

## Lesson Three — His Life

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In the past two weeks we have looked at the details concerning the forerunner of Messiah, John the Baptist, as well as the birth of the Messiah. This week we will spend some time looking at the life of the Messiah. In doing so, we will naturally include His actions and His words. What did He do? What message did He bring?

Please remember to continually ask the Lord for insight and wisdom. Also ask Him to fill you with His Spirit, as you confess to Him anything that He prompts you to confess. Why don't you stop and do that now?

Are you ready? Let's get started.

### Day One — The One of Whom Moses and the Prophets Spoke

This week we will peruse passages that reveal the life and work of Jesus Christ. Because there is so much information on this subject, it would be impossible to cover it all in one week's time. So for our purposes this week, we will glimpse particular facets of the overall picture, and realize that we could not possibly cover it in full.

First we will look at an event in the Scripture which I have already referred to my lectures; but I want to bring attention to the event again so that you can look at what is written and study through it carefully. It is an event which took place on Resurrection day.

Jesus taught a lesson to two disciples that we need to learn as well. These two disciples were setting out on a seven-mile journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus on Resurrection day. Their hearts were downcast because of recent events, i.e. the crucifixion of the One they had hoped would redeem Israel, and the report that He had been seen alive. Without their knowing Who He was, Jesus began walking and talking with them. He

questioned them as to their thoughts and conversation. Their response to His query concerning recent events revealed a very definite lack of understanding of the way the Old Testament Scriptures were put together. This lack of understanding (something which should not have been the case for these disciples), evoked this response from Jesus:

**Luke 24**

**25 And He said to them, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**

Write out what the disciples had missed in their understanding of Scripture, and how Jesus corrected their mistake.

Do you know what portion of the Old Testament Moses wrote? It was the first five books of the Bible. So essentially, Jesus began at the beginning of the Scriptures and continued on from there, teaching the disciples about Himself, which He could do from *any part of Scripture*. (See if that isn't what is stated by Jesus' words.)

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

The events of that day continued. Jesus and the two disciples arrived at the destination, and the two men asked Jesus to stay with them. He complied. Even yet, they did not recognize Him. Then, as they sat down to eat —

**Luke 24**

**30 And it came about that when He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. 32 And they said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?”**

At what moment did they recognize Who He was?

Here is a question to ponder — Keeping within the context of what Jesus had just revealed to His disciples about the Scriptures, why do you think they recognized Him *at that moment*?

When the disciples understood what Jesus was showing them about the Scriptures, what effect did it have on them (v. 32)?

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

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

**Luke 24**

**...44 Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures...**

According to this passage, where are the places in Scripture that Jesus said one could go to find all things that are written about Him?

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

Although all of Moses’ writings deal with the Christ (as we have just seen), let’s look specifically at something Moses said to the second generation of the Children of Israel, as they were about to enter the Promised Land. In the midst of a rather lengthy dissertation, Moses said:

**Deuteronomy 18**

**15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. 16 This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’ 17 And the LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well. 18 I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him...”**

Essentially, what did Moses prophesy?

The fulfillment of this prophecy spoken by Moses can be easily ascertained through Jesus’ Own words.

**John 8**

**28 Jesus therefore said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.**

**John 12** (Jesus speaking)

**49 “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak. 50 And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”**

**John 17** (Jesus speaking to the Father)

**...8 for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them; and they received them, and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me...**

Relate what Moses had told the Children of Israel to what Jesus told the people.

As we have seen the complete Old Testament is about the Lord Jesus Christ. And in order to see that the people during Christ’s day recognized this fact, let’s read a few verses wherein such statements are made.

**John 1**

**45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”**

**John 4** (The Samaritan woman at the well)

**25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.”**

**Matthew 16** (His disciples answering Christ’s question, “Who do people say that I am?”)

**14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

**Acts 3** (Peter speaking to the Men of Israel)

**22 “Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD SHALL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED in everything He says to you. 23 And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ 24 And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. 25 It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.’ 26 For you first, God raised up His Servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways.”**

What can you learn about Jesus from the previous passages?

Now, let's bring these things to the present and relate them to the future.

**Hebrews 12**

**25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. 26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN." 27 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.**

What responsibility does this put on you, personally?

As we close for the day, do you have any thoughts or questions you would like to write down?

See you tomorrow.

## Day Two — Christ's Introduction into Public Ministry

With the past weeks of study and with what we saw yesterday, we can now begin to look at the life of Christ. Since we know that Jesus Christ is the One spoken of by Moses and all the prophets, we can now look to see what His mission and message was. But while looking at Jesus' mission and message, there are things we must remember. We must remember that:

- Man was created to rule.
- Man lost the right to rule, due to Adam's sin.
- All mankind is affected by Adam's sin, as the fallen nature is passed through the seed of the man.
- Jesus Christ was prophesied from the beginning, in many ways.
- Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, was born to a virgin, through God's Spirit overshadowing her; God is His Father.

With those things in mind, let's go to the beginning of Christ's public ministry. We will be reading large portions of Scripture today in the various gospels. I have the Scriptures formatted in such a way that you will be able to make study notes in both margins. Just spend the day studying through these passages, asking the Holy Spirit to allow you to see what He wants you to see.

**Luke 3**

**1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to**

**John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. 5 EVERY RAVINE SHALL BE FILLED UP, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW; AND THE CROOKED SHALL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; 6 AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.’”**

**7 He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’ for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”**

**10 And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, “Then what shall we do?” 11 And he would answer and say to them, “Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise.”**

**12 And some tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” 13 And he said to them, “Collect no more than what you have been ordered to.”**

**14 And some soldiers were questioning him, saying, “And what about us, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages.”**

**15 Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, 16 John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” 18 So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to the people.**

What had John been sent to do?

According to v. 15, what kind of state were the people in?

What does John say of the One to come after him?

### **Matthew 3**

**13 Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” 15 But Jesus answering said to him,**

**“Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him. 16 And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”**

What happened after Jesus was baptized? Give details.

### **John 1**

**32 And John bore witness saying, “I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. 33 And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’ 34 And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”**

**35 Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”**

**37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 And Jesus turned, and beheld them following, and said to them, “What do you seek?” And they said to Him, “Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?” 39 He said to them, “Come, and you will see.” They came therefore and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. 40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means Christ). 42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).**

**43 The next day He purposed to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.” 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 And Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.”**

When John saw Jesus coming to him, what did he call Jesus?

Relating this information to what we studied yesterday, what do you think John meant when he said that?

What did Andrew say to his brother, Simon, about Jesus?

What did Nathaniel say of Jesus?

After Jesus had been baptized by John...

#### **Matthew 4**

**1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. **3** And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” **4** But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’”

**5** Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, **6** and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING YOU’; and ‘ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’” **7** Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’”

**8** Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; **9** and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” **10** Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” **11** Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

**12** Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; **13** and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. **14** This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, **15** “THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES — **16** THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND TO THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED.” **17** From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Who led Jesus into the wilderness to be tested by Satan?

Throughout this forty day period, who tempted Jesus?

It is recorded that Satan twice asked Jesus the same question. What was the question?

Then what was the third recorded temptation?

Once Jesus came out of the wilderness, and settled in Capernaum, from that time on, what did Jesus begin to preach (v. 17)?

In closing our study today, what have you learned about the introduction of Christ's public ministry?

## Day Three — The Messianic Message

As we have already seen, the message of the forerunner of Christ — John the Baptist — was a message of repentance. Below are his first recorded words in the Gospel of Matthew. When you come to his quote, underline what John says.

### Matthew 3

**1 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven (lit., *the* heavens) is at hand."**

At this point in your understanding, what do you think is the meaning of John's words?

Immediately following Jesus' baptism by John, God speaks from heaven concerning Jesus. Underline what He said.

### Matthew 3

**16 And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."**

In order to understand the import of God the Father's statement and in order to understand what the Jews knew this statement to mean, it *must* be related back to the prophecy given in II Samuel 7:12-14a, which we looked at on pp. 29, 30. Relate God's statement in Matthew 3:17 to God's statement in II Samuel 7:14. What is obvious?

In Matthew 3:17, the statement spoken from heaven is clearly the fulfillment of what was previously stated by God through the prophet Nathan to David in II Samuel. This statement from heaven reveals that Jesus

is the One Who was David's descendant; the One Who would sit on David's throne; and the One Who would have an everlasting kingdom. Remember Jesus came to the Jews as their King! And as such, He came to offer them *the kingdom of the heavens*. We must understand what it means that the kingdom of the heavens is at hand. We must not gloss over these things and let them slip by without understanding the true meaning. (We'll discuss this in more detail in the lecture.)

Sometime after Jesus' baptism and His 40 days of testing in the wilderness, John was taken into custody. When Jesus heard this news, He began preaching the same message that John had preached. Underline His words in both passages below.

**Matthew 4**

**17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ...23 And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom...**

**Luke 4**

**41 And demons also were coming out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Son of God!" And rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ. 42 And when day came, He departed and went to a lonely place; and the multitudes were searching for Him, and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from going away from them. 43 But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose." 44 And He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.**

Go back and underline the statement Jesus made in v. 43. According to Jesus' Own words, for what purpose did Jesus come?

According to these two passages, what message did Jesus bring to the Jews? Compare it to the message John had been preaching.

According to Matthew 4:23 and Luke 4:44, to whom did He give the message? How do you know?

From the passage in Luke chapter four, what did the demons say of Jesus?

For the following three years Jesus did public ministry. He walked the streets of Jerusalem and the surrounding regions, continuing to take a very specific message to the Jews. It was a message *concerning*

*the kingdom of the heavens*, which has its roots in the *unconditional* covenant made with Abraham (which was related to the *conditional* covenant made with Abraham's physical descendants, through Moses at Mt. Sinai). For the most part, the Old Testament, in dealing with irrevocable promises made to Abraham and to His descendants, dealt with the *earthly land* and the Jews having an inheritance in that land. Though the Abrahamic covenant was unconditional and irrevocable, an *individual's participation* in the promises of this covenant was fully conditional upon each person's willingness to obey the law — the Mosaic covenant.

Again, the Old Testament had to do with the earthly portion of the kingdom. But now Christ came to Israel (Abraham's descendants) with an offer for the heavenly kingdom. Now Jesus' message had to do with the heavenly portion of the kingdom, conditioned upon adherence to His commands. Jesus came offering a better inheritance, based upon a higher standard of obedience than that seen in the Mosaic Law. (For examples, compare the portions of the Mosaic Law with Christ's commands in Mt. 5:20-32.)

The message of the New Testament had to do, not with this earthly land, but with the second realm of the kingdom promised to Abraham's descendants. It had to do with *the heavenly portion* of the kingdom, which can easily be seen as one peruses the pages of the New Testament. God's first-born son, Israel, was in a position to receive a double-portion of the inheritance! And both realms of the kingdom make up the double-portion — the heavenly realm and the earthly realm.<sup>1</sup>

(It is an interesting study to look at a red-lettered edition of the Bible and see what was uppermost on Jesus' mind in His last week on earth prior to His death [even His entire public ministry, for that matter]. He gave the message that He was sent by the Father to give.)

It becomes very obvious that the focus of His message concerned offering the kingdom of the heavens to Abraham's descendants — the only ones on earth who were in a position to be made such an offer. They were the people of God, the only people who had access to the Living God, and the only people who were descendants of the one to whom the promises were given. God was their king. Jesus was God in the flesh; and He had come to offer the kingdom of the heavens to them. In obedience, they only needed to repent from their sinfulness and receive their King and accept the offer of the heavenly kingdom.

Tomorrow we'll see how they responded to this offer. And we will continue to study these things as we work through the next several weeks of study.

That's it for today! Have a nice one!

## Day Four — Miraculous Signs

As we begin our work in today's study, it must be remembered that the New Testament is simply the on-going flow of the Old. To be sure, one cannot fully understand either Testament apart from the other; the two form one continuous story. And this is evident by the fact that, as we have already seen, the Old Testament closes with the exact message that the angel brought to Zacharias at the point when God began to speak to His people again after 400 years of silence. (Compare Mal. 4:5, 6 with Lk. 1:17.) This is not coincidental!

And this type of thing can be seen over and over again when comparing the Old and New Testaments. One way this can be seen is in the message that Jesus brought to Israel (being the identical message that John

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<sup>1</sup> This area of study is covered in greater detail in the Bible study entitled UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE — BIBLICAL SURVEY, which is available from Seeking the Kingdom Ministries.

the Baptist also brought). The message, “Repent...” was reflective upon something which the Prophet Isaiah had spoken against Israel some 700 years prior. By Divine inspiration, Isaiah rightly spoke:

**Isaiah 1**

**2 Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, “Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me. 3 An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master’s manger, but Israel does not know, My people do not understand.”**

**4 Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him. 5 Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts, and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil.**

According to vv. 5-6, what is the condition of Israel?

It was in the midst of Isaiah’s ministry to the Southern Kingdom that the Northern Kingdom was taken captive and exiled in 722 BC by the Assyrian king, after many prophets had been sent to them, calling them to repentance; but they would not listen to God’s Word. Exile and captivity was the result for the lack of righteousness on the part of the people in the Northern Kingdom. God had previously told them would be the case (*cf.* Deut. 28:15ff; Lev. 26:14-39).

God sent prophets to both Northern and Southern Kingdoms<sup>2</sup>, warning them also of sure captivity and exile if they continued to walk in rebellious ways. In fact, what Isaiah said in the passage above only reflects upon the words spoken by God through Moses to the second generation when He told them of their sure outcome if they walked in disobedience. Moses had previously warned:

**Deuteronomy 28**

**35 “The LORD will strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.**

Slightly over 100 years after the Northern Kingdom had been taken into captivity by Assyria, the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, came into Israel in the three waves of attack and deportation (605 BC; 597 BC; 586 BC), so to speak, exiling the Southern Kingdom to Babylon. Their captivity lasted for 70 years, at which time Cyrus’ decree went forth stating that Jews in Babylon could go back to Israel and rebuild their Temple, city and wall.

Then for another 100 years or so, God continued to send prophets to speak God’s Word to Israel, but for these succeeding 100 years Israel continued to disobey God and disregard His Word. Finally, God sent the last prophet, Malachi, who spoke God’s Word to the people during Nehemiah’s day. Finally, God had said all He was going to say; and silence ensued for the next 400 years, until the angel was sent.

And the fact that nothing had changed with Israel’s condition during *or after* Isaiah’s ministry is not difficult to ascertain at all. Israel was sick with sin; and in this sin-sick condition, the message opening up the New Testament is John’s message of repentance to the nation, with a view to healing contingent upon repentance — “Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand.”

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<sup>2</sup> Remember that the Kingdom of Israel had been divided after Solomon died. Ten tribes of Israel made up the Northern Kingdom, and two tribes made up the Southern.

Also the fact that Jesus went about the countryside calling for repentance while healing the sick was indicative that Israel, as a nation, *was sick from the sole of their feet, to the crown of their head.*

(The healing of a physically sick person formed a *sign* which pointed to the fact that Israel as a nation could experience *spiritual healing*, conditioned upon national repentance.)

Jesus went throughout the land of Israel preaching the kingdom of God and performing miraculous signs and healing people from various sicknesses. All of this was not without purpose. The Apostle John specifically laid out eight signs throughout his gospel, after which he stated the reason *why these things* [these signs] *had been written down.* In a moment we'll peruse a few of the eight signs, but notice this first. After giving the eighth sign, he wrote:

**John 20**

**30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.**

It must be remembered that a *sign* points to something yet future. With the condition of Israel being such as it had been stated in Isaiah 1:2-6, and the message of repentance being spread throughout the land, according to John's own words, why did he write this gospel?

Since it is a Jew who requires a sign (I Cor. 1:22), compare v. 30 with v. 31, *what was written* so that they may believe?

At this point in your understanding, what does it mean to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"?

John goes on to say that there were many more things that Jesus did. He wrote:

**John 21**

**24 This is the disciple who bears witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written.**

What was the implication John made through saying that "the world would not contain the books"?

Out of all the miraculous signs that Jesus performed, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John chose eight signs to tell about in his gospel. The passages wherein each of the signs are spelled out are printed for you in the Appendix under the heading EIGHT SIGNS IN JOHN. For the remainder of today's study, will you find this section in your Appendix and read through all of, or part of, the eight signs? There is space below for notes to be taken on the details of each of the signs. Things to note in these spaces are the answers to the question: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

If time allows you to study through all eight signs, please do so! If not, choose a couple of the signs and work through them. Then, at your weekly meeting when you come together as a group perhaps *all* the signs will have been studied and each can be discussed. We'll deal with these signs to large extent in the lecture this week.

FIRST SIGN:

SECOND SIGN:

THIRD SIGN:

FOURTH SIGN:

FIFTH SIGN:

SIXTH SIGN:

SEVENTH SIGN:

EIGHTH SIGN:

## Day Five — His Last Week

Thus far we have glimpsed the messages which were brought by both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. Both brought an identical message to God's people — the only people on earth who could have been offered this specific message. The message had to do with *repentance* and *the kingdom of the heavens*. We have also seen that Christ's public ministry was one of miraculous signs of healing, portending the need of national healing through repentance.

Today we will look at a few events which took place during the last week of Christ's public ministry, exactly prior to His death. We'll begin on the first day of that week. Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Look to see what the crowds were saying on this day —

### **John 12**

**12 On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."**

### **Matthew 21**

**8 And most of the multitude spread their garments in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees, and spreading them in the road. 9 And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!" 10 And when He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the multitudes were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."**

### **Mark 11**

**8 And many spread their garments in the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. 9 And those who went before, and those who followed after, were crying out, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!"**

### **Luke 19**

**37 And as He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 38 saying, "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"**

From all four gospel accounts, what seems foremost in the minds of the Jews this first day of Christ's last week?

This type entry into Jerusalem would certainly have reminded many, if not all of the Jews about an event which had been recorded in the Scriptures concerning David's son, Solomon. Read an excerpt from I Kings about the day Solomon was coronated as king over Israel. The Jews would certainly have gotten the innuendo. And the leadership didn't like it all!

#### **I Kings 1**

**32 Then King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came into the king's presence. 33 And the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. 34 And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel, and blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne and be king in my place; for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." 36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! Thus may the LORD, the God of my lord the king, say. 37 As the LORD has been with my lord the king, so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David!"**

**38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. 39 Zadok the priest then took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" 40 And all the people went up after him, and the people were playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth shook at their noise.**

Then there was also a prophecy spoken by the Prophet Zechariah, which prophesied of this event:

#### **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.**

As Jesus entered into the city that first day of the week on a donkey, numerous things began to take place in rapid succession. It seems that the hatred on the part of the leadership toward Jesus grew daily. Just a few weeks prior, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the leaders had already decided to look for an opportunity to kill Him. (So adamant had they become in desiring to kill Jesus that they even sought to put to death the one whom Jesus raised from the dead — Lazarus.) With the events of this first day of the week of Passover (i.e., His riding into the city on a donkey, and the cries of the crowds), they looked for a way to kill Him all the more!

Early in this particular week of Passover, Jesus spent the days walking through the streets teaching the crowds and answering the Pharisees accusations, talking much about the kingdom of the heavens. But in the evenings, He would retreat with His disciples and continue to teach them, as He encouraged them, again talking much about the kingdom of the heavens. Of course, in His omniscience, He knew His time was growing shorter by the day.

At some point in the final weeks of Christ's public ministry, the leaders — speaking on behalf of the nation of Israel — crossed over the line. There had previously been a defining moment in Matthew chapter twelve when the leaders attributed Jesus' power to perform miracles to Satan. As a result, in His last week prior to His death, Jesus withdrew the offer of the kingdom of the heavens, which He had been making to them for the previous three years. Let's read about it.

#### **Matthew 21 (speaking to the Pharisees)**

**33 "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A**

**VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey. 34 And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. 35 And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. 36 Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. 37 But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize his inheritance.' 39 And they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40 Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?"**

**41 They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons."**

**42 Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'? 43 Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. 44 And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."**

**45 And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. 46 And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet.**

Who does the landowner represent?

What did the landowner do with the vineyard?

What did the tenants do?

When did the landowner send his son?

What did the tenants do with the son and why?

Then Jesus asked the next question, "When the landowner comes, what will he do with the tenants?" How did they answer?

What will the landowner do with the vineyard?

Does the landowner have the right to do this? Why?

What does v. 43 imply that the vineyard represents?

Why will the vineyard be taken from the tenants and given to another people? What are these other people to do?

This is exactly what happened. Due to the continuous unrepentant state of the leadership of the Jews, and their sway over the people, Jesus withdrew the offer of the kingdom of the heavens from the Jews and would make the offer to a new man, a new creation, the Church.

As a result of a lack of repentance on the part of the majority of the leadership and their holding sway over the people, they connived to kill their King. And the very crowd who had begun the week singing praises to the “Son of David” as He rode into the city on a donkey, had another cry —

**Mark 15**

**12 And answering again, Pilate was saying to them, “Then what shall I do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?” 13 And they shouted back, “Crucify Him!”**

**14 But Pilate was saying to them, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify Him!” 15 And wishing to satisfy the multitude, Pilate released Barabbas for them, and after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified.**

Next week we will study the death of Jesus Christ. See you then.

## NOTES