations.
I abide before God for
are lovingkindness and
that they may preserve
I sing praise unto thy
for ever,
may daily perform my
Refuge from Treachery and
Oppression.
Musician; after the manner
n. A Psalm of David.
oul ¹¹waiteh in silence
God only:
m cometh my salvation.
is my rock and my sal-
y high tower; I shall
e greatly moved.
ng will ye set upon a
e may slay him, all of
eaning wall, like a tot-
fence?
ly consult to thrust him
from his dignity;
light in lies;
ess with their mouth,
ey curse inwardly.
[Sé'lah
, ¹²wait thou in silence
od only;
expectation is from him.
is my rock and my sal-
hat is too high for me. ⁹ Heb.
iven a heritage unto those &c.
t unto God. ¹² Or, as other-
shall be slain &c. ¹³ Heb. be
God.

Understanding the Bible Biblical Survey

A Survey of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation

Cornerstone Christian Fellowship

PART I - OLD TESTAMENT

Understanding the Bible — Biblical Survey

A survey of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation
(Revised 2017/2018)

Part I The Old Testament

**From the UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE
STUDY SERIES**

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To be continued...Part II The New Testament Portion

Unless otherwise noted, all the Scriptural passages used throughout this study
are from the NKJV.

WELCOME

Welcome to this study entitled UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE—BIBLICAL SURVEY. This study deals with the progressive revelation of God’s Word to His people. It begins in Genesis and works through the Prophets, the Gospels, the Book of Acts, the Epistles and ends in the Book of the Revelation, giving you an overall picture of Scripture. Hopefully, this study will allow you to make earnest biblical application in your own life so that you might be more equipped to understand the ramifications of your actions in your present walk with the Lord as it relates to your future.

The goal of this study is to present a great challenge to you, a challenge that should not be taken lightly. Throughout God’s Word there are many warnings given to God’s people — warnings that need to be heeded today in light of the Coming Age. The challenge before us is that we should heed these warnings, as they are spelled out in Scripture.

As you begin this study, it is vitally important that you ask the Holy Spirit to be your Teacher. Many times we come to the Scriptures with pre-conceived ideas — beliefs we hold because “that’s what we’ve always been taught.” It can be dangerous to lose our teach-ability when it comes to God’s Word. Pray that you would remain teachable, not just in this study, but all throughout your life.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, in order that YOU may become complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (II Tim. 3:16-17). Take a moment right now and ask God to work in you — to *teach* you more about His plan and purpose for your life. Ask Him to *rebuke* you in the areas of need, to *correct* you in your understanding and to *train you in righteousness, so that you may accomplish the perfect work that God has for you*. Then remain open to the Holy Spirit so that He might reveal more of God and His plan to you.

Our prayer for you is that you study well. Understanding *the big picture of Scripture* has changed lives. As well it should! But the big picture is not always an easy concept to grasp. Commit yourself to the Lord as perhaps never before. He desires His children to know the detail *concerning His plans and purposes for the ages*; but for the most part, Christians today do not have a grasp of God’s plans and purposes for time and the ages, nor their part in it. We have been blinded by the enemy of our souls, and for good reason on his part. Satan knows what effect this knowledge would have on the lives of God’s people. He has seen it in times past. (A thorough study of the Hebrews chapter eleven would reveal what this knowledge does in a person’s life.)

Therefore, we must continually commit ourselves to the Lord, asking the Teacher of our soul to teach us One on one. He will do that for *each of us*. But we must seek Him with all our heart! This overall message of the full scope of Scripture is very dear to the Heart of the Lord, therefore, we must have seeking hearts if we desire to know Him on this more intimate level. We must always yield ourselves totally to Him, diligently searching the Scriptures to see if what is being taught is correct or not.

Is having a more intimate knowledge of the Savior a desire of your heart? Do you desire to yield totally to Him? If you do, will you stop right now and tell Him? Your prayer will bless His heart. He will be happy, through His Holy Spirit, to reveal His Revelation to you, as you diligently seek Him.

Matthew 6:33 says that if you *seek first His kingdom and His righteousness*, then He will grant to you all that you need. We pray for you, even as Paul prayed for the church at Ephesus:

***...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,
may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,***

the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;
that you may know what is the hope of His calling,
what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,
according to the working of His mighty power

May the Lord richly bless you as you seek Him.

The folks at Cornerstone Christian Fellowship

Becoming Familiar with this Workbook

It would be beneficial for this section – Becoming Familiar with this Workbook – to be reviewed with the class by the class facilitator at your first class meeting.

Also...you can find the messages* given by Pastor John Herbert related to each of the lessons in this workbook on this website: www.cornerstonejacksonville.com/messages
Search for the series entitled "The Word of God – A Survey of the Bible"

*Each lesson in this workbook has one or more corresponding lecture(s), all of which are available in a video, audio and PDF formats. It is recommended for students to work through a lesson in this workbook prior to viewing its corresponding message(s). The PART numbers for the messages correspond with the LESSON numbers in the workbook. Several lessons have more than one lecture that is associated with that lesson.

PLEASE encourage each member of your class to do their homework. It will be time well-spent to further understanding of the way God has laid out His Word. Invaluable time, really!

Let's spend a few minutes becoming familiar with this study book. It has been carefully designed to be of the greatest help to you in your study. First, glance through the workbook. Notice how the weeks are divided into five days of study. We strongly urge you to separate your lessons into five days as opposed to doing your entire week's study in one day. Think of it in terms of gathering manna daily! *Daily* study will give you time to meditate on the different facets of Scripture, and give the Lord time to speak to your heart concerning the truths taught. **Please make every effort possible to do your weekly homework prior to coming to class.** Experience has shown time and time again, that when a person consistently fails to do their homework, their questions and doubts interrupt the flow of class discussion. **It is vitally important that you actively participate in class on the basis of personal study.** Getting to know God and learning what His will is for you can be done in no other way. We must study His Word! It is the only means He has given us.

In this notebook, the Scripture passages are printed from the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted. The purpose of having the passages printed out for you in the workbook is twofold:

- 1) for consistency in class and,
- 2) for saving time in study.

But please feel free to check your Bible for the context of any given passage whenever you desire. In fact, we encourage this! Context is vitally essential to a proper understanding of any passage. One reason you are encouraged to refer to your Bible whenever you wonder about the meaning of any given passage is that greater and clearer understanding comes about when context is considered. It is not our intention to take a passage out of context to "make it say what we want it to say." We have tried to use passages to reflect the original author's intent, but it is good for you to check things out for yourself whenever possible.

These printed passages have also been provided for you to mark up and make notes within your workbook pages. This will be very helpful to you when you are called upon do a review or summary in your workbook.

You will notice that within some of the passages there are numbers in these brackets <>. The numbers are from STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE, and are found reprinted in a section of the Appendix, along with Strong's definitions of the word. Please note: if the number begins with a "0", that means it is an

Old Testament word and would be found in the OT section; if it doesn't begin with a zero, then it is a New Testament word and would be found in the NT section of the Appendix.

As time allows in your study, I encourage you to look up the definitions and write them in the spaces provided throughout the study. This is a good study tool. However, it is good to remember as you look up these definitions that these definitions are, in themselves, not inspired, but rather a sort of commentary. Only God's Word is inspired. (At the beginning of each lexicon section in the Appendix, there is an explanation describing the etymology of these definitions.) Many people have found that looking up the words in the lexicons becomes quite easy and is very rewarding in their study.

Here is an example of a passage with Strong's numbers inserted. Just take a moment to read the passage, and see the explanations which are placed here to show you step by step what you are to do. Obviously, you will not find these steps continuously printed throughout the study notebook.

John 3

16 "For God so loved <25> the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes <4100> in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

NOTES:

loved <25>

believes <4100>

If anything in particular strikes you about the verse as you read it through this first time, make notes as to what struck you in the space provided. Then move on to the next step. (There will not always be a space provided for NOTES — only on selected passages.)

Now in the Appendix, look up the numbers found in the brackets and write out the Greek *transliteration* (a Greek word written in the English alphabet), along with the definition(s) which you feel best describes this *word as it appears in context*. (As time allows, this is where you might want to read the passage in your Bible to check the context.) Remember, our example passage is from the New Testament, so you will be in the New Testament lexicon — numbers that *do not* begin with a zero. So look up the number <25> first, and make note of the definition, writing it in the space provided.

Now repeat this process for the second word and set of brackets found in the example passage.

You may want to sum up what you have just learned by re-phrasing the passage in your own words in the space provided in NOTES, or jot down thoughts in the margin. This will be a great tool for review and remembrance.

In the Appendix, there is a sheet entitled HOW TO DO THOROUGH OBSERVATION. You may want to peruse this sheet now. This technique is helpful in observing a passage .

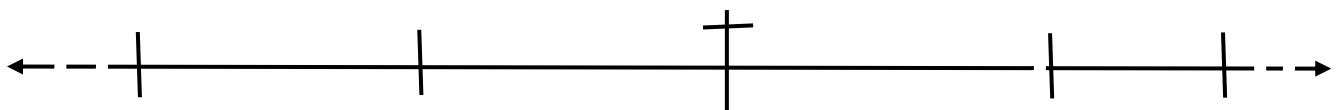
Frequently you will come to places in which you are to write a summary. I cannot encourage you enough to take the time to do these summaries. It may be very tempting to skip this part! But summaries are very important for a couple of reasons! Writing a summary causes you to think through what you have learned in a detailed, logical fashion, and writing it down causes you to remember it better. Also you will have something to which you can look back, helping you to better remember what you have studied.

Sometimes you will even be asked *to summarize your summaries*. This will be very helpful in building the big picture by taking the little puzzle pieces and putting them together. There have been people who have

studied through the workbook, step by step, not grasping the big picture *until* they summarize the summaries. Then all of a sudden, it clicks, and that section of the puzzle falls into place.

Oh yes, and one more thing! In the back of your book, there should be a folded sheet with a timeline printed on it. (If for some reason the timeline sheet is not present, it is easy enough to make one for yourself on an 11 x 14 sheet of paper. See the diagram below.) We will refer to this timeline frequently throughout the study. It is only a tool in placing important events in a time-perspective way, and it will become helpful to see the Biblical perspective of history in relation to prophecy as we work through it.

This is what the outline of the timeline looks like —



Be encouraged! This is a very exciting way to study Scripture. If you are feeling at this point that you have “bitten off more than you can chew,” take courage, you have not! We will walk through this one step at a time. If you will be faithful, God will meet you where you need Him.

So be diligent in your studies! You can do it!

Understanding the Bible – Biblical Survey

Lesson One — Gaining a Heart of Wisdom

- Day One – God’s Word
- Day Two – A Seeking Heart
- Day Three – Moses’ Heart
- Day Four – Seeking God with All Your Heart
- Day Five – Gaining a Heart of Wisdom

A Bible study should be just that — a study of the Bible! It should be so true to the Word of God that it transforms a person from the inside out. It should encourage and exhort a person to walk truer to God’s Word than they have in the past, based upon their growing understanding. And it should give a person a greater passion for more knowledge and understanding of God’s Word, which would naturally lead to a heart of wisdom.

After Jesus had taught seven parables in Matthew chapter thirteen, He asked His disciples if they had understood the things He had just taught. When they answered positively, He then said, “Every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old” (v. 52).

After understanding certain things in the Scriptures, it would only follow that a student of the Bible would go on to understand more and more things in the Word. And a Bible teacher should strive to teach his students more and more, reviewing things already understood and revealing more — teaching both “new and old” — out of the teacher’s own “treasure” of growing knowledge and understanding. We must all strive to understand more as God leads us. Are you ready to strive together with me toward a better understanding of God’s Word and His purpose for us?

Let’s get started.

Day One— God’s Word

As one seeks to gain a heart of wisdom, it is evident that the only way to do so is to study the Word of God. And in approaching a study of the Word of God, there are several things that are essential to understand. The most basic is the difference between the Word of God and the word of man. Actually the two are not to be compared, for there is no comparison! God’s Word is the only thing to be considered at any moment in this respect, for David says that God Himself esteems His own Word even *above His own Name*. Read it below. (Italicized print is added for emphasis.)

Psalm 138

2 I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

How does God esteem His Word?

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Read a couple of other Old Testament passages concerning the Word of God —

Psalm 12

**6 The words of the LORD are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth,
Purified seven times.**

What does this passage reveal about the importance of a literal translation, rather than a ‘thought for thought’ translation?

Psalm 19 reveals what the Word of God can do in a person’s heart and life —

Psalm 19

**7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is
sure, making wise the simple;**

**8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the
LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;**

**9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are
true and righteous altogether.**

**10 More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than
honey and the honeycomb.**

**11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great
reward.**

Go back and underline the different names given to the Word of God.

Make a list of what the Word of God does in a person’s life (vv. 7-9):

After making these statements about the Word of God in Psalm 19, King David makes a summary statement of how sweet the Word of God is (vv. 10, 11). What does he say?

The most important things to understand when you study God’s Word are *structure* and the *context of any passage within that structure*. The *structure* of God’s Word is given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God has laid out His Word in a very specific way and for very specific reasons. God begins His revelation to man at a certain point and continues that revelation from that point. And if we do not study portions of Scripture according to the *structure of His Word*, we run the serious risk of missing important points altogether.

Also, understanding *the context* is vitally important to understanding any verse correctly, but *not just* the context of a particular verse. While each verse has a context — the passage; that passage also has a context

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— the chapter; that chapter has a context — the particular book in which it is found; and that book has a context — the Bible! Everything must be kept in context!

So to understand God's Revelation to man, we must see it according to the way in which He gave it — according to His structure. And we must understand any passage within its context, seeing that context within the structure. Thus, it becomes vitally important to understand the overall scope of Scripture as it is structured, so that *any part* — a verse, passage, chapter, or book of the Bible — fits within the context of the overall scope and structure of the Bible. This is very important! And this is why a survey study is the foundation to all other studies in the Understanding the Bible Study Series. (This concept will become clearer as we work our way through this study.)

So what is the Bible all about? Where does it begin? Where does it end? And what is in the middle?

Scripture has those specific things — a specific beginning, a specific ending, with particular points between the two. And God has laid it all out in a particular fashion. So for one to understand God's Word, one has to study it the way God gave it. For example, God begins in Genesis in a specified way for a particular reason. And He ends in Revelation with a specified end. And that which is given between those two points is given for particular reasons with intended meanings. Isaiah says that God gives understanding and insight by giving *a little from here* and *a little from there* (Isa. 28:9-13a). In other words, Moses speaks of the same things as John, who speaks of the same things as Jeremiah, who speaks of the same things as Matthew, who speaks of the same things as Jesus. On and on you could go, *all giving information that leads to building the same overall picture.*

We will strive to study the Bible in this way — a little from here and little from there — beginning at the beginning, and working our way through to the end, surveying the whole Bible, back and forth, until the picture is clearly drawn, all the while striving to keep passages in context, and seeing it within the God-given structure of the whole.

We'll end here today. I am so excited for you to begin this journey. I pray that it changes your life!

Is there anything you would like to say to God? If so, write it out here.

Day Two—A Seeking Heart

Christians are to seek the Lord with their whole heart. Anything short of that would cause one to come up short in his/her understanding. It is a good idea to often ask the Lord to give you a greater desire to know Him, and to ask Him for a heart of wisdom.

Here are a few of the many places in the Old Testament where the Lord tells His people to seek Him. An important thing to notice is that He is talking to redeemed people, not to unredeemed.

Deuteronomy 4

29 “But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

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1 Chronicles 16

10 Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! 11 Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore!

1 Chronicles 28

9 As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.

Psalm 119

2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

Isaiah 55

6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.

Jeremiah 29

13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart..

Does anything strike you about these verses? If so, what?

Now look at a few of the New Testament passages —

Hebrews 11

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Matthew 6

33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Luke 11

9 “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Revelation 3

20 “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

What do you think it means to seek the Lord? What would it look like? How does one do it?

Hopefully, you mentioned that reading, studying, and hearing God's Word is essential to seeking God. A person cannot seek God apart from His Word. *It would be impossible!*

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Lesson One

If you were to seek the Lord with your whole heart, what changes would you have to make in your life to do it?

Are you willing to make those changes?

The longest chapter in all of Scripture esteems God's Word throughout. Psalm 119 has 176 verses and is divided into 22 sections, each giving different facets of what God's Word does in a person's life. (This Psalm is printed in your Appendix on pg 7.) As time allows, read through the entire Psalm, or if time does not allow, choose a section or two, and write your impressions of what God's Word can do in a person's life according to Psalm 119.

Your impressions of Psalm 119:

See you tomorrow.

Day Three — Moses' Heart

Today we will be looking at a man who earnestly sought after God. The man is Moses. We want to glimpse the heart of Moses. The author of the Book of Hebrews writes of Moses' parents, and then of Moses:

Hebrews 11

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. 24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

From this passage, what can you see about Moses' parents' hearts?

And what can you see of Moses' heart (v. 25)?

What did Moses 'esteem' in v. 26?

According to the passage, why did he do this?

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Most likely you know the story of Moses — the reed basket, his sister Miriam, the Pharaoh's daughter, the murdered Egyptian, the flight into the wilderness, his Gentile bride, the burning bush, the return to his brethren. This is not to mention the ten plagues, the Passover, the parting of the Red Sea, the sunken chariots and washed-up bodies of Pharaoh's army. Those words and phrases should be enough to evoke very vivid pictures in your mind. But we want to see more than just the images of these pictures. What kind of heart did Moses have?

Subsequent to all the events depicted in the words of the previous paragraph and at the age of 80, Moses made an interesting request of God. Imagine what Moses already knew of God, and what he is about to ask of Him. Read about it below —

Exodus 33

7 Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp.

According to v. 7, what would be the purpose for one to go outside the camp to the tent?

8 So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. 9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. 10 All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door. 11 So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

(Notice Joshua's heart, too. We'll come to Joshua later.)

Now for Moses' request:

12 Then Moses said to the LORD, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’ 13 Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people.”

Of what does Moses specifically remind God at the end of v. 12?

Then what does he ask of God in v. 13?

Do you have any thoughts about this?

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And all of this from a man who had already seen the things mentioned in the paragraph at the top of pg. 16!

Continuing in **Exodus 33** with God's response —

14 And He said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” **15** Then he said to Him, “If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. **16** “or how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.”

17 So the LORD said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.”

18 And he said, “Please, show me Your glory.”

19 Then He said, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” **20** But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.” **21** And the LORD said, “Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. **22** So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. **23** Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.”

Can you imagine this moment for Moses? He had seen God's power in the events previously mentioned, and now again he was personally dealing with God, desiring to know God more intimately, saying, “Show me Your glory!” After certain preparations were made (preparations which were spelled out by God for Moses to do), Moses was to stand on “the rock”, and then God placed Moses “in the cleft of the rock” and covered him with His hand until God passed by him. The Lord spoke these words as He passed by —

Exodus 34

5 Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. **6** And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, **7** keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.”

8 So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

Write out what God said to Moses —

What was Moses' response to God after revealing His glory to him?

What kind of commitment did Moses display in his desire to know the Lord?

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Lesson One

We'll close here for the day. Perhaps you would want to end your study time today telling the Lord that you, too, desire to know Him more. Continue to ask Him to reveal Himself to you. This should be your prayer throughout this study (throughout your whole life, really).

Day Four — Seeking God with all your Heart

Pray for your study time today. Call upon the Lord. Ask Him to show you great and mighty things. Make this the diligent request of your heart.

Did you notice in yesterday's homework how available God was to Moses? I hope that was an encouragement *to you!*

Yes, God had a special and specific purpose for Moses. But are you aware that He also has a special and specific purpose *for you?* God is not a respecter of persons. That is to say that He loves all of His children, and has very special things pre-determined for each of us. Read what Paul told the Church at Ephesus:

Ephesians 2

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

God waits patiently for us to come to Him with a seeking heart. He wants us to *diligently seek* Him, to call upon Him before He reveals more and more to us. Remember what the writer of Hebrews said?

Hebrews 11

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

According to this verse, what two things must a believer believe *in order to please God?* And what do these things mean?

Do you understand and believe *both* things?

Let me ask you something. Are you ready to *seek the Lord with your whole heart?* You may not even know what this means exactly, or you may not be sure that you are ready, but do you have a deep desire to know more of Jesus? A desire to know Him more intimately? If you do, He will begin the wonderfully sweet process of revealing more and more of Himself to you as you seek after Him. If you are not sure that you are ready for this, then ask Him to fill you with the desire to know Him better. Just open your heart to Him and ask Him to fill it with passion.

Let's study a few verses about seeking the Lord.

Jeremiah 33

3 ‘Call <07121> to Me and I will answer you, and I will show you great <01419> and mighty <01219> things, which you do not know.’

NOTES:

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call <07121>

great <01419>

mighty <01219>

2 Chronicles 16

9a For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him...

NOTES:

Deuteronomy 4

29 But from there you will seek <01245> the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek <01875> Him with all your heart and all your soul.

NOTES:

seek <01245>

seek <01875>

Isaiah 55

6 Seek <01245> the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.

Seek <01245> (Same word as found in Duet. 4:29.)

Psalms 25

14 The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant.

NOTES:

After this very limited glance at some of the ‘seeking’ verses in the Old Testament, let’s look at a few in the New Testament.

In this passage from Luke chapter eleven, Jesus answers His disciples’ questions as to how they should pray. He repeats His answer, obviously wanting His disciples to get the message. Then Jesus continues to explain that just as earthly fathers desire to give good things to their children – things essential for their physical well-being, so does our Heavenly Father desire to give us good things – things that are essential for our spiritual well-being, if we but *ask, seek, and knock*. Study the next passage and write what you learn.

Luke 11

9 “So I say to you, ask <154>, and it will be given <1325> to you; seek <2212>, and you will find <2147>; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 If a son asks for bread

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from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

NOTES:

ask <154>

given <1325>

seek <2212>

find <2147>

Jesus told His disciples to ask, seek, and knock. What would He want them to ask for? To seek for? To knock for? He continues His discourse, telling them exactly what they are to seek! A few verses down, He spells it out:

Luke 12

31 But seek <2212> the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

NOTES:

seek <2212>

In the Gospel of Matthew, it explicitly says that not only are we to seek His kingdom and His righteousness, but Matthew shows what priority it should take in our lives! “But seek **first** His kingdom...” (Mt.6:33). And that word means we are to make this THE priority in our lives.

It must be understood that these verses are written to *people who have already been redeemed!* In other words, the verses found in *both* the Old Testament and the New Testament are written to God’s redeemed people. These words concerning seeking God are addressed to people who are already saved. This indicates that there is more to our walk with God, than simply our eternal salvation – we have been saved for a purpose. It is essential to understand what that purpose is!

How is God calling you to seek Him? What will it take? Will you give Him the time necessary?

We'll call it a day for now.

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Day Five — Gaining a Heart of Wisdom

Today we want to look at more information about the wisdom that God desires to give to *any Christian who will diligently seek Him.*

Since we have only this one passage to study today, observe it *thoroughly* by reading it several times. Make study notes in the margin, noting repeated words or phrases. Also make a note of any cross-references that come to your mind as you read through the passage. (Cross-referencing verses is a very good study habit to get into, as we need to learn that Scripture interprets Scripture.)

After you have done your own thorough observation of the passage, then answer the questions which follow.

1 Corinthians 2:6-3:4

I Corinthians 2

6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges

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all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3

1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?

For whom is this message of wisdom (v. 6a)?

What *time reference* does this passage refer to (vv. 6-8)? What detail does it give about those times? You may need to think this through carefully.

What do you learn about this “hidden wisdom” (v. 7ff)? List all the facts.

From the information in this passage, can any Christian have an understanding of this hidden wisdom? If so, how?

This wisdom is not that which deals with the initial knowledge of Christ as Savior, nor with the elementary things concerning His saving us from our sins (*cf.* Heb.6:1-3). This knowledge deals with the “deeper things” of God (v. 10). (See also these cross references: I Cor. 1:13, 20, 28; 3:19, 14:2; II Cor. 1:12; Eph. 4:13; 6:24; Philippians 3:15; Heb. 5:14; Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:5, 9; Col. 1:26; II Tim. 1:9.)

Some people have said that there are ‘no deeper things of God’. But a statement like that doesn’t square with our passage today, nor with the passages listed in the parenthesis above. Some have even suggested that this whole idea of digging deeper into God’s Word is “Gnosticism.” It is not! Digging into God’s Word (i.e., mining truths as for gold) is all about seeking Biblical wisdom concerning the things that God desires us to understand. This is where *seeking* comes to the forefront.

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This must be stated clearly: These deeper things of God are not only for a select few! The message concerning God's plans and purposes for the ages is *for all the redeemed of God* – each and every one of us! God gives every believer the opportunity to know and understand His plans and purposes for the ages. But these things are like GOLD! They must be mined through hard work *i.e.*, diligent study! The understanding of these things is not instantly infused in a person the moment he or she puts their faith in Christ. If that were the case, then why the Bible? Why this *big* Book? But God desires us *to diligently seek Him*. And you know what? He *deserves* that!

Today's passage in I Corinthians deals with *mature knowledge*. This type of knowledge would never be for people who do not know Jesus Christ. The reason is simple – a person without the Spirit of God does not have the *ability* to understand the things of the Spirit, nor would he have burning desire within his soul to do the kind of seeking this wisdom requires. This is something that is attained as a person grows up in their salvation, growing from the milk of the Word to the meat of the Word (I Pet. 2:2; [*cf.* I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12,13]). This is hard work, but the blessings that come as a result will be worth far and above the effort put forth. You wait – you'll see!

And that we shall do! Seeking is essential! Please continue to pray for yourself and for others who are in the study.

Why don't you close your study time in prayer today using Psalm 90 as a springboard for meditation and prayer?

Psalms 90

12 So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

A person who diligently seeks the Lord will gain a heart of wisdom. It can be no other way.

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Gaining a Heart of Wisdom **Lesson One**

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Lesson Two — How to Understand the Bible

- Day One – First Things First
- Day Two – The Old and New Testaments
- Day Three – The Central Person of Scripture
- Days Four and Five – The Law of First Mention

Last week we began to lay a foundation upon which we will continue to build as we make our way through this Biblical Survey. As you study, please note how many Scripture passages are used. Take a moment to peruse the pages of this workbook, noticing how many bold sections there are. As you have seen, these sections are the Scripture passages used for observation and study.

God's Word is the focus to which our attention is called. Man's word is of no moment when set alongside God's Word. One has life, the other doesn't! The *best* commentary on Scripture is Scripture! The best way to study Scripture is *to study Scripture*. (Does that even need to be stated?) Then the youngest babe can grow into a greater understanding of God's Word! Look carefully at what Isaiah says about how God gives His Word, and to whom He gives knowledge and understanding —

Isaiah 28

9 “Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts? 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.”

Observe what the passage says. Notice *to whom* God will teach knowledge — to those weaned from milk (those who desire to progress to solid food). Also, notice *how* He will teach it — He will draw from passages of Scripture, a little from here and a little from there, until the whole picture is complete; a bit from this book and a bit from that book, making the overall picture more and more detailed. (Of course, the various passages drawn from various places must each be understood within the context from which they came, and even that context from the larger context.) That's why a survey of the whole Bible is foundational to understanding its individual pieces. The better one understands how the whole is made up, the more apt one will be to understand the individual passages correctly, thus moving from milk to solid food, and then from solid food to strong meat (I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14).

Please continue to pray that the Lord will give you more and more understanding, and that His Holy Spirit will be active in your life as your Teacher.

Day One — First Things First

Last week we had a small glimpse into the heart of Moses, and how he sought to know God better. Seeking God is the first step and is an important element in grasping and understanding Scripture. Another important element in understanding Scripture is knowing *how* God laid it out, and then to compare Scripture with

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Scripture. (Again, Scripture is its own best commentary.) And as we study through various Scriptures, questions will be asked. PLEASE (please!) derive your answers from the Scripture itself. These questions are designed to help you *see* what the Scripture is saying!

God says of His Word —

II Timothy 3

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

How much of Scripture is described in this verse?

From this passage, describe what all of Scripture is good for.

What does the Word of God do for the man of God?

Go back and circle the word *profitable*. What do you think it means that something is *profitable*?

Let's cover the basics here – in order for something to be *profitable*, it must first have *a foundation* or a base upon which profit can accrue. Paul tells us in I Corinthians *exactly* what the foundation is, and how a person is to build upon it.

I Corinthians 3

11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

What is the foundation that must be laid first (v.11)?

Then, what is to be built upon that foundation?

According to v. 13, what will become evident in the day (referring to the Day of Judgment)?

In a very real sense in this passage, Paul tells us about reward and loss being built upon a previously laid foundation through *the type of work* each man does. According to this passage how is reward revealed, and how is loss revealed?

In the previous passage from II Timothy chapter three, Paul deals with the fact that Scripture is inspired by God. Inspired means *God-breathed*. *Breath* and *spirit* are translated from the same Greek word *pneuma*. In I Corinthians, Paul tells us that the Scriptures are spiritual thoughts put into spiritual words. Scriptures are *God-breathed* — *spiritual* thoughts, put into *spiritual* words (I Cor. 2:13).

From these passages, it must be concluded that unless a person possesses a living spirit, he cannot understand Scripture, for the Scriptures are spiritually discerned! Of course, anyone can read the Scriptures, but not everyone is able to understand the meaning behind the Words.

All people are born spiritually dead (Eph. 2:5). In order for a person to be able to understand Scripture, that person must experience spiritual birth, or a birth from above. This is brought about through faith in the death of Jesus Christ, with the Spirit of God breathing life into that individual who had previously been spiritually dead. This life is brought about through that individual exercising faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, thereby bringing about his *spiritual birth*. That which is born of flesh is flesh (our first birth), and that which is born of the spirit is spirit (our second birth [John 3:6]). And since Scriptures are *spiritual thoughts put into spiritual words*, only when a person has *spiritual life* breathed into him by the Holy Spirit (through faith in Jesus' death on the cross) can he begin to understand spiritual thoughts, as they are put into spiritual words.

With spiritual life in place, where does one begin to grasp the overall picture of Scripture? While many Christians begin their spiritual journey at a place in God's Word *other than the beginning* (i.e., Genesis), it actually becomes essential to go back to the beginning and begin drawing the big picture from there! This is what we will do in this study. Next week we will begin in Genesis chapter one, we will begin to lay the foundation for all of Scripture. Then in succeeding weeks we will journey through the different portions of God's Word seeking to grasp the overall scope, ending in the Book of Revelation, all the while we will be building upon the foundation that must be laid from the beginning.

In order to come into a greater understanding of the Bible, there are some important keys of interpretation that one must have. One key is to understand the overall scope of Scripture — the big picture, if you will. One must study to see where the Scriptures *begin*, and why they begin there. Then study to see *where they end*, and *why they end there*. Then study to see *what are all the pieces between those two points*, and *how these pieces fit together* to make up one cohesive Body of Truth.

All in all, we must strive to see *how God gave His Word*, for only then can we properly understand it.

One helpful tool used in this process is a Biblical timeline. There should be a ledger-size timeline in the back of your workbook. (If for some reason it is missing from your book, you can draw one for yourself, as it is quite simple. There is a small picture of the timeline on pg. 9 which you can use to copy your own. Simply draw it out on a large sheet [ledger size] of paper in a “landscape” format.) You can use this timeline throughout your study, filling in information as you come to it along the way. We will cover it in detail along our way.

The Biblical Timeline

Today we will begin to fill in the basic points on the timeline. (You may want to mark everything in pencil for now.) Notice the broken line with an arrow on the left side of the sheet. This broken line represents “Ages Past.” Mark that now.

Then on the right side of the sheet, there is another broken line and an arrow. This represents “Ages Future.” Mark that now.

The timeline is divided into sections by the use of vertical lines. The first vertical line on the left represents *the end of ages past and the beginning of the present age, and time as we know it*. (Time as opposed to eternity. The two are distinct from each other, and this distinction must be understood.) This point in time, represented by the first vertical line, would be found in Genesis 1:2b ff. Though eternity past is mentioned in Genesis 1:1, 2a, it is only mentioned briefly. Time, as we know it, begins in v. 2b. (More detail is given about eternity past in subsequent Scriptures. We will get more of the details about this in Lesson Four of our study.)

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This first vertical line represents the six days in Genesis chapter one. However, for practical purposes, you will want to mark this line by writing “Adam” underneath it, for it is on the 6th day at this *time* that God created Adam.

The second vertical line represents the call of Abraham. Mark that line by writing the name “Abraham” underneath it. There is a 2,000-year period between Adam and Abraham, so you may want to make note of that in the space between these two vertical lines.

Moving to the right along the timeline, you see the cross. Of course, this represents the first coming of Jesus Christ. Mark this as such. There is a 2,000- year period of time between Abraham and Christ's first coming. So mark the space accordingly.

Now go to the last vertical line, just before the right arrow. This last vertical line represents *the end of time*, and *the beginning of eternity future*. At this point in the timeline, the present heavens and earth pass away and a new heavens and new earth come into existence. Mark that line with the words “New Heaven and New Earth.”

Now look at what you have. You can see the distinction between time and eternity. You can see that *time* is broken into certain segments, by major events in history. The thing to be grasped at this point in our study is that the Bible mostly deals with *time*, not eternity. While there is a little information given to us about eternity whether past or future, it is just that — *little* information! And it serves the student of Scripture well to make the distinction between time and eternity when studying any portion of Scripture, *especially when it comes to the area of prophecy.*

If you have any thoughts or questions at this point, you may want to write them on your Q. and A. sheet in the [Appendix](#) (pg. 5).

Day Two — The Old and New Testaments

Yesterday we looked at the fact that there needs to be a distinction made between time and eternity. The need for this distinction will become more apparent as we continue studying. In fact, the need for any of these keys of interpretation will become more apparent as you move forward.

Along with making the distinction between time and eternity, it is also important to see how the Old Testament relates to the New Testament, allowing each to shed light on the other. God's Word is given *progressively* and with purpose. It comprises one large Body of Truth, with every part fitting into the whole, and every part needing to be understood in light of the whole. The revelation of the Word is progressive. With just a few keys for proper understanding, one can begin in Genesis and work his way through the Bible progressively, and a lifetime of learning can ensue! In fact, a person could literally study for a lifetime, and never stop learning, since there is so much for one to learn!

As stated before, and will be stated again, every single verse has a context — the passage; and every passage has a context — the chapter; and every chapter has a context — the book; every book has a context — the Bible. Again, the Bible is one Body of Truth with an untold number of facets, the sum of which draws the overall scope of God's revelation to man.

If a person begins in the New Testament and pays no attention to the Old, he would miss the main message and the significance of Scripture as a whole. For example, the first book of the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew, begins with the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the names of whom appear in the Old Testament.

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Matthew 1

1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. 2 Abraham begot Isaac...

Why would it be important for the names to appear like this? Again, it is not happenstance. The Holy Spirit is telling us something. These names are not there just for the historical value that they bring to genealogy. The names of these men are fraught with significance and meaning, as they relate to Jesus Christ. And if a person doesn't study these men (and many others) within the context of the Old Testament, he stands to misunderstand God's intent.

As we look at a few passages in today's lesson, we have a specific goal in mind. This week we are striving to understand the importance of seeing the New Testament in the light of the Old, and vice versa. So today's passages will serve as an example of this. So, let's look at our example passages.

Preceding Christ's public appearance, a man named John came baptizing for the forgiveness of sin. John was the one spoken of by Isaiah the prophet saying that he, John, would prepare the way of the Lord. At some point, Jesus appeared on the scene to be baptized by John. Read about it.

Matthew 3

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" 15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. 16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and 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."

One of the things to be noted here is what the voice from heaven said (v. 17). Write out the exact words.

Christians today seem to think little about these words, having heard them so frequently, and having not understood them in light of the Old Testament. But because of the Old Testament implication of these words, this would have been startling to a Jew! These words point right back to a very specific text in the Old Testament where God sent a very specific message to King David through Nathan the prophet, concerning David's descendant and his kingdom. Here is a portion of what God said to David. (We'll study the extended passage in more detail in coming weeks.) God spoke to David, saying:

II Samuel 7

12 "When your days 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. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men

It is v. 14 that relates to what the *voice out of heaven* said on the day John baptized Jesus. How are the two statements related?

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After hearing this prophecy, David went in before the Lord, and thanked Him for what He had promised him. David made this statement in the midst of his prayer of thanksgiving —

II Samuel 7:19b ...and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come...

According to this statement, what did David understand concerning the timing of this prophecy?

With this information, don't you find it interesting to note that David's name is mentioned first in Christ's genealogy in the opening sentence in the Gospel of Matthew? What do you think could be the implication here?

If you didn't know the background of the prophecy made to David in the Old Testament, then this statement made from heaven would have little meaning. What meaning does this Old Testament passage bring to the New Testament passage in Matthew 3:17?

All of this would have been/should have been of great interest to the Jew. They knew the context of the statement made from heaven. Through the prophet Nathan, God said that He (God) would be a Father to a descendant of David, and this Descendant would be God's Own Son; and this Descendant would sit on David's throne, which would be established forever. Any Jew hearing the voice from heaven that day would have understood what the implications were — the One spoken of by The Voice which came out of heaven is the Holy One of Israel, the Greater Son of David, the Expected One, the One to be the anointed King!

There was another time God spoke audibly from heaven. It was the day that Jesus took three of His disciples to a mountain and was transfigured before them into His kingdom and glory. The three disciples — Peter, James and John — heard a voice from heaven that day as well. The words were very similar to what had been heard the day Jesus was baptized.

Matthew 17

5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

Here again, God calls Jesus His Son, referring back to what the Prophet Nathan told David about his future descendant and throne. Have you noticed that Jesus being God's Son has something to do with His being King?

Psalms 2

7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

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Lesson Two

If you compare what we learned in II Sam. 7 to Mt. 3:17; 17:5 to what we read in Ps. 2, it becomes easy to see that Sonship implies rulership.

Did you get that? **Sonship implies rulership!** Do you see the connection made here? In studying the Bible, this is a point that needs to be understood and remembered. The Jews understood that sonship implied rulership because they knew the Old Testament Scriptures. The point is, we need to know the OT if we want to understand the NT.

If we have a lack of understanding in relating the New with the Old Testament, then much is missed. But the Jews would not have missed it! In fact, this is the one specific reason that the Jews wanted to crucify Jesus. When Jesus stood before the chief priests and the Council just prior to His crucifixion, the high priest questioned Him, “**I adjure you by the Living God, that you tell us that you are the Christ, the Son of the God**” (Mt. 26:63, 64; cf. Mk. 14:61). From the eyes and ears of the onlookers, His answer served as His death sentence. But of course, we know that God sent His Son...

Also, if one studied *the context* of II Samuel 7 and compared it to *the contexts* of Matthew 3:17; 17:5, along with *the context* of any other passage wherein the phrase “the Son of God” is used, one could learn very much about the phrase *the Son of God*, and the implications thereof. *Correct understanding takes place by comparing Scripture with Scripture*. That is the way it must be done, as that is the only way learning takes place.

Again, the purpose of our passages today is to give us one example (from innumerable examples) of how the New Testament relates to the Old. It might be put this way — the New Testament is *enfolded* in the Old, and the Old Testament is *unfolded* in the New. True enough!

As we close today, write out a brief summary of what you learned today. (These summaries will be reviewed on Day Five.)

Day Three — The Central Person of Scripture

The Bible is a word picture...it tells a story. It has one main plot, with innumerable subplots, and each and every subplot plays into the overall plot. The story has several main characters: God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and His angels, God’s arch enemy (Satan and his angels), and man. The setting is the earth and the heavens surrounding the earth. The story opens in conflict and ends in the resolution of that very same conflict. But the overall main Character in the overall story is God’s Son, Jesus Christ. Everything has to do with Him. Everything!

All of that which is written in God’s Word is written about the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus’ Own Words, the whole Old Testament is about Him. (That is quite a statement to make, but the truth of it is born out in the passages we will study today.) And it is evident that the whole New Testament is about Him as well. And all Scriptures should be read and studied with this in mind.

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Yesterday we saw an example of how the New Testament relates to the Old — revealing the Father/Son relationship. Yesterday's example was only one of innumerable examples we could have looked at. I hope you picked up that key. It is very important to see the connection between the two Testaments.

Actually, Jesus Himself connects the two Testaments in a way that would be good for us to comprehend and follow as a guide to understanding. His very words reveal that a good grasp of the Old Testament is paramount.

Jesus spent three years in public ministry. Even at the end of that period, after His death and resurrection, He needed to teach His disciples something about the way they viewed the Old Testament Scriptures. We would do well to learn the same lesson they did.

This particular event happened on Resurrection Day. There were two disciples who were setting out on a seven-mile journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Their hearts were downcast because of the previous days' events, i.e. the crucifixion of the One they had hoped would redeem Israel, and the report that He had been seen alive after His death. Without their knowing Who He was, Jesus began walking and talking with them. He questioned them as to their thoughts and conversation. Their response to these events revealed a very definite lack of understanding of the way the Old Testament was put together. This lack of understanding (something which should not have been the case for these disciples), evoked this response from Jesus:

Luke 24

25 Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 “Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

What descriptive term did Jesus use in describing these two disciples?

According to Jesus' Own words, why did Jesus call them this?

Write out what the disciples had missed, and how Jesus corrected their mistake.

According to this passage, how much of the Old Testament is about Him?

What portion of the Old Testament did Moses write?

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

The events of that day continued. The threesome arrived at their destination, and the two men asked Jesus to stay with them. He complied. Even yet, they did not recognize Him. Then, they sat down to eat. Here is where it becomes really interesting —

Luke 24

30 Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. 32 And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

At what moment did they recognize Who He was?

Why do you think they recognized Him at that moment?

Drawing from this whole story, and seeing the Scriptures the way Jesus taught them, what effect did it have on them (v. 32)?

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

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

Luke 24

44 Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

According to this passage, where did Jesus say one could go to find all things that are written about Him?

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

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We have just seen the positive side of grasping this key of understanding — two disciples moving from a place of foolishness to a place wherein their hearts burned within them. But let's look at a picture on the negative side. Let's look at a passage that shows a group of people who refused to accept that the entire Old Testament was about Jesus. And the result was that they remained in ignorant foolishness.

When reading this passage notice the reprimand Jesus gives to the Pharisees, who had the same Old Testament Scriptures as did the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and who claimed to be Moses' disciples (John 9:28). The following is what He said to them after a fairly lengthy discourse in John chapter five. Pay close attention to vv. 46 and 47.

John 5

45 “Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Rephrase the scope of what Jesus said.

Remember that these men saw themselves as disciples of Moses (John 9:28). So, these Pharisees knew what Jesus was saying. He was being so specific with them, that they could not have missed it! They would have known what was written by Moses in these books. Moses makes a very interesting statement in:

Deuteronomy 18

15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16 according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’ 17 And the LORD said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good. 18 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. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him...

What does Moses say God will do (v. 15)?

Then what did he say that the people must do (v. 15b)?

What had God told Moses that He would do through the promised Prophet (v. 18)?

And what would happen to the one who doesn't listen to the Words of that Prophet?

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Again, today we are *not* looking so much at what these passages teach (as interesting as they are!); but rather we are striving to grasp an important key in understanding how Jesus taught that the Scriptures should be understood. As we close for the day, would you summarize what you have learned along these lines?

Days Four and Five — The Law of First-Mention

Today and tomorrow will be spent reading an article written and compiled by Roel Velema who lives in the Netherlands. You can take two days to read through this material, then at the end of Day Five, you will be asked to summarize this reading, as well as your week's summaries. So please give yourself time today and tomorrow to do a thorough job. This information is so helpful, so be sure to give it a good read!

The Law of First-Mention

by Roel Velema
Hattem, The Netherlands

Scripture reveals certain principles needed for the proper and faithful interpretation of that book. These principles have to be recognized as Bible students seek to properly understand the Word.

One of these principles is called “the law of first-mention.” It is a principle that has received hardly any attention in books written on hermeneutics, and one can only come to the conclusion that this principle has fallen into disuse.

What is this “Law of First-Mention” or “First-Occurrence Principle”?

The “law of first-mention” is the principle in the interpretation of Scripture which states that the first mention or occurrence of a subject in Scripture establishes an unchangeable pattern, with that subject remaining unchanged in the mind of God throughout Scripture.

Down through the years this important principle has been recognized by able commentators of the Bible. *A. T. Pierson* called it "the Divine Law of Firsts."

Benjamin Willis Newton (Brethren movement, 19th century), wrote about this principle:

"I find in Scripture a principle of interpretation, which I believe, if conscientiously adopted, will serve as an unfailing guide as to the mind of God as contained therein. The first mention of a thing, the very first words of any subject of which the Holy Spirit is going to treat, is the keystone of the whole matter."

Arthur Pink wrote in his book “Interpretation of the Scriptures”:

The law of first-mention. Very frequently this is of great help in arriving at the meaning of a word or expression. Since there be but one Speaker throughout the entire Word, and He knew from the

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beginning all that He was going to say, He has so ordered His utterances as to forecast from the outset whatever was to follow. Thus, by noting its setting and associations, the initial occurrence of anything in the Scriptures usually intimates to us how it subsequently will be employed. In other words, the earliest pronouncement of the Holy Spirit on a subject very frequently indicates, substantially, what is found in the later references thereto. This is of real assistance to the expositor, supplying him with a kind of key to what follows. So far as we are aware, attention was originally directed to this canon of exegesis by Lord Bacon (1600), and for more than forty years this writer has made use of the same, putting it to the test in scores of instances, and while he has found a few cases where the first mention of a term failed to intimate clearly its future scope, he has never met with one that was out of harmony therewith; the vast majority of them were invaluable in serving to define their significance and scope. This will appear from the illustrations which follow.

The first prophecy recorded in Scripture supplies the key to the whole subject of Messianic prediction, furnishing a remarkable outline and forecast of all that was to follow. Said the Lord God to the serpent, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15).

First, it is to be noted that those words were not addressed to Adam and Eve, implying that man was not the immediate party in the covenant of recovery; that it depended not upon anything of, by, or from him.

Second, that this Divine pronouncement was made after the fall, and from this point onwards prophecy is always consequent upon human failure, not coming in during the normal state of affairs, but only when ruin has begun and judgment is impending — the next prophecy was through Enoch (Jude 14, 15) just before the Flood! In the prophecy of Genesis 3: 15, it was revealed that all human hope was to center in a Coming One. It made known that the Coming One should be man, the woman’s “seed,” and therefore of supernatural birth. It announced that He would be the object of Satan’s enmity. It foretold that He should be temporarily humiliated — bruised in His heel. It also proclaimed His ultimate victory, for He should bruise the serpent’s head, and therefore must be more than man. It intimated the age-long strife there would be between the two seeds: the children of the Devil and those united unto Christ.

And the Lord said unto Cain, “What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground” (Gen. 4:10).

That is the first time that all-important word “blood” is mentioned in the Scriptures, and like all the initial occurrences of fundamental terms it well re-pays the most careful attention and meditation. Profoundly important is this reference, foreshadowing as it does some of the most essential and outstanding features of the atonement of Christ.

Abel was a shepherd (Gen. 4:2) and was hated, though without cause, by his brother (I John 3: 12, 13). He did not die a natural death, but met with a violent end: as the good Shepherd was crucified and slain by wicked hands (Acts 2:23). In the light of those facts, how deeply significant are the words “the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me.” That is the all-important but inexpressibly blessed thing in connection with the blood of Christ: it is vocal Godwards! It is “the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Heb. 12:24), for it satisfied every demand of God and procured inestimable blessing for His people.

The next mention of “blood” is in Genesis 9:4, where we learn that life is in the blood.

The third reference is Exodus 12:13, where it delivers from the avenging angel. Put the three together and we have a complete outline of all the subsequent teaching of Scripture upon the blood. They treat, respectively, of death, life, salvation.

The law of first-mention opens up Scripture in a way God has not treasured up in any of His other principles of Biblical interpretation. Scripture passages that are otherwise unknown to the Bible student, present Biblical truths of utter beauty and serve as a basis to open up other passages in Scripture.

Arlen Chitwood presented some of these beautiful truths in his writings:

There is a law of “first-mention” in Scriptural interpretation which states that the first time a subject is mentioned, the subject remains unchanged throughout Scripture.

Exodus chapter seventeen presents the first mention following the Exodus of Satan's move against Israel, along with God's attitude toward this move. Thus, the pattern is set in this chapter for Satan's strategy in his efforts to destroy Israel through the use of Gentile national powers, and the pattern is also set (based on previously revealed principles) concerning God's attitude toward a Gentile nation which would allow itself to be so used. The basic principles governing God's attitude toward and treatment of individuals or nations participating in anti-Semitism were established during the days of Abraham (Gen. 12:3), and these principles, as the principles governing the law of first mention in Exodus chapter seventeen, remain unchanged throughout Scripture (Arlen Chitwood: *By Faith*).

Two cities figure prominently in events on earth during the 2,600-year period covering “the times of the Gentiles”: Jerusalem, and Babylon. And these two cities, both mentioned very early in Scripture (Gen.14:18; 10:10), stand in complete contrast to one another at every point. Babylon is **first mentioned** in connection with Nimrod (the name means “rebel,” “one who revolts”), and Jerusalem is first mentioned in connection with Melchizedek (meaning, “King of peace” [Heb. 7:2]), **establishing first-mention principles which hold constant throughout Scripture** (Arlen Chitwood: *Focus on the Middle East*).

The “cherubim” (singular, “cherub”) are **first mentioned in Scripture** in connection with the earth’s government, **establishing an unchangeable way** — a first-mention principle — in which angels designated by this name are seen throughout Scripture. They are first seen in Scripture guarding the entrance to the garden in Eden following man being driven from the garden because of sin. They were placed as guardians to prevent man from reentering the garden, in his fallen state, and eating of the tree of life – the tree which would have provided (and will yet future provide) the wisdom and knowledge for man to rule and reign over the earth.

And a “mountain” in Scripture signifies a kingdom. Satan, in his unfallen state, was given a kingdom (this earth), and he was placed, by God, in the position of the messianic angel (the ruling angel) over this “mountain,” this kingdom (Ezek. 28:14) (Arlen Chitwood: *From Acts to the Epistles*).

Genesis 14:18, 19 provides the first mention of heavenly blessings associated with Abraham and his seed, though such was in view within God's original promise to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, as recorded in Gen. 12:1-3. And this first mention of heavenly promises and blessings appears in a Messianic type.

Melchizedek, one of two central figures forming the Messianic type (Abraham being the other) is also presented in Scripture for the first time in this passage. The type surrounds that day when Christ will come forth in the antitype of Melchizedek, as the great King-Priest in Jerusalem, with bread and wine (cf. Matt. 26:29), and bless Abraham and his descendants – both heavenly and earthly.

Thus, **more than one first-mention principle is established in Gen. 14:18, 19**, and that which is established in this passage remains constant throughout Scripture. Heavenly and earthly blessings reside only in the seed of Abraham (something which never changes in Scripture), and these blessings will be realized during that coming day when Christ exercises the Melchizedek priesthood (Arlen Chitwood: *From Egypt to Canaan*).

The connection of “God’s breath” with life (the connection between II Tim. 3:16 and Heb. 4:12) is given in Gen. 2:7. Man was not created alive. Rather, man was formed from the dust of the ground as an inanimate, lifeless being. Then God, through breathing into His lifeless new creation, imparted life. God “breathed into his [Adam’s] nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

This is the first mention in Scripture of life in relation to man, **establishing a first-mention principle which can never change throughout Scripture**. Any time beyond this point in Scripture when one finds life in relation to man, this life must always be effected by means of “the breath of

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God.” There must always be a breathing in on God’s part in order for life to exist (cf. Ezek. 37:1-10; Luke 8:54, 55) (Arlen Chitwood: *From Egypt to Canaan*).

The context of Rev. 1:10 and central message of the book clearly reveal that the writer, through the use of the expression, “the Lord’s day,” could have had only one thing in mind – the future “day of the Lord.” John was not only removed from the Isle of Patmos and taken to heaven but he was also moved forward in time to the end of the present dispensation. He was transported to a place and time where he saw Christ occupying His future position as Judge in the midst of His Church (Rev. 1:11-20). And from that point forward, the Book of Revelation has to do with things either anticipating judgment (chs. 2, 3, 5), with judgment itself (chs. 1, 6-20, or with things resulting from judgment (chs. 4, 19, 21, 22) during “the Lord’s day,” “the day of the Lord.”

The first reference to the Day of the Lord in Scripture **forms a first-mention principle, establishing a meaning and usage for this day which holds constant throughout Scripture**. The Day of the Lord is first mentioned in Isa. 2:12 as a day when the “lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted” (Isa. 2:11-17). To bring the latter to pass (the Lord’s exaltation), the Day of the Lord is always associated in Scripture with God’s judgment, both upon man and the material creation. Judgment during this day falls first upon the Church (cf. Rev. 1:10-20; I Thess. 5:2-4), then upon Israel and the Gentile nations (cf. Rev. 6:1ff; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 2, 11, 31; 3:14), and then upon the material creation (cf. Rev. 21:1; II Peter 3:10). This is the way the Book of Revelation is structured (Arlen Chitwood: *In the Lord’s Day*).

When Christ exercises the Melchizedek priesthood, He will have a dual reign. He will sit on His Own throne in the heavenly Jerusalem, ruling over the earth with His co-heirs, His consort queen; and He will also sit on David's throne in the earthly Jerusalem in the midst of His people, Israel (the nation which will look upon the Pierced One and be saved at His second advent). Occupying a dual reign of this nature, Christ will thus be a King-Priest in both the heavenly Jerusalem and the earthly Jerusalem.

This will be in perfect keeping with both heavenly and earthly promises associated with Abraham and his seed, first brought to light in connection with the first mention of Melchizedek in Scripture (Gen. 14:18, 19). Melchizedek blessed Abraham as “possessor of heaven and earth”; and the seed of Abraham, both heavenly and earthly, are to “possess the gate of [rule over] his enemies” (Gen. 22:17, 18) (Arlen Chitwood: *Let Us Go On*).

A first-mention principle has been established in Gen. 2:7, and life which man derives from God must always be acquired through the same means set forth in this verse. God alone initially “imparts” and subsequently “continues” and “sustains” life; and this is always accomplished, in its entirety, through the *Neshamah* of God (Arlen Chitwood: *The Neshamah*).

Now, the question: Why is the Word of God “alive,” “powerful,” and “sharper than any two-edged sword”? The answer: Because of its origin. The Word is “*Theopneustos*”; The Word is “God-breathed.”

But, what does that mean? And why is the Word “alive” because of its origin? This is where one has to go back to beginning points in the Old Testament and find the first mention in Scripture of God bringing a matter to pass through the use of His breath.

This is necessary not only because of the need to compare Scripture with Scripture but also because of a principle of Biblical interpretation, called, “**the first-mention principle**.” This principle has to do with unchangeableness, and it centers around an unchangeable structure of the Word given by the unchangeable God. Because of the inherent nature of the Word, the first time a subject is mentioned in Scripture, a pattern, a mold is established at that point which remains unchanged throughout the remainder of Scripture.

Remaining within this principle, the first time one finds the breath of God mentioned in Scripture is in Gen. 2:7, in connection with life imparted to man; and, consequently, at this beginning point, this verse connects life with the breath of God after an unchangeable fashion. God formed and fashioned

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man from the dust of the ground, but man was not created alive. Life was subsequently imparted through God breathing into man's "nostrils the breath of life," resulting in man becoming "a living soul."

Thus, at this point in Scripture the unchangeable connection between God's breath and life is established and set. Only God can produce life, and any time life is produced beyond this point it must always be through the one means set forth at the beginning, revealed in Gen. 2:7 (Arlen Chitwood: *Theopneustos*).

Thus, the law of first-mention unlocks many treasures in the Word of God, for the principle is always completely consistent throughout Scripture.

This can be seen quite clearly in the first mention of the word “**sword**” in Scripture. The word is first mentioned in Gen 3:24: *“So he drove the man out, and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.”* The first mention of the word “sword” had to do with access or denial to the tree of life.

In Ephesians 6:17 we read: "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." The principle in Gen. 3:24 shows what is mentioned here in Eph. 6:17. The Word of God here has to do with access or denial to the tree of life. This perfectly agrees with the context, which had to do with the Word of the Kingdom, not with the gospel of God's grace.

It can also be seen in the word “**trumpet**” in Scripture. The first mention is in Exodus 19:13: “When the trumpet (ram’s horn) sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mount.” The trumpet has to do with a gathering, whether for blessing, for war, or for judgment.

Note Matt. 24:31 and I Thess. 4:16 how this principle remains unchanged in Scripture. However, the law of first-mention is not only limited to words, but can be applied also to concepts which appear for the first time in Scripture. For example, words such as “polygamy” and “monogamy” don’t appear in Scripture, but the first mention of this concept in Genesis 1 and 2, shows that monogamy – one man, one woman, with the union of the two forming one flesh – is the form for marriage in the mind of God, etc..

The law of first-mention shows that God's truth doesn't fluctuate, but that His truth is an evidence of His own steadfastness. This greatly challenges us as we press on to reach the end-goal of our faith (1 Peter 1:9), which necessitates our coming into a mature knowledge of His Word. And the principle of first-mention is therefore a principle which Christians do well to heed in their study of the Word as they move toward that goal.

The End of Roel Velema's writing.

As we close for the day, please summarize what you have learned from this reading.

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As we close for the week, briefly summarize your week's summaries.

Understanding the Bible – Biblical Survey

Lesson Three — The Purpose of Man’s Creation

Day One — Observations of the Beginning

Day Two — The Question of the Purpose for Man’s Creation

Day Three — The Answer Spelled Out

Day Four — “It is Not Good...”

Day Five — What Happened?

Have you ever wondered why God created man? Or have you wondered what is the reason for *your* existence? What is God’s reason for man’s existence? Can you give specific answers to these questions?

Did you know that Scripture records God’s *spoken intent* for creating man just *prior* to creating him (Gen. 1:26), and reiterated His purpose just *after* creating him (Gen. 1:28)? Scripture records the very first words of God concerning man at this point, revealing His purpose for man’s creation. And this would set a First Mention Principle for the purpose of mankind, which wouldn’t change from that point forward!

This week we will look closely at the question — Why did God create man? Remember to pray for a clearer understanding. Seek help, guidance, and understanding from the Holy Spirit. And remember to *lean not on your own understanding*, but listen to what God says in His recorded Word.

Day One — Observations of the Beginning

Today we are going to observe Genesis chapter one. You may remember that Genesis chapter one, along with the first three verses of chapter two, form the very foundation upon which all of Scripture rests. There is good reason why God places this information at the beginning. His placing it there was not happenstance!

Right now we are simply turning up the puzzle pieces. In upcoming weeks, you should be able to easily see how these things begin to fit together in the big picture. Give yourself time to study! These *first* things are important.

Let’s begin by reading the first two verses of the Bible —

Genesis 1

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was <01961> without form <08414>, and void <0922>; and darkness <02822> was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

We'll come back to v. 1 in next week's lesson, but for now, look up the following words from v. 2 in the Appendix—

was <01961>

without form <08414>

void <0922>

darkness <02822>

After looking up the definitions, state the condition of the earth, as found in v. 2 —

Now we will look at what God did to bring the earth into order out of such horrible disorder. The remainder of Genesis chapter one is divided into *six days of time*. In the NOTES section after each passage, briefly write out which day it was, and what God did on that particular day. As the example, the first one is done for you.

Genesis 1

3 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.

NOTES:

The first day — God brought forth light; made a separation between light and darkness; called the light day, and the darkness night.

Genesis 1

6 Then God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” **7** Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. **8** And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

NOTES:

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The Purpose of Man's Creation

Lesson Three

Genesis 1

9 Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

NOTES:

Genesis 1

14 Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 “and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

NOTES:

Genesis 1

20 Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

NOTES:

Genesis 1

24 Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind”; and it was so. **25**

And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 "Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. 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.

NOTES:

And now for the seventh day! Read the first three verses of chapter two and make notes of what the seventh day was all about.

Genesis 2

1 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. **2** And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. **3** Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

NOTES:

That's it for the day. See you tomorrow.

Day Two—The Question of the Purpose for Man's Creation

Begin today in prayer.

Before we begin to grasp a clear understanding from Scripture as to the purpose for man's creation, and without looking beyond this point in your workbook, write down what you think is/are the purpose(s) for man's creation and, if possible, give Scripture references. It is good to spend a bit of time on this, for if you do not know the purpose for man having been created, then how can you begin to know how to fulfill that

which should be your life's goal? So without going any further, state in your own words why you think man was created.

Go back and add any Biblical references you can use to substantiate what you just wrote.

Usually a person will answer the question of God's purpose for creating man by saying that man was created "to glorify God." They may get this idea from the passage below —

Isaiah 43

7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”

According to Isaiah 43:7, who is created for God's glory?

Would that be all of mankind, or just those who *are called by His name*?

Let's check out the context of this passage. (Do you remember how important *context* is for *proper understanding* of Scripture?)

Isaiah 43

1 But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. **2** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. **3** For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. **4** Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life. **5** Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, And gather you from the west; **6** I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth- **7** Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”

According to v. 1, who is called by the Lord's name?

Now relate v.1 to v.7. What relationship is there?

We can see that the passage is referring to Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation (at the end of Jacob's Trouble, Daniels 70th week), not mankind in general. This is *not* to say that mankind was not created to

glorify God! Man *is* to glorify God! But let's think it through — How would man glorify God? Very specifically, *how* would one accomplish this task?

Do you know of any other place(s) in Scripture where God's purpose is specifically stated? If so, write down the reference(s), briefly stating what the passages say —

Finding and fulfilling God's purpose in your life should be paramount in your mind. This should become our intended goal. So, let me ask — What is the goal of your life? And how does this goal relate to God's created purpose for you?

How do you plan to accomplish your goal? Name three specific things that may help you accomplish the goal of your life:

- 1)
2)
3)

The reason it is important to think these things through is that if God has a purpose for you — and He does — it becomes important for you to understand *exactly* what that purpose is, so that you can take the necessary steps to work toward fulfilling it. But if you do not know what His specific purpose is, then how will you accomplish it, or how will you know if and when you have accomplished it? Simply stated — it's good to think these things through, and to see if our thoughts on the subject are in complete agreement with God's Word. If any of us lack understanding in this area, it is best to find out now, while there may be time to make necessary adjustments. That is why I had you spend time writing out your thoughts. Just think it through a bit.

See you tomorrow.

Day Three — The Answer Spelled Out

Let's go back to the original question in our lesson — WHY DID GOD CREATE MAN? In the very beginning, even before He had need to redeem man, why did He *create* him? Did God specifically state His reason? Did He state His own purpose for mankind at the moment of creation? Yes, He did!

His intended purpose for man's creation is very clearly stated! You read this passage Day One of our lesson this week, but you may have missed it! God spelled out His purpose for creating man! Let's read it again (printed below) and underline God's stated purpose when you see it.

Genesis 1

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Write out God's stated purpose for creating man according to His own words.

Do you feel that God meant this literally?

How important do you think this first statement is? (Remember the Law of First Mention.)

Is there any reason for us to believe that God changed His mind about this?

Let's think through a few things. At this point in your understanding of mankind's history, has Adam or his offspring ever ruled over *all the earth*? In other words, from the moment Adam was created until now, has man had dominion over all the earth, including the birds of the air, the fish in the seas, and animals that roam over the whole earth?

“And let them rule,” were the very words that came out of the mouth of God at the very moment He was creating man. This was God’s plan for man. Was God’s plan thwarted? Was His plan never to be in place again? Is it yet to happen? When? Where? With whom? Write down any thoughts you might have about these things.

Let's go back to the passage in Genesis chapter one. Included are some words with Strong's numbers for you to look up the definitions —

Genesis 1

1 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful <06509> and multiply <07235>; fill <04390> the earth, and subdue <03533> it; have dominion <07287> over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” 29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 “Also, to every

beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.

be fruitful <06509>

multiply <07235>

fill <04390>

subdue <03533>

have dominion <07287>

Now go back and plug these definitions into the passage and write out what you have learned.

Now for the details of man's creation. God saw fit **not** to give these details in chapter one, however, He does give minimal detail in chapter two —

Genesis 2

7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. **8** The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. **9** And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

NOTES:

What was the man's body made from?

Genesis 2

15 Then the **LORD** God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend
<05647> and keep it <08104>.

NOTES:

tend <05647>

keep it <08104>

Then God gave Adam a command:

Genesis 2

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

What was God's command?

What would be the result if man disobeyed this command?

Think for a moment...what did God mean when He said that "man would die"? What would it mean *to die*? (We'll look at this again at the end of the lesson.)

We'll stop here for the day. I hope you are persevering, as we are laying down necessary foundational information. Keep seeking understanding for these things from the Lord.

Day Four — “It is Not Good...”

A careful look at Genesis chapter one reveals that every time God looked to see what He had done, He saw that it was good! But now we come to a place where He states, “It is not good...” After God created man and placed him in the garden, He saw that *it was not good for the man to be alone.*

Genesis 2

18 And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

And in the passage following this, we see that God gave Adam the job of naming all of the animals, all the while he was to be looking to see if there might be a suitable helper for him.

Genesis 2

19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam

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called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. 23 And Adam said: “This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.” 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

NOTES:

Thus, God “built” woman. From what was the woman’s body taken?

Write out the steps that God took to “build” the woman —

What did Adam name this new newly fashioned creature, and why?

From the text, what was the specific purpose for God creating woman?

Given the context of what we have studied thus far, what would it be that the woman was to help Adam do?

Since today’s study is rather brief, this would be a good time for you to briefly summarize what you have learned in the past four days, particularly noting the specific commands that God gave the man. Writing a summary at this point will help seal what you have learned.

Day Five — What Happened?

In the past four days we have glimpsed the stated purpose for man, as well as the actual creation of the man and the woman. We have also glimpsed the commands God gave Adam prior to His placing the man and the women in the garden. Today we want to see a little more of the detail of the ongoing story. We are laying part of the foundation of the Bible, so these study days are important. Be sure to continue to pray for understanding.

From the passages studied yesterday, what two trees did God place in center of the garden, and what was man to do with respect to these trees (Gen. 2:8 [see pg. 48])?

And just to get you thinking, why do you think God put the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden?

Let's read what happened.

Genesis 3

1 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." 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."

Summarize what happened in the various sections of this passage —

Verses 1-6:

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Verse 7:

Verses: 8-13

Continuing in Genesis chapter three, study the sections below and analyze carefully what is taking place. Write out your notes in the NOTES section.

Genesis 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; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 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.”

NOTES:

Genesis 3

16 To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule <04910> over you.”

NOTES:

rule <04910>

Genesis 3

17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

NOTES:

Back in Genesis 1:26, man was created *to have dominion* <07287> *over all the earth*. In Genesis 3:16, we see that man is now to *rule* <04910> *over the woman*. We can see from the number for each word that these are not the same Hebrew words.

rule <04910>

have dominion <07287>

Prior to the fall, part of the man's body was taken out of him and formed into the woman and presented back to him so that the two, as one, would have dominion over the earth. But *after the fall*, after the woman had become deceived, and both of them ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the man was now to *rule* over the woman. What is the difference here? Checking on the definitions again, what differences do you see in the two words?

Briefly write a comparison of what the man was created to do (prior to the fall), and what he was going to have to do now?

Before		After
--------	--	-------

Genesis 3

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. 22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" - 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

NOTES:

Taking into account all that has happened up to this point in time, do you see any significance in Genesis 3:20? If so, what?

What might be the significance of Genesis 3:21?

What might be the significance of Genesis 3:22, 24?

Again, we will consider — what does it mean to die? Is it ceasing to exist? Does it ever mean ceasing to exist? It is important to see the context wherein *death* was first presented in Scripture and go from there. How is death first presented in Scripture? Look back at Genesis 2:16, 17. It refers to a *separation*. It meant that in the day that Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, he was *separated from God* — he *did die* that day. And we can also learn that death also had reference to the complete triune nature of man as well — his spirit, and his soul, and his body.

- His spirit became separated from God's Spirit – his spirit *died*.
 - His soul became separated from only knowing good, he now knew evil experientially – his soul *died*.
 - His body became separated from the Glory with which he had been covered in the likeness of God, and in that respect – his body *died*.

We'll understand more of this as we continue to study. Then, we'll begin to see the importance of understanding what it means *to die*.

Much was lost in this decision to disobey. It literally changed all of mankind. Adam's sin corrupted his line of descendants as we see one of Adam's offspring, Cain, rising up and killing his brother, Abel (Gen. 4). Ultimately, the ramifications of Adam's sin are spelled out in the passage below.

Genesis 5

1 This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. 3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

What comparison can you make between Genesis 5:1 and 5:3?

Genesis 5:1

Genesis 5:3

We have learned a lot in this week's lesson. All of this is foundational for us to go forward in Scripture. All Scripture is based upon the foundation laid out in these early chapters. And we must remember that Scripture always interprets Scripture.

You're doing a great job. Keep it up!

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Lesson Four — The Present System of Rulership

Day One — Principalities and Powers

Day Two — In the Beginning

Day Three — World Rulers

Day Four — Satan’s Fall

Day Five — Angelic Dominion

Last week we saw that God’s stated purpose for the creation of man was that he would rule over the earth. But man fell and became disqualified to rule. We know that God has a plan of redemption for man, but even with redemption in place, we do not yet see man ruling as God intended. So the question is — Who is ruling now, and how does all of this fit into the overall picture of Scripture? This week, we will look into these things. Please pray for yourself and for the others in your study group. Ask the Lord to protect you this week as you study these things.

Some people struggle with the idea that man has been created to rule. Perhaps it is because they have never been taught this truth. And while it is true that *redeemed man* should bring glory to God, it also must be recognized that God’s first mention concerning the purpose of man’s creation is that he is to rule. This stated purpose for man, found in the *very first chapter* of the Bible, is an often overlooked foundational truth. And *if this truth is ignored, then it will be impossible to grasp the big picture of the purpose for man relative to time and eternity*. Taking this full circle, when man *does* rule, he will ultimately be glorifying God, for having fulfilled his purpose for his creation. (Now that is something to think about!)

Since man is not presently ruling, we have a question to ask: WHO is ruling over the earth at this present time?

Of course, God is the Sovereign over the universe, being the Creator and Supreme Ruler over all of creation. He is the One Who ‘*had no beginning, is now, and shall have no end.*’ He rules above all of creation from *the farthest sides of the north* (Is. 14:13b). But for some, perhaps seemingly mysterious reason, He has placed created beings to rule over the various provinces of His creation, including Earth.

And man since man failed at the very beginning, then what is happening over the planet earth? Who is presently positioned as the ruler of this earth? Did God just skip having anyone else rule and He rules directly? Or is there some sort of hierarchy in place?

Our goal this week is to “fit together this puzzle section” which will answer these questions. By seeing the face of this puzzle section you may begin to understand a part of the overall scheme of things which you may, or may not have previously understood. But beware! The process can be frustrating. You will want to know more. You will have more questions. You will want to see how this fits in the whole puzzle. Be patient! And pray! You must pray for wisdom. Pray that God will give you understanding. Pray that any blinders may fall off, that Satan will have no more ability to blind you from these truths, as these truths are vital to the overall picture. Hang in there! It will all come together for you. But it takes time and diligent study.

Let's see if we can get some of these questions answered from Scripture. We will first look at a few passages in the New Testament because herein it is stated so plainly. Tomorrow we'll get back to the Old Testament.

Day One — Principalities and Powers

As we saw in our study last week, Man, being created specifically to rule, was thwarted from being able to enter into that position because of a deceptive act that Satan did. And so we have wondered – who is ruling now over the earth. One very specific place in Scripture which deals with the question of rulership over this present world system is found in the Book of Ephesians. Read through the passage below, then look up the definitions in the Appendix.

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities <746>, against powers <1849>, against the rulers <2888> of the darkness <4655> of this age <165>, against spiritual hosts <4152> of wickedness <4189> in the heavenly places <2032>.

principalities <746>

powers <1849>

rulers <2888>

darkness <4655>

age <165>

spiritual hosts <4152 (see def. #2)>

wickedness <4189>

heavenly places <2032>

Now that you have looked up all the definitions, write in your own words the description of those we struggle against.

Ephesians 6:12 is a description of the hierarchy of the ruling forces over this world. Here are a few more New Testament passages that address the same topic —

John 14

30 [Jesus is speaking] “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler <758> of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

ruler <758>

What does Jesus call Satan?

II Corinthians 4

4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Who is *the god of this world*?

The following verse tells why the *ruler of the world* has no hold on Jesus —

Colossians 2

15 Having disarmed principalities <746> and powers <1849>, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

principalities <746>

powers <1849>

From the previous two verses, who are the principalities and powers to which Paul refers? (Notice that these are the identical words used in Eph. 6:12.)

Remember to continue to pray for proper understanding. It is only through the work of the Holy Spirit that one can begin to grasp truths in Scripture. See you tomorrow.

Day Two — In the Beginning

Skim over yesterday's lesson, so your mind will be refreshed on our topic for the week.

Because this topic is so powerful, remember you must begin in prayer. Ask God to **cover you** and **to give you wisdom and insight**. Satan does not want you to know these truths about his character and purposes.

Be sure to pray that the Lord will open your eyes. It is important to know our enemy in order to do battle with him. Satan has blinded our eyes to so much of what God desires the Church to know concerning His plans and purposes for the ages. There is good reason Satan tries to keep us blinded. It will become evident as we learn more. God desires us to seek Him diligently and He will reveal His truths to us as they are found in His Word.

Let's begin today by simply *thinking through* some questions. (Although I am not having you write out answers to these questions, *I do want you to think through these things.*)

- When was Satan created and when did he fall?
 - Does Satan actually rule over this earth in a real and tangible sense?
 - Has Satan ruled over the earth from the beginning or was he given dominion at some point thereafter? If thereafter, when was it?
 - Why was Satan present (in a fallen state) in the Garden of Eden *so soon* after man's creation?
 - Why did Satan desire to bring about Adam's fall? What was in it for him?

In order to answer these questions we need to look back at Genesis, the book of beginnings, and allow Scripture to interpret things for us. Having a correct understanding of *the beginning* is paramount in understanding other portions of Scripture. So please bear with the process of “fitting together this puzzle section” and examining it.

Last week in the first portion of the homework for Day One (pg. 41), we looked at the first two verses of the Bible. Please turn back to this section and review what you studied. For today's study you only need to review the first two verses in Genesis. Do that now.

Having these things fresh in your mind, consider 1:2. In the original text, Genesis 1:2 begins with a Hebrew letter called a ‘*waw*’ (often pronounced “vav”). This Hebrew letter, found at the beginning of v. 2, can be translated in one of two ways -- either using a **conjunctive** such as “and” (which would *connect* two words or phrases together), or a **disjunctive** such as “but” (which would *disconnect* two words or phrases).

The Hebrew *waw* is used some 28,000 times in the Old Testament. Of those 28,000 times, it is translated about 25,000 times *conjunctively* “and” and about 3,000 times *disjunctively* “but.” **Context** is usually the determining factor as to which way it should be translated. But Genesis 1:2 is rather unique in its position in Scripture in that there is little *preceding context* — only one verse. At first glance, this might make it appear somewhat difficult to determine just how the *waw* was intended for interpretation. But considering the first verse of Scripture and relating it to subsequent Scriptures, it is easy to see that this can be easily understood, even here in the second verse of all Scripture.

Specifically, we are looking to see if the *waw* was intended to *join* or *connect* verses one and two in a conjunctive fashion — “and,” or if it was intended to *disjoin* or *disconnect* verses one and two in a disjunctive fashion — “but.”

Essentially the question is — Did God *create* the earth formless and void OR did the earth **become** formless and void?

With v. 1 preceding v. 2 in Genesis chapter one, we can now look to see if any other passages shed light on the correct way to translate this Hebrew letter. Isaiah gives us specific insight into this question. Let's study the passage thoroughly.

Isaiah 45

18 For thus says the LORD, Who created <01254> the heavens, Who is God, Who formed <03335> the earth <0776> and made <06213> it, Who has established it, Who did not create <01254> it in vain <08414>, Who formed <03335> it to be inhabited: “I am the LORD, and there is no other.

From this passage write out each thing *that the Lord did*. I'll begin for you, then you keep going with all the points contained in this passage —

- 1) He created the heavens
 - 2) He formed _____

Now look up the definitions:

created <01254>

formed <03335>

earth <0776>

made <06213>

in vain <08414> (Please note – this is the same word translated “without form” in Gen. 1:2.)

Below the verse is typed out again, only the pronoun "it" has been replaced with the noun "the earth." This helps the verse to be more easily understood.

Isaiah 45:

18 For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made [the earth], Who has established [the earth], Who did not create [the earth] in vain [without form], Who formed [the earth] to be inhabited: “I am the LORD, and there is no other.

With the definitions in mind, write out what you learn from this passage.

Compare Isaiah 45:18 with Genesis 1:2 and write out the comparison. (When doing your comparison, keep in mind that the phrase “in vain” is translated from the same Hebrew word used in Gen. 1:2 translated “without form”.)

Genesis 1:1 states that God created (Heb., *bara*) the earth. Genesis 1:2 gives a description of the earth as being *without form* (Heb., *tohuw*). Isaiah says that God, “**did not create** (*bara*) the earth **in vain** (*tohuw*). So, we might wonder what happened?

Tomorrow we will try to see what this all means, and why it matters. Please continue to ask the Lord to give you understanding in His Word.

Have a good day.

Day Three — World Rulers

Remember to pray for spiritual discernment and insight, and for God to hedge you up with His protection.

In the first day's homework this week, we saw that Satan is called "the god of this world," "the ruler over the earth." Keeping this in mind, here are a few more questions for you to ponder —

- When did Satan gain dominion over the earth? Was it before or after he fell?
 - Does his dominion over the earth continue to this day?
 - Why did he desire to see man fall?
 - Since a believer's free gift of eternal life cannot be revoked for any reason, then why does Satan even bother with Christians? What does he hope to gain?

These are good questions to consider. They are also questions which should be answered if we are to know and do battle with our enemy, an enemy who is against our very created purpose, and one who fights at every turn to keep us from understanding these things.

The importance of believers knowing the purpose for their creation becomes evident as we begin to understand more and more about these *first things* in Scripture. It is also important so that we might make the goal of our life the fulfillment of God's purpose for us. In order to do that, it is essential for us to gain this understanding.

It is equally important to know and understand that which is set against our attaining this goal, in order that we might be able to endure and remain steadfast. Therefore, we *need* this puzzle section. We need to see Satan's role in this overall scope of Scripture. We need to have a clear understanding of how he fits into all of this. We will take a look at Satan and his part in this picture.

First, there is something that we need to understand about the heavenly rulers in relation to earthly rulers. Let's check out something from the writings of Daniel the prophet. Then we'll go to Ezekiel and Isaiah, and hopefully, this picture will come into focus.

The prophet Daniel has written some interesting things concerning the angelic world and just how far-reaching their authority is. As a young man, Daniel had been taken into captivity by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Daniel had purposed in his heart to live faithfully for God, and not to become unfaithful in a strange land filled with strange gods. As a result, the One and True God used Daniel in mighty ways during his captivity and beyond. Daniel proved himself faithful throughout the Babylonian captivity.

Sometime after Nebuchadnezzar had taken Judah, the Southern kingdom, into captivity, the Medes and Persians defeated the Babylonians. The Babylonian kingdom came into the hands of the Medes and the Persians, which was a dual kingdom, and the second in the line of world kingdoms prophesied in the Book of Daniel.

Daniel remained there during the Medo-Persian reign. It was during this dual reign in Babylon that Daniel received a peculiar vision which filled him with much fear and confusion. He prayed and fasted for the interpretation of the vision for 21 days, until an angel came to him with the interpretation. Below is the detail of what happened.

(We are looking at this passage for the purpose of grasping an understanding of the angelic forces and their relationship to earthly rulers. So at this point, rather than studying this passage for its prophetic purposes, we want to look at this passage for the purpose of gaining understanding about the powers and principalities in the heavens in relation to earthly rulers. We want to notice what the messenger angel says *about the angelic realm.*)

Daniel 10

12 Then he [the messenger angel] 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 withheld me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief ^{princes} of Persia, 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.”

Remember at this time, we are using this passage to gain a better understanding of the angelic world, not to look at the prophetic information. So remain focused on the picture drawn here which describes the angelic world.

Look up all the definitions.

prince <08269>

chief <07223>

king <04428>

Re-read the previous passage with the understanding of these definitions.

Remember that the messenger angel is describing the angelic world in v. 13; he is not speaking of the physical world. Below are some questions for consideration.

When was the messenger angel sent with the interpretation in response to Daniel's prayer?

Who resisted the messenger angel in reaching Daniel?

Who came to the aid of the messenger angel?

Again we are not presently looking at prophecy, but rather we are trying to understand the angelic realm a little better. In Daniel 10:15-17, after the messenger angel gives Daniel the interpretation of his vision, he then says:

Daniel 10

20 Then he [the messenger angel] said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince <08269> of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince <08269> of Greece will come. **21** But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince <08269>....

Look back at vv. 13 and 21 in Daniel chapter ten above. Keeping in mind the definition for this word *prince* <08269>, what is the picture here?

To whom will the messenger angel return to fight?

Then *who* will be the next heavenly prince to come?

History has proven the messenger's declaration to be true. The very next worldwide kingdom which came into power *after* the Medo-Persian kingdom was the Grecian kingdom under the direction of the earthly ruler, Alexander the Great. The angel was evidently explaining to Daniel the warfare which takes place in the heavens with corresponding changes of power taking place on earth, reflecting the fact that the changes take place in the heavens *first*. Very interesting, don't you think?

Think for a moment. What picture does this put into your mind concerning the kingdoms of the world in relation to the angelic realm? What is the relationship between the heavens and the earth?

Meditate on these things throughout the day. See you tomorrow.

Day Four — Satan's Fall

Yesterday we looked at the connection between earthly rulers and heavenly rulers. From Scripture we can understand that earthly rulers are somewhat puppets (if you will) of their corresponding heavenly rulers. Today we want to look into these things a bit further.

In Ezekiel chapter twenty-eight, God tells the prophet to take up a lamentation against “the prince of Tyre,” who is identified in v. 2 as a man, and ‘not a god.’ So it’s easy to see that the first ten verses of this chapter speak of the earthly ruler and the pending judgment upon him since he lifts himself up in pride. (If you like, feel free to read the first ten verses from your Bible.)

But the following verses (vv. 11-19) speak of the corresponding heavenly ruler — Satan. It becomes evident that these verses speak of Satan because of the words used to describe this ruler, even calling him the ‘anointed cherub’. Study the passage thoroughly, then we’ll study it further in the lecture.

Ezekiel 28

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 12 “Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom <02451> and perfect in beauty.

13 You were in Eden <05731>, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 You were the anointed <04473> cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect <08549> in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. 16 By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. 18 You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to

ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever.”“

NOTES:

Look up the following words and write out the definition which best fits the context.

wisdom <02451>

Eden <05731> (This is the same Hebrew word used in Gen. 2:15 as to where God placed the man after he had been created. But note the difference in the description of the garden.)

anointed <04473>

perfect <08549>

After looking at these definitions, write out any new insights.

Give a description of Satan in his *unfallen* state (vv. 13, 14).

What two places does this passage use in locating where Satan was in his unfallen state (vv. 13, 14)? Give a description of both of these places mentioned.

Let's look again at the description of Satan's fall. Remember that the prophets often received visions "in motion," so to speak, which is why some prophecies concerning the future are written in past tense — the prophet having written about something they had *previously* seen in a vision. The actual event may or may not have taken place in time and space at the time of writing. But they saw the whole of it as having taken place. (This clue is particularly helpful in trying to understand the writings of the prophets.)

Ezekiel 28

15 “You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. **16** By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within,

And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. 18 You defiled <02490> your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever.”“

Only one additional word to look up —

defiled <02490>

Whose sanctuaries did Satan defile (v. 18)?

How did he defile them?

Describe Satan after his fall.

In the order given, list all that God says He will do to Satan because of his actions.

Now summarize today's study.

Day Five — Angelic Dominion

Today we want to continue with our study of the heavenly rulers. Specifically, we want to look at what it was that Satan did when he defiled his sanctuaries. In other words, what did he do that was so bad? Be sure to pray for insight and understanding.

Just to begin, you may want to review how Ezekiel described Satan's fall in yesterday's study (Ezek. 28:15-18a). Glimpse that now.

So, let's compare Scripture with Scripture. The context of Isaiah chapter fourteen shows that God reveals to Isaiah the details of *the end of the Great Tribulation*, the end of the time of Jacob's trouble. In this prophecy, there is such a connection between the man who is the Antichrist and Satan that you can hardly make a distinction (all of which gives additional information on how earthly rulers correspond to heavenly rulers). The *context* leading up to what we want to look at now, makes this obvious. (If you like, you could read Isa. 14:4-10).

But then Isaiah, referring to the power behind the Antichrist, flashes back to Satan's rebellion fall in an age past. Let's read the detail about Satan's fall:

Isaiah 14

12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart:

**'I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
I will be like the Most High.'**

15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit...

Put into your own words what Satan said he would do.

By the very fact that Satan says he *will ascend* (mentioning ascending twice) along with the text saying that he will *be brought down*, indicates that his place is somewhere between earth and God's Throne. The text also gives evidence beyond any doubt that Satan has a throne (i.e., "I will exalt my throne..."). With these thoughts in mind, answer the following questions.

What is Satan called in v. 12? (Be sure to note the name *and* the description¹.)

Based upon that, of whom might the “stars of God” be referring?

¹ FYI –The NASB translates the description of Lucifer as “the star of the morning.”

Specifically, where does Satan want to sit?

But what will happen (v. 15)?

What is the verb tense in v. 15?

The ‘Mount of the Congregation’ (has also been translated “the Mount of Assembly”) is the description of the location of God’s Throne with an interesting location — *the farthest sides of the north*. The Book of Job gives more insight into what this place is and what activity occurs there. In Job 1:6-7, we see God calling together “the sons of God” (the angels) in an assembly, seemingly for them to give Him an account of what is going on in their own sanctuaries. We only get the account of earth because that is the only scope of activities which God has seen fit to reveal to man. (Remember, the main setting of this overall detail is the earth.)

Job 1

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” So Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”

Then we see this assembly (or ‘congregation’) happening again. This could well indicate that this ‘assembly’ takes place with some regularity.

Job 2

1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” So Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.”

The phrase “sons of God” in the Old Testament is a name referring to the angels, implying rulership. Only sons rule. Stars of God refers to the same thing, only it seems that “stars of God” may be a specific class of angels.

In both instances, we can see that when asked, Satan said that he had come from "*going to and fro on the earth and walking back and forth on it.*" This is a statement of jurisdiction, if you will. The earth is Satan's domain, his sanctuary. But according to Isaiah, evidently Satan felt it wasn't enough for him to have such a limited domain. He wanted to "raise his throne above the stars of God," and to "sit enthroned on the Mount of the Congregation."

What do you think this would imply?

Satan is the present ruler of this world, with innumerable fallen angels who joined him in his rebellion against God in an age past. And as we have seen in this week's study, he continues to be in this position of rulership as head over the other fallen angelic rulers, who rule over the various governments of the earth.

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The Present System of Rulership

Lesson Four

We'll cap this week's lesson with one more passage. It is a passage found in the New Testament and has to do with Christ's temptation in the wilderness. This is His third temptation recorded in the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 4

8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’“

NOTES:

What did Satan offer Jesus (vv. 8, 9)?

Does it appear that Jesus indicated in any way that Satan did not have the power to give Him the kingdoms of the world? Why, or why not?

As we close for today, summarize what you learned today.

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Lesson Five — The Progressive Call of Abraham

- Day One — The Call
- Day Two — The Delay
- Day Three — The Covenant
- Day Four — The Test
- Day Five — The Overall Scope

Last week we learned that this present world system is governed by Satan and his fallen angels. As we will learn in upcoming weeks, the good news is that though we presently live in this corrupt world system, we can look forward to that glorious day when Jesus Christ puts the present ruler down and takes His rightful place on the throne. Jesus presently sits at the right hand of the Father waiting “until He [the Father] makes His [the Son’s] enemies a footstool for His [the Son’s] feet” (Ps. 110:1; Mt. 22:44; Mr. 12:36; Lu. 20:42; Heb. 1:3, 13; 10:12).

This week we will learn how God continues to unfold His promise of Genesis 3:15. We will see that God calls to Himself a man who would be faithful and obedient, and through whom God would raise up a people of His own. In Genesis 3:15, God reveals some detail as to the unfolding of God’s redemptive plan. It is interesting that God directed this promise to the “god of this [present] world” (Satan), when He said, “... *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*” It is upon this foundation that we can begin to build the whole picture of salvation — the WAY of salvation, the WHY of salvation, and the END of salvation.

Two thousand years after God created Adam, He called forth one man who would be the father of His Chosen People — the people through whom God would fulfill His plan into motion. Abraham’s call is the subject of our study this week.

(If you would like, to do any extra Bible reading this week, you could read Genesis 12-22. A good grasp of these chapters will be a very definite help in future study.)

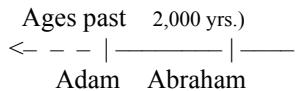
Day One — The Call

We are at a very important turning point in history. Looking at your Biblical timeline, the Bible shows the birth of Abram is 2,000 years after the creation and fall of Adam and the Woman. If you did not previously do so, take your timeline sheet and fill in this information. Of course, the horizontal line represents *time*. The first vertical line represents the creation of Adam. The second vertical line on the horizontal line represents

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The Progressive Call of Abraham Lesson Five

the birth of *Abram*. The time between Adam and Abram is about 2,000 years. Then, at the age of 70, God called Abram to leave Ur.



Let's begin with the initial promises God gave to Abram. Stephen, the first New Testament martyr, stated some information concerning Abraham and God's initial call to him. Let's read about it —

Acts 7

2 And he said, “Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ 4 Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell...

Being inspired by God, Stephen points out that God called Abram while he was still in Mesopotamia, prior to Abram going to Haran. Genesis chapter eleven ends with several verses covering the lineage of Abraham's father's family and the death of his father, Terah, in the land of Haran. Then chapter twelve flashes back to the initially stated promises which God gave to Abram while he was still in Mesopotamia, prior to Abram, Sarai, Terah and Lot moving to Haran, prior to Terah's death. The passages are printed below in chronological order.

Genesis 11

27 This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. 28 And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. 30 But Sarai was barren; she had no child.

This is what the Lord said to Abram while he was still in Mesopotamia —

Genesis 12

1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

(Note that the name *Abram* means ‘honored father.’)

What was the command God gave to Abram?

What were the promises God gave to Abram?

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How many nations did God say He will make of Abram?

Who will be blessed through Abram?

Abram left his country, but took part of his family with him. His father and nephew, Terah and Lot, accompanied Abram and Sarai, as they left Ur in Mesopotamia. He stopped in Haran, spent three to five years there until Terah died, and then Abram finally moved on to the land where God wanted to take him in the first place. Here is some information about it —

Genesis 11

31 And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. 32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

Notice that Abram was 75 years old *when he left Haran*, not when God called him out of Mesopotamia.

Genesis 12

4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Does it appear that Abram *exactly* obeyed God in Mesopotamia? Give evidence of your answer.

See you tomorrow.

Day Two — The Delay

Begin with prayer.

Note that it was *after* Abram's father died that Abram finally went to the place where God had originally called him to go. (Did you know that the name Terah means 'delay'? Isn't that interesting?) Read the detail.

Genesis 12

4 So Abram departed the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.

6 Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. 7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

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Do you see 100% obedience on Abram's part yet? Give the evidence for your answer.

According to this passage, to whom will God give this land?

What did Abram do after God told him this?

Add any additional promises or detail to your Promise Sheet.

We'll follow the story in detail just a little further. We need to get Lot settled, then we will get back to Abraham.

Genesis 13

2 Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold...

5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. 6 Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land. 8 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. 12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.

Briefly write out what has happened.

Finally, the Lord has Abram where He wants him — in Canaan, alone!

Genesis 13

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are-northward, southward, eastward, and westward; **15** "for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. **16** "And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could

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number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. 17 “Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.” 18 Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

NOTES:

List the additional promises and/or detail to what God has already spoken to Abram on your Promise Sheet.

Day Three — The Covenant

We will continue to follow God's dealings with Abram.

In Genesis chapter fourteen, a number of problems surfaced concerning Lot. Abram had received word that his nephew Lot had been caught in the midst of a war between several kings and had been taken captive by the group of victorious kings. Upon hearing this, Abram called 318 trained men to pursue Lot's freedom. The Lord gave the victory to Abram, and his nephew was freed. It was at this point in time that Abram met a very important individual—Melchizedek, a king/priest of God Most High. This is the beginning of a very important type used in Scripture. We will study it in brief this week, but be sure to remember the detail as we will need it in future weeks.

Genesis 14

14 Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. **15** He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. **16** So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him. 18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.” **22** But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, **23** “that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’ - **24** “except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”

(Too bad for a chapter break here. Keep reading.)

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Genesis 15

1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield <04043>, your exceedingly <03966> great <07235> reward <07939>.”

Write a brief review of what you have just learned in these passages —

shield <04043>

exceedingly <03966>

great <07235>

reward <07939>

After studying the definitions of these Hebrew words, rewrite Genesis 15:1 in your own words.

Now read Abraham's response —

Genesis 15

2 But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” **3** Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!”

4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." 5 Then He brought him outside 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." 6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. 7 Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought <03318> you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit <03423> it." 8 And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

NOTES:

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This question must be asked: According to the text, what was it that Abram believed (vv. 4-6)?

brought <03318>

inherit <03423>

In God's own words, why did He bring Abram out of Ur?

Compare this promise with the original promise God gave Abram in Genesis 12:1-3. Do you see a progression? Explain.

What question concerned Abram?

As you continue to read, pay particular attention to *the subject matter* of the unconditional covenant which God made with Abram.

Genesis 15 (continued)

8 And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?" **9** So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." **10** Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. **11** And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 "Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. **18** On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates- **19**

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“the Kenites, the Kenezzites, the Kadmonites, 20 “the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 “the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Gergashites, and the Jebusites.”

NOTES:

From the text in Genesis chapter fifteen, what did this covenant have to do with?

List the additional promises and/or detail to what God has already spoken to Abram on your Promise Sheet.

Day Four — The Test

We will continue today looking at the progressive call of Abraham. Be sure to pray before you begin.

Genesis 17

1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. 2 And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.”

3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: 4 “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. 8 Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

NOTES:

List the added information to the promises God made to Abram on your sheet, and make note of Abram's name change.

While the name Abram means *honored father*, God changed Abram's name to *Abraham*, which means *father of a multitude*. It is interesting what God was doing in and for Abraham, don't you think?

9 And God said to Abraham: “As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. 10 This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; 11 and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins,

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and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. 13 He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”

NOTES:

What was Abraham to do? Who also was supposed to do this? For how long were they to continue this practice?

What would happen if a person did not do this?

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

Write down any new information that God revealed to Abraham.

Note Sarai’s name change. The name *Sarai* has the connotation of *head person*, but God changed her name to *Sarah* which means *princess* or *female noble*.

Genesis 21

1 And the LORD visited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him-whom Sarah bore to him-Isaac. 4 Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.

NOTES:

We need to jump ahead to the next section in Genesis concerning Abraham. This deserves some very close observation. You are probably familiar with it, but pray that God will open your eyes to truths which you may have previously missed.

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Genesis 22

1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested <05254> Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

NOTES:

tested <05254>

Do you remember in Lesson Three we learned that the reason God placed the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was to test Adam and the Woman for obedience to prove themselves worthy to fulfill their created purpose? We can see the same thing here. What does v. 1 say God did with Abraham?

Why do you think He did that?

Now back to the story —

Genesis 22

3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. **4** Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. **5** And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.”

6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. **7** But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. 9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

11 But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am.” 12 And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” 13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the

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name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of The LORD it shall be provided.”

15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son - 17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

NOTES:

Go back to Genesis 22:2. What did God specifically tell Abraham to do?

How soon did Abraham obey? Was there any indication of hesitation?

What do you think is the significance of what Abraham said in Genesis 22:5b?

What do you think is the significance of what Abraham said in Genesis 22:8?

Compare this act of obedience as it is spelled out here in chapter twenty-two to what Abraham did in Genesis 15:6. Is there any difference? If so, what is (are) the difference(s)?

In Genesis 22:13, 14, what was provided? What do you think the significance of this is?

(Look particularly at vv. 13 and 14. You see another example of *substitution* here. This was something that Abraham’s descendants would need to understand. This is also part of God’s revelation of His unfolding plan of redemption to His people. A substitute was offered *instead* of Abraham’s son — the ram caught by his horns in the thicket. The idea of substitution is not new at this point in Scripture. Substitution has been seen in Genesis chapter three, when God slew the animal[s] — revealing a substitutionary death in place of Adam and the Woman. More revelation is seen in Genesis chapter four, when Cain slew Abel — revealing that a man will die, even a brother. These instances are part of the continuing revelation of the future

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fulfillment of redemption through Christ. And here in Genesis chapter twenty-two, we see that a son is involved.)

Re-read vs. 15-18 and see if there is anything added to what God had already promised Abraham. Write out additional promises on your Promise Sheet.

Day Five — The Overall Scope

Today we will summarize a few things that we have learned through the story of Abraham.

First, we have a question to consider. At what point in Abraham's life do you think he was saved? In other words, when did Abraham first put faith in God? And what would be the indicator of his faith?

Now that you have considered that question, we will look at a New Testament passage which would indicate how early in Abraham's life he was saved. Read it in Hebrews chapter eleven.

Hebrews 11

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Two things must be remembered — Salvation is never apart from death and shed blood, and God *never commends a work* apart from faith, for works done in the flesh are as filthy rags in His eyes (Isa. 64:6). And this passage in Hebrews chapter eleven clearly states that Abraham acted on faith while in Mesopotamia! And this *work done in faith* is commended by God (Heb. 11:8). Through the author of Hebrews, God commends this work saying that Abram acted *through faith*. **His faith for the free gift of salvation had to have been prior to his being called out of Ur!**

The point is this — many people have been taught that Abraham's moment of salvation is in Genesis 15:6. But that cannot be, due to what the writer of Hebrews is dealing with, and due to the fact that God began giving Abraham promises *while still in Mesopotamia*. Abraham believing God in Genesis chapter fifteen, was believing Him for what He was telling him about — *his inheritance!* And because he believed what God was saying about this, God counted it to him as righteousness, even subsequent to his salvation. The covenant made in Genesis chapter fifteen has to do with things beyond salvation. What would it be about? (Look at the context and answer the question.)

God's continuing revelation to Abraham in the form of a covenant reveals that God's plans and purposes will not be changed.

Let's take a moment to consider something written about this in the New Testament. James relates Genesis 15:6 with events in Genesis chapter twenty-two in his epistle. Look at how he relates them —

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James 2

20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God.

You see, Abraham believed God concerning his descendants and the inheritance in the land in Genesis chapter fifteen. It was on *this* point that his faith was tested in Genesis chapter twenty-two. His work of obedience (in offering up Isaac) brought his faith to perfection (lit., to its goal; to maturity). Any thoughts?

Also, Paul specifically speaks about these things in his writings as well.

Romans 4

3 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

To whom is the promise given? And what is the promise?

We will learn more about the descendants of Abraham in succeeding weeks of study, and more about the inheritance. Do you have any thoughts or questions at this point?

As we close for the week, finish up your list on the promises given to Abraham and your reading in Genesis chapters 12 through 22, briefly summarizing each chapter.

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Promises Made To Abraham

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Lesson Six — Chosen for a Purpose

Day One — The Four Hundred Years

Day Two — Bondage and Redemption

Day Three — Dealing with Leaven

Day Four — At Mt. Sinai

Day Five — At Kadesh Barnea

Last week we learned that God very specifically called Abraham out of Mesopotamia for the expressed purpose that Abraham and his seed (descendants through Isaac and Jacob) would realize an inheritance in another land. We learned that God progressively revealed Himself and His plans to Abraham as Abraham was faithful. This week we will see the fulfillment of a portion of what God told Abraham, specifically about his descendants being in bondage in a land not their own, and God taking them out of that *land in order to bring them into the land promised to Abraham and his descendants* (Gen. 15:13, 14).

This week we will be studying the successes and failures of Abraham's descendants. We will see their redemption, and will strive to grasp *the purpose* of that redemption.

It is important to understand the details of these events because this picture is given to the Church as *a type* so that we might learn from their example. (We'll look at the passage in a minute.) Therefore, study this lesson well! Again, it is part of the foundation which is laid out in Scripture in order to teach us details concerning *our salvation*. It is an important concept to grasp!

Day One — The Four Hundred Years

Begin your week of study in prayer. Pray for eyes to see and ears to hear and a heart to understand!

Today we will review what we have learned thus far. We will glimpse the portions of the puzzle which we have turned up and have begun to fit together. (Remember that God reveals understanding and knowledge bit by bit, here a little, there a little [Isa. 28:9-13a]; and repetition is one of the best ways to learn.)

As we have seen, Satan was created as the anointed cherub over the earth (Ezek. 28:14). But because of his desire to:

- 1) raise his own throne above all the other stars of God (i.e., other morning stars), and
- 2) sit upon God's Own Throne on the Mount of Assembly (Is. 14:12-14), God cast him down (or is in the *process* of casting him down as it is written in the imperfect tense) and caused Satan's sanctuaries to become defiled (or *desecrated*).

This ruin of Satan's domain is the reason why God restored the earth in Genesis 1:2b-19. The earth had become without form and void (Gen. 1:2a; cf. Isa. 45:18) as a result of judgment against Satan and his rebellious angels (Ezek. 28:18). God restored the earth to a habitable place and created the birds of the air,

the fish of the sea, and the animals which roamed the earth. God's final creation was forming man from the dust of the earth and breathing into man's nostrils the breath of life — God's own breath. Man became not only a physical being, taken from the dust of the earth, but also a spiritual being, receiving from God His very Own breath — His very own Spirit. Man was made in the image and likeness of God and was told to

- 1) be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and
 - 2) to rule over the earth and subdue it.

Then God placed the man in the garden and told him to work and protect the garden.

God created man in His own image and likeness in order for them to have dominion over this newly formed earth and newly created beings, in Satan's stead. Having created the man, God caused the man to fall asleep, took a rib (a part of Adam's body) from the man's side and fashioned a woman. The woman was created to be the man's helper, for God saw that *it was not good* for man to be alone. This, in no way, implies that the woman was inferior to the man. But rather, the woman was created to help the man fulfill his created goal. Neither could do it alone, for both were incapable of doing it alone. Together, and only together, the man and woman were to accomplish God's purpose. (This has been designed altogether with the view toward Christ and His bride [*cf.* Eph. 5:32].)

But before man could take his position as ruler over the earth, God tested man in order to prove his worthiness — “Don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” (The privilege to rule always requires obedience, and a test is the checking point.) Man must prove his willingness to submit to His Creator in obedience. Therefore, God gave Adam a test by putting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden, and God commanded him not to eat from that tree. (The tree of life was also there, which would have given the man wisdom to fulfill his created purpose. But the choice between the two trees was the man’s to make.)

Satan was intensely interested in bringing about the fall of man, for Satan knew that if man would prove himself unworthy to rule, he (Satan) would maintain his position as the ruler over the earth. Therefore, he set out to bring about the fall of man, through deceiving the woman, and succeeded in his goal. Man failed the test by eating from the wrong tree.

Very much was lost in this failure:

- For Adam, instead of maintaining the garden and protecting it, they had to leave the garden.
 - Instead of the garden producing fruit from the ground and from the trees, the man had to work the ground outside of the garden where food would only be obtained by the sweat of his brow, while working among thorns and thistles.
 - For the Woman, child bearing (multiplying and filling the earth) would be painful.

These are the consequences for her disobedience.

Satan had gained a major victory and has been unrelenting in his pursuit to maintain his dominion ever since. He has also been successful. He is ready to do battle with anyone who hears God's call to the pursuit of righteousness. As we study, watch how carefully he fights this battle. But also know that in the midst of the battle, even while the battle is still raging on, Satan is the defeated foe. We will see this as we continue to study.

God remains steadfast in steps to fulfill His plans and purposes for man. His purposes will not be thwarted. We have seen the revelation of His plan of redemption unfolding through the first four chapters in Genesis. We have also seen how God called Abraham out of Ur in order to take him into another country and to raise up a people of His own. God progressively revealed Himself to Abraham; and as Abraham responded positively and obediently toward God, He continued the revelation.

We see in Genesis chapter fifteen, that “*Abraham believed God and God counted it unto him as righteousness* (v. 6).” Subsequent to this statement in Genesis chapter fifteen, we see God calling Abraham *to act upon his faith – his belief in God and His promises – “Offer up your son.”*

It is only through this means – actions done through faithfulness to his calling with resulting righteousness being accounted to him – could Abraham be in a position to be used of God in the way God had purposed. It was after Abraham believed God (Gen. 15) that God tested Abraham for his worthiness. The *belief* was counted to him as righteousness, but *this accounting of righteousness came to fulfillment in his subsequent action* (Gen. 22). Then look to see how God looks upon *acting in faithfulness* in James chapter two.

James 2

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

In last week's lesson, we witnessed Abraham's faithful growth toward maturity. He, in fact, became the father of a great nation, a people called the People of God — God's very own nation. With this review, here are some questions for you to ponder:

- What would be the purpose for God to have His Own people in the world?
 - Why was there a need for so many people, as the sand on the seashore and stars in the heavens?
 - Why have *a land* set before them?

We will learn more about all of this as we get further into the survey, but for now, we need to study the Scriptural information given about the descendants of Abraham. As we have seen, one portion of the promises God gave to Abraham is found in Genesis chapter fifteen. We saw it last week, and we need to begin here this week.

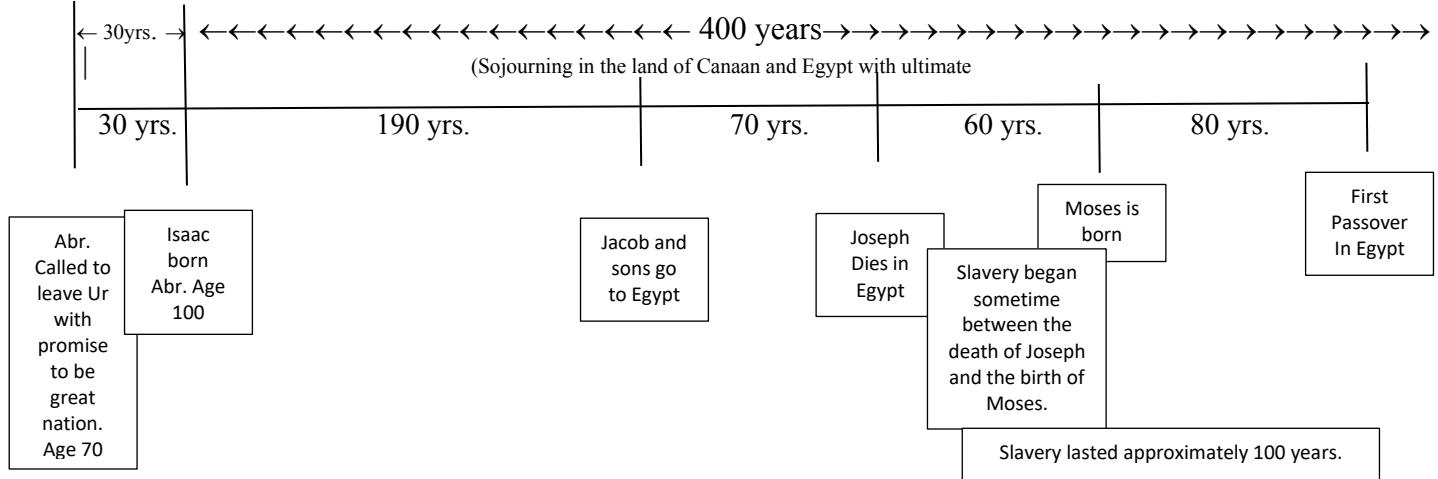
Genesis 15

13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

This week we will look at the fulfillment of this prophecy. But first, write in your own words what, according to this passage, will happen to Abraham's descendants.

Do you remember how many years will make up the time period of Abraham's descendants being strangers in a land not theirs (eventually becoming enslaved) at the end of which time, God will bring them out of bondage? How many years will it be?

Some people think that the four hundred years begins at the time of enslavement. That is not the case. A careful look at related Scriptures reveals that the actual enslavement lasted only 100 years or so. See it on the timeline below. The four-hundred-year designated time period *begins at the birth* of Abraham's descendant, Isaac, a *stranger in a land* (or a sojourner in a strange land) and would continue until such a time as God brought them *out of a land of enslavement*.



A study in the book of Genesis reveals the amazing plan of how God brought Abraham's descendants to Egypt. He did so in order to set them apart in a land, which was not their own, until such time as they had multiplied into great numbers. They were to become a strong and mighty nation, a pure race. At some point in time between the death of Joseph and the birth of Moses, they became enslaved, just as God had promised Abraham. (To understand the accounting of 430 years, see Gal. 3:16, 17; Acts 7:6; 13:19.)

We'll look at it tomorrow.

Day Two — Bondage and Redemption

The next several days we are going to be taking a close look at God redeeming the Children of Israel, and glimpse some of Israel's successes and failures along the way. *It cannot be overstated how important it is that the Church today understands the full ramifications of what took place with this first generation of Israelites following the exodus from Egypt.* There are at least two explicit passages in the New Testament that use the events of this generation as examples to us, so that we might learn from their mistakes and not come to the same end as they.

I Corinthians 10

6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. ...

... 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

(Good Scriptural cross references for the same idea given in these verses can be found in Hebrews chapters three and four. Each Scriptural reference sheds more light into the facts given about this first generation.)

As we study today, pray that God will give you insight and understanding into the things surrounding this redemption.

Let's quickly (and very briefly) cover the events which lead to the enslavement of Israel and their need for redemption. The promised son, Isaac, was born to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis chapter twenty-one. In the course of time, Isaac had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Though Esau was the first-born, he forfeited his rights as first-born son to Jacob. (The rights of the first-born were that of

- 1) acting as priest for the family,
 - 2) being the ruler over the father's estate, and
 - 3) receiving a double-portion of the inheritance.)

God changed Jacob's name (which means *supplanter* or *beguiler*) to *Israel* (which means *he will rule with God*).

(This is no small matter as one thinks of the ramifications of the meaning of this name change. The nation brought forth from Egypt is called *the nation of Israel*, or pointing to the meaning of the name, *the nation who will rule with God*. In fact, some believe the etymology of the name *Israel* is the same as the etymology of the name *Sarah*. It is interesting to note that Sarah was the wife of Abraham, and Israel is referred to in Scripture as the wife of God [Isa. 54:5a; Jer. 31:32; Hosea 2:19, 20].)

Isaac's son, Jacob, had twelve sons whose descendants made up the twelve tribes of *Israel*, or the twelve tribes "who will rule with God." It was the descendants of Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob, whom God made into a new creation (*cf.* Isa. 43:1, 7). Again, through a series of events, God brought Jacob's family to Egypt, wherein they enjoyed the blessings of the land for some years. God used this time in Egypt to set apart this people for Himself, allowing time for the nation to grow in numbers. (They went into Egypt numbering seventy [Gen. 46:27], and came out some 210 years later numbering probably more than 2,000,000.) But after Joseph's death and prior to Moses' birth, a new Pharaoh (an Assyrian) had come into power in Egypt. The Assyrians had, at some point after Joseph's death, conquered Egypt. This Assyrian Pharaoh (probably along with a relatively small group of Assyrians living within Egypt's borders) feared that Israel might rise up and usurp his power and authority. Therefore, he sought to enslave Israel. Their slavery lasted for some 100 years or so. Then God reckoned the time for their redemption and acted on their behalf. Nothing thwarted His plan for their redemption. He brought forth His "first-born son (the Nation of Israel)" out of bondage with His mighty outstretched arm, and set them on the path to the Promised Land (Ex. 4:22; 15:13).

Today we will look closely at how God redeemed His people out of the bondage of slavery. Moses was the man God used, having already prepared him for this job. The following is what God told Moses to say to His people:

Exodus 6

6 “Therefore say to the children of Israel: ‘I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue [you from their bondage](#), and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

rescue <05337>

redeem <01350>

After studying the definitions, what can we learn from the passage?

Who will do the work of bringing the Children out of bondage?

What will God do and how will He do it? (Be sure to notice the word “redeem.”)

God sent Moses to Pharaoh, telling him what to say —

Exodus 4

22 “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Israel is My son, My firstborn. **23** So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.”’”

Pharaoh would not let God's people go and continued to harden his own heart. Therefore, God sent plagues upon Egypt, each plague dealing with each one of the Egyptian gods, each plague intending to motivate Pharaoh to let God's people go. But Pharaoh would not!

Finally, after nine plagues (nine “mighty acts of judgment”), God was ready to bring about the tenth and final plague. God told Moses that every family of Israel was to slaughter a lamb and to take some of its blood and put the blood on the door posts and lintel of their houses. He gave very specific directions concerning this. This was to be the LORD’S Passover.

Exodus 12

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3 “Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. 4 ‘And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 ‘Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 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. 7 ‘And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 8 ‘Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 ‘Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. 10 ‘You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. 11 ‘And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’S Passover. 12 ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 ‘Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

Think for a moment. Why would God need to redeem Israel? What was their condition?

Who would be killed?

Who would not be killed?

Look back at Exodus 12:13. What did God have to see in order to “pass over” any house?

Write out exactly what each household was to do.

Write out exactly what God did.

This scriptural picture of the events that took place the Night of Passover in Egypt reveals the fact that by a sovereign act on God's part and faith on the part of the Children of Israel, the Nation was redeemed. This was their salvation – their eternal life. That night, God became their Savior. The events of the tenth and final plague caused Pharaoh to let God's firstborn son go (Ex. 4:22).

Day Three — Dealing with Leaven

Begin your day in prayer.

Review Exodus 12:1-13 from yesterday's lesson. Remember that the details of what happened to the Children of Israel are given as an example (lit., *type*) for us, so that we can learn from their experiences (I Cor. 10:6, 11). Study well these days, for you are laying a foundation which will be necessary for understanding other sections of Scripture.

Today we will look at what was to happen immediately following the Passover.

Continuing in Exodus from yesterday —

Exodus 12

...14 ‘So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. 15 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. 16 On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. 17 So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. 18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. 19 For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. 20 You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.’”

(Note that v. 14 says that this day is to be *a memorial* to them. A memorial is something to which they were to look back upon and remember. On the other hand, a *sign* is given as something that they were to look forward to [e.g. the Sabbath Rest]. Remember this distinction, for we will need to make the distinction as we study further.)

God repeats these commands shortly thereafter:

Exodus 13

6 “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD. 7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. 8 And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, ‘This is done because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.’ 9 It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD’S law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. 10 You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year...

In Scripture, leaven is *always* used as a symbol of sin or corruption (I Cor. 5:8). Leaven is the picture God gave to Israel showing that, after redemption, God expected Israel to rid themselves of sin. Keep that in mind as you work through these questions.

Go back through these last two passages and count how many times God told them that they *were to rid themselves of leaven*. How many times is it?

Now count how many times God said that if anyone had been found with leaven he would *be cut off from the people*. How many?

What does it mean to be *cut off from the people* or *cut off from Israel*? Does it say that they would be sent back into slavery? Then what? Psalm 37 has a few verses that explain what it means to be ‘cut off’. (As you read these verses, note what is the *opposite* of being ‘cut off’. This will help reveal what being ‘cut off’ means.)

Psalms 37

9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.

...22 For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be cut off.

...28... But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.

...34 Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.

So, according to these verses, what does it mean to be 'cut off'? And what does it mean to not be 'cut off'?

So, go back to Exodus 13:6-10. What were the people to do and why were they to do it?

For *how long* were they to do this?

And if they did *not* follow these instructions, they were to be “cut off from the people,” which means they would not receive their portion of the inheritance in the Land.

So then, *after* their redemption, they were to rid leaven from their houses and from their borders.

When the Israelites were some days out, Pharaoh changed his mind about having let the people go. Now the Lord had hardened Pharaoh's heart, in order to accomplish something. Pharaoh called for all of his soldiers with chariots to chase after this multitude to bring them back into slavery. Pharaoh joined the chase alongside his 600 chariots.

Be sure to catch the ongoing picture here. There is so much to be learned about our own relationship with the Lord.

Israel's enemy — Pharaoh's army — had finally caught up with them and it appeared that Israel had no way out. A sea lay before them, mountains on either side, and Pharaoh's army behind. Yet all God needed to do in dealing with His people's enemy was to *stretch out His mighty arm*. He told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea, and by the power of God, a strong wind cut a path through the Red Sea, and dried the path so that His people could walk to freedom on dry ground. A very vivid picture is written out for us in Exodus 14:16-31. God provided the protection of a cloud between the camp of Israel and Pharaoh's army until His people were all safely on the other side of the Red Sea. Then, once every Israelite was safely on the eastern shore, with Pharaoh's horses and chariots having followed them onto the sea's floor, God told Moses to lift his hands again, and the sea tumbled back over the army. And it was over. Can you imagine the sight! Israel's enemies either lay at the bottom of the sea, or lay dead on the shore. All of Israel looked and beheld the sight. By God's power, Pharaoh and his army were rendered powerless against them, before their very eyes.

Pharaoh and his army died and were buried in the Sea. But Israel had died vicariously in Egypt, through the substitutionary death of the lamb, and in a picture, were buried in the Red Sea, only to rise up on the other side of the sea to walk in the newness of life set before them. This is a picture of baptism. *Baptism is a picture of burial and resurrection.* The Children of Israel had been set free from bondage to their enemies through death and shed blood (of the lambs). Then they were taken through the Red Sea (a picture of burial and resurrection), in order to be taken to the Promised Land wherein they were to realize the purpose of their redemption and of their calling.

Exodus 14

30 So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. **31** Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

What does this passage say Israel did when they saw their enemy dead?

Now the calmed Red Sea lay between the Children of Israel and Egypt, between themselves and the bondage that had held them for years. They had been freed and now were being taken to a new land — the land of their inheritance. Not only were they free, but the Lord was traveling with them, leading them by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire during the night. Awesome!

We'll pick it up again tomorrow.

Day Four — At Mt. Sinai

God told Israel that they were to celebrate the Feast of Passover annually, as *a memorial* of what He had done for them. This was to be an annual reminder of the price God had paid for their redemption. He wanted them to look back and remember that they had once been in bondage, but that His mighty arm had set them free. This was to be Israel's redemption story. In addition to celebrating the Feast of Passover, they were to immediately celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. At the beginning of the feast they were to clean out any and all leaven that was within their houses, even within their borders. They were to keep this feast for seven days. (Seven is a number of completion in Scripture.) If anyone was found with leaven within their house, they were to be *cut off from Israel*. They were not sent back to Egypt (they did not lose their redemption), but they were *cut off from the fellowship of the people of God; cut off from receiving the very things to which they had been called out to receive; cut off from receiving their inheritance as a first-born son of God* (Ex. 12:14-20; 13:6-10). This is a very important point to understand, especially in light of the fact that God gives this first generation and events to us as examples (lit., *types*) so that we might not do the same things they did, standing to lose something as they did. This will become clearer to you and you continue to study.

Three months to the day that they had come out of Egypt, they came to Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19) – a place where they would be for about a year. It was at Mt. Sinai where God made *a conditional covenant* with Moses and the Children of Israel, and where He taught them about Himself and what He expected of them as they entered the Promised Land. Exodus 19:4-6 is the first thing God said to His people at Mt. Sinai. This is an important passage to know and understand!

Exodus 19

3 And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: **4** You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.

5 ‘Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. **6** And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

Let's stop there for a moment and look carefully at what God said. What had they seen Him do to the Egyptians?

Who did all of this work?

What do you think it means that He “brought them to Himself”?

Now, *who* is to do something?

What are they to do?

And for what reason?

What is the potential for the Children?

It is important to realize that this entire adult generation of Israel was, in fact, redeemed, for if they were not redeemed, they would not be expected to obey. This following passage from Isaiah speaks of their redemption in no uncertain terms.

Isaiah 63

8 For He said, "Surely they are My people, Children who will not lie." So He became their Savior. **9** In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.

What can we learn from this passage?

Continuing —

10 But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, And He fought against them.

What do you learn from this verse?

Why is obedience required in Exodus 19:5? According to this passage, what would be the result of obedience? (Notice the “if...then” statement.)

Think it through. Actually, the Children of Israel could only become a kingdom of priests, a holy nation *if* they had been previously redeemed. An individual (or a nation) could never become a king/priest (or a kingdom of priests), *unless* they had first been redeemed. Literally then, redemption places them into a position wherein they would be able to fulfill *all* that God had intended, including the role of king/priests (or a kingdom of priests).

And it is only in being redeemed by God that there is a possibility that anyone could fail or succeed in fulfilling His purposes for redemption. The redemption is all of God's to do. The fulfilling of the purposes thereof are up to the will of the individual who has been redeemed, as he chooses to obey or disobey. *Only the redeemed are in a position to obey.*

We will look at what happened with the first generation of redeemed Israelites tomorrow.

Day Five — At Kadesh Barnea

When the Children of Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai, they remained there for just over one year (Ex. 12:37 - Num. 14:45). God had much information to give to them. It was here that God made a conditional covenant with His people. They committed to obey everything He said, and conditioned upon their obedience, He promised to bless them in the Promised Land, setting them above all the nations of the world, with Himself dwelling in their midst. Just think of it! But, as we shall see, obedience on the part of Israel was not the case, and this first generation, though redeemed, fell short of their intended goal through disobedience and unbelief in God's willingness (and ability) to bring them into the land.

If we had time to do an in-depth study of the period of time they spent in the wilderness, we would be able to see that the Children of Israel were a rebellious people. They continued to be disobedient, and God brought judgment upon them as He disciplined them as a Father disciplines His sons. He continued however, *to focus on bringing them into the Promised Land*. All the while, the Children of Israel tested God, as He continued to forgive them (Num. 14:20).

Then came the point when God had taught them all they needed to know about His blessings and expectations, so He finally told them to move forward to Kadesh Barnea where they would come to the entrance of the Promised Land. Egypt was behind them with the Red Sea separating them from Egypt. The land which God had promised to their forefathers, the land about which God had told them, the land that was flowing with milk and honey was before them. God told them that He would go with them into the land and He would make their enemies fall before them.

The Children of Israel had progressed from a rudimentary knowledge of God in sacrificing the paschal lambs in Exodus chapter twelve, to the place where they knew exactly what God expected from them, what He had planned for them, and what He wanted to accomplish through them. He had told them *many times over* that He was their God and they were His people; that He would hand their enemies over into their hand; and that they would rule over their enemies. In other words, God would set up a *theocratic kingdom* in the Promised Land wherein He would rule over the world *through* them, as they would be His kingdom of priests, His holy nation, His own treasured possession of all the earth. He reiterated this to them many times during the year they spent at Mt. Sinai.

God would be their King; He would administrate the kingdom *through* His people. They had grown in numbers. The land was before them and was theirs for the taking.

But first, *the test!* They had to prove themselves worthy. They had to prove their faithfulness to Him. Here at Kadesh Barnea they stood on their proving ground.

Spend a good amount of time studying the following account. Read through it several times. Make notes in the margin as to the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW. Feel free to use any cross references in your Bible. Get a good grip on this passage and write out your thoughts in the NOTES section.

Numbers 13

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2** “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them.”

... 17 Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains, 18 and see what the land is like; whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; 19 whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; 20 whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there

or not. Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes. 21 So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. 22 And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. 24 The place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there.

25 And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. 26 Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 Then they told him, and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.”

30 Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”

31 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." 32 And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

NOTES:

Now the Children of Israel faced a *major* decision concerning obedience to God's word, which He spoke to them *subsequent to* their redemption. We will see in the passage today that God indeed had 'passed over' their sins previously committed and had continued to forgive their disobediences in everything thus far.

But now, they were at the place in which they had to choose whether or not they would *believe God* to fulfill the very purpose for which God had redeemed them out of bondage. It was their choice to believe and act in obedience, or to not believe God and act in disobedience. Having been redeemed, God had provided everything necessary for their success.

Look back at Numbers 13:27. The people even had the chance to see and taste the fruit of the land. They were there, right at the door of the very place to which God had purposed in bringing them out of Egypt. So what would they decide? Let's keep reading.

Numbers 14

1 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” 4 So they said to one another, “Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.”

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly.

3 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. 4 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 5 and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: “The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 6 If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’ 7 Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them.” 8 And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

List what the ten spies said about the land and the idea of going in to take it. Then list Joshua's and Caleb's response. Then write out how the community of Israel responded.

The Ten Spies:

Joshua and Caleb:

The Israelite Community:

Are you getting the picture? From the moment they left Egypt, God was drawing them to the Promised Land. That which He had told them had to do with this land. He desired their focus to be *this* land. But instead, they longed for Egypt! Imagine! In Egypt, their knees were bent and their backs were hunched under the weight of slavery. They had a glorious land before them, yet they longed for the land wherein they had been enslaved. They wanted to go back to Egypt. These redeemed people, full of the knowledge of what God would and could do for them, decided *not to believe* Him, not to take Him at His word, and they *disobeyed* Him. It's such a sad picture.

What would God's response be? Notice in this next verse that God appeared to *all* the Israelites.

10 ...Now the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

11 Then the LORD said to Moses: “How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? **12** I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.” **13** And Moses said to the LORD: “Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, **14** and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. **15** Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, **16** ‘Because the

LORD was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.' 17 And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, 18 'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.' 19 Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

20 Then the LORD said: "I have pardoned, according to your word; 21 but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD- 22 because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, 23 they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. 24 But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. 25 Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea."

Did God forgive them for their sins as Moses had requested (see v. 20)?

26 And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 27 “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. 28 “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: 29 ‘The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. 30 ‘Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. 31 ‘But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. 32 ‘But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. 33 ‘And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. 34 ‘According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection. 35 ‘I the LORD have spoken this; I will surely do so to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.’”

Remember when I asked you why God placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden? And then, why did God tell Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? I have to ask the same question of you here — Why did God allow Moses to send in the twelve spies? This is important for us to understand. Write out your thoughts.

Look back at Number 14:1-4 and compare it to Numbers 14:27-35. What did Israel say? What did God say?

Israel said: | **God said:**

Look at your list above and circle one thing that Israel wanted to do but that God did not allow. Why is it that God would not allow them to go back to this place?

Continuing —

36 Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, 37 those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD. 38 But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land. 39 Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly. 40 And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the mountain, saying, “Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised, for we have sinned!” 41 And Moses said, “Now why do you transgress the command of the LORD? For this will not succeed. 42 Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you.”

44 But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop; nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah.

Write a brief summary of what these verses are saying —

Would God repent (change His mind) from what He had previously declared? Why or why not?

That's it for this week. Keep up the good work! You are doing a great job!

Understanding the Bible – Biblical Survey

Lesson Seven — The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms

Day One — The Law and the First Generation

Day Two — The Law and the Second Generation

Day Three — The Establishment and
Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom

Day Four — The Words of the Prophets

Day Five — The Words of the Prophets and the Psalms

Last week we learned about the redemption of the Children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. We learned about the purpose of their redemption and the conditional covenant God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai, with the realization of the blessings of the covenant conditional upon their obedience. This week we will focus on a little more detail concerning the Law, and glimpse the message of the Prophets and the Psalmist, completing the Old Testament portion of our survey. (It's too bad that this section of the study has to be so brief!)

From the time the Children of Israel left Egypt to the time they reached Kadesh Barnea was about one and a half years. During this time, they had moments of praise for God, moments of trust in God, moments of testing God, and moments of receiving judgment from God. Much of the year and a half was spent learning about God and what He expected of them as they entered the Promised Land. God told them what the land would be like — that it would be a land flowing with milk and honey and that the produce of that land would be plentiful. He told them that He would be with them and all they needed to do was to obey Him and He would bless them. He specifically gave them both sides of the picture — blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (Lev. 26). He made this explicitly clear. He also manifested His Power before them continuously. They had no reason to doubt His ability or His desire to fulfill all that He told them concerning the Promised Land. He had proven Himself faithful to them in all ways (II Tim. 2:13).

FYI — This week may look like a long week of study, but not to worry. There is simply a little more reading than usual, but not as much in the way of writing. Just be sure to adjust your time accordingly. (It is so difficult to summarize so much information into one week's study!)

Day One — The Law and the First Generation

As you begin, be sure to pray for your week of study.

Several weeks ago, we learned that God, at the time He created man, said, "Let them rule..." If Scripture is studied apart from understanding this stated purpose for mankind, one becomes handicapped in

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understanding how God deals with His people. Therefore, we must not forget God's statement made on the sixth day in Genesis chapter one concerning man's creation — "And let them rule."

We also studied that the present rulership over the earth takes place in the heavenly realm surrounding the earth and that the rulers in the realm above the earth are the fallen angels who rebelled against God in an age past.

We learned that God raised up Abraham in Ur and called him out of Mesopotamia in order to take him into a land which God would give to him and his descendants. Along with promising Abraham a land, God also promised him many descendants, and an inheritance for him and his descendants in that land. Some of the promises made to Abraham have yet to be fulfilled in their fullness.

Through a series of events, God brought Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph, into a foreign land (Egypt), followed by all of Abraham's lineage through Isaac and Jacob — seventy in all — in order to grow them into a nation set apart (Gen. 46:3, 4). During that period of time, not only did their numbers grow, but they eventually became enslaved by the Pharaoh who had come into power after Joseph's death. Thus they found themselves in the exact position which God foretold to Abraham in Genesis 15:13 — enslaved in a land not their own.

God Himself redeemed this people — the descendants of Abraham — in a very specific way and for a very specific purpose. He redeemed them with His mighty outstretched arm from the bondage of slavery. The only role the Children of Israel had to play in this redemption was to act in faith according to what God said about the matter, through appropriating the blood of a paschal lamb. Then God traversed through the land of Egypt bringing death to the first born of all the inhabitants of the land — man and animal alike. But God passed over every household which displayed blood on the door posts and lintel of the house because a death had obviously taken place in that household. The blood on the door posts and lintel was a sign that a death had taken place — a *substitutionary* death. This tenth plague was the final act of judgment upon the land of Egypt, which caused Pharaoh to release the Children of Israel from bondage. Possibly more than 2,000,000 people marched out of Egypt freed that night from slavery.

At exactly the right time, God redeemed this people out of bondage, took them through the Red Sea, and then brought them to Mt. Sinai. It was at Sinai, where God began to extensively reveal to His people all the various things surrounding the purpose of their redemption. Exodus 19:4-6 reveals this purpose for God's redeeming Israel out of bondage. God's purpose was that they were to become a kingdom of priests, administering the kingdom of God over all the other nations of the world. But, just as Adam and Abraham were tested to prove their worthiness to serve God in His Kingdom, so must the Israelites be tested in order to prove themselves worthy.

God revealed to them this very purpose for their redemption. God very specifically told them that He had brought them to Himself as on eagles' wings, and now they were to become a holy nation, a kingdom of priests. From Exodus chapter nineteen forward, He laid it all out for them — blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience. And after they had unanimously agreed they would obey (Ex. 24:3, 7), He made a *conditional* covenant with them concerning blessings in the land and the inheritance therein. This covenant, however, had nothing to do with their redemption out of bondage, other than the fact that they had to first be redeemed in order for them to be in a position where they could become a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. The covenant had all to do things beyond the Passover, things related to the land and their inheritance.

Then for about a year, God taught the people about Himself and His plan for them, and He gave them the Law. During this time in the wilderness, God brought the Children of Israel to a mature understanding of His plans for them.

One thing God revealed to them was that He desired (and planned) to dwell in their midst. Over and over again a similar statement was made as the one following —

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Exodus 25

8 “And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it....”

What did God instruct Moses and the Children of Israel to do and why?

How were they to do this?

As has been shown, God entered into *a conditional covenant* with His redeemed people, saying that they would be His kingdom of priests, a holy nation, *if they obeyed and fully kept the covenant*. Leviticus chapter twenty-six is the summary of blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience to the first generation. God spelled it out exactly.

Leviticus 26

3 ‘If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, 4 then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. 5 Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

6 I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land. 7 You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. 8 Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

9 ‘For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you. 10 You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new. 11 I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. 12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. 13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright.

From this passage, fill in the chart —

If you...

Then I will...

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Now we will continue in Leviticus to read the consequences for disobedience —

Leviticus 26

14 ‘But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, 15 and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, 16 I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. 17 I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you.

18 ‘And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. 19 I will break the pride of your power; I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. 20 And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit. 21 Then, if you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins. 22 I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate. 23 And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me, 24 then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins. 25 And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. 26 When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

27 ‘And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, 28 then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. 29 You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. 30 I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you. 31 I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. 32 I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. 33 I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

But, if you....

Then, I will...

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As we have seen, God is speaking to His redeemed people — the first generation out of Egypt. The message of obedience versus disobedience is a message which can only be given to redeemed people. Unredeemed people are not called upon to obey, as obedience is never an issue prior to redemption, either in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. Salvation through faith always precedes any expectation of obedience.

According to this chapter in Leviticus, is *obedience* or *disobedience* the only variable that dictates the respective consequences?

Let's phrase the above question in another way because I want you to get the point! Based on the above chapter, is redemption **totally accomplished** *prior to* any expectation of acts of obedience or disobedience?

Do their subsequent actions have any bearing on their being redeemed from bondage?

If obedience doesn't have to do with the redemption, then according to this chapter in Leviticus, what does it have to do with?

After a year at Mt. Sinai, God had brought them to a mature knowledge of His plans and purposes for them as His firstborn son. In deeming it time to move them away from Mt. Sinai in order to bring them into the land of their inheritance, God took them to Kadesh Barnea, the location where they would enter the land. Now it was time for their test. But instead of going in believing God at His Word, they asked if they could send spies into the land. God granted their request, telling them to send 12 spies in to the land, a leader from each of the 12 tribes.

The sad thing is that 10 of the 12 leaders who spied out the land led the Children of Israel astray. Ten of the spies came back with a bad and false report, casting doubt on God's ability to bring them in to the land. This was the very place where they could have laid hold of their inheritance had they believed and obeyed at Kadesh Barnea. They failed to believe God at His word concerning the very land He had been promising to take them into. They said "No" to God, and planned to appoint a new leader in order to go back to Egypt, preferring their bondage to trusting God. However, God never allowed the redeemed nation of Israel to go back to Egypt. God knew that a redeemed person (or nation, for that matter), could not become 'unredeemed' by any action on their part, even unfaithfulness. But this redeemed generation coming out of bondage *could fail* their test of worthiness and be found to have fallen short of their intended goal or purpose. Such was the case with this first generation (*cf. Heb. 3 and 4; I Cor. 10:1-11*).

Therefore, God declared that this first generation of redeemed people would never 'enter the rest' that was to have been theirs in the land. They could not go back into bondage as that was impossible, but they would *never* enter the land nor the rest, nor would they personally participate as a kingdom of priests, administrating His theocratic kingdom and blessings to the other nations of the world. And this brings up a very important key in Scriptural understanding. The Sabbath rest is *reckoned in time* not in eternity. This is an important fact to note! In fact, looking at your timeline, see the line between the last two vertical lines? It represents the millennial kingdom. Scripture refers to this period as the Sabbath Rest (Heb. Chs. 3 and 4). It is the seventh day.

Meditate on these things. We'll develop this more as we go. See you tomorrow.

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Day Two — The Law and the Second Generation

We have already seen that the first generation of Israelites coming out of Egypt fell short of their intended goal. We have seen the consequences of their unbelief and disobedience — they were not allowed to enter the very land to which they were being taken, and could not receive their inheritance as Abraham's descendants. Therefore, for the remainder of the forty years while this first generation was dying in the wilderness, the second generation was being groomed to be taken into the land. God wanted them to fulfill the position their parents had forfeited. This generation was being taught the same things their parents had been taught, that of feasts and holy days, priestly duties, offerings and sacrifices, etc. In fact, *immediately* following His setting aside the first redeemed generation of Israelites at Kadesh Barnea (Num. 14), God began teaching this second generation what they were to do upon entrance in the land (Num. 15:1ff.). Immediately! The remainder of the Book of Numbers deals with the subsequent 38-year historical account of the wanderings in the wilderness and the things that God taught this second generation.

Today we'll see that the second generation was being led into the land in the same way that their fathers had been led and for the same purpose. God had not changed His purpose, nor His requirements for entrance into the land. He set before this second generation the same call to obedience with the same consequences for obedience and disobedience (Deut. 28 compared to Lev. 26).

In fact, the Book of Deuteronomy is actually the second giving of the Law — a reiteration of the same law, only it is now being given to the second generation. (That is why the book is called "Deuteronomy".) God desired Moses to tell the second generation the exact things he had told the first generation. The first few verses of the book show us the time frame —

Deuteronomy 1

3 Now it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him as commandments to them...

The Book of Deuteronomy opens in the 40th year after their release from bondage. Forty years had passed since the nation's enslavement had ended. Now God tells the people again, why He redeemed them, only this time He is speaking to the second generation of people, the ones who had grown up in the wilderness. In this next passage, underline the last portion when you get to it:

Deuteronomy 4

37 "And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and He brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power, 38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land as an inheritance, as it is this day.

He also tells them why He tests them. His reasons for testing does not change with time nor with generations.

Deuteronomy 8

2 "And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

State in your own words *the reason* God tests His people. Did it have anything to do with their redemption?

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Do you remember that God tested Adam, Abraham and the first generation? Now we begin to get a very clear purpose for His testing — *to know what is in their hearts, whether or not they would keep His commands.*

As God continues to speak to this second generation through Moses, He reminds them that they, too, are to be His treasured people, and of His goal for them is the same as the goal of their fathers.

Deuteronomy 26

18 “Also today the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that you should keep all His commandments, 19 and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken.”

He had told the first generation something very similar. Remember? (Refer back to Ex. 19:4-6.)

God mentions again that He plans to put them above all the other nations of the earth, but it is still conditional. They were also told of the consequences for obedience and disobedience, as their parents had been told in Leviticus chapter twenty-six, the same commands given to this generation in Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight, almost verbatim!

These two chapters (Lev. 26 and Deut. 28) tell of the great list of consequences for obedience and disobedience. God minces no words about the respective outcomes. The point is that redeemed people **must continually choose to obey and to be whole-hearted to the Lord if they desire to have the opportunity to fulfill God’s goal for them.** Their redemption, however, is *not* in question nor is it conditional. But God’s favor and blessing upon them is certainly conditioned upon obedience!

In summing up the redemption God brought about on Israel’s behalf, answer the following questions.

Having put faith in God’s provision for redemption, is it possible for that redemption to be lost?

In releasing Israel from slavery, God placed Israel in a position where they have the potential to fulfill the plan God had intended for them to fulfill. In your own words, state what the plan was, and how it would be fulfilled.

In your own words, explain how God expects a redeemed person to cooperate in fulfilling the purpose, or goal, of their redemption.

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

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Leviticus chapter twenty-six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight contain sobering words concerning what God expects of His people in the way of obedience. Do you believe He expects the same from redeemed people today, or has He changed in His way of dealing with His people?

Finally, in summation of the Deuteronomy discourse, God speaks through Moses of the glorious hope and wonderful promise —

Deuteronomy 30

1 “Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, 2 and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, 3 that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you.

Ultimately, the choice is to be made on the part of the ones redeemed!

Deuteronomy 30

11 “For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

15 “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, 16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.

Just one more question today. Combining all that we have learned about Israel being redeemed, and seeing God's part and man's part — God calling them to obedience, yet giving them the choice — according to vv. 15 and 16, what was their choice, and what was the outcome of their choice?

Day Three — The Establishment and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom

With the overview we have done of the first two generations of Israel in the past two days of study, we are ready to move on into the remainder of the Old Testament. In the next three days, we will be completing the survey of the Old Testament. (Oh dear! The brevity of this!!) Here is how it goes —

The second generation of Israel was found to be relatively faithful to their calling, as seen throughout the Book of Joshua. But faithfulness on the part of the Children of Israel as a whole was short-lived! God established His rule in Israel at Sinai, then in the land through Joshua, the Judges and the kings. But because of Israel's ongoing disobedience and the failure to live up to the conditions of the kingdom covenant set up at Mt. Sinai, the historical kingdom never became the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham. That has yet to happen.

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While the second generation was basically faithful to their calling, the subsequent generations were not (Judges 2:7-10). And as soon as this generation of Israel died off, the following generations spiraled down in their relationship with the God of Israel. The Book of Judges depicts a miserable and ongoing lack of obedience on the part of succeeding generations, stating several times throughout the Book of Judges that “every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6; 21:25)

Finally, Samuel appeared on the scene as the final judge and the first prophet. Samuel is the one who anointed Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, as king of Israel. It was not God’s will for the people at this point in time to anoint a king over Israel, but the people insisted that God give them a king as the other nations had. And, so to speak, God acquiesced. A few years into Saul’s reign, he disobeyed God (I Sam. 13:13, 14; 15:22, 23; 28:7-19), and God told Saul through Samuel that He would remove him from the throne and would place another in his stead. His successor would not even be a member from his line, nor from his own tribe, but from another. David, a shepherd boy in Bethlehem from the tribe of Judah, was appointed by God to be Saul’s successor years before God established David on the Throne.

Once David did ascend the Throne, there were times in his life when he committed gross sins, due to his ultimate repentance, he found favor with God and was called *a man after God’s own heart*. It was due to David’s repentance and his commitment to serve the Lord God and Him *alone* that gave him such favor from God. During David’s entire reign he did not enter into idol worship, and for the most part the people followed the leadership of David in worshipping only God. This was not the case with many of the other of the kings over Israel.

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

2 Samuel 7

8 “Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. 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; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, 11 since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. 12 When your days 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.”

Fill in the chart with the information from this passage.

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

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

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II Samuel 7

11 ... Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. 12 When your days 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. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. 15 But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”“

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

New promises made to David:

Promises concerning David's descendant:

Just as Saul had been king for 40 years, so was David king for 40 years. At the end of David's reign, there was peace on all sides. David had committed sin in his life, as the Bible says all men do, but David had a heart that sought after God. He always repented and ultimately was faithful to the end.

Although David desired to build a house for the tabernacle of God, God would not allow him to do it. The building of the temple was to be done by David's son, Solomon.

David's reign ended well. Solomon, his son, would sit on the throne. Solomon had a great start. He built the temple for God, something David was not allowed to do, and he sought wisdom from God for his reign. Once the temple was finished, God's presence filled the temple as He continued to dwell among His people!

God's presence on the earth was seen in manifest glory, filling the temple. What a moment! His glory so filled the temple that the people fell on the faces in worship to their God. He continued to rule among His people through earthly kings, and would remain in their presence as long as they obeyed Him and kept the covenant.

God is unchanging. He still requires His people to be holy and set apart. Read what He said to Solomon and the conditions He continues to put upon His redeemed people. This immediately follows the dedication of the temple —

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2 Chronicles 7

12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: “I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. **13** When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, **14** if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. **15** Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place. **16** For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. **17** As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, **18** then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man as ruler in Israel.’ **19** But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, **20** then I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. **21** And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and this house?’ **22** Then they will answer, ‘Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this calamity on them.’”

Fill in the chart with information from the passage —

What God said He would do:

What the people were to do:

If they disobeyed, what would happen?

Eventually, Solomon was not faithful to God and fell into ongoing sin. Solomon’s reign did not end well. Solomon had a divided heart. He did three specific things God had told the kings of Israel not to do:

- 1) he followed other gods,
- 2) he had many wives and concubines (actually hundreds!), and
- 3) he multiplied horses, building an army for himself. God, alone, was to be Israel’s protection.

Due to Solomon’s sins of disobedience and that of his son’s, God allowed the kingdom to be divided during the reign of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, and the kingdom remained divided from that day forward. The northern ten tribes seceded to form the Northern kingdom, called Israel, and the two southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin) formed the Southern kingdom, called Judah. The Northern kingdom walked continuously estranged from the Lord, and resultantly the Lord brought about the judgment upon them which He had stated

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He would do — He scattered them amongst the nations (Lev. 26; Deut. 28). On the other hand, the Southern kingdom had its ups and downs, but also eventually was judged by God for disobedience, and was exiled into the Babylonian kingdom in keeping with that which was stated in Leviticus chapter twenty-six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight. All in all, it was not a pretty picture.

We'll stop there. We are covering a lot of history this week. Meditate on these things, asking God to continue to give you understanding of His Word.

Day Four — The Words of the Prophets

We have only glimpsed the historical kingdom — its establishment, its disruption and its overthrow. God sent prophets to His people in order to keep His Word ever before them. There is so much to learn from these prophets, therefore once again, it becomes very difficult to choose which verses to include in our study. Remember that God had a complete message for His people through each one of the prophets. Yet, only in studying all the prophets together, does one begin to get the *complete* picture.

God continued to make statements that “if you will...” then “I will...” Or “if you do not...” then “I will not...” God told them through these prophets that if they did not repent, they would be given over into captivity. And though He is long-suffering, giving them many, many, many chances, we can see that God is very serious about what He says. There is always a consequence to sin and disobedience. Always! Yet, in God’s mercy, all they had to do was to repent and follow Him. But they would not!

One thing to understand about the prophets is that God sent some prophets to the Northern kingdom and some to the Southern kingdom, with a couple prophets ministering to both. Some prophets were sent before the scattering and exile (pre-exilic prophets), some during the exile (exilic prophets), and some after the exile (post-exilic prophets) when a remnant from the Southern kingdom was allowed to go back into the land and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

The prophets had very difficult messages to give. But the interesting thing to note is that, in the end, they all gave *words of hope*. On the one hand, they spoke of exile, captivity, scattering, separation and death. On the other hand, they spoke of hope. In the end, the hope mentioned throughout the Prophets — the hope of the coming Messiah and his kingdom, of the re-gathering of Israel, of the re-construction of the temple (in which God will once again dwell in the midst of His people) — was always before them. Through each and every one of the prophets, God gave them hope of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel wherein they would once again be united as a nation and set above all other nations with God ruling through them, even in the midst of them. What a glorious hope for Israel yet future.

Today we will glimpse their going into exile along with their relative *immediate hope out of exile*. Later we will look at their future hope.

Jeremiah was an exilic prophet sent to the Southern kingdom. (An “exilic prophet” means that his ministry to the people was during part of the exile.) We'll read only a small part of what he told them.

Jeremiah 25

1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), 2 which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: 3 “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this is the twenty-third year in which the word of the LORD has come to me; and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. 4 And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising

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early and sending them, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. 5 They said, ‘Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. 6 Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.’ 7 Yet you have not listened to Me,” says the LORD, “that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

8 “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘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 shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,’ says the LORD; ‘and I will make it a perpetual desolation. 13 So I will bring on that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations. 14 (For many nations and great kings shall be served by them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the works of their own hands.)”

Let's look at the distant future hope of Israel.

Exactly 70 years after the Southern kingdom, Judah, had been taken captive, a remnant of people were allowed to go back to Israel in order to rebuild the altar, the temple, and the wall in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel built the altar and the temple; Nehemiah built the walls. But the total fulfillment of this prophecy in general has yet to be fulfilled.

Ezekiel was also an exilic prophet and he also spoke of a future hope for Israel – one that has yet to be fulfilled.

Ezekiel 11

16 “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.”

17 “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”’ 18 And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there. 19 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. 21 But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads,” says the Lord GOD.

What plan did the Lord have for the people?

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What can we see in the passage that makes it evident that this has not yet been fully accomplished?

Then many of the prophesies given by the prophets deal with a time yet future! Read the information below, trying to develop the picture in your mind of what the Lord is saying through these prophets —

Joel 3

17 “So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever pass through her again.”

18 And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD And water the Valley of Acacias. 19 “Egypt shall be a desolation, And Edom a desolate wilderness, Because of violence against the people of Judah, For they have shed innocent blood in their land. 20 But Judah shall abide forever, And Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21 For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted; For the LORD dwells in Zion.”

NOTES:

Jeremiah 23

3 “But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. 4 I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the LORD. 5 Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. 7 Therefore, behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8 but, ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own land.”

NOTES:

Jeremiah 33

6 ‘Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. 7 And I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return, and will rebuild those places as at the first. 8 I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me. 9 Then it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations of the earth, who shall hear all the good

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that I do to them; they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide for it.'

NOTES:

List some of the things you learned about this coming kingdom and God dwelling with men. Where, when, etc.

See you tomorrow.

Day Five — The Words of the Prophets and the Psalms

Begin in prayer.

Today we want to look at things concerning the temple. The first siege of the Babylonian exile began in about 606 BC. Solomon's temple was destroyed in the third and final siege in about 586 BC. Zerubbabel was able to go back into Jerusalem from captivity in about 536 BC, to begin to rebuild the temple. It was Zerubbabel's temple which was later remodeled by Herod the Great during the Roman Empirical rule, and it was this temple which stood during the days of Christ. God's glory never filled this temple. But God did visit His people — He came in the flesh, in the Person of Jesus Christ, and for a time, dwelled among His people. But His own people rejected and crucified Him, and this temple was destroyed 37 years later (John 1:10-11). From 70 AD to this present day, the Lord's temple has not been rebuilt. The theocracy ended in Daniel's day when the glory departed the Temple (Ezek. Chapters 9 - 10), and it will not be reestablished until God's glory will fill the millennial temple in the Coming Age. Prophecies in Scripture reveal that there will be another temple built during the last days in which the Jews will once again establish a sacrificial system. It will be in this temple that the Anti-Christ will perform the abominable act which will cause a desolation in Israel (Dan.9:27; 11:31; cf. Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:3-4). Then there will be another temple constructed during the millennial reign of Christ (Ezek. 43). This temple is described in several prophecies. (All of this to say, that when a temple is mentioned in Scripture it is a good idea to determine to which temple the passage is referring.)

It is important to understand the significance of the destruction of Solomon's temple. Remember, this was the house of the Lord, the very place in which the Lord dwelled. While in captivity Ezekiel saw, in a vision, the Glory of the Lord leave the temple. In Ezekiel chapters 9-10, he saw the cloud over the mercy seat in the midst of the temple move over the door of the temple, then he saw the cloud move to the eastern gate. Finally, Ezekiel had the heart wrenching experience of seeing the cloud move over the Mount of Olives and then watched as it disappeared.

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“Ichabod” means ‘the glory of the Lord is departed from Israel.’ What a sad day in the history of mankind! After his vision, Ezekiel was privy to much interesting information concerning the history as well as the future of the world. He glimpses Satan (Lucifer) before his sin and after (the passage we studied in Lesson Four [Ezek. 28:11ff]). As did the prophet Daniel, Ezekiel also received much detail concerning the coming ‘day of trouble,’ the Anti-Christ, the last days, the future battle of the nations with Israel and finally, the millennial kingdom. In chapters forty through forty-eight, Ezekiel gives very explicit detail describing the millennial temple and the glory of the Lord re-appearing. The following passage describes the moment in time when the glory of the Lord will come again to fill the future temple.

Ezekiel 43

1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. 2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. 3 It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4 And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. 5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple. 6 Then I heard Him speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me.

NOTES:

Isaiah also glimpsed information about this awesome time in the future. (A mountain represents a kingdom in Scripture.)

Isaiah 2

1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

NOTES:

Isaiah 4

2 In that day the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious; And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing For those of Israel who have escaped. 3 And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. 4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, 5 then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering. 6 And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.

NOTES:

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Does this description remind you of anything? If so, what?

Jeremiah 30

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **2** “Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying: ‘Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. **3** For behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,’ says the LORD. ‘And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.’”

... **7** Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, But he shall be saved out of it. **8** ‘For it shall come to pass in that day,’ Says the LORD of hosts, ‘That I will break his yoke from your neck, And will burst your bonds; Foreigners shall no more enslave them. **9** But they shall serve the LORD their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them.

10 ‘Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,’ says the LORD, ‘Nor be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, And no one shall make him afraid.

NOTES:

Ezekiel 37

21 “Then say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; **22** and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. **23** They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. **24** David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. **25** Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. **26** Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. **27** My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. **28** The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.””

NOTES:

Isaiah 9

6 For 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

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Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

NOTES:

Daniel 2

44 “And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

NOTES:

From the passages you have seen today, write out any impressions of the coming kingdom.

Now for a look at a few of the Psalms. We know that King David wrote most of the Psalms. We have also come to understand that David had a grasp of the future kingdom of his Descendant. He understood that one of his descendants would be the Son of God (I Sam. 7:11-16, 19). Knowing this, a person should see the Psalms beyond only seeing them as prayers of David, but also see them in the light of prophecy. Read through the ones that follow —

Psalm 8

3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? 5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 7 All sheep and oxen-Even the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

NOTES:

Psalm 9

5 You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; You have blotted out their name forever and ever. 6 O enemy, destructions are finished forever! And you have destroyed cities; Even their memory has perished. 7 But the LORD shall endure forever; He

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has prepared His throne for judgment. 8 He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

NOTES:

Psalm 10

12 Arise, O LORD! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget the humble. 13 Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, “You will not require an account.” 14 But You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief, To repay it by Your hand. The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless. 15 Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man; Seek out his wickedness until You find none. 16 The LORD is King forever and ever; The nations have perished out of His land. 17 LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear, 18 To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.

NOTES:

Psalm 21

1 The king shall have joy in Your strength, O LORD; And in Your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! 2 You have given him his heart’s desire, And have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah 3 For You meet him with the blessings of goodness; You set a crown of pure gold upon his head. 4 He asked life from You, and You gave it to him-Length of days forever and ever. 5 His glory is great in Your salvation; Honor and majesty You have placed upon him. 6 For You have made him most blessed forever; You have made him exceedingly glad with Your presence.

7 For the king trusts in the LORD, And through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved. 8 Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. 9 You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger; The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath, And the fire shall devour them. 10 Their offspring You shall destroy from the earth, And their descendants from among the sons of men. 11 For they intended evil against You; They devised a plot which they are not able to perform. 12 Therefore You will make them turn their back; You will make ready Your arrows on Your string toward their faces. 13 Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power.

NOTES:

We can see that David wrote often about the coming kingdom of his distant Descendant.

As you have time, peruse the Psalms and see if you can recognize more that deal with this future kingdom.

As we close for the week, why don’t you write out your impressions from this week’s study?

On the following page, there is a chart of the Prophets with good information. You might enjoy having it.

The Prophets

The Pre-Exilic Prophets

Prophet	Prophesied to:	Date*
Elijah	Israel	870-845 BC
Elisha	Israel	845-800 BC
Joel	Judah	840-830 BC
Jonah	Nineveh	790-770 BC
Amos	Israel	765-753 BC
Hosea	Israel	760-720 BC
Isaiah	Judah	750-670 BC
Micah	Judah	740-700 BC
Zephaniah	Judah	640-620 BC
Nahum	Concerning Nineveh	630-610 BC
Habakkuk	Judah	612-586 BC
Obadiah	Concerning Edom	586-585 BC

The Exilic Prophets

Prophet	Prophesied to:	Date*
Jeremiah	Judah	627-582 BC
Daniel	Judah/Babylon	605-534 BC
Ezekiel	Judah exiled in Babylon	593-573 BC

The Post Exilic Prophets

Prophet	Prophesied to:	Date*
Haggai	Judah	520-516 BC
Zechariah	Judah	520-516 BC
Malachi	Whole House of Israel	450-400 BC

* All dates are approximate and taken from a variety of sources