



Mosaic

THE PROPHETIC PICTURES OF JESUS



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ET IN COE L I S E G O R O G A V I P R O T

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Preface

For the first fifteen years of my life, I lived disconnected from God, skeptical of His existence and certain He had no interest in someone like me. Yet, I am profoundly grateful for how God shattered my doubts with His boundless love. Since embracing Jesus, one truth has brought immense peace and hope into my life: God's unwavering fidelity to His promises. The Bible chronicles numerous promises God made, promises that find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.

Did you know the Bible contains sections written centuries before Jesus's birth, detailing His life with astonishing precision? These passages, known as prophecies, are God's promises made well in advance. If only a few prophecies were about Jesus, it would already be remarkable. But the Bible contains about 300 distinct prophecies describing Jesus in intricate detail! Studying these prophecies lays a solid foundation for our faith, helping us comprehend the magnitude of Jesus's actions.

Thus, we begin an exploration titled "MOSAIC: The Prophetic Pictures of Jesus". This title reflects the idea of a mosaic, where each prophecy is a unique piece that, when combined, forms a complete, detailed image of Jesus. As we navigate through God's Word, each day offers a chance to examine an Old Testament prophecy and witness its fulfillment in Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. By dedicating time to study the scriptures and engaging in weekly group discussions, your faith will deepen and expand. This season is an opportunity for tremendous growth as we collectively piece together these prophetic fragments, forming the grand mosaic of Jesus's life.



Chris Morante, Senior Pastor, Evangel Church





GOD WITH US

The Incarnation of Jesus

Discover how God's promise to dwell among His people is ultimately fulfilled in the prophecies concerning the divinity of Jesus.



KING OF KINGS

The Lordship of Jesus

The long awaited Messiah of Israel is revealed in Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promise to send a king in the line of David with God's own heart.



ANOINTED ONE

The Supernatural Ministry of Jesus

God's plan to restore a broken world illuminates Jesus as the fulfillment of His promise to send an anointed messenger who walks in the authority of God.



SUFFERING SERVANT

The Suffering of Jesus

This week we examine the prophecies concerning the pain God would endure to show His love. See how Jesus is revealed to be the fulfillment of God's promise to save us by completely entering into our suffering.



OUR REDEEMER

The Death of Jesus

God's plan of salvation clearly points to Jesus as the fulfillment of the promise to rescue His people from their sins through the death of His righteous servant.



RISEN SAVIOR

The Resurrection of Jesus

Here we see the victory of God on full display through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This is the divine exclamation point that underscores every promise of God!



God With Us



Week 1: Introduction

From the very beginning of the Bible, God had one desire, to dwell among his people. He wanted one thing, to be in relationship with them. In Genesis, God is found walking in the Garden and looking for Adam (Gen. 3:9). Abraham had a meal with God and was called his friend (Isa. 41:8). Jacob wrestled with God until dawn had broke (Gen. 32:30). In the wilderness, God had requested a tabernacle be built because He wanted to dwell among us his people (Ex. 25:8). The whole purpose of giving Israel the land was to prepare a place where God would dwell among them. All they had to do was keep the commandments God had given them. These commandments were not meant to be burdensome, but more like the vows we take in marriage. We do not keep them out of some legal obligation, but we are bound to a higher law, the law of love for one another. Likewise, the Jews were joined to God in a bond of marriage to follow Him in love, with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deut. 6:5). In spite of this, Israel continued to play the Harlot and go after other gods (Jer. 3:8).

Despite their constant rejection, God did not leave them without hope, because He had a plan. One day, He would rescue them from their oppressors, return them again to their land, and reclaim them for Himself. In that promise God said that He would dwell among them again and be their God, so that they would truly experience His presence. This is the ultimate hope and plan of God since the beginning. As John says in the opening of his Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh and dwelt (or tabernacled) among us." (John 1:1, 14a) Jesus is the fulfillment of this hope. Jesus is "God with us," and He came to show us exactly who God is. Everywhere that Jesus went, He revealed the heart of God, and what the world looks like when God is fully in control. This hope even shapes our future, as the final picture in the book of Revelation reveals that God in Christ will be dwelling among his people, walking in their midst (Rev. 21:3). This week's passages reflect on how Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise that God would come to his people.



DAY 1

PROPHECY (Isaiah 7:14)

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 1:23)

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”

SUMMARY

The land of Judah was being invaded by their sister Israel, but God would have none of it. He would not allow Judah to be conquered, so He asked King Ahaz to name a sign of Israel’s destruction. When Ahaz refused to, God said that He would provide a sign in the form of a child. This child would be given through a virgin, and His name would be called “Immanuel.” God promised that deliverance would come through the birth of a child. Writing to a Jewish audience, Matthew’s intention was to show that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Son of God. To do so, Matthew often referred back to the Old Testament to illustrate that Jesus fulfilled those prophecies. He believed that the birth of Jesus was the fulfillment of that promise to Ahaz over 800 years later, that God in the person of Jesus had finally come to visit his people and bring about not just a national deliverance, but a deliverance from sin, the ultimate enemy of God and His people. By defeating sin, Jesus would remove the barrier between God and His people which climaxes at the end of the Gospel when Jesus shares, “Behold I am with you always!”

REFLECTION

The child was a sign that God is with us, and Jesus was that child. When and where have you recently noticed God showing up in your life? Today ask Him to make you more aware of His presence in your life.

DAY 2



PROPHECY (Isaiah 9:6)

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

FULFILLMENT (Luke 1:32-33 [NIV])

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

SUMMARY

God promised a kingdom that ‘will never end’ and a Son who would rule over it. To the Israelites, who had been oppressed since the time of their forefathers, the longing for the One who would reign over all for eternity became their anchoring hope. During the time of Jesus’ birth, the Israelites were under Rome’s heavy shadow and the watchful eyes of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Israelites were seeking freedom, and embedded in their Scriptures was the message that God was going to send a child to deliver them from the darkness they had cast themselves into by rejecting God, and going the way of the nations around them. This hope of the Messiah’s reign was a welcomed battle cry against their foes, knowing the prophecy from Isaiah promised a time when the “government would rest on His shoulders”, and not the other nations. In the midst of that darkness a message came to a virgin that she would bear that child. That freedom would be available to all because “His kingdom will never end”. He would cast off their oppressors, and end the cycle of war and strife because He would be the “Prince of Peace”.

REFLECTION

In a world that is deeply chaotic, God has given us His very Son to bring peace and hope. If you are struggling with uncertainty and hopelessness, ask God to give you peace. If you know someone is walking through a difficult and uncertain season, pray for them.



DAY 3

PROPHECY (Isaiah 45:21-25)

“Declare and set forth your case; indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me. Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. They will say of Me, ‘only in the Lord are righteousness and strength.’ Men will come to Him, and all who were angry at Him will be put to shame. In the Lord all the offspring of Israel will be justified and will glory.”

FULFILLMENT (Philippians 2:9-11)

For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

SUMMARY

What will happen six months from now? Six years from now? “Only God knows,” both Christians and non-Christians alike claim. The future is a fickle thing. Through Isaiah, God announced in advance His plan, and challenged the gods of the surrounding nations to do the same. Without a doubt, there is no god but the Lord who can declare the future before it happens. Yet this same God has chosen to display that power in absolute weakness on the cross. In Jesus, God became man, and took on the most shameful and excruciatingly painful form of death invented, crucifixion. After His humbling, an honor reserved for God would be applied to Jesus, that “every knee will bow.” Yet Paul also adds, “and every tongue will confess that Jesus the Messiah is Lord!” In one stroke of the pen, Paul proclaims that God has declared that Jesus is God! Now the only question left for every person is will you bow now in willing submission to Jesus, or will you wait until you have to?

REFLECTION

Israel was in danger of rejecting the one true God, for the gods of other nations. So the Lord challenged them to display their power. When God’s display of power was revealed, it happened on the cross, as Jesus died for the sins of the world, and because of that, God exalted Him to the highest place. Today, let that reality drive you to worship.

DAY 4



PROPHECY (Psalm 102:25-27)

“Of old You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. Even they will perish, but You endure; and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.”

FULFILLMENT (Hebrews 1:10-12)

And, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; they will perish, but You remain; and they all will become old like a garment, and like a mantle You will roll them up; Like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.”

SUMMARY

Who is Jesus? Was He a teacher? A good man? Was He God? The debate rages on, yet He is arguably the most famous person to ever live. The author of Hebrews was concerned with the answer to this very question. In the outset of his letter, he wants to get across the identity of Jesus. He is not simply one of the angels, who are also called the sons of God, but someone far greater, who shares the very nature of God (Heb. 1:3). Therefore, the author goes back to the Scriptures to lay out the superiority of Jesus’ true identity. At the climax of these quotations, he draws on two Psalms in tandem to make his point that Jesus is both God and Creator. Unlike the angels, Jesus was there in the beginning as the creator of all. He partnered with God to bring all things into being, and all of those things will change and fade away, but He will not. As he will go on to write, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” (Heb. 13:8) In a world that is in constant flux, Jesus remains as our anchor and firm foundation.

REFLECTION

In a world that is ever-changing and full of uncertainty, how can the unchanging nature of Jesus encourage me today?



DAY 5

PROPHECY (Isaiah 44:6)

“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.’”

FULFILLMENT (Revelation 1:17-18)

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

SUMMARY

While John was in the Spirit, on the Lord’s Day, he caught a vision of Jesus, just like Isaiah (Isa. 6:1). John was so startled that he collapsed in His majesty and became completely undone before Him. However, Jesus looked down and raised him up. While John and the churches around him were on the brink of persecution and the threat of martyrdom loomed, Jesus came to reveal Himself. He comforted John with these words from Israel’s prophetic past when God declared there is no other God beside Him. In fact, in the passage from Isaiah, God challenges the other gods to prove themselves, but they cannot for they are nothing but false idols compared to Him. John and the churches he wrote to, were being invited to trust in the one who had overcome Death, and is now alive forever. Because of His resurrection, Jesus now holds the key to the place they feared, Hades. The very fear (Heb. 2:15) that has held humanity in bondage has been rendered powerless through Jesus’ victory. With that comfort, Jesus reaches out to speak to us today, that we have nothing to fear, because He has overcome!

REFLECTION

Jesus is alive forevermore! He conquered death and holds the keys to Hades. What fears do I need to put before the feet of Jesus? Take a moment to write them down, and surrender them to God.

DAY 6



PROPHECY (Psalm 2:7 [ESV])

I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 3:16-17 [ESV])

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

SUMMARY

In His covenant with David, God said, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.” (2 Sam. 7:14, ESV) God declared that He would be Father to the king. In doing so, God was describing His relationship with David as that of a father and son, thereby establishing David’s authority to rule. This relationship is reiterated in Psalm 2:7, but in this case, it is applied to a future ruler in the line of David. The fulfillment of this Scripture took place at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry as He was baptized by John in the Jordan River. As Jesus came out of the water, the heavens opened and the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and God spoke from heaven. Here we catch a glimpse of the complete presence of the Godhead—Father (the voice from heaven), Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit (the dove). In that moment, God declared to all who were present, Jesus is My Son, and upon Him I invest all the authority of the Kingdom. Jesus was now anointed for God’s mission to rescue the world.

REFLECTION

God has declared Jesus His Son, and now all who trust in Him are given the right to be called the children of God (John 1:12). Rejoice today that through the work of Jesus we are brought into the family of God..



Notes

Notes





King of Kings



Week 2: Introduction

Every four years in this country, we vote for “the leader of the free world.” Each candidate positions themselves over and against the others, for the right to be called the President of the United States. At the end of this political race, Americans are divided over the results, some rejoicing in victory while others are bewildered in the wake of the outcome. This constant tension arises from one fatal flaw that has been repeated throughout history, we have placed our hope in man and man’s kingdom. Rather than looking to the Heavens for the answer, humanity has turned towards themselves, and repeated the error of Israel (1 Sam. 12:12), when they demanded a king to be over them. In that moment, they rejected God and His Kingdom, and replaced the eternal wisdom of God for the temporal wisdom of man, in order that they would be like the other nations (1 Sam. 8:19-20).

God’s intent had always been that they would live under His reign. Yet, Israel had desired to govern themselves, with one of their own ruling over them. They had hoped that things would be better that way, but their first king was a disappointment. As good as Saul started out, he lost his way (1 Sam. 15:22-23), and God promised that He would replace him with “a man after His own heart.” (1 Sam. 13:14) This man was David, and under his rule, Israel prospered. While David was certainly imperfect he became the gold standard to which all other kings would be compared (1 Kings 15:3-5). David had faithfully served the Lord, returned the Ark of the Covenant to Israel, and built a tent for the Lord to dwell. As he pondered building a house for God, the Lord told David that his son would build His house, and God would build David’s house. God would establish David’s reign through his descendants forever saying, “I will raise up your descendant after you, who come forth from you, and I will establish his Kingdom...I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me.” (2 Sam 7:12, 14)

This prophetic promise became embedded in the hope of Israel, especially the hope that another David would arise from their midst. With the rising and falling of each king, the hopes of Israel ebbed and flowed, like waves crashing against the shore. This promise became important as Israel went off to exile to be ruled by foreign nations. One nation after the other oppressed Israel through the centuries kindling the hope for God to fulfill this promise and vanquish their enemies. It was at the fullness of time that God sent His Son, in the line of David, to fulfill these promises made to Israel. A righteous King would come forth and bring the rule and reign of God into full realization. In Jesus, Israel did not just have a man after God’s heart, instead they had a king with God’s very heart! Jesus is the King above all other kings who came to rule in their midst. This week’s readings are concerned with the fulfilled promise that God has sent forth a King that would be over all kings.



DAY 7

PROPHECY (Micah 5:2-5)

“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity. Therefore He will give them up until the time when she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren will return to the sons of Israel. And He will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they will remain, because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth. This One will be our peace.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 2:1-6)

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’ ”

SUMMARY

A star hung in the heavens for all the world to see that God was fulfilling a promise to His people. The very instrument that God gave the world to mark the seasons, days, and years (Gen 1:14) was set in the sky to tell anyone who was looking that something significant had happened: a King was born. God was declaring to the world through the star that the King had come. Upon their arrival in Jerusalem, the importance of this celestial object was not lost on the scholars and scribes when they inquired, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” Long ago, the prophet Micah had declared that the birthplace of David, the greatest king of Israel, would be the home of the long-awaited deliverer of His people. Though the city of David had fallen into obscurity, God had not forgotten his promise that His chosen ruler would arise from that town. Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem is the sign that He is the King who has come to bring peace and establish a Kingdom that will extend to the ends of the earth.

REFLECTION

God hung a star in the heavens to guide those who were far from Him, to come and worship at the feet of the Messiah. Who do you know that is far from God, and needs a sign from Him? Pray that God would reveal Himself to them in a very clear way.

DAY 8



PROPHECY (Isaiah 9:7)

There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

FULFILLMENT (Luke 1:32-33)

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”

SUMMARY

There is something special about a child coming into the world, with eager parents anticipating the arrival of a new family member. In Isaiah, God had spoken a definitive word of judgment to Israel: the King of Assyria was coming, and they were going to be judged for their rejection of God and His law. Yet, God did not leave them without hope but gave them a pregnant promise. One day a child would come and fulfill the promise God made to David. This promise was that he would never lack an heir on his throne. For generations, Israel had longed for God to fulfill this promise, and nearly 800 years later, an angel came to a virgin and told her that you are going to be the bearer of this promise; you are going to have that child! This child would be David’s heir, and God would give Him a Kingdom that would have no end, and He alone would make this happen. Jesus is that promised child.

REFLECTION

God’s word does not return void, and He does not work on our timetable. What promises are you still waiting for God to fulfill in your life? How are you praying through those promises with anticipation? Which promises have you seen Him answer?



DAY 9

PROPHECY (Psalm 45:6-7)

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of joy above Your fellows.

FULFILLMENT (Hebrews 1:8-9)

But of the Son He says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions.”

SUMMARY

Every generation hopes for a great ruler, and this hope was embedded in Israel. In fact, God had made a covenant with her greatest king, David, regarding his heir. God had promised from David’s line someone who would rule forever (2 Sam 7:13). However, this hope was shattered with Israel’s exile into Babylon. But God was not frivolous in His promise. He would send His own Son, born of woman, in the line of David to fulfill His promise to David, as the author of Hebrews writes, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...” Jesus is the fulfillment of that Davidic promise, and He is the hope of every person who longs for a great ruler. No matter who is on the throne, or what power may seem in charge, Jesus is the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lord’s. He has been placed on a throne that will not fade away or rule that will diminish with time. Rather He will reign forever, and ever.

REFLECTION

He has been placed on a throne that will not fade away or rule that will not diminish with time. Rather He will reign forever, and ever.

DAY 10



PROPHECY (Psalm 2:6-9)

“But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain. I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ”

FULFILLMENT (Revelation 19:11-16)

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

SUMMARY

One of the guiding hopes of Israel during the 1st century was that God would send a deliverer to fulfill the promise God made to David long ago – the establishment of David’s Kingdom for all time. The Second Psalm captures this hope, envisioning a King who would overcome every adversary. God would appoint an anointed ruler, or Messiah, through whom He would shatter His opponents like vessels of clay. In the end, God’s chosen servant would be victorious over His enemies. In one of John’s final visions of Jesus, he sees a warrior prepared for battle – the very Son of God, exalted above all, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. He is ready and able to strike down His enemies and rule with a rod of iron. Today, we are invited to live with eager expectation of this hope – that one day Jesus will deliver the final blow to all of His enemies and establish Himself as the Lord of all.

REFLECTION

Jesus is our Deliverer. He has conquered the enemy and will one day return to establish His kingdom on earth. What challenges do I need to trust Jesus with today?



DAY 11

PROPHECY (Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45)

You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 21:44)

“And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.”

SUMMARY

Since the dawn of civilization, all of humanity has been ensnared by the ebb and flow of nations at war with one another. Throughout the Bible, numerous references depict nations overthrowing one another. Through the prophets, God spoke of a time when He would carve out a stone (or son perhaps, the word stone and son sound similar in Hebrew), that would come and crush all nations before it. This was the promise of God establishing His Kingdom over all kingdoms. Jesus echoes this theme when explaining to His opponents that He is the stone that God has chosen, the Son promised by God. Yet, God’s people rejected Him. His listeners were faced with a choice, receive the King and His Kingdom or reject Him and face judgment.

REFLECTION

As we reflect on the never-ending cycle of global conflicts with nations warring against each other, we need to stand firm in the hope of the unchanging King and His unshakeable Kingdom. Today, allow the promise of God’s victory to anchor you in uncertain times.

DAY 12



PROPHECY (Daniel 7:13-14 & Psalm 110:1)

“I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.”

The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 26:63-66)

But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?” They answered, “He deserves death!”

SUMMARY

People were astonished when they witnessed the miracles of Jesus, and others were amazed at His teaching because He spoke as one having authority. As Jesus stood before the High Priest, one of the major charges levied against Him was blasphemy, meaning to insult God intentionally and bring dishonor to His name and character. Finally compelled to speak, Jesus quoted two passages of scripture that spoke to His identity as God’s Son. While the religious rulers speculated the identity of Jesus, He stood in quiet confidence because He knew who He was. There was a certainty within Him regarding His identity and the fulfillment of God’s word through Him. Despite the outcome, Jesus promises that regardless of their determination about Him and whether or not they decide to put Him to death, He will sit at the right hand of God and be the ruler of a kingdom that cannot be shaken or destroyed.

REFLECTION

In the midst of being questioned about His identity and mission, Jesus went back to the Scriptures. How can we follow Jesus’ example and ground our identity in God’s word? Today, take a moment to write down two to three Scriptures that anchor your identity as a child of God.



DAY 13

PROPHECY (Psalm 110:1 [NIV])

The Lord says to my lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”

FULFILLMENT (Hebrews 1:13 [NIV])

To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

SUMMARY

Where is Jesus right now? There are various ways to answer this question, but the author of Hebrews wants to remind us that Jesus is seated in the highest position in the heavens, exalted at God’s right hand. To sit at the right hand of an earthly king was a place of honor, denoting special trust, authority, and relationship with the king. Jesus is given the most unique place, as the author compels his audience to ask, “to which of the angels did God ever say.” Jesus is no mere person or one among a host of spiritual beings. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus has ascended into the heavens, where he rules over all things. Although at times it may seem that the world is out of sorts, we know there is going to come a day when the Father submits all rule, authority, and power to the feet of the Son, and His victory shall be complete (1 Cor. 15:24–27).

REFLECTION

Amid life’s journey, distractions can shift our focus away from Jesus to the events around us. Despite appearances, have I kept Jesus on the throne of my life, or have I inadvertently placed Him in another seat?





Notes

Notes





Anointed One



Week 3: Introduction

It doesn't take long, as we glance at the news, to perceive the world's chaotic state. We hear of wars, and rumors of wars. It seems like every year a new disease plagues on our fears, forcing us to confront the frailty of our mortality. Despite living in the land of the free, a global epidemic of human trafficking has led to more slaves than ever before. When we look at everything around us, we intuitively know that things are not as they should be. The world has lost its balance and fallen out of step with God's desire. We long for God to intervene.

The world was no less chaotic in the first century, and in desperate need for the manifestation of God's rule. In a small synagogue on the Sabbath, a young rabbi walks into the service, and following the custom, reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. As all eyes focused on Him, Jesus began reading Isaiah 61, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Rolling up the scroll He sat down and declared, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luk. 4:16-21). The prophetic promises of God had reached their climax, and now, in the person of Jesus, these hopes were about to be realized. At last, God was coming to His people to set them free from their oppressors. His anointed messenger would proclaim that now was the time of freedom! Now was the time of healing! Now was the time when God's blessing would be poured out on everyone who encountered Jesus!

Jesus became like a prism for the promises of God. Just as light entering a prism vividly reveals all the unseen colors hidden from our eyes, the prophetic promises of Israel's Scriptures were being refracted through Jesus. As Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, invited the outcast into fellowship, and announced forgiveness of sins, He demonstrated in word and deed what the rule and reign of God looks like. Jesus' ministry became a sign pointing forward to the world the way that God imagines it. Wherever Jesus went, He was the messenger proclaiming that God had a greater vision for His people. This week's readings are concerned with Jesus as that Anointed Messenger of God, declaring, "Our God reigns!"



DAY 14

PROPHECY (Isaiah 52:7)

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

FULFILLMENT (Mark 1:14-15)

Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

SUMMARY

Every week, it seems like something terrible is happening, and all we want to hear is some good news! Israel had long expected the message of good news, anticipating the fulfillment of the promises God had made to her through the prophets. Namely, that she would be liberated from her oppressors and restored to her former glory. God had declared that the inauguration of these promises would be proclaimed through His chosen servant who would declare a message of salvation, saying, “Your God reigns.” Mark picks up this theme by having the first words Jesus speaks being, “The time is fulfilled,” indicating the very thing you have been waiting for has arrived. Jesus became the embodiment of that hope as he proclaimed, “the Kingdom of God is at hand,” in both word and deed. A new reality had begun where people were set free, and began to experience the good news of the reign of God in their lives. In the ministry of Jesus, we catch a glimpse of what the world looks like when God is in charge.

REFLECTION

Jesus preached the good news and announced that, “the kingdom of God is at hand.” Where are you currently seeing God’s Kingdom to show up in your life and in your family’s life?

DAY 15



PROPHECY (Isaiah 9:1-2)

But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 4:12-17)

Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— “The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great Light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a Light dawned.” From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

SUMMARY

During early childhood, darkness is often associated with fear. To soften this response, parents use a night-light to dispel the darkness. In the scriptures, God employs the imagery of darkness to signify separation from His presence and judgment. Through the prophet Isaiah, Israel had been given a word of judgment for turning away from their God and consulting spiritists and mediums for answers leaving them in darkness. But God did not leave them without a sign of hope. Their Redeemer would break forth with a great light, like the dawn turning darkness into day. As Jesus begins His ministry in Galilee, Matthew recalls this promise that one day light would break forth in that very region to vanquish the darkness. In word and deed, Jesus rescued them “from the kingdom of darkness” and transferred us into His eternal Kingdom (Col 1:13).

REFLECTION

Jesus is the light of the World (John 8:12). However, He also says that we are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). Our purpose is to radiate His light into the darkness of this world. How can I allow Christ’s light to shine through me and to impact those around me?



DAY 16

PROPHECY (Isaiah 6:9-12)

He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening, but do not perceive; keep on looking, but do not understand.’ Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed.” Then I said, “Lord, how long?” And He answered, “Until cities are devastated and without inhabitant, houses are without people and the land is utterly desolate, the Lord has removed men far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 13:13-17)

“Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; for the heart of this people has become dull, with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes, otherwise they would see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and return, and I would heal them.’ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”

SUMMARY

Much of Jesus’ teaching ministry was in parables, which are little prophetic instruments, meant to drive the hearer to insight, awaken the conscience, and inspire action. After the parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9), it became evident that not everyone understood Jesus’ message. In response, Jesus turned to the Scriptures, using words from the prophet Isaiah to illuminate His method of teaching. Isaiah was tasked to warn Israel that swift judgment would come if they didn’t repent, and turn from their evil ways. Much like the idols they worshiped, Israel had become unresponsive to God, lacking the ability to see and hear His warnings. Repentance was only possible for those with open hearts, and ears to hear and eyes to see.

REFLECTION

How is the soil of my heart today? Are there areas that need to be addressed so that I can remain in a state of continually hearing, receiving, and responding to God’s Word in my life?

DAY 17



PROPHECY (Isaiah 35:5-6)

Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 11:2-6 [ESV])

Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

SUMMARY

Life doesn't always go the way we want it to, and following Jesus doesn't guarantee a perfect life. When we look at the lives of the disciples, they were beaten, whipped, imprisoned, and rejected, just like Jesus was. Following Jesus isn't always easy. John the Baptist had trusted that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised deliverer to Israel. He had heard the voice from heaven at Jesus' baptism and all of the great things Jesus was doing in His ministry. Despite this, he found himself in jail for preaching the Gospel of God, declaring, “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” (Matt. 3:2) John, facing difficult circumstances, became disillusioned and asked, “Are You really the one who I prophesied about or shall we search for another?” Interestingly, Jesus responded with the same things that caused John's inquiry – what He was doing! In fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, God would redeem His people, and the sign of this redemption was that the blind would see, the deaf would hear, and the lame would walk. Jesus was fulfilling God's hope for His people, displaying in word and deed that the Kingdom had indeed arrived, and He was the promised Messiah.

REFLECTION

In challenging times, we need to be reminded of two things. First, that Jesus is our deliverer. Second, consider what he has done. Take a moment to reflect on your story and the ways He has answered your prayers, and rejoice.



DAY 18

PROPHECY (Isaiah 53:4)

Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 8:16-17)

When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: “He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases.”

SUMMARY

Jesus came on the scene and began transforming the circumstances of lives around Him. Through both His words and actions, the Kingdom of God overflowed in dramatic ways. Sickness was healed, and people were delivered from demonic oppression. Matthew weaves the records of these experiences through the lens of the suffering of the Messiah in Isaiah 53. Isaiah foretells that one man would representatively suffer on behalf of the nation, and through this suffering, freedom and healing would be released to the people. As Matthew recounts the miraculous ministry of Jesus, he emphasizes a crucial truth – the power to heal was intimately linked with His mission to rescue and redeem the world. Therefore, every reader of the Gospel is invited to come to Jesus for healing and deliverance to see their lives changed and made whole, just as Jesus did in Galilee.

REFLECTION

Are you sick? Is anyone you know sick? Take time to pray for them. Trust that God will extend His hand to heal in fulfillment of His prophetic promises.

DAY 19



PROPHECY (Isaiah 61:1-2 [ESV])

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn...

FULFILLMENT (Luke 4:16-21 [ESV])

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

SUMMARY

As Jesus was just beginning His ministry, He returned to His hometown of Nazareth. While visiting the synagogue, He was asked to read from the Scriptures, and was handed the scroll of Isaiah the prophet. Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1-2, a passage spoken to Israel during a time when they were on the verge of being trapped in exile. However, God assured them that this wouldn't be the end of their story, but the stage from which God would rescue them from their oppressors. Through the prophet, God promised to send a messenger anointed by the Spirit of God, to bring good news, set the captives free, and proclaim that the year of Jubilee had arrived. Referring back to Leviticus 25, Isaiah envisioned a time of liberation when slaves were set free, and debts were erased, and the Messiah's coming would fulfill this promise. After reading these words, Jesus declared, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Jesus came to set us free from our bondage to sin, pay our debts, and grant freedom to all who respond to the good news of His coming.

REFLECTION

Jesus came to heal, deliver and set us free. Consider someone in your life who needs to hear the good news today? Take a moment to pray for them.



DAY 20

PROPHECY (Zechariah 9:9)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

FULFILLMENT (John 12:14-16)

Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

SUMMARY

Things that are not obvious when they are happening become perfectly obvious when we look back at them through the lens of hindsight. Zechariah 9:9 foretold of the Messiah, the King of Israel, who would be coming to the daughters of Zion (inhabitants of Jerusalem). They would know Him because He would be just and endowed with salvation, and because He would come humbly, seated on a donkey. This Scripture was fulfilled when Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of what we now know as Holy Week. Riding on a donkey, Jesus made His way into Jerusalem, an event recorded in all four Gospels. John 12:16 tells us that, despite this event being the fulfillment of Scripture, everyone missed the true significance of this moment. The promised king had arrived! Yet, even Jesus' disciples did not understand the full reality of what was transpiring. It was not until Jesus was glorified after He was risen from the dead and they looked through the lens of hindsight, that they remembered that these things had been written about Jesus.

REFLECTION

Often, when God is working in our lives, we don't see it as it is happening. But when, in hindsight, we look back on our lives, we can see all that He has done. As I reflect on my life, where do I see the hand of God moving in ways I didn't see at the time?



Notes





Suffering Servant



Week 4: Introduction

It was the final week of Jesus' life, and He had gathered with His disciples to share one final meal with them before He would enter into His suffering. Just a few days earlier, He entered Jerusalem with the cheers of the crowds waving palm branches shouting, "Hosanna, to the Son of David!" (Matt. 21:9) For those with eyes to see, this was the Messiah coming to Jerusalem at last, but they missed it. Jesus would enter into the temple and declare it corrupt, chasing out the money changers. Trouble was in the air. Then, He sat at a table with His disciples, took bread, and broke it saying, "This is My body, which is broken for you..." (1 Cor 11:24, NKJV) Brokenness was not the posture of God's anointed Messiah; the Messiah was to break Israel's enemies. Yet, God had a different vision of what it meant to be the Messiah. On several occasions, Jesus shared with the disciples that the Messiah must suffer, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. "They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again." (Mar. 10:33-34)

Jesus understood that in order to deliver Israel, He would need to take a different journey than His contemporaries expected. Like David before Him, He would represent Israel in battle. However, in this battle against sin, He would take upon himself the suffering of His people, the penalty of their sins. Israel had known the consequences of her actions: separation from God, and a lack of the blessings that came with His presence. Jesus would enter into that darkness and take up in himself the brokenness of the people. As Isaiah foretells, "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall upon Him." (Isa. 53:6) Jesus would enter into Godforsakenness on our behalf so that we would not have to, He would allow the punishment intended for all of humanity to fall upon Him, to remove that punishment from those who would come to trust in Him. This week's readings help us to understand that the Messiah would first have to suffer many things in order that we might be brought into a relationship with God.



DAY 21

PROPHECY (Psalm 22:1)

My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 27:39-46)

And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads and saying, “You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, “He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. “He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ ” The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words. Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

SUMMARY

As Jesus hung dying on the cross, passersby called out insults and mocked Him. “You say You are the Son of God. So, save Yourself! Come down from that cross!” The chief priests also mocked Him. “He saved other people but, look, He can’t even save Himself!” “He trusts in God. He even claims He’s God’s Son. Well, then, let God rescue Him if He delights in Him!” Even the criminals who were crucified alongside Him joined in. All the mocking took the same form, asking why He could not save Himself, why God was not saving Him, if He was, in fact, the Son of God. Then, after darkness fell for three hours that afternoon, Jesus Himself asked a question, “Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachtani?” With the words of Psalm 22:1, Jesus cried out to God, wanting to know why He had abandoned Him. When the darkness fell, Jesus became sin for us, taking upon His shoulders the weight of our sins. As Jesus bore those sins, God’s face was turned from Him. The Son with whom God had been well pleased could no longer see the face of His Father because sin separated Him from the Father and led the Son to feel abandoned.

REFLECTION

What does it mean to me knowing that Jesus felt the weight of my sin on His shoulders, that He felt alone and abandoned?

DAY 22



PROPHECY (Zechariah 11:10-13)

I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples. So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the Lord. I said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. Then the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 26:14-15)

Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?" And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him.

SUMMARY

God called Zechariah to shepherd His flock, a people who were headed for slaughter due to the wickedness of rulers, who did not care about them but were concerned only for themselves, their power, and their positions of authority. As their shepherd, Zechariah was to do his best to rescue the people. Before long, Zechariah grew impatient with the people and they, in turn, rejected him. Demanding his wages, Zechariah was paid thirty pieces of silver but, at God's command, threw them to the potter in the temple. Like Zechariah, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, was rejected by His people, betrayed by one of His own disciples, Judas, who received thirty pieces of silver from those who felt their positions of authority were being threatened by Jesus. Seeing how Jesus suffered at the hands of the chief priests, Judas later threw the money into the temple, just as Zechariah had done, and that "blood money" was used to purchase the potter's field. Two shepherds, both rejected, but in the case of Jesus the true Messiah, His rejection, death, and resurrection saved His flock from death, the penalty for their sins.

REFLECTION

The price Jesus paid for my sins was far greater than the silver for which He was betrayed. What does that say about God's love for me?



DAY 23

PROPHECY (Isaiah 50:6)

I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 27:26, 30)

Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

They spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head.

SUMMARY

Jesus knew the pain He would endure in giving Himself as the sacrifice for our sins. He knew He would face the most brutal form of death imaginable, death on a cross. And He knew that, before He even faced the cross, He would endure punishment in the form of beating, torture, and humiliation. The book of Isaiah tells of the Suffering Servant who, in obedience to God, would endure suffering that would be unimaginable to any of us. Jesus is the Suffering Servant. It is His voice we hear in Isaiah 50:6 as He speaks of being scourged, tortured, and humiliated. In Mark 10:34, Jesus said, “They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and three days later He will rise again.” Yet, even knowing all this, Jesus humbled Himself and was obedient to God’s will. Although He was fully divine, Jesus was fully human. He knew the pain He would endure and asked the Father to let the cup of suffering pass from Him. But His desire was to do God’s will, and so He endured the beating, the mocking, and the cross, all so that we may have eternal life.

REFLECTION

Consider the depth of Jesus’ sacrifice, knowing the pain He would face, yet humbly submitting to God’s plan. In what areas of your life can you emulate Jesus’ humility and obedience, even in the face of challenges?

DAY 24



PROPHECY (Psalm 35:19)

Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me; Nor let those who hate me without cause wink maliciously.

FULFILLMENT (John 15:25)

“But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’

SUMMARY

Hatred is a powerful emotion. Many justifiably hate war, crime, abuse, and torture, and all forms of unloving acts. But the Scriptures foretold those who would hate Jesus “without a cause.” In spite of His many miracles and the large following of people He had, Jesus was despised and hated by the religious leaders of His day. This caused them to go to incredible lengths to try and trap or embarrass Jesus even to the point of looking for Jesus to stone a woman caught in the act of adultery (John 8). How did Jesus respond to the hatred He endured? Many others would respond with more hate. However, Jesus embodied the very words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.” Jesus showed that the greatest response to the hatred He faced was the love of God.

REFLECTION

Jesus loves his enemies and prayed for them until the very end. How can the example of Jesus serve to guide me when I am dealing with those who dislike, and disagree with me.



DAY 25

PROPHECY (Psalm 41:9)

Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

FULFILLMENT (John 13:18)

“I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.’”

SUMMARY

The name Judas is synonymous with betrayal. Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus’ chosen twelve disciples, would one day betray Jesus, turning Him over to the chief priests in return for thirty pieces of silver. Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him. Responding to Peter’s statement that they all believed Jesus was the Holy One of God who had the words of eternal life, Jesus said, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” (John 6:70, ESV) At the Last Supper, after washing the feet of the disciples, Jesus predicted His betrayal. Quoting Psalm 41, He pointed to His impending betrayal as the fulfillment of Scripture when He said, “He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.” Eating bread together was a sign of intimacy and close fellowship and lifting up one’s heel against another paints the picture of a horse that has lifted his hoof ready to strike someone. This prophecy shows the deepest kind of betrayal. How painful it must have been for Jesus to be betrayed by someone whom He not only trusted, but also cared about.

REFLECTION

Jesus understood what it was like to be betrayed by someone close to Him. How can that help me when I feel betrayed by someone in my life?

DAY 26



PROPHECY (Psalm 109:25)

I also have become a reproach to them; when they see me, they wag their head.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 27:39)

And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads.

SUMMARY

Everywhere Jesus found himself during His ministry, He attracted crowds. As He came closer to His death, the crowds changed their demeanor towards Him. At first they surrounded Him to see the miraculous compassionately flow toward all who had need. They would even cry “Hosanna!” at his coming to Jerusalem. However, their disposition has now shifted as Jesus is suffering on the cross. Like David before him, this suffering servant would have to endure abuse from the people through their insults. Those who passed by Calvary that day joined in the emotional abuse of Jesus, showing their disapproval and rejection through wagging their heads at Him. Yet, Jesus endured the cross for our sake because of His deep love and obedience to His Father’s will.

REFLECTION

Jesus went from being celebrated to being hated by many. We can’t allow the opinions of people to shape our identity and calling. How can the example of Jesus help to strengthen our resolve to be a witness for Him even in trying times?



DAY 27

PROPHECY (Zechariah 13:7)

“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My Associate,” declares the Lord of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn My hand against the little ones.

FULFILLMENT (Mark 14:27)

And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, because it is written, ‘I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.”

SUMMARY

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He knows His sheep and they know Him. However, in a troubling prophecy found in the book of Zechariah, God states that one day He will strike down His own shepherd and as a result, the people of Israel would be saved. God also promises that when this takes place, the sheep that followed that shepherd would be scattered and vulnerable. After sharing a Passover meal, Jesus and His disciples went to the Mount of Olives. Quoting the words of Zechariah, Jesus said, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’” That night, Jesus was arrested and the next day, He was crucified. When the temple guard came with Judas Iscariot to arrest Jesus, what did the disciples do? Matthew 26:56 (ESV) says, “Then all the disciples left him and fled.” In fulfillment of Jesus’ words and the words of Zechariah 13:7, the sheep were scattered. In the face of trials, Jesus’ disciples deserted Him and fled.

REFLECTION

When Jesus, the Good Shepherd, was struck down, His disciples left Him and fled. How do I respond when people criticize my faith? Do I run and hide or allow my light to shine?



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Our Redeemer



Week 5: Introduction

One day Jesus was walking by the Jordan where John was baptizing. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he exclaimed, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29) The author of the Fourth Gospel desired to communicate a truth that Jesus was the Passover Lamb of God. The feast of Passover was the climactic feast of Israel that celebrated their release from slavery under the Egyptians. With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, God delivered Israel through a series of plagues that climaxed with the death of the firstborn. That night God told the people of Israel to take a young lamb or goat and eat it in haste, taking the blood of that animal over their doorposts. Those who were covered by the blood would have death pass over them and walk out of their slavery into the glorious freedom that God had promised. This was only a picture of what God would ultimately do through Jesus on the cross.

Every year, the Jewish people would celebrate this victory in a feast, which Jesus used to explain what his death would mean in the plan of God. As Jesus was eating a Passover meal with His disciples, He took the cup, and told them to, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:27-28). Where the cup once symbolized their redemption from Egypt, now it symbolized an even greater and eternal redemption through the blood of Jesus that would restore relationship with God once again. As Isaiah writes, “He rendered Himself as a guilt offering,” so that, “He will bear their iniquities” (Isaiah 53:10-11). Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross becomes that offering on our behalf. The blood of Jesus shed on the cross covers our sins, so that now sin and death would pass over us, so that we would be redeemed, bought by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. This week’s reading help us to reflect on those promises that speak to the significance of the death of Jesus.



DAY 28

PROPHECY (Psalm 22:16)

For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.

FULFILLMENT (John 19:18)

There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.

SUMMARY

Crucifixion was not just a form of execution, but also a method of torture as the condemned would be nailed by his hands and feet to the cross and endure a long, painful death. In the Roman empire, this was considered to be the cruelest, most humiliating and shameful form of capital punishment. It was used to punish those considered the lowest kind of criminals, such as slaves and political insurrectionists. Psalm 22:16 foretold Jesus' crucifixion, "They pierced my hands and my feet." It also pointed to the fact that Jesus was crucified between two other men, men who truly had been guilty of the kind of crime that would be punished by this cruel method. We see the fulfillment of this in John 19:18. Jesus was crucified, His hands and feet pierced by the nails that held Him to the cross, and He was crucified between two others, men who were likely rebels or insurrectionists. Although Jesus was guilty of no crime, the sign placed on His cross identified Him as "King of the Jews," a claim that, in the eyes of Rome, made Jesus an insurrectionist like those between whom He was crucified.

REFLECTION

Jesus died among men whose crimes merited punishment. Although He did not deserve punishment, He took that punishment for my sins. Thank Jesus today for bearing the punishment you deserved.

DAY 29



PROPHECY (Psalm 34:20)

He keeps all his bones, not one of them is broken.

FULFILLMENT (John 19:31-36)

Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken."

SUMMARY

Crucifixion was a long, cruel, and painful form of death. The condemned person would hang on the cross, nailed by his hands and feet, which made breathing extremely difficult. To breathe, the person had to push himself up with his legs so that his lungs could be properly inflated. This could go on for hours or even days. At some point, the person's legs would be broken to hasten death. When Jesus hung dying on the cross, the Roman soldiers were told to break His legs. But when they came to Jesus, He was already dead, so His legs were not broken. This was a fulfillment of Psalm 34:20, which said that not one of His bones was broken. It was also a fulfillment of the Passover. In Exodus 12:46, God instructed the Jews not to break any of the bones of the lamb which was sacrificed to commemorate the night of the first Passover, when the blood of that lamb saved them from death. Jesus is our Passover lamb, sacrificed on the cross to save us from sin. His gave His life so that we might live but, as with the lamb sacrificed on Passover, none of His bones were broken.

REFLECTION

Even painful things can be a part of God's plan. What pains in my past have I seen Jesus redeem?



DAY 30

PROPHECY (Zechariah 12:10)

“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.”

FULFILLMENT (John 19:34-37)

But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, “Not a bone of Him shall be broken.” And again another Scripture says, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.”

SUMMARY

The death of Jesus needed to be confirmed so one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear. Blood and water ran forth and everyone knew this would-be King was dead. As John was looking back at this event, he realized that this was all a part of the plan. What had seemed like tragedy in the moment was actually the only way it could have happened. Going back to the prophet Zechariah, John quotes, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.” In Zechariah, they are piercing God! The soldiers and crowds, while thinking they are doing the right thing, are completely missing it, they have just killed God. The piercing of our God becomes the means through which the blood of Jesus will be poured out on a lost and dying world. Through that crimson flow all who trust in Him will be washed as Isaiah says, “He was pierced for our transgression.”

REFLECTION

Jesus went through the most horrific pain, and ultimately died in order that we might be restored to relationship with God. Think back to the moment when you first realized what Jesus had done for you. Thank Him for His sacrifice.

DAY 31



PROPHECY (Isaiah 53:11-12 [NIV])

After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

FULFILLMENT (Hebrews 9:28)

And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

SUMMARY

Yom Kippur, or The Day of Atonement, was the most solemn and Holy Day on the Jewish calendar. It was a day when the High Priest would perform elaborate rituals for the sins of the people. It was a day to be taken very seriously because it meant that God had removed the sins of the people from them for another year. This ceremony would involve a sacrifice that could only be given on this particular day and in a specific way to provide atonement for the people. It also involved two goats, with one being sacrificed and the other being released into the wilderness to “carry the sins of the people away.” The author of Hebrews is pointing back to the day of atonement that the Jewish people knew very well and in doing so, also reveals that there is a prophetic promise that one day the suffering servant of God would provide this sacrifice “once for all.” This meant that they would no longer need to return again year after year for forgiveness because God’s chosen servant would “bear the sins of many.”

REFLECTION

One of the incredible visual reminders of Yom Kippur was the goat that was led away into the wilderness. It was a visual reminder that the sins of the people had been carried away. One of the great tools the enemy will use in the life of a believer is guilt or shame. When we face this, we need to look no further than Jesus to see that He has carried our iniquities away. Rest in His peace today!



DAY 32

PROPHECY (Psalm 31:5 [NIV])

Into your hands I commit my very life. Lord, set me free. You are my faithful God.

FULFILLMENT (Luke 23:46)

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last.

SUMMARY

Surrender is about giving up completely and agreeing to forgo especially in favor of another. In this respect, Jesus surrendered His will, His body, His very last breath to the Father. Jesus trusted in His Father, even until His last breath on the cross when it seemed as if God had abandoned Him in His greatest time of need. And yet, in surrendering His spirit, His will, His body unto the Father, Jesus knew He would have complete peace, freedom as the Psalmist foretold. It was at this point of surrender that Jesus gave up His life in order to save us. When many think about the death of Jesus, they believe it to be an unfortunate story about a group of people that took the life of the Son of God. However, as Jesus said Himself in John 10:18, "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again."

REFLECTION

Can you trust God with everything you hold onto in this life? Your family, your job, your sickness, your very soul? Be encouraged by the example of Jesus. Remember that even on the cross, He trusted in His Father's power.

DAY 33



PROPHECY (Jeremiah 31:31)

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. “They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 26:26-28)

While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.”

SUMMARY

For generations, the Israelites celebrated the Passover supper, as a commemorative act of how God saved them from their Egyptian exile and the plague of the death of the firstborn (Exodus 12). When Jesus shared the Last Supper, commemorating the Passover with His disciples, He reframed this meal around His sacrifice. Through giving His body, and pouring out His blood Jesus was establishing a ‘new covenant’ as promised by God through the prophet Jeremiah. Jesus used this familiar meal that His disciples had been taking part in their entire lives to show its ultimately fulfillment in His impending death. Jesus explains that if you want to understand His death and its victory, you must understand that He offered His body and blood for the ‘forgiveness of sins’. Through this act sin would lose its grip over humanity, and death would pass over all who ate and drank this meal.

REFLECTION

Whenever we “eat this bread and drink this cup we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes” (1 Cor 11:26). We celebrate the victory of God in Jesus. Take a moment to thank God for the victory that comes through the cross.



DAY 34

PROPHECY (Isaiah 53:9)

His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 27:57-60)

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.

SUMMARY

The sign above His cross read King of the Jews in three languages to let the world know, this is what the Romans do to would-be kings. Beside Him were two other would-be political insurrectionists. But now that was all over. Jesus had breathed His last breath, the spear had pierced through His side, and the clouds went dark with sadness. Upon seeing these events, the centurion who oversaw His execution remarked, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39) God is dead, and we have killed him. Despite His innocence, Jesus was killed on trumped-up charges. That evening, a secret disciple of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea, approached Pilate and asked for the body. Joseph took and placed Jesus' lifeless corpse in a new tomb he had just cut out for his family. Thus fulfilling the prophecy concerning the Servant whom God would bring forth to redeem His people. As the perfect sacrifice, His death would serve as a guilt offering to remove the sins of His people and bring them into relationship with God.

REFLECTION

Jesus was crucified despite the fact that He was innocent. Although He Himself knew no sin, He became sin for us, and entered into a death for us. Take a moment to remember when you made the decision to follow Jesus. Thank God, that He saved you.





Risen Savior



Week 6: Introduction

The ancient Easter hymn reads, “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death...” The resurrection of Jesus is the great exclamation point for every promise of God. It has changed all of human history and the way that we understand God Himself. However, this was not always the case. As two men were walking toward Emmaus, a town approximately seven miles west of Jerusalem, another traveler came alongside them. He inquired what they were discussing, and why they were so sad. They began to tell Him all the things that had happened to Jesus: how this prophet, mighty in word and deed, was handed over to their rulers, and delivered to the Romans for crucifixion. They hoped that He was the Messiah, but this hope was shattered in the wake of these events. Even more, His body had disappeared according to some reports. To this retelling, their companion replied, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” (Lk 24:25-26). These disciples missed it, so Jesus reframed their understanding of these events by leading them through the greatest Bible Study that ever took place.

The Resurrection is the capstone in the story of Jesus. In the resurrection, death was defeated, and its grip over humanity was removed, as Jesus now holds the keys to death and Hades (Rev. 1:18). Through this climactic moment, God vindicated His Son, and established Him as both Lord and Messiah. Without the resurrection, the work of Jesus is just a nice story with a sad ending, but His Story did not end in death. Christ came bursting forth from the grave, and because of that victory, we now have new life in Him. Ultimately, the resurrection shaped the way that the early disciples read their Scriptures, what we know as the Old Testament. Upon further study the early church saw in Jesus the climax of the grand story God was crafting, with hints of the resurrection woven throughout. This final week’s readings are concerned with those passages.



DAY 35

PROPHECY (Psalm 2:7 & Isaiah 55:3)

“I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’”

“Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David.”

FULFILLMENT (Acts 13:29-37)

“When they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead; and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people. And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’ As for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: ‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.’”

SUMMARY

For the early church, the resurrection of Jesus was central to His identity. In His lifetime, Jesus stirred speculation that He was the King that the Jews were anticipating from their Scriptures, fulfilling the promises of David. However, the crucifixion shattered those hopes. Messiahs were not enthroned on crosses. They overcame their enemies with power. They were not defeated by them. However, God had a different plan with Jesus. He raised Him from the dead! Paul, picking up this theme in Romans, writes, “[He] was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead” (Rom 1:4). The Resurrection was the vindication of Jesus, the revelation that He was truly the Messiah of God, and that the promises of God had been and were continuing to be fulfilled in and through Him.

REFLECTION

Jesus died and the enemy rejoiced, but for the God who raises the dead there are no endings. If you or someone you know is currently facing a challenging situation, take a moment to pray for God to step in and transform it for His glory.

DAY 36



PROPHECY (Jonah 1:17)

And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

FULFILLMENT (Matthew 12:40)

For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

SUMMARY

Despite the miracles Jesus had performed and the message that He taught, the scribes and Pharisees demanded a sign from Him. They wanted proof that He was the Messiah. He told them that no sign would be given but that of Jonah, a prophet sent to Nineveh with a message to repent or face disaster. Jonah was reluctant, so he attempted to flee from God, and was swallowed by a great fish. Praying from the belly of the fish, Jonah agreed to go to Nineveh. After three days in the fish's belly, God released Jonah, and he delivered God's message. Jonah's release from the belly of the fish was a sign to Nineveh that the prophet and the message were from God. Nineveh believed, repented, and was spared. In giving the scribes and Pharisees the sign of the prophet Jonah, Jesus pointed to His death, burial, and resurrection three days later. This was the only proof they needed that He was, in fact, the Messiah. Sadly, they never accepted the sign, even after Jesus rose from the grave on the third day after He had been crucified.

REFLECTION

Jesus' death and resurrection bring the message of grace and salvation. Faith in Him saves us from the judgment of our sin and brings eternal life. Who do I know that is running from God's plan like Jonah? Pray for them.



DAY 37

PROPHECY (Psalm 16:9-11)

Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will dwell securely. For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

FULFILLMENT (Acts 2:29-32, 36)

“Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. “This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses....Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.”

SUMMARY

The disciples on the way to Emmaus remarked, “We had hoped that he [Jesus] was the one who was going to redeem Israel.” The crucifixion had dashed these hopes, and the news of the empty tomb only fostered their confusion. Where had Jesus gone, what had happened? God had raised Him from the dead! He would not let His Son suffer the sting of death, but He would hold true to His promises to David, that He would not abandon the Messiah in the grave. Three days later the stone was rolled away, the linens were wrapped, and no trace of His body was left. The power that held humanity captive since the Garden had been plundered and rendered powerless in the wake of the victory of God. Now as Peter declared God had exalted Jesus to the highest position, declaring Him to be both Lord and Messiah!

REFLECTION

God had not abandoned Jesus to defeat, but raised Him in victory. Is there any area in my life that I need God to help me overcome? Ask the Lord for His continued presence in every trial and situation.

DAY 38



PROPHECY (Psalm 118:22)

The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.

FULFILLMENT (Acts 4:8-12)

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health. He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief corner stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

SUMMARY

In construction, the cornerstone of a building is the first stone set. It is also the most important stone set as it gives the building a firm foundation, ensures that it will be straight and level, and provides stability for the entire structure. A stone that has an odd shape, one that will not fit in the builders’ plans, will be rejected. After Peter healed the lame beggar with the name of Jesus, the Pharisees had him arrested and then demanded to know by what power or by what name he had done this. Through the Holy Spirit’s prompting, Peter quoted Psalm 118:22, bearing witness to the fact that Jesus was the fulfillment of that Scripture. Jesus Himself used this Psalm in speaking of His eventual rejection and exaltation in Matthew 21:42. Jesus did not fit in with the “plans” of the Jewish leaders for the promised Messiah, and so they had rejected Him by having Him crucified. But Jesus was raised from the dead and now sits in glory at the right hand of the Father. Jesus is the chief cornerstone. Through Him, there is salvation, for it is only through His name that we are saved.

REFLECTION

As the chief cornerstone, Jesus provides a firm foundation on which to build our lives. Have I made Him the cornerstone of my life? How can I trust Him more even when His will doesn’t seem to fit my plan?



DAY 39

PROPHECY (Isaiah 25:8)

He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken.

FULFILLMENT (1 Corinthians 15:54)

But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

SUMMARY

Life is fleeting and passes us by so quickly. At times it can seem like a never-ending series of goodbyes. Yet, there is a future that God has promised to His people, one without goodbye's. On that day, there will be a grand celebration with a lavish banquet. On that day, we will rejoice because our God has made all things new, and we will walk in fullness of our salvation. It is in this hope that we wait. Everyday we anticipate the complete realization of what God had done for us through raising Jesus from the dead. Judgment may be coming for the world, but for those who trust in Him, they will be spared the consequences of that judgment, the Second Death. God, in Jesus, will come again to His people, and “Death will be swallowed up in victory.” He will touch His people in such a powerful way that the very tears on their faces from the anguish of trial and tribulation will be removed by His hand, and the stigma of following Him will be replaced by the joy of beholding His face. Until then, we wait patiently for that day when we will put on our immortality, and the goodbye's of earth will be replaced with the welcome from heaven!

REFLECTION

God has promised a glorious future to His children. A future without goodbyes, where Death is defeated for all time. Spend time today and reflect on what you are most looking forward to in eternity with Christ?

DAY 40



PROPHECY (Hosea 13:14)

Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight.

FULFILLMENT (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)

“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY

Held in shackles for fear of dying, the weight of the curse from the Garden cast a heavy shadow over all of humanity. From generation to generation, the curse released its fury without discrimination, but God would not allow His people to be tormented forever. When God raised Jesus from the dead something happened. The ruling powers of Sin and Death were defeated, and the chains of enslavement were shattered. This victory was not only His but ours. Writing to the Corinthian church, Paul goes back to the prophet Hosea and augments his message of judgment to the Northern Kingdom, and transforms its message through the resurrection of Jesus. Now Paul mocks death and the grave! Where is their victory? What happened to their power? Its rule has been abolished, and now those who trust in Christ will stand in victory.

REFLECTION

We are free to live for Jesus! Where has Jesus called me to share the message and hope of that freedom?

Appendix

HOW TO LEAD SOMEONE TO JESUS

As you are sharing your faith and someone is ready to turn to Jesus, it can be an overwhelming feeling. Therefore, we encourage you to think ABC when praying with someone to come to Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

ADMIT

We have to admit that we have a problem called sin and are in need of having our sins forgiven. Without God's help, it is impossible to be who He wants us to be. One of the biggest hurdles is that all of us think we are good enough, but we have to realize that apart from Jesus, we can do nothing. We can never make ourselves right before God in our own strength. (1 John 1:9)

BELIEVE

We have to believe that Jesus died for our sins, rose again, and that He is who the Word of God declares. (Romans 10:9-10) We place our faith (trust) in Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross for us. In John 11:25-26, Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

COMMIT

To commit our lives to Jesus, we are turning towards Him and away from our old way of living (sin). Through this act of commitment, we are confessing Jesus as Lord (leader) of our lives and are now committing to walk in God's plan for our lives as we follow Jesus daily. (Mark 8:34-35)

This is the first step to someone beginning a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ!

May the Lord provide you with many opportunities to share Jesus so that others can take the greatest step of their lives.

We would love the opportunity to walk with anyone who has made a decision to follow Jesus.

Please visit evangelchurch.com/newtofaith for free resources to help you grow in your new relationship with God.

Appendix

TIPS FOR LEADING A GROUP

Thank you for opening your home and leading a group this season. Fulfilled is a dynamic series about the prophetic promises of God throughout the Old Testament. Each week covers an essential theme that relates to Jesus' redemptive work, revealing the plan that God has been orchestrating to save the world through His son! Your group times will help you dig deeper together into God's Word!

Here are some key tips for hosting a group this season:

1. Pray for your group members regularly. Prayer is the heartbeat of the Christian life. Try to begin and end every group session in prayer.
2. Start by setting the big picture of the evening. Letting people know where we are going and what to expect is essential to having a great group experience.
3. Take time to discuss what you are reading in the devotionals. There is so much going on in what you are reading that we won't get a chance to cover in the videos or sermons.
4. Don't feel like you have to finish all the questions. The questions are there to help facilitate conversation.
5. Try to facilitate a group conversation. The more you can get others involved, the better your group experience will be. Don't allow any one person dominate the conversation but invite everyone to share.
6. Look for opportunities to connect outside of your group time. Look for chances to serve together in our outreaches or service projects.



