

EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

WITH REFERENCE TO PROPHECY AND THE GREEK PERFECT TENSE

VOLUME 1

THE COMING OF CHRIST

by

DR PETER MOSES AND DR JOHN MCEWAN

[BOOK 74-1]

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WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States jurists saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

Salvation is available for all members of the human race.

Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation it neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

How do I become a Christian?

There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (I Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

The results of Salvation

The results of this are unbelievably wonderful.
My sins are taken away (John 1:29)
I possess eternal life now (I John 5:11,12),
I become a new creature in Christ [2 Corinthians 5:17),
The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (I Corinthians 6:19)
And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

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Many other Christian resources are available freely from our internet web site: www.ebcwa.org.au and www.orakeibaptist.co.nz for weekly messages.

For further information contact Dr Peter Moses at pjmoses@bigpond.com.au

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PREFACE TO THE EBCWA HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS PROJECT 2021

We decided early in 2021 to upgrade the Harmony of the Gospels series, which was originally published in a series of volumes almost 20 years ago with volume 1 appearing in July 2002. These volumes were revised some 10 years ago. The complete Harmony is currently published in 27 volumes as seen below. The numbering of the books for this major upgrade will remain the same.

The completion of the Greek Perfect Tense project in 2018 -2019 where around 1200 individual occurrences of the Perfect Tense verbs were reviewed now allows us to incorporate additional value into this revision of the Harmony of the Gospels. This was published in 21 volumes including a series of parallel workbooks

The Perfect Tense project was in 8 categories [1] Unbeliever, [2] Believer, [3] God the Father, [4] God the Son, [5] God the Holy Spirit, [6] The Church, [7] Israel and [8] People and Places and covered the whole New Testament. The spread of these categories both in the New Testament and the Gospel is as follows.

Category	Unbeliever	Believer	Father	Son	Spirit	Church	Israel	Others
NT	41	158	112	274	109	241	108	151
Gospels	9	16	42	195	46	34	60	64

The predominance of the Lord Jesus Christ in both of the categories is noted with the percentage of the Son increasing from 22.9% of the New Testament to 41.8% when the Gospels are taken as a separate group.

The focus in the Gospels is therefore on the Lord Jesus Christ the Author and Finisher of our faith

The new series will also contain Prophecies fulfilled at the First Advent demonstrated in the Gospels showing how there is an interweaving of different facets of God's Eternal Plant as a reality to encouragement us all.

LIST OF VOLUMES IN THE 2021 HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

BOOK NO	TITLE
74-1	THE COMING OF CHRIST
74-2	JOHN THE BAPTIST AND NICODEMUS
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74-4	HEALING AND THE SABBATH
74-5	THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
74-6	CHRIST'S MINISTRY IN GALILEE
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74-8	PARABLES AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
74-9	MIRACLES
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74-11	THE BREAD OF LIFE
74-12	MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION
74-13	THE LAST JOURNEY
74-14	FEAST OF DEDICATION
74-15	MINISTRY IN PEREA
74-16	RAISING OF LAZARUS
74-17	THE RICH YOUNG RULER
74-18	PRESENTATION OF THE KING
74-19	CONFLICT WITH AUTHORITY
74-20	THE OLIVET DISCOURSE
74-21	THE LAST PASSOVER
74-22	PREVIEW OF THE CHURCH AGE
74-23	BETRAYAL AND TRIALS
74-24	THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST
74-25	RESURRECTION
74-26	HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS – KING JAMES VERSION
74-27	HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS – MODERN PARAPHRASE
74-28	COMPENDIUM OF DOCTRINES IN THE HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

INTRODUCTION

Within the Bible there are many parallels giving different aspects of the same thing. The four Biblical Gospels of course have the same focus, that is, on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The different authors have a different emphasis on aspects of the story, but have a common story.

As one approaches a harmony of the Gospels the concept adopted is that all Scripture is God Breathed and as the Holy Spirit has put all the books together there is a harmony amongst them all. This can be seen in prophecies in the Old Testament being fulfilled literally centuries later and reported on in the New Testament

By comparing events in the four Gospels simultaneously a more complete picture of the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ is obtained so that we may more fully appreciate what He has done for us and the magnificence of the Plan of God. That is the focus of this Harmony of the Gospels.

The analysis of the four Gospels will be on a verse by verse basis, examining the key words, background, application and doctrines together with a harmonised version of the King James Version, as well as examining problem areas of so called contradictions. The basic structure of the harmony will be based on that found in the Bible Topic Book which may be modified from time to time after evaluation of parallel texts.

The background notes on the Gospel of John and introduction are adapted from the Diploma in Theology notes in Volumes 8 to 10 of the Diploma Course of the Evangelical Bible College of Western Australia by Dr John McEwan. Our first finding in our review of the Harmony has been to suggest to all our contacts to pray about using the Harmony of the Gospels as part of the Diploma of Theology, rather than just the 110 hours of lectures on the Gospel of John alone. Save that for post-diploma work.

NEW EDITION OF THE HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS WITH PERFECT AND PROPHETIC REVIEW

The 26 volume Harmony of the Gospels was completed in 2004 to 2005 and subsequently reviewed in 2017. Since 2017 a study of all of the Greek Perfect Tenses in the New Testament has been completed and published.

In addition work has been undertaken where Old Testament Bible Prophecies fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ has been examined and divided into two groups, those recorded in the Gospels and those in the rest of the New Testament.

It has been decided that elements of both the Perfect Tense and Prophecy should now be incorporated into the Harmony of the Gospels as it again reinforces the complete validity of the Scriptures as the only complete source of the truth.

The Perfect Tense project has been published in 21 volumes including workbooks, which allow a person not using the KJV to complement and publish the work using their own version.

The upgraded work will be issued in an e-book format as they are completed to form a complete package for Church, group or individual use. We encourage sharing them freely with others as you are led.

We are greatly encouraged as we prepare the contents of the final books already completed as they encourage complete confidence in God's Eternal Plan and joy in the midst of current global events concentrating on the Lord Jesus Christ the Author and Finisher of our Faith. As Christians we are in a unique place of security and can encourage others to consider and accept eternal salvation by faith in Christ.

PERFECT TENSE

We examine the effect of the Perfect Tense in this project. There are nearly 1500 Perfect Greek Tenses in the New Testament.

1. God knows everything from beginning to end, and has in the Scriptures provided the information for humanity to have a permanent relationship with Him in His Eternal Plan, through His work for mankind on the Cross.
2. The basic meaning of the Greek Perfect Tense is that something happens at a point in time, with results that go on forever.

As God knows what goes on forever He has authored the Scriptures for mankind to individually express their volition regarding divine revelation, and so make decisions for their eternal destiny.

3. Everybody born physically exists for ever. We are born physically alive but spiritually dead. We therefore have to accept that we need to be born spiritually; being “born again”. **John 3:6-18, 36.**

4. Being “born again” in Grace through Faith in Christ provides a permanent relationship with God.

5. Those who reject the way of Grace remain alive physically, but by rejecting the staggering grace of the gift of the Cross, God’s perfect grace provision, they must accept that they select the wrath of God to live forever under, rather than grace, and are condemned to having no permanent relationship with God. **John 3:36.**

6. God is totally Just and will always provide sufficient information for all to establish relationship with Him, and does so through the ministries of the Holy Spirit, so that each person can have the grace based relationship with Him; so refusal to accept the way of Grace is rebellion against God, and a direct insult to His provision of the Cross, and His plan.

GOSPELS: MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, JOHN

1. The four Canonical Gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Many false “gospels” were written in the third century but were rejected as the fakes they clearly are. They can be read still today, and fragments of these heretical “gospels” turn up at times, like the so called “gospel of judas” recently. They are nonsense, and rightly rejected by people who seek the “ring of truth”, which is what we find in the Four proven Gospels before us.

2. All were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (**2 Timothy 3:16**), but each writer saw things from a different perspective, and therefore have variations in the things they wrote about.

3. All the Gospels are compatible but the emphasis of the writers is on different characteristics of Jesus Christ.

- | | | |
|------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Matthew | Christ the King | Written to the Jews |
| b) Mark | Christ the Servant | Written to the Romans |
| c) Luke | Christ the Perfect Man | Written to the Greeks |
| d) John | Christ the Son of God | Written to everybody |

4. The Gospels have equivalents in the four wing creatures in (**Revelation 4:7**) - the living creatures. (cf. **Ezekiel 1:10**)

- | | | |
|------------|---------|------------------|
| a) Matthew | King | Head of a Lion |
| b) Mark | Servant | Head of an Ox |
| c) Luke | Man | Head of a Man |
| d) John | God | Head of an Eagle |

5. The Gospels have equivalents in the four colours of the material of the entrance into the tabernacle. (**Exodus 26:36**)

- | | | |
|------------|---------|----------------------|
| a) Matthew | King | Purple of Royalty |
| b) Mark | Servant | Scarlet of Sacrifice |
| c) Luke | Man | White of Purity |
| d) John | God | Blue of Deity |

e) It should be noted that the colours of the robe of the ephod of the High Priest were purple, scarlet, white and blue.

6. The Gospels have equivalents in the Branch.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| a) Matthew | Branch of David (Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15) |
| b) Mark | Servant the Branch (Zechariah 3:8) |
| c) Luke | Man whose name is the branch (Zechariah 6:12,13) |
| d) John | Branch of Jehovah (Isaiah 4:2) |

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

INTRODUCTION

The Messiah is offered and sadly the Messiah is rejected; this is the message of Matthew. This is the most Jewish of the Four Gospels. It is for the Jews but not necessarily only for those in the land. This is the Gospel to give to the Jewish people you know, especially if you can get a modern Hebrew edition.

We need to think of this Gospel as the link between the Old and the New Testaments; the person and the work of the Lord as the Messiah. The Old Testament prophecies which are fulfilled by Messiah is one of the main themes of this Gospel. But Matthew is also clear - He is more than just Messiah of Israel; He is the Saviour of the world. Matthew is saying to Israel, "behold your king/Messiah, but he is even more!"

THE AUTHOR

His Jewish name was Levi. Matthew means gift of Jehovah. His father was Alphaeus. He was a tax collector, which was a very despised occupation. The tax collecting in the ancient world was up for bids with some of the money collected going to the government, the other going to the tax collector. He was therefore an extortioner; his aim was to become wealthy and he had clearly been successful in this.

Normally the person who was the tax collector had someone else to collect the taxes for them but Matthew was so brazen and greedy that he was actually extracting tax himself from the people when the Lord met him. This is not a nice person! The taxation of Rome was exorbitant, and often unfair, with you having to go up to the tax collector personally who would say what he wanted.

The tax collector would be accompanied by armed mercenary soldiers. If you decided that you did not want to pay taxes you were killed. He was as bold as brass and not a very nice character before Christ met him, being very money hungry. He was changed radically by his meeting with the Lord, as all are when they genuinely meet the Lord. He is the one who records the vital "fruit inspecting" words in Matthew 7:13-23.

The older books, "Sketches of Jewish Social Life", by Edersheim, or "Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus", by J Jeremias, are excellent on the subject of tax collectors and other details of daily life at the time. We do not know how Matthew died. Wikipedia is helpful, but its strong Anti-Christian bias eliminates many facts.....

Levi, or Matthew, hated religion but he found in J'Shua someone who could turn things upside down in the religious area. After his conversion and training eventually he went over to such places as Macedonia, Syria, Persia, Parthia and eventually India, where there were Jewish trading colonies. Two centuries later copies of the Gospel of Matthew were found in India. One tradition is that he is buried there – possibly in Goa.

LANGUAGE OF MATTHEW

The Gospel of Matthew was written originally in Aramaic and then later translated into Greek. The fact that it was originally in Aramaic and not Greek is attested to by a number of church Fathers such as Origen and Jerome, who commented on the Gospel of Matthew. Ireneaus said that Matthew wrote his Gospel in a Hebrew tongue. This format was quite common practice. Josephus wrote his Wars of the Jews in Aramaic and then translated it into Greek. Statements like, "Which is being interpreted", in **Matthew 1:23** and, "That is to say", **Matthew 27:33**, is found often enough in Matthew to point to the fact that the original was not Greek.

THE GOSPEL

The estimated date of his Gospel is 58 AD. It was certainly written well before the destruction of Jerusalem, before Luke and appears to be the first written with Mark second and John last. In the early church this gospel was considered to be the most authoritative. Clement of Rome in 96 AD, Barnabas in 106 AD, Polycarp in 115 AD, and Justin Martyr in 145 AD were among many of the church fathers who quoted from it.

The language it was finally written in was Greek, as shown by the fact that when he mentions a Hebrew word he translates it, as shown in **Matthew 1:23, 27:33, 46**. He also explains Jewish customs in **Matthew 22:23, 27:8,15**, showing that he is writing to the Jews out of the land who would have used the LXX for their scriptures and were out of touch with local customs (many families having lived in the Diaspora - out of the land - for 300 years since the days of Alexander, or 600 years, since the days of Nebuchadnezzar).

Pappius, an early Christian writer, stated in 120 AD, that Matthew wrote the "Hebrew Gospel". In many commentaries there are many paragraphs on whether he wrote in Hebrew and translated into Greek but as explained above the Gospel was finally written for the whole church in Greek.

THE LOGIA

It is believed that he also wrote a major source book, called the "Logia", or "the sayings" of Jesus, and this was the basis of the Gospel. He was the only one of the disciples who was likely to be able to write shorthand. This is something that the tax collectors of the day were able to do. The only other group were within the court system, who took evidence in that way. One can see this tax collector noting down the sayings of Jesus in a shorthand form.

The original document that the liberals consider Matthew used as his source was called "Q" by them, as the first letter of the German word for "source" is Q. The German liberals said that the authors of the Gospels had a source and then people other than the disciples wrote the gospels. The truth is that Matthew wrote both the "source"/logia, and his Gospel, and these were available when Mark, Luke and John wrote theirs.

In the second century it was also reported that Matthew was also the author of what they called then "the testimonia", which was a list of prophecies of the Old Testament which had been fulfilled in the New Testament by events in the Lord's life. We believe that this is probably correct, as these witnesses were very close to events, and so he was also able to draw on this document in the writing of the Gospel of Matthew. Both the logia and the testimonia were available into the second century, but were lost through latter centuries.

The early church did not have the complete New Testament in any one place until the 320s. For the first 20 or so years they had nothing that comprises the New Testament today. Many would gather round and read writings (the logia) from Matthew. It is of interest that 60% of Matthew's Gospel is taken up with the sayings of the Lord. He is also the one that has the most quotes from the Old Testament, thereby identifying fulfilled prophetic words.

Some people argue that Mark's Gospel was the first written. However, of the 1071 verses of Matthew 500 of them are in Mark with only 55 verses of Mark not being in Matthew....

The relationship between Mark and Matthew is therefore established. In the case of the leper being healed however the version by Mark and Luke are very similar in length whilst Matthew is shorter indicating that both Mark and Luke consulted Matthew and then expanded on the story, possibly after speaking to the man. This however does not mean that one is slavishly copying from another, for each is hearing the Spirit and bringing unique emphasis to the things they are led to record.

The sources being used by Matthew for writing his Gospel are, as noted above, the logia and the testimonia, which were his short hand notes of the things he saw and heard, being added to as he recalled events or verses of the Old Testament that he realised had been fulfilled by an event. He draws on his own memories of events and scripture; and likely has written them up in the two book format by the time of James being written, 10-15 years after the Resurrection. The whole Gospel however, as with the rest of Scripture, was coordinated by the Holy Spirit at the right time for its spreading along the local church networks around 58AD.

We have here the eyewitness account of a person who remembered what he had seen and heard and had recorded details under the principle of Holy Spirit inspiration initially into the Logia and Testamonia, and then, at exactly the right time he sits down and weaves all together under the Holy Spirit's guidance and direction into the Gospel we have before us.

THE JEWISH GOSPEL

Matthew stresses the Jewish message. Messiah has come, the King has come, He has been rejected but He is on the throne. There are more words of the Lord in Matthew than in any other Gospel. Matthew uses three money words, which would be quite typical of a tax collector. If the Gospel had been forged they would not have done this. This gives a clear "ring of truth"; the fact that it was written by a person with intimate knowledge of money and an interest in it. The three words occur in **Matthew 17:24**, the word translated tribute, the parable of the coin in **Matthew 17:27**, and talent in **Matthew 18:24, 25:15**. He also uses the words gold and farthings and brass more than others. A talent was 8,000 pennies and with a penny being a days wage this was 8000 days wages for a working man.

We should never be worried about the close and even critical/analytical study of the Word of God, being concerned that we might discover something that will cause us to lose our faith, for it will always stand up to scrutiny. Matthew has several favourite phrases; that it might be fulfilled is mentioned ten times, he is obviously enthusiastic about what is being fulfilled. "This was spoken by the prophet" - 14 times, and the "kingdom of heaven" - 33 times.

PARABLES AND MIRACLES

As far as parables and miracles none of the Four Gospel writers write them all down. In addition Matthew does not write in chronological order, he is writing things to co-ordinate them together for the Jewish mind. There are 13 parables in Matthew not recorded elsewhere. It can be useful to compare the four Gospels to see their overlap and the things they select out from their account; there is slightly different purpose in each.

Of the 35 miracles recorded in the Scripture Matthew records 20 of them, 3 of which are unique to Matthew, the two blind men, the dumb demoniac both in Matthew 9 and finding the lost coin. He also records 12 times when the Lord did multiple miracles.

Matthew gives us the view of the "wonder working Son of God", the king of Israel come with "signs and wonders". Paul points out that the Lord came in power and the wisdom of God - **1 Corinthians 1:24**. Matthew gives us the key discourses of the Lord. Teaching sessions, the miracles, and the specific parables of the Lord, all interrelate and inter react in this Gospel.

Of the miracles, six are in the natural world, such as the stilling of the storm, another eight are personal, such as healings, whilst the other six are spiritual, dealing with demonism. By choosing these miracles he is showing the Lordship of Christ over nature, in the affairs of men, and in the spiritual realm. Matthew's message is; He rules in all three spheres – He is King of kings and Lord of all lords, for He is the Creator of the universe, and its only Saviour.

Anybody in the Lord's time could have gone to the genealogies, held at the temple, and proved that Christ was the expected Messiah of the line of David on both mother and father's side. He was the only one with the right to the throne and the evidence was there. He challenged every Jew with this claim. In 70 AD the Jewish records were lost when the Romans destroyed the Temple.

GENEALOGY

It is clear that there are, to the western mind, "gaps" in the genealogy in Matthew 1. We should not try and argue the gaps away, for they exist. When the Jews said "begat" it was not necessarily a father-son relationship it could be a grandfather to a grandson and genealogies would often skip a generation where there was a clearly understood connection, for the interest of symmetry or interest in specific people.

The key to the genealogy is that you have a historical set of records that people could be checked against. The skipping of a generation or several generations was not important from their point of view. The names recorded were those of people you wanted to stress, and enough to check with records and fill in any gaps.

The way they thought was that those who were not mentioned were so well known anyway it didn't matter, or you omitted them because you did not wish to stress something about their character, so they were not mentioned. We also have very important things happening here in relation to the reporting of women in the genealogy.

As we will see the genealogies are divided into three sections as far as Israel is concerned. From Abraham to David is a thousand years, from David to the Babylonian Captivity, and from the Captivity to the time of Christ. It is not only a record but it is a sermon in itself. The latter two periods are combined equal in years to the first, but equal number of names, hence the clue to the "gaps" in genealogy.

As a result of the genealogy of Christ no one in his day ever queried the genealogical right of the Lord Jesus Christ to be King of the Jews. The chief priests wanted the plaque on the Cross to be rewritten, but they were not able to dispute the claim. He was the only person living in Palestine who was able to claim that. His line is seen through Joseph (Solomon) in Matthew and Mary (Nathan) in Luke.

In his genealogy Matthew is making a point and preaching a sermon showing that the Lord is God and is also Messiah.

During the period from Abraham to Saul, Israel was a theocracy. As God ruled Israel so the Lord Jesus Christ is to rule as God. As we come close to the Babylonian captivity a number of kings are left out because they were decadent. Jeconiah, under a specific curse, **Jeremiah 22:30**, who is mentioned, is eventually saved and blessed in Babylon.

The Lord is King; He is coming to rule as King in the line of the kings to sit on the throne of David. The third section from Zerubabel to Joseph, we see men who are functioning in the time of the priests. The Lord is coming to rule as the High Priest of Israel. In the genealogy therefore we have the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is God, King, and Priest, which is a three fold ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We also have a Gospel message mentioned in the genealogies. Here there are certain people mentioned that would not normally be mentioned. No self respecting Jewish genealogy of the time mentioned women, but in Matthew's list there are four; Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba. Here we have four women who are either involved in adultery, or were under a curse. Ruth is a Moabitist and therefore under a curse, while the earlier two are Canaanites.

The other three women are morally tainted, and two women are foreigners. This message therefore becomes one of the "gospel", the good news that salvation is available through this line. With these people we see the grace of God at work. In all cases despite their shortcomings and disadvantages it is seen that they all have a part in the plan of God.

There is some thought that two lines converge on one person at the great grandfather stage and that Joseph and Mary are cousins; the name is such a common one and this may not be the case. The genealogies definitely establish the Lord's credentials to be the Messiah of Israel. There is a great opportunity to gain a lot of messages from these lists. This genealogy, of Joseph, will be studied in the Harmony in conjunction with that in Luke, (that is of Mary).

DISCOURSES

There are several major discourses in Matthew. He is writing this as a Jew to show that the Messiah has come. This is proved by what He did, what He said and what He taught; once again the three fold witness. Matthew emphasises the ministry of miracles, the parables and the discourses; once again the three fold ministry.

The first major discourse is that of the Sermon on the Mount. This tells us what the kingdom is all about. Our Lord came preaching about the kingdom. The Lord is King and is to rule in your heart as He will one day rule on earth. In the Sermon on the Mount we have the policy of the King.

It is a very OT discourse for, the kingdom citizens, the kingdoms laws; the kingdoms attitudes and the citizenship of the kingdom are outlined. It is rooted and grounded in the Old Testament.

When the Lord gave this message the hearers would have understood that He was completing a chapter in the Old Testament in the form of Deuteronomy 28, which was awaiting completion by the coming of Messiah.

In **Deuteronomy 28:15-22** the Lord, through Moses, had told the children of Israel that if they would hearken unto the voice of the Lord they would be blessed. After giving the principle, a series of blessings are given. When the Lord gave the beatitudes, as recorded in Matthew 5, He was going back to complete this chapter.

The person who would do this would be the one who would complete the law, the Messiah. Only God can bless. Here He is saying that He is God, and also that he is the one who spoke through Moses. In Matthew we have the Lord summing up the Mosaic Law, reinforcing what Moses has said. Jesus is saying, "You have heard Moses say this; I now say that is what happens now", and it is recorded in this section of Matthew.

The Lord Jesus Christ is reflecting the statement in Deuteronomy 28 and saying that, "if you keep my commandments you will be blessed". If you want the blessings of God you must be in obedience to God, and that means obedience to "me" – Jesus is Messiah, and Messiah is God and Man.

CURSING AND BLESSING

In **Deuteronomy 28:15 ff**, you have the "cursings"; the choice of Israel when Messiah comes is blessing or cursing. As Elijah said on Mt Carmel, "Are you for God or not"?

This is a trumpet call to repent and to be obedient to God's Word. John the Baptist prepares for the message, and Jesus gives the last challenge to the nation before he fulfils the Spring Feasts at the Cross and Empty Tomb. The biggest danger in dealing with the Sermon on the Mount is seen in liberalism today, as they take it out of its Jewish and Biblical Deuteronomy context, and imply things from it's words which are not true. It is the record of the policy of the King, and must be responded to for blessing or judgment.

One of the main things behind this Sermon being given, is the Lord is on this day showing Himself to be the God of Moses. He notes, "If you neglect my words a greater penalty will occur to you than did to people who ignored Moses". How are you going to survive if we neglect so great salvation? The Sermon on the Mount is a great challenge to Israel. The writer of Hebrews explains this fully 30 years later. **Hebrews 3:4-19**.

Matthew is the lynch pin of the New Testament, and this is why he is constantly going back to the OT. The Lord came to make a point to Israel. Many of us see only how it applies to us now, but let us reflect on its impact then first. The children of Israel ignored the warning that was given by Moses, and they went into captivity in 586 BC for 70 years in Babylon, they ignored the warning of the Lord, and went into dispersion in 70 AD. The Sermon on the Mount is a warning to Israel, and therefore has multiple applications to our days.

There are two main theological errors that occur with interpretation of this passage. The liberals emphasise it out of proportion, as a method of living today. But remember, it has no mention of the Holy Spirit, and that should be a clue that we should be careful of taking it all for ourselves literally; there is far more here, and later revelation will be needed to apply it successfully. **Ephesians 5:9-21**. At the other end of the spectrum the ultra dispensationalist of today says that the Sermon on the Mount does not apply to us at all. This is not true, as all Scripture is for us, even though not directly to us. We must ensure we walk slowly here and get the Lord's meaning, in its sequence and context of revelation, before we make application to our own day.

Deuteronomy 28 and Matthew 5 are parallel passages and make the same point and the results were the same, when the Israelites rejected the sayings. The results were the Babylonian captivity in 586 BC and the dispersion of Israel 70 AD. What importance does the Sermon on the Mount have today? Firstly, to Israel it is the record in the Word, of the policy of Messiah. It also has many levels of impact and application to us today as Holy Spirit filled Christians.

THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

The other major discourse in Matthew (and in Luke) is the Olivet Discourse; the contents of which saved the believing Jewish members of the first church from the catastrophe of the final siege of Jerusalem.

In **Matthew 24:1-3** there are three interesting questions being asked here. The Lord had said that the Temple would be destroyed. The disciples asked when it would happen. What will be the sign of His coming? What will be the sign of the end of the world? They thought that it would all happen at once. They thought that if the Temple and City would be destroyed, as Daniel had predicted, **Daniel 9:24-27**, the Lord would return and the end of the world would occur at once. This is the Amillennial view, and the Lord will correct them.

The Lord answers differently, saying that there are going to be large time differences between these events. There are three questions and three answers mixed in Matthew 24, and Luke 20-21.

One of the things said by Jesus saved their lives, "When you see the eagles on the hills do not even go into your house go to the mountains". In 66 AD the Jewish revolt broke out. The Jerusalem church knew it was a crisis and knew what the Lord had said about the Temple being destroyed. On the hills they saw the Roman legions with their golden eagles, marched quickly up from Caesarea to try to stamp out the rebellion.

The Christians had Matthew 24 open, and were studying it. They were at that point besieged by the Romans. They had the Lord's instructions and miraculously the siege was lifted for a time, and the Roman Governor killed as he led his troops back to Caesarea at the battle of Beth Horon. As the "eagles" left with the troops, in obedience to the words of the Lord, all the believers of the church at Jerusalem escaped and fled across the Jordan to the city of Decapolis - Pella.

From there they dispersed to all corners of the known world. They had to leave the city the day the siege lifted, for in the days that followed the battle of Beth-Horon the rebels stopped people leaving. Obedience saved every believer in the city, but all the unbelievers perished or were enslaved when the second siege began, for it was only lifted with defeat of the Jewish rebels.

In the future this passage is going to be important as well, as in the Tribulation period there are things that are going to happen that will parallel the events of 66 AD.

Some things in Chapter 24 have been fulfilled, others have to be fulfilled, but they all have application to us when interpreted correctly, and to that future group of Jewish believers in Jerusalem facing the Anti-Christ's forces.

In this chapter we get a glimpse of God's character, policy and will, both for the Disciple's generation, our generation, and the generation of Believers facing the Anti-Christ in the last days. He gives the policy of how he wants to rule our life, and it is with our expectation of literal fulfilment of scripture prophecy, and our readiness to be instantly obedient to its commands.

We are to be "alert" at all times. Do a word study of the word "alert" and see how many times it is included in an order in the New Testament Letters. **Ephesians 6:10-18**.

Some of the most interesting Commentaries on Matthew are by Jewish Christians, (Messianic Believers).

THE KINGDOM

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit Matthew is making a point about the King who rules through the very source of His rejection - the Cross. He is the King who will reign forever, and this is the "good news" of the work then and the future work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the certainty of His promised kingdom.

There is an expanded emphasis in the Church Age of the Lord's teaching, because the king was present as he said the things recorded in Matthew, but He is absent now, however HE is coming again, and that thought is to dominate our application of the Word in our days. **Matthew 16:1-4**.

We have a similar message to the Disciples and the Jewish believers of the Great Tribulation period, and it is still the message of love, mercy and grace, but the king is absent at this time. There are over thirty references to the kingdom in Matthew. The message is clear, the Lord will literally set up his kingdom, and we are challenged to remember this every Communion Service – "until He comes". **1 Corinthians 11:26**.

FIVE DISCOURSES

There are five discourses in Matthew each one having a narrative beforehand, then another narrative section followed by another discourse. After the fifth discourse there is the death of Christ. These are not necessarily combined chronologically, as Matthew is more interested in the topics covered. Remember, as noted above Matthew groups things in a Jewish rabbinic teaching manner, by subject and significance, not simple chronology.

THE STRUCTURE OF MATTHEW

The first four chapters are chronological, then from 5 to 13 the chapters are logical and topical, after which it returns to a chronological approach.

There is great emphasis on the teaching ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ such as the Sermon on the Mount, The Olivet Discourse and the Temple Discourse of chapters 21 to 23. It also exposes religion for what it is which is a satanic device.

There are extensive quotations from the Old Testament. The word "tote" is used 90 times showing that Matthew thought in Aramaic and not in Greek.

Matthew the tax collector reveals a great deal of interest in the Gentiles. This is demonstrated by the inclusion of the Gentile women in the genealogy, his discourse on the Magi and how the Gentiles were saved in Matthew 12. The tax collectors were only a step above the prostitutes in orthodox thinking at the time. They were known as the publicans while the prostitutes were called the sinners.

It is only this Gospel which records the events of the death of Judas and the request of the Pharisees that the death of Christ be upon their and their children's heads. Matthew also uniquely attests to the resuscitation of the saints after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the conspiracy of the religious leaders about someone stealing the body of the Lord.

GOSPEL OF MARK

THE POWER OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

The Gospel of Mark shows us the active work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In **Mark 10:45** that work is focused on the cross. Here we have the importance of the work of the Lord which has its focus on the cross and resurrection. It is the key to His Lordship and Kingship, and we will see His claims to be king and saviour are proved and demonstrated in and through in the Cross and Resurrection.

Many people consider Mark to be the first Gospel written but it appears that Matthew probably was, with Mark being the second or third. In these last days of the Church Age we believe the Harmony should be taught weekly in the churches that want their people prepared for the days we now face.

It is considered that it was an abbreviated Gospel with direct application to the church in Rome that was made up of free men and slaves. They were people who wanted a simpler version of the Gospel that was in tune with their nature and character.

Mark is the simplest of the Gospels and it should be the one that the new believer should be encouraged to start on. If you have a gospel/good news service every Sunday night, start with the Gospel of Mark first. It is also a good Gospel to use with the youth group.

THE AUTHOR

Mark was born ten or fifteen years after the Lord. He was only a teenager during the ministry of our Lord. He was given the Hebrew name of John which means Jehovah is gracious. His Roman name was Marcus, which means hammer. It was quite common for men in the ancient world to have two or more names, one for each culture they moved regularly in.

Mark was from a wealthy family in Jerusalem and clearly involved with the Roman rulers, so he was given a Roman name to move more easily in those circles. Saul was the great apostle Paul's given Hebrew name, but he had Paul as his name all along, as the Greek name he would have been known by in Greek circles. This practise remains common to the present day amongst the Jews. Mark was a cousin to Barnabus and his mother was Mary of Jerusalem.

He lived near the valley of Kidron and the Garden of Gethsemane. In the early days of the Christian church in Jerusalem Mark's home was a well known meeting place for the believers. While some believers were selling additional properties they had, and giving the money obtained to support the ministry, Mary did not sell her home, as her home was used for the Lord's work to grow the church in Jerusalem. **Acts 4:32-37**.

The unnamed young man in **Mark 14:50-52** probably was John Mark himself. He is an observer, looking and observing. This is the Gospel of an active young man, a man who met the Lord when he was a teenager. This Gospel is a mixture; a combination of two people looking at things through different eyes. The young eyes in the case are those of Mark while the older eyes are Peter's. In this Gospel therefore you have binocular vision; the two men working together in the Spirit to produce the fast-paced story we have here.

Mark, like many of us, was very unstable in his early life but later on he became very mature and as Paul awaits death he asked that Mark come and see him. He was a young man who made good in the end. Mark was called "the stump fingered one", according to a second century tradition as he was by birth eligible to act as a Levitical priest, so he cut off the tip of one finger. This made him ineligible to perform his priestly functions. He was a prepared person, accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord, after having grown up amongst believers and having looked carefully into the facts.

He travelled a lot in ministry, being in Cyprus for a time, in Rome and other places. Paul was initially hard on Mark, but Barnabus was forgiving to his nephew/cousin. After Mark and Paul fell out Barnabus took him on missionary journey while Paul teamed up with Silas. There were therefore created two missionary teams. Eventually there was warm reconciliation between Paul and Mark. **Acts 15:36-41, 2 Timothy 4:11**.

It is a lesson for us all; sometimes you are going to have disagreements with good people in the ministry. Make sure that the disagreement is on something important and remember the example of Paul, Mark and Barnabus. If you separate from another believer make sure that it is on good terms, and be ready to be restored later and unite in the Holy Spirit for ministry to God's glory.

The early Church Fathers were all convinced that John Mark was the author of this Gospel, but working with Peter. They all saw that Peter was very much involved here. Often in the eyewitness accounts Peter was there but Mark was not. In this Gospel you also have the most perceptive views of the failure of Peter.

These great men were humble. Peter tells us that he failed the Lord, that he had said something, and the Lord had told him he was wrong. We need to recognise where and when we fail, get up and keep moving as we see Peter do.

DATE OF THE GOSPEL AND PLACE OF WRITING

There are two main views on the date and place of writing. It is probably written in the decade of the sixties, with the benefit of Matthew and Luke's Gospels already written as a framework. Scroggie puts it in the mid sixties with Luke at 60 AD and Matthew possibly up to ten years earlier. The original recipients of the Gospel, the Roman Church members, were looking for action rather than dialogue, and so the Gospel focuses on what the Lord did.

Matthew stresses prophecy, which did not really interest the Romans, Luke stresses discourses, but the Romans wanted to see power in action. With the Gospel of Mark it is clear that it is Jews writing for a Gentile group because where the words are Aramaic, the words are interpreted, which would not happen if it had been written for Jewish consumption.

He also explains Jewish customs and explains such things as two mites in Roman terms. There is also a complete absence of Jewish law in Mark. For the Romans the Jewish law was not an issue. There is a description of the Mount of Olives which would not be required for the Jewish reader.

The place of writing is thought to be in Rome or close to it. We do not know what happened to Mark. It is however quite likely that he was a martyr. He was associated with Egypt and with Alexandria being a city where we are told he had part of his ministry. However there is no concrete evidence for his death there or in Venice.

Of the Gospel of Mark about one third are the words of the Lord, which is less than those of Luke or Matthew. Matthew is methodical and massive, Luke is artistic and graceful, John abstract and profound, Mark is conversational, graphic, concise, vigorous, realistic and forceful. It is the common man's version of the facts.

There are eighty special words that he uses. He records 18 of the 35 miracles. It is written in a style that if you try and read it out loud you will become breathless quite quickly.

Mark emphasises the actions rather than the words of Christ and to show Him as the ever active servant. He shows Him a servant to give his life as a ransom for many. Turn to and read, **Mark 10:45**.

Mark only stresses the middle ministry and the last few weeks of the ministry of the Lord. He therefore leaves a lot of gaps. He emphasises these things for a reason.

There is a pivot for Mark's Gospel in **Mark 8:27-30**. The issue in the Gospel is, what think ye of Christ? This is the one thing that the unbeliever must answer; it is a question on what a person's eternal state will rest. The two halves of Mark's gospel is service up to chapter 8 and sacrifice afterwards.

The Gospel begins with one man proclaiming the coming Christ and ends with many proclaiming the risen Christ. You start with a person saying to prepare the way and end with a person saying walk in the way that has been prepared.

THE GOSPEL

It is a short Gospel. A good way to ground people in the faith is to read the Gospel aloud with the group and evaluate it together. Note the beginning and the end of the Gospel!

In **Mark 1:1-15** you are face to face with the Gospel message straight away. Look at the events covered. John is expected, John arrives, he preaches, he baptises, Jesus is tested, John is imprisoned, Jesus preaches the gospel! Everything is racing along, and it is going towards the cross and the empty tomb. That is Mark's point, and he does not waste words.

Mark 16:1–20 talks about signs and wonders. In this chapter we have the resurrection. Mark knows what went on, as he talked to the women involved; they left from his house and returned there. They clearly told him that they were so frightened that they did not tell anybody all they saw.

Mark knows Mary Magdalene, one of those clearly staying at his house, and she tells him that when she came out of the empty tomb she met someone who she thought was the gardener. Mary had been a demon possessed prostitute, but has been transformed by the Lord, and Mark is impressed with this woman and her words.

Mary meets Jesus in the garden. She goes off and tells the disciples, possibly also gathered now at John Mark's house. The apostle John and Peter have their running race, which John wins, but Peter goes into the tomb first. These little details indicate Peter's hand on the Gospel of Mark. We then have the shorthand version of the great commission.

SIGNS, WONDERS AND MIRACLES

Here we have signs and wonders tied into the great commission, **Mark 16:15-20**, whilst in Matthew and Luke we do not. Sometimes signs and wonders followed in Acts. Sometimes they did not. We should neither be surprised by their presence nor their absence. The gospel is preached anyway, and we accept whatever God does in each case.

The last verses in Mark are disputed by many, with the oldest manuscripts not containing them, but all things described here have occurred, so the verses are not problematic. All the great manuscripts from the third and fourth centuries finish at verse 8, but they do occur in later manuscripts. There is nothing in verses 17-20 that is not witnessed to in Acts and could not be true, except the drinking of poison.

The average believer in the New Testament is not running around doing miracles. It is the apostles and those closely associated with the apostles who are doing the miracles in the New Testament, Paul and Barnabus, Paul and Silas. When the apostles were laying hands on the sick after Pentecost they did not have any failures in the early days. If they healed they were successful, while the gift operated within them, but it appeared to wane as the years went on. Signs and wonders do not actually sway people determined not to believe – witness the Sanhedrin who knew of and/or saw Jesus miracles! **Acts 26:26**.

Reflect upon - Paul could not heal Trophimus, **2 Timothy 4: 20**, as the Lord had other plans. Paul was not upset; he simply carried on without him. Let us have the same attitude that Paul had; if the Lord gives miracles after our preaching we rejoice, but if there are no great signs we also rejoice in the salvation of the lost. There are some today who order the Holy Spirit around in a blasphemous and irreverent way, ordering miracles from God as if from a waiter at a restaurant. This is an evil, and is far from the spirit and practise of the apostles. **Jude 3** applies always.

CREDENTIALS OF THE PERSON WORKING FOR THE LORD TODAY

In **2 John 10** we read what the credentials of a person who claims to be working for God are to be today. How do you judge the pastor teacher or the evangelist? Check out their doctrine, and their life; the fruit of the Holy Spirit test. **Matthew 7:13-23**. Do they believe the doctrines once delivered to the apostles or not? Do they walk in a godly fashion in their life? Do not ask if they can work a miracle? The miracles can be counterfeited by Satan, but he doesn't do well with the "fruits" of the Holy Spirit.

In **Matthew 7:13-23** the Lord notes, that there will be some who will heal the sick and raise the dead, and do it in "Jesus name", and the Lord will tell them that he never knew them. He will say on the last day, "depart from me I never knew you – you workers of iniquity". Signs and wonders mean nothing apart from the fact that the person has power. The question is, where does the power come from? In **Jude 3** we have the faith once delivered to the apostles. The test is doctrine and the spiritual fruit of holiness of life. If the healer is sound in doctrine and holy in life, the healing **may** be of God. Who gets the glory? Don't get side tracked!

DOCTRINE - DIFFERENT MEANS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKING

The Holy Spirit works in different ways in different circumstances and locations, according to God's Plan not your desires. Let us look at two locations; Antioch and Iconium. It clearly shows that the outworking of the Holy Spirit varies from place to place. (**Acts 15:22-35**) (Antioch) (**Acts 14:1-7**) (Iconium).

1. In Antioch there was preaching only. At Iconium there was preaching and miracles.
2. Believers cannot base a system of procedures on one successful operation.
3. Because the Holy Spirit permitted miracles in Iconium it does not follow that there will be miracles everywhere.
4. The same success was obtained at Antioch by the preaching and teaching of the word without miracles.
5. The ministry of the believer must be related to the Holy Spirit. Such a ministry may be communicated by doctrine or verbally and may or may not contain accompanying supernatural phenomena.
6. The believer cannot compel the Holy Spirit to a type of procedure as at Iconium such as the tongues and healing that was used in the ancient world. Because God permitted these things in the past it does not follow that they will be used in the present.
7. The demand for healing miracles and tongues is tantamount to dictating to God and this places the believer in opposition to the plan of God.
8. Miracles were always used to focus attention on the message from the word and were never used as a sign of spirituality and power:
 - (i) The message and not the miracles was always the important factor.
 - (ii) By emphasising miracles we either detract from the message or have no message at all. The Holy Spirit always emphasises the message.
 - (iii) Today emphasis on miracles, tongues and healing obscures the issue of God's Word.

In **Hebrews 2:1-4** we have the fruit of the Spirit as the true test of the origin of the gifts being demonstrated. The writer to the Hebrews follows the apostles. The great miracles were associated with the apostles, the ones who were with the Lord. How were the gifts received? According to the will of the Holy Spirit, the will of God. The Holy Spirit is in the business of working miracles and giving the gift of miracles as it is required in God's plan, not for our amusement.

Puny man does not go around ordering God to do miracles. We do not say I want the gift of miracles; it is according to His will not ours. God makes the decisions our job is to walk with Him. There are many people in the healing ministry who claim the statements in Mark yet do not accept these other doctrines of the Scriptures. Beware of such men.

The issue for us is not miracles or healings; let the Lord look after that, preach the gospel. It is the gospel applied into the soul in the power of the Holy Spirit that saves, **John 16:8-11**, not the miracles.

If the Lord does miracles in your presence it should not surprise you, as every time that there is a conversion there is a miracle. It should not sidetrack you from the gospel message, which is the issue.

A lot of the signs and wonders that are done by people today are built on the occult powers that have always been around, and not on Christ. Some healing is similar to occult Buddhism with the name of Jesus used to give a nice flavour. The book, "The Seduction of Christianity", by Dave Hunt, deals with this. The Lord often heals, and does miracles often when you are in a new area for evangelism, and giving the gospel for the first time. God does the miracles - we do not.

DIVISION OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel of Mark is divided into sections,

- (A) The presentation of the King,
- (B) The action and reaction to the Lord's ministry,
- (C) Confrontation with the religious leaders,
- (D) A miracles section, then into the pathway to the cross.

Mark's treatment is not a chronological treatment. Like Matthew he selects things that work for his theme.

The miracles involve His power over nature, the power over demons, and the power over disease. There were many thousands of healings but only 36 individual miracles are recorded in the gospels. The miracles were to show that the Lord had power over all of nature.

Mark uses three words to describe miracles, wonders "teras", signs "semeion" and power "dunamis". All three words are joined together in **Acts 2:22**. God showed His power in Jesus' life by the wonderful work that he did. Mark emphasises these things in his Gospel.

There are five miracles involving nature, nine involving healing of men and four miracles in the spirit world. Mark therefore records 18 miracles not including the miracle of the resurrection which is the greatest miracle of all. The Christian has no need to feel embarrassed about miracles. The very sight of heavier than air planes flying is a miracle which would have been seen by most as entirely impossible a hundred years ago, but gravity is still working. A plan was clearly "seen" by Isaiah and well described in **Isaiah 60:8**.

There is no difficulty in the Creator suspending any of the laws if He desires to. A miracle is the work of God in His universe utilising laws which He knows, and we do not. If miracles do not occur He is not who he claims to be. He uses them to show that the Lord is Lord of all.

PIVOT IN THE GOSPEL

The pivot in Mark's gospel is in chapter 8 to the start of 9. The Lord questions his disciples as to what they think of Him. Peter gets it right. The Lord says that He is going to die and be resurrected, and then Peter says that He is surely not going to do that. The Lord responds to that by telling him to "get behind me Satan". This reminds us that Peter's wrongful words are the policy of Satan, for Satan is the one trying to stop the cross, which is why the Lord came.

In verse 34 he talks about discipleship. He talks about taking up his cross and following Him and taking His yoke upon us. The gospel was well planned with many drafts being done and refined under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Mark wrote it so that it did the most that God wanted it to do in the shortest time and space. At this point he says that Messiah must die and rise again. Who is He? He is the Son of God. If you accept Him truly you must be His disciple!

The transfiguration in chapter 9 is important as it emphasises His deity and His work being accepted by the Father. We then have the ministry in Perea and the return to Jerusalem and then the death burial and resurrection.

There are many short verses in chapter 15 with sentences that flow from one to another. It is very powerfully written. Everything is short sharp and to the point. In Mark's Gospel you get to the heart of the Lord, and you get the power of who he was and what happened outworking in your own life.

Mark was raised in a devout God fearing home. Children need to be brought up in the knowledge of the Lord and love the Lord. Mark was initially a quitter. It caused Paul and Barnabus to fall out. Even though he failed originally he grew.

On one of the great missionary journeys of history he went home to his mother, which was a disgrace, but the story does not end there, he recovered. When your work is finished you will be there standing in front of the Lord; we must not be quitters now. Mark emphasises real facts and this strengthens our own faith. It should have an impact on everything you do and say.

DOCTRINE – CHRISTIAN LIFE - SERVICE

1. Our duty is to surrender our entire lives to God. (**Romans. 12:1**)
2. Willingness is essential. **Judges 5:2, 8:25, Isaiah 1:19, 2 Corinthians 8:3**
3. Service in the big things requires by faithfulness in the small things.
4. Monotony and difficulties are transformed into the opportunities with the correct attitude (**Matthew 6:33**)

5. Everything we do should be "as unto the Lord" (**Colossians 3:17**)
6. Service to Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men (**Romans 14:18**)
7. Our work should be completed. **John 4:34, 17:4, Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:7**
8. The example of Christ. **Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:27, Philippians 2:7**
9. Qualities of our service:-
 - a) It is demanded. **Hebrews 12:28**
 - b) It should be immediate. **Matthew 21:28**
 - c) It is abundant. **1 Corinthians 15:58**
 - d) It is according to ability. **Matthew 25:22, Luke 12:48**
 - e) It is in co-operation with God. **2 Corinthians 6:1**
 - f) Must be exclusive (**Luke 16:13**)
 - g) In the power of the spirit (**Romans 1:9**)
 - h) Undertaken in Godly fear (**Hebrews. 12:28**)
 - i) Motivated by love (**Galatians. 5:13**)
10. It is :-
 - a) Following Christ (**John 12:26**)
 - b) For him whom all Christians serve (**Colossians 3;24**)
 - c) Service to God. (**Acts 27:23**)
11. It requires:-
 - a) Turning from idols (**1 Thessalonians. 1:9**)
 - b) Fasting and prayer (**Luke 2:37**)
 - c) Ministry of the Word (**Acts 6:1-4**)
12. Benefits of Service:-
 - a) It glorifies God. **Matthew 5:16, John 15:8**
 - b) It enriches life. **1 Timothy 6:18-19**
 - c) It gives a pattern for imitation. **Titus 2:7**
 - d) It encourages others in their tasks. **Hebrews 10:24**
 - e) It shows neighbourliness. **Luke 10:36-37**
 - f) It lightens life's burdens. **Galatians 6:2,16**
 - g) It demonstrates love. **John 21:15-17**
 - h) It demonstrates faith. **James 2:17-18, 1 Peter 2:12**
 - i) It is Christlike. **John 13:12-15**
13. The model servant (**Genesis 24**)
 - a) Does not pre-empt his master.(v2-9) We should wait upon the Lord and not run ahead of time.
 - b) Goes where he is sent (v4,10). We should be in the geographical will of God.
 - c) Does nothing else. God has specific tasks for every believer to perform. We should concentrate on our own area and not get sidetracked.
 - d) Is prayerful and thankful. We should always realise where our power comes from and not get proud when we have spiritual blessings and prosperity.
 - e) Is keen to succeed (v 17-18, 21). We should be keen to evangelise. (Romans 1:14-16)
 - f) Speaks not of himself but of his master. Who and what we are is not important, who and what Christ is of the greatest importance. (v 22, 34-36)
 - g) Presents the true issue and requires a clear decision. (v49) We should present the gospel and other doctrine clearly and expect results.

GOSPEL OF LUKE

INTRODUCTION

Luke tells us why he writes the book. It is the longest book in the New Testament and was written with Acts as one historical book. The first half of the book is therefore the Gospel of Luke which deals with the Lord Jesus Christ the perfect man and this is followed by Acts, which tells us the impact of the message of Jesus person and work from Jerusalem to Rome. It was divided into half because of the length of a papyrus roll. The papyrus roll had a limit so that it could be moved by the fingers and could therefore be read on the roll. The limit is the length of Luke.

MANY WRITINGS

In **Luke 1:1-4** Luke says that many people have written books on this subject. There were certainly more than two other Gospels at the time Luke was writing. What we have is the Holy Spirit's testimony to Matthew, Mark and Luke as being inspired. Luke is going to "set it out in order" – be more chronological. He also says that he has a perfect understanding, which means that he has really searched these things out in detail. Luke is an incredibly good and accurate historian who has spoken to many people who are eye witnesses.

His Gospel is written to Theophilus, who may have been Paul's lawyer in Rome, but his name means "lover of God", and so may be general to all "lovers of God". The two books may have been written as a lawyer's brief, so that Paul's defence lawyer could know the facts about Christ, his person, work and the growth of the church through the apostles fully. It is the full story of the person/message behind Paul's conversion, bringing him to stand before Caesar within 30 years of the Lord's death and resurrection.

This is a Gospel written to the Greeks, and is a work of a man of training and intellect. This is the best Greek in the New Testament, compared to Mark which is almost schoolboy/tourist/traveller Greek. Luke's emphasis is on the parables of Christ with the prominent idea being grace.

LUKE THE HISTORIAN

Luke is an historian and one of the best in the ancient world. Many have unsuccessfully attempted to fault Luke as an historian. It was trying to fault Luke that brought about the conversion of Sir William Ramsey. Luke has been called the greatest historian in the ancient world. Anything that Luke has recorded that has not been proved archaeologically yet, will be if there is proof surviving. Sir William Ramsay proved many things true around 1900, with lots more proven true absolutely since.

For instance Luke called the leaders in certain towns "archoi". Many historians said that that could not be right as none of the leaders in towns in that area were ever called by this name. However a frieze was excavated at the city in question and on it was stated that it had been erected by the "archoi" showing Luke to be absolutely accurate.

Luke could not have known things written in his Gospel without him being there. Many things had been changed through the years following the rebellion, and much of the Roman world was changed in the first century itself, even without wars. Luke had to be where he wrote about – he clearly was with Paul from Troas onwards on the second journey.

Much of Palestine had been changed by the devastation in the country due to the Roman advance in 68-71 AD. Great forests were cut down at this time. Two million Jews were either killed or sold into slavery. This was a holocaust with entire cities destroyed. Records that had been kept for a thousand years were lost. With the details he records, Luke could not have written his Gospel after 70 AD.

In Luke 24 he gives no indication when recording the words of the Lord regarding the desolation of Jerusalem, which he surely would have, if he had been an eyewitness of the destruction of 70 AD. With the evidence that exists you do not have to doubt the accuracy of the Gospel writer – Luke is 100% proven.

THE AUTHOR

We do not know where Luke was born, although most people, including Eusebius, claiming to have evidence, states it was in Antioch in Syria.

Others say that it was Philippi in Macedonia. He studied medicine and is called the physician. He could have studied medicine in Alexandria, Athens or Tarsus. Some think that Luke and Paul met at the University of Tarsus. It is possible that Luke became a Christian under the ministry of Paul at Troas. **Acts 16:11ff** begins the “we” passages – Luke has joined the team.

Acts 11:25-26, indicates that he knew Antioch very well, which gives some internal credence to that claim. He was a medical doctor - **Colossians 4:14** and it appears that he practised medicine at Malta when he was on the journey to Rome with Paul. We note that Paul cured the father of Publius in verse 9 and then it states that many people came and were healed. The second group of healings use a completely different Greek word. Paul miraculously healed, and Luke used medicine with prayer.

Luke is very much a man of prayer. He emphasises prayer, recording the prayers of the Lord Jesus Christ more than Matthew and Mark. He also includes three parables on prayer which do not occur elsewhere.

Women, children and the poor get more attention from Luke than the other gospel writers. In his profession he dealt much with the needy of mankind and therefore it is appropriate that he dealt with the Lord as the Son of man. Luke emphasised the wonderful grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the area of his character he emphasises like Paul faith, repentance, mercy and forgiveness. He is stressing the human compassion of need, the compassion of the Lord for the children. The weaknesses of men are highlighted here.

There is no controversy about the fact that Luke wrote both his Gospel and the book of Acts. There is so much internal evidence to this effect that even the liberals, who attack everything else, don't bother to attack Luke, but they ignore his evidence, as they must, for he makes it clear that the miraculous occurred. As far as a date or place is concerned we know that Acts ends about 62 AD. Paul is still awaiting his first trial. It is thought that Luke wrote the Gospel while Paul was in prison in Caesarea. He had access to people in Palestine at this time. Paul was in prison in Caesarea under Felix and Festus, for at least two years.

While Paul was in prison Luke was walking around talking to people. He goes to interview people. He talks to Mary and the daughters of Philip the Evangelist. He travelled all over Palestine gathering information which otherwise would have been lost.

THE SOURCES OF MATERIAL.

In Luke's Gospel you have a lot that is in Mark but is not in Matthew. There is common material for all three and then unique material. The first two chapters are very Hebrew then it becomes Greek. You get a really Jewish flavour from a Jewish woman in the form of Mary. There are therefore six or seven sources of Luke's Gospel. He tells us that there are “many records” existing as he begins to write in Luke 1.

In this Gospel there is a collection of the sayings of our Lord, the parables and the miracles. At least 320 of the 650 verses in Mark occur in Luke and it is likely that he had the Gospel of Mark open before him whilst he wrote.

Nearly half of Mark's Gospel is in Luke. There is also evidence between Luke and Matthew that they are using the same source, probably from “Q” – Matthew's earlier record of the Lord's sayings and parables.

Sections of Luke 1-3 are memoirs of Mary and others. The Bethlehem narrative must have come from Mary who grew up with the stigma of being an adulteress and the illegitimate son as the Jews say even today. The accusations about his birth, ministry and death had caused a lot of pressure on Mary. She said it was these things that kept her sane over this period and how she knew that she was a part in the plan of God.

Another source is the Herodian source. He has special information from the court of Herod. It is clear from this that someone became a believer from the Herodian court. Luke sat down with that believer and talked about it. Passages that show this include **Luke 3:1,19; 8:3; 9:7-9; 13:31, 23:7, Acts 13:1.**

The sixth area comprises other minor but interesting areas of information that he had gleaned by asking people, that the others either did not know, or had forgotten about. For example, **Luke 6:20-8:3** - there are many instances like this one, that do not occur elsewhere. The Holy Spirit moves Luke into meetings with people who form the early church in various places, and who have stories that are vital for us to hear, and he was anointed to share with us; each Gospel writer being woven into God's purposes.

This included the widow of Nain, the Good Samaritan, Mary, Martha and the Lord, the Galileans who are killed on the way to the feast, the man with dropsy, the lost coin, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Pharisees and the publican are all areas which have been examined solely by Luke. His very caring nature is seen in this way. He also obtained information from the daughters of Philip. He hears women as his equals.

Luke was an investigative journalist. He talks to the witnesses and sifts the information. The original reader was likely a real man called Theophilus who was a Greek believer of the early church. Who was Theophilus? He might have been the lawyer who was trying to obtain the release of Paul. The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles could have been a legal brief – we believe that to be the case. It would certainly give him a very good understanding of the Christian church. His style is very rich in the Greek language using some 250 words that none of the others use. This is the Greek of the university lecture theatre whereas Mark is the Greek of the schoolyard and market place.

Luke and Paul have a very close relationship as did Peter and Mark. The Lord used both pairs of men in different ways. If you really want to understand Luke you need to saturate yourself in Paul's letters. Both the letters of Paul and the Gospel of Luke have the same theme, the grace of God, they talk about faith and repentance. The words faith and grace appears many times. Faith appears 240 times in the New Testament with only 53 times outside the writings of Paul and Luke.

All of Luke's quotes are from the Septuagint with the exception of **Luke 7:27**. There are 25 direct quotes, 45 direct references and 30 allusions to the Old Testament. He is writing to the Greeks whose Bible was the Septuagint. There was a lot of interest in the Hebrew Scriptures in the ancient world.

The special features are that Luke is completely comprehensive and looks at the complete picture. He is trying to see everything that appeals to all men about the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Lord's universal appeal to all people. He is the redeemer of all, the Saviour of all; all should come to Him, the emphasis of redemption being offered to all.

He zeroes in on the individual with whom he is interested. His statements like "a little girl" or "the only son" little words showing his compassion. Luke plucks at the heart strings with the lost sheep, the lost coin, the immoral woman, Zaccheus, the helpless debtor, the cry of the widow.

Another feature like that is his emphasis upon the gospel message being good news about forgiveness. Luke uses the phrase, "your sins are forgiven thee", many times in this Gospel. Luke understands, like all who work with the depressed and ill, that they seek restoration of more than health; they want to find peace of mind, hope for the future, and rest from their guilt and shame.

Here you find the prodigal son returns, the publican praying, the dying thief being repentant. In his Gospel he records 9 prayers that Jesus offered seven of which are recorded in Luke and nowhere else.

It is in this Gospel that you have the great songs which have been used by the Roman Catholic church down the centuries:- Ave Maria [**1:28-31**], the Magnificat [**1:46-55**], the Benedictus [**1:68-79**], Glory in the Highest [**2:14**]. These became great songs of doctrine during the Medieval times.

Joy and rejoice are favourite words, they occur 19 times in Luke whilst in Matthew and Mark there are only 22 between them. Luke looks at reaching into home life as well; he talks about patching old clothes, the joy of the prodigal's return, the man of the house telling the late visitor to go away. This also showed that everybody slept in the same bed in the ordinary houses of the ancient world.

The Bible tells us it is not usual to put babies in separate rooms. God designed mothers to feed their own babies not cows to feed them. Most cot deaths involve three factors; people smoking, the fact that the child is not in the same room as the parents, and the baby gets cold. There are many things in the Church today which are not commonly accepted because we have been affected by English culture. Luke gives us a good dose of biblical realism, reminding us that Victorian values/beliefs are not necessarily biblical ones.

THE THEME

If Mark is the Gospel for the young believer, as we have seen, Luke is the Gospel for the maturing Christian. It will bring you closer to the heart of the Lord for suffering humanity than the other three. The theme of the Gospel is the perfect "Son of Man", who meets the spiritual needs of the imperfect children of Adam.

In Luke you are able to get to know the master. In Hebrews we are told that we do not have a high priest who does not know our infirmities. In Luke you have the Lord preaching bluntly about what will happen to a man who will not accept Him. As we read Luke we think of the question, "How shall we be forgiven if we ignore such a wonderful Saviour?"

In **Luke 16:13 - 31** we have the statement that nobody can serve two masters, and also the story of the rich man and Lazarus. This confronts us with the essence of the saving gospel appeal.

This is not "gentle Jesus meek and mild"; He is giving the facts tough and straight. The Lord speaks of hell more often than anyone else in the Scriptures. The story of Lazarus also points out the lie in the prosperity gospel. Obviously as a beggar Lazarus did not have a prosperous life. Here we have a believer who is dying of hunger covered in sores, but he is at peace with God in the midst of his poverty.

It is not true as a believer that you will get physical blessings in time however we have blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Paul said that he knew how to abound and how to be abased. In all situations he has learnt to be content **Philippians 4:12, 13**.

LUKE AND THE ISSUES OF LIFE

Luke brings out the issues of life, in a way that shows that things are perhaps not as simple as they first seem. Turn to and read **Luke 13: 1 - 5**. The Lord does not jump to trite answers about tragedies, and Luke brings this out, as a man of science himself. We may be trite at times as we answer questions about the "big issues of life", but Jesus was never trite and superficial; He was always profound and direct.

He points out the finality of hell, the reality of hell, and the results of man's disobedience. He shows that even if someone comes back from the dead there are many who will not believe him. Jesus Christ will come back from the dead and they will not believe Him. If you are going to be dealing with the heresies of today the Gospel of Luke is the one that you are best to use. Luke will correct your erroneous views. For example, Paul is sometimes classified as a hater of women, this is not so, and as we read through his Acts account we realise this with all the women mentioned inter-acting positively with Paul.

WOMEN IN THE BIBLE

Luke, the close associate of Paul gives more space to women, and to their ministry, than any of the others with the possible exception of Paul. If you look at the end of Paul's letters you will find that half of those referred to for blessing and prayer are female names. Luke recognises the importance of the women's supporting ministry of the Lord, and spent time with Mary especially. The other Gospel writers did not do that.

Dr Scroggie rightly says that we have no women recorded in Scripture who opposed the Lord Jesus Christ in His ministry, but many men. It is the women who know more than the disciples at the Cross. In the ministry godly women will tend to be your greatest support, as they were Paul's. Women in the church are the greatest asset and tend to "get with" God's Word and live it daily, both faster and more thoroughly than men. You need to mobilise the women in prayer as the Lord and Paul give you example.

We see the portraits in Luke of great believing women, such as Mary the mother of the humanity of Christ, Mary Magdalene, Anna, Mary and Martha, the widow of Nain, the woman who was a sinner who came to the Lord. Many of the parables in Luke's Gospel deal with women. The interrupting woman **Luke 11:27**, the woman sweeping the house looking for coins, **Luke 15:8**, the persistent widow who is hammering on the door of justice before the unjust judge, the women witnessing the crucifixion Luke 24. All the disciples have gone at this point, but the women are there. The women are there first on resurrection morning and first tell the story. When they go back and tell the disciples that he has risen, the men do not believe them.

OTHER CHARACTERS IN THE GOSPEL

Luke also talks a lot about children. He tells how the children were brought to the Lord. We hear also of the widow's only son, the epileptic boy as well as the compassion of the Lord. Here we have the beloved physician who loved the little ones.

Luke is a real historian with Anna, Mary, Elizabeth, Simeon, Zachariah, Zacchaeus being given little character studies that show aspects of the Lord's grace as it meets many different people with significant problems.

There are some interesting characters in Luke and his treatment of them is different compared to, say Mark. A case in point is the woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years. As such she was ceremonially unclean and was therefore not able to go to the Temple to worship. Mark says that she had been to the physicians and spent all that she had to no avail. In fact she had got worse. In contrast Luke defends his profession by saying that the doctors had been trying, but it was a difficult case and the doctors did not find a solution. This gives an indication of the relation between Luke and Mark. He is reacting to what Mark has said and shows that Mark was written before Luke. It also gives a little insight into the gentle and "beloved physician" who was quick to defend his profession.

Luke uses a lot of medical terms. He is interested in details. Of the six miracles which are unique to Luke five are miracles of healing. He is also interested in angels with 23 references to angels. He emphasises that the Lord is involved in the angelic conflict. There is good and evil at work here with forces beyond man.

Luke draws a contrast between John the Baptist and the Lord and balances the story of the two. We have the last of the Old Testament in John the Baptist, and in the Son of Man, we have the fulfilment of the Old Covenant. There is also an emphasis on the Christmas story.

THE KINGDOM TEACHING

He makes the point for us not to be promoting "the kingdom" being established today, because the kingdom is within you - **John 18:36**. Luke is the one who tells us that Jesus says that His kingdom is not of this world. If it was then "my servants would fight". The "gospel of the kingdom" is the kingdom/gospel of salvation at that time. The gospel today is, "the kingdom in you". This does not mean that Jesus is not going to establish his physical kingdom at a later date. If you are purely looking at Matthew and Mark you are not going to spot that distinction; once again the importance of all four Gospels being open before you.

Luke 17:11-Luke 19, which is the Lord's words on His walk to Jerusalem, is where he is talking about the nature of the kingdom of God. In **Luke 18:18** he says that it is very hard for those who have riches to enter into the kingdom of God. Here He is talking about salvation.

The question of how to inherit eternal life, is exactly the same today as asking how to enter the kingdom of God was in Jesus day. The Lord makes it clear that one day he is going to be king on earth, but that he wants to be king of our lives now. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. John 3 ties in with Luke 18. Luke explains that while the physical kingdom is delayed, the spiritual kingdom is open for all to join at any moment they bow before the King.

Luke's view of the crucifixion is an excellent one, tied by his account firmly together with the resurrection and the great commission. Luke 24 compares with Matthew 28. Reading this in conjunction with Mark 16 gives you perception in depth on what is happening. As a navigational fix it helps to have two or three inspired accounts of an incident – again the reminder of the importance of the "Harmony".

In his Gospel we see Luke stressing the wonder of the Son of Man; the joy and wonder of knowing the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. How great is your appreciation and feeling of debt to Christ? Luke's gratitude and joy shows in that he is interested in every little detail; so ought we to be. Luke looks at the attitude of John the Baptist, and how he stated that all must point to Christ. He also tells the story of Mary and Martha, the woman who does little things.

What lessons about humility do you get from this? What is your relationship with people in poverty? There is a challenge in Luke's gospel in meeting the needs of the poor at the spiritual and physical level. We need to be practical in our application. Luke brings into highlight our social conscience. He is interested in people. People are being introduced to the Son of Man. Here is a challenge to personal evangelism and social action.

DOCTRINES.

HELL AND HADES

1. HELL is from the Greek GEHENNA. This was a place where children were burned as offerings to Molech. (**2 Chronicles 33:6, Jeremiah 7:31**). Molech was a huge idol with outstretched paws on which the children were tied prior to being burnt to death.
2. HELL is the same as the Lake of Fire where the lost spend eternity. (**Revelation 19:20, 20:10**)
3. Hades (Gk) in the New Testament is often translated HELL. SHEOL (Hb) is the Old Testament equivalent. Hades and Sheol are in the centre of the earth, cf. Saul, Samuel (from Paradise or Abraham's Bosom) and the Witch of Endor. (**1 Samuel 28:7-19**) Hades or Sheol is the place of the souls and spirits of people who died while awaiting the resurrection. Hades is also the place of imprisonment of a certain group of angels - TARTARUS.
4. HADES is divided into three sections, one section being divided from the other two by a "Great Gulf Fixed". (**Luke 16:19-31**)
It should be noted that the story of Lazarus is a true story, and not a parable, because it mentions proper names (Lazarus) and a geographical location - Hades.)
 - a) Abraham's Bosom or Paradise - The abode of the saved until the ascension of Jesus Christ. The Lord said to the repentant thief - "This day shall thou be with me in Paradise. (**Luke 23:43**)
 - b) Torments - The abode of the unsaved, reserved until the last judgment at the end of the millennium. This is a place of great sorrow and suffering. (**Revelation 20:13**)
 - c) Tartarus - The prison of fallen angels who kept not their first estate. These are fallen angels from Genesis 6. This is a place of imprisonment (**2 Peter 2:4**)
5. Since the ascension of Christ - Paradise has been empty, with the saved being transferred to the Third Heaven. (**2 Corinthians 12:1-4, Ephesians 4:7-10**)
6. Those who die now as believers go directly to the Third Heaven ("at home with the Lord"), with soul and spirit but no resurrection body. (**2 Corinthians 5:8**)
7. Those in Hades (Torments) will be brought before the Great White Throne after which they will be thrown into the Lake of Fire. (**Revelation 20:13-15**). This is the Last Judgment.
8. Hades is in the heart of the earth. (**Matthew 12:40; 1 Samuel 28:7-15**)
9. There are no degrees of punishment in the Lake of Fire.
 - a) Degrees of punishment tend to deny the literal lake of fire. Nothing to indicate the temperature of the lake of fire is not constant.
 - b) Degrees of punishment is contrary to the doctrine of unlimited atonement. Christ died for every sin that has ever been committed. Man is not judged on the basis of his sins but human good. (**Revelation 20:11-15**)
 - c) Degrees of punishment destroys the principle of salvation. Its concept is that one rejecter of grace gets less fire than another rejecter of grace. The unsaved are unsaved because they reject grace.
 - d) Degrees of punishment is based on the theory that for a thesis there is an antithesis and when they come together you have synthesis (the Hegelian fallacy).
 - e) False concept:- One person commits a bad sin, one person performs a marvellous good work. Obviously there must be different degrees of punishment in eternity.

MIRACLES

1. Miracles occurred mainly in three periods of history. Of all the miracles recorded in the Scriptures all but twelve fall into the following three periods.
 - a) The Law and Prophets Group:- prepares for the coming of the Lord
 - i) At the Exodus through to the giving of the Law, miracles were performed by Moses, Aaron and later by Joshua.
 - ii) At the period when the great prophets Elijah and Elisha were teaching many miracles were performed.
 - b) The Lord and Church Group:- bears witness to His first coming
 - i) The miracles of the Lord.
 - ii) The miracles performed by the apostles.
 - c) The Future Miracle Group:- attest to His second coming
 - i) Beginning with the activities of the two witnesses of the Great Tribulation.
 - ii) The universal outburst of miracle activity at the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, when the Lord rules over a restored earth.

2. Their purpose includes the following.

- a) To glorify the nature of God (**John 2:11, 11:40**).
- b) To accredit certain men as spokesmen for God (**Hebrews 2:3-4, Luke 7:18-23**)
- c) To provide evidence for belief in Jesus as Messiah (**John 6:2, 14, 10:37-38, 20:30-31, 1 Corinthians 15:13-20**)
- d) To demonstrate the Lord's superiority over the forces of evil. (**Matthew 9:27-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 4:31-37**)
- e) To demonstrate the uniqueness of the Lord Jesus Christ, God with us. (**John 1:14**)

3. Miracles demonstrate the attributes of God:

a) The Sovereignty of God was illustrated in:-

- i) the Lord's creative work of turning water into wine at Cana. (**John 2:1-11**)
- ii) His power when stilling the storm on Galilee. (**Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:18**)
- iii) the feeding of the 5000 and the 4000. (**Mark 6:33-44; 8:1-9**)
- iv) walking on the water at Galilee. (**Mark 6:47-52**)
- v) His arrest in Gethsemane. (**John 18:6**)

b) The Righteousness of God was illustrated in:-

the Lord's transfiguration before the disciples on the mountain, when they saw the Holiness of God in the Lord displayed. (**Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36**)

c) The Justice of God was illustrated in:-

the cursing of the fig tree during the last week before the cross as a sign of His coming judgement upon unresponsive Israel. (**Matthew 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14, 20-26**)

d) The Love of God was illustrated in:-

all the healing ministries as the Lord's compassion flowed into action, even to the exhaustion of His humanity. While thirty-six specific miracles of the Lord are recorded, many thousands of healing miracles are passed over in a few isolated verses (eg. **Matthew 9:35-36, 14:14, 15:30-31, 8:16-17** etc.)

e) The Eternal Life of God was illustrated in:-

the great miracle of the resurrection of Christ.

f) The Omniscience of God was illustrated in:-

- i) his knowledge of where unseen shoals of fish were. (**Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, John 21:1-14**)
- ii) where the fish was with just enough money in its mouth to pay the required tax. (**Matthew 17:24-27**)
- iii) the knowledge about Nathaniel and the woman at the well at Sychar also shows his omniscience. (**John 1:45-51; 4:5-43**)

g) The Omnipresence of God was illustrated in:-

His ability to appear in various places many kilometres apart demonstrating the truth of His promise to be with believers always. (**Matthew 28:20**)

h) The Omnipotence of God was illustrated in:-

the raising of people such as Lazarus from the dead.

i) The Immutability of God was illustrated in:-

the repetition of the miracle of the draught of fishes both before and after the resurrection showing that His character and power were unchanged.

j) The Veracity of God was illustrated in:-

the healing of the Centurion's servant and the Nobleman's son. The Lord said they were healed, and at that moment, many kilometres away, they were. (**Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10, John 4:46-54**)

k) The Grace of God was illustrated in:-

the healing of Malchus' ear in the garden on the night of the Lord's arrest (**Luke 22:50**). It was a testimony to His Grace that as he faced the horror of the cross, our Lord could still stoop and heal one of His captors. It is significant that the last recorded miracle performed by the Lord before the cross benefited an enemy, one who had come to arrest him.

GOSPEL OF JOHN

In **John 20:26-31, 21:24-25** we have the last authoritative testimony of resurrection faith and the need for all people to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. The Gospel of John and the First Letter were most likely written after the Revelation. This Gospel appears to be the last testimony of John regarding the Lord.

In **John 1:1-18** we see that from both the beginning and end we have a theological and interpretative Gospel rather than the simple story telling of the Synoptic Gospels, which are more involved in the action and discourses alone. John is not only interested in the action but adds things that the others had not included, and gives a theological explanation for each thing recorded.

JOHN AND THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

John complements/supplements the Synoptic Gospels. After sixty years John is able to look back and put the Synoptic Gospels through the sieve again. The Holy Spirit has left this until the church required the reinterpretation of the four Gospels toward the end of the first century, so that they could face the heresies that we face today as they had developed over this period.

Matthew, Mark and Luke omitted things deliberately under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, things to be left until later as it was then that they could be understood in the light of the events of the years between, and the doctrines revealed to the apostles through that period.

Between the days that the synoptic writers put down their pen and the days that John wrote everything had changed; Israel was no more, the Temple was gone, the Roman Empire had ceased to be benevolent to the churches and had started to persecute the believers, and there were Satanic heresies active that needed to be dealt with authoritatively.

John was the only one positioned to meet these challenges. John states a number of things that the Lord said which the others had not been inspired to record earlier. It was about timing, and God's Plan.

Satan had attacked at those points and John responded with the truth. With his Gospel he counter-attacked and demolished every heresy present, and the basis of every one that would develop from them. John said that if they had written everything down the whole world would not be large enough to contain it but that what he had written was enough.

The Jehovah's Witnesses, like most cults, hate the Gospel of John. In their New World "translation" the Jehovah's Witnesses have had to change many of the verses. As you put John against the three Synoptic Gospels they complement each other and form a solid mass of evidence against all heretical views.

John emphasises the deity of Christ and sets out for all time the fact that God did become man. The skeleton of John's Gospel is wound around seven signs and seven sayings to show that Jesus is God who became man.

Acts 4:12 says that there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved; John's Gospel proves that fact systematically. He supplements, interprets, and completes the apostolic witness to the nature and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are 36 miracles in the Four Gospels of which John picks only seven.

THE SEVEN MIRACLE SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

The Seven Signs are;

1. **Chapter 2:1-11** - the **water into wine**, the water of purification becomes the wine of gladness because the bridegroom has come to Israel. He is the Creator who has come to His creatures.
2. **Chapter 4:43-54** - The nobleman's son. He is **healed by faith**. The nobleman enquires as to what time he started getting better and finds that it was at the same time as he accepted by faith that it would happen. This is a sign of the power of the Lord and the way into the blessing of the Lord is through faith.
3. **Chapter 5:1-9** - the **cripple by the pool at Siloam** which is a picture of the defilement of sin. The person was lying there paralysed very frustrated.

This is the condition of man who is unable to save himself. Jesus finds him; the sign of the Saviour who seeks the lost and provides salvation for the lost so that they can be effective.

4. **Chapter 6:1–71**-The **feeding of the five thousand**, the walking on the water and the stilling of the storm. This shows that the Saviour meets all our needs. On the hill their physical needs are met, they are comforted in the storm, and He stills the storm. He shows himself master of nature. When nature is out of control there is a purpose in God's economy. Is anything too difficult for our God? No. **Matthew 6: 25 - 34**.

5. **Chapter 9:1-12** - The **blind man made to see**. We are blind to sin as unbelievers. We need to have the blindness taken away by the Holy Spirit before we can accept salvation. The Lord who is the light of the world brings light into our world.

6. **Chapter 11:1–53** - The **raising of Lazarus**. What is the problem of man? The penalty of sin is death. This shows the Lord having power over death and Satan as the angel of death. It is not a case of good and bad balanced, good will always win. Lazarus was cut loose; we are cut loose from the control of sin.

7. **Chapter 19:-21**. **Resurrection**. The Lord is shown as the master of life and the giver of life as He is resurrected from the dead. These seven signs bring us face to face with our risen Saviour.

We are confronted in these signs of the God-Man - the unique person of the universe. To underline the uniqueness of the Lord as the only Saviour (**John 3:16-36**), John also records seven sayings of the Lord whereby his claims to absolute deity and supremacy are made even more clear.

THE SEVEN SAYINGS

The seven sayings of the Lord: When you look at the "I AM's" you have two alternatives, either Jesus Christ is God, or he is the greatest lunatic that ever walked this earth. John is saying, look at this man, is He what He claims to be. The only conclusion is that you have to worship or revile him; John leaves you with no third alternative.

The use of the "I AM", means that the Lord was saying that He is God. In **Exodus 3:14** God reveals Himself to Moses as, I AM THAT I AM. Using this phrase at his arrest in **John 18:2-6**, He caused the army group to fall backwards due to His power as God flashing forth for a millisecond, before being led away as a willing sacrifice. We are not confronted with the Jesus of liberalism here, but with the Lord of lords, King of kings, God stepping down to speak authoritatively to mankind. There are seven "I AM's";

DOCTRINE - CHRIST – I AM

1. PROVISION - I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE – **John 6:30-35** - - The feeding of the five thousand - a miracle involving bread. God provided miraculous physical food in the desert for forty years - Manna.

Christ is our spiritual food. He says that he is the only source of spiritual food for you. There is life in no other. No one else can satisfy the spiritual hunger in man. He tells us He is the bread from heaven - He shows Himself as God. The bread of the Passover - unleavened, pierced and griddled; speaking of his body.

2. SPIRITUALITY - I AM THE LIGHT - **John 8:12** - The feast of Tabernacles where He told the people to have the everlasting water **John 7:37-39** When the Lord says this He is saying that He is the only source of pure light as shown in His matchless character. He is stating that He is God **1 John 1** says that God is light and in Him is there no darkness at all. We are to walk in the light in fellowship with God.

3. SALVATION - I AM THE DOOR, - **John 10:7** - The Sheepfolds of Jerusalem. **Psalms 22-24**. To be the door of the sheepfold, He is the only way into the plan of God. Anyone that tries to come any other way is a liar and a thief. If this is not true there is no way to God.

4. GUIDANCE - I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD **John 10:11** - the good shepherd, the only one who really cares. Many from other religions say that they really care but it is Jesus the good shepherd, the only one who really cares. All other systems drop you into hell.

5. THE RESURRECTION - **John 11:20-25** – I AM - The death of Lazarus - Christ conquers death proving He is God – the “I am” who met Moses; the resurrection and the life. He is the way the truth and life forever. The only way to eternal life is in Christ Jesus. To reject Him is to have eternal life in the Lake of Fire

6. TRUTH/LIFE - I AM THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE **John 14: 6** - there is no other way to gain meaning in this life and eternal life than through him. We are related to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who came and died for us that we might live. We should be obedient to our Lord who bought us with His blood.

He is the way, the truth, and the life; the only way to live is in the truth, the only way to have life and have it more abundantly is in Him. The only way to God is through the God man Jesus Christ. We need to live in him as He is the only one who has the truth because he is the truth. He can give life, for He is the Creator!

7. PRODUCTION - **John 15:1-5** – I AM THE VINE. Walking from the Passover meal past the Temple towards Gethsemane, he talks about the spiritual production that is ours in union with him. He is the vine; the only way to spiritual productivity is in Christ Jesus through the fruit of the Spirit. Love Joy Peace and the other fruit is only available in Christ. You have to be in the vine to have fruit. Many unbelievers want joy and peace but they cannot have it without Christ.

The seven signs and the seven sayings relate to each other which all goes to prove his deity and that he is the only hope for mankind. Because of this strong teaching, the Gospel of John has been attacked above and beyond the other Gospels by the “liberals” – who are miss-named as “liberal”, for they are just unbelievers, and dishonest ones at that – for they take Christian money and teach anti-Christian and non-biblical things. They hate all of John’s Holy Spirit led work, above all other New Testament books, because the picture of Jesus from John’s “Last Words” to the churches, makes nonsense of their views.

John is not specifically named. John was old and humble and called himself “the disciple that Jesus loved”. He was one of the son’s of thunder. He was big and tough and loud. He learnt what it meant for the Lord to love him. Fishermen often are tough characters. The tough unsaved character in your vicinity may well be another “great Christian in waiting”, ready to be converted and changed by the Holy Spirit’s ministries.

John ended his life in Ephesus, having left Jerusalem at the time of the siege of Jerusalem in 66 AD. Timothy was the senior pastor of Ephesus, and tradition records he was martyred there, and was followed by John. Ephesus was the centre of Christianity until the end of the first century.

John's Gospel was accepted early. Polycarp and Ignatius of Antioch both quoted from John, having known him personally. It was accepted from the very first by the churches. The oldest existing fragment of the New Testament we have is a papyrus fragment possibly dating from 130 -140 AD, and it is from John 14.

BACKGROUND

John's sources consisted of his own experiences and his own preaching over fifty years as a believer in the Lord. This is a Gospel which has been tried in the fire of experience. There is no internal evidence that he used any other Gospel as his source. Ninety two percent of John's Gospel is unique. John and Luke do have a close relationship however, and it appears he wrote his Gospel with Luke's Gospel in front of him.

The cultural-religious capital of the Greek world at this time was Ephesus, where Paul, Luke, Timothy and John ministered. John ministered there from 67/68 to 96 AD. In W G Scroggie's, “Guide to the Gospels”, we find that there are gaps in Luke, which are covered by John, and vice versa. By putting John and Luke together you get an almost complete picture. The other two Gospels go closely together also, giving two complementary pairs of Gospel records.

STYLE OF WRITING

Luther said that, never had he read a book that had such simple words yet having so profound a meaning. Jensen says that the Gospel of John is a book of contrasts from grief to joy and gladness, from the storms of opposition to the peace of fellowship, from condescension earthward to ascension heavenward, from doubt to faith, from life to death.

Any attentive reader of this Gospel must be stirred within as he ponders what its narrative has to do with him. The others give you a story and there is a challenge there but John's Gospel has a challenge in every word. John says bluntly, “What do you think of Christ?” “What are you going to do with this man?”

Scroggie notes that the Gospel of John is chiefly written in short but profound sentences. He will express things both positively and negatively, with economy of well chosen words. The most characteristic article used is the word "that", which occurs 60 times, and gives an explanation of things, and "then", which occurs 190 times. These are connecting words which sum up John's purpose.

He also uses repeat sentences which underlines/expands his main points. An example of this is in the first verse in the gospel. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." This was the way the rabbis taught – profound and tight grammar, with powerful simple words.

We also have parallelism, where you say something twice such as, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you". This is the same thing said a different way but in parallel. This goes right the way back to the Psalms, and was probably the way the Lord taught. This brings the gospel message to man as a dramatic challenge, which is the Lord's way of teaching and proclaiming.

CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL

There are relations also between the Gospel, John's Three Letters, and the book of Revelation. The Gospel says that the Saviour has come to save. The Epistles say, believe in Him and walk in Him, whilst Revelation says that the Saviour is coming to judge, and so be busy in obedient work until He returns. If you do not want him as your Saviour of Lord, he will come as your judge. Revelation is the book of hope for the believer, but final judgement for the unbeliever. We serve a risen Saviour; he is already King and Judge, and is coming again to rule.

Comparing these three areas we see how John moves right the way through Jesus ministry from eternity past to eternity future. In the Old Testament the ministry of the Lord is prophesied, in the gospel we have the ministry of the Lord explored, in the epistles we have it explained and in Revelation we have it consummated. John also quotes heavily from the Old Testament. There are 25 direct quotes from the Old Testament and about 120 allusions from it. John is interpreting what is going on. It is no coincidence that John's Gospel gets the Four Gospels anchored into Acts, rounded out in the letters, and finalised with the book of the Revelation. This is a wonderful example of the Holy Spirit "weaving" together the fabric of what would become bound together into the New Testament in the 4th Century.

Miracles - six of the miracles recorded in John are recorded nowhere else. One of the miracles is the miraculous draught of fishes which is the only post resurrection miracle recorded. In this regard it should be noted that ghosts do not work miracles. The person of the Lord is brought through very clearly in the Gospel as God, and the truth that God has indeed stepped into the Universe He made is underlined by the seven sayings and the seven miracles.

THE GREAT PAUSE

In **John 12: 20-36**, there begins what is called, "the great pause". Rather than talking to all people from this point on, the Lord is talking only to His own disciples. John, looking back over 50 years, said that they did not realise the significance of a lot of things then, but now he saw that there was a change in things at that point. It really made them stop and think. If you are coming to see Jesus you are going to see the cross. It is the blood of Christ which shows what the Lord Jesus Christ's ministry is all about.

This represents a watershed, and within the next chapter the reader is in the last week of the Lord's ministry. The first half concludes when the Lord says that He has come to die. The other half deals with his death and resurrection.

DIVISION IN THE GOSPEL

There are four main sections –

John Chapters 1-4 - true claims - the identification of Christ,

John 5:1 -12:36 - false charges against Him,

John 12:36-18:1 - intimate fellowship and the preparation for the Cross,

John 18:1-21:25 - the redemptive work of the Lord.

Other highlights include the meeting with Nicodemus which is very significant, and John selects this meeting, above all others to teach the truths that the chapter later explores. As we go on John underlines that there is increasing opposition from the religious leaders in, however many people receive Him gladly. Also the fickleness of the crowd who one day are saying "Hosanna" whilst on the next they are screaming, "Crucify him".

John also highlights the picture of the Lord openly teaching the disciples, teaching the people, this public area being contrasted to the private scheming of the Lord's enemies.

Anyone who asks what the Lord was like will see many answers in the Gospel of John where the character of the Lord is examined closely. John discussed the great High Priestly prayer of the Lord. John 17 is the High Priest's prayer for His people; we enter here into the heart of the Lord.

There are 14 discourses in the Gospel of John. In this Gospel the Lord is getting doctrine across. The Lord is teaching the truth, for His word is truth. The Gospel of Mark is for the young believer, and those of Matthew and Luke for the adolescent, and John's Gospel is for the mature believer. John fills in the gaps. For instance, he notes that Jesus had three Jewish trials and three Gentile ones. In addition he records the words from the cross by our Lord, and these are a study in themselves.

It was here that the Lord gave the care of His mother into the hands of John. It appears from the account that he left the hill to take Mary to his home in Jerusalem and then returned. He only writes what he sees, so we have to go to the other writers to fill in events during the time he was away with Mary. He writes of the resurrection, specifically of the events of Thomas which is of great interest. He also records the only recorded post resurrection miracle of our Lord.

John is also the only Gospel writer that records Scriptures in chapters 14-17 where doctrines pertinent to the Church Age are given, such as the return of Christ for His church and the future permanent indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. John has had fifty years to reflect upon the significance of these things and clearly sees their prophetic announcement.

DOCTRINES

CHRIST – LORD JESUS CHRIST – EMMANUEL

1. SCRIPTURE - He is the Word **John 1:1-5,14**

2. BIOGRAPHY

As God, Jesus Christ has existed eternally with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (**John 1:1-5**). As the God-man, Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 1:20**), born of a Jewish virgin, Mary (**Matthew 1:18**) in Bethlehem of Judea in 6 BC. His legal father was Joseph. Both Joseph (**Matthew 1:16**) and Mary (**Luke 3:23**), were descended from David, through Solomon and Nathan. Circumcised on the eighth day (**Luke 2:21-24**). He grew in knowledge and grace. He was baptised by his kinsman, John the Baptist, in the Jordan (**Matthew 3:13-17**) at the commencement of His ministry, and then went into the desert to be tempted by the devil for 40 days and nights (**Matthew 4:1-11**). Jesus spent the next three years in a ministry ranging throughout Palestine, healing the sick, preaching, teaching and encouraging those to whom He ministered that they turn to God. Betrayed by one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, He suffered six trials before Jewish and Roman dignitaries before being condemned to death. He died on the cross on the Passover in AD 32, completing His perfect ministry and life on earth, and securing salvation. God raised Jesus from the dead on the feast of first fruits three days later. He ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives ten days before Pentecost (**Acts 1:8-11**). In heaven He was given the place of commendation at the right hand of the Father, where He makes intercession for us and waits for His enemies to be made His footstool. Jesus Christ will return with His saints to reign for 1000 years (**Revelation 20:1-6**) and will judge unbelievers at the last judgment (**Revelation 20:1 1-15**). Believers will spend eternity with Jesus Christ.

3. EVALUATION

Jesus Christ has absolute characteristics:

- a) Sovereign of the universe. Yet He became subject to human frailty.
- b) Absolutely righteous. Yet He became sin for us (**2 Corinthians 5:21**).
- c) Totally fair. He is not willing that any should perish (**2 Peter 3:9**).
- d) Complete love. He provided salvation for us while we were yet sinners (**Romans 5:8**).

- e) Everlasting life. He became subject to death, even the death of the cross.
- f) All knowing. He knows everything from beginning to the end.
- g) All powerful. Yet He allowed Himself to become the perfect sacrifice.
- h) Everywhere. Which means He can assist each believer individually in the Christian life (**Matthew 28:19,20**)
- i) Unchangeable. Thus His promises are always true and never change (**Hebrews 13:8**).
- j) Truth. Thus in a world of half truths and lies we have a person with absolute purity and truth (**John 14:6**).

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) As a perfect person with no sinful nature, Jesus Christ was able to provide salvation.
- b) Jesus Christ at all times worked in conformity with God's will (**John 10:30**).
- c) God had to forsake His Son on the cross when He judged the sins of the world in Christ.
- d) In Christ we are seated in heavenly places (**Ephesians 2:6**).
- e) Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (**Romans 8:35**).
- f) There is only one way to God, through Jesus Christ (**John 14:6**).
- g) We will be resurrected as believers to life eternal with Jesus Christ (**1 Thessalonians 4:16,17**).
- h) Jesus will return again to reign from Jerusalem for 1000 years (**Revelation 20:4**).
- i) Satan is a defeated foe (**Colossians 2:15**).
- j) We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (**Romans 8:37**).

5. HIS PURPOSE

- a) He came as God's perfect sacrifice for sin. (**John 1:29**)
- b) He came to be lifted up. (**John 3:13-15**)
- c) He came as the Bread of Life. (**John 6:50-51**)
- d) He came as the Good Shepherd. (**John 10:10-11**)
- e) He came to die for the people. (**John 10:49-52**)
- f) His cross came before His crown. (**John 12:23-24**)
- g) On the Cross righteousness and justice met, only then was God free to love man in Christ. (**John 15:12-14**)

CHRIST: DEITY OF CHRIST

1. Jesus Christ is both God and man. The two natures are inseparably united without mixture or loss of separate identity, the union being personal and eternal. (**Philippians 2:5-11, John 1:1-14, Romans 1:4, Romans 9:5, 1 Timothy 3:16**)

2. Jesus Christ is undiminished deity. This includes all the divine characteristics:

- a) Sovereignty (**Genesis 1, Revelation 1:5, 6, 17:14, 19:16**)
- b) Eternal Life (**Isaiah 9:6, Micah 5:2, John 1:1-2, 8:58, Colossians 1:16-17, Ephesians 1:4, Revelation 1:8**)
- c) Holiness (**Luke 1:35, Acts 3:14, Hebrews 7:26**)
- d) Love (**John 13:1, 34, 1 John 3:16**)
- e) Unchangeable (**Hebrews 13:8**)
- f) All Knowing (**Matthew 9:4, John 2:25, John 18:4, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Colossians 2:3, Revelation 2:23**)
- g) All Powerful (**Matthew 24:30, 28:18, 1 Corinthians 15:28, Philippians 3:2, Hebrews 1:3, Revelation 1:8**)
- h) Everywhere (**Matthew 28:20, Ephesians 1:23, Colossians 1:27**)
- i) Truth (**John 14:6, Revelation 3:7**)

3. Christ is the Son of God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 Peter 1:2**)

4. Proofs of the deity of Christ.

- a) He is the Creator of all. (**John 1:3, 10, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:10**)
- b) He is the Preserver of all things. (**Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3**)
- c) He pardons sin. (**Luke 5:21, 24**)
- d) He raises the dead. (**John 5:21, 28-29, 11:42-43**)
- e) He will reward the saints. (**2 Corinthians 5:10**)
- f) He will judge the world in the Last Day. (**John 5:22**)
- g) He receives worship (**Hebrews 1:6**)

5. Jesus Christ is Jehovah.

a) Jesus is God. (**Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1; John 20:28; 2 Peter 1:1; Titus 2:13**) Jehovah is God. (**Jeremiah 32:18; Isaiah 43:10; 45:22; Philippians 2:10**).

b) Jesus is I AM (**John 8:24; 8:58; 13:19; 18:5**). Jehovah is I AM (**Isaiah 43:10; Exodus 3:13-14; Deuteronomy 32:39**).

c) Jesus is the First and the Last (**Revelation 1:17; 2:8; 22:13**). Jehovah is the First and the Last (**Isaiah 44:6; 48:12; 41:4**).

d) Jesus is the Rock (**1 Corinthians 10:4; Isaiah 8:14; 1 Peter 2:6; Matthew 16:18**). Jehovah is the Rock (**Exodus 17:6; Isaiah 17:10; 2 Samuel 22:32; Deuteronomy 32:4**).

e) Jesus is Saviour (**Acts 2:21; 4:12; Romans 10:9; Jude 25**). Jehovah is Saviour (**Psalms 106:21; Hosea 13:4; Isaiah 45:21; 43:3, 11**).

f) Jesus is Lord of Lords (**Revelation 17:14; 19:16; 1 Timothy 6:14-16**). Jehovah is Lord of Lords (**Psalms 136:1-3; Deuteronomy 10:17**).

g) Jesus is Creator (**John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:10**). Jehovah is Creator (**Job 33:4; Isaiah 40:28; Genesis 1:1**).

h) Jesus is Light (**John 8:12; John 1:9; Luke 2:32**). Jehovah is Light (**Micah 7-8; Isaiah 60:20; Psalm 27:1**).

i) Jesus is Judge (**2 Timothy 4:1; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10**). Jehovah is Judge (**Genesis 18:25; Joel 3:12**).

j) It is quite clear that Jesus is God (**1 John 5:5**)

6. Jesus lived on earth in total dependence upon God the Father. He never used His own divine attributes in contradiction to the will of the Father. (**Matthew 4:1-11, 27:42-43**)

7. At the birth of Christ no change occurred in the deity of Jesus Christ. During His earthly life, some attributes were unused but they were never deleted or destroyed. To remove any attribute from His deity would be to destroy deity.

8. Jesus Christ is true humanity. This includes attributes such as thirst, hunger, weariness. (**John 19:28**)

9. Jesus Christ had a body, soul and spirit, but no old sin nature. He did not receive an old sin nature because of the virgin birth.

10. God became flesh; it is not a case of God merely possessing humanity.

PROLOGUES

1 PROLOGUE TO THE 2ND GOSPEL

MARK 1:1

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;”

KEY WORDS

Beginning	Arche	Beginning, there is no definite article in the Greek.
Gospel	Euaggelion	Good news, Tidings, Word.
Jesus	Jesus	Saviour
Christ	Christos	Anointed
Son	Uihos	Son Descendant, Offspring
God	Theos	God

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

Each of the Four Gospels has a different starting point. Mark starts with the ministry of John the Baptist, introducing the King, while Matthew starts with the birth of the King.

Because the purpose of Mark is to emphasise the role of Jesus Christ as the Saviour, Mark commences his Gospel with the public ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The incarnation is the beginning of the visible presentation of the “good news” for mankind - this is the “visited planet” – and the Saviour is Lord and God.

APPLICATION

It is always of critical importance that the Lord Jesus Christ is kept in focus at all times for the whole of the Bible revolves around the person and work of our Lord – and each Gospel presents us with the challenge to see all aspects of His person, power and plan for our lives – He is to be our centre.

DOCTRINE

GOSPEL OF SALVATION

1. Gospel means "good news" - there are four gospels are found in the New Testament.
2. Gospel of the Kingdom.
 - a) Preached by John the Baptist (**Matthew 3:1, 2**) the Lord Jesus Christ (**Matthew 4:23**) and his disciples (**Matthew 10:7**) Thy Kingdom come (**Matthew 6:10**).
 - b) It consists of the setting up on earth of Christ's 1,000 year Kingdom thus fulfilling the Davidic Covenant (**2 Samuel 7:16**)
 - c) There will be another preaching of the gospel by the Jewish remnant in the days of the Great Tribulation before the 2nd Advent. (**Matthew 24:14, Revelation 7**) After the 2nd Advent the 1,000 year reign commences. (**Revelation 20:1-6**)
3. Gospel of Grace - the gospel of personal salvation by grace through faith. This gospel appears under many names and is the means of salvation throughout the history of mankind.
 - a) Gospel of God (**Romans 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:2**)
 - b) Gospel of Christ - (**Mark 1:1, Romans 1:16**)
 - c) Gospel of the Grace of God - (**Acts 20:24**)
 - d) Gospel of Peace - (**Ephesians 6:15**)

- e) Gospel of your salvation - (**Ephesians 1:13**)
 f) Glorious Gospel - (**2 Corinthians 4:4**)

4. The Everlasting Gospel - (**Revelation 14:6**) -the good news is everlasting. This gospel will be preached on earth just before Christ's return in glory. (**Matthew 25:31, 32**). This gospel is the means of salvation to countless thousands both Jews and Gentiles. (**Revelation 7:9-14**)

5. Paul's "My Gospel" - (**Romans 2:16**) This is the same gospel of salvation by grace through faith but includes the mystery doctrines of the church age not previously revealed. The gospel in the Old Testament was revealed by the Tabernacle, Feasts, Levitical Offerings etc.

6. "Another Gospel" which is not another (**Galatians 1:6, 7, 2 Corinthians 11:4**) This is a perversion of the Gospel of Christ (**Galatians 1:8, 9**) The curse is proclaimed on any who preach it. There have been many perversions - legalism in Galatia, angel worship in Colossae (**Colossians 2:18**) among others.

HARMONY

PROLOGUE TO MARK'S GOSPEL

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

2 PROLOGUE TO THE 3RD GOSPEL

LUKE 1:1-4

Luke 1:1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, **2** Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; **3** It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, **4** That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

KEY WORDS – [Perfect tense verbs underlined above and highlighted below]

Many	Polus	Much, Many.
Taken in hand	Epicheiro	To take on or in hand. [Aorist Active Indicative]
Set forth in Order	Anatassomai	Set forth in Order [Aorist Middle Infinitive]
Declaration	Diegesis	A leading through, Full declaration
Surely Believed	Plerophoreo	To bear on fully [Perfect Passive Participle]
Delivered	Paradidomi	To give over, To be alongside of [Aorist Active Indicative]
Beginning	Arche	Beginning
Were	Ginomai	To become something you were not [Aorist Middle Participle]
Eyewitnesses	Autoptes	One who beholds for himself.
Ministers	Huperetes	An under rower, Assistant
Word	Logos	Word, Speech, Matter, Reason
Seemed Good	Dokeo	To seem good [Aorist Active Indicative].
Perfect	Parakoloutheo	To have perfect understanding [Perfect Active Participle].
Write	Grapho	To write [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Order	Kathexes	In succession,
Theophilus	-	Loved of God.
Know	Epiginosko	To have a full working knowledge [Aorist Active Subjunctive].
Certainty	Asphaleia	Certainty
Instructed	Katecheo	To sound throughout, Instruct [Aorist Passive Indicative].

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

PARAKOLOUTHEO – GOOD UNDERSTANDING. Occurs 4 times in the New Testament. In **Luke 1:3** Luke first of all however reminds us that he thoroughly researched the whole subject, so that he knew thoroughly

the subject he was going to systematically set out in his Gospel. In the Greek it means to follow a thing along in the mind and trace it carefully – because the results are eternal in significance.

PLEROPHOREO – FULLY OR CONFIDENTLY BELIEVED/ASSURED. This verb occurs 6 times in the New Testament of which twice are in the Perfect Tense. In **Luke 1:1** we see that many had written down accounts of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ by the time Luke writes. These were not fairy tales; this was the truth that was most surely believed by the followers of Christ. The word used here is used for finality, where a person is totally convinced, or fully persuaded about something. This means Luke was fully satisfied after thorough investigation that what he had written was accurate and the truth. Luke had two sources of information as an historian, written material and oral history from the eyewitnesses of the Lord's ministry. He is fully assured of the truth of the records he has received and examined.

In Colossians 4:12 we have the perfect tense used again. Epaphras is a true servant of this church, and most likely their pastor, and the one who has carried the message of need to Paul. His unity with the people of the church is what Paul emphasizes and his prayerful devotion to the church daily is what he tells these people of. He is referred to also as a “servant” of the church; a man ready to do anything to serve the Lord and his people, and he wants to be “fully assured” of the safety of the church in the truth once received by the apostles. He won't rest until he fully knows they are all OK! The purpose for his good shepherding of the church is that they may be safe, stabilized in truth, and be able to serve the Lord with permanent confidence that has eternal results for them all.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

Verse 1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

In verse 1 we see that many had written down accounts of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ by the time Luke begins his record. We do not know how many but certainly more than the two or three who wrote the canonical Gospels. There were miracle stories, books of parables, books of sayings,..... The word translated “taken in hand” is a compound verb comprising “cheir” for hand, and “epi” meaning upon. He has truly “got his hands onto” the material and is determined to write a reliable history.

Moreover the infinitive of “Anatassomai” shows that it was Luke's purpose to set it out systematically, and that the account would be a full and complete one. This clearly indicates that others had set forth material in a systematic form rather than just notes and anecdotes, but none had tried to link all the aspects together in a chronological manner, as Luke will try to do. **1 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:16-19.** This would be vital if it was a lawyer's brief also. Luke is doing what every lawyer asks for – a “time line of events”.

These were not fairy tales; this was the truth that was “most surely believed” by the followers of Christ. The word used here is used for finality, where a person is convinced, or fully persuaded about something. This means Luke was fully satisfied, after thorough investigation, that what he had received from others was true, and what he has studied and now written was also accurate and the truth that can be relied upon in a matter that has eternal significance.

These events were not “done in a corner”, as Paul would note in his Caesarea trial and following discussions with Roman and Jewish leaders. **Acts 26:26.** No pagan leader ever challenged the key facts! They didn't like the truth but they didn't dispute that it was the truth – they just preferred to ignore it. **Luke 18:23-25.**

Luke had two sources of information as an historian; both written material from others already in writing, and oral history from the eyewitnesses of the Lord's ministry. He will blend these two sources together in his Gospel account, as a record that Paul's lawyer can use to explain to the Roman Court his client's belief system, how it developed, and the legality of its tenants and origins. It is also important to note that every interaction with Roman Officials reflects well on Paul's “dignitas” as a Roman.

Verse 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

Here we see that Luke did not claim himself to be an eyewitness, but he had interviews with those who were.

We note that the Greek word Paradiomi which is translated “delivered”, is made up of the Greek words for side by side, and to give. Luke says that here he has been handed down thoroughly reliable information both oral and written.

He was a secondary and not primary witness to the events of the Gospel, but the material is totally reliable and not fables; and he certifies it is “checked” and correct. In the Acts record he will be an eye witness from Chapter 16 and will give us accurate information in all he records; and archaeology backs him.

The verb is also in the Aorist Active Indicative, which shows the active way in which they “came alongside” Luke, and the indicative mood says that this is a reality, they actually did it. In the second half of this verse the word “were” is the word Ginomai, which means to become something which they were not before.

These people became eyewitnesses as soon as the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ commenced. They had been there from the beginning. This is an old Greek word, and means seeing with one’s own eyes. This is the only place we have it in the New Testament. This is the word we get the English word Autopsy from.

Of course they became eyewitnesses once the ministry started. Prior to that there was nothing to witness. As a result of what they saw they became disciples and became servants to the general public proclaiming the Word of God. **Acts 26:16, 24-26, Ephesians 3:7-8, 4:11-12, Colossians 1:23-25.**

Verse 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

Luke is seen to be motivated to write an account himself by the example and enthusiasm of the other reporters of the Life and Ministry of our Lord, but also because he has uncovered more stories than the others have recorded and he is excited by what he has learned about the faith that saved him. The word translated “seemed good” means that this is a natural conclusion and justification for Luke to write his Gospel account – he has been “moved” to write. **Psalm 40:5, 50:21.** He is passionate for truth.

Luke first of all however thoroughly researched the whole subject, so that he knew thoroughly the subject he was going to systematically set out in his Gospel. In the Greek it means to follow a thing along in the mind and trace it carefully. “In order” means consecutively, much of Luke is chronological, but some is topical. At this time historical accounts were ordered quite differently than today’s newspaper reporter, but Luke comes closest to a good modern investigative journalist. He has an overall plan to start, and he is filling the gaps with facts he has verified. He won’t record anything that he hasn’t verified from someone who was there.

The recipient of this treatise is a person called Theophilus, which means a person loved by God, but was also a common name of the time. He is also the recipient of Luke’s other canonical work, the Book of Acts.

His title “Most Excellent” indicates that he was a high official in the Roman Government, and may have been a title like “Your Excellency” [see Felix in **Acts 23:26** and Festus in **Acts 26:25**] indicating he may be of the order “Equites” – a Knight. It is of interest that the adjective does not occur when Luke again addresses Theophilus in **Acts 1:1**. The suspicion is that this man was the official lawyer (a “Queens Counsel”) for Paul’s case, and that the Gospel and Acts are a legal brief (although much more) to help defend Paul against the charges to be brought before the Emperor, that he is guilty of spreading an illegal religion.

Verse 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

Here we have the word “Epignosis” which means a thorough working applied knowledge. We note it is in the subjunctive mood, which shows that the free will of Theophilus is in focus. He had in fact received instruction in these things, at an earlier point of time as seen in the aorist active indicative of “Katecheo”.

Luke is fine tuning his knowledge that he might accurately and fully know the facts. If this man is the lawyer appointed by the court he must be better prepared than the Jewish opponents he will face, and by these books he is.

He therefore has a lot of information. Whether he now consolidates the academic knowledge on the subject to full working knowledge is however up to him. He has the information but Luke notes his free will is involved. The word translated “certainty” is based on the Greek word Sphallo which means to fall or totter and with the negative prefix “a” means not to stagger, or to be uncertain.

The men doing the teaching were called catechists, based on the Greek word Katecheo, translated instructed in this and those receiving it catechumens. Whether Theophilus was in the second category is not known.

APPLICATION

We have not inherited fairy tales or fables in the Bible about the Lord Jesus Christ. We have substantial systematic and thorough information from leading eyewitnesses and in this case one of the greatest historians of all time, Luke.

Many people were led to write down detailed accounts but only a few of those accounts were inspired and recorded in the canon of Scripture. It is of the greatest importance that before you attest to a subject you investigate thoroughly so that you get a complete picture.

As a result of our meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Living Word, we are to be ministers of the Word.

In order to make proper decisions on a subject we need to have good solid information, then it is up to us as to whether we pursue it or not.

It is critical that the whole subject is researched and set out systematically. Hence verse by verse studies are the superior way to study the Scriptures.

DOCTRINES

BIBLE – INERRANCY

1. The Scriptures are quoted as the absolute standard of truth. **(Daniel 10:21, John 10:35)**
2. The source of the Scriptures is God, there is no imperfection or error permissible with God. **(2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21, 1 John 1:5, James 1:17)**
3. The Scriptures therefore becomes the final authority in the resolution of disputes. **(Romans 4:3, 11:2, Galatians 4:30)**
4. The Scriptures are seen as authoritative. **(Matthew 26:31, Mark 14:27, Luke 4:8, Acts 23:5 Romans 11:8)**
5. The person who does not know the Scriptures is in error. **(Mark 12:24)**
6. The Lord believed the Scriptures:-
 - a) He implied there was only one Isaiah. **(Isaiah 61:1,2 cf. Luke 4:16-21, Isaiah 53:1, and Isaiah 6:1-4, 9-10 cf John 12:38-41)**
 - b) Jonah was a prophet not a myth. **(Matthew 12:39, Luke 11:29)**
 - c) Daniel was a prophet not an historian. **(Matthew 24:15, Mark 13:14)**
 - d) Adam and Eve were created. **(Matthew 19:8)**
7. The Bible is called God's Word **(Mark 7:13, Luke 5:1, 11:28, John 10:35, Acts 6:7, 12:24, Romans 10:17)**

BIBLE – INSPIRATION

1. The principle of inspiration is found in **(2 Timothy 3:16)** "All Scripture is God breathed" Gk. THEO PNEUSTOS.
The Holy Spirit communicated to the human authors God's complete plan **(2 Samuel 23:2, 3, Isaiah 59:21, Jeremiah 1:9, Matthew 22:42, 43, Mark 12:36, Acts 4:24, 25, 28:25)**
The human authors of Scripture so wrote that in spite of their personalities, they were able to communicate God's plan with perfect accuracy in the language they wrote.
2. The origin of Scripture is beyond human viewpoint. **(2 Peter 1:20, 21)**

3. The Bible is the mind of Christ. **(1 Corinthians 2:16)** Therefore it is the absolute standard for believers. **(Psalm 138:2)**
4. Pre-canon revelation from God occurred through the Holy Spirit. There was no written scripture until the time of Moses. **(2 Samuel 23:2, Ezekiel 2:2, 8:3, 11:1, 24, Micah 3:8, Hebrews 3:7)**
5. Four categories of Old Testament revelation:
- a) The spoken word - thus saith the Lord. **(Isaiah 6:9, 10, Acts 28:25)**
 - b) Dreams. **(Numbers 12:6, Genesis 15:12, 31:10-13, 31:24, Daniel 10:9)** - whilst asleep.
 - c) Visions. **(Isaiah 1:1, 6:1, 1 Kings 22:19)** - whilst awake.
 - d) Angelic teaching. **(Deuteronomy 33:2, Acts 7:53, Galatians 3:19, Psalm 68:17)**
6. The extent of revelation:
- a) The unknown past - the Bible portrays past historical details unknown to man apart from revelation. **(Genesis 1-11)**. The accuracy of these historical facts is guaranteed by inspiration, e.g. Creation, Noah's Flood.
 - b) Ancient history - whilst the Bible is not a text book of history, all historical citations are accurate.
 - c) Objective law - the Old Testament contains many laws for both individuals and national life. These laws express perfectly the mind of God to those people to whom they are addressed.
 - d) Some portions of the Bible contain direct quotations from God. The doctrine of inspiration guarantees that such quotations are properly recorded exactly as God desired.
 - e) God uses the emotions, trials and triumphs of certain believers to declare His grace in devotional literature like the Psalms, Song of Solomon
 - f) Inspiration extends to the recording of falsehoods just as they were uttered. Satan Genesis 3:4
 - g) Inspiration guarantees the accuracy of all recorded prophecies.

BIBLE – INSPIRATION – FULFILLED PROPHECY PROOF OF INSPIRATION

All scripture is inspired by God **(2 Peter 1:19-21)** Therefore all Biblical prophecies must come true. This is demonstrated in prophecies already fulfilled.

1. Reuben would be unstable and lose his rights as firstborn. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:3-4)** - Fulfilment **(Numbers 26:5-11)**
2. Simeon would not have land allotted in the Promised Land. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:5-7)** - Fulfilment **(Joshua 19:1-9)**
3. Levi would not have land allotted in the Promised Land. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:5-7)** - Fulfilment **(Joshua 21:4-7)**
4. Judah would become the ruler over the nation of Israel. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:8-12)** - Fulfilment **(Numbers 10:14, Joshua 15:1 Revelation 5:5)**
5. Zebulun would receive an allotment of land on the coast and it would reach down to Sidon. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:13)** - Fulfilment **(Joshua 19:10-16)** as well as history when they took the land to the south of their area previously allocated to Asher and their influence reached right down to Sidon.
6. Issachar would be given a fertile area between two mountains and would be a servant. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:14-15)** - Fulfilment **(Joshua 19:17-22)**
7. Dan would be a full member of Israel but would lead the nation away in idolatry. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:16-18)** - Fulfilment **(Joshua 19:40-48)** and the fact that idolatry in the nation was led by this tribe. It is also of interest that his tribe is not mentioned as having any part in the 144,000 witnesses in **(Revelation 7)**.
8. Gad would be a warrior tribe. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:19)** - Fulfilment **(1 Chronicles 5:18-20, 12:8)**
9. Asher would have a rich and fertile land. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:20, Deuteronomy 33:24-25)** - Fulfilment - History - Asher enjoyed a rich and fertile area together in more recent times successful oil exploration.
10. Naphtali would be quick to spread good news Prophecy **(Genesis 49:21)** - Fulfilment **(Matthew 4:13-15)** as Jesus began his ministry in Naphtali and most of the disciples who gave the good news came from that region.
11. Joseph would receive great blessing. Prophecy **(Genesis 49:22-26)** - Fulfilment **(Deuteronomy 33:13-17)**
12. Benjamin would be a ferocious group Prophecy. **(Genesis 49:27)** - Fulfilment **(Judges 19, 20:21-47)**
13. Joshua and Caleb to enter into the Promised Land after 40 years wandering. Prophecy **(Numbers 14:24, 30)** - Fulfilment **(Joshua 3:7, 17 14:6-12)**
14. Sisera would be defeated by a woman. Prophecy **(Judges 4:9)** - Fulfilment **(Judges 4:21)**
15. Hophni and Phineas would die on the same day. Prophecy **(1 Samuel 2:34)** - Fulfilment **(1 Samuel 4:11)**

16. The priesthood would be removed from the family of Eli. Prophecy (**1 Samuel 2:27-36, 3:11-14**) - Fulfilment (**1 Kings 2:26-27**)
17. Saul was to be the first king of Israel and would save the nation from the Philistines. Prophecy (**1 Samuel 9:15-16**) - Fulfilment (**1 Samuel 11:14**)
18. Saul's kingdom would not continue. Prophecy (**1 Samuel 13:14, 15:28, 24:20**) - Fulfilment (**2 Samuel 3:1, 5:1-3**)
19. Saul to die in battle on a certain day. Prophecy (**1 Samuel 28:19**) - Fulfilment (**1 Samuel 31:1-6**)
20. Solomon to build the Temple not David. Prophecy (**1 Chronicles 17:1-12**) - Fulfilment (**1 Kings 7:51**)
21. The sword not to depart from David's house because of sin. Prophecy (**2 Samuel 12:10-12**) - Fulfilment (**2 Samuel 13:28-29, 16:21-22**)
22. The bones of Jeroboam's pagan priests to be burnt upon the false altar that Jeroboam had constructed. Prophecy (**1 Kings 13:1-3**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 23:4-6**)
23. Jeroboam's dynasty to be destroyed. Prophecy (**1 Kings 14:10-11**) - Fulfilment (**1 Kings 15:27-28**)
24. Ahab to be victorious over the Syrians. Prophecy (**1 Kings 20:28**) - Fulfilment (**1 Kings 20:29-30**)
25. Ahab to die in battle for killing Naboth. Prophecy (**1 Kings 21:19, 22:17**) - Fulfilment (**1 Kings 22:37**)
26. The dogs would then lick his blood from his chariot. Prophecy (**1 Kings 21:19**) - Fulfilment (**1 Kings 22:38**)
27. Jezebel to be eaten by wild dogs. Prophecy (**1 Kings 21:23, 2 Kings 9:10**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 9:30-37**)
28. Elisha to receive a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Prophecy (**2 Kings 2:9**) - Fulfilment demonstrated by the fact that the Bible records that Elisha performed twice as many miracles as Elijah.
29. Naaman to recover from his leprosy. Prophecy (**2 Kings 5:3,8,10**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 5:14**)
30. The starving inhabitants of Samaria to receive an abundance of food in twenty four hours. Prophecy (**2 Kings 7:1**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 7:16-17**)
31. An arrogant aide to the king to see the miracle but not to eat of the food. Prophecy (**2 Kings 7:2,19**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 7:17,20**)
32. Ben-Hadad, a Syrian king to recover from his sickness, but die anyway.. Prophecy (**2 Kings 8:10**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 8:15**)
33. Jehu to have four generations on the throne of northern kingdom. Prophecy (**2 Kings 10:30**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 15:12**)
34. Jehu's dynasty to then be destroyed. Prophecy (**Hosea 1:4**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 15:8-12**)
35. Joash to defeat the Syrians on three occasions. Prophecy (**2 Kings 13:18-19**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 13:25**)
36. Jehoram to suffer with a disease because of sin. Prophecy (**2 Chronicles 21:15**) - Fulfilment (**2 Chron 21:18-19**)
37. Amaziah to die because of his idolatry. Prophecy (**2 Chronicles 25:16**) - Fulfilment (**2 Chronicles 25:20-27**)
38. Sennacherib to be assassinated in his own land. Prophecy (**Isaiah 37:7**) - Fulfilment (**Isaiah 37:37-38**)
39. Sennacherib's attempt to invade Jerusalem not to be successful. Prophecy (**Isaiah 37:33-35**) - Fulfilment (**Isaiah 37:36-37**)
40. Hezekiah to be healed of a terminal disease. Prophecy (**Isaiah 38:5**) - Fulfilment (**Isaiah 38:9**)
41. Cyrus to allow the Jews to go back to Jerusalem. Prophecy (**Isaiah 44:28**) - Fulfilment (**Ezra 1:1-2**)
42. Zedekiah to be captured by Nebuchadnezzar. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 21:7**) - Fulfilment (**Jeremiah 52:8-11**)
43. Jehoahaz to die in Egyptian captivity and not return to Judah. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 22:10-12**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 23:33-34**)
44. Jehoiachin to be captured by Nebuchadnezzar. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 22:25**) - Fulfilment (**2 Kings 24:15**)
45. Coniah was told that no seed of his would sit on the throne of David. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 22:28-30**) - Fulfilment - historical. This prophecy is in apparent contradiction to the Davidic Covenant of (**2 Samuel 7:8-16**) where David was promised a "son" who would reign forever on his throne. This apparent contradiction is solved by the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ as Mary was descended from David via Nathan. (**Luke 3:23-31**)
46. Hananiah, a false prophet to die within a year. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 28:15-16**) - Fulfilment (**Jeremiah 28:17**)
47. Nebuchadnezzar to invade Egypt. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 43:9-13**) - Fulfilment - history
48. Nebuchadnezzar to defeat the Egyptians at Carchemish. Prophecy (**Jeremiah 46**) - Fulfilment - history.
49. Nebuchadnezzar to be given the mind of an animal because of pride. Prophecy (**Daniel 4:19-27**) - Fulfilment (**Daniel 4:28-37**)
50. Belshazzar to have his kingdom removed from him. Prophecy (**Daniel 5:5, 25-28**) - Fulfilment (**Daniel 5:30**)

51. Alexander the Great to establish a world empire in a very short time. Prophecy (**Daniel 2:32-39, 7:6, 8:5-8, 21, 11:3**) - Fulfilment - history.
52. Alexander to defeat the Persians - Prophecy (**Daniel 8:5-8**) - Fulfilment - history
53. Alexander to die at the height of his power and his kingdom to be divided into four parts. Prophecy (**Daniel 8:8, 22, 11:4**) - Fulfilment - history tells us that at the height of his power Alexander died in Babylon at the age of 33. After a period of some twenty years of internal struggle and fighting the eleven generals of the Greek army who had survived Alexander were reduced to four called in Scripture the four winds of heaven, Ptolemy, Seluchus, Cassander and Lysimachus.
54. Antiochus Epiphanes to persecute the Jews and desecrate their Temple. Prophecy (**Daniel 8:11-25**) - Fulfilment - history. The whole of (**Daniel 11**) represents historical prophecies of the Greek dynasties based on Ptolemy and Seluchus which lasted until the time of Julius Caesar with Cleopatra being the last Greek ruler of Egypt. [SEE Prophecy: Prophecy and History Fulfilled]
55. Zacharias would be mute until the birth of John the Baptist. Prophecy (**Luke 1:20**) - Fulfilment (**Luke 1:57-64**)
56. John the Baptist to be the herald for the Lord Jesus Christ. Prophecy (**Luke 1:76-77**) - Fulfilment (**Matthew 3:1-11, Luke 3:2-6**)
57. Simeon to live until he had seen the Messiah. Prophecy (**Luke 2:25-26**) - Fulfilment (**Luke 2:28-30**)
58. Peter would deny Jesus Christ. Prophecy (**John 13:38**) - Fulfilment (**John 18:24-27**)
59. Peter to die as a martyr. Prophecy (**John 21:18-19, 2 Peter 1 :12-14**) - Fulfilment - history
60. Judas to give himself over to Satan. Prophecy (**John 6:70**) - Fulfilment (**John 13:27**)
61. Judas to betray Jesus. Prophecy (**John 13:21**) - Fulfilment (**John 18:2-5**)
62. Paul would suffer a lot for the Lord Jesus Christ. Prophecy (**Acts 9:16**) - Fulfilment (**2 Corinthians 11:23-28, 12:7-10, Philippians 1:29-30**)
63. Paul would be a minister to the Gentiles. Prophecy (**Acts 9:15**) - Fulfilment (**Romans 11:13, Ephesians 3:1**)
64. Paul would preach before kings. Prophecy (**Acts 9:15**) - Fulfilment (**Acts 24-26**)
65. Paul would go to Rome. Prophecy (**Acts 23:11**) - Fulfilment (**Acts 28:16**)

HARMONY

PROLOGUE TO THE 3RD GOSPEL

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

3. PROLOGUE TO JOHN'S GOSPEL - JOHN 1:1-18

John 1:1 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him

KEY WORDS – [Perfect tense verbs underlined above and highlighted below]

Beginning	Arche	Beginning
Was	Eimi	Keep on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Word	Logos	Something Said, Word.
Same	Houtos	The same indicates the logos pre existence before incarnation
All Things	Ta Panta	Whole, Whatsoever, Whosoever, literally “the all things”
Made	Ginomai	To become something one wasn’t before [Aorist Middle Indicative] then Perfect, active, indicative.
Life	Zoe	Life
Light of Men	Phos	Fire. Light Here is the Logos as the Light of Life specifically to man
	anthropon	
Shineth	Phaino	Appear, Seem, Shine [Present Active indicative]
Darkness	Skotia	Dimness, Dark denoting spiritual darkness of 1 John 1:5-7
Comprehended	Katalambano	To take eagerly, Seize.[Aorist Active Indicative]
Sent	Apostello	Set apart, Sent out [Perfect Passive Participle]
Whose Name	Onoma Autoi	Literally “name to him”
Witness	Martureo	To bear witness [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Through Him	Dia autou	An intermediate agent in winning men to Christ.
Might Believe	Pisteuo	May come to believe [Aorist Active Subjunctive].
True Light	To Phos Alethinon	Literally means “the light the genuine”
Lighteth	Photizo	To give light [Present Active Indicative]
Cometh	Erchomai	Come [Present Middle Participle]
World	Kosmos	The orderly universe
Was	Eimi	Keep on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Made	Ginomai	To become something one wasn’t before [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Knew	Ginosko	Know [Aorist Active Indicative]
Received	Paralambano	To take to ones side or welcome [Aorist Active Indicative]
Gave the Power	Didomai +Exousia	To give the privilege or right [Aorist Active Indicative]
Become	Ginomai	To become something you are not [Aorist Middle Infinitive]
Sons of God	Teknon, Theos	Spiritual children whether Jew or Gentile cf John 11:52
Believe	Pisteuo	To believe [Present Active Participle]
Born	Gennao	To be born [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Blood	Haima	Blood
Will	Thelema	Desire, Pleasure , Will
Flesh	Sarx	Flesh, of natural generation
Made	Ginomai	To become something one is not before [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Dwelt	Skenoo	To pitch one’s tent, To tabernacle [Aorist Active Indicative]
Beheld	Theaomai	To look closely at [Aorist Middle Indicative] from which we get theatre
Glory	Doxa	Glory
Begotten	Monogenes	Only born rather than only begotten
Father	Pater	Father
Full	Pleres	Replete, full, complete
Grace	Charis	Grace
Truth	Aletheia	Truth
Cried	Krazo	Speaking with a loud voice [Perfect Active Indicative]
Preferred before	Emprosthen	In front of. In John 3:28 John uses the phrase before him,
Was before	Protos	A paradox but clear, he always was before John as God
Fullness	Pleroma	This is the only time in John’s writings that this occurs.
Received	Lambano	Receive [Aorist, Active Indicative]
Law	Nomos	The law, commandments
Given	Didomi	To give [Aorist Passive Indicative]
By	dia	Through
Came	Ginomai	The historical commencement of Christianity
By Jesus Christ	Dia Iesous Christos	Through Jesus Christ John clearly identifies the Logos with Jesus
Grace and Truth	Charis kai Aletheia	Both grace and truth have the definite article “ho”

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Seen	Horao	To see. [Perfect Active Indicative]. John says God is invisible.
Begotten	Monogenes	Begotten.
Bosom	Kolpos	Bosom indicates the eternal relationship of the Son with the Father.
Declared	Exegeomai	To lead out, Draw out, Recount [Aorist Middle Indicative].

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

APOSTELLO – TO BE SENT - Occurs 133 times in the New Testament with 22 times in the Perfect Tense. Of the Perfect tense occurrences 13 are in the Active Indicative and 9 in the Passive Participle. The origin of the verb Apostello comes from the ancient Athenian Navy, in times when bribery was rampant and the wealthiest, rather than the best might be elected admiral of the fleet – with disastrous consequences. They adopted the process, that the admirals would gather in secret conclave, and freely elect an admiral from the group in that meeting before the battle, to lead the fleet. They would be selected, and “sent out with ultimate authority” to fight the enemy. The result of such a decision/appointment were permanent for the State.

GINOMAI - The verb to become something that the object/event was not before reminds us of the permanent results of the creation. The Lord made this universe of space-time and it is the place within which we make choices – choices that are eternal in their scope and results.

KRAZO – CRY, CRY OUT – this verb occurs 59 times in the New Testament. In **John 1:15** John the Baptist bore witness as a herald of Jesus the Messiah, and he was constantly “proclaiming aloud” that the He who was coming after him, was far superior to him, and always would be.

HORAO – TO SEE – Occurs 115 times in the New Testament, with 31 times in the Perfect Tense. It is one of 10 Greek verbs translated “to see”, and with the verb “Blepo” means to physically see. John the Apostle dominates the use of “Horao” with 25 of the occasions in his Gospel and Letters. Horao is wholly in the Active Voice and in the Indicative Mood in all but two cases. In John 14:7 Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit who they cannot See, and uses the verb again two times in John 14:9, noting that soon the world will not See Him, but the disciples will See Him. To see the Lord has eternal consequences for each person.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED AT THE FIRST COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

PROLOGUE TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
3	Psalm 90:2	He is from everlasting [Micah 5:2]	John 1:1
	Psalm 69:8	A Stranger to His Brethren	John 1:11
	Isaiah 49:7	He is despised of the nations	John 1:11
	Zechariah 12:10c	The Messiah would be rejected	John 1:11
	Psalm 72:17	Belief in His name will produce offspring	John 1:12-13
	Numbers 24:17	Time: I shall see Him but not now	John 1:14
	Isaiah 9:6	A son given deity	John 1:14
	Psalm 45:2	Words of Grace Come from His lips	John 1:17
	Song of Solomon 5:16	The altogether lovely One	John 1:17

REFLECTION

The above passage can be divided into five sections

Verses 1 - 2 The relationship of the Son to the Father.

Verses 3 - 5 The relationship of the Son to His Created Space-Time Cosmos.

Verses 6 - 8 The relationship of the Son to John the Baptist.

Verses 9 - 16 The relationship of the Son to the Angelic and Human World.

Verses 17 - 18 The relationship of the Son to Moses.

Verse 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John chooses his words carefully and refers the reader straight back to **Genesis 1:1** by using the Greek words, "en arche" - in eternity past. The construction of this verse in the Greek leaves out the definite article which emphasises the importance of the subject matter. In this verse we are face to face with our limits as human beings. What John is saying is, "in the sphere of eternity-infinity, before time and space were made, God already was".

This is meant to be a shocking verse. It is meant to make people stop and face their limits as human beings, as creatures trying to understand their Creator. It is meant to arrest any tendency of mankind to arrogance.

The Greek word Eimi translated "was" is in the imperfect tense, which indicates no idea of origin for God or for Logos, but simply continuous existence, while the word translated "Word" is from the Greek word Lego and originates from Homer in the 9th century BC, meaning, "to lay by, to collect, to put words side by side, to speak". It is of eternal significance that we hear the words about the one who is the "Word" behind all.

In this verse John puts up a brick wall for all of us, so that every one hits it. God was there prior to the beginning of this universe. If we go to the place where time begins, God is coming out of eternity to meet us! The present universe has not always been here, but God has. Matter (Space-time) has not been around forever, Einstein understood that, but most people don't even think about it. John has thought and he writes slowly and carefully, to make us face and think about the unfathomable. It is not true that time and space have always existed; Genesis tells us that they are the first creations. We are creatures in a creation with the Creator, the Lord Jesus Christ, being very much more important than the creatures. **Colossians 1:16 - 17.**

The Creator stepped into history [his story]. We however are creatures of space and time. We cannot conceive of anything that does not take up space and time; we cannot even think of a thought that isn't spatial or temporal. What John is saying in this verse is that God is beyond the concepts of space and time. God is infinite and eternal, but we are finite and temporal. We take up only a small area of space and are on earth for only a short time. This side of eternity there are many things which we are not capable of understanding. Read **Genesis 1:1**, and **Psalms 33:4-9**, and so "stand in awe of him"!

On a starry night go out into an open area and look up at the stars which appear to go on forever, yet they do not, but God does. We can ask with the Old Testament saints, "What is man that you are mindful of him?" Most of the debates between theologians rests on one problem, they think they know more than they are capable of. Even John Calvin fell into this trap. He recognised later in life that some of his institutes were wrong but he was not allowed to alter them.

John starts his Gospel with these words to ensure we begin the study of the incarnation, person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our knees. This concept of the greatness of God helps us to keep humble. Little men think that they have everything in a nut shell. Well they are the "nuts" if they think that is true.

Through Christ you can be strong, have joy, gain great knowledge of life and God, and learn many other things, but you must realise that it is all from God, and you must humbly stand before your Creator-Saviour God as your Lord and King. In heaven you will know everything; for only then, beyond space-time we will know as we are known. Young Luther and young Calvin were both arrogant; as they grew they were both corrected by this Gospel. Let us ensure that we have our arrogance corrected also!

John is teaching to both Greek and Jew in this Gospel. To the Greeks he says, the Creator has stepped into his creation, to the Jew he says, Messiah has come, and HE is way bigger than you were thinking. What he hints at here he states openly in verse 3. Read Verse 3. All "safe" views about the Lord Jesus Christ come crashing down on verses like these. John wants all to see that the Lord stands like a rock which men either accept as their salvation place, or they are broken against him. **Daniel 2:34ff.** This is why so much Satanic "scholarship" has been targeted against John's Gospel.

Verse 2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Jesus Christ was with, (the Greek word "pros", meaning face to face with) God. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ were in complete relationship prior to the creation of the universe. Before space and time existed there was perfect unity in the Trinity.

This verse shows that the Lord Jesus Christ is co-eternal with the Father. It confronts directly the false teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses, as it did the early Gnostics. The Lord Jesus was not the Father's first creation; they are co-eternal in the Godhead before creation.

This is a great mystery and truly awesome! The blood of the Creator was shed for you and his death made it possible for us creatures to have a relationship with Him. Turn to and read **1 John 3:2 ff.** We are no longer just creatures but children of God through our relationship with Him.

Christ gives meaning to life as He makes, through his incarnation and death, the unimportant of supreme value through union with Him by his blood shed for us. We have a destiny, through his person and work, in His creation. This creation is only temporary, these heavens will be rolled up as a mat and a new creation will occur, **2 Peter 3:9-18**, and in Christ we are part of that also! The perfect tenses of John's Gospel and Letter remind us of the eternal significance of the events and decisions in space-time, but they remind us most of the fact that the Gospel begins with – in Christ we are eternal, and are entered into eternity with Him.

The word "logos" which means more than "word" alone; it indicates rationality, power and authority. Whatever word of God, or word for God is used, it is used for a purpose. Where the name is different the reason for the difference should be ascertained. The Hebrew word for Word is 'devar' while the Aramaic word is 'memrah'. By the time of Christ the entire Old Testament had been translated into Aramaic, and so would the New Testament. The rabbi's of those days had a lot to say about the "Memrah".

DOCTRINE

WORD

1. The Word was a person who had intellect, emotion and will **John 1:2-3.**
2. The Word was the means by which God made His covenants **John 1:17**
3. Salvation was by means of the Word. **Hosea 1:7**
4. The Word was the means of revelation, **John 1:18, Genesis 15:1**
5. The Word was the agent of Creation **Psalms 33:4-6**
6. The Word was sometimes the same as God and sometimes different from God **John 1:1**
7. The Word was the agent of the Shekinah glory and visible manifestation of God in the Old Testament **John 1:14**

Verse 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John says, "All things were made by him". The Greek words here are important; "dia" plus the genitive in the Greek means, all things, "by means of", him became. The Lord Jesus Christ himself was the agent of creation. The Hebrew way of thinking is shown by the way in which the negative is given as an alternative with the phrase, without Him nothing came into being. Satan is the prince of this world but the Lord is King of Kings, and Creator and Lord of all. Finally all knees shall bow before Christ, even Satan's, as he is thrown into the Lake Of Fire.

Turn to and read, **Hebrews 1:1-2.** Satan is only the usurping Prince of this world, and he will be cast down! We should remember whose side we are on. Note the perfect tense at the end of this verse, for the results of the creation are eternal – and it is our choices, like Satan and the angel's choices, that determine our eternal destiny. The universe was "made" at a point in time, but the unfolding drama of redemption that occurs here will have eternal results for every one of us walking through it, angelic and human.

Verse 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

In Him is light. This verse relates to 1 John 1:5 (turn there and read this verse). The light indicates the power and holiness of God. This is in the locative of sphere in the Greek, which means that in the sphere of his influence was the source of all life. Only a creator explains this universe. Evolution stumbles on the evidence of self-consciousness, the evidence of the development of languages and the creation of life.

Evolution therefore comes together face to face with the revelation of God. There is no "theistic evolution"; there is either the impossibility of godless evolution or creation as the Bible states it. God made this world!

John is clear, and so must we be, the source of light is Christ, and the source of life is Christ. He is the light from God; He is the light of self consciousness and the one who brings the only true light to see this creation by. The ability that we have to think about God and be aware of him comes from God alone. Only the Creator of space-time can reveal the eternal issues that flow from actions in space-time.

The light that shines in our life and reveals the sin which is in us comes from Him. **John 16:8-11**. We are creatures made by a Creator with a built in capacity to recognise the truth about God. Many unbelievers believe that there is God but reject his light, just as the fallen angels/demons did. **James 2:19**. All creatures are held accountable for this rejection of the creator. **John 3:16-36 (Read), also Revelation 20:11-15**. The individual creature's failure to act upon the light revealed to them is culpable and the results of rejection eternal, but "Praise God" the results of acceptance of the Saviour are also eternal.

The word for darkness is, "skotia", which means the lack of light, absolute ignorance with a connotation of evil. God could have left us in the dark but didn't. This is the first part of the Gospel, God stepped into history; we are not in the dark any more, unless we deliberately walk away from the light in rejection of God, and consciously walk into the darkness, as Judas would. John 13:30.

Verse 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

The darkness however does not overcome the light ever, for the darkness flees from light. The word for overcome is, "katalambano", which means to master it or to make it your own. It is in the aorist, active, indicative, which means in all points of time God's light has been attacked by the forces of darkness but the darkness has never mastered the light and never will. Satan has always attacked the light, but the light will always shine, and the Lord seeks for us to be his light bearers. **Matthew 5:14-16**.

Satan, the arch distorter, distracter and deceiver, has always attacked the Word and the believer who loves it, and to deal with him we must know the truth, walk in the truth, and be filled in the Holy Spirit so the spiritual power of the Word shines through us. **Ephesians 5:15-21**. John is "turning the light on" in this Gospel to ensure we know the truth systematically. There are six proclamations so far in the Gospel.

1. Before the world was there was a mind behind all.
2. That mind is God.
3. That mind has expressed itself in the present space-time creation.
4. That mind is the only source of all light – there is no other revelation than that from the creator.
5. That life is like light, and the darkness has never cast a shadow on it.
6. The revelation of that light is given in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

The next proclamation is that of John the Baptist; that God had a fore-runner to prepare the way for the incarnation. Before the King comes the herald of the king.

Verse 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

This verse now introduces the person of John the Baptist who is contrasted to the person of Christ. John says, referring to John the Baptist, "there was a man". John comes from a natural source, with a supernatural message: the Lord comes from a supernatural source with a supernatural message. John shows that the two figures are worlds apart. You have the called man John the Baptist, and the sent God-man Jesus Christ. In John the Baptist we have the last of the Old Testament prophets, in the Lord we have the one they all spoke of, Emmanuel, God with us! Turn to and read, **Isaiah 40:1-5** this is the prophecy of the coming of John the Baptist. Turn to now and read, **Luke 3:1-6** as this passage gives the fulfilment.

Most of the sects teach that the Lord Jesus Christ was one of the creations of God, and not the Creator as the Bible states. John is answering these heresies. He is, God with us; Emmanuel is Jesus Christ. The man from God is John the Baptist: God become man is the Lord Jesus Christ. John the Baptist teaches us many things. We should be like John the Baptist, as he was faithful to the ministry he was called to, and obedient to the Lord in all things within it, so should we be. God does not "need" any of us, but he graciously calls us to use us within his plan. We have the opportunity to play our part in the divine plan, let us not lose out on the thrill, the challenge, blessing, the eternal rewards that are ours by playing our unique part in the unique plan for the universe.

In the Greek construction of this verse John uses the perfect tense for the verb "send", which means that the impact of John's coming has permanent effect, which goes on forever.

By application our Christian life should be like John's, lived as it were, in the perfect tense. Everything you do under the direction/power of the Holy Spirit has results that go on forever. There is a plan for every life. We are all sent out to do something and we should do all things within our part of the plan, "as unto the Lord", for the results of all work is eternal. God chooses in His wonderful grace to use us. God invites us to allow Him to do his work through us and we share in the everlasting blessings that are those who are part of his plan. Do we rejoice, like John the Baptist, in the Lord's plan, and do we praise him each morning for the chance to be a part of it?

Verse 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

John the Baptist stands as the symbol of Holy Spirit powered Christian ministry; he pointed to the light, this is the task of all true ministers. This man came as a herald, he came to testify to the coming light and this is what we do, but we look back to the light, as he looked forward. John was there to open the door to saving faith. He prepared for the Lord's work upon people, as we are to prepare for the Holy Spirit's work upon people by our witness. We are to lead people to Christ, so that under the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, they might respond to him. We should not get in the way. We should not make an issue out of anything other than leading people to the Lord.

Verse 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

John, who had a great following, was not the Messiah; he was the fore-runner pointing to the Messiah. He went to the desert and crowds came to him. He led people to the Lord and then bowed out. Turn to and read **John 3:22 - 36**. Note John's words, "He must increase and I must decrease". John succeeded because he did his job, and knew his place, rather than trying to do too much and therefore becoming ineffective. He was tempted to be more than he was and he beat that temptation.

Turn to and read, **1 Peter 5:6-7**. Humble yourself in the sight of God and he will lift you up in his time to do what he wants you to do. Let God promote you, or do not be promoted! John the Baptist shows us that there is no place for church politics in the service of the Lord; if the Lord does not lift you up to a place of service, humbly seek his guidance to find his place for you.

Verse 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The true light "aletheia" the perfect, the genuine, the unique one. He is the only way of salvation. Only the Lord can enlighten mankind, all others who claim to be "light" are pale and fake imitations when compared against him. What people do with the light is up to them, but we have the awesome responsibility to be "light bearers" and to make him known through the ministries of the Holy Spirit.

They will seek Christ in you, if you are true to Christ. People will see his presence in you and say, "I want what you have". True evangelism is the prayer saturated obedient life that is like a lighthouse drawing people to Christ within you. Then it involves working with the Holy Spirit, and being sensitive to his leading and work upon others, and giving the gospel to those who have been prepared by the Spirit's work. Evangelism is "walking with God the Holy Spirit", so that you can be guided to do what He requires of you.

Verse 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

This is a shocking verse, its three blunt statements are meant to hit us hard. The reality of the incarnation was not welcomed by mankind, and sadly the maker of all was rejected by most, and still is ignored by the vast majority. The history of humanity is the story of the search for the creator, yet when he comes his creatures, not only reject his words, but kill him violently.

1. He was in the world, (the Creator became a creature).
2. The world was made by Him, but the world rejected Him.
3. The creatures rejected the Creator. He was not recognised as He should have been. **Romans 1:25**. They worshipped the creature rather than the creator!

Verse 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

He came in the line of David as a Jew, as the Messiah to Israel, but they did not receive Him. Turn to and read, **Isaiah 53:3-4**.

Even though this rejection was foretold, it is still shocking that the nation that was so well prepared, by Moses and the Law, Feasts and Sacrifices, by prophets, by priests, and by their great King David in his Psalms, yet still they rejected him.

When we see this rejection we must stand amazed that the Lord God let the world continue in existence! It is only God's grace that we all live today! This level of rejection also explains why there must be a lake of fire, why judgement must come to this world eventually. Turn to and read, **Hebrews 2:3, 2 Peter 3:9**. Many rejected but to those who believe in him there is eternal good news!

Verse 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

But as many as received Him he gave the power to become the sons of God even to those who believed in His name. It is always open, the door of salvation, to all those who will accept him, but only on His terms. The phrase, "as many as", is an answer to Calvinism in its extreme form. This is unlimited atonement but you also have election here, in the work of God the Holy Spirit and the plan by which the Baptist and the Lord were "sent". We confront our logical-thinking limits here, for God knew in eternity past how every decision would work out, yet every decision is still free, and none will say, "unfair", in the end.

The word receive - "lambano", means to take the free gift. It is in the aorist, active indicative; the aorist tense is at a point of time, the time of belief, active voice means that the person must do the act of receiving, whilst the indicative mood is the mood of reality, reminding us of the reality of our salvation. Salvation is God's gift to us in Christ, and if you reject that gift, you have clearly loved darkness rather than light. You only need a little faith to make it; for it is not the strength of any woman or man's faith that saves them but the power of the one in whom the faith is expressed. **Luke 17:5-6**.

In the KJV where the translator added a word to clarify the translation in the English they put it in italics. In this case the word "even" is not in the original. The text should read, "to them that believe on His name". **Acts 16:31**. We are challenged to believe that what He did on the Cross He did for us. To those who trust in Him, he gives power, "exousia", which means authority, freedom or privilege, and rights.

You have become a member of the Royal Family of God in Christ. **1 Peter 2:9-10**. As such you have the privilege of fellowship with God, have the power of God in you, the Authority of God, and you are fellow citizens with all His saints down the ages. Turn to and rejoice as you read, **Ephesians 2:19, Galatians 6:10, and 1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10**.

The Lord of Glory has come, the creator to his creation, and he has opened the door of salvation for all who will accept him to become his sons and daughters eternally. This is all by grace, and it is more marvellous when we remember that he has not judged this world for its rejection of him.

Verse 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

This brings out the gracious flavour of our salvation. We were born again, aorist, passive, indicative of "gennao", which shows that at a point of time we receive the reality of the second birth. It is not the work of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but it is a work of God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the gynaecologist bringing the believer into a new birth and the Paediatrician to help us grow. Turn and read, **Ephesians 2:8-9**. It is not the will of the flesh or the old sin nature's area of strength (Human good works). It is Satan's greatest ploy to convince the unbeliever that he/she can obtain salvation by means of good works, but we don't need to, for God's grace provides all we need.

As a result of legalistic deception many people live according to the so called, "golden rule", and are not saved, just straining to "be good". If Satan can deceive people into thinking they are saved when they are not, he has kept them hell bound, and this is his main strategy.

Satan does not rejoice in the drunkard or the overtly sin filled life of an unbeliever, for they may in despair turn to the gospel and be saved. Satan rejoices in religion without reality, for then he has fully fooled the people into a false sense of security and they go to hell singing hymns.

Satan laughs at but uses religion without a saving relationship with Christ, for it dooms the believers in it to join him forever in the lake of fire. The Holy Spirit alone can save such people.

Note the next phrase, "not by the will of man"; the word for man is "andros", which is a nobleman rather than a common man "anthropos". Not the most noble of men can become a child of God without being born again. All have received the sinful nature from Adam, and all need a saviour. Turn to and read, **John 16:8 - 11**.

This shows that the Spirit convicts you of the need for the only Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is then the one giving you faith and the Son provides salvation. All we have to do is to agree with God's way, we do not have to do anything other than use our free will. The work of salvation is totally grace; the Father planning it, the work of the Son on the cross providing it, the work of the Holy Spirit revealing and enlivening it to us. We respond to what God has already done. **Acts 4:12, 16:31**

Verse 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

God came and pitched His tent amongst us to open the way so that we could live with Him. "He became flesh", refers back to verse 1, where the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. Deity took on humanity; the Creator took on the form of a creature. In a unique way God became man but still was God.

This is a "mystery", which is called in theology the hypostatic union; "Emmanuel" - God with us. Many heresies in the early church arose out of conflict over understanding in this area. This side of eternity none of us are going to understand this fully!

The Lord Jesus Christ as God became true humanity at the point of the incarnation. John uses the word "sarx", which means flesh or body. He was truly man; he was not just clothed as with a coat of humanity. Other heretics said that at His baptism, when the Holy Spirit as a dove alighted on Him, it was "the Christ" coming on the human Jesus. They also said, when He was crying out on the cross, "My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?" The heretics argued that He was saying, "My deity, my deity why have you gone?" John by his choice of words rejects all these views as a false way of seeing the Lord. There are cults and theologians today that believe these false things still. Other heretics in the first century stated that when He was born He was truly God but never truly man and that Mary was the mother of God. This leads to the later Eastern and Western Roman church dogma of Mary the Mother of God.

Contrary to all the false views, John maintains that the Lord Jesus Christ was, and still is truly man and truly God. He is unique and always will be. Cults like the Jehovah's Witnesses have changed key words in this verse and other verses. The Creator became man with all the limitations of man, but without a sinful nature. **Hebrew 4:15, 16**. Because of the fall the O.S.N. is inherited through the father and not the mother.

Had Jesus Christ been born of a human father He would have inherited an O.S.N. Because he was born of a virgin, He did not inherit Adam's sin, and therefore was born, as Adam was created, a free man. At conception we have the male and female chromosomes coming together to form the human being, the female chromosomes do not contribute to the O.S.N. and therefore the female egg is the only perfect cell in humanity.

Jesus Christ was able to be tempted and able to resist temptation. He had to do this as He had to come to the cross in a perfect sinless situation as if He had sinned He could not have been the perfect sacrifice. We are all born children of Adam, and in Adam all die, for we are born with an O.S.N. In addition we have personal sins. The Lord Jesus Christ was called the second Adam because he was born sinless as Adam was created sinless. However as He lived on the earth He is aware of living under harsh and adverse conditions.

Not only is he perfect man, he is also perfectly and completely God. "And we beheld His glory the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth". Jesus Christ is undiminished deity and true humanity in one person for ever. This statement of a person can only be used for the Lord Jesus Christ. His deity shone through.

He is referred to as the only begotten - "monogenes" - literally the "only born one" or the uniquely born one. John is saying that, in His humanity, Jesus Christ is the only one born perfect, in complete fellowship with the Father and without sin.

We as believers are born again as children of God but in His humanity He is the only born child of God. Cults however say that this verse says that He is the first creation of God.

If you look at it in context this cannot be so, as we see in, **John 1:1-2**. He is co-eternal with the father. He is born into the world with a human body and nature.

The humanity of Christ Jesus was born in fellowship, everybody else is born out of fellowship, as Adam's children, and we are by our acts later in life dead in trespasses and sins. We are born in need of a Saviour, and prove our need by every sinful act.

It is important to note however that you do not need to be sprinkled with "holy" water as a child, as, if you die prior to reaching the age of accountability you are automatically saved, even though children are born sinners. Evidence for this comes from, **Matthew 18:3, 19:14, 2 Samuel 12:18-23**. We can have the same faith that David had regarding the death of all children.

In summary then, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ has two natures, divine and human distinctly separate yet united with no loss or transfer of properties or attributes of character or mixture or loss of separate identity. The union was personal and eternal. The Lord Jesus Christ is both perfectly divine and human still, and He is seated now at the right hand of the Father as our advocate. **1 John 2:2**. In his Gospel John talks about the hypostatic union, in his letter he talks about the advantage of it to you as we walk through life.

The hypostatic union comes from the Greek word "hupostasis" which is a compound word comprising "hupo" - under and "stasis" - static or stationary. Here we have the concept of two things standing together and united into one with no loss or transfer from either or loss of attributes of either. John silences the heretics, for they are wrong!

By the time John wrote his Gospel all the heresies we presently have, had been tried by Satan and launched as alternative religions. You have Satan having thought up all the heresies. There is nothing new in the cults today or in the heresies, as Satan has tried each out already many times in history. The only difference today is that he has a different marketing strategy.

In **Hebrew 4:14, 15** we have a high priest who was tempted as we are and knows human nature but he is still God and still perfect. This is an open mystery as we have here a unique event the difference between every cult and religion and Christianity is in the doctrine of the hypostatic union. It is important to teach your people the hypostatic union. In the first 400 years of the Church age the major church councils concentrated on this doctrine to ensure they got it right. The Roman Catholic Church stands solid on this today. Over that period heretics argued against it from a number of viewpoints.

It is a hard doctrine for us to understand, but remember that is because we have no precedents for it. The incarnation was a unique event, never before occurring nor ever again, so are language and concepts unique also to describe it. It is amazing to contemplate that the incarnate god-man, whilst a baby in the cradle, was in his deity holding the universe together. The Lord was always God and he became man at the incarnation. He was truly human with body soul and spirit although due to his virgin birth He had no Old Sin Nature. **1 Peter 2:22**.

At no time was the divine nature lacking, however from time to time some of the divine nature was not used as it was not in conformity with the Father's will, and plan for our salvation. The Lord was absolutely obedient to the plan, and this obedience won our salvation.

When one studies this and sees the full character of the Godhead in Christ, the greatest miracle was that the Lord did not step down from the cross, but went to the cross and died for your sin and mine. There were legions of angels just waiting to wipe out the earth for its rejection of him, and assist the Lord of Glory, and they were there waiting to be called. The Lord Jesus Christ would have been totally aware of this when He was on the Cross.

In the temptations He was tempted to do many things including turning stones into bread. As the Creator he could have done it. This is not a valid temptation to us.

He would also be aware that when He was tempted to cast himself off the Temple that there were myriads of angels there looking on. Jesus knew it, so did Satan, and he had perverted Scripture to try and tempt the Lord to move outside the plan of the Father.

The Lord Jesus Christ could therefore be supremely powerful and weak at the same time. Deity cannot be tested but humanity can. The temptations he faced were for His deity to overwhelm His humanity; for him to attempt to complete the plan outside of his humanity, and outside of the Father's Plan.

An example of this is in omniscience. Deity is omniscient but humanity learns, deity never thirsts, humanity does. He did not mix His attributes but learnt as a human being even though He could have transferred all the knowledge from His deity to His humanity. There are areas in Scripture where the Lord's humanity is in view, others where His deity is shown and still others where the complete hypostatic union is visible. The mechanics of the union is a mystery but you must see the necessity for it.

The necessity to be a man is fourfold:-

[a] Saviour hood - God cannot die, He had to become human to die.

[b] Kingship - A king is a man who reigns over other men. He received His kingship through the spiritual line of Mary who was descended from David through Nathan. Luke 3 and his legal line through Joseph via Solomon, Matthew 1.

[c] High Priesthood - A priest is a man who represents other men before God

[d] Mediatorship - A mediator has to be equal with both parties in the mediation.

In his humanity He could say, "I thirst", and yet in His deity, "Before Abraham was I am". The accurate knowledge of the hypostatic union is of vital importance when giving the true gospel. If you teach a gospel where He is just a man you have not got the true gospel. Similarly if you consider Him as God alone the true gospel cannot be given.

In Christ we see God's favour and grace, as he revealed himself in the Old Testament, so he reveals Himself in the New Testament in Christ as the unique God-Man. By resting on the foundation of the character of God and the hypostatic union we are on a firm foundation. Turn and read in **Jude 24, 25**. Here we see the Lord called, "our only wise God, our Saviour". What is able to keep you from falling? The power of God, the Father's plan for you, the Holy Spirit in you, the Son as the advocate for you, and your position in Him.

This commences one of John the Baptist's sermons, concerning the coming Messiah who he is to identify as the Lord Jesus Christ. John can be seen as the last of the Old Testament prophets. Until the Cross the rule that applied was still the Mosaic Law. The new age, the Church Age began at Pentecost. John is also classified by the Lord as the greatest of the prophets. **Matthew 11:11**.

Turn to and read, **Luke 1:57 – 80**. This is an excellent example of godly parents waiting upon the Lord; Zachariah, Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph. John the Baptist was born in a similar way to Isaac and Samuel. John was the second cousin to the humanity of the Lord. There is no evidence that John claimed family familiarity which was his right. John recognised Jesus as the Messiah, not as a blood relation. He saw past the physical through to the spiritual reality.

Verse 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

John also shows that Jesus was before him even though he was born before Him. The word witness is "martureo", here in the present, active, indicative. This is the historical present. When John the Apostle was writing this John the Baptist has been dead for many years.

He however uses the present tense almost as if John kept on saying this. By implication John's witnessing has permanent results; he keeps on witnessing to the reality of the Lord's Messiahship. It would be great to be a person who was remembered as one who keeps on witnessing for Christ.

He "cried out" is in the present, active, indicative of "krazo". He prophetically yelled out (kept on calling aloud) in the same way as the old Town Crier. Turn to and read, **Isaiah 55:11-13**. He took his stand for the truth and kept faithful to it throughout his life. He was a called and prepared man, who was thoroughly courageous. You should not take a position of Bible teacher unless you are called and empowered by the Lord, for only in the Holy Spirit's power can we serve.

If you are called then you must be prepared. And if you stand to speak for the Lord you must be courageous. If you are a preacher; you are a royal herald, who are yourself a member of the Royal Family of Eternity through your relationship with the Lord. The herald represented the King. He did not change the words of the King but accurately reflected his message. That is our role as pastors of the Word of God. The Lord will judge those who twist His words. God's Word is always to be given in a forthright manner.

Turn to and read, **Jeremiah 1:17-19, Ezekiel 2:6 - 3:11, 17, 33:1-7**. God will honour his pastor and give you strength as you are obedient to, and faithful to, his Word.

The pastor needs to have a strong mind, and be a watchman warning people from the Word of God. God's method is forthrightness. The Lord wants communication not fine sounding words. We must be clear and correct.

John points to Christ. He is in no doubt that the Lord is superior to him. He is superior in power and majesty, and was "before" him in time. John was humanly speaking older than Jesus, but he recognises that the Lord is, "from eternity".

Verse 16 And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

John pointed to the Messiah, God become man, the Lord of glory. He was, John says, before me, he is the pre-eminent one full of honour and glory. The law came by Moses but grace came from God. This person Jesus is going to eclipse everyone who has come before, the light has come. John saw that all would be changed by the incarnation; that the old would be swept away.

John the Baptist died knowing that the Messiah had come. He knew that what God would do was as good as done. In Christ we receive the fullness of God, and it is truly, "grace upon grace"; a constant, fresh supply of God's grace, new every morning supplying our every need. Have we praised him for this today?

Verse 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The glory that was there with the Law of Moses was a candle compared to the light that came with Christ. The fullness that is in Christ Jesus is superior to everything else even though there was glory in the Old Testament. The "Law of sin and death", as it is called, has been superseded by the "Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus". **John 15:25, Romans 6:14, 7:2-6, 8:2-4, 2 Corinthians 3:7-13, Galatians 3:19-25, Colossians 2:14, Ephesians 2:15.**

We must ensure we do not miss out on this grace message; we must live in it, not stay within the superseded system of legalism – be it Mosaic or some new version from America. Because the Exodus generation did not utilise the promises of the Word of God they failed, and missed out on blessing, **Hebrews 4:1-2**. We must ensure we do not copy them in their failure to apply God's Word into the fabric of each day. Failure to live in the grace that the Lord has given is a serious matter.

Verse 18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the revealer of God to man. In His person we see the character of God. The Greek here states that, "no one has seen God never", which is very strong language. The word to see is "horao" in the **perfect, passive, indicative**. This word means to get a panoramic view – our word horizon is from it.

John is saying that no one has seen a panoramic view of God before the Lord Jesus Christ came. In the Old Testament people had glimpses of God through the Law and the prophets, but in the New Testament we have a panoramic view because of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Only begotten" is the use of the word "monogenes" again; the "uniquely born one". In his humanity he was born, but in His deity He always existed. In the bosom of the father is the place of honour and the location of reward. He has the place of honour, always has, and still does, but due to his victory he is seated in glory as a "Man" as before he had always been there as God. As Dr McGee used to say, "There is a man in the glory".

The Lord Jesus Christ has "declared" the character of God for all to see. The word here is the aorist, active, indicative of "exegeomai", which means to lead out to pasture, to unfold a teaching clearly to the benefit of the one taught.

APPLICATION

The virgin birth is a critical doctrine, especially as it relates to the doctrines of Redemption, Imputation and Propitiation. NO virgin birth = NO salvation.

By this means the Lord is showing us the glory of God by everything He was, and everything He did; showing us the full Character of God.

It is a picture of the Lord coming to a people who are in twilight and leading them into a full life in the full light of the reality of his character. In the person of Christ we see the truth and the glory of God, and are meant to live in it so that the light might be truly seen in our lives.

When you strike a legalistic church and they want you to live by the Mosaic Law it is likely that they have set up a barrier between themselves and the light. They want to appear holy, but they do not want the light shining too brightly on them, because they don't want their comfortable, or pride based religion to be upset...

Legalism at its root is based on pride. The greater light than the law is now here. You can put legalism on as a suit of clothes and fool those who have little discernment, or you can live in the light.

Believer - What are you going to choose, a list of petty rules to hide your sins behind, or the light of Christ to reveal things to you?

DOCTRINES

CHRIST: DEITY OF CHRIST [see page 28 above]

GOD: CHARACTER OF GOD

1. Whilst God is three persons all three persons have exactly the same essence or character:

a) SOVEREIGNTY

The Father (**Ephesians 1:11** , cf **Isaiah 40:8**, **Matthew 6:10**, **Hebrews 10:7, 9**)

The Son (**John 5:21**, **Revelation 19:16**)

The Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:11** , cf **Hebrews 2:4**)

b) RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Father (**John 17:25**)

The Son (**Luke 1:35**, **Hebrews 7:26**, **2 Corinthians 5:21**)

The Spirit The Holy Spirit

c) JUSTICE

The Father (**Job 37:23**, cf **8:3**)

The Son (**Acts 3:14**, **John 5:22**, **Revelation 19:11**)

The Spirit (**Nehemiah 9:20**)

d) LOVE

The Father (**John 3:16**)

The Son (**Ephesians 5:25**, **1 John 3:16**)

The Spirit (**John 16:7-11**, **1 Corinthians 2:10**)

e) ETERNAL LIFE

The Father (**John 5:26**)

The Son (**Micah 5:2**, cf **John 1:1-2**, **1 John 5:11**)

The Spirit (**Isaiah 48:16**)

f) ALL-KNOWING

The Father (**Hebrews 4:13**, cf **Matthew 11:27**, **1 Peter 1:2**)

The Son (**John 18:4**, cf **Matthew 9:4**, **John 2:25**, **1 Corinthians 4:5**)

The Spirit (**Isaiah 11:2**, cf **1 Corinthians 2:11**)

g) EVERYWHERE

The Father (**2 Chronicles 2:6**)
 The Son (**Matthew 28:20, cf Ephesians 1:23**)
 The Spirit (**Psalms 139:7**)

h) ALL-POWERFUL

The Father (**Mark 14:36, cf 1 Peter 1:5**)
 The Son (**Hebrews 1:3, cf Matthew 24:30, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:21**)
 The Spirit (**Romans 15:19**)

i) UNCHANGEABLE

The Father (**Hebrews 6:17, Psalm 33:11**)
 The Son (**Hebrews 13:8**)
 The Spirit (**John 14:16**)

j) TRUTH

The Father (**John 7:28, John 17:3**)
 The Son (**1 John 5:20, cf John 1:14, 14:6, Revelation 19:11**)
 The Spirit (**1 John 5:6, cf John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13**)

GOD: NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD

1. Father, Son and Holy Spirit Matthew 28:19,20. These titles emphasise the function of each member of the Trinity.

- a) Father - the sovereign authority, who decreed the plan of salvation
- b) Son - the obedient Son, who offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin according to the Father's will
- c) Holy Spirit - the one who reveals the Son to mankind, thereby bringing honour and glory to Him

2. At the Lord's Baptism - Matthew 3 where the Spirit descends, the Father speaking from heaven and the Son being baptised.

3. We have the Father sending the Son in **John 3:16**, in **John 14-17** we have the Son sending the Spirit.

4. We have the three fold titles of God **Romans 5, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 1, Romans 15**

5. The Holy Spirit is called God in Acts 5, 1 Corinthians 3 and called the Lord in **2 Corinthians 3:17**

6. The works of the Lord are ascribed to the Father John 17, the Holy Spirit responsible for the procreation of the Son **Luke 1:35, 2:11**; the Son doing the will of the Father John 8, 10, the Holy Spirit sustaining the Son. **Matthew 18:28, John 3:34**

7. The Trinity are involved in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ in the first advent. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ is the co operative work of the Trinity, the Father gives the son **Romans 8:32**, the Lord lays down his life **John 10:18**, the Holy Spirit empowers Him to offer Himself on the Cross **Hebrews 9**. On the Cross He addresses the other two members of the Trinity when He cried out "My God, My God why has thou forgotten me?"

8. All three were involved in the resurrection

- [a] The Father - **Colossians 2:12**
- [b] The Son as the person who was raised - **John 2:19, 10:18, 1 Peter 3:18**
- [c] The Holy Spirit was involved in His resurrection - **Romans 8:11** The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit will be involved in our resurrection.

9. The indwelling of the believer - **John 14:23**, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit - **1 Corinthians 6:19**, we have the power in us - **Ephesians 4:6**, the Lord in us - **Colossians 1:27**

GOD - TRINITY

1. There is one God. He has manifest Himself in three personalities. (**2 Samuel 23:1-3, Isaiah 48:16, Isaiah 63:7-10, Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:33, 2 Corinthians 13:14**)
2. The oneness of God refers to the unity or sameness of character. All three members of the Trinity are equal (**Philippians 2:6, Deuteronomy 6:4, Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20, Colossians 2:9**), although they have different functions/purposes in relation to man.
3. The three members are distinguished according to their function in the plan of salvation (**1 Peter 1:2-3**)
 - a) The Father - the authority, who planned our salvation (**Isaiah 14:27, John 4:34, 5:17, 12:44, 1 Corinthians 8:6a, Ephesians 3:11**)
 - b) The Son - the obedient son, who was born as a man, died for our sins, and rose from the dead (**John 4:34, 5:17, Hebrews 10:7**)
 - c) The Holy Spirit - the ministering servant, who reveals the Son and sanctifies us (**John 16:8-11**).
4. The Son is the only visible member of the Trinity. (**John 1:18, 6:46, 1 Timothy 6:16, 1 John 4:12**). He was revealed in the Old Testament in Christophanies (eg the Angel of Jehovah) and became flesh in the New Testament. (**Exodus 3:14 cf John 8:58; Psalm 10:16 cf Revelation 11:15; Zechariah 14 cf Revelation 19**)
5. Evidences of the Trinity
 - a) Affirmed by the use of the title Elohim (plural, Gods) in the Old Testament and the plural pronoun "us" in (**Genesis 1:26, 3:22, 11:7**).
 - b) The worship of God we have repeated three times "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty (**Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4**)
 - c) The name (singular) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit indicates Trinity. (**Matthew 28:19-20**)
 - d) The Lord's Baptism - the Spirit descends, the Father speaks from heaven and the Son is baptised. (**Matthew 3**)
6. Light is a good illustration of the Trinity. (**1 John 1:5**) Light is one, but has three elements.
 - a) Father - actinic light - that part of light which is invisible, nor felt.
 - b) Son - luminiferous - that part of light which is both seen and felt.
 - c) Spirit - calorific - that part of light which is not seen but felt.

CHRIST: KENOSIS OF CHRIST

1. Kenosis is an expression which means to "empty oneself" or "to make himself of no reputation."
2. Principle of Kenosis:- (**Philippians 2:5-8**)
3. Jesus Christ from eternity past always has been God. As such he is all knowing, he is all powerful, has everlasting life and many other absolute qualities. He was not created because he is eternal.
4. Jesus Christ chose to become a little lower than the angels and took on the form of man.
5. Adam the first man aspired to be God, the second Adam who is God divested himself of his deity (Kenosis) and became man in order to save mankind.
6. During his earthly ministry, rather than using his own absolute power he used the power of the Holy Spirit.

LIGHT

1. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. (**1 John 1:5**)
2. The Lord is the visible manifestation of that light. (**John 1:4, 8:12, 12:46**)
3. The Lord's coming as the Light of the World was prophesied. (**Isaiah 49:6**)

4. The light was seen in the darkness of the world. (**Matthew 4:16, Luke 2:32**)
5. The Lord brought light and immortality through the gospel. (**2 Timothy 1:10**)
6. Believers are said to be light bearers. (**Matthew 5:14-16, John 12:36**)
7. We are said to be the children of the light. (**John 11:9-10, Ephesians 5:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:5, 1 Peter 2:9**)
8. Light is necessary for man's existence on the earth. (**Ecclesiastes 11:7; Jeremiah 31:35**)
9. Divine guidance of Israel was provided by God through light. (**Exodus 14:20**)
10. Bible doctrine in the soul is portrayed by light. (**Psalms 119, 105, 130**)
11. The gospel is called light. (**2 Corinthians 4:3,4; 2 Timothy 1:10**)
12. Salvation brings the believer out of darkness into light just as the planet Earth was brought out of darkness into light by God. (**Luke 1:79; 1 Peter 2:9**).
13. Satan is the distorter, the angel of light. (**2 Corinthians 11:14**)
14. Satan's strategy is to outshine the true light with his own false gospel. (**2 Corinthians 4:3-6**)

HARMONY

PROLOGUE TO THE 4TH GOSPEL

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

4 GENEALOGY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST - MATTHEW 1:1-17

1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. 2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; 3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; 4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; 5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; 6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; 7 And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; 8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; 9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and

Achaz begat Ezekias; 10 And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; 11 And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: 12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; 13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; 14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; 15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; 16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. 17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

KEY WORDS

Book	Biblos	Book or scroll from which we get the English word Bible.
Generation	Genesis	Birth, Origin. "The birth roll of Jesus Christ"
Son	Uihos	Son
Begat	Gennao	To beget, Bring forth. [Aorist Active Indicative]
King	Basileus	A king
Wife	-	Not in the original
Brethren	Adelphoi	Brethren
About the Time	Epi	Upon, On, Over
Carried Away	Metoikesia	Change of Dwelling
Brought	Metoikesia	Change of House
Husband	Aner	A man
Born	Gennao	To beget, Bring forth [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Called	Lego	To lay out, Collect, Say [Present Passive Participle]
Christ	Christos	Anointed
Generations	Genea	Generations
Fourteen	Dekatessares	Fourteen

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED AT THE FIRST COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
4	2 Samuel 7:12	David's Seed	Matthew 1:1
	1 Chronicles 17:11	David's Seed	Matthew 1:1
	Ezekiel 34:23-24	Descendant of David	Matthew 1:1
	2 Samuel 7:16	David's House established forever	Luke 3:31
	Genesis 49:10	The Seed of Judah	Luke 3:33
	Genesis 28:14	The Seed of Jacob	Luke 3:34
	Genesis 9:26-27	The God of Shem will be the son of Shem	Luke 3:36
	Jeremiah 23:5-6	Descendant of David	Luke 3:23-31
	Jeremiah 33:14-15n	Descendant of David	Luke 3:23-31

REFLECTION

The purpose of the two genealogies is to show that Jesus is the King of the Jews [Matthew], thus this account commences with the first Hebrew – Abraham, while the account in Luke is to show that Jesus Christ is true Humanity, and directly descended from Adam.

They have 14 common names from Abraham to David where the lines diverge via Solomon, the Kingly line, and Nathan, another son of David and Bathsheba, in the line of humanity and promise. Both lists of common names correspond exactly.

GENEALOGY OF JOSEPH IN MATTHEW 1

In Matthew we see him as the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. The genealogy commences with Abraham who was the first Hebrew. He started as a Gentile and became a Hebrew (one who crossed the river).

Remember - the word "begat" does not necessarily mean a father-son relationship, but does mean that the second person was a descendant.

Other Gentiles came as descendants of Abraham, such as Ishmael the father of many of the Arabs. The Hebrews therefore are called the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

From Jacob/Israel we have them called "Israelites", and from the days when the Tribe of Judah became the main survivor after the Exile, the other tribes got security within Judah/Judea, and so they all take the name of "Jews" from 535 BC as they return from Babylon. It is significant that modern Israel has gone back to the inclusive twelve tribal name of "Israel".

The official kingly line comes down through David and Solomon to Joseph, the legal though not physical father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is therefore seen to have a legal and moral right to the throne of Israel.

In **2 Samuel 7:8-17** the Davidic Covenant promises David that a descendant of his will reign eternally as the King of the Jews. The Lord Jesus Christ is that king.

The founding of the Jewish nation was based on regeneration, but eventually changed to natural generation. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are all based on their spiritual regeneration.

The gospel is noted even now to be "to the Jew first" because it is the only race founded on regeneration.

Jacob had twelve sons. By tradition the eldest son was the chief in a family but Reuben was unstable.

He lost the leadership to Judah who appears in the list of the kingly line, the priesthood to Levi and the double portion to Joseph. Jesus is called the lion of the tribe of Judah.

WOMEN IN THE GENEALOGY

For a Jewish person of the Rabbinic period the inclusion of women in his genealogy almost destroys the value of such a family tree. In the case of the Lord Jesus Christ's legal line in Matthew we have a number of women. Other than Mary in verse 16 the women all had pasts which would have further devalued the family's reputation from a traditional Jewish viewpoint.

The First Woman - Tamar

Tamar who appears in verse 3 was the wife of Judah's son Er. The story of her part in the line of Christ is given in Genesis 38.

[**Genesis 38:7**]. Er was a wicked person so God killed him. According to the custom of the day a brother was to then marry Tamar, which Onan did. His attitude was very wicked also, so God killed Onan [**Genesis 38:9-10**].

As Judah had run out of mature sons Tamar was told to go back to her family until a further brother Shelah had grown up. In due course Judah's wife died, Shelah grew up but no call came for Tamar to return to Judah's family.

Tamar hearing Judah is coming into her family area, dresses as a prostitute and having received certain signs of evidence that it is Judah who will father any children she conceives, Judah goes in and has sex with Tamar, and as a result she falls pregnant. Judah sends a servant to redeem the signet ring and other items but does not find her.

About three months later Tamar is clearly pregnant with twins, and Judah tries to have her executed for adultery, but she is able to show the items which Judah recognises openly as his. He also reflects on the fact that he did not go through with the arrangement with Shelah.

He does not have any further sexual relations with her, and in due time twins are born to her, both of which are noted in Matthew 1:3, with Perez being in the line of Jesus Christ.

The Second Woman – Rahab

Rahab was a Gentile who protected the two spies who went to survey Jericho before the Israelites crossed the Jordan under Joshua. Her story is given in Joshua 2 and her rescue in Joshua 6. In **Joshua 2:1**, Rahab is described as a sacred prostitute of the city fertility cult, who may also have been in the rope making business at the time her future husband arrived and was hidden by her.

She is a key member of the pagan hierarchy, but has already accepted that God is truly Lord of all, and she walks away from all her neighbours and culture to embrace truth!

As a result she and her family in Joshua 6 were saved from the pillage that ensued at Jericho. This woman is also noted as one of the heroes of faith in **Hebrews 11:31**.

The Third Woman – Ruth

Rahab's son/grandson was Boaz who was the nobleman for the third woman mentioned, Ruth. She was a Moabitist under a ten generation curse as found in **Deuteronomy 23:3-8**. She is the subject of the book of Ruth. She became a widow and decided to go to Israel with her mother in law Naomi. Here she met her kinsman redeemer Boaz. This shows that cursing is turned to blessing with regeneration and Holy Spirit led nobility/virtue of character.

The Fourth Woman - Bathsheba

David was the eighth son of Jesse and became the second King of Israel after the death of Saul. He had a number of wives but the legal line leading to Joseph went down through his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba the wife of one of his greatest warriors, Uriah the Hittite.

FROM SOLOMON TO BABYLON

From verses 7 to 11 in Matthew 1 we go from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity. For the first two hundred years or so, Israel, divided after Solomon, was two independent kingdoms. Eventually however they became dominated by the Assyrians who took the Northern Kingdom of Samaria/Israel into permanent captivity in 720 BC from which only a remnant return in 535 BC. Some have started to return in recent years, from far flung places.

Eventually the southern kingdom of Judah suffered the same fate under Nebuchadnezzar with dispersion under the Chaldean Empire in three stages into Babylon. This process was completed and eventually in 535 BC Israel became independent again due to the edict of a Gentile King, Cyrus the Great, but it was independence as a province of the Persian Empire. The man entitled to be king, Zerubbabel, was Satrap (Governor under the Persians).

From the death of Alexander the Great, who conquered the Persian Empire, there was increasing pressure from the Greek Empires of Damascus and Egypt, and there was a brief time of independence under the Hasmoneans. Eventually total foreign domination occurred in 63 BC, when Pompey invaded Israel. Throughout the ministry of our Lord the Roman Empire dominated the Jews.

In 70 AD the Jews went into dispersion in which state they will remain until the Second Advent of Christ. During the Millennium the Davidic and Palestinian covenants will be fulfilled and the Jews will again legitimately occupy the Promised Land. Daniel had foreseen the entire history of the Jewish people. **Daniel 2: 7-12**.

Verses 7-11 however, only take us from Solomon to the captivity in Babylon in the line of Judah, as there was no divine sanction for the northern kingdom of Samaria.

The legal genealogy here then goes from Solomon to Jehoshaphat and Joram. Four kings are not included in the king list at that point as they have no part in divine history except to pass on their genes. This is because of the introduction of pagan religion into the southern kingdom by Athaliah the daughter of Jezebel who married into the kingly line of the south.

Continuing in verse 9 we have Hezekiah and Josiah, who were, after David and Solomon, the most outstanding kings of Judah. Hezekiah however had a son who was evil and one of the worst kings of Judah.

THE SONS OF JOSIAH

In verse 11 we have the final kings before the Babylonian captivity. Josiah had four sons, three of whom reigned from Jerusalem. However not one is named in the Matthew account as they all do evil. His grandson whose name was Jeconiah and is also known by the name Coniah is however mentioned. Jeremiah witnessed to all these kings in a clear way but identifies that they are without positive effect on history.

Coniah was a fool and a bad king, and God through Jeremiah placed a curse on Coniah stating in **Jeremiah 22:28-30**. “**Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? 29 O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. 30 Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.**”

In this passage we see the fact that no descendant of Jeconiah would reign on the throne of David. We also see that from verses 12 to 16 that Jeconiah is in the legal line of Christ with Joseph being a descendant of his. He therefore had physical descendants so he was not childless in the sense of not having children, but that the line of kings would terminate with him.

Zerubbabel was a physical descendant of Coniah. He was a noble person who led Judah back to the land but was not crowned king of Judah.

Nor were any of his descendants even though they were in the royal line. The Jews however survived the period of captivity and returned to the land purged of religion and invigorated. Spiritual prosperity was born in the darkest hour because it was under pressure that many became believers.

God however had promised a true Son of David with everlasting life, the Lord Jesus Christ, would reign over the Jews eternally. This apparent paradox is solved by the virgin conception and birth of the Lord Jesus Christ where his physical descent from David is given through Mary [Luke 3] while his legal descent is given through Joseph in this passage.

APPLICATION

David made tremendous errors, he arranged for the death of Uriah who being a loyal soldier would not have sexual relationship with his wife due to guard responsibilities to his king. David committed adultery against this loyal officer.

However through repentance, he is known as a friend of God and is held up as an example by God. This is because he recognised his sin and did something about it. **Psalms 51, 103**. Repentance restores blessing and can restore a person's full place before God in His Plan.

The sequence of a godly king followed by an evil king shows that just because a father is noble and walks with God his son may not.

A more modern example of this was with one of the sons of Moody, the great American evangelist. Even though his father was one of the greatest of modern believers his son died an unbeliever.

The reason perhaps why the other three kings just prior to the Babylonian Captivity were not mentioned is that they were all unbelievers. This teaches the lesson that we all must be born again to feature in the annals of God, the Book of Life.

Spiritual prosperity can be born in the darkest hour because it is under pressure that many people become believers.

It is noted that there is a constant sequence of 14 generations from Abraham to David, David to Babylon and Babylon to Christ. Seven is God's perfect number, 2 shows blessing hence the genealogy of Christ shows God's blessing on Abraham. At the end of the 6th group of seven generations we have the humanity of Christ born.

LUKE 3:23b-38

.... being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, 24 Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, 25 Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge, 26 Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda, 27 Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri, 28 Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er, 29 Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, 30 Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim, 31 Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David, 32 Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, 33 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda, 34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor, 35 Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala, 36 Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech, 37 Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, 38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

KEY WORDS - LUKE

Being	Eimi	To be [complete status quo]
Supposed	Nomizo	To reckon as law
Son	-	Not in the original

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT – None found

REFLECTION

Because of Luke’s account having no amplification it is left without comment. However how can it be called Mary’s genealogy when Mary is not mentioned?

In Matthew we have undoubtedly the genealogy of Joseph as it is so said in **Matthew 1:16** where Joseph is stated to be the son of Jacob. In what sense then could he be considered the son of Heli in **Luke 3: 23b**, “being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli”. He could not be the physical son of Jacob and also of Heli.

In Luke it is not stated that Heli begat Joseph so the natural explanation is that Joseph was the son in law of Heli, who was also descended from David through Nathan. It is also noted that the words “son of” are in italics and therefore not in the original.

The use of this structure would be in accordance with Jewish structure as shown in **1 Samuel 24:16**, “*And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept*” David obviously was not the son of Saul but was his son in law as David married Saul’s youngest daughter Michal. It is therefore clearly concluded that the genealogy in Luke 3 is that of Mary the mother of the humanity of Jesus Christ.

COMMENT

There is no conflict in the harmony of these passages as that of Matthew deals with the line of Joseph while that of Luke relates to the line of Mary. They have a common lineage from Abraham to David.

DOCTRINE

CHRIST: VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST

1. Jesus Christ had to be born of a virgin to fulfil prophecy. **(Isaiah 7:14)**

 2. Jesus had to be born of a virgin to confirm the curse of Coniah. **(Jeremiah 22:28-30)**
 - a) Coniah was a believer but an evil king at the time of the Babylonian captivity.
 - b) Coniah is also in the direct line of Christ in Joseph's lineage from David **(Matthew 1:6, 1:11, 1:16)** through Solomon. This is the Kingly line.
 - c) Mary was also in the direct line of Christ from David **(Luke 3:23, Luke 3:31)** through Nathan. In **Luke 3:23** Joseph is the son-in-law of Heli, Mary's father.
 - d) Both lines, Solomon's and Nathan's meet in the person of Jesus Christ but by the virgin birth Coniah's line is cut off as Joseph is the legal but not natural father of Jesus Christ.

 3. Jesus had to be born of a virgin to not have the sin nature of Adam. The sin nature of man comes down through the male. **(1 Timothy 2:14)**
 - a) Adam, as the head, was responsible for his wife.
 - b) Eve was deceived and sinned.
 - c) Adam made deliberate choice.

 4. In order to be the God-Man Jesus had to be conceived of the Holy Spirit to Mary.

 5. The virgin birth is therefore critical especially in the doctrine of Redemption, Imputation and Propitiation.
- NO virgin birth = NO salvation.

HARMONY

GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST AS THE KING OF THE JEWS

“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king;

And David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.”

GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST AS TRUE HUMANITY, A DESCENDANT OF ADAM

“being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge, Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda, Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri, Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er, Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim, Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David,

Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda, Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor, Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala, Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech, Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”

5 ANNOUNCEMENT TO ZACHARIAS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST'S BIRTH LUKE 1:5-25

Luke 1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now **well stricken in years**. 8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord **standing** on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; **to make ready** a people prepared for the Lord. 18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. 19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. 20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. 21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. 22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that **he had seen** a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. 23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. 24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, 25 Thus hath the Lord **dealt with** me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

KEY WORDS

Was	Ginomai	Came into being [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Days	Hemera	Day
King	Basileus	Sovereign, King
Priest	Hiereus	Priest
Named	Onoma	Named or called
Course	Ephemeria	The rotation or class of the Jewish priest's service
Wife	Gune	Wife, woman
Daughters	Thugater	Daughter
Were	Eimi	Kept on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Both	Amphoteris	Both
Righteous	Dikaios	Just, Righteous
Before	Enopion	Before, In the presence or sight of
Walking	Poreuomai	Depart, Go, Make a journey, Walk [Present Middle Participle]
Commandments	Entole	Commandment, Precept
Ordinances	Dikaioma	Judgment, Righteousness, Justification, Ordinance
Blameless	Amemptos	Blameless, faultless
Child	Teknon	Child
Was	Eimi	Keep on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Barren	Steiros	Sterile, Barren
Stricken	Probaino	Be of a great age, [Perfect Active Participle].
Years	Hemera	Years, Age, Time
Came to pass	Ginomai	Became something it was not before [Aorist Middle Indicative]
While he executed the priest's office	En toi hierateuein auton	Perform the function of the priest's office. This verb is an expansion of hierous which means to be a priest. [Present Active Infinitive]
Order	Taxis	Regular arrangement, Order
According to	Kata	According to a standard
Custom	Ethos	Custom, Manner
Priest's Office	Hierateia	Office of the priesthood
Lot	Lagchano	Receive by lot, Cast lots [Aorist Active Indicative]
Burn Incense	Thumiao	Burn Incense, Offer aromatic fumes [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Went	Eiserchomai	Enter or go in [Aorist Active Participle]
Temple	Naos	Temple or Shrine
Whole	Pas	Whole, Whosoever
Multitude	Plethos	Company, Multitude
People	Laos	People
Praying	Proseuchomai	Pray or make prayer [Present Middle Participle]
Without	Exo	Outside
Time	Hora	Hour, Instant, Time, Season
Appeared	Optomai	Appear, Look, See Show self [Aorist Passive Indicative].
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Standing	Histemi	Stand [Perfect Active Participle]
Right Side	Dexios	Right hand side
Altar	Thusiasterion	A place of sacrifice, Altar
Saw	Eido	Be Aware, Beheld [Aorist Active Participle]
Troubled	Tarasso	Trouble [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Fear	Phobos	Fear
Fell	Epipito	Press upon, Fall upon [Aorist Active Indicative]
Prayer	Deesis	Prayer.
Heard	Eisakouo	Heard [Aorist Passive Indicative].
Bear	Gennaio	Bring forth, Conceive, Bear [Future Active Indicative]
Son	Uihos	Son
Call	Kaleo	Call, To name [Future Active Indicative]
Name	Onoma	Name
Shalt Have	Esomai	Will be [Future Middle Indicative]
Joy	Chara	Joy
Gladness	Aggalliasis	Exultation, Gladness
Rejoice	Chairo	Be glad, Rejoice [Future Passive Indicative]
Birth	Gennesis	Nativity, Birth
Great	Megas	Great

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Sight	Enopion	Before, In the face of, In the presence of
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God, Master
Drink	Pino	To imbibe or drink [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Wine	Oinos	Wine
Strong Drink	Sikera	Intoxicant, Intensely fermented liquor.
Filled	Pleitho	Furnished, , Imbued, Influenced. [Future Passive Indicative]
Holy	Hagios	Pure, Sacred, Saint, Holy
Ghost	Pneuma	Spirit – seen as the Holy Spirit not a Ghost.
Mother	Meter	Mother
Womb	Koilia	Womb, Belly
Many	Polus	Many, Much, Often,
Children	Uihos	Child, Son
Turn	Epistrpho	Convert, Turn about [Future Active Indicative]
Shall go	Proerchomai	Go before, Pass on [Future Middle Indicative]
Before	Enopion	Before, In the face of, In the presence of
Spirit	Pneuma	Spirit
Power	Dunamis	Power, Strength, Mighty work
Turn	Epistrpho	Convert, Turn about [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Hearts	Kardia	Heart, Thoughts, Mind
Fathers	Pater	Father, Parent
Children	Teknon	Child, Son, Daughter
Disobedient	Apeithes	Disobedient
Wisdom	Phronesis	Prudence, Wisdom
Just	Diakaios	Innocent, Holy, Righteous
Make Ready	Hetoimazo	Prepare, Provide, Make ready [Aorist Active Infinitive]
People	Laos	People
Prepared	Kataskeuazo	Prepared [Perfect Passive Participle]
Whereby	Kata	By what standard
Know	Ginosko	Understand, Be aware of [Future Middle Indicative]
Am	Eimi	Status quo verb, Keep on being, Exist [Aorist Active Indicative]
Old Man	Presbutes	Aged, Elder
Well stricken	Probaino	Of a great age
Years	Hemera	Time, Years
Answering	Apokrinomai	To respond, To commence to speak [Aorist Passive Participle]
Gabriel	Gabriel	Man of God
Stand	Paristemi	To stand before [Perfect Active Participle]
Presence	Enopion	In the presence of, in the sight of
Sent	Apostello	To be sent out [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Speak	Laleo	To talk, speak, say [Aorist Active Infinitive]]
To show glad tidings	Euaggelizo	To bring glad tidings [Aorist Middle Infinitive]
Dumb	Siopao	To be dumb, Speechless [Present Active Participle]
Able	Dunamai	To have the power, Able [Present Middle Participle]
Speak	Laleo	Speak [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Until	Achri	Even unto
Performed	Ginomai	To become something that was not before [Aorist Middle Subjunctive]
Believest	Pisteuo	To believe, To put trust in [Aorist Active Indicative]
Words	Logos	Word
Fulfilled	Pleroo	Become full, Complete [Future Passive Indicative]
Season	Kairos	Due time
People	Laos	People
Waited	Prosdokao	An old Greek verb for expecting. [Present Active Participle]
Marvelled	Thaumazo	Wonder, Marvel, Admire [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Tarried so long	Chronizo	Delay, Tarry [Present Active Infinitive] Base English word Chronology
Temple	Naos	Shrine, Temple
Came out	Exerchomai	Come forth, Depart out of [Aorist Active Participle]
Could	Dunamai	Be possible, Have power [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Speak	Laleo	Speak, Talk, Tell , Utter [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Perceived	Epiginosko	To be fully acquainted with, [Aorist Active Indicative] Full knowledge
Seen	Horao	Behold , See [Perfect Active Indicative]

Vision	Optasia	Vision
Beckoned	Dianeuo	Beckon [Present Active Participle]
Remained	Diameno	To continue, Remain [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Speechless	Kophos	Deaf, Dumb, Speechless
Came to pass	Ginomai	To become something that was not before [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Ministrations	Leitourgia	Service, Ministration,. [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Accomplished	Pletho	Accomplished, Completed [Aorist Active Indicative]
Departed	Aperchomai	Depart, Go away, [Aorist Active Indicative]
House	Oikos	Family home
After	Meta	Following
Conceived	Sullambano	Conceive [Aorist Active Indicative]
Hid	Perikrupto	Hid Used only here in the N.T. [imperfect Active Indicative]
Five	Pente	Five
Months	Men	Month
Saying	Lego	Say [Present Active Participle]
Dealt	Poieo	Do [Perfect Active Indicative]
Looked on	Epeidon	To behold, Look upon
Take away	Aphaireo	Cut off, Take away [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Reproach	Oneidos	Disgrace, Reproach

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

HISTEMI – STAND. Occurs 156 times in the New Testament with 62 times in the Perfect Tense. Most of the occurrences are in the Gospels, Acts, and the Revelation. As would be expected the verb is always in the Active Voice. Examination of these verses show little activity other than people waiting apart from the 14 times Histemi in the Perfect Tense that appear in the Revelation.

KATASKEUAZO – PREPARE, MAKE READY. Occurs 11 times in the New Testament, and twice in the Perfect Tense. **Luke 1:17** commences with the phrase “and he shall go before him”. Who is “him”? Reading back to the previous verse we see that it refers to the Lord their God. This shows that the Lord Jesus Christ is “Jehovah in the flesh”, or Emmanuel – God with us”.

“In the spirit and power of Elijah” indicates that John the Baptist had a similar motivated life and ministry to Elijah although he did not perform many miracles as shown in John 10:41, which confirms, “John did no miracle but things that John spake of this man were true”.

John’s ministry was to all Jewish families and individuals, as was the ministry prophecied by Malachi 4:5-6, which also states that this will occur before the Great Tribulation period. In addition he was to assist in making the disobedient just and more literally “to make ready for the Lord a prepared people”.

Therefore John the Baptist’s role as the Herald to the King was to thoroughly prepare a people ready for the Lord as prophesied in Malachi. The preparation has eternal consequences for those who are ready, and for those who ignore the herald and are neither ready nor prepared to receive and acknowledge their King.

In **Hebrews 9:6**, while the temple system was legitimate, looking forward to the last perfect sacrifice, certain things kept on happening. These things speak of the work of Christ, and the significance of the blood sacrifice. The writer wants to take the people who hear this letter first through the things that they could still observe in the Temple of their day, but get them to see the present ritual from the Lord’s perspective.

The priests had to, every year enter the Holy of Holies and conduct the ritual as it had been laid down from the days of Moses. They kept on doing what was ordained/ordered, and the results were lasting during the Age of the Law, but the practise was temporary; it was designed to be replaced.

It had “built in obsolescence”; it’s legitimate operation was only until the Lord came, fulfilled all that was prophecied in the Law, and the temple veil was torn in two.

The people who first heard this letter knew the veil had torn, yet were still being part of the sacrificial system that the torn veil had indicated was “OVER!!!” A revised temple system will operate in the Millennial Kingdom, but that will be re-instituted by the Lord himself.

PROBAINO – OLD, GREAT AGE Occurs 5 times in the New Testament and twice in the Perfect Tense. In both **Luke 1:7** and Luke 2:36 we see in the Perfect tense of “Probaino” - the permanency of being old! It is a “scarier” verb as we age ourselves – as it reminds us of our temporary tenure on this brief planet. We are here for a very limited time, but the choices made are eternal in significance.

HORAO – TO SEE – Occurs 115 times in the New Testament with 32 times in the Perfect Tense. John the Apostle dominates with 25 of the occasions in his Gospel and Letters. Horao is wholly in the Active Voice and in the Indicative Mood in all but two cases. In **Luke 1:22** the verb relates to Zacharias seeing an angel in the temple, 9:36 relates to what the disciples had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration, and 24:23 to a visions of the angels seen by a number of the disciples, in associated with the empty tomb. What they “saw” was permanent in its results – the angels announced things fully and finally, for action to occur.

POIEO – DONE, MADE Occurs 475 times in the New Testament with 16 times in the Perfect Tense and with one exception all are in the Active Voice.

Examples include Mark 5:19, where Jesus tells the healed demoniac to, “Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you and how he had compassion on you”. Later in Mark 7:37 Jesus healed a deaf and dumb man at the Sea of Galilee, and the people were amazed saying, “He has done all things well”. “He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak”. In Mark 11:17 Jesus quotes Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11 relating to the desecration of the Temple as the house of prayer, noting that they had made it into a den of thieves. Sadly this was permanent and the temple would be demolished.

In **Luke 1:25** Elizabeth, the cousin of Mary, who was barren, became pregnant with John the Baptist, and said, “Thus the Lord has **dealt** with me”, while in Luke 17:10 Jesus says to the disciples **to do** the tasks that are set before them as their duty.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED AT THE FIRST COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
5	Malachi 4:6	Forerunner would turn many to righteousness	Luke 1:16-17

REFLECTION

Verse 5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

In the days of Herod the king refers to Herod the Great. For full coverage as to his lineage see section 18. He claimed to be a proselyte to the Jewish religion, but used Judaism only as much as it would enhance his secular plans. He was the archetypal religious criminal figure using people’s faith to his own political ends and worshipping power alone. He was a total narcissist, and like most who are incredibly successful and live long, he went psychotic at the end of his life as he died of bowel cancer. He was a truly evil hypocrite.

For the first time in the history of Israel the Sceptre of kingship had departed from Judah [see **Genesis 49:10**]. It was the ultimate expression of the “Age of the Gentiles” to have a half Jew, half Edomite rule them. As a result it was now time for the Jews to look for another “governor” from Bethlehem who should rule and shepherd the nation Israel [see **Micah 5:1-2**]. From the prophetic word of Daniel in **Daniel 9:24-27** it was clear that these very days were those when Messiah would be born. There was a great deal of messianic expectation around this period, for the calculation was clear – this was the day that Daniel had spoken of.

Zacharias is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Zechariah. Abia is the shortened form of Abijah.

When the families of the priestly descendants of the tribe of Levi increased in number to an extent that they could not function in the Tabernacle at the same time, David and Solomon divided them into 24 courses or classes, so that they might serve by turns, **1 Chronicles 24:1-19**.

Zechariah was in the course of Abijah, which was the eighth in the new order which had been established.

We note later in this verse that not only Zechariah but also his wife Elizabeth came from the tribe of Levi. Their son, John the Baptist, was also most well qualified by birth to be a priest being the son of a father who was a priest and of a mother who was the daughter of a priest. By both father and mother he was descended from the family of Amram of whom came Moses, Aaron and Miriam, three of the most illustrious characters in Jewish History from the family of Levi.

We thus have a totally qualified king in the Lord Jesus Christ, and totally qualified priest in the form of John the Baptist, but he will come as a prophetic voice, not as a priest. Both will proclaim the truth, with permanent results for all who hear them, for the majority will reject their testimonies and perish as a result, both in time under Roman destruction, but then also eternally under God's direct judgment.

Verse 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous before God. What this means is that they were both upright and holy in their outward conduct, and they kept the Mosaic Law, and their obedience was seen by all around them. As believers they were practicing their faith daily in the presence of God, being aware that He was observing them and their motives. **Genesis 6:9, 7:1, 17:1, Romans 8:9-25, Philipians 3:4-12.**

They were both found to be mature believers walking with God. Here both of them were so to speak walking in maturity together before the Lord. They were an unusual and wonderful example to others in a very dark time spiritually for the nation. They are mentors of quiet obedience, having one major part to play in the eternal plan of God – to bring up John as a godly son, and they did that, as unto the Lord.

The two words "Commandments and Ordinances" may relate to the Decalogue and the Ceremonial and Judicial Laws given after the Decalogue, as all the precepts in chapters 21 –23 of Exodus are called judgments or ordinances, and this was the basis of the divine regulations to Israel prior to the giving of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

Like a number of prominent people in the Bible before, the couple who were to have a child of critical importance in the plan of God, were at this point unable to have any children, and had been trying for many years. We see such examples as Sarah the mother of Isaac, **Genesis 15:1-5, 17:1-8, 21:1-7**, and Hannah the mother of Samuel in the Bible. **1 Samuel 1:6-21**. This couple are now well into their forties and so having a child at this stage of life is a remote chance; indeed is to be by the miracle of the Lord alone. To be "well-advanced" in age is with lasting results – only a miracle will provide a child!

In the case of the Lord Jesus Christ as well there was a miraculous birth, not because Mary was barren, but because she was a virgin at the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is of interest that in the case of Isaac, John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ, the birth of these three were announced in exactly the same way, with God foretelling the birth of Isaac in **Genesis 17:16**, the angel of the Lord announcing the birth of John the Baptist in **Luke 1:13**, and Gabriel telling of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

Here we see Zechariah undertaking his priestly function before God. "Before God" means that he is in the Temple, which in time past was the location where God had manifested himself in the form of the Shekinah Glory. Since the destruction of Solomon's Temple the Shekinah Glory had not however been present. On this occasion however the Temple was visited by an angel, and it will later be visited by the Lord. The glory of this house will be greater than that of Solomon's Temple, for this one will be visited by the Lord of glory, of whom the temple spoke in all its structure and work.

Verse 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

In the Talmud we see that it was the custom of the priests to divide the various areas of temple service amongst themselves by lot. This meant he received the white stone that signified he had the particular job that day and in God's timing it was the very day for him to meet the angel.

As a result the function allocated to Zechariah was to burn incense at the golden altar near the veil in the holy place, the outer and larger covered area in front of the veil that covered the Holy of Holies.

It was only once in a lifetime that a priest obtained the lot for going into the sanctuary and burning incense on the golden altar. The lot which gave approval was a white stone cast into the lap of the Chief Priest. **Revelation 2:17.**

The role he had drawn for this day spoke of the prayers of the priesthood going up to God from the golden altar in the form of the smoke of the incense. Zechariah would use this opportunity to offer up his own prayer for a child, and was going to experience the greatest event in this temple since it had been built by Joshua and Zerubbabel 520 years before.

Verse 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

Here we see a large group of people outside the Temple praying at the time of the burning of the incense. The incense burnt on the golden altar represents prayer and praise to the Lord. The entry of the priest into the Holy Place was a signal that prayer was to be formally offered from the golden altar and everyone who had a specific prayer to ask of the Lord would attend the temple at that time and pray their prayer at the time of the offering, so that as the smoke rose from within the building they knew their prayer had gone up to heaven also. **Hebrews 4:9-16.**

Incense was burnt twice a day in the Temple, in the morning and in the evening. **Exodus 30:7,8.** In this passage Luke does not stipulate which period was involved in this incident.

There is a holy spirit of prayer in the temple as Zechariah enters the Holy Place. There is power in corporate prayer, and as we enter into the place of prayer we enter the place of blessing and direction, and this man will receive both.

Verse 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

The word “appeared” in this verse is in the form that Paul used for the resurrection appearances of Christ in **1 Corinthians 15:5-8.** The appearance of the angel is clearly real as is shown by the indicative mood. **Judges 13:3-23.**

There is fear in seeing an angel, for the Hebrew people realised that to do so was often to die, as the angels are both messengers and judges of men. **Exodus 12:29-33, Numbers 22:22-35, Joshua 5:13-15.** Eternity does not touch time without serious reason and important communication to be received.

Zechariah’s duties for the two week period was to take the coals off the brazen altar representing the Cross and to bring it into the Holy Place to the altar of incense to burn the incense upon the coals. The altar of incense also known as the golden altar was made of gold overlaying wood representing the unique God man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The means of doing this are set out in the book of Numbers. Priests who violated the principles, and offered what is called strange fire to burn the incense were killed by God. **Numbers 16.** If God accepted the offering the priest came out alive, if not he wouldn’t. It was thought at this time that to see an angel at the point of offering incense/prayers meant you had violated the protocols in some way and were to die within seconds.

If the offering was not accepted by God rabbinic Jewish tradition of the time recorded that an angel would appear on the right side of the altar. This is why Zechariah was filled with fear because he thought his death was imminent. Zechariah became aware of the angel’s presence and he became deeply troubled. **Judges 6:22-23, 13:21-23.** The angel “standing” there was certainly going to have eternal results – but it was not as Zechariah feared – he would live and be blessed in his and Elisabeth’s obedience.

Verse 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Verses 13 – 17. This section takes on a metrical form when turned into Hebrew and is a prose poem in both the Greek and English, and is like **Luke 1:30-33, 35-37, 42-45, 46-55, 68-70 2:10-12, 14, 29-32, 34-35**. It is as if Luke was careful to write in such a way that these sections could be chanted or sung – which would be in accordance with his training as a Greek Doctor, as they had to learn oratory and poetry also. These passages of Luke would later be used by the Early Church as worship songs in services.

In verse 13 Zechariah however is told not to fear, and he hears the good news for him, that Elisabeth is going to have a son. He is instructed by the angel to call the son John which means “God is gracious”. This is not a family name, and so the instruction is clear and definite – he is to break with tradition here, because something is to be done with and through his son that is unique and amazing.

In verse 14, the words “shall rejoice” have the concept of, “shall have cause to rejoice” – it would prove to be a joyful event. Fear will turn to joy in the Lord. **Jeremiah 31:13, John 16:20, 2 Corinthians 6:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:19**.

Verse 15 – Great in the sight of the Lord. He was closer in standing to the Lord than any other of the prophets as seen in **Matthew 11:11a**, “*Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist*”.

John the Baptist was a Nazarite from his birth, a feature he shared with both Samson and Samuel. Samson failed spectacularly while Samuel and John the Baptist kept the requirements of their status. The Nazarite represented purity and dedication whereas the leper represented sin. As the herald of the perfect king it was entirely appropriate that the herald should demonstrate the purity of the King. **Numbers 6:1-27**.

Verse 16 – We know from the context of John the Baptist’s ministry that he had a ministry much like Elijah with turning the people’s heart to the Lord. This is taken from Elijah’s prayer to the Lord when imploring the burning of the sacrifice at the conflict with the prophets of Baal. [**1 Kings 18:36-38**]. While both had major ministries the majority of the nation did not turn to the Lord at either time.

Remember, God doesn’t assess our ministries by “results” as men see them, for a ministry is always “before/as unto the Lord”, and some ministries are God’s “last words” to an individual, a local church, or people group, and so their rejection doesn’t detract from the perfect obedience of the messenger, but it does rob the rejecters of truth of all blessing.

Verse 17 commences with the phrase, “and he shall go before him”. Who is “him”? By reading back to the previous verse we see that it refers to the Lord their God. This shows that the Lord Jesus Christ is “Jehovah in the flesh”, or Emmanuel – literally – He is “God with us”. **Isaiah 7:14, 8:8, 9:6-9, 12:1-2**.

“In the spirit and power of Elijah”. **Isaiah 40:1-11, Malachi 3:1-5**. This indicates that John the Baptist had a similar holy and devoted life and ministry to Elijah, although he did not perform any miracles, but he didn’t have to, as his role was to point to the one who would. He served purely as the herald of the One King and the herald does not draw attention to himself. **John 10:41**. “John did no miracle but things that John spake of this man were true”.

John’s ministry was to the Jewish people to prepare the way for the Messiah – but the Messiah was rejected and so the herald of the king must come back, and prepare the people again, and this second time the people will respond. **Malachi 4:5-6** notes that this second ministry will occur before the Great Tribulation period. In addition he was to assist in making the disobedient just and more literally, “to make ready for the Lord a prepared people”. **Zechariah 10:12ff**.

John rightly denied he was Elijah in accordance with the Malachi expectation, for that ministry is still to come, **John 1:21**. Jesus will however identify him exactly as Luke records here, as “Elijah in spirit and power”. **Matthew 17:12, Mark 9:12**. John will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, who will desire to come to Jesus – John will challenge all parents to consider their children’s fate if they fail to recognize their sinfulness, and fail to repent before the Lord. He will challenge them to be obedient to Moses, David, Amos, Isaiah, and Solomon, and recognize their need of a Saviour. **Psalms 10:16-18, 78:5-8, 111:10, Proverbs 2:1-11, Isaiah 29:22-24, Amos 4:12, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11**.

Verse 18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

Zechariah acted a little like Gideon here, but let us not be too hard on him, as he expected to die at any second Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, nor would Mary who did not ask for a sign. Zechariah is beside himself, and has deep doubts about things, even though God has done this before with Hannah, Manoah and his wife, and with Abraham and Sarah. He looked at this in a natural light and perspective, only thinking about his prayer as a forlorn hope, but deeply fearing his wife was just too old to bear any children.

Zechariah was sincere in his desire behind his prayer, and he wanted to say to his lovely wife Elisabeth that he had really tried, but deep in his spirit he didn't think it was possible, and may have been doubly concerned at the angel's appearance - for he was privately praying at the altar of incense rather than praying for the nation as he was supposed to, and he didn't even really believe what he was saying! How gracious God is to us all! **Hebrews 4:7-16.**

Verse 19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

Gabriel identifies himself to Zechariah. He is the angel who taught Daniel [see **Daniel 8:6, 9:21**] and also will appear to Mary [see verse 26 below]. His name literally means "man of God". He says that he stands in the presence of God as a personal servant/messenger and has been specifically sent to tell Zechariah the good news about the birth of John.

He uses the name that Zechariah would know from his own reading of the book of Daniel, and as he announces the coming of the herald of the King of kings, it is appropriate that it is Gabriel who gives the message. **Daniel 9:20-27.**

The count down to Messiah coming is over – the date of his birth approaches, not long after the birth of the messenger.

Verse 20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

Zechariah asked for a sign and got one, he was deprived of the power of speech. We see his ability to speak return on the birth of his son John in verse 64. There are consequences for not believing in the word of God through his messenger angels. **Genesis 18:9-15, Numbers 20:12, Isaiah 7:9-16.**

Unbelief is sin and sin has consequences. "Whatever is not of faith is sin". **Romans 14:22-23, Galatians 3:2-11, Ephesians 2:8, Hebrews 3:7 – 4:4.** The one clear and public job the priest had after burning incense each day was to go outside and stand on the temple steps and announce the Aaronic blessing upon the people. **Numbers 6:24-26.**

Verse 21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

The phrase "they marvelled while he tarried" is in the imperfect tense, meaning that they were constantly amazed and not a little frightened, that the priest had not reappeared, as the Talmud says that the priest remained only a short time in the sanctuary. The priest did not hesitate or prolong his time, as he was to place the hot coals from the altar, sprinkle the incense as he prayed for the nation and not linger, but walk steadily to the door again. He had a small bell attached to his garment to ensure that priests waiting outside could hear him moving about, and rescue him if he got anything wrong and died. The thought of the people was that he had died. No-one was expecting Gabriel to speak, as he had not spoken to man since the mid 500s BC, and then only to Daniel. The prophecy of **Daniel 9:24-26** had not been factored into anyone's thinking this particular day, even though the expectation of its fulfilment was in the air.

Verse 22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

The crowd realised that he had seen a vision, as he signed to them, but was unable to speak the blessing from Numbers aloud. The word translated perceived is epignosis, which means that they fully understood - were very clear in the minds, they had a full knowledge of his seeing a vision. His signing to them showed them further proof that he had seen a vision as he clearly indicated that he had seen an angel from the Lord.

The drama of this event is the first warning to Israel, at the heart of the temple that spoke of the coming of the Messiah and his work, would have got holy men going back to the prophetic words of the past. By the time of Jesus birth they know that it is in Bethlehem that Messiah is to be born, and those who seek the Lord realise that the words of Daniel are unfolding in their day. Most refuse to believe however! **Matthew 16:3, Acts 1:7.**

Verse 23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

We noticed that even though he had been struck dumb Zechariah remained at his post as a Levitical priest serving until the time of his roster as a priest had been completed and then he went home to Elisabeth. When a man was struck dumb he was treated as unfit for the priesthood and would be removed from his office, but as Zechariah had clearly communicated by sign language, and writing likely also, that he had seen an angel, he was permitted to continue his function, even though the debility disqualified all others.

Seeing what had happened, this also shows us that he had a great sense of responsibility, and that the change in his life at this point had come from God. His service is lifted up a notch rather than being distracted by the angelic visitation.

Angelic messengers visiting mankind are very rare, for they are not needed often, and so when one comes it is with very solemn and significant information that requires life change on the part of the person visited. Life is never the same after an angelic visitation, but worship continues and spiritual service increases. The fruit of angelic words to any man or woman is that their worship and spiritual service increases in quantity and quality.

The Greek word for ministration, "Leitourgia", is where we get the English word "Liturgy", or priestly function from. It was a common word in ancient Greece for public religious or social service, the emphasis being on the fact that it was work for, or on behalf of/for the benefit of, the people. It is seen in **Hebrews 8:6, 9:21, Philippians 2:17, 30** and is common in the papyri for the service of the Egyptian priesthood. All spiritual service is "other" focused, as we serve the Lord's people on his behalf. **John 21:15-22, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 18.**

Verse 24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

The word for conceive is used eleven times by Luke, and in every case he is using it in the medical sense, in relation to the conception of a child. It is used on five other occasions with James in **James 1:15** using it for lust "giving birth" to sin.

After Elisabeth had conceived John the Baptist she became reclusive for a period of five months, which was a common thing for older mothers to be encouraged to do, even today, to make sure there is no shock or accident that might create miscarriage – which increases in risk with age. The Greek word translated hid "Perikrupto" indicates that she hid herself constantly. It is a composite verb with "krupto" meaning to hide and "peri" all around.

It is not shame that causes this, but her awareness, from her husband's communication by writing to her, that this child is important in the Plan of God. This is no ordinary child and so she takes extra-ordinary precautions to ensure his and her own survival. She doesn't crow about her pregnancy, but "goes underground", and waits for the day to show herself and be assured that risk of miscarriage is now low, and she is ready to give birth to the messenger of Messiah.

This is a woman who can handle the truth and walk humbly in it, and be aware that she is making history without any arrogance. This couple are spiritually well chosen by the Lord for their duty to bring this boy up in spiritual depth.

Verse 25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

Barrenness was deeply felt by Jewish women, not just because the husband wanted an heir but because the believers knew that eventually the Messiah would be born, and all Jewish women longed to be the mother of Messiah or his servants, plus the natural longing for a woman to become a mother. The "desire of women" for Jewish women was the desire to be the mother of the Messiah, as the messianic expectation was high, and all knew that he had to come soon from the time ticking clock of **Daniel 9:24-26. Hebrews 11:1, 11.**

APPLICATION

Both the Lord Jesus Christ and John the Baptist were totally qualified to undertake their respective roles in the Plan of God.

We as Christians, each with specific God given gifts are uniquely gifted to undertake our function in the plan of God. As with John, the decision to function well in the plan of God involves our volition and knowledge of God's Plan.

We should not be amazed at what God can do even in apparently impossible situations. We can do all things through Christ on the path He has called us to walk.

God can and will solve our problems and ease our heartaches if we are obedient to Him. We need to know our responsibilities to God and to be persistent and consistent in undertaking the tasks, even at times of turbulence in our life, knowing that all things do work together for good. **Romans 8:26-28**.

Elijah will return with Moses as the two heralds of the Second Advent of Christ. Your position in the Plan of God is of critical importance even though you may consider yourself a failure. If we are alive we have a part to play in the plan still.

Zachariah failed to believe and was struck dumb for a time, but he regained speech and he retained his ministry and gained the new one of bringing up his son in the spiritual family home that would nurture his own spiritual walk with God.

DOCTRINES

JOHN THE BAPTIST – HERALD

1. SCRIPTURE **Matthew 3:1-15; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 1:5-25, 57-80.**

2. BIOGRAPHY

John the Baptist (or Baptiser) was born in 6 BC to Zacharias the priest of the course of Abia (**Luke 1:5**) and Elisabeth, both of whom were descended from Aaron. He was related to Jesus through his mother, who was a cousin of Mary (**Luke 1:36**). He grew to manhood in the wilderness of Judea (**Luke 1:80**). He received his prophetic call (**Luke 3:2**) and became famous as an unorthodox preacher calling for national repentance. Jesus called John the greatest prophet (**Luke 7:28**) under the old covenant. He dressed in a coat of camel hair and ate locusts and wild honey. Many flocked to hear him preaching. He baptised those who had repented but refused the religious leaders who considered baptism as a possible source of power, calling them vipers (**Matthew 3:1-7**). Jesus was baptised by John to commence His ministry, John pointing to Him as the Messiah and contrasting his water baptism with the future spirit baptism of Christ (**Matthew 3:11**). John returned to the area of Herod Antipas (or Herod the Fox) causing turmoil with his messianic teaching. He also criticised Herod for marrying his brother Philip's wife Herodias. He was imprisoned in the Perea fortress of Machaerus and eventually beheaded (**Mark 6:17-29**). John was the herald of the king, Jesus Christ the Messiah.

3. EVALUATION: Matthew 3:1-12.

- a) John preached in the wilderness. There are no people in the desert but people flock to hear him (verse 1).
- b) His message is four-fold:
- c) Identification of Jesus Christ (**John 1:29**).
- d) The message is more important than the messenger (**John 3:30**).
- e) A call to repentance (**Matthew 3:2**).
- f) Faith in Christ brings salvation (**Acts 19:4**).
- g) He shows he is fulfilling **Isaiah 40:3** (verse 3).
- h) The crowds did not go to see a fine dresser but went to hear his message (verses 4,5).
- i) He baptised in the Jordan those who had confessed their sins (verse 6).
- j) Religious leaders from Jerusalem approached John for baptism. John was intolerant of them and warned them of the baptism of fire to come (verse 7).
- k) He tells them to produce good of eternal value which can only be performed after conversion (verse 8).
- l) The Pharisees and Sadducees were proud of their ancestry to Abraham but John warns them that this will not save them (**Romans 9:6-8**) (verse 9).

- m) The future dispersion of Israel is prophesied (verse 10) and that unbelievers will be judged.
- n) John announces Jesus Christ as one who would give the superior baptism of the Holy Spirit or fire (verses 11,12).
- o) The herald, who, through a fore-shadowing of Elijah (**Malachi 4:5**), is not Elijah (**John 1:20-34**), baptises the king, Jesus Christ to commence Jesus' ministry (verses 13-15) (**Acts 10:37,38; 13:24,25**).

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) Before the king are heralds: John the Baptist and the Herald angels for the first advent, and Moses and Elijah and the mighty angel for the Second Advent (**Revelation 11:3-6**).
- b) As a herald, John emphasised the person and ministry of the king rather than his own ministry (**John 3:30**).
- c) There are many messengers but only one message. Messengers pass away but the Word of God abides forever (**Luke 21:33**).
- d) Tradition and religion are antagonistic to the truth (**Matthew 23**).
- e) Divine good can only be produced by believers (**Hebrews 11:3-39; James 2:18**).
- f) Ritual without reality has no meaning; in fact it can be a stumbling block (**Isaiah 1:11**).
- g) Your ancestry or culture is unimportant as far as God is concerned (**Romans 2:10,11**). God treats everyone on an individual basis.
- h) Christ is the answer to every problem (**John 14:6**).

PRIESTS

1. A priest is a man who represents himself or other men before God.
2. There are three categories of priesthood in human history:
 - a) Family priest - from Adam until Levi
 - b) Levitical priesthood. - appointed under the Law of Moses
 - c) Royal priesthood
 - i) Melchizedek - king of Jerusalem, but also priest of the Most High (**Genesis 14:18**)
 - ii) Jesus Christ - King of kings and the Great High Priest (**Hebrews 10:17**)
 - iii) Church Age believer - we share Christ's priesthood, since we are united with Him (**1 Peter 2:9**)
3. Until the Law was given the head of each family was the priest for that family. (**Genesis 8:20, 26:25, 31:54**)
4. When the Law was proposed the whole nation of Israel was to be "a kingdom of priests unto God". The nation of Israel however failed in unbelief.
5. God appointed Aaron and his family in the tribe of Levi as a specialised priesthood (**Exodus 28:1**)
6. All believers in the Church Age have become a kingdom of priests in Christ (**1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6**)
7. The chief privilege of being a priest is to be able to approach God directly. (**Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-22**)
8. In their role as a priest the believer offers:-
 - a) Their own body. (**Romans 12:1, Philippians 2:17**)
 - b) Praise to God. (**Hebrews 13:15-16**)
 - c) Their possessions. (**Romans 12:13, Galatians 6:6**)
 - d) Intercession on behalf of others. (**Colossians 4:12,1 Timothy 2:1**)
9. The priest must be a partaker of the nature of the people he represents. Jesus Christ had to be a human too. (**Hebrews 5:1, 7:4, 5, 7:14-28, 10:5, 10:10-14**)
10. Comparison of the priesthoods
 - a) The Melchizedek priesthood was a picture of the priesthood of Christ (**Psalms 110:4; Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1-28**)
 - b) The Levitical Priesthood
 - i) Was based on the Law, which could not save
 - ii) Was based on physical birth into the family of Aaron
 - iii) Was available only to the family of Aaron

- iv) The priests came from the tribe of Levi. The kings came from the tribe of Judah. No person could be a priest and a king.
- v) Was based on mere men, with their own weaknesses and sin
- vi) Ended when the priest died

c) The Royal Priesthood of Christ

- i) Is based on Christ's sacrifice, which took away all sin for all time
- ii) Is based on spiritual birth, being born again into the family of God
- iii) Is universal to all believers in the Church Age
- iv) It is a royal priesthood - because of the Kingship and Priestly office of Jesus Christ
- v) Is based on the perfect person of Christ
- vi) Is eternal, since Christ lives forever

PRIESTS – LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

1. Aaron was the first appointed High Priest in the Levitical priesthood. (**Exodus 28:1, Numbers 18:7, 8**).
2. In the Levitical priesthood sons followed their father by physical birth into the priesthood.
3. Any descendants of Aaron who had physical defects were eliminated (**Leviticus 21:21-23**)
4. The function of the Levitical priesthood
 - a) To teach the law (**Leviticus 10:11**)
 - b) To offer the sacrifices (**Leviticus 9**)
 - c) Maintain the tabernacle. (**Numbers 18:3**) (Levites)
 - d) To function in the Holy Place where they changed the shewbread and trimmed the candlestick. (**Exodus 30:7-8, Leviticus 24:5-8**)
 - e) They inspected diseased persons in order to declare them unclean. (**Leviticus 13, 14**)
 - f) They acted as the supreme court of the land and judged major controversies. (**Deuteronomy 17:8, 19:17, 21:5**)
 - g) Priestly blessings. (**Numbers 6:22**)
5. Some priests also received the office of prophet. Eg - Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah.
6. The tribe of Levi
 - a) The Levites descended from Levi who was chosen by God for the care and protection of holy things. (**Numbers 3:5 ff, 8:14-19**)
 - b) The first-born of all tribes of Israel were consecrated to the Lord. They were ransomed back by five shekels of silver, this money paying for the tribe of Levi who were their representatives.
 - c) The period of service for the Levites was from 25 to 50 years of age because of the tremendous pressures of being involved in spiritual activity.
 - d) The function of the Levites:-
 - i) To preserve the law, transmit it for posterity, constantly writing out the scripture. (**Leviticus 10:11, Nehemiah 8:9, Ezekiel 44:23**)
 - ii) They were to assist the priests in the service of the tabernacle and later the temple. (**Numbers 18:4**)
 - iii) There were two tasks that were not done by the Levites. The hewing of wood and fetching of the water by the Gibeonites. (**Joshua 9:21**) The gatekeepers. (**1 Chronicles 26:1, 19**)
 - iv) Classification of the Levites:-
Kohath responsible for the ark, table of shewbread, the two altars, the lamp stand, the sacred vessel and the veil. Gershom, for the coverings, hangings from the tabernacle, the doors. Merari, for the planks, the bars, the pillars, the sockets, the pins and the cords.
 - v) The Levites were responsible for the transportation of the tabernacle.
 - vi) The Levites were also responsible for all the music.
7. Dress of the High Priest (**Exodus 28**)
Except on ceremonial occasions, the dress of the priests and the high priest was no different from that of the common people. On ceremonial occasions the High Priest's uniform consisted of the following: white linen shorts, a white linen coat approximately hip length, a belt in the same colour as the curtains - white, blue, scarlet and purple, a turban-like cap with a golden crown inscribed 'Holy to Jehovah' (his badge of rank), an

ephod of blue lavishly embroidered with colours, a breastplate of gold and cloth with the twelve stones representing the tribes engraved with their names and fastened with gold clasp. (see Priestly Garments).

8. The consecration of the priests and High Priests described in (**Exodus 29**)

9. The Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 16**) On that high holy day, the high priest donned his ceremonial robes and entered the Tabernacle where he sprinkled the blood of the bullock of the sin offering for himself over the top of the mercy seat. (v6, 14).

If he emerged from the Holy of Holies his priesthood was assured for another year. He re-entered a second time with the blood of the goat of the sin offering for the people to do likewise for them. His return to the Israelites signified that he had obtained national pardon. The people of Israel were spared. (v30).

10. The descendants of the High Priest

a) Succession occurred upon the officiating high priest's death with the eldest surviving son's installation. (**Numbers 20:28**)

b) The line was promised to pass down through Phinehas eldest son of Eleazer, the son of Aaron. (**Numbers 25:10-13**). Eli was a legitimate priest and descendant of Ithmar, but not an high priest; the switch in the time took place during Saul's reign. It was rightfully restored to the line of Eleazer during Solomon's reign. (**1 Kings 2:26, 27, 35**).

When Israel was about to go under dispersion in Jeremiah's day, Seraiah was the corrupt high priest. He was captured by Nebuzar-adam and executed at Riblah. (**2 Kings 25:18-21**).

His son Josedech, who should have inherited the office, never served as high priest but lived and died in captivity at Babylon. (**Haggai 1:1-14**). His son Joshua assumed the office when the High Priesthood was restored in the days of Zechariah and Zerubbabel. (**Zechariah 3.**)

c) His successors were Jothum, Eliashia, Joiada, Johanan and Jaddua, who served in time of Alexander the Great. He met Alexander's conquering army with a scroll of Daniel in his hand. By reading him those passages dealing with him Jaddua won Alexander's friendship for the Jews.

d) Jaddua's successors were Onias I and Simon the Just. Onias II, too young to become the high priest, was set aside in favour of Simon's brother Eleazer.

e) The high priesthood was passed down to the Asmonaeon family of the course (class or order) of Joiarits. (**1 Chronicles 9:10, 24:7, Nehemiah 11:10**) and continued in that line until Herod the Great destroyed that family, the last high priest, Aristobul being murdered by order of Herod (Herod the Great's brother in law) in 35 BC

f) There were twenty-eight high priests until the year 70 AD Two high priests related to the death of Christ were Caiaphas and Annas.

ANGELS

1. There are two kinds of angels:

a) Elect Angels (**1 Timothy 5:21**) - those which have chosen to remain with God.

b) Fallen angels - those which have rebelled against God and followed Satan:

i) imprisoned ones (**Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4**) - apparently active on earth prior to the Flood (**Genesis 6**)

ii) demons, currently active on earth (**1 Corinthians 10:20,21, Mark 5:1-20**)

2. There are various orders in the angelic realm.

a) Cherubim (highest order) - (**Genesis 3:24, Exodus 25:19-20**) Cherubs were originally the defenders of divine holiness. Lucifer (Satan) was a cherub (**Ezekiel 28:14**)

b) Seraphim - (**Isaiah 6:2**). Seraph means burning ones.

c) Rulers, Principalities and Powers - can refer to human authorities, but usually refers to angels (and generally to fallen angels). (**Ephesians 3:10, 6:12, Colossians 1:16**). They control certain segments of the human race, they can control the voice and the mind. (**Mark 5:1-20**).

d) Ministering Angels

- i) Guardian angels. (**Hebrews 1:14**). Protect and assist believers.
- ii) Angels of the waters. (**Revelation 16:5**). Water is used as a prison. Abyss (Greek), refers to an underwater prison.
- iii) Angels of the abyss. (**Revelation 9:1,11**). An angel which has a special responsibility for the abyss.
- iv) Angel of fire. (**Revelation 14:18**).
- v) Angels of judgement. (**Revelation 8:2, ch 15,16**) - trumpets and bowls.
- vi) Watcher angels. (**Daniel 4:13**).

3. Appearance of angels:

- a) Angels can appear as human beings (**Genesis 18:1-2, Hebrews 13:2**)
- b) Angels are described variously as having wings, many eyes, many faces (**Isaiah 6:2, Ezekiel 1**) and often glow with brilliant light (**Matthew 28:2-3**).
- c) Lucifer (Satan) was the most beautiful creature ever to come from the hand of God (**Ezekiel 28:12-17**)
- d) Angels are NOT pink fat babies with wings, or red skinned creatures with horns and forked tails.

4. Named angels:

- a) Lucifer, son of the morning, was the covering cherub over the Throne of God (**Isaiah 14:12**). His name is now Satan, the accuser/slanderer (**Revelation 12:10**)
- b) Gabriel a messenger angel (**Daniel 8:16, 9:21, Luke 1:19,26**)
- c) Michael a fighting angel (**Revelation 12:7, Jude 9**) and guardian angel of Israel. (**Daniel 10:21, 12:1**)

5. Angels and Christ's Incarnation

- a) At his birth - (**Luke 2:9-15**)
- b) At his temptation - (**Matthew 4:11**)
- c) At his resurrection - (**Matthew 28:2**)
- d) At his ascension - (**Acts 1:10**)
- e) At the Second Advent - (**Matthew 13:37-39, 24:31, 25:31, 2 Thessalonians 1:7**)

6. Angels and Man

- a) Angels were watching at the time of creation. (**Job 38:7**)
- b) Angels were present when God gave Moses the Law. (**Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53**).
- c) Angels are watching us now. (**1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12**)
- d) The elect angels rejoice whenever someone is saved (**Luke 15:7-10**).

7. Many times revelations from God were mediated through angels -

- a) The Law of Moses - **Exodus 3:2, Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53, Hebrews 2:2**
- b) Prophetic announcements to Daniel - **Daniel 7:16, 8:16-26, 9:20-27, 10:1-12:13**
- c) Prophetic announcements to Zechariah - **Zechariah 1:9, 2:3, 4:1,5, 5:5, 6:4,5**
- d) Announcement of the birth of John to Zacharias - **Luke 1:11-20**
- e) Announcement of the birth of Jesus to Mary - **Luke 1:26-38**, and Joseph - **Matthew 1:20-21**

DREAMS AND VISIONS

1. Dreams have been used by the Lord in the history of his revelation to man to communicate specific warnings and prophetic truth. Of the seventy references to them, all but eight occur in the Old Testament period, and the others before the establishment of the church. They do not appear to be a common phenomenon for guidance or direction within the church age. This is likely due to the role of the Holy Spirit which is expanded from the Old Testament times, and is directive in this age. Refer Holy Spirit Ministries.

2. Dreams occurred many times in the history of Israel as a direct means for specific guidance. **Genesis 20:3-6, 31:11, 24, 37:5-10, Daniel 7:1ff**. They were used to direct Mary and Joseph, and the Wise men, quite specifically regarding the birth of Jesus. **Matthew 1:20, 2:12-22**.

3. Dreams, or visions of significance were either self explanatory or the person had to go to a person skilled in dream interpretation. **Genesis 20:3, 28:12, Numbers 12:6, Deuteronomy 13:1**.

4. Visions, like dreams were unusual events, and appear to be restricted to key personnel who were tasked with communicating God's Word to others. **1 Samuel 3:1-15, Isaiah 1:1ff, Ezekiel 7:13, Daniel 2:19**.

5. In Acts there are specific visions given to the apostles for very specific purposes. **Acts 9:10-16, 10:27-29, 16:6-9, 18:1-11, 2 Corinthians 12:1-7.**

6. Dreams and visions may still occur, but they will occur in very unusual situations, for very specific reasons (as we see in Acts). They will occur in situations where, for some reason, the Holy Spirit chooses this means rather than directly speaking to the soul of the indwelt believer.

While we must allow for the Lord to speak any way he chooses, this will be an unusual means nowadays because it is unnecessary due to the indwelling and filling ministries of the Holy Spirit for all believers; a situation not occurring in the Old Testament period.

HARMONY

ANNOUNCEMENT TO ZACHARIAS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST'S BIRTH

“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.”

6 ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH - LUKE 1:26-38

Luke 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the

Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. 36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing shall be impossible. 38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

KEY WORDS

Sixth	Hektos	Sixth
Month	Mane	Month
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Sent	Apostello	To be sent [Aorist passive indicative]
City	Polis	City
Named	Onona	Named, Called
Virgin	Parthenos	Virgin
Esposued	Mnesteuo	to be betrothed. [Perfect Passive Participle]
Man	Aner	Fellow, Husband, Man
House	Oikos	Family, Home, Household
Came In	Eiserchomai	Enter in, Go in
Said	Lego	To speak
Hail	Chairo	Greeting, Hail, Godspeed
Highly favoured	Charitoo	Be highly favoured [Perfect Passive Participle]
Blessed	Eulogeo	Bless, Praise, from which we get the English word eulogy
Women	Gune	Wife, Woman
Saw	Eido	Be aware, Behold
Was troubled	Diatarasso	Trouble
Logos	Saying	Word, Utterance, Speech
Cast her mind	Dialogizomai	Imperfect Middle Indicative showing she was both puzzled and upset
Manner	Potapos	What manner of
Salutation	Apasmos	Greeting, Salutation
Should be	Eimi	Keep on being [Present Active Optative]
Fear not	Phobeo me	Fear not [Present Middle Imperative]
Hast found	Heurisko	Find, Get, Perceive , See [Aorist Active Indicative]
Favour	Charis	Grace
Behold	Idou	Behold, Lo, See
Conceive	Sullambano	Conceive [Future Middle Indicative]
In thy womb	En Gaster	In thy womb.
Bring forth	Tikto	Be born, Bring forth, Be delivered
Shall call	Kaleo	To call [Future Active Indicative]
Name	Anoma	Name
Jesus	Iesous	Saviour
Shall be	Eimi	Shall be [Future Middle Indicative]
Great	Megas	Big, Great
Shall be called	Kaleo	Be called [Future Passive Indicative]
Highest	Hupsistos	Most high, Highest
Shall give	Didomi	To give [Future Active Indicative]
Throne	Thronos	Throne
Father	Pater	Father
Reign	Basileuo	Reign, King [Future Active Indicative]
House	Oikos	Family, Household
Forever	Eis Aion	For ever
Kingdom	Basilea	Kingdom, Reign
Shall be	Eimi	Absolute status quo [Future Middle Indicative]
No End	Ou Telos	No end
Said	Epo	To speak [Aorist Active Indicative]
Seeing	Epei	Because, Seeing that
Know	Ginosko	Know , Understand, Be aware [Present Active Indicative]
Man	Aner	Man, Husband
Answered	Apokrinomai	Answer [Aorist Passive Participle]
Said	Epo	To speak [Aorist Active Indicative]
Holy	Hagios	Holy one, Saint

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Ghost	Pneuma	Spirit
Come Upon	Eperchomai	Come in , Come upon [Future Middle Indicative]
Power	Dunamis	Power, Mighty work
Overshadow	Episkiazo	Overshadow, [Future Active Indicative]
Holy Thing	Hagios	Holy one, Saint
Born	Gennaio	Born, Beget, Conceive, Bring forth
Called	Called	Kaleo
Behold	Idou	Behold, Lo, See
Cousin	Suggenis	Cousin, Kin, Relative, Fellow countryman
Hath Conceived	Sullambano	Catch, Conceive, Help, Take [Perfect Active Indicative]
Old Age	Geras	Old age from which we get the word "geriatric"
Sixth	Hektos	Sixth
Month	Mane	Month
Called	Kaleo	Called [Present Passive Participle]
Barren	Steiros	Barren from which we get the word "sterile"
Nothing	Pas Rhema On	Literally whole word none, Nothing
Shall be impossible	Adunateo	Be impossible [Future Active Indicative]
Said	Epo	To speak [Aorist Active Indicative]
Handmaid	Doule	A female slave , feminine form of doulos
Be	Ginomai	To become [Aorist Middle Optative]
According to	Kata	According to a norm or standard
Word	Rhema	Saying, Word
Departed	Aperchomai	Depart, Go, Back out [Aorist Active Indicative]

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

CHARITOO – MADE GRACIOUS, MADE ACCEPTED. This verb occurs twice in the New Testament but only once in the Perfect Tense. In **Luke 1:28** the King James Version uses "highly favoured" but could use "endued with grace" as Mary has not worked for this position but has been chosen by God to be the Virgin who would give birth to the Messiah in fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14 obviously having eternal consequences.

MNESTEUO – BETROTHED, ENGAGED. Occurs 3 times in the New Testament with all three texts dealing with the engagement of Mary and Joseph. Matthew 1:18. In **Luke 1:27** and Luke 2:5 it shows that in the ancient world betrothal was as strong as marriage. Once the engagement had occurred it was permanent.

SULLAMBANO – CONCEIVE. Occurs 16 times in the New Testament with one time in the Perfect Tense. The birth of the John the Baptist by "barren" Elizabeth in her old age **Luke 1:36** was both miraculous in nature and of eternal significance fulfilling Bible Prophecy being a key element of the Eternal Plan of God.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
6	Isaiah 9:6	A Child Born	Luke 1:31
	Isaiah 49:5	A servant from the womb	Luke 1:31
	Ezekiel 37:24-25	Descendant of David	Luke 1:31-33
	2 Samuel 7:14a	The Son of God	Luke 1:32
	Psalms 132:11	The Seed of David	Luke 1:32
	Isaiah 9:6	A Son Given	Luke 1:32
	1 Chronicles 17:12-13	To reign on David's Throne forever	Luke 1:32-33
	Psalms 89:27	Emmanuel to be higher than Earthly Kings	Luke 1:32-33
	Psalms 89:35-37	David's seed, throne, kingdom endures forever	Luke 1:32-33
	Isaiah 9:7	To establish and everlasting kingdom	Luke 1:32-33
	Isaiah 9:7	No end to His Government, Throne or Peace	Luke 1:32-33
	Micah 5:2b	Ruler in Israel	Luke 1:33
	Exodus 15:11	His Holy Character	Luke 1:35
	Isaiah 7:14	To be born of a virgin	Luke 1:35
	Daniel 9:24b	He would be Holy	Luke 1:35

REFLECTION

Verse 26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

The words “was sent” are in the aorist passive indicative. The aorist tense is the point of time he was sent, passive voice is the fact that he was sent by God, Indicative mood is the voice of reality, it really happened. The point made is strong here – at exactly the right moment God acts, stepping into space-time.

We notice also that he was sent to Nazareth of Galilee. Nazareth has the concept of root shoot/branch. c f **Isaiah 11:1**. “*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*”

Verse 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

Here we see Gabriel, one of the two named elect angels being sent to Mary. He is the angel who spoke to Daniel directly about the prophetic timetable for Messiah to come, and so it is right for him to be the angel to announce the fulfilment. **Daniel 8:16ff, 9:21**. In **Luke 1:19** we see him bringing good news to Zechariah. Here we see him telling Mary of the forthcoming birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. The word Parthenos in the Greek means a virgin and whilst the Hebrew equivalent in **Isaiah 7:14** can be rendered young woman as well as virgin, this is not the case in the Greek. Mary was a virgin.

The word espoused is the perfect, passive, participle, which showed that Mary had received engagement to Joseph in the past with lasting results. The perfect tense indicated a state to be perpetuated. Betrothal or engagement normally lasted one year and unfaithfulness on the part of the bride to be, as well as her lover, was punished by death. **Deuteronomy 22:23:24**.

Verse 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

In this verse the angel comes in to talk to Mary and said, “Hail, highly favoured” [the words “thou that art” are not found in the original]. The word translated “highly favoured” is in the Perfect, Passive, Participle, which shows that she has received/been given grace, or enriched with grace. A similar concept is given in **Ephesians 1:4-9, and 2:8-16**.

The older manuscripts do not have, “blessed art thou among women”, at this point, but have the phrase in verse 42. It could be either place, or both places – they both fit. Mary is called to the toughest road of any woman in history, but the greatest blessing and enrichment of grace is given to her to meet the demands. When God calls us to a hard road, He provides all grace to abundantly meet our demands.

Verse 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

Here Mary sees Gabriel for the first time. She has heard him in Verse 28 but on seeing him she was troubled. The word troubled is in the aorist, passive, indicative, indicating she received a troubled mind at the point of seeing the angel. Remember Zechariah’s vision of Gabriel also. It is no warm and fluffy thing to see the great Arch-Angel. He enters history to announce Messiah’s arrival – it is serious stuff and unique!

The phrase “cast in her mind” indicates that her mind was overwhelmed with thoughts being “cast into it”; she was in overdrive, being both puzzled and seriously worried by what the angel was telling her, and what the permanent effect of what he was saying would be on her life.

She knew her life was now about to change permanently – she was to be blessed above all women, but there was a terrible price to pay. Mary truly shows us the “fellowship of His Suffering”, and is a mentor for all in all centuries. **Philippians 3:10, Colossians 1:24-26, James 3:6, 5:10, 1 Peter 2:19-21, 4:13**.

Verse 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

Gabriel tells Mary not to fear. The verb is in the imperative mood. It is an order, indicating her present state of fear/worry. It is in the present tense, which means that she is ordered to constantly not fear, and the middle voice reflects that she is going to benefit from not fearing.

Mary needed encouragement, as it was not everyday that a young girl would have a conversation with an angel, and it was unique to have this conversation – she is the greatest of all women in world history – and at this point she is probably around age 14 years!

The word favour is the word grace and is a common Old Testament concept. “Charis” is a very ancient and common word with a variety of applied meanings. They come from the concepts of sweetness, charm, joy and delight. Mary was a truly “lovely” young woman, and her character was godly, even at this young age.

New Testament examples include words of grace, **Luke 4:22**, Growing grace, **Ephesians 4:29**, With Grace, **Colossians 4:6**. It is also a favourite word for Christianity with such phrases as the Gospel of Grace. **Acts 20:24**.

Mary is said to find favour with God. The word “with” is the Greek word “para” which could be translated, “in the sight of God”. She lives her life in the light of God’s daily presence – she is a person who stays in fellowship with the Lord through each day by her habit of prayerfulness.

Verse 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

The phrase “conceive in the womb”, has the same idiom in **Isaiah 7:14**, of Immanuel. We talk about the virgin birth but more properly we should call it the virgin conception and virgin birth.

The verb for conceive is in the perfect tense, and reminds us of the lasting results of the Virgin Birth of the Saviour – for sin and death will be defeated forever by his person and work. Mary’s obedience to the unique call on her life opens the door for us all.

In this verse also we have instruction from Gabriel as to the naming of the child. In this case the son is to be called Jesus, which is the Greek form of Joshua, and means Saviour. Family names are irrelevant, just as with John’s naming, for the Lord will be Saviour of all, and his name must proclaim his ministry.

Verse 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

In the phrase “the Son of the Most High” there is no article in the Greek (giving great emphasis) but the use of the Most High in verse 35 clearly shows that it refers to God.

Here Mary is told that the son who will be born is indeed the Messiah, for He is both God and the son of David, and that God will give to Him the throne of David, which has been vacant since the curse of Coniah almost 600 years before.

The virgin birth of Christ allowed Him to reign as a king forever, as he was legally the King of the Jews from his father Joseph, but was also in the line of David physically through his mother Mary.

Verse 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Gabriel now tells Mary that he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. This relates back to Jacob’s prophecy regarding Judah in **Genesis 49:10**. The kingdom which will start at the Second Advent of Christ will last for a thousand years in the Millennial Kingdom, and will then continue endlessly into eternity future. **Revelation 20-22**. The new Jerusalem will continue the throne of Messiah forever – He created the old universe and all that is in it presently, and the New Universe with all its Eternal-Infinite will be ruled over by our Lord, and we are part of it forever. The phrase “no end” is to be “sat with” by us – in Christ Jesus we are blessed and provided for in resurrection body forever – joy without ending...

Verse 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Mary understood now that she was going to be the means by which the Messiah of Israel, but also the Saviour of the world, was going to enter into the world, but could not understand the means by which this was to be accomplished. The shock of the unique event is lifting and she is now being practical and thinking this through – how is it going to happen?

She asked Gabriel how this could happen since she had not had sexual relations with her fiancé. It is noted that the word man can be translated not only man but husband, and to all intents and purposes under Jewish Law of the time, as she was espoused to Joseph, he was “her husband”.

Verse 35 **And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.**

The Holy Ghost is the Holy Spirit. The Greek word used here is “Pneuma” which means spirit and thus we are talking about the third person in the Trinity.

The phrase “shall overshadow thee” is a picture of a cloud coming over her, which was a common concept in the ancient Greek world to speak of the power of God being over a person. We see this with the accusative in **Acts 5:15**, where Peter’s shadow was cast over some of the sick in the vicinity of the Temple, and just his shadow passing over them ministered divine healing power.

We also have the shining bright cloud of the Mount of Transfiguration in **Matthew 17:5**, **Mark 9:7** and **Luke 9:34**, and the appearance of the Shekinah Glory, which represented God’s presence in Old Testament times of **Exodus 40:38**.

The miraculous conception, or virgin birth of Jesus Christ, is therefore plainly indicated in Luke, who seeing he was a physician, gives added interest to his account. He understands that it is divine creative power, like that at the creation, that moves over Mary, and without the agency of any man produces a child.

Verse 36 **And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.**

The word cousin is the Greek word *suggenis* which is simply a relative rather than necessarily a cousin as we know it. It should be remembered that even though Mary was a relative of Elisabeth the latter had hidden herself away from public view [**Luke 1:24**], so the angel gave the surprising news that not only Mary as a virgin was to have a child, but also Elisabeth, who was old and barren, was already pregnant.

The perfect tense again for the word for conception reminds us that the birth of John, though natural, was miraculous, and will have lasting/eternal results, due to his ministry. Elisabeth and Zechariah have embraced God’s will for their lives, and the whole world will be blessed by their obedient service in bringing John up in a godly household.

Verse 37 **For with God nothing shall be impossible.**

Use of the word Rhema at the end of this sentence, although not translated into the English above, brings out the single item of the miraculous conception, rather than the whole content of the miraculous intervention of God in space-time, at this point, where “Logos” would be used.

These two amazing miraculous events showed clearly that with God nothing is impossible. If He wishes to do something miraculous to further His plan He is more than able to do it, and every word He “speaks out” does not return to Him without accomplishing His purposes. **Isaiah 55:11**.

Verse 38 **And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.**

While Mary was staggered by these great pronouncements she unlike Zechariah accepted them as from God. She recognised that the great honour bestowed on her as the means of bringing the Saviour into the world demanded nothing less than her complete obedience.

Here she uses the Greek word for a female slave of the lowest order “*doule*”, one who was bound to her master for the term of her life. In this she showed complete obedience. As the word (rhema) went out from God, so she embraces its demands and sadness, and is totally obedient to the Plan of God, and will play her part fully.

Mary will honour these words all her life, and is truly the greatest of all women of all time, and a mentor of obedient humble service for us all. She is truly our “Mother in Faith” – and rightly honoured.

APPLICATION

Each of us has different roles to play in the Plan of God. We are given different spiritual gifts in order to undertake our unique service for the Lord and while of course it will not be as spectacular as others may be, our individual service for the Lord is important.

We see with God nothing is impossible within the Plan, for what He has called us to accomplish will have all the operational assets required provided within the Plan. We need to remember this when we are faced with apparently insoluble problems, and quietly obey – confident of God’s provisions. As an old friend says, “We do His Will, and He is responsible to pay the bills”.

DOCTRINES

CHRIST - VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST – SEE PAGE 59

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY TO JESUS CHRIST

1. The ministry of the Spirit in sustaining Jesus Christ was prophesied in the Old Testament. **(Isaiah 11:1-3, 42:1, 61:1-3)**
2. The virgin birth was only possible by the work of the Holy Spirit. **Matthew 1: 18, 20, Psalm 40:6, Hebrews 10:5.**
3. The Holy Spirit was given without measure (constant unhindered filling) to the humanity of Christ. **(John 3:34)**
4. The Holy Spirit was related to the baptism of Jesus. **(Matthew 3:16)**
5. The Holy Spirit sustained Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry. **(Matthew 12:18, 28, Luke 4:14, 15, 18)**
6. The Lord acknowledged the work of the Spirit in his works and miracles. **Matthew 12:8** (Quoting **Isaiah 44:1), 18, 28, Luke 4:14-21.**
7. The sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the Lord when he bore our sins on the cross. **Matthew 27:46, Psalms 22.**
8. The Holy Spirit had a part in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. **(Romans 8:11, 1 Peter 3:18)**
9. The present ministry of the Holy Spirit to Jesus Christ **(John 7:39, 16:14)**
10. The same sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit is passed on to us at salvation, and we are commanded to make use of this ministry
11. to grow thereby. **Galatians 4:19, 5:16, Ephesians 3:16, 17, 5:18, Romans 13:14.**

HARMONY

ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man"?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."

7. MARY'S VISIT TO ELIZABETH LUKE 1:39-56

Luke 1:39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; **40** And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. **41** And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: **42** And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, **Blessed** art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. **43** And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? **44** For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. **45** And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which **were told** her from the Lord. **46** And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, **47** And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. **48** For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. **49** For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. **50** And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. **51** He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. **52** He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. **53** He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. **54** He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; **55** As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. **56** And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

KEY WORDS

Arose	Anistemi	Arise, Raise up Stand up. [Aorist Active Participle]
Went	Poreuomai	Depart, Go one's way, Take a journey [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Hill country	Oreinos	Hill country
Haste	Spoude	Diligence, Haste
City	Polis	City
Entered	Eiserchomai	Come into, Enter into [Aorist Active Indicative]
House	Oikos	House, Home
Salute	Azpasomai	Embrace, Greet, Salute [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Came to pass	Ginomai	To become something [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Aorist Active Indicative]
Salutation	Aspasmos	Greeting, Salutation
Babe	Brephos	Babe, Child, Infant
Leaped	Skirtao	Leap [Aorist Active Indicative]
Womb	Koilia	Womb
Filled	Pletho	Accomplish, Furnish [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Holy	Hagios	Set apart, Saint, Holy
Ghost	Pneuma	Spirit
Spake out	Anaphoneo	To speak out [Aorist Active Indicative]
Loud	Megas	Great, Loud
Voice	Phone	Voice, Noise. From this word we get the word telephone
Blessed	Eulogeo	Bless, Praised be [Eulogy] [Perfect Passive Participle]
Women	Gune	Wife Woman
Fruit	Karpos	Fruit
Womb	Koilia	Womb
Whence	Pothen	Whence

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Mother	Meter	Mother
Come	Erchomai	Come, Enter into
As soon as	Hos	When, As soon as
Voice	Phone	Voice, Noise.
Sounded	Ginomai	To become something [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Ears	Ous	Ear
Joy	Agaliasis	Gladness, Joy
Blessed	Makarios	Blessed, Inner happiness
Believed	Pisteuo	Put trust in, Believe, Commit [Aorist Active Participle]
Shall be	Eimi	Absolute status quo, stability [Future Middle Indicative]
Performance	Teleoisis	Verification of prophecy, Completion, Fulfilment
Told	Laleo	To tell, Utter [Perfect Passive Participle]
From	Para	In the presence of, Side by side
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God, Master
Said	Epo	To say [Aorist Active Indicative]
Soul	Psuche	Soul
Magnify	Megaluno	Magnify, Shew Great, Enlarge [Present Active Indicative]
Spirit	Pneuma	Spirit
Rejoiced	Agallaio	Rejoice greatly, With exceeding joy [Aorist Active Indicative]
Saviour	Soter	Saviour
Hath Regarded	Epiblepo	To look upon [Aorist Active Indicative]
Low estate	Tapienosis	Humiliation, Made low, Low estate
Handmaiden	Doule	Female Slave
Behold	Idou	Lo, See
Henceforth	Nun	Hereafter, After this
Generations	Genea	Age, Generation, Nation, Time
Call Blessed	Makarizo	Call blessed, Count happy [Future Active Indicative]
For	Hori	Because, For, That
Mighty	Dunatos	Power, Mighty, Strength
Done	Poieo	To do [Aorist Active Indicative]
Great Things	Megaleios	Great things, Wonderful works
Name	Onoma	Name
Mercy	Eleos	Mercy
Fear	Phobeo	Reverential fear [Present Middle Participle]
Generation	Genea	Age, Generation, Nation, Time
Shewed	Poieo	Show [Aorist Active Indicative]
Strength	Kratos	Power, Strength, Might
Arm	Brachion	Arm
Scattered	Diaskorpizo	Disperse, Scatter, Waste [Aorist Active Indicative]
Proud	Huperephanos	Haughty, Proud
Imagination	Dianoia	Imagination, Mind, Understanding
Heart	Kardia	Heart
Put down	Kathaireo	Cast down, Destroy [Aorist Active Indicative]
Mighty	Dunastes	Mighty ruler, Potentate
Seats	Thronos	Thrones
Exalted	Hupsoo	Exalt, Lift up [Aorist Active Indicative]
Them of low degree	Tapeinos	Cast down, Humble, Lowly
Filled	Empletho	Fill [Aorist Active Indicative]
Hungry	Peinao	To be hungry
Good things	Agathos	Benefit, Good things, Well
Rich	Plouteo	Increased with goods, Rich [Present Active Participle]
Sent away	Exapostello	To send away, [Aorist Active Indicative]
Empty	Kenos	Empty, In vain
Holpen	Antilambanomai	Help, Support [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Servant	Pais	Child, Servant, Son
Remembrance	Mnaomai	Be mindful, Remember, In remembrance [Aorist Middle Infinitive]
Mercy	Eleos	Compassion, Mercy
Spake	Laleo	To speak [Aorist Active Indicative]
Fathers	Pater	Father
Seed	Sperma	Seed, Offspring from which we get the word sperm
Forever	Eis Aion	Forever

Abide	Meno	Abide, Dwell, Stay [Aorist Active Indicative]
Three	Treis	Three
Months	Men	Month
Returned	Hupostrepho	Come again, Return, Come back [Aorist Active Indicative]
House	Oikos	Home, House

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

EULOGEO – BLESSED – Occurs 44 times in the New Testament with 10 times in the Perfect Tense. Eight of the ten times relate to the Lord Jesus Christ, with the other time of the Perfect Tense of “Eulogeo” in the Gospels is in **Luke 1:42**, where Elizabeth observes that Mary is pregnant with the Messiah, telling her that she is blessed of all women, with eternal results for us all.

LALEO – TO SPEAK - Occurs 298 times in the New Testament with 14 appearances in the Perfect Tense, the majority being in the Active Voice and Indicative Mood. With the exception of two times all of the occasions are from the Gospel of John.

In **Luke 1:45** Elizabeth says to Mary, “Blessed is she who believed for there will be a fulfilment of those things which were Told her from the Lord”.

In John 6:63 Jesus says that the words He Speaks are spirit and are life. Jesus said that the Jewish authorities seek to kill Him, a Man who had Told them the truth from God. John 8:40.

In John 9:29 the unbelieving Jewish religious authorities say that they know that God Spoke to Moses but do not know about Jesus. In John 12:28-29, The Father talked to the Son and some said that an angel had Talked to Him.

Addressing the disciples at the Last Supper in John 15:3, Jesus tells them that they are all clean because of the words He had Spoken to them already, while in John 15:11, that the words Spoken to them were spoken so that their joy might be full and that they might have lasting peace. John 16:33.

In John 16:1, the words Spoken were so they should not stumble, in John 16:4, when the time comes they may remember them, but it is noted that because He had told them of His departure at this stage, they were sorrowful. John 16:6.

In John 16:25, Jesus said that He had been speaking in parables but would now Speak plainly, and in John 18:20, that He had always Spoken openly in the synagogues when asked about His doctrines by the High Priest.

In Acts 27:25, Paul was confident of the future, as he set out across the Mediterranean, encouraging others by saying that he believed that what would happen would be exactly what God had Told him.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

Verse 39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah.

In this verse we see Mary taking action in obedience to the angel’s words. She arises and enthusiastically goes to see her relative Elizabeth who has gone into seclusion after learning of her pregnancy. She hasn’t told family, and so the only way Mary can know is directly from God, and Elisabeth realises this – she is not alone in the special revelation received and that fact will encourage her and her husband – its God’s Plan and He is weaving them all together into their parts in the “Unfolding Drama of Redemption”.

“Into the hill country”. Luke uses this adjective twice in this context here, and in **Luke 1:65**, instead of “to oros”, the mountains. The phrase occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, and is geographically more accurate. We do not know in what city Elisabeth and Zechariah lived. As a priest he probably lived in a Levitical city in Judea when he was not operating in the Temple

Luke is very fond of the word “Anistemi”, meaning “to arise”, using it sixty times compared to a mere twenty-two other occurrences in the rest of the New Testament.

Verse 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

Having travelled perhaps quite a distance, maybe even over a number of days, Mary arrived at the house of Zechariah and warmly embraced Elisabeth. This was a unique meeting for two pregnant women who both had miraculous conceptions. There was great empathy towards each other, being aware that they were privileged to be intimately involved in the greatest event in history. There is warmth and depth of love, and mutual appreciation here that only occurs when people are walking closely with the Lord.

Verse 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

The leaping of a child in the womb is a common enough incident with unborn children as seen also in **Genesis 25:22**, but here Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit in order to understand what had happened to Mary. Both women, by their humble obedience are being woven into God’s eternal plan, but they need to work together and pray together, drawing human fellowship from each other, as they are the only people to understand this path that both must walk.

The effect of the arrival of Mary on Elisabeth is very dynamic. This verse says, “Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost”.

The meaning of this seems to be that she was filled with joy; with a desire to praise God; with a prophetic spirit, or knowledge of the character of the child that should be born of her. All these sayings were produced by the Holy Spirit. As the older woman Elisabeth is to encourage the younger Mary.

It should also be noted that the Holy Ghost is the Holy Spirit. With the translation of the King James Version the fellows from the three universities involved translated the Greek word “Pneuma” as either Ghost or Spirit, according to their university’s preference. The correct translation is Spirit. Misunderstanding of this has caused some to foolishly believe that there is a fourth character in the plan of God, and that the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit are not the same.

Verse 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

Elisabeth enthusiastically shouted out the fact that Mary was greatly honoured/blessed (perfect tense) being the chosen and obedient vessel by which God would bring the Saviour into the world. The perfect tense reminds us that the results of these two women’s obedience goes on forever, and we are all blessed through the ministry of John the Baptist, but we are totally blessed forever by the ministry of Jesus the only Saviour.

Elisabeth here repeated nearly all the words of the angel to Mary in **Luke 1:28**, esteeming it to be the highest honour among mothers to be the mother of the Messiah. The use of these parallel words underlines the fact that divine revelation through the angel, has revealed these truths. They are both walking in God’s Plan, as obedient women.

They don’t need Zechariah to add the man’s blessing to make it real or more powerful. In a day when women were not considered as important as men, it is significant that Zechariah isn’t mentioned.

Verse 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Elisabeth is almost incredulous as to the great honour the Lord has given her that the mother of the humanity of her Saviour should have come to visit her at her home. The fact that Elisabeth recognises that Mary is bearing the Messiah is another feature of her being controlled by the Holy Spirit. All family ties are set aside, as the human family is set aside for the divine family that both are recognizing they have become active parts of. This will become clear over time, and Mary will live to read Peter’s words that express her feelings and Elisabeth’s that day. **1 Peter 2:7-10.**

Verse 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

The effect of the arrival of Mary is instantaneous. With the sound of Mary's voice the baby John the Baptist leapt in Elisabeth's womb. It is another reminder that the unborn child is a "person", and can respond to all manner of stimuli.

Verse 45 **And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.**

This is the first beatitude in the New Testament and it is similar to the last one in the Gospels spoken to Thomas to discourage his doubt [**John 20:29**].

Elisabeth wishes Mary to have full faith in the prophecy of the angel. This song of Elisabeth is as real poetry as is that of Mary in verses 47-55 which is known as the Magnificat, and also that of Zacharias in verses 68-70.

All three spoke under the power of the Holy Spirit. These are the first New Testament hymns and they are very beautiful. The perfect tense of the verb here reminds us again of the lasting results of the events, but also the lasting legacy of the free will response of the two women to the events. Their worship has eternal significance.

Verses 46 – 55 - MARY'S MAGNIFICAT

This song properly consists of three parts.

A - In the first part Mary praises God for what He had done for herself personally. [Verses 46-49]

Verse 46ff

**And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
47. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
48. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden:
for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
49. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things;
and holy is his name.**

"My soul doth magnify the Lord" - The Greek verb "megaluno" means to celebrate with words, to extol with praises. This is the only way in which God can be magnified, or made great; for, strictly speaking, nothing can be added to God, for he is infinite and eternal; therefore the way to magnify him is to show forth and celebrate those acts in which he has manifested his greatness.

"My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" - Mary's spirit was lifted up. These words show that Mary's whole soul was filled with the Divine influence, and focused entirely on God. It also shows that Mary recognised she was a sinner and needed a Saviour. [cf. Medieval Roman Catholic Doctrine that claimed things of Mary that she would be embarrassed of.]

"He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden" - "He has looked favourably", Mary is saying that in the most tender and compassionate manner God has visited me in my humiliation, for I am but the lowest of female slaves, drawing the reasons of his conduct, not from any excellence in me, but from his own eternal kindness and love. God's Plan is grounded in His Grace, Mercy and Love, not our worth.

"All generations shall call me blessed" - This was the character by which Mary alone wished to be known. What dishonour do those do to this holy woman, those who give her names and characters which her pure soul would abhor; and which properly belong to God her Saviour! Sadly, by many Mary is addressed as "Queen of Heaven, Mother of God"; both titles which are indeed biblical, but pagan. **Jeremiah 7:18, 44:17-25**. These titles are from the pagan "trinity" or Baal (fake father), Asteroth (fake mother/fertility figure), and child (the gift of the fertility goddess). Let us be as far away from the old paganism as possible.

"He that is mighty hath done to me great things" As God fills Mary with His goodness, she empties herself to Him in praises; and, sinking into her own unworthiness, she ever confesses that God alone is all in all. Being a clean vessel is what God requires of us; wholly obedient to the demands of a holy God. Our power comes not from any physical attributes, but from the Holy Spirit alone.

“Holy is his name” - Probably the word which Mary used was “chesed”, which though we sometimes translate holy, yet the proper meaning is abundant goodness, exuberant kindness; and this well agrees with the next verse of her song.

B.- In the second verse of the song, Mary praises Him for what He has done, and would do, for the obedient believer; not just herself, but all who obey the Lord. [Verses 51-53]

**50 And his mercy is on them that fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He hath shewed strength with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats,
and exalted them of low degree.
53 He hath filled the hungry with good things;
and the rich he hath sent empty away.**

“His mercy is on them” – His favour or grace in action is shown on the miserable and the guilty and is demonstrated to them.

“That fear him” – Relates to those that “reverence” or honour Him. One kind of fear is that which a servant has of a cruel master, or which a man has of a precipice, the plague, or death. This is not the “fear” which we ought to have toward God.

The reverential fear here is one which an obedient child has of a kind and virtuous father, a fear of injuring his feelings; of dishonouring the family name by our life; of doing anything which he would disapprove. It is on those who have such fear of God that his mercy descends.

This is the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, **Job 28:28, Psalm 111:10.**

“From generation to generation” - From one age to another, it is unceasing; it continues and abounds. But it means also more than this. It means that God’s mercy will descend on the children and children’s children of those that fear him and keep his commandments.

In verses 51 to 54 we have six aorist active indicative verbs the explaining what God has done. All are translated hath

Hath shewed strength with his arm

Hath scattered the proud

Hath put down the mighty from their seats

Hath filled the hungry with good things

Hath sent the rich empty away

Hath holpen [helped] his servant Israel.

Verse 51 **“He hath showed strength with his arm”**. God has almighty power in the incarnation and in working out salvation for his people; which is done by his own arm, he was mighty to save, and demonstrated the greatness of his strength.

“He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts”. This relates to the proud and haughty Jews; who imagined nothing less, than that the Messiah would be born of one of the rich and noble families in Judea. They believed that he would appear as a prince and set up an earthly kingdom in great state and splendour, and make them a free and flourishing people.

Instead of this, he was born of a poor virgin, of whom they sarcastically remarked “Is not his mother called Mary who was of Nazareth in Galilee?” In addition they asked, “Shall Christ come out of Galilee or any good thing out of Nazareth?”

Here however we have a virgin engaged to a carpenter giving birth to the Messiah and because of the lowliness of his birth the Messiah was rejected by them; and thus were they scattered and confounded in their imaginations.

Verse 52 **“He hath put down the mighty from their seats”**, God has removed powerful leaders from their positions of authority from time to time and will do so in the future as well as proud fallen angels who will be cast out of heaven half way through the Tribulation period to be later cast down to hell and the Lake of Fire. Eventually the Lord will set up His own kingdom as the commencement of His eternal rulership as King of Kings.

“and exalted them of low degree”; The house and family of David which had one sat on the throne had socially sunk very low. He used a poor virgin in his family as the means of bringing the Saviour into the world thus exalting them of low degree. This method has been used by God in his infinite wisdom and grace in all ages of time. Not many mighty and noble are called by grace for they despise it; but the foolish, the weak, and the base things of the world respond.

Verse 53 **“He hath filled the hungry with good things”** we find characters such as Simeon and Anna who were eagerly awaiting the Messiah who we will see later in this chapter being granted a meeting with the young Messiah.

These did not lust after material things of this world but were satisfied with joy and peace, with food and gladness, so that they could say with Jacob, they have enough, yes, all things; seeing Christ is theirs, and all things with him.

“and the rich he hath sent empty away” - the rich in this world's goods, and such who trust in their wealth, and boast of their riches, God sometimes strips them of all, and turns them into the world naked and empty. However we see the rich in grace, who are often the materially poor of the world; and who, though they seem to have nothing, yet possess all things, and are full.

In the third section, she praises Him for what He had done, and would do, for Israel. [Verses 54-56]

**54 He hath holpen his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy;
55 As he spake to our fathers,
to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.**

Every idea here occurs in the Old Testament, showing that Mary's mind was full of the spiritual message of God's Word.

Verse 54 **“He hath holpen his servant Israel”**. By application this means not the natural descendants of Jacob, or Israel in general, but the elect of God (God's active and true servants) among them. The Scriptures make it clear that all were not Israel, who were of Israel; and not them only, but also the chosen ones among the Gentiles; who, with the former, are all descendants of Abraham **Romans 4:16** The word “servant can be translated as “a child” as well as “a servant” and refers to the weak and helpless but with the understanding of relationship.

“in remembrance of his mercy” refers to God attitude which he had in his heart towards them. The mercy of God is the source of redemption. Mercy provided a Redeemer, and a ransom; and it is owing to it, that the Redeemer came, not to works of righteousness done by men, but to the abundant mercy of God our Saviour.

Verse 55 **“As he spake to our fathers”**. God had communicated to many of Mary's antecedents, to David, of whose family Mary was; to Jacob, or Israel, of whose stock she was; and to Isaac, in whom the seed was to be.

“To Abraham and to his seed for ever”. We have this referred to in **Romans 4:16** where the forever seed of Abraham is not his natural, but his spiritual seed; both among Jews, Arabs and Gentiles, to the end of the world. To these true “children of Abraham in Abrahamic faith”, God promised this mercy through the provided and only Saviour and Redeemer, and these God helps and will help unto all generations upon this planet enter eternity at the terminus of space-time.

V 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

“And Mary abode with her about three months” - Mary stayed with Elisabeth about three months. This space of three months is a term of time fixed by the Jewish doctors, to know whether a woman is pregnant or not. It is significant that Mary sought the company of the spiritual couple Elisabeth and Zechariah through this time. In times of spiritual demands we need the company of those who share our vision and spirituality.

This is an important time frame, as in case of divorce or death: the rules state, "every woman that is divorced, or becomes a widow, lo! she may not marry, nor be betrothed, until she waits, ninety days (i.e. three months), exclusive of the day in which she is divorced, or her husband dies, and of the day in which she is betrothed; that so it may be known whether she is with child or not, in order to distinguish between the seed of the former, and the seed of the second husband. And so in the case of marrying the wife of a brother that died without issue and of newly married couples mistaking their spouses”.

“And returned to her own house”; at Nazareth, in Galilee. Now it was, that Joseph, to whom she was engaged saw that she was pregnant and suspecting infidelity, and he had a his mind to put her away privately without calling for her execution. However being informed by an angel of God, in a dream, of how Mary had become pregnant he was encouraged to take her as his wife, which he accordingly did. See **Matthew 1:18 -23**

APPLICATION

We should be keen about our work for the Lord and eagerly participate in His plan for our lives. We should encourage other believers to walk with the Lord as we mentor that walk to them.

When we are doing the work of God we should realise that it involves not us as individuals but we are all members of the same body and our contributions should be coordinated. This will stimulate those involved for further work for the Lord.

We often receive blessings from God. We do not earn or deserve these blessings but we receive them with joy and often surprise. Let us expect the blessing of the Lord, for His desire for us is that we might use all we receive for service and glory.

We should recognise Mary as the God directed and anointed mother of the humanity of Jesus Christ; and so the greatest of all women in history, and a marvellous mentor of true Abrahamic Faith. The reverential fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. For those who trust Him there is protection and comfort but for those who arrogantly reject Him He sends discipline. Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.

It is an unspeakable privilege to be descended from believing parents; to have been the subject of their prayers, and to have received their blessing. It is also a matter of vast guilt not to copy their example and to walk in their steps.

If God is “disposed” to show mercy to thousands of generations, how heavy will be the condemnation if the children of saintly parents do not obtain for themselves of it and early seek his forgiveness. God does protect and provide for his own but judges and opposes the haughty and proud.

DOCTRINE

MARY - GRACE

1. SCRIPTURE - **Matthew 1; Luke 1-3.**

2. BIOGRAPHY Of the seven women named Mary in the New Testament, none has a more central role than Mary the mother of Jesus Christ. The genealogy of Mary is given in **Luke 3**. She is shown as the daughter of Heli (**Luke 3:23**), descended from Nathan the son of David (**Luke 3:23-31**). At the time of the conception of Jesus, she was engaged to Joseph who was also descended from David, through Solomon (**Matthew 1:7-16**). Through his parents Jesus was legally entitled to the throne of David. Living in Nazareth (**Luke 1:26**). Mary visited a close relative, Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist (**Luke 1:39-56**), before travelling to Bethlehem to be taxed under the orders of Augustus. In Bethlehem, Jesus was born (**Luke 2:1-20**). After the visit of the Magi, when Jesus was about 18 months old, Joseph, Mary and Jesus fled into Egypt until the death of Herod the Great (**Matthew 2:20,21**).

Joseph led his family to Nazareth because Archaleus, a very cruel king, was reigning in Judah (**Matthew 2:22,23**). Joseph is no longer mentioned, but Mary appears at the marriage of Cana (**John 2:1-12**); then later when Jesus was challenged by the Pharisees (**Matthew 12:46-50**); and at the cross (**John 19:25-27**). On the cross Jesus committed His mother to the care of the disciple John. Mary was with the disciples in the upper room after the ascension (**Acts 1:13,14**).

3. EVALUATION

- a) Mary was one of the few people prophesied in the Old Testament, as the woman from whose seed the Saviour would come (**Genesis 3:15**).
- b) Her state was amplified in **Isaiah 7:14** that she would be a virgin.
- c) Since the sin nature is passed down through the father, Mary received a sin nature from Heli.
- d) Because Jesus was born of a virgin however, conceived by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ was born without a sin nature (**Matthew 1:20**).
- e) Mary was highly favoured in grace by God (**Luke 1:28,30**), being called "blessed among women".
- f) Mary accepted the miracle of this birth as outlined by Gabriel (**Luke 1:26-38**).
- g) Mary praised God for His goodness (**Luke 1:46-55; cf. 1 Samuel 2:1-10**).
- h) Mary recognised that the child she was to have would be the long awaited Saviour (**Luke 1:46-48**).
- i) Joseph was noble by protecting Mary from public stoning as an adulteress (**Deuteronomy 22:23,24**).
- j) Mary and Joseph arranged for Jesus' circumcision on the eighth day (**Luke 2:21**) and His presentation to the Lord after the purification of Mary (**Luke 2:22-24**). They offered turtle doves and pigeons, showing they were not wealthy (**Luke 2:24**).
- k) Jesus never called Mary mother, but always woman (**John 2:4; 19:26**), to ensure that Mary was never to be thought of as the mother of God.

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) We should be oriented to grace (**Romans 5:2; 6:14**).
- b) Parents are responsible for the spiritual welfare of their children (**Deuteronomy 32:46**).
- c) Christians should use common sense in making decisions (**Proverbs 24:5,6**).
- d) God uses unbelievers in the lives of believers to work His plan out (cf. the taxation of Augustus).
- e) Pre-eminence should always be given to Jesus Christ (**John 3:30**).
- f) There is only one mediator between God and man Jesus Christ (**1 Timothy 2:5**).
- g) All except Christ have sinned (**Romans 3:23**).

HARMONY

MARY'S VISIT TO ELIZABETH

"And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house."

8 BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST - LUKE 1:57-58

57. Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. 58. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

KEY WORDS

Full time	Chronos	Season
Came	Pletho	Fulfil, Accomplish [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Delivered	Tikto	Be born, Be delivered [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Brought Forth	Gennaio	Be delivered [Aorist Active Indicative]
Son	Uihos	Son
Neighbours	Perioikos	Neighbour
Cousins	Suggenes	Cousin, Kin
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Aorist Active Indicative]
Lord	Kurios	God, Lord, Master
Shewed Great	Megaluno	Enlarge Magnify Shew Great [Aorist Active Indicative]
Mercy	Eleos	Mercy
Rejoiced	Sugchairo	Rejoice with [Imperfect Active Indicative]

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

In these verses we have the birth of John the Baptist, which occurred some six months prior to the birth of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 57 “**Now Elisabeth's full time came**”. The nine months, which is the full gestation time, was now complete; for in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy the angel acquainted Mary with it and she had hurried to see Elisabeth and stayed about three months with her. It would appear that Mary had left for home before the birth due to the statement in verse 56.

“**That she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son**”, - This was in fulfilment of the angel's prediction both to Zacharias and Mary in **Luke 1:13**, “But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.”

Verse 58 “**And her neighbours, and her cousins**” Those that lived in the vicinity, whether of the house of Aaron, or of the tribe of Judah; to both which she was related, the priests in the city, and the children of Judah in the places about it: there is joy amongst all involved in the birth of John, and great expectation about what he will do.

“**...heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her**”; or "had magnified his mercy with her"; in removing her barrenness, and so taking away her reproach from among men. God had also been merciful in granting her strength to conceive, and bring forth a son, that was to be so great, as the prophet of the Highest; and more than a prophet, and greater than any born of women:

“**Rejoiced with her**” - the Imperfect tense and pictures the continual joy of the neighbours, complemented by the use of the prefix sun which showed that there was continual communal joy. We must remember that the spiritual believers were able to refer to **Daniel 9:24-27** and calculated precisely the days for Messiah to ride into Jerusalem, and so deducting 30+ years they all knew that something was due to occur around their day – Messiah's birth is due any moment....

APPLICATION

The Lord uses people who are naturally retiring, those who are old and perhaps not as attractive as they once had been in the bloom of youth to accomplish great things for Him in His plan. We are told to rejoice with those who rejoice. Here we see all the relations and neighbours rejoicing on the birth of John the Baptist.

DOCTRINE

JOHN THE BAPTIST [see page 70]

HARMONY

BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

“Now Elisabeth’s full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.”

9. CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JOHN - LUKE 1:59-80

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. **60** And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. **61** And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. **62** And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. **63** And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. **64** And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. **65** And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. **66** And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him. **67** And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, **68** Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, **69** And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; **70** As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: **71** That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; **72** To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; **73** The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, **74** That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, **75** In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. **76** And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; **77** To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, **78** Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, **79** To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. **80** And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

KEY WORDS

Came to pass	Ginomai	To become [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Eighth	Ogdoos	Eighth
Day	Hemera	Day
Came	Erchomai	To come to pass
To circumcise	Peritemno	Circumcise [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Child	Paidion	Little Child
Called	Kaleo	To call [Pluperfect Active Indicative]
Father	Pater	Father
Mother	Meter	Mother
Answered	Apokrinomai	Answer [Aorist Passive Participle]
Said	Epo	Say, Speak, Tell [Aorist Active Indicative]
Shall be Called	Kaleo	Called [Future Passive Indicative]
Is	Eimi	Is [Present Active Indicative]
None	Oudeis	None, Not any
Kindred	Suggenia	Kindred
Name	Onoma	Name
Made signs	Enneuo	Make signs [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Have	Thelo	Have [Present Active Optative] indicating a wish.
Asked	Aiteo	Ask, Call for, Desire [Aorist Active Participle]
Writing table	Pinakidion	Writing table
Write	Grapho	To write [Aorist Active Indicative]

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Saying	Lego	To describe, Give out [Present Active Participle]
Marvelled	Thaumazo	Wonder, Marvel [Aorist Active Indicative]
Mouth	Stoma	Mouth
Open	Anoigo	Open [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Immediately	Parachrema	Straight away, Immediately
Tongue	Glossa	Tongue
Spake	Laleo	Speak, Talk, Utter [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Praised	Eulogeo	Bless, Praise [Present Active Participle]
God	Theos	God
Fear	Phobos	Fear
Came	Ginomai	To become something [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Dwell round about	Perioikeo	Dwell round about [Present Active Participle]
Sayings	Rhema	Saying, Word
Noised abroad	Dialaleo	Noise abroad [Imperfect Passive Indicative]
Hill country	Oreinos	Hill country
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Aorist Active Participle]
Laid up	Tithemi	To place [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Hearts	Kardia	Heart
Child	Paidon	Young child
Shall be	Esomai	Shall be [Future Middle Indicative]
Hand	Cheir	Hand
Lord	Kurios	Lord
Filled	Pletho	Imbue, Supply, Influence [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Holy	Hagios	Holy, Set apart
Ghost	Pneuma	Spirit
Prophesied	Propheteuo	Prophecy [Aorist Active Indicative]
Saying	Lego	Speak, Tell, Utter.[Present Active Participle]
Blessed	Eulogetos	Blessed
Visited	Episkeptomai	Look out, Visit [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Redeemed	Poieo Lutrosis	Make Redemption [Aorist Active Indicative]
People	Laos	People
Raised up	Egeiro	Lift, Rise, Stand [Aorist Active Indicative]
Horn	Keras	Horn
Salvation	Soteria	Deliver, Salvation , Save
House	Oikos	House, Home
Servant	Pais	Child, Servant, Young man
Prophets	Prophetes	Prophets
Since the world began	Apo aion	From the ages
Saved	Soteria	Saved
Enemies	Echthros	Enemy, Foe
Hate	Miseo	Hate [Present Active Participle]
Perform	Poieo	To do, Perform [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Mercy	Eleos	Mercy
Remember	Mnaomai	Be mindful, Remember [Aorist Passive Infinitive]
Covenant	Diatheke	Covenant, Testament
Oath	Horkos	Oath
Swore	Omnuo	Swear [Aorist Active Indicative]
Grant	Didomi	Bestow [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Delivered	Rhoumai	Deliver [Aorist Passive Participle]
Serve	Latreuo	Serve, Worship [Present Active Infinitive]
Without fear	Aphobos	Without fear
Holiness	Hosiotes	Holiness
Righteousness	Dikaiousune	Righteousness
Days	Hemera	Day
Lives	Zoe	Life
Go	Proporeuomai	Go before [Future Middle Indicative]
Face	Prosopon	Face
Prepare	Heroimazo	Prepare, Provide, Make ready [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Ways	Hodos	Way
Give	Didomi	Give [Aorist Active Infinitive]

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Knowledge	Gnosis	Knowledge, Science
Remission	Aphesis	Deliverance, Remission
Sins	Harmartia	Sin, Offence
Tender	Splagchnon	Bowels, Inward affection
Mercies	Eleos	Mercy
Dayspring	Anatole	Dayspring, East, Rising
High	Hupsos	High, Exalted
Visited	Episkeptomai	Look out, Visit [Future Middle Indicative]
Give Light	Epiphanio	To give light [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Sit	Kathemai	Dwell, Sit [Present Middle Participle]
Darkness	Skotos	Darkness
Shadow	Skia	Shadow
Death	Thanatos	Death, Deadly
Guide	Kateuthuno	Guide, Direct [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Feet	Pous	Foot
Grew	Auxano	Increase, Grow [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Waxed strong	Krataioo	Be strengthened, [Imperfect Passive Indicative]
Spirit	Pneuma	Spirit
Deserts	Eremos	Desert, Wilderness
Till	Heos	Even, Until
Showing	Anadeixis	Exhibiting, Showing

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
9	Psalm 18:2-3	The Horn of Salvation	Luke 1:69-71
	Exodus 33:19	His Character - holiness	Luke 1:72
	Malachi 4:1-2	Jesus is the Son of Righteousness	Luke 1:78
	Psalm 119:105-107	He is the light to guide our feet	Luke 1:79

REFLECTION

Verse 59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. **60** And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. **61** And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

“And it came to pass that on the eighth day” - The precise time for circumcision is fixed in **Genesis 17:12**, *“And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.”*

“they came to circumcise the child”; that is, the neighbours and cousins of Elisabeth, who were there at the time of her delivery; eight days after they came again, to be at the formal circumcision of the child.

There was no particular person appointed to do the circumcision for the later Mishnah rule stated, "all are fit to circumcise; even an uncircumcised person, and a woman, and a minor, may circumcise in a place where there is no man; but a Gentile may not circumcise at all".

The circumcision of John seems to be performed in Zechariah's house, and by one of those that came; for Zechariah, being dumb, could not say the blessing which the circumciser was obliged to say. Neither could he say that which, as the father of the child, was his responsibility.

“and they called him Zechariah, after the name of his father”: as the neighbours of Naomi gave a name to the son of Boaz and Ruth, calling him Obed, **Ruth 4:17**. This they did because Zechariah was dumb.

The naming of John caused a temporary problem in the community associated with Zechariah and Elisabeth because the locals had initially called the baby Zechariah after the father, but Elisabeth counters this naming by saying that the baby's name shall be John.

According to the Jewish custom of the day you named a baby after a relative whether alive or dead unlike the modern custom among the Jews, which requires that the relative be dead. No one in the family had ever been called John thus this was a major break in tradition and custom, and Elisabeth's request is checked out with Zechariah.

Verse 62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. 63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

The imperfect active indicative of the word "enneuo" indicates that they constantly were making signs to Zechariah because they could not believe the proposed naming of his son. They appeared dumbstruck at this change from custom. It is a reminder that most people are "sheep" indeed, and will just follow the past as the guide to the present/future. God calls us to transformation and daily renewal, with our focus always forward to the Lord's return.

The word have "thelo" is in the optative mood which is the mood of a wish so that rather than use the word "have" this verse could be better translated, "And they were constantly making signs to the father how he would wish him to be called"

The fact that they were constantly making signs to Zechariah showed that he was not only dumb but deaf as well. The people who did not approve of Elisabeth's answer now made representations to Zechariah asking him what he was going to call the child. So he confirmed the name John by writing it on a tablet.

"and they marvelled all" They were astonished, not so much at the new name brought into the family, as at the agreement between Elisabeth and Zechariah in this point, when the latter was both deaf and dumb. At this stage the people attending the circumcision knew nothing of the angel's message.

There is a very interesting play on words here as Zechariah means "God remembers", and Elisabeth, "the oath of God". In combination then we have the phrase, "God remembers His oath". They are both obedient.

Verse 64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

Immediately he acted in obedience to the instructions he had been given in verse 13 and the dumbness was removed and he began to praise God and worship. The word "loosed" is not in the original but implied by the fact that he who was dumb kept on praising [imperfect tense] the Lord. Worship begins with our obedience to the Lord and is our response to the joy of walking with the Lord on His path.

Verse 65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. 66 And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

The imperfect tense of "dialaleo" shows that this event caused constant comment in the neighbourhood.

"And fear came on all that dwelt round about them" The fear that we are seeing here is a reverential "fear of the Lord". The people round about realise that the hand of God was in these things and that made a very serious impression upon their minds. We see a similar incident in **Acts 2:43**, "*And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles*". "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". **Proverbs 1:7, 3:7, 8:13, 9:10, 14:26, 15:16, 33, Psalm 19:9, 23:4, 25:14, 103:11-17, 119:79.**

"and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea": the several things that were the cause of constant comment related to the appearance of the angel to Zechariah in the temple; his message to him; the striking of Zechariah deaf and dumb; the conception of Elisabeth, who had been barren; the birth of her son; the unusual name given him; and the more unusual manner in which it was given; and the removal of Zechariah's deaf and dumb status.

These people treasured these events in their memories, and often thought of them, wondering what would be their eventual result. They concluded that God had a most important function for the child to perform since so many, and such great things, have gone before and been involved in his birth.

The fact that “**the hand of the Lord was with him**” indicates God preserving his life, giving him health, causing him to grow strong both in body, mind and grace. His Nazarite life-style will also focus attention and prepare the population to respond to his unique message. God truly goes before his servants.

Verse 67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

When Zechariah speaks he is controlled by the Holy Spirit and gives an accurate song of praise to the Lord. The word for filled is the Greek word “Pletho”, whereas being filled with the Holy Spirit in **Ephesians 5:18** is the Greek word “Pleroo”. We need to realise that Zechariah, unlike believers since Pentecost, was not permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, for in his day we are still within the Age of Israel. He was given the assistance of the Holy Spirit at this point in time as shown by the aorist tense. [See doctrines of the ministry of the Holy Spirit below – as this clarifies the changing ministries of the Holy Spirit – we are blessed today by the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit due to the completed work of the Lord.]

Zechariah now sings to the Lord. His song of praise and worship can be divided into two sections verses 68-75 speaks of the coming Messiah with emphasis on the Lord Jesus Christ rather than his son John. In the second passage verses 76 to 80 he focuses in on his son John and his work to prepare for Messiah.

Verse 68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

Verse 68 - The middle voice of the verb “episkeptomai” translated “visited” shows that Zechariah, inspired by the Holy Spirit knew that this was of benefit for mankind for God to visit. The word “visited” means to visit for the purpose of “aiding those who need aid,” or alleviating misery. Here God “looked upon” the world - He saw it miserable - He came to relieve it, and brought salvation.

The phrase “and redeemed” was spoken under the belief that the Messiah, “the Redeemer,” was about to appear, and would certainly accomplish His work. The literal translation of this passage is, “He hath made a “ransom” for his people. Men and women are sinners. They are bound over to just punishment by the Law. The Mosaic Law is holy, and God, as a just ruler must see that the Law is honoured and the wicked punished. However if anything can be done, which will be an “equivalent” for the punishment; then God may release the sinner.

The “blood of Jesus” - that is, His death in the place of sinners constitutes such a ransom. It is in their stead. It is for them. It is equivalent to their punishment. It is not itself a “punishment,” for that always supposes “personal crime,” but it is what God is pleased to accept in the place of the eternal sufferings of the sinner.

This is illustrated by a story from the time. The king of the “Locrians” made a law that an adulterer should be punished with the loss of his eyes. His “son” was the first offender, and the father decreed that his son should lose one eye, and he himself one also. This was the “ransom”. That king showed his “love,” his regard for the honour of his law, and the determination that the guilty should not escape.

So God gave His Son a “ransom” to show His love, His regard to justice, and His willingness to save people; and His Son, in his death, was a willing ransom for our sins.

Verse 69 A horn is a symbol of strength. The word salvation, connected here with the word “horn,” means that this “strength,” or this mighty Redeemer, was able to save. It is possible that this whole figure may be taken from the Jewish “altar.” On each of the four corners of the altar there was a small projection called a “horn.” To this persons might flee for safety when in danger, and be safe. We flee to the Lord for safety, to be saved from our sins by His grace. The prophetic word is from **Psalm 18:1-2**.

Psalm 18:1-2 *“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”*

The Lord is the “horn of my salvation” and my “high tower of defence”. God’s “horn of plenty” is the gracious provision of his resources to fight the battles in the Angelic Conflict, and His provision is always sufficient and overflowing for the needs of the ministry. We see this illustrated in the life and witness of John the Baptist. God’s presence is the “high tower” that gives protection from the enemy and all who would harm us. In prayer and worship it is as if we are sheltered behind the high walls of God’s protection and we rejoice in his powerful presence. *“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are safe.”* **Proverbs 18:10.**

“**In the house of his servant David**” can mean “in the family of his servant David. In **Luke 1:32** the angel states that Mary was of the family of David and this is shown conclusively in the genealogy in Luke 3. This statement by Zechariah is a matter of considerable importance; because it demonstrates the truth of all the prophetic declarations, which uniformly state that the Messiah should come from the family and sit on the throne of David.

Verse 70 *“As he spake, by the mouth of his holy prophets”, shows not only the faithfulness of God in his promises but also the longevity of His promises, as God’s promises have been, “since the world began”.* Cf **Genesis 3:15.**

Verses 71-73 The English of the word saved “soteria” in verse 71 would appear to be a verb but it is a noun. The literal translation of the start of this verse therefore is, “Salvation out of the enemies of us”.

This verse and the two following contain and express the substance of what God spoke by the prophets, that they should be saved by Him (God’s coming Messiah) from their sin, from Satan, from the world, from the Law’s righteous demands, and from death, the last enemy that is to be destroyed. The second half of the verse is a further repetition of His salvation from our enemies.

Both of the verbs in verse 72 are in the infinitive mood, which indicates the purpose behind this action. This verse also praises the faithfulness of the Lord that he will keep his promises.

In verse 73 the faithfulness of God is further demonstrated in the fact that the verb “omnuo” meaning to swear is in the aorist tense meaning at a point of time and that time was to Abraham some 2000 years before this event. What an amazing God we have to make a promise 2000 years before it was fulfilled or 4000 years in the case of **Genesis 3:15.**

In **Exodus 33:17-23**, Moses asks to see God’s glory, and God makes it clear to Moses that he cannot see the undiminished glory of God without dying instantly on the spot, but through the incarnation we can all see the Lord’s glory in the person and work of Christ, and the glory of that coming is the message John the Baptist will be privileged to proclaim.

Verse 74 What is said in this and the following verse, is the result of the plan of God, firstly that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, as stated before in verse 71, and that we might serve Him without fear of eternal damnation. Our principle responsibility, because we have been delivered from our spiritual enemies, is the service of God.

This is not the legalistic service but one based on a lack of fear, a desire to serve the Lord because of who He is and what He has done for us. It is a saying of the Jews that: “greater is he that serves from love, than he that serves from fear”. However such a type of service is not natural to any woman or man, and cannot be performed by our own power and strength, but can only be accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Verse 75 We are to worship in holiness and righteousness. God is not interested in ritual or religious ceremonies but to worship in spirit, controlled by the Holy Spirit and truth, in conformity with His Word. As the apostle Paul showed in his epistles, having been bought by the Lord and redeemed he was a willing slave of Christ who had bought him from the slavery of sin. It is part of our testimony to be rightly motivated in our service to the Lord and to others. **Ephesians 5:14-21.**

Verse 76 **And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,**

Verse 76 John's task is to be the prophet of the Most High, not just His herald. He is going before the coming Messiah. He is going to be before the face of the Messiah preparing for His coming. John will be the last, and the Lord tells us the "greatest" of the prophets of the Old Testament. **Matthew 11:11**.

Verse 77 John is going to give the "gospel of the kingdom", and will have a specific ministry in relation to Baptism (Jewish ritual representing change and readiness – mikveh). He is going to give them knowledge of coming salvation. The King is coming and the people have to be readied for His arrival, and their preparation is by means of repentance and purification for his Coming.

Verse 78 The dayspring is the same as the daystar or morning star. **2 Peter 1:19, Numbers 24:17**. The morning star announces the start of a new day, the coming of light. John is announcing the coming of the Light of the World in the form of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Righteousness of the book of **Malachi 4:1-2**.

Verse 79 **To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. 80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.**

Verse 79 The word "epiphany" translated, "to give light", is in the infinitive mood which shows the purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ coming was to give light, and therefore life to those under the shadow of death and guidance. He is truly the "Word" made flesh, as the "Word" of God gives light to our path. **Psalm 119:105-107**.

Here we have the twofold ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. We should note the difference between "them" that sit in darkness and guidance of "our" feet.

God shines the light onto our path, always at our feet, to show us where the next step is to be placed. Those who sit in darkness are the unsaved Gentiles, while those who need guidance are the children of Abraham who desire to be like their fore-father in faith.

Verse 80 In this, the last verse of this chapter, the child constantly grew but also constantly received strength in spirit showing that the Lord was preparing John the Baptist for his ministry as the herald of the Lord Jesus Christ.

At some age he leaves home and spends most of the rest of his life in the desert places in the wilderness of Judea. This separates him from religion and contrasts his message with theirs. He is a voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord".

APPLICATION

Some things appear foolish to people who relate solely on human wisdom or tradition. Our ways are not His ways, or our thoughts His thoughts. **Isaiah 55:6-11**.

The Lord loves an obedient child. Obedience to the Lord can bring great blessing to the individual and the family. The Lord wants obedience not offerings.

We are permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit as believers since the Day of Pentecost, although not always controlled by Him. In the pre Pentecost days the Holy Spirit was given for a limited period of time to undertake certain divine duties and could be taken away as part of discipline. This is what David was fearful of in **Psalm 51:11**.

The men, by whom God spoke of the Messiah, were men with a spirit of prophecy; who spoke as they were moved by God with one "mouth"; all agreeing in their accounts concerning Christ, though they lived in different periods of time, from the beginning of time. **Hebrews 1:1-4, 1 Peter 1:10-11, 2 Peter 1:21**.

It is our duty to act as ambassadors for the Lord while He is away. We in a sense are heralds for the coming King. We never retire from the Christian life. We are on duty before the Lord until the day we die. Retirement is for heaven.

PROPHECY

MESSENGER BEFORE THE LORD

PROPHECY

Malachi 3:1 (425 BC): "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."

Malachi prophesied of the provision of a messenger to precede the Lord, to preach the good news and prepare the way for his arrival.

FULFILMENT

Mark 1:2; [30 AD] – "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

Luke 1:76-77 [30 AD] "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,..."

Luke 7:27,28 (30 AD): "This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

1. John the Baptist is shown to be the messenger before the Lord predicted by Malachi.
2. John prepared the way for Jesus Christ by calling the attention of the Jews to the need to repent.
3. John is stated to be the greatest of the prophets, but less than the least in the kingdom of heaven: showing that the greatest which man can do is far less than what God can do through man, or what we will be like in our future state (**1 Corinthians 15:22**).

DOCTRINES

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY TO JESUS CHRIST [see page 81]

CIRCUMCISION

1. Circumcision was designed by God as a sign of the Abrahamic covenant. (**Genesis 17:10-14**)
2. It was both a physical operation and at the same time a circumcision had ritual connotations. (**Romans 2:25**)
3. No Jew could partake of the Passover without first being circumcised. (**Exodus 12:48**)
4. Circumcision indicates dedication of the male. It occurred on the eighth day. Medical science has shown, from an infection viewpoint as well as coagulation of the blood, that the eighth day is the optimum. (**Leviticus 12:2,3**)
5. The ritual of circumcision has no significance in the Church Age and only intrudes as a false standard. (**1 Corinthians 7:18,19; Galatians 5:2,3; Ephesians 2:11**)
6. Circumcision became a rallying point for legalism. (**Acts 15:1,24; Galatians 6:12,13**)

7. Circumcision is used to designate the Jews by race and by nation. (**Galatians 2:8; Colossians 4:11; Titus 1:10; Ephesians 2:11**)
8. During their period of slavery in Egypt, the Jews started to fail to circumcise their male children. (**Exodus 4:24-26**)
9. This neglect continued into their wilderness wanderings. (**Joshua 5:4,5**)
10. Moses neglected to circumcise his sons. (**Exodus 4:24,25**)
11. Circumcision to the Jewish baby is the equivalent of dedication in the modern church. The adult circumcision (**Genesis. 17:24-27**) can be analogised to believers' baptism in the Church Age.

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not indwell all believers, since Christ was not yet glorified (**John 7:39**). Instead, He only came upon some Old Testament saints to perform special functions.
 - a) JOSEPH, a believer who was a prime minister. (**Genesis 41:38**)
 - b) Believers who were artisans occupied in the construction of the Tabernacle. (**Exodus 28:3, 31:3**)
 - c) Believers involved in administration. (**Numbers 11:17, 25**)
 - d) A believer who was both a political and military leader - JOSHUA (**Numbers 27:18**)
 - e) Certain Judges: OTHNIEL (**Judges 3:9, 10**) GIDEON (**Judges 6:34**) JEPHTHAH (**Judges 11:29**) SAMSON (**Judges 13:24, 25, 14:5-6, 15:14**)
 - f) Kings of Israel (**1 Samuel 10:9, 10, 16:13**)
 - g) DANIEL (**Daniel 4:8, 5:11, 6:3**)
 - h) Post exilic rulers (**Zechariah 4:3, 12-14**)
2. Believers in Israel could be disciplined by the removal of the Spirit:
 - a) SAUL (**1 Samuel 16:14**)
 - b) DAVID (**Psalms 51:11**)
3. A believer could obtain the Holy Spirit by request, but not as an indwelling presence. (**2 Kings 2:9, 10, Luke 11:13**)
4. Jesus gave the Holy Spirit without request to the disciples just before the ascension. Purpose: To sustain them for the ten day interim before the Church Age would begin. (John 20:22)

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. TO THE UNBELIEVER
 - a) RESTRAINING (**2 Thessalonians 2:7**)
If unbelievers were unrestrained in the Church Age the one world system which Satan is trying to establish would come. After the rapture of the Church it will come.
 - b) CONVICTING (**John 16:7-11**)
 - i) Sin - the barrier which remains in unbelief.
 - ii) Righteousness - God is totally righteous, man is only relatively righteous and needs God's righteousness for salvation.
 - iii) Judgment - Satan and all unbelievers are judged.
 - c) REGENERATION (**John 3:5**)
Man without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things. The Gospel is spiritual, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel a reality to the unbeliever when one believes and is "born again" or regenerated. (**1 Corinthians 2:14**)
2. TO THE BELIEVER AT SALVATION
 - a) Regeneration (**John 3:1-16, Titus 3:5**)
 - b) Baptism (**Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:5**) We are baptized into union with Jesus Christ and become part of the body of Christ. This is not to be confused with the Filling of the Holy Spirit.
 - c) Indwelling (**Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20**) From salvation on the believer is indwelt by the Spirit.
 - d) Sealing (**2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30**). This ministry relates to your future with God, the guarantee of eternal security.

e) Distribution of spiritual gifts (**1 Corinthians 12:11**) Each believer receives a spiritual gift at the point of salvation in order to function in the body of Christ.

3. TO THE BELIEVER AFTER SALVATION (Spirituality)

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit after salvation is the means by which we live the Christian life ordained by God (**Ephesians 2:10, 5:18**)

a) The Filling of the Holy Spirit (spirituality through confession of sin and surrender of the life). (**1 John 1:9 Ephesians 5:18**)

b) The character of Jesus Christ is produced by the believer when he is filled with the Spirit. (**Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23**)

c) Glorification of Christ (**John 7:39, 16:14, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20**)

d) Fulfilment of the Law. (**Romans 8:2-4**)

HARMONY

CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JOHN

“And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.”

10. ANNOUNCEMENT TO JOSEPH OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

MATTHEW 1:18-23

1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

KEY WORDS

Birth	Gennesis	Birth
On this wise	Houto	In this manner

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Mother	Meter	Mother
Espoused	Mnesteuo	Betrothed, Espoused [Aorist Passive Participle]
Before	Prin	Before, Ere
Came together	Sunerchomai	Cohabit, Come together [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Found	Heurisko	To be seen
To be	Echo	To have and to hold [Aorist Passive Indicative]
With Child	Gaster	Pregnant
Husband	Aner	Man, Husband, Fellow
Just	Dikaios	Just, Right
Willing	Thelo	Willing, [Present Active Participle]
Make a public example	Paradeigmatizo	To make a public example, Put to an open shame
Minded	Boulomai	Intend, Be disposed [Aorist Passive Indicative]
To put her away	Apoluo	Divorce, Let go, Set at liberty [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Privily	Lathra	Secretly
Thought	Enthumeomai	Ponder, Think [Aorist Passive Participle]
These things	Tauta	These things
Behold	Idou	Lo, Behold
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Appeared	Phaino	Appear, Be seen, Shine [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Dream	Onar	Dream
Saying	Lego	Ask, Speak, Say [Present Active Participle]
Son	Uihos	Son
Fear	Phobeo	Fear, Reverence Be afraid [Aorist Passive Subjunctive]
Not	Me	Not
To take	Paralambano	Receive, Take [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Wife	Gune	Wife, Woman
Conceived	Gennaio	Bear, Born, Conceived [Aorist Passive Participle]
Bring forth	Tikto	Be born, Be delivered [Future Middle Indicative]
Call	Kaleo	Call [Future Active Indicative]
Name	Onoma	Name
Shall save	Sozo	Save, Preserve, Heal [Future Active Indicative]
His	Hautou	His own
People	Laos	People
From	Apo	From the ultimate source of
Sins	Harmartia	Sins, Offence
Done	Ginomai	To come into being [Perfect Active Indicative]
Fulfilled	Pleroo	Accomplish, Complete, Fulfil [Aorist Passive Subjunctive]
Spoken	Rheo	Command, Say, Speak [Aorist Passive Participle]
Prophet	Prophetes	Prophet
Saying	Lego	Say, Utter, Describe, Give out [Present Active Participle]
Virgin	Parthenos	Virgin
Shall be	Echo	To have and to hold [Future Active Indicative]
With Child	Gastare	To be pregnant
Bring forth	Tikto	Be born, Be delivered [Future Middle Indicative]
Call	Kaleo	To call [Future Active Indicative]
Emmanuel	Emmanooul	God with us
Interpreted	Methemneneuo	Interpret [Present Passive Participle]
God	Theos	God
With	Meta	Among, With, In close proximity
Us	Hemon	We, Us

PERFECT TENSE VERB

GINOMAI – TO CAUSE TO BE, MADE, TO COME INTO BEING - Occurs 647 times in the New Testament with 65 times in the Perfect Tense. It is the third most common verb to be in the Perfect Tense after Oida and Grapho.

It occurs in this form in 17 different New Testament books and is almost always in the Active voice. Ginomai often means, to become something or change something from one situation to another.

The Perfect Tense should therefore in many cases be seen as the indication of permanent change in situations to demonstrate God's power or in human eyes, the modification of His plan.

In Matthew's Gospel there are seven verses with Ginomai in the Perfect Tense. In order for the fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14 for the birth the Lord Jesus Christ, being a virgin birth, there is change needed in the hearts of Mary and Joseph. The Virgin Conception/Birth is a unique event in the history of humanity. **Matthew 1:22**. Due to hardness of man's heart, the rules for divorce are changed. Matthew 19:8.

The requirements of a donkey to fulfil Isaiah 62:11 and Zechariah 9:9 also need a change of heart of the owners. Matthew 21:4.

In order that humanity is not exterminated, the days are shortened, Matthew 24:22, the Bridegroom coming will be an unexpected surprise, Matthew 25:6, after two days at the Passover the Son of Man will be delivered up, Matthew 26:2, and the arrest of Jesus was done so that the Scriptures could be fulfilled. Matthew 26:56.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
10	Genesis 3:15	He would be a seed of the woman	Matthew 1:18
	Isaiah 49:1	Called from the womb, His humanity	Matthew 1:18
	Isaiah 7:14	To be Emmanuel God with us	Matthew 1:18-23
	Isaiah 12:2	To be called Jesus	Matthew 1:21
	Isaiah 35:4	He will come and save you	Matthew 1:21

REFLECTION

Verse 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

In the Greek the phrase translated "*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise*" has Jesus Christ coming before birth as the important matter after verse 16. It says "Now of Jesus Christ the birth thus was...."

In some of the oldest manuscripts have the same word genealogy "genesis" used in **Matthew 1:1**, not the word "gennesis" for birth as in verse 16. Morison notes, "The evangelist is about to describe, not the genesis of the heaven and the earth, but the genesis of Him who made the heaven and the earth, and who will yet make a new heaven and a new earth". The birth of the Lord will fulfil the promise made to Adam, **Genesis 3:15**.

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

The Hebrew word Shuph translated bruise, is also translated to break in **Job 9:17** and "to cover" in **Psalms 139:11**. The serpent is now on the ground and can only cause damage by striking low portions of the body such as the heel. The snake however, is very vulnerable and can be hit on the head and killed that way easily. In this verse we have various people mentioned:- "thee" - the serpent, "thy seed" - everyone born into humanity, "the woman" - true humanity in the line of Christ, "her seed" - the Lord Jesus Christ

The first announcement of salvation emphasises the Virgin Birth. Why? Adam brought the whole human race into sin. For as in one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed onto all men and women for all have sinned. **Romans. 5:12**. "All have" - aorist tense - all sinned when Adam sinned. The issue in salvation is not sin, it is the matter of what theologically we call "human good". God's good versus your own good – we cannot solve the sin problem by our own human good works.

God says, "*I will put enmity between your seed and the woman's seed*". This is Satan being referred to, and he hates the woman and tries to cut off the seed of the woman. Everywhere else it refers to Abraham and his seed, David and his seed, because the seed is sperm. There is a strange medical position here and this is why the saints of old believed that it involved a future virgin birth, which was confirmed in **Genesis 7:14**.

This says in the Hebrew, behold the virgin shall conceive, and that means without any man being involved. The particular one is the one forecast in **Genesis 3:15**. This shows how God's plan is going to move forward.

There are three people cursed. There is the serpent, the woman, and the man. The curse on the serpent is at variance with the curse on the man and woman. On the serpent it is "for ever and ever". It is a mortal wound from which the serpent will never recover. An absolute all out war against evil is now declared, but the final outcome is sure – the "Seed of the Woman" – Christ – will be triumphant totally.

God's Character and Plan is progressively revealed in history. God will not tolerate any permanent existence of evil. It will only be allowed in space and time. The love of God in grace is shown after the Fall. God never changes; He was and still is perfect love, and perfect holiness – sin isn't excused, its dealt with totally.

The curse of the man and woman is given in verses 16-19 and involves their mortal bodies. What this means is that how you respond in your mortal bodies indicates how you will spend eternity. There is going to be animosity between snakes and people. The battle is not between the woman and the serpent, it is what the woman bears and the serpent/Satan. The declaration of the gospel is absolutely necessary because of the fall of man.

All members of the human race are born into the slave market of sin, and are in Adam's race, and under his judgment, carrying the sign of that in our Old Sin Nature, inherited through the man. The seed of the woman is the first title of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the creation mandate the role of the woman was to be the helper. The role in salvation is also to be a helper. She helps by bringing salvation into the world. The role of the woman is not changed after the fall. They are told to be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth. **Romans 16:20**. As awesome as evil is and as horrible as it is, it is not ever out of control at any point in history. It is still subject to the sovereignty of God – the Plan allows for all the decisions of angels and people.

Mary is "Espoused to Joseph" - Matthew proceeds to explain his statement in verse 16, which implied that Joseph, though the legal father of Jesus in the royal line, was not the actual father of Mary's Son.

Espoused or betrothal with the Jews was a serious matter, with the man who betrothed a woman being legally her husband. Though they did not live together as husband and wife till actual marriage, breach of faithfulness on the part of the betrothed was treated as adultery and punished with death by stoning. **Deuteronomy 22:23-24**.

"Of the Holy Ghost" – It should be noted that the word translated "ghost" is the word for "spirit" so we are seeing here the work of the Holy Spirit. Remember our previous discussion of this, as the use of the word "ghost" was purely the preference of one group of translators of the KJV in 1611.

The discovery that Mary was pregnant was inevitable, and it is plain that she had not told Joseph of the revelation to her before this time; trusting that God alone would move him, not any human pleading on her part.

She "was found with child" which is the usual Greek idiom, plainly shows that it was the discovery that shocked Joseph. He did not as yet know what Matthew plainly asserts, that it was the Holy Spirit, not Joseph or any man that was responsible for the pregnancy of Mary.

Both Matthew and Luke present the birth of Jesus as not according to ordinary human birth. Jesus had no human father. We see here God sending His Son into the world to be the world's Saviour and He gave Him a human mother, but not a human father so that Jesus Christ is both, Son of God and Son of Man, the God Man.

Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from the standpoint of Joseph as Luke gives it from the standpoint of Mary. The two narratives harmonize with each other.

Verse 19 **Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.**

The words translated willing and minded in this verse have the same concept of being disposed to a certain action. Joseph was not disposed to put Mary to open shame but was disposed to quietly dissolve the relationship.

Her husband - The word in the original Greek does not imply that they were married. It means here the man to whom she was espoused or betrothed. Joseph is a very noble person and this is now explored.

A just man - Justice consists in being fair to all. The meaning here is that he was kind, tender, merciful; that he was so attached to Mary that he was not willing that she should be exposed to public shame. He sought, therefore, secretly to dissolve the connection, and to restore her to her friends and family, without the punishment commonly inflicted on adultery.

A public example - To expose her to public shame or infamy. Adultery has always been considered a very serious crime. In Egypt, it was punished by cutting off the nose of the adulteress; in Persia, the nose and ears were cut off; in Judea, the punishment was death by stoning. This punishment was also inflicted where the person was not married, but betrothed. In this case, therefore, the regular punishment would have been death in this manner.

Yet Joseph was a noble man, mild and tender; and was not willing to complain of her to the magistrate and expose her to death. He however sought to avoid the shame, and to put her away privately.

Put her away privily - The Law of Moses gave the husband the power of divorce, **Deuteronomy 24:1**. It was standard practice in a bill of divorce to specify the reasons for which the divorce was being made. Witnesses were also present to testify to the reasons behind the divorce.

In this case however Joseph resolved to put her away without specifying the cause, because he was not willing to make her a public example. This is the meaning here of "privily."

Both to Joseph and Mary this must have been a great trial. Joseph was very much in love with Mary but her character was likely to be publicly ruined, and he decided it proper to separate her from him.

Mary was innocent, but Joseph was not yet satisfied of her innocence. We may learn from this to put our trust in God.

He will defend the innocent. Mary was in danger of being exposed to shame, but rested in God's direct intervention with Joseph, as God had directly intervened with her, Zechariah and Elisabeth. This is another powerful indication of Mary's faith.

Verse 20 **But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.**

Joseph did not act hastily. He did not go to the Rabbis/Priests of the Mosaic Law, which he was permitted to do. It was a case deeply affecting his happiness, his character, and the reputation and character of his chosen companion, and he apparently prayed and agonized in prayer over this.

The angel of the Lord - The word "angel" literally means a messenger. It is applied chiefly in the Scriptures to those invisible elect angels who are sent forth by God to minister to believers. Various ways were employed by the elect angels, in making known the will of God in the past, such as by dreams, visions, and assuming at times a human appearance. These are very rare and occur only as God directs.

In a dream - This was a common way of making known the will of God to the ancient prophets and people of God, **Genesis 20:3; 30:1, 30:11, 30:24; 37:5; 41:1; 1 Kings 3:5; Daniel 7:1; Job 4:13-15** being but a few examples.

In what way it was known that these dreams were from God cannot now be fully understood. It is sufficient for us to know that in this way many of the prophecies were communicated.

Son of David - Descendant of David. See **Matthew 1:1**. The angel put him in mind of his relation to David perhaps to prepare him for the intelligence that Mary was to be the mother of the Messiah - the promised heir of David.

Fear not - Do not hesitate, or have any apprehensions about her virtue and purity. Do not fear that she will be unworthy of you, or will disgrace you, David your mutual ancestor, or the Lord. "*Take unto thee Mary thy wife*" - To take her as thy wife; to recognize her as such, and to treat her as such.

For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost - Is the direct creation of divine power. A body was thus prepared pure and holy, and free from the corruption of sin, in order that He might be qualified for His great work the offering of a pure sacrifice to God.

As this was necessary in order to the great work which He came to perform, Joseph is directed by an angel to receive her as pure and virtuous, and as every way worthy of his love.

Verse 21. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Conceived	Gennao	Bear, Born, Conceived [Aorist Passive Participle]
Bring forth	Tikto	Be born, Be delivered [Future Middle Indicative]
Call	Kaleo	Call [Future Active Indicative]
Shall save	Sozo	Save, Preserve, Heal [Future Active Indicative]

The sequence of verbs in this verses is interesting. The action of the participle precedes the action of the main verb. In this case the word 'conceive' precedes being born.

After this are two future active indicatives which are realities, that He will be called Jesus, and He will be the Saviour, which is exactly what His name means. He will perfectly fulfil the prophetic words relating to his Advents. Refer to the commentaries on Isaiah, to **Isaiah 7:14, 12:2, 35:4, and 49:1**.

It is the same name as Joshua in the Old Testament, and twice in the New Testament "Jesus" is used when Joshua who led the children of Israel into the Promised Land should have replaced it. **Acts 7:45, Hebrews 4:8**.

He shall save - This expresses the same as the name, and on this account the name was given to Him.

What does the Lord Jesus Christ save us from? He saves people by dying to redeem them; by giving the Holy Spirit to renew them, by His power in enabling them to overcome their spiritual enemies, in defending them from danger, in guiding them in the path of duty, in sustaining them in trials and in death; and He will raise them up at the last day, and exalt them to a world of purity and love.

His people - Those whom the Father has given to Him. The Jews were called the people of God because He had chosen them to Himself, and regarded them as His special and beloved people, separate from all the nations of the earth.

Christians are called the people of Christ because it was the purpose of the Father to give them to the Lord Jesus Christ and because in due time he came to redeem them to Himself, **Titus 2:14, 1Peter 1:2**.

From their sins - This was the great business of Jesus in coming and dying. It was to pay the penalty demanded by a righteous God. It is only by means of the death of Christ that man can be reconciled with God.

Verse 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

The prophecy here quoted is recorded in **Isaiah 7:14**. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

The perfect tense in this verse remind us that there are permanent results flowing from all fulfilled prophetic words. God's Word can be depended upon, and the results of the fulfilment of the Word go on forever.

The prophecy was delivered about 740 years before Christ arrives in ministry, in the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah. The land of Judea was threatened with an invasion by the united armies of Syria and Israel, under the command of Rezin and Pekah. Ahaz was alarmed, and seems to have contemplated calling in aid from Assyria to defend him.

Isaiah was directed, in his concern, to go to Ahaz, and tell him to ask a sign from God, **Isaiah 7:10-11**; that is, to look to God rather than to Assyria for aid, but Ahaz refused to do that.

He had no confidence in God, but feared that the land would be overrun by the armies of Syria, and relied only on the aid which he hoped to receive from Assyria.

Isaiah answered that, in these circumstances, the Lord would Himself give a sign, or a pledge, that the land should be eventually delivered. The sign was that a virgin should have a son, and that before that son would arrive the land would be forsaken by these hostile unbelieving kings.

The prophecy was therefore designed originally to signify to Ahaz that the land would certainly be delivered from its dangers, and that the deliverance would not be long delayed. The land of Syria and Israel, united now in confederation, would be deprived of both their kings, and thus the land of Judah would be freed from the threatening danger.

The full implication of this prophecy however was fulfilled by the birth of our Lord.

Behold, a virgin shall be with child - Matthew clearly understands this as applying literally to a virgin cf. **Luke 1:34**.

It therefore confirms that the conception of Christ was miraculous, or that the body of the Messiah was created directly by God as seen in **Hebrews 10:5**: ***"Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me."***

And they shall call his name Emmanuel - That is, his name shall be so called. "Immanuel" is a Hebrew word and literally means "God with us". Matthew doubtless understands it as denoting that the Messiah was really "God with us," or that the divine nature was united with the human.

The Hebrews often incorporated the name of Jehovah or God, into their proper names. For example Isaiah means "the salvation of God;" Eleazer, "help of God", and Eli, "my God".

Matthew however indicates that all this means much more than the simple use of such names. He had just given an account of the miraculous conception of Jesus: of his being conceived by the Holy Spirit. God was therefore His Father. He was divine as well as human. His appropriate name, therefore, was "God with us."

Though the mere use of such a name would not prove that He had a divine nature, yet as Matthew uses it in context it does prove that Jesus was more than a man; that He was God as well as man.

PROPHECY

BORN IN BETHLEHEM

PROPHECY

Micah 5:2 (710 BC): But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

1. At the time of Micah in the 8th Century BC, the settlement of Bethlehem was small.
2. It was one of a number of settlements called Bethlehem in the area conquered by the Jews. Bethlehem of Judea had to be distinguished from Bethlehem of Zebulun mentioned in **Joshua 19:15,16**.
3. That the prophecy related to the Messiah is clear from the statement that this future ruler of Israel who had been promised under the Davidic covenant in **2 Samuel 7:16** was one whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.
4. The person referred to therefore had eternal life.

FULFILMENT

Matthew 2:5-6 (6 BC): And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

1. The arrival of Gentiles, the Magi from Babylon, caused Herod to enquire of the priests of Israel where the Messiah would be born.
2. They referred to **Micah 5:2** and pointed to Bethlehem, the town to which Joseph and Mary had travelled to be assessed under the census of Caesar Augustus (**Luke 2:1**).
3. It is of interest that Joseph and Mary were domiciled in Nazareth in Galilee (**Luke 2:4**) yet they stayed in Bethlehem for almost two years before fleeing to Egypt to allow the Magi to confirm the direct fulfilment of **Micah 5:2**.
4. Bethlehem means "house of bread". Thus the bread of life (**John 6:35**) was born in Bethlehem.

APPLICATION

We see in this act the love and power of Almighty God to do what he wills. There is no miracle with God who has all power and all knowledge. We understand so little of this present world and the best is yet to come!

The laws of nature are simply the expression of God's will in space-time, but he has not revealed all his will in the laws that we have discovered to date. God is Spirit. He is Person. He holds in his own power all life and will in the end of time wrap up this space-time universe and replace it. **2 Peter 3:9-18, Revelation 21-22**.

We may be attacked by slander; circumstances may be against us; but in due time God will take care to vindicate our character and save us from ruin. **Psalms 37:5-6**.

Our aim should be to preserve a clear conscience and God will guard our reputation by holy actions.

God will guide those who are thoughtful and calm. When we have looked patiently at a worrying subject, and do not know what to do, God, as in the case of Joseph, will intervene if we leave the problem with Him and lead us and direct our way.

Because we have the completed canon of Scripture and dreams are wild, irregular movements of the mind when asleep it is mere superstition to suppose that God now makes known His will in this way.

Emmanuel, or "God with us", gives glory to the plan of redemption. It is this which is the wonder of angels. It is this which makes the plan so vast, so grand, so full of instruction, and comfort to Christians.

It is this which sheds such peace and joy into the sinner's heart; which gives him such security of salvation, and which renders the grace of God in the work of redemption so great and His character so awe-inspiring.

DOCTRINE

CHRIST: HYPOSTATIC UNION

1. Hypostasis means standing together under one essence, two things united under one with no loss or transfer to the other and no change to either.

In the person of Jesus Christ the two natures, divine and human, were inseparably linked with no loss or transfer of properties or attributes, and no mixture or loss of separate identity the union was personal and eternal. The Lord Jesus Christ is still perfectly human and divine
2. See **Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, John 1:1-14, Romans 1:2-5, Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-11, 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:4**
3. The incarnate person of the Lord Jesus Christ included undiminished deity; He remained co equal and co eternal with the father while on earth. As a baby in the cradle he was holding the universe together.
4. The Lord Jesus Christ was also true humanity; body, soul and spirit although due to the virgin birth he had no old sin nature **1 Peter 2:22**

5. The two natures were united without transfer of attributes; the Essence of Deity and humanity were unchanged.
6. No aspect of the divine nature was lacking, although certain attributes were not exercised in line with the Father's plan **Matthew 4:1-10**
7. The union was personal and hypostatic; one essence with two natures.
8. Deity did not indwell humanity or possess it. The union was more than sympathy and harmony, it was unique combining the two natures eternally.
9. Christ had two natures in one person, therefore he could be supremely powerful yet weak at the same time.
 - a) Deity cannot be tempted, humanity can. **Matthew 4:1-10**
 - b) Deity cannot thirst, humanity can **John 19:28**
 - c) Deity is omniscient , humanity learns **Luke 2:40,52**
10. The necessity of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is seen in the following:-
 - a) To be our Saviour he had to be man as God cannot die. **Hebrews 2:14,15, Philippians 2:7,8**
 - b) To be our mediator He had to be equal with both God and man **Job 9:2, 32-33, 1 Timothy 2:5-6**
 - c) To be our High Priest He must be a man. **Hebrews 7:4,5 14-28; 10:5, 10-14**
 - d) To be a king he must be a man, a Jew in the line of David. **Psalms 89:20-37, 2 Samuel 7:8-16**
11. There are three categories of sayings or actions of the Lord:
 - a) From his deity alone **John 8:58**
 - b) From his humanity alone **John 19:28**
 - c) From his hypostatic union - **John 11:25,26**
12. The uniqueness of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is a key doctrine to understand for all believers, for it is on this point that the accurate preaching of the gospel rests. **1 Timothy 3:16**
13. The gospel message in one word is Immanuel - God with us. John's testimony on this point **John 1:14**. In Christ we see God's love and favour towards man. As God revealed himself in the Old Testament, so He perfectly reveals himself in the person of the unique person of the universe , the God man the Lord Jesus Christ.

HARMONY

ANNOUNCEMENT TO JOSEPH OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

11. THE BIRTH OF JESUS IN BETHLEHEM - MATTHEW 1:24-25

1:24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: **25** And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

KEY WORDS

Raised	Diegeiro	Raise, Arise, Stir up [Aorist Passive Participle]
Sleep	Hupnos	Sleep
Did	Poieo	To do [Aorist Active Indicative]
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God
Bidden	Prostasso	Bid, Command [Aorist Active Indicative]
Took	Paralambano	Take, Receive [Aorist Active Indicative]
Wife	Gune	Wife, Woman
Knew	Ginosko	To know [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Till	Heos	Until
Brought forth	Tikto	Be born, Be delivered, Brought forth [Aorist Active Indicative]
Firstborn	Prototokos	First born
Son	Uihos	Son
Called	Kaleo	To call [Aorist Active Indicative]

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

Verse 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

Here we see the logical sequence of the action of the participle preceding the action of the main verb, with Joseph being raised from sleep, and then doing what the angel had told him to do. It is not clear for the reason for Joseph’s sleep, whether it was natural or that the Lord put him the sleep so that He could reveal to him His will by means of a dream. We note that God used a dream in relation to the flight to Egypt.

Joseph responds to divine guidance immediately and firmly believing that it was a messenger of God that was sent to him, Joseph publicly married Mary took her to his house, lived with her as his wife, and had no further thoughts of putting her away.

One can only imagine the relief and joy of Mary when Joseph rose to the occasion, publically recognized their part in the divine drama of redemption, and formally made her his wife.

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

The verb Ginosko translated “knew” is a euphemism for having sexual relations. The verb is in the imperfect tense indicating that Joseph kept on not having sexual relations with Mary until after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This shows that Mary was a virgin until after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, but the text indicates did not remain a virgin afterwards. In fact Jesus had some half brothers including two New Testament writers James and Jude.

Matthew does not say that Mary bore no other children than Jesus. The perpetual virginity of Mary is not taught here, and was not taught by the early church until the fourth century. Jesus had brothers and sisters and the natural meaning is that they were younger children of Joseph and Mary and not children of Joseph by a previous marriage.

So Joseph “called his name Jesus” as the angel had directed and the child was born to married parents. Joseph therefore showed that he was an upright man in a most difficult situation. We also see that **Isaiah 7:14** tells us that a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son indicating that Mary was not only a virgin when she conceived by the Holy Spirit but was still a virgin when Jesus was born.

LUKE 2:1-7

Luke 2:1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should **be taxed**. **2** (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) **3** And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. **4** And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David;) **5** To be taxed with Mary **his espoused** wife, being great with child. **6** And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. **7** And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

KEY WORDS - LUKE

Came to pass	Ginomai	To become something [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Days	Hemera	Days
Went out	Exerchomai	Issue, To go forth [Aorist Active Indicative]
Decree	Dogma	Decree, Ordinance
The World	Ho Oikumene	The globe, specifically the Roman Empire
Be taxed	Apographo	To write off, Enrol, Taxed [Perfect Passive Infinitive]
Taxing	Apographe	Assessment, Taxing
First	Protos	First
Made	Ginomai	Became or occurred [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Governor	Hegemoneuo	To act as ruler, Governor [Present Active Participle]
Went	Poureuomai	Depart, Go ones way. Walk [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Every One	Hekastos	Both, Each One
His Own	Idios	Home
City	Polis	City
Went up	Anabaino	Climbed, Ascended [Aorist Active Indicative]
Called	Kaleo	Called [Present Passive Indicative]
Was	Eimi	Kept on being [Present Active Infinitive]
House	Oikos	Household
Lineage	Patria	Family, Kindred, Lineage
Taxed	Aprographo	Enrolled Aorist Middle Infinitive]
Espoused	Mnesteuo	Betrothed [Perfect Passive Participle]
Wife	Gune	Wife, Woman
Being	Ousa	Being [Present Active Participle]
Great with child	Egkuos	Heavily pregnant
So it was	Ginomai	So it became [Aorist Middle Indicative]
They	Autos	They
Were	Eimi	They were constantly [Present Active Infinitive]
There	Ekei	Thither
Were accomplished	Pletho	Completed [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Should be delivered	Tikto	Be born, Delivered, Give birth [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Brought forth	Tikto	Gave birth [Aorist Active Indicative]
Firstborn	Prototokos	First child
Son	Uihos	Son
Wrapped him in swaddling clothes	Sparganoo	To wrap in swaddling clothes [Aorist Active Indicative]
Laid	Anaklino	Lay, Make sit down [Aorist Active Indicative]
Manger	Phatne	Manger, Stall
Because	Dioti	For, Because
Was	Eimi	There kept on being [Aorist Active Indicative]
Room	Topos	Room, Place
Inn	Kataluma	Guest chamber, Inn

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

APOGRAPHO – TAXED, WRITTEN, ENROLLED occurs 5 times in the New Testament and twice in the Perfect Tense.

In **Luke 2:1** it is of interest that the taxing or census of the Roman Empire had been planned a number of years before, but warfare meant that it was postponed to the right time by God to conform with a pregnant Mary going from Nazareth to Bethlehem to fulfil the prophecy of **Micah 5:2** from over 700 years previously. The timing was exactly right – God’s Plan is always precise!

MNESTEUO – BETROTHED, ENGAGED. Occurs 3 times in the New Testament with all three texts dealing with the engagement of Mary and Joseph. **Matthew 1:18** In **Luke 1:27** and **Luke 2:5** it shows that in the ancient world betrothal was as strong as marriage. Once the engagement had occurred it was permanent.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
11	Genesis 49:10	The timing of His coming	Luke 2:1-7
	Psalm 22:9-10	Born the Saviour	Luke 2:7

REFLECTION

Verse 1 **And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.**

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus - When John the Baptist was born, and Christ was conceived, and his mother pregnant with him, and the time of his birth drew on. The word those “ekeinos” translated those can also mean “that same or that very day”. It is so translated in the Ethiopic version which reads, "in that day".

Interpreted in that light, it was apparently the same day on which John was circumcised, and Zacharias delivered the above song of praise, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus.

Caesar Augustus was the second emperor of Rome; the name Caesar was common to all the emperors, as Pharaoh to the Egyptians, and afterwards Ptolemy. His name Augustus was not his original surname, but Thurinus; and was given him, after he became Caesar, to express his grandeur, majesty, and reverence.

That all the world should be taxed; or "registered", or "enrolled"; for this was not levying a tax, or imposing tribute upon them, but a taking an account of the names of persons, and of the taxable value of their estates. For the payment of a tax there was no need of the attendance of women and children, but this was a thorough census and every living person was to be seen and counted by the officials.

The Arabic version gives the translation, "that the names the whole habitable world might be described, or written down": The word apographo is translated to write off, Enrol, Taxed [Perfect Passive Infinitive] but with the perfect passive infinitive it indicates that they received a writing down for a purpose, such as an enrolment for future taxation.

This enrolment had been first considered by Augustus, when at Tarracon in Spain, over twenty years before. It was however deferred by problems in the empire.

The timing of the edict is again seen as part of God’s plan as it had to coincide with Joseph and a pregnant Mary being obliged to travel the long distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem to fulfil the prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judea.

The quotation that “all the world” would be taxed would also be rendered that the whole of the Roman Empire would be enrolled. It would therefore seem that it was not just Judea or Israel but the whole Roman Empire which at this stage is said to have a population of 120 million would be enrolled which would be no mean feat. It unfolded around the empire at different times, but was “on time” to ensure Jesus was born where prophetic revelation had said he would be born – Bethlehem.

Verse 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

And this taxing was first made should be better stated, "this was the first enrolment, or taxing" in the Jewish nation; for there was another afterwards, when Judas the Galilean arose, and drew many after him, **Acts 5:38**.

when Cyrenius was governor of Syria

Luke has been attacked here on the basis that Quirinius was believed to be governor of Syria only once, and that was from A.D. 6 as shown by Josephus Antiquities, but Professor Ramsay proved in the early 1900s by inscriptions he discovered, that Quirinius was twice in Syria, and that Luke quite expectedly is correct here also.

The Date of the Birth of Christ

An error in calculation by Dionysius the Younger, who in the 6th century introduced the present method of dating made the Birth of Christ coincide with the Roman year 754, whereas further studies as outlined below show that it should have been 747 or 748 which would make it 6 or 7 BC.

We know that Jesus had to be born before 4 BC because the death of Herod occurred in the northern spring of 4 BC. The Wise Men who interviewed Herod were seeking the Christ child and found Him together with Mary and Joseph as a young child in a house, not as a baby in the manger, as the shepherds found him.

The child was probably about 18 months old. This is further indicated by the fact that Herod ordered all male children 2 years old and younger to be killed in an attempt to eliminate the Christ child.

Josephus the Jewish historian tells us that in the start of the governorship of Quirinius in 8 BC Herod spent the whole of the year outside Jerusalem fighting a war. Josephus also tells us that in 5 BC Herod left Jerusalem and went to Jericho and stayed there until his death.

From this information we see that the Lord Jesus Christ was born either in 7 or 6 BC.

Verse 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

There was therefore a huge movement across the Roman Empire with people going to the cities of their lineage. This could well explain why there was a shortage of accommodation in Bethlehem forcing Mary and Joseph to have to stay in the stable or cave attached to, or underneath the inn.

The concept of a Roman census was originally instituted by Servius Tullius, sixth king of Rome. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that "He ordered all the citizens of Rome to register their estates according to their value in money, taking an oath, in a form he prescribed, to deliver a faithful account according to the best of their knowledge, specifying the names of their parents, their own age, the names of their wives and children, adding also what quarter of the city, or what town in the country, they lived in."

A Roman census appears to have consisted of these two parts:

1. The account which the people were obliged to give in of their names, quality, employments, wives, children, servants, and estates; and
2. The value set upon the estates by the censors, and the proportion in which they adjudged them to contribute to the defence and support of the state, either in men or money, or both: and this seems to have been the design of the census or enrolment in the text.

This census was probably similar to that made in England in the reign of William the Conqueror, which is contained in what is termed Domesday Book, one copy now in the Chapter House, Westminster, and dated 1086, and a complete original at the National Archives in Kew, and partial manuscripts in other places.

"Each to his own city" A number of papyri in Egypt have the heading enrolment by household. Here again Luke is vindicated. Each man went to the town where his family register was kept.

Verse 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

Both Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem as this was the city of David and they were both descended from David, Joseph from Solomon and Mary from Nathan. [See section 4 above]

The phrase "went up", the Greek word Anabaino, which is translated "climbed or ascended", is accurate as Bethlehem is at a higher elevation than Nazareth.

The city of David, which is Bethlehem, was where David was born and brought up **1 Samuel 17:12**. According to **Micah 5:2** this was the place where the Messiah was to be born.

Bethlehem means "the house of bread": a very fit place for Christ, the bread which came down from heaven, and gives life to the world, to come from. **John 6:35-58**.

Verse 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

Mary was heavily pregnant and yet, though in such difficult circumstances, was obliged by this Roman edict, to come to Bethlehem. There are three biblical witnesses to this principle for all believers of the Church Age. **Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-17**.

By being obedient to the government, even though it was greatly inconvenient to her because of her condition, she was able to conform to the prophecy of Micah.

Verse 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

Mary had up to this time been living at the wrong place for Messiah's birth. A little longer stay at Nazareth, and the prophecy would have failed. But with no intention certainly on her part, much less of Caesar Augustus, to fulfil the prophecy, she is brought from Nazareth to Bethlehem and at exactly the right time the period of pregnancy is completed and her baby is born.

Verse 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Jesus is called Mary's firstborn, because she had no children before him. Even though she might not have any after him he would still be called the firstborn and was holy to the Lord, **Exodus 13:2**.

Christ, as to his human nature; was Mary's firstborn; and as to His divine nature, God's firstborn.

Swaddling clothes are not normal baby clothes; they are bands of cloth used for binding up the dead. The swaddling cloths indicate even at this very early stage of our Lord's life that He was born to die.

There was no cradle so the Saviour of the world was placed in a feeding trough. This shows the abject poverty that the Lord Jesus Christ was born in.

As outlined above the pressure of accommodation for those arriving for the census was such that the Holy Family were unable to find lodgings, and the family were caught without any baby clothing, or the cold necessitated the unusual wrapping of the baby Jesus.

APPLICATION

God will use the plans and schemes of man as a vehicle to further His plans and purposes.

A census, conceived by a pagan emperor, which is a sensible concept under the fourth divine institution of nationalism, was delayed and used in perfect harmony with God's timing to ensure that a promise He had made many centuries before would be fulfilled. "*This is the Lord's doing. It is marvellous in our eyes*". **Psalm 118:23**.

We as Christians are to comply with the reasonable requirements of our national entity even though we may find at the time that such requirements are difficult for us. It is part of our Christian testimony. Christ who was rich became poor so that we who are poor could become rich. As a baby He was identified with death so that we could be identified with new life in Him.

DOCTRINE - NATIONS

1. God has set the geographical and historical boundaries for nations. (**Acts 17:26, Genesis 10:25; Deuteronomy 32:8**)
2. All nations and races are descended from Noah's three sons Ham, Shem and Japheth. (**Genesis 9:19**)
3. The nations were dispersed after the Tower of Babel (**Genesis 11:9**)
4. Internationalism and one-worldism is therefore against the will of God. (cf **Genesis 11:4,9**) Satan is attempting to unite the world as a counterfeit to the Millennium, when Christ will reign as King.
5. Nations are established by God to protect the freedoms and rights of people so that they may serve God peacefully. (**1 Timothy 2:1-2**)
6. The importance of free will - a government should not force people to accept or reject Christianity.
7. Freedoms in a nation are to be protected
 - a) Externally by military forces
 - b) Internally by police forces and courts (**Romans 13:4**) Capital punishment is an integral part of law enforcement. (**Genesis 9:6**)
8. The effectiveness of believers within a nation determines its blessing or cursing (**Deuteronomy 11:26-28, Genesis 18:17-33, Matthew 5:13**)
9. When nations become evil, God must destroy them. Examples include
 - a) Amorites (**Genesis 15:16, Deuteronomy 7:2**)
 - b) Chaldea (**Daniel 5**)
10. Jews were forbidden to intermarry with other nations, so that the Jewish religion would not be defiled by heathen practices. (**Deuteronomy 7:1-3, Ezra 10:2,14**)
 - a) Solomon's union with foreign women was evil. (**Nehemiah 13:23-27**)
 - b) Abraham forbade Isaac to marry outside his people. (**Genesis 28:1**)
 - c) Esau's marriage to Hittites brought grief (**Genesis 26:34,35**)
 - d) Moses' marriage to an Ethiopian caused trouble. (**Numbers 12:1**)
11. The threefold split of humanity appears in the book of Acts as examples of salvation.
 - a) An Ethiopian (Hamitic) is saved in (**Acts 10:1 -48**)
 - b) Saul (Semitic) is saved in (**Acts 9:1-16**)
 - c) Cornelius (Japhetic) is saved in (**Acts 10:1-48**)

HARMONY - THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

“Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn, and he [Joseph] called his name JESUS.”

12. ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHEPHERDS - LUKE 2:8-14

Luke 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. **10** And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. **11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. **12** And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe **wrapped in swaddling clothes**, lying in a manger. **13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, **14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

KEY WORDS

Were	Eimi	Kept on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Country	Chora	Country, Fields, Grounds, Region
Shepherds	Poimen	Shepherd
Abiding in the field	Agrauleo	Abiding in fields [Present Active Participle]
Keeping	Phulasso	Beware, Keep, Observe [Present Active Participle]
Watch	Phulake	Cage, Prison, Ward, Watch
Flock	Poimne	Flock, Fold
Night	Nux	Night
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God
Came upon	Ephistemi	Come upon, Present, Stand before [Aorist Active Indicative]
Glory	Doxa	Glory
Shone round about	Perilampo	Shone round about [Aorist Active Indicative]
They were sore afraid	Phobeo Megas	Literally fearful great fear, They were greatly fearful [Aorist Passive Indicative]
	Phobos	Passive Indicative]
Born	Tikto	Born [Aorist Passive Indicative]
This day	Semeron	This day compared to the normal word "hemera" for day
City	Polis	City
Saviour	Soter	Saviour
Is	Eimi	Always is [Present Active Indicative]
Christ	Christos	Christ
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God
Sign	Semion	Sign
Shall Find	Heurisko	Find, See [Future Active Indicative]
Babe	Brephos	Baby on the breast, Infant
Swaddling clothes	Sparganoo	Wrap in swaddling clothes [Perfect Passive Participle]
Lying	Keimai	Lie [Present Middle Participle]
Manger	Phatne	Manger, Stall
Suddenly	Exaiphnes	Suddenly
Was	Ginomai	Came to be [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Multitude	Plethos	Multitude, Throng, Abundance
Heavenly	Orianos	Heavenly
Host	Stratia	Host
Praising	Aineo	Praise [Present Active Participle]
Saying	Lego	Speak, Utter, Say [Present Active Participle]
Glory	Doxa	Glory, Worship, Honour, Praise
The Highest	Hupsistos	Most high, Highest
Earth	Ge	World, Earth
Peace	Eirene	Peace, Quietness, Rest
Good will	Eudokia	Good pleasure
Man	Anthropos	Man

PERFECT TENSE VERB

SPARGANOO – WRAPPED IN SWADDLING CLOTHES Occurs twice in the New Testament. In **Luke 2:12** Why was this a sign to them?

Certainly it would be most unusual to find a child in a manger in a stable especially a future King of the Jews. Though there might be many other children, in the inn, none of them would be lying in a manger or in swaddling clothes.

What were “swaddling clothes”. These were the strips of linen used in the ancient world for preparing the dead for burial. The unique sign was that this baby had been born to die. The fact he was permanently wrapped in swaddling clothes was a sign that He was the Saviour whose death would pay the penalty of sin. Lying in a manger shows how the Lord came in grace with great humility. Had not the angel given them this direction, they would never have thought to have looked for Him in such a place. In addition it might have been a “stumbling stone” for their faith, had they not been told beforehand where he was, and how he would appear to the world.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
12	Psalm 45:7-8	Called the Christ, Messiah or Anointed	Luke 2:11

REFLECTION

Verse 8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Shepherds were common in the area around Bethlehem. It was near Bethlehem that David kept his father’s flocks. **1 Samuel 17:15** . *“But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.”* The shepherds abiding in the fields keeping watch over their flocks by night shows that at the time of the nativity the flocks were out in the fields during the night.

The words translated keeping watch is in the plural indicating that there were multiple watches; the watches during the night lasted three hours.

The night was therefore divided into four watches, the even, midnight, cock crowing, and morning. The reason why they watched them in the field appears to have been, either to preserve the sheep from beasts of prey, such as wolves or foxes, or from bandits who roamed through the land of Judea at that time.

It was a custom among the Jews to send out their sheep to the open pastoral lands, about the Passover, and bring them home at the commencement of the first rain.

The Passover occurred in the spring, and the first rain began early in the month of Marcheshvan, which is equivalent to our October or November, around the Feast of Tabernacles, which would be appropriate, given God was in Jesus, “tenting with us”.

We find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole of the summer. During the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day. As these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a probable that October had not yet commenced. It is concluded that our Lord was not born on the 25th of December. So when was our Lord born?

Fabricius gives a list of no less than 136 different opinions concerning the date of Christ’s birth: and as to his birth. To show the diversity of months we note that: the Egyptians placed it in January, Wagenseil, in February, Bochart, in March, Clemens Alexandrinus, in April, others, in May, Epiphanius speaks of some who placed it in June and of others who supposed it to have been in July. Wagenseil, who was not sure of February, fixed it probably in August, Lightfoot, on the 15th of September - Scaliger, Casaubon, and Calvisius, in October and others, in November. The Holy Catholic Church, supreme in power at the time under Constantine, and so infallible in judgement, placed it on the 25th of December, the very day on which the ancient Romans celebrated the feast of their goddess Bruma – the “Saturnalia” – Mid-Winter’s Day. It was the Emperor’s way of trying to Christianize the pagan feast, but has worked down the centuries the other way...

Verse 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

It may be Gabriel, who had brought the tidings of the conception of the Messiah to the virgin who now revealed the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. The phrase “came upon them”, indicates that it was all of a sudden, unexpectedly, at once. Angelic visitation is no “fluffy-light-hearted” phenomenon. He stood by them or as some versions render it stood over them, over their heads, just above them; so that he was easily and perfectly seen by them.

The messenger brought a very glorious and extraordinary light by which they could discern the illustrious form of the angel that was over them. At the sight of such glory and the angel they were overawed with the majesty of God and were conscious of their own sinfulness and frailty.

They were sore afraid is a phrase in the Greek, Phobeo Megas Phobos, which literally translated means fearful great fear. They were greatly fearful. Evaluation of the structure of the verb reveals the reality of the fear with the Indicative mood with the passive voice showing they received fear and the aorist tense that the great fear was received at that very point in time.

Verse 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

The angel immediately sets about allaying the fears of the shepherds assuring them that he is bringing a message of great joy. The great joy is that the Saviour of the world has been born in Bethlehem. Why then cause fear, so as to have to tell the shepherds to “Stop being afraid...”? It is a reminder to us that elect angels are beings from eternity-infinity, from heaven itself, and when such beings step into time and space it is overwhelming to our limited minds.

The effect of this birth on all mankind is pivotal. It was not a great joy to many individuals. It was not a great joy to Herod and his courtiers, who were troubled at it; nor to the greater part of the Jewish nation, who when he came to them, received him not, but rejected him as the Messiah.

It was particularly not a great joy to the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, who when they saw Him, said, this is the heir, let's kill him, and seize on the inheritance. The Messiah will be the touch-stone for all of Judaism to face the choice as to their eternal destiny – and the vast majority will reject Him.

However to all that were waiting for Him, and were looking for redemption in Israel; to all sensible sinners who rejoice at His birth, and in His salvation; to all the people of God, whether Jews or Gentiles it was the cause of great joy. God's plan had moved another major step forward towards its ultimate conclusion.

Verse 11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

The word for day is for a natural day, consisting both of night and day. It would appear that Jesus Christ was born in the night. The Jews said that the future redemption shall be in the night. Also it was a tradition of the Jews that Christ would come in the middle of the night, which is when most babies are indeed born.

The angel does not say, "unto us", but "unto you", unto you men; for he means not merely, and only the shepherds, or the Jews only, but the Gentiles also; all the children, all the spiritual seed of Abraham, all elect men and women; for their sakes, and on their account and for their good.

He is born in the city of David; that is, Bethlehem, confirming the prophecy of **Micah 5:2** (710 BC): *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”*

It is noted that at the time of Micah in the 8th Century BC, the settlement of Bethlehem was small. It was one of four Bethlehem's in the area conquered by the Jews. Bethlehem of Judea therefore had to be distinguished from Bethlehem of Zebulun mentioned in **Joshua 19:15-16**.

That the prophecy related to the Messiah is clear from the statement that this future ruler of Israel who had been promised under the Davidic covenant in **2 Samuel 7:16** was one whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. The person referred to therefore had eternal life.

In this verse the person born is noted; He is a Saviour who is Christ the Lord. The person here is seen as the unique God man as He is not only the Saviour but also the Lord or God. As Christ He has come from God the Father to undertake God's plan.

The birth of the unique Saviour must be joyful, and is obviously to be seen as good news and glad tidings.

Verse 12 **And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.**

Why was this a sign to them? Certainly it would be most unusual to find a child in a manger in a stable especially a future King of the Jews, but the even stranger thing was the “wrapping” in the bandages of the dead.

Though there might be many other children, in the various inns, none of them would be lying in a manger under the inn, or in swaddling clothes. What were “swaddling clothes”? These were the strips of linen used in the ancient world for preparing the dead for burial. They were stored in places such as the animal shelter caves under public places, where the poor dead might be brought for wrapping. The linen bandages were worn out clothes, but stored in rock cut niches in the wall for the poor to sue to wrap the dead and given them some dignity before burial. The sign was that this baby had been born to die.

The fact he was wrapped in swaddling clothes was a sign that He was the Saviour whose death would pay the penalty of sin. Laying in a manger shows how the Lord came in grace with great humility, and was relaxed in the company of the animals, and the most basic of places – always beware of those unable to sit in the humblest places without acting as if they will catch a deadly disease, and separate from all who act superior to others – pride is Satan’s sin; it is not to be ours. **Galatians 6:14-26.**

Had not the angel given them this direction, they would never have thought to have looked for Him in such a place. The Lord’s place of birth was an immediate challenge to the shepherds, for their humble status may have predisposed them to think kings were “above them”, but the Lord was coming in humility. He would later ride the donkey, not the white horse of the conqueror.

Had they not been told beforehand where He was, they would not have found Him, but also they would not have prepared their hearts, that He would not be as the pagans and the unbelievers expected; born in a palace. His palace was nature itself – amongst the creatures He had created.

Verse 13 **And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**

The heavenly chorus of angels now join the angel in praises to God, and reinforce that the superior beings (the angels) are honouring the Messiah-Saviour-King who is to be born in the humble place. "The multitude of the heavenly host" probably means that the whole of the elect angels came together to sing the praises of God, and glorify Him at the birth of the Saviour. This is seen in **Hebrews 1:6** which says, "*When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him*".

Glory to God in the highest, - It is right and proper to praise the glory of God, for God is great in the salvation, peace, and reconciliation provided to his people by Jesus Christ. The glory of God is His matchless character; the glory of all his perfections and His wisdom in forming and executing such a plan.

And on earth peace: This does not mean international peace, which will be the case when the Prince of Peace reigns on this earth during the Millennium. What is meant is the peace that this child will bring eventually at the Cross where God and man are reconciled. He is our peace! **Ephesians 2:14-17.**

Christ alone is their peace maker. He is unique, being God and man in one person forever, and so qualified as a mediator in things relating to God, and He alone is able to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

APPLICATION

The time in the year at which Christ was born has been considered of great importance to many Christians. However, the matter has been considered of no importance by the Holy Spirit, who inspired the writers of the Scripture. It is therefore concluded that we should concentrate on what the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures wants us to understand. It is around the time of the Feast of Tabernacles – but other than the significance of that for the incarnation we ought not to “argue about days”. **Galatians 4:8-11, Colossians 2:14-17.**

However erroneous customs infiltrating the two main festivals of the Christian Church, Christmas and Easter should be noted for what they were.

Do we have real joy when we see the Lord's plan as described in the Scriptures being worked out in our individual lives? Do we know the will of God for us as individuals?

God is in ultimate control and His plan will be completed exactly according to His timetable.

It is by humility that Christ came to reign; and this is the only way into His kingdom. Pride is the character of all unsaved men, humility the mark of the Son of God, and should be to all of His followers. Christ came in the way of humility to destroy that pride which is the root of evil in the souls of men.

You have to have the peace with God before you can have the peace of God, which passes all understanding. It passes understanding because it flows only from the eternal plan of God – and we are presently still creatures limited to space and time.

PROPHECY

THE CHRIST CHILD

PROPHECY

Isaiah 9:6,7 (740 BC): 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

1. The people of Judah at the time of this prophecy were at a low point in their history, being led by their apostate king Ahaz. They were living in a period of unrelieved gloom. Zebulun and Naphtali had suffered reprisal raids made on Israel by Tiglath Pileser III of Assyria who had deported many of its inhabitants.

2. In this darkness Isaiah prophesied a glorious future with the Messiah himself coming from this region. The Messiah, the light of the whole world, would arise in the glorious day when the Davidic dynasty would become established forever and the Messianic kingdom come into being. His kingdom would be one of peace, justice, prosperity and righteousness, in stark contrast to the kingdom of Ahaz.

FULFILMENT - "The child born":

Luke 2:11,12 (c.6BC) 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger..

The first of six fulfilments is the child born. Jesus had to be born to be true humanity. As God cannot die, Jesus had to become man to be subject to death, even the death of the cross (**Hebrews 2:9**). Jesus also had to become man to be a priest, a king, and a mediator. It is of great importance that in verse 11 the baby born in Bethlehem is not only our Saviour but also shown to be the Messiah (Christ) and God (the Lord). Nevertheless Jesus is a baby lying in a manger.

FULFILMENT - "The Son given"

John 3:16 (6 BC): For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God loved humanity so much that he gave his everlasting Son that by faith in him men should be saved. In order to live eternally, mankind has to have an eternal relationship with a person with everlasting life - God. The child born and the Son given points to the unique person of all time - the God-man, Jesus Christ Jesus is therefore Emmanuel, God with us (**Matthew 1:23**). As God, Jesus Christ is eternal; he is the beginning and the end: the alpha and omega (**Revelation 1:8**).

FULFILMENT - "The government on his shoulders"

1 Corinthians 15:25,26 (Second Advent – still to come): For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

The government shall be on upon his shoulders. Jesus Christ is the Lord omnipotent, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords.

Jesus is seen here as the great conqueror. He currently sits in the place of commendation at the right hand of God the Father until all his enemies are made his footstool. It is because of our union with Christ that we shall reign with him (**Revelation 20:4-6**), and through him we conquer death.

FULFILMENT - "The mighty God"

Titus 2:13 (second advent): Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

We look forward to the appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, firstly, at the Rapture of the Church (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**) and after that at the Second Advent (**Revelation 19:11-16**) at the commencement of his glorious reign on the earth.

FULFILMENT - "Prince of peace"

Ephesians 2:14 (32AD): For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

The work of Jesus is the means of creating peace between God and man through reconciliation by his death on the cross (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). Jesus is also a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (**Psalms 110:4**), who was the king priest of Salem (or peace). The wall of partition being broken allows us entrance to God (**Hebrews 4:14-16**), thus allowing us to approach the throne of grace.

FULFILMENT - "Eternal ruler"

Luke 1:31-33 (second advent): And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

This shows Jesus Christ as the eternal King descended from David (**Isaiah 9:7**). The kingdom over which he reigns is an eternal kingdom. Jesus is seen as a direct descendent of David through Solomon in **Matthew 1**. He will have eternal life (as God he always had eternal life, but as God-Man he "wins" this as victor over sin and death) as he will reign forever as God and Man.

SUMMARY: Jesus, during his first advent, fulfilled the birth of a child, the giving of the Son, and made peace with God possible through the Cross/Empty Tomb.

He is still to fulfil the rest of the prophecy when he returns as world ruler and the King of the Jews, reigning on the throne of David (**Revelation 20:4-6; 21: 5, 6**). The prophecy of **Isaiah 9:6, 7**, therefore, shows Jesus as Saviour and coming King, embracing both first and second advents.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTMAS: BIRTH DATE OF CHRIST

1. Traditionally the birth of Jesus is celebrated on December 25 from the days of Constantine the Great.
2. December 25 is however certainly not the date of the birth of Christ:
 - a) In **Luke 2:8** shepherds were abiding in the fields with their sheep at the birth of Jesus. In the northern winter, the shepherds of Israel would keep their sheep in sheep-folds from about October/November until February/March (spring).

- b) In **Luke 2:1-5** Caesar Augustus issued an edict that all the world should be taxed and that everyone should travel to their city of birth for assessment purposes. It is highly unlikely that an edict of that type would be issued for people to travel in mid-winter, which was unsafe.
3. From Scripture an indication of the date of Christ's birth can be obtained as follows:
- a) Zachariah, the husband of Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist) was a priest in the Temple in Jerusalem (**Luke 1:5**).
- b) He was a Levite of the course of Abijah (**Luke 1:5**), a course being a priestly division of the Levites.
- c) Elizabeth was barren (**Luke 1:7**).
- d) During his time of executing the priestly office in the Temple he is told that his wife will conceive (**Luke 1:8-23**).
- e) Elizabeth conceived soon after he had completed his course's ministrations (**Luke 1:23,24**).
- f) Of the 24 courses descended from Eleazer and Ithamar, Abijah is the eighth (**1 Chronicles 24:10**).

This indicates that they served for half a month each in the Temple.

- g) The first month in the Jewish year was Nisan in March/April; the fourth Tammuz in June/July.
- h) It could therefore be assumed that Elizabeth became pregnant in July.
- i) In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy the angel appeared to Mary (**Luke 1:26-38**). He appeared to her in December/January.
- She conceived at this time as she now went to see Elizabeth (**Luke 1:39**). Jesus was conceived in December/January.
- j) It is therefore likely that Jesus was born in September/October.
- k) This is more consistent with the shepherds being in the fields and a more likely time for the census.
- l) It is generally agreed that Jesus was born prior to 3 BC. It has been established that Cyrenius was governor of Syria in the years around 4 BC (**Luke 2:2**).
- m) Herod the Great died in the spring of 4 BC, not long after the visit of the wise men.
- n) The wise men came from Babylon and went to find Jesus as a young child in a house. The Greek words used in **Matthew 2:11** is PAIDION, which means a child of about 18 months old (not a 'baby' in the manger of **Luke 2:16**, which is the word BREPHOS).
4. It would therefore appear that Jesus was born in the autumn (September/October) of 6 BC.

CHRISTMAS: ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

1. The origins of Christmas are not in Christianity, but in ancient pagan religions.
2. On Christmas Eve, late Roman Imperial Church celebrated a mass to the Virgin Mary. In **Jeremiah 44:17**, the pagans sacrificed to the queen of heaven. We must be careful not to appear to be pagan in any way, nor associate the blessed Mary, the greatest of all women with anything associated with the female goddesses (demons) of fertility.
3. The Hindus also celebrate the queen of heaven with an unbloodied sacrifice.
4. The Spaniards went to Mexico to convert the natives and found that there was an existing ritual in which bread was converted into the actual flesh of the god involved.

5. The Serbs serve roast pig in celebration of Boshitch whose name means Christmas
 6. The Saxons offered a boar in sacrifice to the sun on Christmas Day.
 7. Santa Claus appearing in the chimney derives from a Norse legend which showed the god appearing in the fire hearth, bringing luck to the home.
 8. The Scandinavians used to worship trees. When they became Christians this was incorporated into Christmas.
 9. The Yule Log was burnt in celebration of Thor, the god of thunder. Yule is the Chaldean name for infant or little child. Yule day - child's day, was used by the pagan Anglo-Saxons.
 10. Mistletoe came from the Druids. They gave mistletoe as a charm to the people for reconciliation - kissing under the mistletoe, The man in the branch is mentioned here.
 11. Evergreen trees were employed in religious observances in a number of areas in pagan worship in the Old Testament (**Deuteronomy 12:2; 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 16:4; 2 Kings 17:10**).
 12. Images on the green tree (**2 Chronicles 28:4; Isaiah 57:5; Jeremiah 2:20; 3:6; 3:13; 17:2; Ezekiel 6:13**)
 13. The pagans worshipped the sun. The sun "dies" on the winter solstice (22 December), and is "reborn" or "resurrected" three days later on 25 December.
 14. God's attitude to sun worship (**Ezekiel 8:7ff** - Israel was to worship God towards the west, not as the sun in the east).
 15. Candles at Christmas has its origin in the worship of the unconquered sun.
 16. Gifts under the tree represent gifts to the god. After they have been offered to the god under the tree they are distributed to the worshipers.
 17. Santa Claus (Father Christmas) has been given a number of characteristics of God - he is all-knowing, everywhere, he rewards good works, he answers prayer requests. He has the white hair of wisdom (**Daniel 7:9, Revelation 1:13**).
 18. Hogmanay. Derived from the Chaldean 'Hog-Manai'. It means the feast of the Numberer. Meni, or Manai, is the moon divinity or the Moon God. The Saxons had the Man in the Moon as Manai. Worship of the moon is given in (**2 Kings 23:5**).
- The moon is to number the seasons in (**Psalms 104:19**). Hogmanay is therefore derived from the feast of the man in the moon, or the moon god.
19. The Christmas Goose. The favourite offering to Osiris was a goose, which not be eaten except in the depth of winter.
 20. Jerome, commenting on (**Isaiah 65:11**), said that this ceremony took place on the last day of the month and the year.

HARMONY

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHEPHERDS

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

13. VISIT OF THE SHEPHERDS TO ADORE CHRIST - LUKE 2:15-20

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which **is come to pass**, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

KEY WORDS

Came to pass	Ginomai	Came to pass [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Angels	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Gone Away	Aperchomai	Depart, Go Away [Aorist Active Indicative]
From them	Apo Autos	From their immediate vicinity
Heaven	Ouranos	Heaven
Shepherd	Poimen	Shepherd
Said	Epo	To say [Imperfect Active Indicative]
One another	Allelon	One another
Let us go	Dierchomai	Depart, Go, Travel [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
See	Eido	Be aware, Be sure, Behold, [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Thing	Rhema	A matter , A topic
Come to pass	Ginomai	Came to pass [Perfect Active Participle]
Has made known	Gnorizo	To make known, To make to understand [Aorist Active Indicative]
Came	Erchomai	To enter, To come [Aorist Active Indicative]
Haste	Speudo	Make haste [Aorist Active Participle]
Found	Aneurisko	To find [Aorist Active Indicative]
Babe	Brephos	Baby on the breast
Lying	Keimai	Lying [Present Middle Participle]
Manger	Phatne	Manger, Stall
See	Eido	Be aware, Be sure, Behold, [Aorist Active Participle]
Made Known	Daignorizo	To make known [Aorist Active Indicative]
Saying	Rhema	A matter , A topic
Told	Laleo	Speak, Tell, Talk [Aorist Passive Participle]
Concerning	Peri	About, Concerning
Child	Paidon	An infant, Child
Heard	Akouo	Hear [Aorist Active Participle]
Wondered	Thaumazo	Have in admiration, Marvel, Wonder [Aorist Active Indicative]
At	Peri	About, Concerning
Told	Laleo	Told [Aorist Passive Participle]
Kept	Suntereo	Keep, Preserve [Imperfect Active Indicative]
All	Pas	As many as, Every
Pondered	Sumballo	Compare, Ponder [Present Active Participle]
Heart	Kardia	Heart
Return	Epistrepho	Turn again [Aorist Active Indicative]
Glorifying	Doxazo	Glorify, Honour, Magnify [Present Active Participle]
Praising	Aineo	Praise
Heard	Akouo	Hear [Aorist Active Indicative]
Seen	Eido	Be aware, Be sure, Behold, [Aorist Active Indicative]
Told	Laleo	Told [Aorist Passive Indicative]

PERFECT TENSE VERB

GINOMAI – TO CAUSE TO BE, MADE, TO COME INTO BEING - Occurs 647 times in the New Testament with 65 times in the Perfect Tense. It is the third most common verb to be in the Perfect Tense after Oida and Grapho. It occurs in this form in 17 different New Testament books and is almost always in the Active voice.

Ginomai often is said to become something or change something from one situation to another. The Perfect Tense should therefore in many cases permanently change situations to demonstrate God's power or modification of His plan. In Luke's gospel there are seven verses. The night time vigil of the shepherds is changed radically after the angel tells them of the birth of the Messiah **Luke 2:15**, the people of the Gadarenes in Luke 8:34 go and see about the fate of the swine as in Mark 5:14 also see the change in the cured demoniac Luke 8:35.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

Verse 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

The Imperfect Active Indicative of the word to speak "epo" shows that the shepherds constantly talked to one another. As a result they decided to go to confirm that what had just happened to them was not a dream.

These shepherds were genuine believers waiting for the coming of the Messiah. As soon as they had heard about His birth, that He had actually appeared on earth close by, they went to find Him. These were faith-prepared men and in a spirit of excitement and worship they headed into Bethlehem township, possibly leaving those who were not believers, or hired servants, in charge of the sheep.

The word "ginomai" translated "come to pass" is the word meaning to become something. It is a perfect active participle, the perfect tense showing that it has happened at one point in time, but this event that they have been told of has everlasting effect into the future. It is a point in time perpetuated forever.

The shepherds recognise that it is the Lord God who has spoken; who has given them the message through the angel. We see others who were told but were not believers and did not "mix the word/announcement with faith; King Herod who did not go, the Wise Men who did, the court advisors who knew where the Messiah was to be born, but were not interested enough to go, or did not believe. Different groups were given the message, and according to their free will there were different responses to the information. **Hebrews 3:7 – 4:7.**

Verse 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

In this verse we see them acting on the message, and they do not hesitate – both because of the importance of the news, but also, they don't want to leave the sheep without full protection for too long. They made a top priority of hurrying to the place where the angel had said they would find the Messiah. They knew the place for poor people to find a cave where the dead could be prepared – they were poor men and such know where the charity outlet operates...

In the Greek the Aorist Active Participle for making haste precedes the Aorist Active Indicative of the point in time when they found the Messiah with Mary and Joseph, just as the angel had described it.

We should be surprised at the prompt obedience to the heavenly vision displayed by the shepherds whose whole life revolved about protecting their sheep from wolves and bandits. We see in them no doubts, or questionings, or hesitations. These are men of faith and obedience – they hear and respond **James 2:12-26**

Verse 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

They satisfied themselves of the truth of the coming of the Messiah. They confirmed the message given to them by the angels. Having seen the child themselves, they had now evidence that would satisfy others; and accordingly they became the first preachers of the "gospel," and went and proclaimed to others that the Messiah had indeed come.

One of the first duties of those who are newly converted to God is to proclaim to others what they have seen and felt. It should be done in a proper way and at the proper time; but nothing can or should prevent a recently converted Christian from telling his/her friends, parents and any old companions who will hear.

Verse 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

The word wondered in the Greek is “thaumazo” which means to wonder, marvel, be tremendously surprised. The Messiah born in a cave under an Inn, of very poor parents, surely not! But these shepherds were simple honest reliable folk, and they were men of faith, and saw, that the angel had told them the truth, that God had indeed stepped into history, and as a humble being, just like them. They people of the surrounding area heard the story from them; they were also awaiting the Messiah, but was this the truth they wanted to hear?

How was it, they wondered, that the news had been given to these low class shepherds and not to the religious leaders of Israel? However these shepherds are to a man, changed and enthusiastic about a story which they could never make up. It was a dramatic witness to those who heard the shepherd’s story.

A very similar response occurred at the time when Christ was reading the Scriptures in the synagogue in Luke 4. The reaction in verse 22 was, *“And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph’s son?”* All the way through the unfolding drama of redemption, the Father has chosen the poor and weak to proclaim the truth to the wealthy and powerful. The sad truth is that most who have the trappings of wealth and power end up feeling they do not need God at all! **1 Corinthians 1:27-28, James 2:5, 1 Peter 2:4-10.**

Verse 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

Mary also heard the story of the shepherds, directly from them, regarding their encounter with the angels. The Greek word translated to ponder is “sumballo”, which means “together [sum] throw [ballo]”, or compare one thing with another. Here we see the word heart as the thinking part of the mind.

Mary compared all the facts she had, from her own encounter with the angel, from Elisabeth, and Zechariah, from Joseph’s dream, and “compared them in her mind”: she compared what the shepherds had said with what had been said to herself by the angel, and also by her husband, as well as what was said by Elisabeth at the time she made her a visit. She “sits with the truth”; it is just too great to comprehend fully.

She however said nothing of all these things to others, lest she could be accused of boasting and therefore left things to be discussed in the future, and she discusses them first it would appear with Luke, who is the first to tell her story with Holy Spirit inspired precision.

Verse 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God. These simple men, having confirmed the angel’s story returned to the care of their flocks, glorifying God for what He had shown them, and for the blessedness and honour which they felt. They had a unique part to play, as the first evangelists of the truth of the incarnation and they played that part, and then quietly left the stage. The next person to step up and play his part as an evangelist of the incarnation would be John and Baptist.

They had as a result of their confrontation with the great truth of the arrival of Messiah become true servants of God and they were encouraging the same faith in all their hearers.

APPLICATION

All people should without delay seek the Saviour. When told of Him by the servants of God, they should, like these shepherds, forsake all, and give no rest to their eyes until they have found Him.

We may “always” find Him. We need not travel to Bethlehem. We have only to believe on Him and we shall find Him ever near to us, and forever our Saviour and friend.

When the Lord clearly guides us we should make all haste to do His will and share what He teaches us with others so that we point not to ourselves but as ambassadors to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Often more good may be done by a young believer who has been converted recently encouraging people who knew them prior to conversion than during any other period of their life.

Do we have the desire to tell others about our Lord? Paul had a deep desire to do so as seen in **Romans 1:14-16**.

DOCTRINES

CHRISTIAN LIFE - AMBASSADOR

1. An Ambassador does not appoint themselves, they are appointed by the nation represented, the king she/he represents, the person he/she represents. We are appointed by God. (**2 Corinthians 5:20**).
2. An Ambassador does not support themselves. We are sustained and protected by God (**Philippians 4:19**).
3. An Ambassador does not represent themselves. We represent God on earth. (**Matthew 28:19-20**).
4. An Ambassador does not belong to the nation to which she/he is sent. Positionally we are in heaven, experientially we are in the world. (**Philippians 3:20, John 15:19**).
5. All Ambassadors have instructions in written form. We have the Word of God. (**1 Thessalonians 4:1-2**).
6. An Ambassador representing their country does not treat any insult as personal. (**Matthew 5:11-12**).
7. When an Ambassador is recalled from a country it is tantamount to declaration of war. After the Rapture there will be massive warfare on earth. All Christians will be recalled at the Rapture. (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17**).

CHRISTIAN LIFE: EVANGELISM

1. All believers are ambassadors for Christ, and are obliged to give the gospel to unbelievers. (**Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 4:5**).
2. Two forms of witnessing - with the lips (**2 Corinthians 5:18-21**) and by the life (**2 Corinthians 3:3**)
3. The gospel is "good news".
4. Sin is not an issue. Jesus died for all sin on the cross. The penalty has been paid. The issue now is "Do you trust that Jesus Christ has died for your sins, and was raised from the dead to give life to all who believe on Him?" People choose to either rely upon Jesus Christ, or upon their own good works, to be saved. (**Romans 8:1, 9-30-33**)
5. What about the heathen who haven't heard?
 - a) God is totally fair, and everyone has the chance to be saved
 - b) Unlimited Atonement (**Colossians 2:14, 15**)
 - c) God's will - none should perish (**2 Peter 3:9**)
 - d) Man's negative will - God consciousness - Gospel hearing.
6. Witnessing is impossible except through the power of the Holy Spirit. (**John 16:8-13**) The Holy Spirit convicts of
 - a) Sin because of unbelief.
 - b) Righteousness.
 - c) Judgement because of Satan being judged (**Matthew 25:41**)
7. The natural man needs the Holy Spirit to understand the gospel (**1 Corinthians 2:14**)
8. The Bible is the weapon of witnessing. (**1 Corinthians 15:3, 4**)
9. Biblical Pattern of Witnessing. (**1 Thessalonians 2:1-12**)
 - a) Effective contact (v.1)

- b) The gospel must be given even under opposition. (v.2)
- c) The gospel must never be compromised or watered down - (v.3)
- d) The believer in whom the gospel is deposited is tested by God and should not be for the praise of man. (v.4)
- e) Flattery should never be part of the gospel. (v.5-6)
- f) Whilst the gospel should not be given to get praise from men it should be given in love without cost (v9)
- g) The gospel must be followed up (v 10) with discipleship and teaching (v11) so that the new believer can become spiritually self reliant. (v.10-12)

10. Your obligation to witness (**Romans 1:14-16**): you are a debtor (v14), you are ready (v15), you are not ashamed (v16)

11. Win souls, not arguments. Stay on the gospel, don't get side-tracked.

12. We are fishers of men **Matthew 4:19**

- a) Fishermen need to be equipped to fish. You need to be walking in the Spirit and you need to know the gospel.
- b) Fishermen go to where the fish are. You must be in contact with unbelievers so that you can witness to them.
- c) Fishermen are patient. Allow for the conviction and preparation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the unbeliever.
- d) Fishermen know what bait to use for different fish. You have to be flexible and know how to approach different personalities.
- e) Fishermen concentrate on fish and not the fishpond. Our primary concern is saving people - the evil in the world will continue to exist.

CHRISTIAN LIFE: EVANGELISM - NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN

1. The pastor of the local church must practice a Bible saturated, spirit controlled life. By his systematic teaching of the Word he must encourage people to apply it in their life. The vessels that the Lord uses must be clean.

2. You must have a co-ordinated prayer life in the Church. This consists of the mid week prayer meeting and organising your prayer warriors. You need specific weekly prayer sheets.

3. You need to have weekly meetings with your deacons and elders to plan strategies for the church. You need to have that for a prayer plan for the week. It is good to have this on Sunday morning over breakfast so that the prayer points can be noted down and duplicated by the pastor for the morning service.

This gives current material. You plan your visitations, your speakers and how it can be co-ordinated in with the overall preaching plan. There also needs to be a home fellowship strategy and a strategy for the Bible class and Sunday School.

4. In the preaching everything must tie into the evangelistic, witness function of the church. He must emphasise that they are ambassadors and evangelists.

5. The minister encourages the people to find the fish. Every week they should be reminded of their work in this area.

6. Every believer should have his own list of people who he is praying constantly for. He should have a list of ten unbelievers and as one is converted a new name should be placed on the list.

7. The church contacts should be followed up as part of the strategy. This is the importance of a Sunday School. The Sunday School should be well known in the area. The unbelieving parents who send their children to Sunday School should be followed up by the minister to show friendliness towards them. You may be their only Christian contact.

8. There needs to be a church service follow up. Every visitor should be made to feel welcome but not embarrassed. Never ask a visitor to stand up. After the service have a coffee time and a special room set aside for visitors. It is an advantage to have a service which finishes a bit earlier. The minister follows up the visitors and lets an elder go on the door.

9. Organise visitation and be visible with walking through districts and greeting those you meet. This is far better than driving and parking. The morning should be in the study. Have a meal at home to have time with your wife or family, after lunch visitation. With walking you get exercise and are away from the phone.

Plan to visit three or four locations only. Drive to a central location and walk. If you are seen on the street people get to know. You have raised the profile of the church. You are swimming in the sea with the fish. Sit down with street kids, help an old lady. The church needs to draw on the local area. You need to be decently dressed but not suit and tie.

HARMONY

VISIT OF THE SHEPHERDS TO ADORE CHRIST

“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.”

14. CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS - LUKE 2:21

Luke 2:21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

KEY WORDS

Eight	Okto	Eight
Days	Hemera	Days
Accomplished	Pletho	Accomplish, Complete [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Circumcising	Peritemno	Circumcise [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Child	Paidon	Young Child
Name	Onoma	Name
Called	Kaleo	Called, Named [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Named	Kaleo	Called, Named
Angel	Aggelos	Angel
Conceived	Sullambano	Conceived [Aorist Passive Infinitive]
Womb	Koilia	Womb

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child - The original institution of circumcision was set out in **Genesis 17:12**. This was strictly adhered to by obedient Jews and in this case by the parents of our Lord here, and by those of John the Baptist, described in **Luke 1:59**.

The Apostle Paul reckons this among his privileges, that he could have boasted of as well as other Jews. It needs to be asked, why was Christ circumcised since he had no sin, which circumcision supposed; nor needed any circumcision of the heart, which that was a symbol of?

We see that it was done by Joseph and Mary, as obedient parents, since all the male Jews were obliged to be circumcised under the Mosaic Law. He had not come to do away with the Law but to fulfil it. It was essential that he fulfilled all the law in its three codices in order to fulfil the Law completely.

His name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb - It appears from this verse and from the instance of John the Baptist, that it was usual to give names to children, or publically announce them, at the circumcision ceremony.

APPLICATION

We are to understand the Christian way of life as delineated in the pertinent sections of the Scriptures and apply them to our daily living.

We have to realise that we are not under the law but under grace. There are however a number of criteria we are to follow such as the commandments in 1 Thessalonians 5.

DOCTRINES

CIRCUMCISION – SEE PAGE 99

HARMONY

CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS

“And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.”

15. PRESENTATION IN TEMPLE - LUKE 2:22-24

22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

KEY WORDS

Days	Hemera	Day
Purification	Katharismos	Cleansing, Purification
According	Kata	According to a norm or standard
Law	Nomos	Law
Were accomplished	Pletho	Accomplish, Full [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Brought	Anago	Bring, Depart [Aorist Active Indicative]
Present	Paristemi	Bring before, Yield, Present [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Lord	Kurios	God, Lord
Written	Grapho	Write [Perfect Passive Indicative]
Male	Arrhen	Male, Man
Openeth	Dianoigo	To open [Present Active Participle]
Womb	Metra	Womb
Called	Kaleo	Called [Future Passive Indicative]
Holy	Hagios	Holy, Set apart
Offer	Didomi	Offer, Give [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Sacrifice	Thusia	Sacrifice

Said	Ereo	Say, Tell [Perfect Passive Participle]
Pair	Zeugos	Pair, Yoke
Turtledoves	Trugon	Turtledoves
Two	Duo	Two
Young	Neossos	Young
Pigeon	Peristera	Dove, Pigeon

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

GRAPHO – WRITE, WRITTEN – Occurs 192 times in the New Testament, with 96 times in the Perfect Tense so that, with the exception of Oida [to know], Grapho is the most common verb appearing in the Perfect Tense in the New Testament. It appears in 11 individual books and is intimately involved with Bible prophecy – God’s word says it – “it is written” = “it is settled forever”. The frequency shows the utmost importance that God places on His unchangeable Word, and its eternal significance.

We note that the Lord Jesus Christ directly quotes the Prophecies in over a third of occurrence of the Grapho Perfect Tense showing the unbreakable link between God and His Word. As prophecies comprise 27% of all verses in the Bible, God expects us to use them, and those which have been perfectly fulfilled act as encouragement to us, and those yet to be fulfilled, are for our instruction and guidance, especially as we see the opportunity for them all to be literally fulfilled in coming days and years.

EREO – TO SAY, SPEAK OR TELL – Occurs 71 times in the New Testament of which 22 times are in the Perfect Tense. It occurs twice in Luke and the Revelation, four times in John, five times in Acts, six times in Hebrews and once in Romans and 2 Corinthians.

On 14 occasions the Active Indicative is used, while 7 times the Passive Voice, mainly in the Participle form, occurs. Many of the Perfect Tenses of the verb Ereo are tied in with quotations from the Old Testament, reinforcing the fact that the Bible is once and for all given to man as something which will last forever and using the truth of the Old Testament to reinforce the eternal nature of what is said. In fact half of the Perfect Tenses in Ereo are intimately tied to the eternal Word of God in the Old Testament.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT - None found

REFLECTION

Verse 22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

There is a two fold purpose for the ceremony here, the purification of the mother and the redemption of Jesus as the firstborn as seen in verse 24. A mother was considered unclean having given birth to a child, a period of 40 days for a male child and 80 days for a female. This shows that this event occurred when Jesus was 40 days old. **Leviticus 12:2, 12:6.** Even though Mary is the first woman who can come as a pure mother, with a totally pure son, she still approached this, to fulfil the Mosaic law completely, as the Lord as the baby being brought that day would be the one to complete the Law.

For the first seven first days after she gave birth, a mother was ceremonially unclean. She then continued thirty three days in the blood of her purifying, which made forty; Although the time of her purifying was upon the fortieth day, yet it was not till the day following that she came to the temple with her offering as explained in the following, "a new mother does not bring her offering on the fortieth day for a male, nor on the eightieth day for a female, but after her sun is set: and she brings her offering on the morrow, which is the forty first for a male, and the eighty first for a female".

And this was the time when they, Joseph and Mary, brought him, the child Jesus, to Jerusalem, and to the temple there, to present Him to the Lord, to the priest his representative; and which was done in the eastern gate, called the gate of Nicanor: for here, they made women, suspected of adultery to drink, and purified new mothers, and cleansed the lepers. The woman to be purified was placed in the east gate of the court, called Nicanor’s gate, and was there sprinkled with blood: thus she received the atonement. Everything here spoke of sin and the need for salvation, and the Lord would answer all the sin problems of mankind.

Verse 23 (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

The verse that Luke is quoting is **Exodus 13:2** – “Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.”

The firstborn son was devoted and consecrated to God, and so had to be redeemed. The reason of this law was that when God smote all the firstborn of Egypt, he saved the firstborn of Israel through the Passover lamb; and therefore God claimed a right to the first born, and obliged their parents, excepting the Levites, to redeem them at the price of five shekels, which was given to the Levites.

Under this law our Lord was acknowledged as Mary’s firstborn, and as such one holy to the Lord, forever associated with the Passover lamb. A sum of money was now paid for his redemption, He who was to be the great Redeemer of His people. “It is written”, perfect tense, and we are reminded that all that was written would be perfectly fulfilled in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. What was done this day by the parents of the baby Jesus would stand forever as their testimony of obedience to the Mosaic Law, as they brought the one who spoke it to Moses, and would in his First Advent work fulfil its righteous demands in readiness for the final fulfilment at his Second Advent, when He comes to fulfil the Autumn Feasts.

Now as the tribe of Levi was exempt from this law it is a clear case that Mary though related to Elisabeth, was not of the tribe of Levi, otherwise her firstborn would not have been subject to it. “An Israelite that comes from a priestess, or from a she Levite, is free, (i.e. from the redemption of the firstborn;) for the thing does not depend on the father, but on the mother, as it is said, that openeth the womb in Israel.”

Verse 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

Jesus is the firstborn. The fact that they offered a pair of turtle doves and two young pigeons show that they were a poverty stricken family as such a sacrifice was allowed under the law if you could not bring the normal sacrifice.

If the person was able, she was to bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering; and a young pigeon, or a turtle dove, for a sin offering; but in case of poverty, then the above sacrifice was allowed with one of them was for a burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering.

The fact that they were a poor family conforms to **Isaiah 11:1**, where the former mighty line of David would be cut down and left as a stump from which the Messiah would come. Once again, as it was “said in the Law” so it was done, and fulfilled the prophetic words relating to the fall into poverty of the house of David, but from the most humbled place the Messiah and ultimate King would come. The perfect tense reminds us that what God says is settled and true and will have eternal results.

APPLICATION

We have the Scriptures to follow, and as daughters/sons of God we are to obey them. It is only as we obey Him that we are able to be used by Him for His plan and purposes.

We are not under the Mosaic Law, but we are under the higher law of grace. This allows us great freedom as well as great responsibility.

Jesus Christ was not brought up in a rich family. His family was amongst the poorest in the nation. God often does things in unexpected ways and using the most unlikely people.

DOCTRINES

LEVITICAL OFFERINGS REPRESENT CHRIST

1. The Levitical offerings and sacrifices were a picture of the work of Jesus Christ. (**Hebrews 10:1**)
2. There are five offerings in Leviticus 1-6
 - a) Burnt animal offerings Chapter 1 The work of Christ.

- b) Cereal offerings Chapter 2 The person of Christ.
- c) Peace offering Chapter 3 Reconciliation.
- d) Sin offering Chapter 4 Unknown sins.
- e) Trespass offering Chapter 5-6v7 Known sins.

3. Burnt animal offerings (Leviticus 1)

An innocent perfect animal was killed for the sins of the offerer. A representation of Jesus dying for our sins on the cross.

- a) Bullock v2-9 Offered by the rich person.

Bullock is a male without blemish = Jesus Christ as a perfect person.

Offering is on the brazen altar = The death on the cross.

Offered voluntarily = Faith in Christ is on the basis of free will.

Sinner, (offerer) puts his hand on animal's head for an atonement. = Sins laid on Christ on the cross. Christ died for the sins of humanity . **(2 Corinthians 5:21)**

Killing of the bullock = The death of Christ

Blood covering the altar = Total cleansing from sin.

Flaying of animal to check that there were no inner blemishes = Jesus was perfect and free from sin both outwardly and inwardly.

Wood burnt = Human good removed. **(1 Corinthians 3:12, 15)**

The head is burnt = The perfect mentality of Christ

The fat is burnt = The outward perfection of Christ.

The gut washed with water from the brazen laver. = Cleansing from sin. **(1 John 1:9)**

The legs washed. = Cleansing from sin allows for service.

Bullock is burnt. = The solution to the sin problem at salvation and during the Christian life has been accomplished at the cross.

- b) Sheep v10-13 Offered by the middle class.

- c) Birds v14-17 Offered by the poor.

4. The Cereal Offerings (Leviticus 2)

- a) The Gift Offering = the gift of Jesus Christ.

Fine flour = Perfection of Christ

Oil = Holy Spirit

Frankincense = Satisfaction to God the Father

Salt = Preservation

Leaven (not included) = Sin

Honey (not included) = Human Good.

Take a handful of the mixture = Appropriating salvation personally by faith.

Burnt on the altar = Judgment of Christ on the cross.

Oil = Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit.

The priest eats the remainder. = the priest is sustained by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.

- b) The Oven Offering

Unleavened bread = Christ had no sin.

Baked offering hidden from man's view = Godward side of the Cross. Golgotha shrouded in darkness during the period of judgment of the sins.

Fire = Justice of God

Offering = Perfect humanity of Christ

Oven = Cross

Oil = empowerment of Christ.

Frankincense = God is propitiated or satisfied.

- c) The Flat plate Offering

Fine flour with oil = Perfection of Christ

Unleavened = No sin or sin nature

No frankincense = No propitiation until God judged the sins of the world.

Part into pieces = Crumbled - something completely destroyed - Christ's body broken for us. Crushed with our sin. (Isaiah 53)

Oil poured onto crumbs = Oil of appointment - Messiah or given one. God the Father appointed God the Son to go to the cross cf. dove at baptism.

d) The Frying Pan Offering

Partly closed, partly open - Unseen = Godward, propitiation. Seen = manward, reconciliation.

The offerer gives offering to priest who takes it to the altar, takes part as a remembrance (memorial) for (judgment) = compare with Lord's Table remembrance
rest eaten by the priests - how we appropriate Christ - faith.

e) Rules of Cereal Offerings

Prohibited leaven = sin or evil

Honey = Human good or human sweetness

Garnished with salt = a contract between God and man.

f) Cereal offerings were made at the

Passover (with burning = judgment = cross)

Firstfruits (without burning = resurrection)

Day of Atonement (with burning = judgment = cross)

g) The Memorial Offering

Green corn = Christ in resurrection

Dried = Roasted by fire, Judgment

Beaten = Bruised or crushed

Full ears = Perfection of Christ

Put oil on = Messiahship appointment.

Frankincense = Propitiation, satisfaction.

Burnt = Reference to the cross

Memorial = Lord's Table of the Old Testament.

5. Peace offering Chapter 3 Reconciliation.

Similar to the burnt offering, with both male and female animals sacrificed.

6. Sin offering Chapter 4 Unknown sins.

Confession and repentance from sin, equivalent to **1 John 1:9** (and cleanse us from all -unknown sins - unrighteousness)

7. Trespass offering Chapter 5-6v7 Known sins.

Confession and repentance from sin, equivalent to **1 John 1:9** (forgive our - known/confessed - sins)

HARMONY

PRESENTATION IN TEMPLE

"And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

16. PROPHECY OF SIMEON - LUKE 2:25-35

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it **was revealed** unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the **custom of the law**, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

KEY WORDS

Was	Eimi	Status quo [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Man	Anthropos	Man
Name	Onoma	Name
Just	Dikaios	Just, Righteous
Devout	Eulabes	Devout
Waiting	Prosdechomai	Receive from [Present Middle Participle]
Consolation	Paraklesis	Comforter, Consolation
Ghost	Pneuma	Spirit
Revealed	Chrematizo	Reveal [Perfect Passive Participle]
Should not see	Ne Eido	Not see [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Death	Thanatos	Death
Before	Prin	Before
Seen	Eido	See [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Lord	Kurios	Lord
Christ	Christos	Christ, Anointed One, Messiah
Came	Erchomai	Came by, Accompany [Aorist Active Indicative]
Temple	Hieron	Temple
Parent	Goneus	Parent
Bring in	Eisargo	Bring into, Lead into [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Child	Paidon	Child
To do	Poieo	To do [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Custom	Ethizo	Custom [Perfect Passive Participle]
Law	Nomos	Law
Took	Dechomai	To take, Accept, Receive [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Arms	Agkale	Arm
Blessed	Eulogeo	Eulogise, Bless [Aorist Active Indicative]
God	Theos	God
Said	Epo	Say [Aorist Active Indicative]
Lord	Despotes	Absolute Ruler, from which we get the English word despot
Servant	Doulos	Servant
Depart	Apoluo	Let go, Loose, Depart from [Present Active Indicative]
Peace	Eirene	Peace
According to	Kata	According to a norm or standard
Word	Rhema	Saying, Word
Eyes	Houtos	Eye
Seen	Eido	See [Aorist Active Indicative]
Salvation	Soterion	Salvation. From where we get "soteriology" study of salvation.
Have prepared	Hetoimazo	Prepare, Provide, Make ready [Aorist Active Indicative]
Face	Prosopon	Face
People	Laos	People
Light	Phos	A light
Lighten	Apokalupsis	Lighten, Reveal from which we get "apocalypse" [
Gentiles	Ethnos	Nations
Glory	Doxa	Glory

People	Laos	People
Mother	Meter	Mother
Marvelled	Eimi Thaumazo	Marvelled [Present Active Participle]
Spoken	Laleo	To speak, Say, Talk [Present Passive Participle]
Blessed	Eulogeo	Eulogise, Bless
Said	Epo	To say [Aorist Active Indicative]
Set	Keimai	Appointed, Set up [Present Middle Indicative]
Fall	Ptosis	Fall
Rising again	Anastasis	Resurrection, Raising again
Many	Poulos	Many, Much
Sign	Semeion	Sign, Miracle, Wonder
Be spoken against	Antilego	To speak against [Present Passive Participle]
Sword	Rhomphaia	Large sword probably used in executions
Pierce through	Dierchomai	Go through, Traverse [Future Middle Indicative]
Thine own	Autos	Your own
Soul	Psuche	Soul.
Thoughts	Dialogismos	Reason, Thought, Imagination [
Many	Polus	Many
Heart	Kardia	Heart
May Be Revealed	Apokalupto	May be revealed [Aorist Passive Subjunctive]

PERFECT TENSE VERBS

CHREMATIZO – WARNED FROM GOD – Occurs 9 times in the New Testament and twice in the Perfect Tense. In **Luke 2:26** The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. In this verse we see “the Lord’s Christ” which could be translated God’s “Appointed or Sent One”, or the Messiah.

We see different ways in which God revealed truths to men. It was not in a dream, as the wise men were warned, nor by an angel, as Joseph, nor by a voice from heaven, but by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, enlightening his understanding, and impressing on his mind what was to be done. Simeon had revealed to him a personal prophecy from God, that he would live to see the Messiah, so it was bound to be fulfilled. In Hebrews 8:5 the priests of Levi served following the example and pattern of the original in heaven.

ETHIZO – CUSTOM, MANNER - Occurs 4 times in the New Testament and twice in the Perfect Tense. In **Luke 4:16** the Lord Jesus Christ conforms with the permanent custom of the Sabbath, visiting and reading the Scriptures on the Sabbath while in Acts 17:2 we see Paul teaching and discussing the Scriptures for three Sabbaths as was his habit in Thessalonica.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
16	Isaiah 42:6	The Light [salvation] of the Gentiles	Luke 2:32
	Isaiah 49:6	He is salvation for Israel	Luke 2:29-32
	Haggai 2:6-9	He would visit the Second Temple	Luke 2:27-32
	Haggai 2:32	Descendant of Zerubbabel	Luke 2:27-32

REFLECTION

Verse 25 **And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.**

Many have thought, that this was Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, who was president of the Sanhedrin for forty years; and in which office this his son succeeded him; and which Simeon was the father of Gamaliel, the teacher of the Apostle Paul.

Whatever his lineage, Simeon was definitely a member of a believing remnant. He was a righteous and devout man and looking for the Messiah of Israel, and one of few people being guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit in his day. There were few looking for Messiah's coming, but there were enough to affirm the truth of His arrival.

Verse 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

In this verse we have two verbs translated "to see". It is noted that in the Greek it is the second verb which is in the subjunctive mood. From the English it would appear that it was the first use of that verb that should be in the subjunctive. In the Greek it says literally "...not to see death before he should see the Christ of the Lord", rather than, "that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ".

The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. In this verse we see "the Lord's Christ" which could be translated God's Appointed or Sent One", i.e. the Messiah.

We see different ways in which God revealed truths to men. It was not in a dream, as the wise men were warned, nor by an angel, as Joseph, nor by a voice from heaven, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, enlightening his understanding, and impressing on his mind that this indeed was the One, even though from a human perspective alone all he could see were two poor parents and a baby.

Verse 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Guided by the Holy Spirit he meets Jesus, Joseph and Mary in the Temple at the time of the presentation of the child. Probably Simeon had in view the prophecy of **Malachi 3:1**. "*The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple*". In this messenger of the new covenant, the soul of Simeon delighted.

Now the prophecy was just going to be fulfilled; and the Holy Spirit, who dwelt with this righteous man, directed him to go and see its fulfilment as far as he was concerned. He would not live to see Jesus return even as a young man, but by faith he knew it was already certainly accomplished. **Hebrews 11:1**.

After the custom of the Law, perfect tense, means to present him to the Lord, and then redeem him by paying five shekels, and to offer those sacrifices appointed by the Law. The custom's fulfilment in this case had eternal results for all four, but also for all humanity. God uses the custom to bring about blessing.

Verse 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

Simeon recognises the Christ child as the Messiah and praises God. In the Hebrew the meaning of the word Joshua [Jesus in the Greek] is salvation.

The utterances of Elizabeth, Mary and Simeon are consecutive. Each begins where the other ends. Mary sings of her own born Messiah; Zacharias celebrates the triumph of Israel, and Simeon announces the hopes of the Gentiles. But besides this, holding forth the Messiah as a Saviour for Gentile as well as Jew, what is remarkable is that he announces in Jesus, a suffering Messiah as well as a glorious king. **Isaiah 53!**

Verse 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

It was promised to Simeon that he should not die till he had seen the Lord's anointed. Now, having seen him, he expects to be immediately dismissed in peace into the eternal world; having a full assurance in faith, and enjoyment of the reality of the coming salvation of God. **Hebrews 11:39-40**.

Though Simeon means his death, yet death itself is not mentioned; for death has not only lost its sting, but its name also, to those who have, even by faith, seen the Lord's anointed. **1 Corinthians 15:55-56, Romans 8:9-11, 28-34**.

Verse 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

The Messiah, who is often so called; goes by the name of "salvation", because the salvation of God's elect is put into his hands. He has undertaken it; and because he is the author of it, he has fulfilled his work and completed what he promised to do. Simeon saw that God would do what God had said, to the end.

Old Simeon now saw, with his bodily eyes; a sight which many kings and prophets had desired. He not only saw the physical child but also saw with the eyes of his understanding, with the spiritual eye of faith, that this child was his Saviour and Redeemer and would do all that the Lord required to bring salvation.

Verse 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

Here salvation is represented under the concept of a feast, which God himself has provided for the whole world. Everybody is invited to come to the feast. He has invited all the nations of the earth.

Simeon in the Temple, the most sacred location for the Jews, was not meaning the congregation of Israel that looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and who were now together with Simeon and Anna, nor the body of the Jewish nation only, to whom he ministered, but both believing Jews and Gentiles world wide.

God provided a Saviour who was to be lifted up on the cross, as the serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, to draw all men and women who respond to the Holy Spirit's ministries, (**John 16:8-11**), to believe on Him, to see in the Lord Jesus the object of faith and hope and to look to Him alone for life and salvation.

Verse 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

The Gentiles are represented as sitting in darkness, that is, in ignorance and sin. Christ is a "light" to them, as by Him they will be made acquainted with the character of the true God, his law, and the plan of redemption. As the darkness rolls away when the sun arises, so ignorance and error flee away when Jesus gives light to the mind. He is the light of the world. **Psalm 119:105-107, John 10:4-27.**

Israel had been given all the prophecies of the coming Messiah. They had the responsibility of keeping the Scriptures of the Lord. Christ came to fulfil many of the prophecies at His first advent. He came unto his own but his own received him not.

Verse 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

Notice here that it is Joseph and the Lord's mother Mary reinforcing that Joseph was not His physical father.

Why one wonders did Joseph and his mother marvel at Simeon's words. After all they had heard from Gabriel, Elisabeth, and the Shepherds. Simeon's prophecy had gone beyond the angel's outline and it was surprising that he should know anything about the child's destiny.

We should bear in mind that every parent is astonished and pleased at the fine things others see in the child. It is a mark of unusual insight for others to see so much that is obvious to the parent. It also confirmed and reinforced the truth of who the baby was, Immanuel, God with us. The normal ups and downs of baby care can normalize the birth of the baby, but the prophetic word of Simeon reminds them, this is a unique child and unique event in human history, and they both have parts to play into the future.

Verse 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

Christ brought downfall to the hopes of those who expected a temporal prince to throw off the Roman yoke and bring in a political millennium. He brought ruin to those whose desire for the kingdom of God was ambition for place, wealth and power in it.

However He brought "rising up to newness of life" to those who were willing that God should overthrow their plans and ambitions, and who accepted from Him the grander gift of a universal kingdom, prepared for all people. The rejection of Him brought ruin to the Jews in 70 AD; the acceptance of Him brought life eternal for all who accepted Him as the true Messiah-Saviour and coming King.

Verse 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

In the phrase, "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul", Simeon announces to Mary that the mother who sang the Magnificat would also be a sorrowing mother at the Cross.

Though she was exulted in the thought that her son was indeed the Messiah, and would at the right time sit upon the throne of David, she learns now that a sword shall pierce her soul.

Men's views and decisions regarding Christ are a mirror in which the very "thoughts of their hearts" are seen. **Hebrews 4:12, 1 Timothy 3:16-17.**

APPLICATION

Those who come, under the influence of God's Spirit, to places of public worship, will undoubtedly meet with Him who is the comfort and salvation of Israel.

When we see the Lord through the Scriptures or dig up gems of truth from the Word of God we have a sense of peace and comfort.

We may not see the physical baby, or Christ in the flesh, but we can and must see Him through the Word. It is in personal relationship that we find salvation.

We see that God has provided salvation and has offered it by grace to all. Whoever wants to come is free to come.

The result of preaching Christ is always to awaken opposition, or love and obedience. There are only two options to truth; acceptance and rejection.

DOCTRINES

BIBLE – INERRANCY – SEE PAGE 35

BIBLE – INSPIRATION- SEE PAGE 35

BIBLE – INSPIRATION – FULFILLED PROPHECY PROOF OF INSPIRATION - SEE PAGE 36

HARMONY

PROPHECY OF SIMEON

“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

17. PROPHECY OF ANNA - LUKE 2:36-39

Luke 2:36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: **she was of a great age**, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; **37** And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. **38** And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. **39** And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. **40** And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

KEY WORDS

Was	Eimi	Kept on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Prophetess	Prophetes	Prophet
Daughter	Thugater	Daughter
Tribe	Phule	Kindred, Tribe
Was of great age	Probaino En Polus Hemera	Literally advanced in great days [Perfect Active Participle]
Lived	Zao	To live
Husband	Aner	Husband
Seven	Hepta	Seven
Years	Etos	Year
Virginity	Parthenia	Virginity
Widow	Chera	Widow
Eighty	Ogdeokonta	Eighty – literally eight times ten
Four	Tessares	Four
Departed	Aphistemi	Depart, Withdraw oneself [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Temple	Hieron	Temple
Serve	Latreuo	Serve, Worship [Present Active Participle]
Fasting	Nesteia	Fast
Prayer	Deesis	Prayer, Supplication
Night	Nux	Night
Day	Hemera	Day
Coming	Ephistemi	Come into, Be at hand [Aorist Active Participle]
That instant	Autos Hora	Literally at that very hour or instant
Gave thanks	Anthomologeomai	Give thanks [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Spake	Laleo	To speak [Imperfect Active Indicative]
To look for	Prosdechomai	Receive from [Present Middle Participle]
Redemption	Lutrosis	Redemption, Redeemed
Performed	Teleo	Accomplished, Finished [Aorist Active Indicative]
All things	Hapas	Everything
According to	Kata	According to a norm or standard
Law	Nomos	Law
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God
Returned	Hupostrepho	Returned
Own	Hautou	Own
City	Polis	City

PERFECT TENSE VERB

PROBAINO – OLD, GREAT AGE. Occurs 5 times in the New Testament In both Luke 1:7 and **Luke 2:36** we see in the Perfect tense of “Probaino”, the permanency of being old!

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
17	Isaiah 59:20	He would come to Zion as their Redeemer	Luke 2:38

REFLECTION

Verse 36. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

Anna may not have been a prophetess in the strict sense of the word, i.e. one who could foretell future events; but rather a holy woman; who, from her extensive knowledge and deep experience in Divine things, was capable of instructing others.

This concept is given in the use of the word in **1 Corinthians 14:3** which says, "*He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and to exhortation, and to comfort*". So here we find Anna proclaiming Jesus to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

She was of the tribe of Asher, one of the so called "lost" tribes.

This was one of the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel that were taken into captivity by Assyria in 720 BC, several families of which had returned from their idolatry towards God in the time that Hezekiah proclaimed the Passover in Jerusalem. **2 Chronicles 30:1-11**.

There are no "lost tribes", for the godly remnant of each of them all fled south into Judah at that time.

Though her family might have been a distinguished one in Jerusalem we find that it was her very exemplary life that entitled her to be mentioned in such a way by the Lord in history.

She was sexually pure when married, but was only married for seven years, and was now as a widow eighty-four years of age.

She had been using all her time in prayer and worship on behalf of the nation. She was therefore another who was ready to greet Messiah, and like Simeon she sees past the baby to the Saviour.

Verse 37. And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

At the age of eighty four it is likely she had retired from physical work but her spirit continued still to burn with a steady and undiminished flame. Prayer and witnessing do not stop. **1 Timothy 5:9-15**.

She attended constantly at the hours of prayer, which were nine in the morning and three in the afternoon. She accompanied her devotion with frequent periods of fasting. These periods were probably not more often than twice in the week which was the custom of the most rigid Pharisees. **[Luke 18:12]**

Verse 38. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

Just as Simeon was embracing the Christ child in his arms, and blessing God for him, and saying the things concerning him Anna arrived and also started to give thanks to the God for the Messiah. She praised God for the long looked for Messiah and Saviour; and that she had lived to see his blessed face and his parents.

It was clear to the believing Jews that the 70 weeks of Daniel's prophecy (**Daniel 9:24-27**) was nearing fulfilment so many Jews were expecting the arrival of the promised Messiah. The Messiah was going to come into Jerusalem and specifically to the Temple.

It is not clear whether Anna, who until this time had kept herself confined to the temple, now ventured out into Jerusalem giving the people the good news of the arrival of the Messiah, or whether she remained in the Temple to witness to those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem, and came to the temple to pray about that.

It is however clear that she witnessed to the fact of the presence of the Messiah in Jerusalem to any who was willing to hear.

Verse 39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

The phrase, "When they had performed all things", relates to the purification of Mary and the presentation and redemption of her firstborn, together with the relevant sacrifices and ceremonies. After they had conformed to the requirements of the Mosaic Law of the Lord they returned into Galilee. They are next seen in Bethlehem where the wise men found them within the next two years living in a house.

As we will see below, they may have gone to and fro to Jerusalem in the first years, or headed back to Bethlehem shortly after this ceremony to find work, as they are there when Jesus is around 18 months of age.

HARMONISATION

While it appears in the standard harmony of the Gospels that verse 39 is the same event as the passage in **Matthew 2:19-22** on serious reflection the journeys do not appear to be related, and the passages should therefore be separated.

DISCUSSION

Certainly in both cases Jesus, Joseph and Mary finish their journey in Nazareth which was a town in northern Israel near Lake Galilee.

Looking at **Luke 2:39** it states, "*And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.*" From verse 21 of Luke chapter 2 Mary and Joseph have been at the Temple performing the requirements of the Mosaic Law.

With a male child the mother was unclean for forty days, a sacrifice had to be made and the young child had to be circumcised. Logically after this and meeting two believers in the Temple area they went home to Nazareth, as they had only come to Bethlehem for the Roman census.

The wise men did not visit the baby in the stable as often portrayed on Christmas cards but visited him as a small child in a house. Bethlehem is a short distance from Jerusalem, and it is noted that they came to Jerusalem from time to time. During those times it would have been quite possible for them to stay in Bethlehem in a house.

It was from there that they went to Egypt, subsequent to which they returned to Israel, but headed up to Nazareth, their home town because of the rule of Archaleus over Judea.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that both journeys were to Nazareth, which was the parent's home town, but that the Luke journey occurred soon after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, perhaps within a couple of months and the return from Egypt was at least two years later.

The sequence of events seems to be that the Luke passage above should be placed at the end of the section 14 passage. It has therefore been transferred to this section and is not included in conjunction with **Matthew 2:19-22** where the standard harmony places it.

APPLICATION

It is a great honour to have one's name written in the Scriptures as Anna did but to be written in the book of life is of infinitely greater importance.

A simple devoted life of an ordinary Christian has tremendous impact on those with whom they come in contact.

Anna, after the sadness of a very short married life, was able to use the years granted to her for the glory of God. She mentors the attitude of all mature believers towards life changing events – we seek God's useful path through them to His Glory and the blessing of others.

DOCTRINES

PRAYER

1. We may know the provision of God but we must communicate with Him in order to obtain this provision.
 - a) Prayer is the believer's means of communicating with God.
 - b) The Bible is God's way of communicating with man.
2. Promises Involving Prayer
 - a) **Matthew 21:22** We should ask believing.
 - b) **Matthew 18:19** The power of corporate prayer.
 - c) **Psalms 116:1, 2** God is always available to hear our prayer.
 - d) **Isaiah 65:24** God will answer while we are yet praying.
 - e) **Matthew 7:7** We are commanded to pray.
 - f) **John 14:13-14** We can ask for anything in His name.
 - g) **Philippians 4:6** The prayer should be with thanksgiving.
 - h) **1 Thessalonians 5:17** We should pray without ceasing.
 - i) **Hebrews 4:16** We can come boldly to the throne of Grace.
3. Prayer Divided into 4 Segments
 - a) Confession of sins (**1 John 1:9**)
 - b) Thanksgiving (**1 Thessalonians 5:18**)
 - c) Intercession for others. (**Ephesians 6:18**)
 - d) Petitions for one's own needs (**Hebrews 4:16**)
4. Power of Prayer
 - a) Individual - Elijah and the burnt offering. (**1 Kings 18:36-39**)
 - b) Corporate - the release of Peter from prison. (**Acts 12:1-18**)
5. One Prayer that could not be Answered The prayer of our Lord on the Cross. (**Psalms 22:1-18**)
6. To Whom are Prayers Addressed?
 - a) Directed to the Father - (**Matthew 6:5-9**)
 - b) In the name of the Son - (**Hebrews 7:25**)
 - c) In the power of the Spirit - (**Romans 8:26-27**)

The Son (Jesus) and Spirit are interceding for us.
7. Prayers can be Divided into Petition and Desire
 - a) Petition - What you ask God for. (e.g. a new car)
 - b) Desire - The desire behind the petition. (e.g. happiness because you have a new car).
8. Four Possible Combinations
 - a) Petition answered - Desire not answered. (**Psalms 106:15** - The quails of the Exodus generation. (**1 Samuel 8:5**) - A King to reign over Israel.
 - b) Petition not answered - Desire answered. (**Genesis 18:23**) The preservation of Sodom. (**2 Corinthians 12:7**) - Removal of the thorn in Paul's side.
 - c) Petition answered - Desire answered (**1 Kings 18:36-37**) -Elijah requests fire for the offering. (**Luke 23:42**) -The penitent thief's prayer. Type c) represents the perfect prayer.
 - d) Petition not answered -Desire not answered. Type d) unanswered prayer has 9 main reasons which are shown in paragraph 10.
9. Reasons for Unanswered Prayer
 - a) Lack of belief. (**Matthew 21:22**)
 - b) Selfishness (**James 4:3**)
 - c) Unconfessed sin (**Psalms 66:18**)
 - d) Lack of compassion (**Proverbs 21:13**)
 - e) Pride and self righteousness (**Job 35:12-13**)
 - f) Lack of filling of the Spirit (**Ephesians 6:18**)

g) Lack of obedience (**1 John 3:22**)

h) Not in the Divine will (**1 John 5:14**)

Most of the reasons for unanswered prayer, is some form of sin in the life, which can be solved by confession of known sins as per paragraph 4 a) under the concept of **1 John 1:9**

10. Intercessory Prayer

a) This is one of the four factors in a prayer which are:-

b) Confession of sins.

c) Thanksgiving

d) Intercession

e) Own needs.

f) The power of intercessory prayer is taught in (**1 Kings 18:42-46**) the principle being found in (**James 5:16-18**)

g) The power of prevailing prayer is shown in (**Acts 12**)

h) The prayer for the unbeliever (**Romans 10:1**)

i) Prayer for an unknown believer (**Colossians 1:3-11**)

j) Prayer for the known believer (**Ephesians 1:15-23**)

11. The True Lord's Prayer (**John 17**)

a) That Jesus might be glorified as the Son who has glorified the Father. (v 1 of **Philippians 2:9-11**)

b) That He might be restored to glory which He had prior to the foundation of the world. (v 5)

c) For safety of believers from the world and the devil. (v 11, 15)

d) For the sanctification of believers. (v 17)

e) For the spiritual unity of believers. (v 21)

f) That the world might believe. (v 21)

g) That believers may be with Him in heaven to see and share His glory. (v 24)

CHRISTIAN LIFE: FASTING

1. The true purpose of fasting is to spend time ordinarily spent in things such as eating and sleeping to prayer and Bible study.

2. Fasting is not only the denial of food, although it often involves it.

3. The Jews fasted on the Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 16:29-31; Numbers 29:7**). Fasting in these passages is covered by the words, "afflict their souls".

4. Fasting with the wrong attitude becomes human works, and therefore is unacceptable to God (**Isaiah 58:3-4, Jeremiah 14:12**).

5. Fasting should always reflect an attitude of humbleness toward God (**Psalms 69:10**).

6. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights during his temptation (**Matthew 4:2**).

7. When Christians fast it should be a matter between the individual and God (**Matthew 6:16-18**) The fasting Christian should not make a public spectacle.

8. Fasting in the form of extra time in prayer and bible study is beneficial:

[a] for major decisions in the Christians' or church's (**Acts 13:2,3**)

[b] to remove certain types of demons (**Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29**)

[c] in revival (e.g. the post-war revival in South Korea).

HARMONY - PROPHECY OF ANNA

"And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

RETURN TO NAZARETH

And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.”

18. VISIT OF THE MAGI TO BETHLEHEM - MATTHEW 2:1-12

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, **2** Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. **3** When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. **5** And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, **6** And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. **7** Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. **8** And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. **9** When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. **10** When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. **11** And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. **12** And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

KEY WORDS

Born	Gennao	Born, Bring forth, Conceive [Aorist Passive Participle]
Days	Hemera	Day
King	Basileus	King, Ruler
Behold	Idou	Lo, Behold
There came	Paraginomai	Appear publicly, Be present [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Wise men	Magus	Wise men, Sorcerers, Magicians
From	Apo	From
The East	Anatole	East, Rising
Saying	Lego	Saying [Present Active Participle]
Where	Pou	Where, At what locality.
Is	Eimi	Is, Keeps on being [Present Active Indicative]
Born	Tikto	Be born, Be delivered [Aorist Passive Participle]
Jews	loudaios	Of Juda
Seen	Eido	To see [Aorist Active Indicative]
Star	Aster	Star
Come	Erchomai	Come [Aorist Active Indicative]
Worship	Proskuneo	Worship [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Aorist Active Participle]
He was troubled	Tarasso	To be troubled [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Gathered	Sunago	Assemble, Come together, Gather together [Aorist Active Participle]
Chief Priests	Archireus	Chief priest, Chief of the Priests
Scribes	Grammateus	Scribe, Town clerk [From which we get the word grammar]
People	Laos	People
Demanded	Punthanomai	Ask, Demand, Enquire [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Be born	Gennao	To be born [Present Passive Indicative]
Said	Epo	Say, Speak, Answer [Aorist Active Indicative]

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Written	Grapho	Written [Perfect Passive Indicative]
Prophet	Prophetes	Prophet
Land	Ge	Land
Art	Eimi	To keep on being [Present Active Indicative]
Least	Elachistos	Least, Very little, Smallest
Princes	Hegemon	Governor, Prince, Ruler
Shall come	Exerchomai	Shall come forth, Go forth [Future Middle Indicative]
Governor	Hegeomai	To have rule over [Present Middle Participle]
Shall rule	Poimaino	To shepherd, Feed, Rule [Future Active Indicative]
Privily	Lathra	Secretly
Called	Kaleo	Call [Aorist Active Participle]
Enquired diligently	Akriboo	Enquire diligently, learn exactly [Aorist Active Indicative]
Time	Chronos	Time
Appeared	Phaino	Appear [Present Passive Participle]
Sent	Pempo	Sent, Thrust out [Aorist Active Participle]
Search	Exetazo	Ask, Enquire, Search [Aorist Active Imperative]
Diligently	Akribos	Diligently
Young Child	Paidion	Young Child
Found	Heurisko	To find [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Bring back word	Apaggello	Bring back word, Report back [Aorist Active Imperative]
Come	Erchomai	To come [Aorist Active Participle]
Worship	Proskuneo	Worship [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Aorist Active Participle]
King	Basileus	King
Departed	Poreuomai	Depart, Walk, Take a journey [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Saw	Eido	See [Aorist Active Indicative]
Went before	Proago	To go before [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Till	Heos	Until
Came	Erchomai	To come [Aorist Active Participle]
Stood	Histemi	To stand, Abide, Continue [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Young Child	Paidion	Young Child
Was	Eimi	Kept on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Saw	Eido	See [Aorist Active Participle]
Star	Aster	Star
Rejoiced	Chairo	Rejoice [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Exceeding	Sphodra	Exceeding
Great	Megas	Great
Joy	Chara	Joy
Come	Erchomai	To come [Aorist Active Participle]
House	Oikia	Home, Household
Saw	Eido	Saw [Aorist Active Indicative]
Mother	Meter	Mother
Fell down	Pipto	Fall down [Aorist Active Participle]
Worship	Proskuneo	Worship [Aorist Active Indicative]
Opened	Anoigo	To open [Aorist Active Participle]
Treasures	Thesaurus	Wealth, Treasure
Presented	Prosphero	To present unto [Aorist Active Indicative]
Gifts	Doron	Gifts, Offerings
Gold	Chrusos	Gold
Frankincense	Libanos	Frankincense
Myrrh	Smuma	Myrrh
Warned of God	Chrematizo	Warned or Admonished by God [Aorist Passive Participle]
Dream	Onar	Dream
Not Return	Me Anakampto	Not return [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Departed	Anachoreo	Depart, Withdraw [Aorist Active Indicative]
Own	Hautou	Own
Country	Chora	Coast, Country, Land
Way	Hodos	Way, Journey

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
18	Psalm 2:6	To own the title King	Matthew 2:2
	Psalm 72:10-11	Great persons will visit Him	Matthew 2:1-11
	Psalm 138:1-6	The supremacy of David's Seed amazes kings	Matthew 2:2-6
	Micah 5:2	Born in Bethlehem	Matthew 2:1-6

REFLECTION

Verse 1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Herod who was the ruler of Israel at this time was completely faithful to Rome. He could not stand the unfaithful and ungrateful people who didn't support Roman power. However the Jews at that time were exactly that. They were always plotting against Rome. There were over 50 revolts against Herod during the 39 years he ruled over the Jews. They always hated him. Herod tried to break religion but he was unable to. He tried to be kind, he tried to build buildings, aqueducts, temples and they rejected them. He fed them and they revolted. He was a great leader for the majority of his reign, but he was a thoroughly narcissistic pagan.

Herod had a Greek court and also a Hebrew court but never had had invasion of the Magi before. At 68 years of age Herod received the invasion of the Magi. We do not know how many of this ancient fraternity invaded Jerusalem at this time. When this group moved out of its ordinary area of action everyone would stand up and take notice. Herod had dealt with past invasions of his kingdom by bribery or very bravely fought wars, but he was never defeated until the Magi came.

There came which is the verb "paraginomai" which in the aorist tense means they made a dramatic appearance. The Magi coming from the east was a unique event. The Magi were a fraternity of physicists, chemists and scientists of the day. This was a group of intellectuals who had accepted Christ as their Saviour and they have come to worship Him.

The origin of the Magi goes back to beyond the time of Daniel for in **Daniel 2:48**, he not only belonged to the Magi but he was for a time the leader of this group of scientists. All that we have in the book of Daniel was recorded for the Magi and they believed it. Many today see Daniel as "myth", but these men saw it as prophetic warning. They saddled their camels and travelled over a thousand miles, whereas most modern theologians would not have expected the First Advent at all, and so it ought to be no surprise that they don't expect the Second Advent either.

Verse 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

Herod is the King of the Jews, he was appointed by the Caesar and Senate in Rome. He feels fairly secure in his throne until he discovers there is a true heir of the Jewish throne that has been born according to these Magi, and then the expectation of Daniel will be communicated to him.

The fact that the King is born King of the Jews frightens Herod. He was not born king; he was a clever and courageous usurper who ruled by courtesy of the Roman Empire. Here is a real and legitimate threat to him and he sees it.

The Star Of Bethlehem - It was in all probability in the constellation of Coma, a decan of the constellation of the Virgin, that the star of Bethlehem appeared. The Magi would be expecting it on Daniel's time frame, and would look in the constellation of "Virgo", as the other prophetic words about the coming king indicated a virgin giving birth. **Isaiah 7:13-16, 9:6, Daniel 2:44.**

Daniel had all the books of the Old Testament up until his time and copies would be left in the archives of Persia for future study after his death, as he was a senior "Satrap"/Ruler until his death.

In this regard Thomas Hyde who was an eminent 17th century orientalist, writing on the ancient religion of the Persians quotes from the mediaeval Arab Christian Abuhargus.

He states that Zoaraster, who the Persian's claimed had been a pupil of Daniel, who himself had been the ruler of the wise men of Babylon in **Daniel 2:48**, had told the Magi that when they should see a new star appear in their west it would notify the birth of a new child whom they were to adore. Further it was stated that this star would appear within the constellation of Virgo.

New stars have appeared again and again. That it was a new and very bright star is well supported by ancient Christian writers. One speaks of its surpassing brightness. Another, Ignatius Bishop of Antioch in 69 A.D. said, "At the appearance of the Lord a star shone forth brighter than all the other stars."

There is a beautiful tradition which relates how, in their journey from Jerusalem to find the spot under the zenith of the star the Magi sat down beside David's well at Bethlehem to refresh themselves. There they saw the star reflected in the clear waters of the well and knew that they had arrived.

Another concept to consider was whether the star was in fact the Shekinah glory itself, or a unique combination of several stars appearing together for a time. Whatever it was it appeared in Virgo.

Verse 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Herod was troubled because he was mentally ill. He wanted to leave behind him the Herodian line to march along with the Julian Caesar line. However both lines terminated by 79 AD when the last descendant of Herod, Agrippa II was killed in the eruption of Vesuvius in that year.

Ancient historians described the condition of Herod at this time. He had rapid mood changes, delusions of persecutions, uncontrolled outbursts of hypertension, cerebral attacks, heart and kidney functions deteriorated and poisons accumulated in the bloodstream. His mouth became ulcerated, his breath foul.

He had experienced constant stomach/bowel pain for the last 3 years of his life and constant diarrhoea. He was therefore in a poor state of health, most likely caused by bowel cancer, which will plague his later family also. He killed 3 of his sons and developed a monster complex for which he is most famous for in history.

However at this point Herod suddenly became interested in genealogy as well as becoming a keen Bible student as he saw this as a real threat to his surviving dynasty. He will murder to maintain their place in history but they are all on the "wrong side of history" due to their rejection of the Saviour and his line is extinguished within 120 years.

Verse 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

From the Greek we see that Herod gathered his greatest advisors together at a point in time [aorist tense] and kept on demanding [imperfect tense], or kept on enquiring about where the Messiah/Christ would be born.

By the time of this cross examination Herod was mentally and physically seriously ill. History tells us that when he entered his 60's he looked like a man 30-40 years of age. He was in tremendous condition. However by the time he reached his mid sixties he had lost his health and mind to bowel cancer and its complications, but because of his strength of will was still able to administer his kingdom until very shortly before he died.

Verse 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

The word grapho in verse 5 is translated written. It is in the perfect tense, which shows that it was written accurately with the result that its truth goes on forever.

What God has said, is settled, and sure. God's Word is the light to walk by through this brief sojourn in space-time, or it is the flame of absolutely just and secure judgment. **Psalms 119:105-125, Hebrews 10:30-39, 12:29.**

The word Governor in verse 6 would appear to be a noun. In fact it is a verb, meaning to have rule over. The Bible is clear, that the Lord Jesus Christ will rule over this earth as King of all kings and Lord of all lords, and

the terrible unbelief of the majority of the churches regarding the Millennial Kingdom will have no effect upon what is certain to come, it is just that those who doubt will be judged. **Matthew 14:31, 21:21, Romans 3:3, 4:20, Hebrews 3:12-19.**

The advisors to Herod knew the answer to Herod's question and quoted a prophecy given some 700 years previously by Micah in **Micah 5:2**, "*But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*"

At the time of Micah in the 8th Century BC, the settlement of Bethlehem was small. It was one of a number of Bethlehem's in the area conquered by the Jews. In fact there were four locations named Bethlehem. The word Bethlehem which means, "house of bread", had therefore to be distinguished by its tribal name. For instance Bethlehem of Judea had to be distinguished from Bethlehem of Zebulun which is mentioned in **Joshua 19:15, 16.**

That the prophecy related to the Messiah is clear from the statement that this future ruler of Israel who had been promised under the Davidic covenant in **2 Samuel 7:16** was one whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. The person referred to therefore had to have eternal life, and this was the Messiah alone. Messiah was God-Man; the unique person of the universe, and He alone would fulfil Micah's words. **Psalms 90:2, 103:17, 2 Peter 1:11-15.**

It is of interest that in the land where He was born, He was rejected by people who could quote the Scriptures and know where He was to be born. We can all know the facts, but still reject them, as we want to do our own thing, not God's! **James 2:19.** The demons know the truth and tremble at it, but will not bow their knee to God, and sadly, neither will the Chief Priests and the majority of the Jewish leaders.

Verse 7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

The word "privily" means privately. Herod spoke to the Magi or wise men. He then sent them out and discussed matters with his advisers the theologians who gave him some of the Scriptural background behind the coming of the Messiah.

The theologians were then dismissed publically, and Herod again talked to the Wise Men privately, giving them additional information/instruction before sending them on their way.

He "learned exactly" or "accurately." He was very careful here, and kept the two groups apart so no-one else would act before he did, and he was anxious to see if the Jewish prophecy of the birthplace of the Messiah agreed with the indications of the star to the Magi.

"The time of the appearing star" is not just "the time when the star appeared", but the age of the star's appearance, and the Decan of the constellation in which it appeared and what the movement of the Star indicated to the Maji. Herod was interested as to how old the boy born to be king was. Why was he so interested?

The older house of the Maccabeans/Hazmoneans had caused Herod a lot of problems constantly trying to take back the rulership of Israel from Herod. Herod therefore wants to eliminate the Messiah who is the true King of the Jews.

He is also mentally ill at this time and had become paranoid about threats to his position. As a result he had already recently killed Alexander and Aristobulus his two oldest sons.

He had become very cruel as well. There were forty young men who had been stirred up about the presence of a Roman eagle emblem in Jerusalem. They had rioted and had removed it forcibly from the temple wall.

Herod was able to crawl into court and condemn them all to death. He ordered them to be executed in different manners, five to be beheaded, five to be crucified, five to be shot to death with arrows, five to be put into boiling oil, five to be cooked on a rotisserie. This was to dissuade others from rebellion, but showed his evil/hate filled soul.

Verse 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

The desire of Herod to eliminate the Lord is seen in the two imperatives in this verse. He commands them to search diligently and to report back. When Herod commanded people to do things he expected them to obey and he had his spies to report back, but in this case they will all be blind-sided by God.

With that sort of background to the events, remember, the “someone” he wants to eliminate it is the Lord Jesus Christ. He therefore sent the wise men to the area of Bethlehem.

He would be able to monitor exactly where they went, as there were four forts in the area and he had an excellent system of sending messages to and from these forts, to give him almost “real time” intelligence.

Herod says that he wants to worship the King of the Jews. His worship will be in the form of elimination of the Messiah. It should be noted that the Herodian Family later rejected Christ together, with the Sadducees, Scribes and the Pharisees, and while the Magi searched for Him the religious leaders did not. There were Romans, there were Greeks, there were Jews, all hearing the truth that prophetic truth was about to be fulfilled, but they had all rejected even the possibility of the Messiah/Christ, but the Magi, Gentiles from the East hadn't.

Just as Peter had, in the Holy Spirit, foreseen that the modern Ammillennialists will also reject prophetic truth; rejecting the possibility of the Second Advent, just as the religious leadership rejected the possibility and significance of the First Advent. **2 Peter 3:1-9.**

Like the people around Herod they do not believe in prophetic truth, so they wait to see if the Magi find anything. They are too lazy and unbelieving to go down the road to see if prophecy is fulfilled, and their lazy unbelief saves the Magi and the holy family.

Verse 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

The star, which they had seen in the east, went constantly before them [imperfect tense of “proago”] and stopped over the place where the young child was.

It should be noted that the humanity of Christ is now 12 to 18 months old as noted in the Greek word “paidion” for “young child”, and that He is now with His parents in a house and not in the stable of any inn.

They had previously seen this in the east. The fraternity had been ordered to look out for the star, probably from the time of Daniel when he held the position of head of the Wise Men.

When the star showed them where the Messiah was they had great joy. The fact that they were joyful and later worshipped Him shows that the Wise Men were believers. All joy and happiness comes from relationship with Christ. The unbeliever can be happy as a response to his environment if her/his environment is good. However, only the believer can have inner peace and contentment irrespective of his or her environment.

The word translated “sought” is in the aorist, active, participle, which precedes the main verb, which is to “rejoice”. This shows that they sought the King and rejoiced finding Him. They then fell down and worshipped Him, the unique God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ

Verse 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

The wise men brought gifts, which were most timely, and in God's Plan, perfect provision for the escape to Egypt that would be required, and would involve considerable expense.

The gifts that are mentioned were gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Magi or wise men were from the Medes. This had been one of the groups that had combined to defeat the Assyrians at the fall of Nineveh. The others were the Chaldeans and the Scythians.

The Scythians had taken the survivors of the Assyrians away as slaves to the Russian steppes, while the Medes had artefacts, art treasures and jewellery from the fabulously rich city. When the Greeks conquered

the Persians they did not go into the mountain country inhabited by the Medes. Neither were the Medes conquered by the Romans. The Medes were therefore rich in valuable objects as well as gold. Such articles facilitated the flight of the Lord Jesus Christ into Egypt that very night.

Verse 12 **And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.**

The Magi were warned in a dream not to return to Herod so they left Israel a different way. The escape of the wise men was a miracle due to the comprehensive nature of the spy system used by Herod.

There were a series of mountains from Syria through to Jerusalem on which Herod constructed a number of forts. Fort Herodian was only 20 kilometres south east of Bethlehem. Using the summits of the hills Herod had a system of day and night signals which allowed him rapid communications across his kingdom.

If an enemy crossed the Euphrates he was able to get that information to Jerusalem within six hours. Four of these forts were around Jerusalem and they could signal direct to his HQ in Jerusalem.

We do not know how the Magi escaped from Judea. They may have gone to Petra and headed back to the high Iranian plateau by one of the secret caravan routes from Idumea. They did however disappear from Israel without detection. **[Romans 8:28]**

APPLICATION

Liberals teach that Jesus is just a good man. This is one thing the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be. He is either God-Man, or the greatest confidence trickster of all time as he claimed to be God as well as man.

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases.

He was teaching law at a University in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would use his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined was Jesus Christ.

Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, he personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all U S jurists saying in part, "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being He is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than He is God. Having concluded that He is God I have accepted Him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

PROPHECY

PRESENTED WITH GIFTS

PROPHECY

Isaiah 60:1-6 (698 BC): Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. 2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. 3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. 4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. 5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the

abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. 6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

1. Like many of the prophecies in the scriptures, this prophecy has two fulfilments: one concerning the first advent as portrayed by the Magi, the other after the second advent at the end of the Millennium.
2. Given in the reign of Hezekiah, this prophecy must have given comfort to the kingdom of Judah seeing that Israel or Samaria had been conquered and dispersed by Assyria only a few years previously and the Assyrian threat to Judah was ever present.

FULFILMENT

Matthew 2:1,11 (4 BC): 1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

The wise men, the Magi, were Gentiles who came to worship Jesus Christ the King. The gifts brought by the Magi portrayed different facets of the humanity of Christ:

- (a) Gold - showing Jesus Christ the King.
- (b) Frankincense - Jesus Christ the Priest
- (c) Myrrh - Jesus Christ the Saviour.

It should be noted that the wise men came into the house and not the stable. The young child was about eighteen months old, as the Greek word for young child, PAIDION, is used rather than that for a baby, BREPHOS.

FULFILMENT

Revelation 21:23-26 (end of millennium): And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

The second fulfilment shows the New Jerusalem with kings and Gentiles coming to bring honour to the Lord of all. They walk in his light and bring their glory and honour to him.

DOCTRINES

HEROD

1. SCRIPTURE - Matthew 2:1-19.

2. BIOGRAPHY

Herod was the greatest non-Roman of his time. Herod was an unbeliever who had a great effect on the life of Jesus Christ. Herod was the son of Antipas II who was in armed conflict with the last of the Hasmonean dynasty, a dynasty founded by Judas Macabbeas in 163 BC. Herod, from Idumea, lived in Petra, learning how to make money from the Nabateans who had discovered the way of sailing to India using the monsoons. He became very rich, When his father was assassinated by the Hasmoneans, Herod ascended the Jewish throne. At 26 he was described as tall, handsome, very athletic and a great conversationalist as well as being very charming. He was a great hunter, wrestler and bowman yet never as a young man did he have a statue or coin made in his likeness as this would have offended the Jews. His concern for the Jews had been shown early in his reign in feeding them at his own expense for two years. The Jews repaid him by revolting against him. Herod was in the forefront of the political scene, backing Cassius and Brutus after the

assassination of Julius Caesar in 15th March of 44 BC. They were defeated by Augustus at the battle of Philippi in 42 BC. He then backed Marc Anthony against Augustus. Marc Anthony was defeated at the battle of Actium in 31 BC. Herod, however, was confirmed as King of the Jews. After Augustus had been established on the throne of Rome, Herod was able to concentrate on pacifying his own country, including removing bandits from the caves of Galilee, thus preparing the area in which Jesus would grow up. Herod was the greatest builder of his day. He developed a standing army, the infantry being made up of Greeks and Celts with the cavalry coming from his homeland Idumea. He set up forts from Damascus to the Negev on top of the highest mountains, allowing for excellent communications across his kingdom. Four of these forts were within signalling distance of Jerusalem including one which was six kilometres from Bethlehem. In the last decade of his life, Herod became physically and mentally ill. He became paranoid about plots against his throne which culminated in his reaction when the Magi asked him where the baby born King of the Jews was to be found. Jesus was born some 18 months before the death of Herod, which occurred in the northern spring of 4 BC.

3. EVALUATION

- a) In Matthew 2 the Magi came from Babylon seeking the King of the Jews (**Matthew 2:1**).
- b) Herod was shocked by the Magi's question as he had not been born King of the Jews. He had, through his father, assumed power by coup d'etat (**Matthew 2:2,3**).
- c) The ruler shared his concern (**Matthew 2:3**).
- d) He called the religious leaders together (**Matthew 2:4**) and demanded where the Christ child should be born.
- e) His religious advisers tell him Bethlehem of Judea (**Matthew 2:5,6**) as this had been given in **Micah 5:2**. It's location was specified as there was Bethlehem of Zebulun in Galilee (**Joshua 19:15,16**).
- f) Herod sent them to Bethlehem asking to report back (**Matthew 2:8**).
- g) The Magi are given divine revelation that they should return to Babylon by a different route (**Matthew 2:12**).
- h) Herod's worship is seen in the systematic slaughter of the young children in Bethlehem (**Matthew 2:16**) aged two years and under.

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) God uses unbelievers in His plan. God rules and controls (**Romans 9:17; Proverbs 8:15,16**).
- b) God's history plan will continue despite the absolute opposition of the leadership of the country (**Job 12:21**).
- c) Herod had a tremendous opportunity to seek the Christ child and find salvation. Instead he tried to eliminate the Messiah.
- d) Physical strength, mental ability and charm in youth can degenerate in later life to create utter misery (**Ecclesiastes 12:1-6**).
- e) Spiritual beauty lasts forever, and should mature with age (**1 Corinthians 13:13**).
- f) Power and position are not a source of happiness. Power corrupts. Position can become a source of pride (**Isaiah 1:23; Amos 5:12**).
- g) God can miraculously protect believers even from powerful rulers. The Magi escaped even though Herod's communication system was the finest in the world (**Daniel 6:23**).

MAGI

1. SCRIPTURE - **Matthew 2:1-12**.

2. BIOGRAPHY

Although there is evidence that they originated in Egypt, the Magi historically were descended from the priestly caste who ruled the Median Empire of Cyaxeres in the 6th Century BC and became firmly established in the Persian Empire.

Their dress was white robes, tall rather than conical hats made of felt which had long side flaps covering their cheeks as far as the chin. They carried small bundles of divining rods known as barsoms. They were not kings as depicted today - this concept originating in medieval times from **Psalms 72:10; Isaiah 49:7, 60:3**. They were experts in interpretation of dreams as well as mathematicians and scientists. They were the civil and religious leaders of Persia and are mentioned in **Daniel 2:10,27; 4:7,9**. Daniel was appointed as Master of the Magi (The Rabmag) (**Daniel 5:11**). They became so powerful that one of their number, Gaumata (Pseudo Smerdis) usurped the throne after the suicide of Cambyses. From this time until the birth

of Christ, the history of Persia and Israel was closely aligned. Both had fallen under Selucid domination after the death of Alexander the Great. Both received independence, with the Magi becoming part of the Parthian Empire which was antagonistic to Rome, whom Herod supported. The Magi's entrance into Israel was monitored by Herod by means of hill-top forts with a communications system not surpassed until the 19th Century. Herod saw the Magi as a threat to his kingdom, this fear being increased when the Magi asked the location of the person born to be king of the Jews. It is highly likely that a large number of Magi entered Israel and not just the three depicted by their gifts in **Matthew 2:11**. The Magi continued until the 7th Century AD when Persia was overrun by Islam.

3. EVALUATION

- a) The Magi came from the east to the west (**Matthew 2:1**). This action of travelling from east to west towards God is paralleled by the location of:
 - i) The Tabernacle with its entrance from the east (**Exodus 27:13-17**).
 - ii) The Temple with its entrance from the east (**Ezekiel 8:16**).
 - iii) Man being expelled to the east of Eden (**Genesis 3:24**).
 - iv) Abraham setting up his altar with Bethel (House of God) to the west and Hai (broken down place) to the east (**Genesis 12:8**).
- b) Jesus was BORN King of the Jews (**Matthew 1:6-16**).
- c) Herod was not and the Magi's request caused him concern (**Matthew 2:2-3**).
- d) He now calls his own wise men, the priests (**Matthew 2:4**), to advise him where the Christ child should be born.
- e) They advise Bethlehem of Judea (**Micah 5:2**), thus clarifying which Bethlehem was involved, as there was also a settlement with the same name in Zebulun (**Joshua 19:15,16**).
- f) Herod asks for the time when the star appeared, to ascertain the age of the child (**Matthew 2:7**).
- g) Being sent on their way, the Magi arrive at Bethlehem. Some authorities state that it was the reflection of the star in the water of a well that showed the Magi that their journey was over. (**Matthew 2:8-10**).
- h) Unlike the shepherds who saw the baby (brephos, Gk.) (**Luke 2:12-16**) in the manger, the Magi encountered the young child (paidion, Gk.) in a house (**Matthew 2:11**). The word for young child indicates an age of one to two years.
- i) They presented the young child with three gifts, each representing a reason why God had to become truly human:
 - i) Gold, representing His kingship.
 - ii) Frankincense, representing His priesthood.
 - iii) Myrrh, representing saviourhood.
- j) They return to Babylon by a different route (**Matthew 2:12**).

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) Man must worship the Creator rather than the created (**Romans 1:19-25**).
- b) God controls history (**Proverbs 8:15,16**).
- c) The Word of God is accurate in defining in advance where future events will take place.
- d) As an all-knowing God, He knows future events in our lives and has catered for them in His Word (**John 21:18,19**).
- e) Only the seekers who left Jerusalem found the Christ child. The seeker will find (**Matthew 7:7**).
- f) Tradition should never be given credence if it contradicts the Word of God i.e. the Magi being three kings bringing their gifts to a baby in a manger) (**Colossians 2:8**).
- g) The escape of the Magi to Babylon by another route, bearing in mind the fortifications and communications system of Herod, was miraculous.
- h) God's provision overrules man's ingenuity (**Acts 5:19**).

HARMONY

VISIT OF THE MAGI TO BETHLEHEM

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.”

19. FLIGHT INTO EGYPT FROM BETHLEHEM - MATTHEW 2:13-15

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

KEY WORDS

Departed	Anachoreo	Depart, Withdraw self [Aorist Active Participle]
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Appareth	Phaino	Appear, Be seen [Present Passive Indicative]
Dream	Onar	Dream
Saying	Lego	Saying [Present Active Participle]
Arise	Egeiro	Awake, Take up [Present Active Participle [Imperative]]
Take	Paralambano	Take [Aorist Active Imperative]
Young Child	Paidon	Young Child
Mother	Meter	Mother
Flee	Pheugo	Escape, Flee [Present Active Imperative]
Be	Eimi	Keep on being [Present Active Imperative]
Until	Heos	While, Until
Bring word	Epo	Tell, Bring word [Aorist Active Subjunctive]
Seek	Zeteo	Desire, Require, Seek [Present Active Infinitive]
Destroy	Apollumi	Destroy, Die, Perish [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Arose	Egeiro	Awake, Take up [Aorist Passive Participle]
Took	Paralambano	Take [Aorist Active Indicative]
Night	Nux	Night
Departed	Anachoreo	Depart, Withdraw self [Aorist Active Indicative]
Was	Eimi	Keep on being [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Death	Teleute	Death
Might be fulfilled	Pleroo	Complete, Fulfil [Aorist Passive Subjunctive]
Spoken	Rheo	Command, Say, Speak of [Aorist Passive Participle]
Lord	Kurios	Lord, God
Prophet	Prophetes	Prophet
Saying	Lego	Saying [Present Active Participle]
Called	Kaleo	Called [Aorist Active Indicative]
Son	Uihos	Son

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
19	Hosea 11:1	Out of Egypt have I called my son	Matthew 2:13-23

[Note In order to come out of Egypt they had to flee to Egypt – see also fulfilment section 21 below]

REFLECTION

Verse 13 **And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.**

An angel from the Lord came and instructed Joseph to get out of Bethlehem and head for Egypt which he and the family did that very night. He was told to go to Egypt until he is advised further. This was to comply with the prophecy of **Hosea 11:1** which says, *“Out of Egypt have I called my son”*.

For a period Jesus with his parents took refuge in Egypt, sustained by the gold recently given to him by the Magi. Egypt was a Roman province, independent of Herod, with a significant population of Jews and was thus an easy and convenient refuge. Egypt is seen in the Scriptures as the place of bondage, but it now became a place of refuge.

In the first two years of our Saviour’s life he was hidden away from the public domain. He had been born in a manger because there was no room in the inn, and now He had to flee by night from Judea to escape from the murderous intents of Herod and hide away in Egypt.

Verse 14 **When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:**

The word arose should probably be translated, he was woken from the dream [passive voice], with the participle preceding the action of the main verb which is “paralambano”, which means to take [aorist active indicative]. He took the child at that point in time and moved immediately, before dawn, to save them all.

Joseph acted promptly, as soon as he awoke out of sleep, rose from his bed, he did as he was commanded, he prepared for his journey, and headed off southward to Egypt while it was still dark.

What part of Egypt he went into is not certain. The Jews say that Jesus went to Alexandria in Egypt, which is quite probable since this was a place where many Jews lived, but there were many other Jewish settlements there at this time. Family members to them both would have been in many places.

Verse 15 **And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.**

Mary, Joseph and the child remain in Egypt until Herod the Great is dead. As with all the facets of the Lord’s life this stay in Egypt had meaning in the Eternal Plan of God.

In 740 BC the prophet Hosea in **Hosea 11:1** stated, *“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.”*

Hosea reflects on the great deliverance by God of the nation Israel under Moses at the Exodus. Israel is shown to be weak and helpless after many years of slavery in Egypt.

However this also is used as a prophecy of the return of the young child Jesus from Egypt after the death of Herod.

The fulfilment is seen in this verse. Herod the Great died in the northern spring of 4 BC just before the Passover. His kingdom was divided into three: Herod Philip in Decapolis, Herod Antipas in Galilee, and Herod Archaleus ruling in Judea.

Archaleus was a very cruel ruler, so cruel in fact that he was deposed by the Romans in 7AD and sent into exile on the outer limits of the Roman Empire.

Knowing Archaleus' reputation, Joseph did not return to Judea and, led by God through a dream, returned to Nazareth in Galilee as we see in the next section.

Israel nationally was a son as stated in **Exodus 4:22** which says, *“And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh Thus saith the Lord. Israel is my son even my firstborn”*. Israel was called out of Egypt.

Jesus Christ is the greater Son called out of Egypt. The greater Son will eventually reign over the national son.

APPLICATION

The plan of God is perfect. It is critical to be in the right geographical location at the right time to ensure compatibility with the plan of God. There is neither blessing nor protection out of God's will for your life!

Timing of events is a feature of the Plan of God with the Magi having provided material support to the child so that the family could live in Egypt. We also are provided with our needs by our Heavenly Father.

It is important to assess God will for our lives in relation to the Word of God.

Our time on this earth is designated by the Lord. Even the greatest enemy cannot remove you if the Lord has further work for you to do and even the greatest medical team cannot keep you here once your work for Him is finished.

PROPHECY

RETURN OUT OF EGYPT

PROPHECY

Hosea 11:1 (740 BC): When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Hosea reflects on the great deliverance by God of the nation Israel under Moses at the Exodus. Israel is shown to be weak and helpless after many years of slavery in Egypt. This also is used as a prophecy of the return of the young child Jesus from Egypt after the death of Herod.

FULFILMENT

Matthew 2:15 (c. 3 BC): And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

1. For a period Jesus with his parents took refuge in Egypt, possibly sustained by the gold given to him by the Magi (**Matthew 2:11**).
2. Herod the Great died in the northern spring of 4BC, his kingdom being divided into three: Herod Philip in Decapolis, Herod Antipas in Galilee, and Herod Archaleus ruling in Judea.
3. Archaleus was a very cruel ruler, so cruel in fact that he was deposed by the Romans in 7AD and sent into exile on the outer limits of the Roman Empire.
4. Knowing Archaleus' reputation, Joseph did not return to Judea and, led by God through a dream, returned to Nazareth in Galilee (**Matthew 2:22,23**). In this Joseph not only arranged for the fulfilment of prophecy [A8 - a Nazarene] but in doing so used a lot of common sense.
5. Israel nationally was a son (**Exodus 4:22**) who was called out of Egypt. Jesus Christ is the greater son called out of Egypt. The greater son will eventually reign over the national son.

DOCTRINES

GOD: DIVINE GUIDANCE: THE WILL OF GOD

1. Three categories of will in history
 - a) Divine will (sovereignty)
 - b) Angelic will.
 - c) Human will.

2. Main areas of the will of God (**1 John 3:23**)
 - a) For the unbeliever - salvation (**2 Peter 3:9**)
 - b) For the believer - spirituality (**Ephesians 5:18**)

3. Christ has free will (**Matthew 26:42, Hebrews 10:7, 9**)
 - a) No free will in mankind would imply no free will in Christ.
 - b) The basic principles of divine guidance however is based on the fact that man possesses free will to choose for or against God.

4. Type of will of God as related to the human race (e.g. Balaam)
 - a) Directive (**Numbers 22:12**) -what God directs.
 - b) Permissive (**Numbers 22:20**) - What God allows
 - c) Overruling (**Numbers 23**) - When God overrules

5. Principles of Guidance
 - a) Knowledge of biblical principles in the believer (**Psalms 32:8, Proverbs 3:1-6, Isaiah 58:11, Romans 12:2**)
 - b) Surrender and filling of the Holy Spirit (**Romans 6:13, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:17-18, 1 John 1:9**)
 - c) Growth - to eat meat and not rely on milk (**1 Corinthians 3:1-4**)

6. Categories of the will of God
 - a) Viewpoint will of God - What does He want me to think?
 - b) Operational will of God - What does He want me to do?
 - c) Geographical will of God - Where does He want me to be?

7. An example of the will of God (**Acts 11**) - the Guidance of Peter
 - a) Guidance through prayer (vs 5)
 - b) Guidance through the mind (vs 6)
 - c) Guidance through the word (vs 7-10)
 - d) Guidance through providential circumstances (vs 11)
 - e) Guidance through the filling of the Spirit (vs 12)
 - f) Guidance through fellowship and comparison of data (vs 13-15)
 - g) Guidance through remembering Scripture (vs 16)

HARMONY

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT FROM BETHLEHEM

“And when they [the Magi] were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.”

20. SLAUGHTER OF THE CHILDREN AT BETHLEHEM - MATTHEW 2:16-18

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

KEY WORDS

See	Eido	See [Aorist Active Participle]
Mocked	Empaizo	Deride, Mock [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Wise men	Magos	Wise men, Magi
Wrath	Thumoo	Enraged [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Exceeding	Lian	Exceedingly, Greatly
Sent forth	Apostello	Send out, from which we get apostle. [Aorist Active Participle]
Slew	Anaiero	Put to death, Kill, Slay [Aorist Active Indicative]
Child	Pais	Child
Coasts	Horion	Coast, Border, Vicinity
Two years old	Dietes	Two years old
And Under	Kato	Downwards
According	Kata	According to a norm or standard
Time	Chronos	Time, Season, Space
Diligently enquired	Akriboo	Enquire diligently [Aorist Active Indicative]
Fulfilled	Pleroo	Completed, Fulfilled [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Spoken	Rheo	Command, Speak [Aorist Passive Participle]
Prophet	Prophetes	Prophet
Saying	Lego	Saying [Present Active Participle]
Voice	Phone	Voice, Noise, Sound
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Lamentations	Threnos	Lamentation
Weeping	Klauthmos	Weeping
Great	Polus	Much
Mourning	Odurmos	Mourning
Weeping	Klaio	Bewail, Weep [Present Active Participle]
Children	Teknon	Child
Would	Thelo	Be disposed [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Comforted	Parakaleo	Comforted, literally to call alongside
Are	Eimi	Absolute status quo. [Present Active Indicative]

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
20	Jeremiah 31:15	Bitter weeping for the massacre of Children	Matthew 2:17-18

REFLECTION

Verse 16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. **17** Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, **18** In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Here we see that after the slipping away of the Wise Men through Herod's spy net, Herod went into a boiling rage. This again shows that he was mentally ill, but the incredible pain of the bowel cancer made him hate/rage filled. He then went and sent his army to kill all the children up to two years of age in the Bethlehem area.

The fact that he ordered the killing of children two years old and under again reinforces the concept that the visit of the Wise Men to the Christ child was up to two years after His birth.

This of course caused a massive outbreak of grief.

This again was a fulfilment of prophecy from 600 BC of Jeremiah as stated in **Jeremiah 31:15**, *"Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."*

This prophecy was given in the year that Nebuchadnezzar, then the crown prince of Chaldea, took the first group of hostages, including Daniel, from Jerusalem. The settlement of Rama was situated eight kilometres north of Jerusalem near the traditional site of Rachel's tomb at Zelzah (**1 Samuel 10:2**).

Rama was a little town between Jerusalem and Bethlehem where at the time of the Babylonian Captivity all the captives were assembled for deportation to Babylon, a place of great sorrow and weeping. Rachel is used here as an idiom for all Jewish mothers.

Rachel as a type for Jewish motherhood represents those women whose children were killed by Herod's soldiers after he had found that the Magi from Babylon were not returning to Jerusalem as he had requested.

However by the time the soldiers reached Bethlehem, Joseph, Mary and Jesus were well en-route for Egypt where they were to spend some time until Herod the Great had died.

The massacre of the children represented another satanic attack on the Plan of God with an attempt to eliminate the Christ child before he matured and thus thwart his effecting salvation on the cross.

APPLICATION

Attacks on believers by the world can vary. Sometimes they are very violent sometimes more subtle.

Autonomous man is threatened by the truth and will create havoc and hurt others not involved in the problem in order to try and eliminate threats to their power. C.f. Nebuchadnezzar and the Fiery Furnace reported in Daniel Chapter 3.

God's plan is always far superior to any action or plan of man. He will often use the actions of man to advance his plan like the removal of the other threats to the young child by Herod in his paranoia killing three of his sons.

PROPHECY - MASSACRE OF THE CHILDREN

PROPHECY - Jeremiah 31:15 (606 BC): Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

This prophecy was given in the year that Nebuchadnezzar, then the crown prince of Chaldea, took the first group of hostages, including Daniel, from Jerusalem. The settlement of Rama was situated eight kilometres north of Jerusalem near the traditional site of Rachel's tomb at Zelzah (**1 Samuel 10:2**).

FULFILMENT

Matthew 2:17,18 (4 BC) :Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

1. Rachel is the type for Jewish motherhood and represents those women whose children were killed by Herod's soldiers after he had found that the Magi from Babylon were not returning to Jerusalem as he had requested (**Genesis 37:9, Revelation 12:1,2**).
2. By the time that the soldiers reached Bethlehem, Joseph, Mary and Jesus were en-route for Egypt where they were to spend some time until Herod the Great had died (**Matthew 2:15**).
3. The massacre of the children represented another satanic attack on the plan of God with an attempt to eliminate the Christ child before he matured and thus thwart his effecting salvation on the cross.

DOCTRINES

ANGELS - SATANIC ATTACK ON THE PLAN OF GOD

Précis of Events

1. There was original perfection and unity. Satan was created the most beautiful creature, a genius.
2. Satan rebels against God and tries to set himself up as God. One third of the angels join him.
3. Satan is condemned and the lake of fire is created for Satan and his angels.
4. Man is created with a free will to show the fairness of God's judgment. God provides everything.
5. God provides one tree a test of free will.
6. In the garden man chooses deliberately to go against God's provision. Man falls.
7. Satan wages war firstly to get man to sin and is successful.
8. Through grace a Saviour promised by God. Satan proceeds to attack the line of Christ.
9. After the incarnation Satan attacks the Saviour personally until He completed His work,
10. After his strategic defeat at the cross Satan now attacks the believer and the divine institutions
11. After the Rapture Satan wages war on the earth and is cast out of heaven
12. At the Second Advent Satan is put into the bottomless pit for the thousand year Millennial reign of Christ
13. Released at the end of the Millennium he deceives the unbelievers before being put in the lake of fire forever

Pre Adamic

- [a] Creation of Satan. Satan was the most beautiful, most powerful angel who ministered at the Throne of God in heaven **Ezekiel 28:13-15**
- [b] Fall of Satan: He became proud, and declared himself god (five "I will's") **Isaiah 14:12-15**
- [c] One third of the Angels follow Satan - **Revelation 12:4**
- [d] God's judges Satan and the fallen angels consigning them to the lake of fire. **Matthew 25:41**

Attacks on the Plan of God

We now see the attack by Satan on the Plan of God as well as God's successful counterattack

Stage 1 – Attack on the Free Will of Man - Innocence to Sinfulness

Man was created and given Scripture in **Genesis 1:26-27**

The woman and then the man falls in **Genesis 3:1-6** having been tempted by Satan

Man is held responsible in **1 Timothy 2:13, 14**

God's response - Salvation promised **Genesis 3:1 5**

Stage 2 - Attack on the Line of the Saviour

Objective : If Satan can prevent the Saviour being physically born he has proved that God does not keep His promises

Attack 1. Cain kills Abel - [Attack on the seed of the woman) An unbeliever kills a believer but

God's response - Seth, another believer is provided for the line of Christ.

Attack 2. Infiltration of Fallen Angels. (Attack on the humanity) - Infiltration until only Noah's family left as the humanity.

God's response - Flood removes angel/men demons incarcerated in Tartarus (Hades)

Attack 3. Tower of Babel (Attack on nationalism) - An attempt by Satan to bring in the Millennium without God.

God's response - God forms nations and confuses their tongues.- Tower of Babel.

Attack 4 on the line of Abraham. –

God's response - Abraham promised the Saviour will be descended from him.

Attack 5. Pharaoh of Egypt. - Satan attempts to eliminate the Jews through Pharaoh's edict to kill all the male Jews

God's response - The Jews leave Egypt under Moses with great riches

Attack 6 - Satan now attacks the descendants of David.

God's response - David promised a King descended from him will reign forever

Attack 7. Against the Kings of Judah – a coup d'etat eliminates all but one member of the royal line.

God's response - Josiah, boy King of Judah divinely protected comes to throne at age of 8.

Attack 8 Against the Jews - Satan attempts to destroy the Jews using Haman.

God's response -Haman eventually executed.

Attack 9. Against Jerusalem. - 185,000 Assyrian troops under Sennacherib attack Jerusalem

God's response -185,000 Assyrian troops killed by God outside Jerusalem.

Stage 3. Attack on the Person of Christ

Attack 1. Possible stoning of Mary

Attack 2. Herod the Great.

Attack 3. Temptation in Wilderness

- Attack 4. Temptation not to go to the Cross.
- Attack 5. Attempt to stone Jesus.
- Attack 6. Attempt to tempt Jesus down from the cross.
- Attack 7. The drugged wine.

Stage 4. Attacks since the Cross.

- Attack 1. Against Scripture.
- Attack 2. Revival of Roman Empire
- Attack 3. Elimination of the Jews.
- Attack 4. One World Government.
- Attack 5. Worldliness
- Attack 6. Persecution.

HARMONY

SLAUGHTER OF THE CHILDREN AT BETHLEHEM

“Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.”

21. RETURN FROM EGYPT TO NAZARETH - MATTHEW 2:19-23,

Matthew 2:19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. 21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets,

LUKE 2:39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

KEY WORDS

Dead	Teleutao	Be dead, Deceased, Die [Aorist Active Participle]
Angel	Aggelos	Angel, Messenger
Appareth	Phaino	Seen, Appear [Present Middle Indicative]
Dream	Onar	Dream
Saying	Lego	Saying [Present Active Participle]
Arise	Egeiro	Awake, Rise up [Aorist Passive Participle]
Take	Paralambano	Receive, Take [Aorist Active Imperative]
Young Child	Paidion	Young Child
Mother	Meter	Mother
Go	Poreuomai	Depart, Go, Journey [Present Middle Imperative]

Land	Ge	Ground, Land
Are dead	Thnesko	To die, Be dead [Perfect Active Indicative]
Sought	Zeteo	Desire, Seek [Present Active Participle]
Life	Psuche	Soul, Life
Arose	Egeiro	Awoke, Raise up [Aorist Passive Participle]
Took	Paralambano	Receive, Take [Aorist Active Indicative]
Came	Erchomai	To come [Aorist Active Indicative]
Heard	Akouo	Hear [Aorist Active Participle]
Reign	Basileuo	To reign [Present Active Indicative]
In the Room	Anti	For, In the place of
His	Autos	His
Father	Pater	Father
Afraid	Phobeo	Afraid [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Go	Aperchomai	Come, Go [Aorist Active Infinitive]
Thither	Ekei	There, Thither, Yonder
Notwithstanding	De	But, And
Being warned of God	Chrematizo	Be warned of God [Aorist Passive Participle]
Dream	Onar	Dream
Turned aside	Anachoreo	Depart, Withdraw [Aorist Active Indicative]
Parts	Meros	Coast, Portion, Part
Came	Erchomai	To come, Enter, Arrive [Aorist Active Participle]
Dwelt	Katoikeo	Dwell, Inhabit [Aorist Active Indicative]
City	Polis	City
That	Hopis	That
Fulfilled	Pleroo	Fulfil, Complete [Aorist Passive Subjunctive]
Spoken	Rheo	Speak [Aorist Passive Participle]
Prophets	Prophetes	Prophets
Called	Kaleo	Called [Future Passive Indicative]
Nazarene	Nazoraios	Nazarene

PERFECT TENSE VERB

THNESKO – DEAD. Occurs 12 times in the New Testament with 5 appearances in the Perfect Tense with them all in the Active Voice. Death here in **Matthew 2:20** is seen as a reality and permanent as far as the physical body is concerned although study of the verb Gennaio above shows that once a person is born, they live forever.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS AT THE FIRST ADVENT

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
21	Isaiah 11:1	Called a Nazarene – the Branch	Matthew 2:23

HARMONISATION

While **Luke 2:39** appears in the standard Harmony of the Gospels as the same event as the passage in **Matthew 2:19-23**, but the journeys are not believed by us to be related, and the passages should therefore we believe, be separated.

DISCUSSION

Certainly in both cases Jesus, Joseph and Mary **end up in Nazareth**, which was a town in northern Israel near Lake Galilee, and a centre of building activity by Herod Antipas early in his reign, providing lots of work for men like Joseph.

Looking at **Luke 2:39** it states, *“And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.”*

From verse 21 of Luke chapter 2 Mary and Joseph have been at the Temple performing the requirements of the Law. With a male child the mother was unclean for forty days, a sacrifice had to be made and the young child had to be circumcised.

Logically after this and meeting two believers in the Temple area they went home to Nazareth as they had only come to Bethlehem for the Roman census.

The wise men did not visit the baby in the stable as often portrayed on Christmas cards, with the shepherds, but visited him as a small child in a house up to eighteen months later.

Bethlehem is a short distance from Jerusalem and it is noted that the holy family came to Jerusalem from time to time for the Jewish Feasts.

During those times it would have been quite possible for them to stay in Bethlehem in a house. It was from there that they went to Egypt after the Magi visit, subsequent to which they returned to Israel but headed up to Nazareth, their home town because of the rule of Archaleus over Judea.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that both journeys were to Nazareth, which was the parent's home town, but that the Luke journey occurred soon after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, perhaps within a couple of months, and the return from Egypt was at least two years later.

The sequence of events seems to be that the Luke passage above should be placed at the end of the section 14 passage. It has therefore been transferred to that section and is not included here.

REFLECTION

Verse 19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

In verses 19 and 20 we have notification of the death of Herod. However it should be noted that it says, "They are dead".

They comprise four leaders in the Herodian line, Alexander and Aristobulus who are sons of Herod were already dead. The third was Herod's next son Antipater who on hearing of the supposed death of Herod was released from prison and immediately claimed the kingdom. Herod however was not dead and had only fainted after a failed suicide attempt. He recovered and had Antipater executed. With the death of Herod the Great all those who had sought the death of the Lord Jesus Christ were dead. They had all died in a space of six months. Satan's people are hate filled, like him, and a similar thing occurs, with multiple malice filled executions, in Nazi Germany in the six months before the total collapse of that evil system.

As a result of his slaughter of his sons Augustus Caesar made the famous pun, that it was better being one of Herod's pigs than one of his sons as at least the pigs lived, for as a "religious" Jew for political convenience he didn't eat pork. In the Greek the word for son and pig are very similar, hence the pun.

Verse 21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

The word arose is in the aorist passive participle format which would indicate that he received awakening from his dream. The action of the participle precedes the action of the main verb which was to take the family and travel to Israel.

Just before his death Herod made Archaleus his heir. Archaleus was an even more cruel person than his father had been, who even the Romans could not tolerate, and eventually he was banished to where modern day Vienna was. This was the far point in the empire, and there he died.

We noted that Joseph was afraid, and humanly speaking he had reasons to be, but he prayed and was in the Plan of God and so safe. This is in the aorist tense showing that it was a momentary fear related to his hearing that Archaleus was reigning in Judea in the place of Herod the Great, It implies that having made a decision to move north he was no longer fearful. **2 Timothy 1:7.**

Herod had a tremendous funeral. It started at Jericho and lasted all day. It is said that many mourners had two to three meals in the funeral procession. He was buried at Fort Herodian amid great pomp in the sight of his seven surviving wives and thirteen children. His tomb was uncovered and may be visited by tourists from 2016 onwards. Explore on the Biblical Archaeology Review Website.

Verse 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Joseph was told that those who had wanted to kill Jesus Christ were dead. Weighing up that Archaleus was ruling in Judea he decided to go to Nazareth to live there, as the ruler there, Herod Philip, a benevolent despot, was reigning over the Galilee. This confirmed the prophecy of **Isaiah 11:1**, which says that He shall be called a Nazarene. Nazarene means a root shoot or branch.

APPLICATION

The timing of the Lord is always perfect within His Plan. The Holy Family's leaving for Egypt was guided by God, as was their return. We need to be in the right place geographically in our lives at all times.

We need to assess situations and adjust our lives accordingly. Situations change and we need to be guided by the Lord.

We have a mind, and we have the Scriptures. We need to consider our life in accordance with common sense, and by applying that same common sense to the Scriptures. "When the plain sense of a passage makes common sense, seek no other sense, lest you find nonsense". Dr David L Cooper.

PROPHECY

CHRIST - A NAZARENE

PROPHECY

Isaiah 11:1 (713 BC): And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots

Given by Isaiah in the year before the final destruction of the northern kingdom, this prophecy confirms that the root of Jesse will bring forth a branch or root shoot. These words would give comfort that the nation had a long-term future, as well as requiring Jesus the Messiah to be seen to come from Nazareth.

FULFILMENT

Matthew 2:23 (to 30 AD): And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

1. Jesus was called a Nazarene coming from Nazareth, which means "root shoot" or "branch". Jesus Christ is shown as the branch in various ways:

- (a) Branch of David (**Isaiah 11:1**) representing Jesus Christ as King.
- (b) My Servant the Branch (**Zechariah 3:8**) - representing Jesus Christ as Saviour.
- (c) The Man the Branch (**Zechariah 6:12**) - representing Jesus Christ as truly Man.
- (d) The Branch of the Lord (**Isaiah 4:2**) - representing Jesus Christ as God.

2. It is of interest that Herod the Great had, towards the end of his life, eliminated bands of robbers from Galilee; thus preparing a safe environment in which Jesus could grow up (**Romans 8:28**).

DOCTRINES

ISRAEL - NAZARITE VOW

1. In (**Numbers 6 and 7**) where the Nazarite oath is given there are four relationships with the Lord:-
 - a) Separation. (6:1-12)
 - b) Worship. (6:13-21)
 - c) Blessing. (6:22-27)
 - d) Service. (7:1-89)
2. The Nazarite or "separated one" was a person of either sex separated wholly unto the Lord.
3. The Nazarite, as a part of the oath abstained from:-
 - a) Wine which was the symbol of joy (**Psalms 104:15**) indicating that the Nazarite's joy was in the Lord (**Psalms 87:7; 97:12; Habakkuk 3:18**)
 - b) Cutting his hair, thus giving him long hair which is a reproach to man (**1 Corinthians 11:14**) and indicated that the person was willing to bear reproach for the Lord's sake.
4. It seems that Samson and John the Baptist had taken Nazarite vows.

GOD: DIVINE INSTITUTIONS – FREEWILL

1. Definition :- Volition or free will is the responsibility before God to choose different ends and means in life.
2. The above definition does not say that one has the power to do what you choose but it does give the opportunity to choose.
3. God gave Adam a choice in the garden in (**Genesis 2:16,17**) where God told the man "thou shalt not eat" in the imperative mood which is a command.
4. Free will gives you the opportunity to want to accomplish things in conformity with God's will without having the natural ability to do so. (**1 Kings 3:5-10**) Solomon in this case wanted to judge but could not because of his own limitations.
5. In (Psalm 13) David's free will continued to be positive even though he had not been successful.
6. One of the reasons for the delay in the answering of prayer requests is to allow the strengthening of free will to desire to do God's will.
7. Free will in both believer and unbeliever. (**John 7:17**)
8. Free will in giving. (**2 Corinthians 8:12**)
9. Free will cannot be coerced or compromised thus Christianity is a matter of obedience. (**2 Corinthians 5:10**)
10. As God is to judge all men it means that man is responsible for his actions and that all normal members of the human race have free will. (**Revelation 20:11-15**)
11. Relationship of free will is vertical, between man and God not man and man. (**Ephesians 6:5-9**)
12. Because man is subject to judgment there is an age of accountability as portrayed by the "rich young ruler".
13. Animals and plants are not judged.

14. Free will also puts the responsibility on both ends and means. An example of the right end but wrong means is the sin unto death of Moses. (**Numbers 20**)

15. By application just because God is blessing a ministry, in the case of Moses by providing water it does not mean that the person is necessarily in God's will. God blesses through his grace and not necessarily because they are doing things by God's way.

16. Human viewpoint attack on free will - Determinism.

- (a) The concept is that if one starts out with any physical item and I know everything there is regarding it and the laws that control it then I can dogmatically predict the future state of that item.
- (b) This concept is incorrect as shown by the power of prayer (**James 5:17**).
- (c) It is possible for God to manipulate His universe. (**Acts 16:26**).

17. Types of miracles in the Bible

- (a) natural - a variation of a natural law
 - (i) Elijah and the drought
 - (ii) Paul and the earthquake
- (iii) Moses at the Red Sea with the east wind
 - (b) supernatural - a direct violation of a natural law
 - (i) The resurrection of Christ
 - (ii) Being born again

18. In physics this concept is called "Heisenburg's Uncertainty Principle" after the German Nobel prize winner who postulated it.

Modern science now views a lot of the formulae of physics as occurring the vast majority of times but on odd occasions not complying with observed laws. Such non compliance would include miracles or manipulation by God.

19. Evolution is an attack on free will as it states that man is evolved from animals and is a higher form of animal. This is often reinforced in text books which state "men and the other animals" indicating that man differs in degree only and not in "kind".

- (a) "Difference in degree" - hot and cold is a matter of relative heat; ice, water and steam are all water and of the same kind.
- (b) "Difference in kind - a square and a triangle.
- (c) Solomon in (**Ecclesiastes 3:21**), a believer out of fellowship assesses man as different only in degree from animals.
- (d) Based on evolutionary principles abortion can be justified and atrocities condoned against other races such as the Nazi reaction to Jews, gipsies and the Slavs. From this comes the concept that if we knew everything about animal behaviour we could then describe man.
- (e) The Biblical view however is that we do vary in kind, not in degree (**Genesis 2:16**) with the thing that sets man apart from the animals being volition.
- (f) By implication man is never totally determined by his environment.
- (g) Hell is a monument to the fact of free will because if you do not have a choice you cannot be judged.

20. Three problems which the Bible solves regarding free will -

- (a) What about babies who die before they hear the gospel or those who are mentally unable to decide?

Solution - (**2 Samuel 12:18**) where a child born to David and Bathsheba dies on the 7th day, the day before circumcision which would have brought the child into a covenant relationship.

David says that he will go to be with the child indicating the child has been automatically saved without a covenant requirement.

This is the principle of "unlimited atonement". (**1 John 2:2**)

- (b) What about the physical damage which hinders the person causing a restriction of free will ?

Solution - (**John 9:1-7**) where a man blind from birth is healed. Jesus did not bypass the free will but made up for the blindness. He breaks down the barriers for a person to do God's will but the free will of the person is not manipulated.

(c) What about spiritual damage to free will ?

Solution - (**Genesis 3:8**) where after the fall God sought out Adam and Eve in the garden where they had hidden from him. God who is all knowing asked the question "Where are you ?"

The principle of the "total depravity of man" is seen here in the fact that man will not of his own free will seek God.

In (Deuteronomy 5) Moses and all the Israelites heard a public address by God which the Israelites shrank back from.

God speaks to man in three areas:-

- (a) He speaks to all men. (**Matthew 5:45, Acts 14:17**)
- (b) He has a more intense form of calling. (**Genesis 6:3, Romans 13:1**)
- (c) He calls through the gospel of Jesus Christ. (**John 16:8-11**)

It is however possible to so damage the free will regarding spiritual matters that it becomes impossible to believe or repent.

Examples

- (a) the Amorites and Canaanites of Joshua's day. (**Genesis 15:16**)
- (b) the Pharaoh of the Exodus. (**Exodus 7- 11**)
- (c) those who accept the mark of the beast. (**Revelation 13:8**)
- (d) the reaction of unbelievers at the second advent. (**Revelation 6:16**)

21. However there are many areas over which even those who have had limited free will have control and the person who searches will find. (**John 7:17**)

22. If God is truly sovereign how can man have genuine free choice? God has absolute sovereignty as shown by a study of His character. It is also clear that man has free will. God uses his free will as creator whilst man uses his as a part of creation.

23. One way of looking at this is fatalism which is the basis of most eastern religions which state that man's destiny is set and certain.

24. Another way is autonomy which says that all things are uncertain and therefore history goes on chaotically.

25. True biblical sovereignty is based on the creator/creation concept with the creator outside the universe and the created beings within.

Three non salvation examples:-

- (a) Paul as a prisoner on a ship bound for Rome predicts, having received advice from the angel of God, that there will be no loss of life but the ship will become a wreck. The guarantee is a sovereign guarantee and therefore absolute. Paul however tells the soldiers that they must stay on the boat to be saved. They do and they are saved. Sovereign decrees by God therefore contain free will decisions by man. (**Acts 27**)
- (b) The sovereign decree is that all things work together for good towards the goal of predestination and eventual glorification. We have a guarantee that we will be in heaven. We need to be actively involved in the chain of events. (**Romans 8:28**)
- (c) Daniel understood the time of "desolations" as seventy years as prophesied by Jeremiah and knew that it would end on time. He now seeks by supplication with sackcloth and ashes forgiveness for Israel's sin on the basis that no discipline is going to be removed without the sin having been forgiven. (**Daniel 9:2**)

God promises certain things but they are contingent on our prayer Using the principle of the sovereignty of

God we can be confident in prayer if we are controlled by the Holy Spirit. (**James 4:2**)

26. Can free will be neutral ? The answer is no, one is either positive or negative towards God. For instance if a young man is keen on a girl and is asked if he is going to marry her and he answers he does not know. As long as he debates the question he will not marry her and is therefore negative to marriage.

27. Every attack in the Christian life has one common feature, the denial of the Word of God as shown in the temptation of our Lord. Each of them therefore is an attack on the character of God.

28. The act of negative free will to the plan of God is given in **(Romans 1:18-32.)**

In this passage:-

- (a) The unbeliever hold the truth in unrighteousness. (v18)
- (b) The power of God is clearly seen by all men. (v19-20)
- (c) They became vain in their imaginations and worshipped part of the creation rather than the creator. (v21-23)
- (d) The result is sexual and other perversions. (v24-31)
- (e) They end up encouraging others to defy God. (v32)

29. Are the majority always right ? A scriptural example of this was Elijah and the prophets of Baal in **(1 Kings 18)** where on a public opinion basis Elijah would have been considered wrong.

The concept that public opinion is always correct comes from the French philosopher Rousseau who stated "the most general will is always the most just also the voice of the people is in fact the voice of God".

Another good example of this would be the public opinion that happened at the crucifixion of Christ.

30. There are therefore two classes in the Christian life, positive or negative to God's will.

31. In Old Testament times physical idols were common. The idols nowadays are commonly abstract in the form of ideas and concepts. It is up to the Christian to challenge these concepts where they occur.

HARMONY

RETURN FROM EGYPT TO NAZARETH

"But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."

22. LIFE OF JESUS AT NAZARETH - LUKE 2:40-52

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. 43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. 46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. 47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. 48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. 49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

KEY WORDS

Child	Paidion	Child
Grew	Auxano	Grow, Increase [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Waxed Strong	Krataioo	Be strengthened, Be strong [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Spirit	Pneuma	Spirit
Filled	Pleroo	Fill, Complete [Present Passive Participle]
Wisdom	Sophia	Wisdom
Grace	Charis	Grace
God	Theos	God
Was	Eimi	Absolute status quo [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Upon	Epi	Upon, With
Parents	Goneus	Parent
Went	Poreuomai	Depart, Go, Journey [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Year	Etos	Year
Feast	Heorte	Feast
Passover	Pascha	Passover
Was	Ginomai	He became [Aorist Middle Indicative]
Twelve	Dodeka	Twelve
Went up	Anabaino	Ascend, Go up, Climb [Present Active Participle]
After	Kata	According to
Custom	Ethos	Custom
Fulfilled	Teleioo	Complete , Finish [Aorist Active Participle]
Days	Hemera	Day
They	Autos	Themselves
Returned	Hupostrepho	Return, Turn Back [Present Active Infinitive]
Child	Pais	Young Man
Tarried Behind	Hupomeno	To stay under or abide, Stay behind [Aorist Active Indicative]
Mother	Meter	Mother
Knew	Ginosko	To know
Supposing	Mueo	Instruct [Aorist Active Participle]
Him	Autos	Himself, Herself
Have been	Eimi	To keep on being [Present Active Infinitive]
Company	Sunodia	Company, From this Greek word we get the word synod
Went	Erchomai	Go [Aorist Active Indicative]
Journey	Hodos	Journey
Sought	Anazeteo	Seek [Aorist Active Indicative]
Kinsfolk	Suggenes	Kin
Acquaintance	Gnostos	Acquaintance, One who is known
Found	Heurisko	Find, See [Aorist Active Participle]
Turn back	Huperstrepho	Return, Turn Back [Aorist Active Indicative]
Seeking	Zeteo	Seeking [Present Active Participle]
Came to pass	Ginomai	To become something [Aorist Middle Indicative]

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After	Meta	Following, After
Three	Treis	Three
Found	Heurisko	Find, See [Aorist Active Indicative]
Temple	Heiron	Temple
Sitting	Kathezomai	Sit [Present Middle Participle]
Midst	Mesos	Midst, Among
Doctors	Didaskalos	Instructor, Doctor, Master, Teacher
Hearing	Akouo	To hear [Present Active Participle]
Asking Questions	Eperotao Autos	To question them, To ask them [Present Active Participle]
Heard	Akouo	To hear [Present Active Participle]
Astonished	Existemi	Amazed, Astonished [Imperfect Middle Indicative]
Understanding	Sunesis	Knowledge, Understanding
Answers	Apokrisis	Answer
Saw	Eido	See, Consider [Aorist Active Participle]
Amazed	Ekplesso	Amaze, Astonished [Aorist Passive Indicative]
Said	Epo	To say [Aorist Active Indicative]
Son	Teknon	Child, Son
Thus	Houto	In this manner
Dealt	Poieo	To do [Aorist Active Indicative]
Father	Pater	Father
Sought	Zeteo	Seek [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Sorrowing	Odunao	Grieve, Sorrow, Torment [Present Middle Participle]
Said	Epo	To say [Aorist Active Indicative]
Sought	Zeteo	Seek [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Wist	Eido	Understand
Must	Dei	Behoves, Must [Present Active Indicative]
Be	Eimi	Keep on being [Present Active Infinitive]
About my Father's business	En touistou patros mou	Literally In the of my Father or In my Father's affairs
Understood	Suniermi	Understand, Be wise [Aorist Active Indicative]
Saying	Rhema	Saying, Word
Spake	Laleo	To speak [Aorist Active Indicative]
Went down	Katabaino	To go down [Aorist Active Indicative]
Came	Erchomai	Come, Enter into [Aorist Active Indicative]
Was subject to	Hupotasso	Subject oneself to [Present Passive Participle]
Kept	Diatereo	Keep [Imperfect Active Indicative]
Sayings	Rhema	Sayings
Heart	Kardia	Mind, Heart
Increased	Prokopto	Increase [Aorist Active Indicative]
Wisdom	Sophia	Wisdom
Stature	Helikia	Maturity, In years, Stature
Favour	Charis	Grace, Favour
Man	Anthropos	Man

PERFECT TENSE VERBS – None found

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY FULFILLED AT THE FIRST COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

ITEM	OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILLMENT
22	Isaiah 11:2	Became strong in the Spirit	Luke 2:40

REFLECTION

Verse 40 **And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.**

Here we see the child grew, which is the Imperfect Active Indicative of “auxano”, which means he kept on growing physically. This child grew and “waxed strong”, which is the Imperfect Middle Indicative of “ekrataiouto”.

Both verbs are also used in **Luke 1:80** of the growth of John the Baptist as a child. Luke however now uses the word *pneuma*, in spirit. Here in addition to the bodily development Luke has “filled with wisdom”. The Present Passive Participle shows that the process of filling with wisdom kept pace with the bodily growth.

We need not be confused over this growth in wisdom on the part of Jesus any more than over his bodily growth. As one commentator notes, “The intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth of the child, like the physical, was real. His was a perfect humanity developing perfectly, unimpeded any defects. It was the first instance of such a growth in history. For the first time a human infant was realizing the ideal of humanity.”

We also note that the grace of God was upon Him in his humanity in full measure, as God’s grace, mercy and love had been with the First Adam. **1 Corinthians 15:22-45, Romans 5:8-15.**

Verse 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

Here we see that it was an annual pilgrimage for Mary and Joseph to go up to Jerusalem, and they, as observant Jews, went up each year. Bethlehem is a short distance from Jerusalem so probably, as noted before was where they stayed many times.

Travels back from Jerusalem to Nazareth were common for this couple. The events of verses 41 to 50 cover a period of seven days. The festival in verse 43 is two days in length; they went on a day’s journey in verse 44 and spent a fourth day returning to Jerusalem in verse 45 before searching for him for three days in verse 46.

Every male Jew was originally expected to appear at the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles as seen in **Exodus 23:14-17**. *“Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. 15 Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) 16 And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. 17 Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD”.*

There was no requirement for Mary to go to Jerusalem at that time as the command was for the males to go but she accompanied Joseph. Jesus may have regularly accompanied his parents, as would the other brothers and sisters of the household. When he is lost the parents expect him to be with relatives and neighbours, and they will not be unduly concerned for he is used to this trip.

It is also noted that it was during a later Feast of Passover that the armed guard would seek out the Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemane among the many people camped around Jerusalem for this festival, so the number of pious Jews who made the journey was quite large significantly increasing the population of Jerusalem out as far out as Bethlehem. Josephus records that up towards two million could attend.

Verse 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

Here not only Joseph and Mary go to Jerusalem, but at twelve years of age they took Jesus with them. This is not the bar-mitzvah of Jesus which would occur at the age of 13. It was at the age of 13 that the Jewish boy would come under the Law and thus responsible for his own sins. Up to that age the parents are responsible for the child’s sins.

In keeping with Jewish tradition the son was taken to Jerusalem on the Passover following his 12th birthday in preparation of his bar-mitzvah which would come at the age of 13. Jesus will however “pass the oral exam” in front of the Chief Priests of the time on this visit.

Verse 43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

It should be noted that the parents in verse 41 here are stated as Joseph and his mother again indicating that Joseph was his legal, although not his physical father, and that Mary was the mother of the humanity of Christ. They now leave to return to Nazareth.

They are travelling with a party from the north, and when the party left Jerusalem Joseph and Mary assumed that the 12 year old was with the group, amongst the other children, but He had this time stayed behind in Jerusalem. They are not careless parents, as it was normal then, as today in the Kibbutz of today, for cadres of older children to stick together and look after each other.

On making the first night's encampment Mary and Joseph go and seek out Jesus amongst the youth group, but having searched diligently they find to their dismay that he is not with the youth group. They therefore leave the pilgrim company and return to Jerusalem to seek out the 12 year old boy, who is they will discover taking his own "Bar Mitzvah Test".

Verse 46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

Even after returning to Jerusalem it took them three anxious days before they found Jesus in the Temple among the great teachers, interpreters and experts in the Mosaic Law. He was there listening to them and asking them questions. This showed that he understood what they were saying and he was asking penetrating questions, which went far deeper than one would expect of a boy of those years.

Verse 47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

The top theologians in Jerusalem were amazed at his questions and understanding. The Greek word for astonished is "Existemi" which is in the Imperfect tense, which means they kept on being amazed.

Their amazement was amplified by the fact that he came from Nazareth of Galilee, which at that time was certainly not known as a centre of academic excellence, as seen in **John 1:45- 46**. *"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see."*

Evidence of the source of His wisdom is given from the prophecy of the coming Messiah. There are several servant of Jehovah songs in the last portion of Isaiah. In this case how the child was taught is shown in **Isaiah 50:4-5**, *"The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. 5 The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back."*

Here even though Jesus was brought up by fine believing parents God the Father taught Him morning by morning. Christ's deity did not have to learn but the child did just like every other human being. Unlike other humans however He was not rebellious and was always attentive.

Later in **Isaiah 50-53** it is clear that one of the things He learnt in the early morning teaching sessions was that He was the Messiah and would suffer for others.

The leaders of Israel therefore had ample reason to be constantly amazed by the young Messiah

Verse 48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

When Joseph and Mary saw Him among the doctors they were astonished that He was allowed as a young boy to sit with them and that He was held in such esteem by them.

His mother, who had been looking for Him for three days, asked Jesus why He had stayed behind. She did so with apparent mildness, which after three full days of anxiety should be an example to parents who should not provoke their children to anger, but deal gently and tenderly with them. **Ephesians 5:18, 6:1-4**.

Mary calls Joseph his father, though she knew he was not, in a physical sense. However because he was his father by the law of marriage; and especially because of his paternal care of Him in His education, and bringing him up he was classified as his father as it is a Jewish tradition that "not he that begets, but he that brings up, is the father".

Verse 49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

The first words of our Lord preserved in the Bible expresses the boy's amazement that his parents should not know that there was only one possible place in Jerusalem for him.

They had sought Him three days with the imperfect tense of "Zeteo" indicating that they were constantly searching for Him.

When the boy first became conscious of his peculiar relation to the Father in heaven we do not know. It is clear that at this point, at the age of twelve, He has it, and it will grow within Him through the years ahead in Nazareth.

He therefore says that, "He must be about or literally in my Father's business". It should be noted that it is in, "my Father", not in "our" Father's business, again showing His unique relationship with God.

Verse 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

Probably Jesus had never expressly said about his mission and so they were confused even though they would have seen and heard many things from Him at home.

From this time we have no more mention of Joseph. The next we hear is of His "mother and brethren" in **John 2:12** at the wedding at Cana. It is therefore concluded that between His appearance in the Temple and the commencement of our Lord's public life, Joseph had died. This is around a twenty year period and we do not know when he died.

Verse 51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

Here we see that subjection does not mean inferiority on the part of the person who is subject to another. Here the superior God – man Jesus Christ is subject to two inferior sinful people in the form of Mary and Joseph. It was however complying with a chain of command which God had set up in the institution of family.

Verse 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

This verse tells us that he developed in four areas.

Developed in wisdom – intellectual development

Developed in stature – physical development

Developed in favour with God – spiritual development

Developed in favour with man – social development

APPLICATION

How greatly we should appreciate the Lord Jesus Christ who was given to the human race as God's solution to every woman and every man's sin/death problem.

We have to understand what the Lord's will is for our life, and ensure that we put God's worship, witness and work as the prime focus of our life.

We however must not neglect our responsibilities to our family, as Scriptures say that a person who does that is worse than an infidel. **1 Timothy 5:8.**

Just because a person is subject to another it does not mean that the person in subjection is inferior.

When the Bible talks about the wife being subject to her husband, it does not imply that the wife is inferior to the husband, it is an equal being subject to another equal in conformity with God's teaching on authority. **Ephesians 5:18 – 6:4.**

PROPHECY

CHRIST - SPIRITUAL MATURITY

PROPHECY

Isaiah 11:2 (713 BC): And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

The Messiah who was prophesied by Isaiah was to be characterised by the provision of spiritual awareness which would be obviously apparent to all who met him.

FULFILMENT

Luke 2:40 (10AD): And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Jesus as a child amazed even his parents as illustrated by the time when they returned from celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem one year, and Jesus was left behind. Finding that he was not in the group in which they were travelling, Mary and Joseph returned to Jerusalem. They found him in the temple with the leading theologians of the day, showing tremendous spiritual understanding (**Luke 2:41-52**).

FULFILMENT

Revelation 4:5 (96 AD): And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

In his vision on the island of Patmos, John sees into the throne room of heaven. Here before the throne of God were seven lamps representing the seven spirits of God.

DOCTRINES

FEASTS OF ISRAEL

1. In the Jewish calendar seven feasts were ordained by God for the Jews to follow and to be a sign to all believers.

2. In order the feasts were:-

- a) Passover
- b) Unleavened Bread
- c) First Fruits
- d) Pentecost
- e) Trumpets
- f) Atonement
- g) Tabernacles

3. **THE PASSOVER (Deuteronomy 16:1-8, Leviticus 23:5)**

Historically

- a) This feast originated on the night when the angel of the Lord passed over the land of Egypt immediately prior to the children of Israel leaving their bondage under Moses.
- b) A male lamb without blemish was killed on the 14th Nisan having been brought into the house 4 days before, great care being taken that not a bone in its body was broken. (**Exodus 12:1-6**)
- c) The lamb was roasted, eaten with bitter herbs and any portion left was burnt. (**Exodus 12:7-10**)
- d) In the original Passover the blood of the Lamb was daubed on the doorposts and lintels, any such house being spared from the last plague against Egypt. (**Exodus 12:21-28**) All plagues were against the gods of Egypt.
- e) The Passover was on the anniversary of the promise to Abraham. (**Exodus 12:41**)

Fulfilment

- a) The sacrificial lamb represents the Lord Jesus Christ. (**1 Corinthians 5:7**)

- b) Christ died on the 14th Nisan on the cross having entered Jerusalem, the Holy city 4 days before on the 10th Nisan.
 - c) When the Roman soldiers broke the legs of the thieves they found Jesus dead so no bone in His body was broken. **(John 19:32, 33)**
 - d) The roasting of the lamb represents judgment, the bitter herbs representing sins or failures.
 - e) The eating of the lamb represents faith in the work of Christ i.e. eating and drinking at the communion table.)
 - f) By faith in Christ we are protected from the final judgment of God. **(Romans 8:1)**
- Currently
- a) Each time we celebrate the Lord's supper we are looking back to the cross and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. **(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)**
 - b) This could also represent salvation to the believer.

4. UNLEAVENED BREAD (Leviticus 23:6-8)

- a) This feast lasted for seven days starting on the 15th Nisan and portrays the provision and fellowship with God.
- b) The bread was unleavened due to the need to leave Egypt with utmost haste. In addition the wine was without leaven or alcohol - the wine being boiled during this feast. This has been found in Chaldean army instructions when it was feared that the Jews could revolt during the time of unleavened bread if they were served with alcoholic Chaldean beer.
- c) As God can have nothing to do with sin God's provision is without leaven as leaven represents evil in the scriptures.
- d) There are various forms of leaven in the Bible:-
 - i) Leaven of the Sadducees - human viewpoint. **(Matthew 16:6)**
 - ii) Leaven of the Pharisees - ritualism **(Mark 8:15)**
 - iii) Leaven of Herod - worldliness **(Mark 8:15)**
 - iv) Leaven of the Corinthians - wantonness **(I Corinthians 5:6, 7)**
 - v) Leaven of the Galatians - legalism **(Galatians 5:9)**
- e) Bread made without leaven shows the perfection of Christ. **(Leviticus 2:11)**
- f) This could represent the Christian walk for the believer.
- g) The unleavened bread was cooked on a griddle which caused the bread to have stripes. It also had holes. By his stripes we are healed **(Isaiah 53:5)** They will look upon him whom they have pierced. **(Zechariah 12:10)**

5. FIRST FRUITS (Leviticus 23:9-14)

- a) This feast always occurred on a Sunday and was celebrated on the 17th Nisan.
- b) This feast portrayed the resurrection of Christ and occurred half-way through the feast of Unleavened Bread.
- c) Christ is said to be the first fruits of them that sleep. **(1 Corinthians 15:20)**
- d) Christ rose 3 days after his death on the Passover.
- e) The Jews crossed the Red Sea 3 days after leaving bondage.
- f) The ark rested on Ararat on this very day after the flood. **(Genesis 8:4)**
- g) This could represent the resurrection body for the believer.

6. PENTECOST (Leviticus 23:15-21)

- a) Pente - fifty - this occurred always on a Sunday 50 days or a week of weeks after the first fruits, generally in May or June. **(Leviticus 23:15)**
- b) It represents the dispersion of the Jews which occurred historically in AD 70 and there followed a long gap to the next feast representing the long time the Jews would be out of the land.
- c) Pentecost in the year of the crucifixion was the day on which the Church age started with the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem. **(Acts 2:1-4)**.
- d) At Pentecost, 3,000 were born again; at the giving of the law, 3,000 were killed.

7. TRUMPETS (Leviticus 23:23, 24)

- a) This occurred in September, the blowing of the trumpets representing the coming of the king. It is the Jewish New Year Day.
- b) This represents the return of the Lord Jesus Christ for his Church at the Rapture. The Jews recognise this as the day on which God would again have a relationship with the Jews.

8. ATONEMENT (Leviticus 23:26-32)

- a) This occurred ten days after the feast of trumpets. It represents the fact that believing Jews only enter into the Millennium.

- b) From evaluation of (**Daniel 12:11-12**) and parallel passages it is apparent that there is a period of judgment at the second advent of some 45 days. This is a period of the wheat and tares, the sheep and the goats. The unbelievers are baptised with fire. (**Matthew 3:11,12.**) The believers enter the Millennium.
- c) This was the only day of the year that the high priest was able to enter the Holy of Holies bringing a bowl of blood, once for himself and once for the nation. (**Hebrews 9:6-7**). His entry represents the sacrifice of Christ.
- d) Christ's sacrifice is the fulfilment of this ritual. Christ only had to make one offering, as he was sinless, for the sins of the world. (**Hebrews 9:11-14**) On the feast of Atonement red wool, the Atonement Lot, was tied to the temple pillar. After the blood was spilt the lot turned white until the time of the cross. Afterwards it stayed red. This sign showed Christ's once and for all sacrifice.

9. TABERNACLES (Leviticus 23:33-36)

This occurred five days after the feast of Atonement and lasted a week. It represents the Millennial reign of Christ and the perfect provision and environment provided. (**Deuteronomy 16:13-15, Romans 8:19-22**)

10. It is of interest that the two feasts that speak of God's perfect provision - Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles - were a week duration whilst the others were for a day, speaking of a point in time occurrence such as the crucifixion, resurrection or rapture of the Church.

11. SUMMARY

- a) PASSOVER fulfilled at The Crucifixion on Passover AD 32
 - b) UNLEAVENED BREAD fulfilled at Burial of Christ on Unleavened Bread AD 32
 - c) FIRST-FRUITS fulfilled at Resurrection of Christ on First-Fruits AD 32
 - d) PENTECOST fulfilled at End of Jewish Age on Pentecost AD 32
 - e) TRUMPETS to be fulfilled at Rapture of Church
 - f) ATONEMENT to be fulfilled at Second Advent of Christ
 - g) TABERNACLES to be fulfilled at Millennial reign of Christ
12. As Paul had seen the literal fulfilment of the first four feasts in some 8 weeks in AD 32 it is hardly surprising that he would expect to be in the "rapture generation" (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 2 Thessalonians 2:1**)

CHRISTIAN LIFE: OBEDIENCE

1. Obedience is better than offerings. (**1 Samuel 15:22; Proverbs 21:3; 28:9**). If we are not in God's will, any "worship" we offer is unacceptable.
2. Obedience is something you have to learn. The basic training in obedience has to start in childhood. As it says in (**Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16**) "Honour your father and your mother ". (**Proverbs 4:3, 4; 22:6; 29:15-17; Hebrews 5:8**).
3. Teaching your child obedience is an act of love. (**Proverbs 3:12; 19:18; 23:13-14**).
4. We have to obey those who are in authority over us. (**Exodus 20:12; 22:28; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 5:16; Romans 13:1-5; Ephesians 6:1-5; Colossians 3:18-22; Titus 3:1**).
5. Those in authority have been put in that position by God. (**Romans 13:1**).
6. Obedience to those in authority is obedience to God. (**Proverbs 24:21; Ephesians 6:7; Colossians 3:23-24; Romans 13:5**).
7. Disobedience to those in authority is disobedience to God. (**Romans 1:30; 13:2**).
8. But when we are ordered to do something that is against God's Will we have to disobey. (**Acts 4:19; 5:40-42**)
9. The fifth commandment (**Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16**) is the only commandment with a promise. (**Proverbs 10:17; Ephesians 6:1-3**). Social life in a society is only possible when the people in it have learned to obey.
10. If this commandment is ignored, if the authority of the family is denied or not exercised, society will quickly slide into anarchy. (**Isaiah 3:12; Proverbs 29:21; 30:21-23; Romans 1:30**).

11. Jesus Christ was perfect in His obedience. (**Luke 2:51; Philippians 2:8**). Examples of the Lord's perfect obedience to the Father's will.

a) The Lord's temptation in the wilderness (**Matthew 4:1-11**), where the Lord resisted the temptation in His humanity to use His divine power outside the Father's will (**Philippians 2:5-8, Hebrews 10:7**)

b) In the Garden of Gethsemane the Lord resisted all temptation to the contrary but set His face firmly to go through with the horror of the cross (**Matthew 26:38-46, Mark 14:34-42, Luke 22:41-44**)

c) During the provocations of the trials the Lord stood firm and resolute. Although He had the power to resist arrest, as shown briefly in (**John 18:6**), He voluntarily went with the troops, even chiding Peter for his sword play (**Luke 22:49-51**). Although abused (**Matthew 26:67-68**), struck (**John 18:22**), scourged (**Matthew 27:26**), mocked and beaten (**Matthew 27:27-31**), and finally crucified the Lord calmly accepted this all as part of the Father's Plan, resisting any temptation to rebel at the injustice, cruelty and callousness of those who perpetrated this evil. Rather He prayed for them, acknowledging to Pilate that all this was part of His role as Saviour (**Luke 23:34, John 18:37**)

d) When miracles were demanded by Herod Antipas (**Luke 23:8-11**) the Lord resisted any temptation to instantly judge that evil man and his court but saying nothing set His face to the cross on which He would bear even the sins of Herod Antipas (**1 John 2:2**)

e) When He stumbled on the road to the cross He did not call on divine strength but Simon of Cyrene had to be pressed into service to carry the cross. (**Matthew 27:32, Luke 23:26**)

f) When reviled by the crowds as He hung on the cross, taunted to do things which He could have done, He resisted all temptation to step down from the cross but stayed there to bear the sins of all. (**Matthew 27:39-44, Mark 15:29-32, Luke 23 :35-39**)

GOD: DIVINE INSTITUTIONS – FAMILY

1. God instituted families and marriage from the start of mankind on earth (**Genesis 2:24**).

2. Marriage was to be monogamous (**Genesis 2:24**). They are classified as 'one flesh'. They must leave mother and father and set up their own house (**Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31; Matthew 19:4-5**).

3. Adultery or breakdown of marriage was so serious a matter that it was included in the Ten Commandments (**Exodus 20:14**).

4. The husband is the head of the family (**Genesis 3:16**).

a) He should be willing to die for her (**Ephesians 5:22-23**).

b) He provides for his family (**Genesis 3:19; 1 Timothy 5:8**).

c) He should rear the children in the fear of the Lord (**Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6,7**).

d) He should not provoke his children (**Colossians 3:21**).

5. Wives are subject to their husbands (**Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:22,23. 1 Peter 3:1-6**).

a) She has the place of honour in the home (**1 Peter 3:7**).

b) She has a deep desire for her husband (**Genesis 3:16**).

6. Children should be obedient to both parents (**Ephesians 6:1-3; Proverbs 22:15; 23:13**).

a) They must honour (**Ephesians 6:2; 1 Timothy 5:4; John 19:26**).

b) If they honour their father and mother they will have long lives (**Exodus 20:12**).

7. Three ways in which normal family life parallels the relationship that God the Father has with "The Christ"

a) It is grounded from one head - (**1 Corinthians 15:45-50**).

i) In the garden of Eden Adam was created first and Eve was taken from Adam's side. Eve had to be taken from Adam. The second Adam was Jesus Christ and out of Him will come a new spiritual race.

ii) I am my father's child because I have received from him his image. Similarly when we are born again we receive the image of God.

- b) The family is subject to discipline - (**Hebrews 12:3-15**)
- i) It is important to train your children to live righteously.
 - ii) God's discipline trains us to walk in His will, in the place of blessing.
 - iii) The child must learn wisdom from the parents. (**Exodus 12:24-28, Deuteronomy 6:6-25, Joshua 4:5-8**) God is wisdom.
- c) The parents are responsible for their family's conduct, morally and legally. Our witness reflects on God.
8. In a survey in the U.S.A. eight reasons were given as to why the family unit was being weakened in that country.
- a) The rise of promiscuity.
 - b) Transfer of the protection of the family from the head of the family to the State.
 - c) Transfer of the education of the child from the parents.
 - d) Movement of family recreation from the family to outside including television.
 - e) Transfer of the place of production from the home to the factory.
 - f) The use of aged accommodation for senior members of the family rather than them staying in the home.
 - g) The loss of traditional homemaking skills and the rise of the supermarket society.
 - h) Transfer of religious instruction from the home to outside.

HARMONISATION

In the standard harmony **Matthew 2:23** "*And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*" Is included in this section. On close examination however it shows it is more appropriately attached to the previous section as it does not relate specifically to the growth of the Christ child but to His return to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph which is the subject of the previous section.

HARMONY

LIFE OF JESUS AT NAZARETH

"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. He was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

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HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

PROLOGUE TO MARK'S GOSPEL

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God

PROLOGUE TO THE LUKE'S GOSPEL

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

PROLOGUE TO THE JOHN'S GOSPEL

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST AS THE KING OF THE JEWS

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Tamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king; And David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST AS TRUE HUMANITY, A DESCENDANT OF ADAM

being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the

son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge, Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda, Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri, Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er, Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim, Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David, Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda, Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor, Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala, Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech, Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO ZACHARIAS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST'S BIRTH

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

MARY'S VISIT TO ELIZABETH

And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

CIRCUMCISION AND NAMING OF JOHN

And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO JOSEPH OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn; and he [Joseph] called his name JESUS.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHEPHERDS

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

VISIT OF THE SHEPHERDS TO ADORE CHRIST

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

PRESENTATION IN TEMPLE

And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

PROPHECY OF SIMEON

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

PROPHECY OF ANNA

And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

RETURN TO NAZARETH

And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

VISIT OF THE MAGI TO BETHLEHEM

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

FLIGHT INTO EGYPT FROM BETHLEHEM

And when they [the Magi] were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

SLAUGHTER OF THE CHILDREN AT BETHLEHEM

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

RETURN FROM EGYPT TO NAZARETH

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

LIFE OF JESUS AT NAZARETH

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. He was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

PROPHECIES REGARDING CHRIST RECORDED OTHER THAN IN THE GOSPELS

OLD TESTAMENT	DESCRIPTION	FULFILMENT
Genesis 3:15	Seed of a woman (virgin birth)	Galatians 3:16

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		Galatians 4:4-5
Genesis 3:15	He will bruise Satan's head	Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8
Genesis 12:3	Seed of Abraham will bless all nations	Acts 3:25-26 Galatians 3:8
Genesis 12:7	The Promise made to Abraham's Seed	Galatians 3:16
Genesis 14:18	A priest after the order of Melchizedek	Hebrews 6:20
Genesis 14:18	King of Peace and Righteousness	Hebrews 7:2
Genesis 17:19	Seed of Isaac (Gen 21:12)	Romans 9:7
Genesis 22:18	As Isaac's seed, will bless all nations	Galatians 3:16
Genesis 26:2-5	The Seed of Isaac promised as the Redeemer	Hebrews 11:18
Genesis 49:10	The time of His coming	Galatians 4:4
Exodus 12:5	A Lamb without blemish	Hebrews 9:14 1 Peter 1:19
Exodus 12:13	The blood of the Lamb saves from wrath	Romans 5:8
Exodus 12:21-27	Christ is our Passover	1 Corinthians 5:7
Exodus 15:2	His exaltation predicted as Yeshua	Acts 7:55-56
Exodus 15:11	His Character-Holiness	Acts 4:27
Exodus 17:6	The Spiritual Rock of Israel	1 Corinthians 10:4
Leviticus 1:2-9	His sacrifice a sweet smelling savor unto God	Ephesians 5:2
Leviticus 14:11	The leper cleansed-Sign to priesthood	Acts 6:7
Leviticus 16:15-17	Prefigures Christ's once-for-all death	Hebrews 9:7-14
Leviticus 16:27	Suffering outside the Camp	Hebrews 13:11-12
Leviticus 17:11	It is the blood that makes atonement	Romans 3:23-24 1 John 1:7
Numbers 24:17	Time: "I shall see him, but not now."	Galatians 4:4
Deuteronomy 18:19	Whoever will not hear must bear his sin	Acts 3:22-23
Deuteronomy 21:23	Cursed is he that hangs on a tree	Galatians 3:10-13
Joshua 5:14-15	The Captain of our salvation	Hebrews 2:10
Ruth 4:4-10	Christ, our kinsman, has redeemed us	Ephesians 1:3-7
1 Samuel 2:35	A Faithful Priest	Hebrews. 2:17 Hebrews 3:1-3, 6 ; Hebrews 7:24-25
2 Samuel 7:13	His Kingdom is everlasting	2 Peter 1:11
2 Samuel 7:14a	The Son of God	Romans 1:3-4
2 Samuel 7:16	David's house established forever	Revelation 22:16
1 Chronicles 17:13	"I will be His Father, He...my Son."	Hebrews 1:5
Job 9:32-33	Mediator between man and God	1 Timothy 2:5
Psalms 2:1-3	The enmity of kings foreordained	Acts 4:25-28
Psalms 2:2	To own the title, Anointed (Christ)	Acts 2:36
Psalms 2:6	His Character-Holiness	Revelation 3:7
Psalms 2:7	Declared the Beloved Son	Romans 1:4
Psalms 2:7-8	The Crucifixion and Resurrection intimated	Acts 13:29-33
Psalms 2:8-9	Rule the nations with a rod of iron	Revelation 2:27 Revelation 12:5; Revelation 19:15
Psalms 8:5-6	His humiliation and exaltation	Hebrews 2:5-9
Psalms 9:7-10	Judge the world in righteousness	Acts 17:31
Psalms 16:10	Was not to see corruption	Acts 2:25-31

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		Acts 13:35-37
Psalm 22:1	Forsaken because of sins of others	2 Corinthians 5:21
Psalm 22:20-21	Satanic power bruising the Redeemer's heel	Hebrews 2:14
Psalm 22:27-28	He shall be the governor of the nations	Colossians 1:16
Psalm 22:31	It is finished	Hebrews 10:10-12,14,18
Psalm 23:1	"I am the Good Shepherd"	1 Peter 2:25
Psalm 24:3	His exaltation predicted	Philippians 2:9
Psalm 30:3	His resurrection predicted	Acts 2:32
Psalm 38:20	He went about doing good	Acts 10:38
Psalm 40:6-8	His delight-the will of the Father	Hebrews 10:5-10
Psalm 45:6	To own the title, God or Elohim	Hebrews 1:8
Psalm 45:7	A special anointing by the Holy Spirit	Hebrews. 1:9
Psalm 45:17	His name remembered forever	Ephesians 1:20-21; Hebrews.1:8
Psalm 45:6-7	A sceptre of righteousness is your kingdom's sceptre	Hebrews 1:8-9
Psalm 55:15	Unrepentant death of the Betrayer	Acts 1:16-19
Psalm 68:18	To give gifts to men	Acts 1:9 Ephesians 4:7-16
Psalm 69:6	The willing servant	Romans 15:3
Psalm 72:17	All nations shall be blessed by Him	Galatians 3:8
Psalm 72:17	All nations shall call Him blessed	Revelation 5:8-12
Psalm 89:27	Firstborn	Colossians 1:15-18
Psalm 89:36-37	His character-Faithfulness	Revelation 1:5 ; Revelation 19:11
Psalm 97:9	His exaltation predicted	Acts 1:11; Ephesians 1:20
Psalm 102:25-27	Messiah is the Preexistent Son	Hebrews 1:10-12
Psalm 110:1	The Lord Jesus Christ is seated at God's right hand David's son called Lord	Acts 2:32-36 Hebrews 1:13 Hebrews 10:12-13
Psalm 110:4	A priest after Melchizedek's order	Hebrews 6:20
Psalm 118:17-18	Messiah's Resurrection assured	1 Corinthians 15:20
Psalm 118:22-23	The rejected stone has become the cornerstone	Acts 4:10-11
Psalm 132:11	The Seed of David (the fruit of His Body)	Acts 2:30
Proverbs 8:23	Foreordained from everlasting	1 Peter 1:19-20 Revelation 13:8;
Isaiah 6:9-12	Blinded to Christ and deaf to His words	Acts 28:23-29
Isaiah 7:14	To be Emmanuel-God with us	1 Timothy 3:16
Isaiah 8:14	A stone of stumbling, a Rock of offense	Romans 9:32-33 1 Peter 2:8
Isaiah 9:6	A Son given-Deity	1 Timothy 3:16
Isaiah 9:6	Declared to be the Son of God with power	Romans 1:3-4
Isaiah 9:6	The Mighty God, El Gibor	1 Corinthians 1:24 Titus 2:3
Isaiah 9:6-7	For He is our peace	Ephesians 2:14
Isaiah 11:2	Anointed One by the Spirit	Acts 10:38
Isaiah 11:2	His Character-Wisdom, Knowledge, et al	Colossians 2:3
Isaiah 11:2	Seven lamps the seven spirits of the Lord	Revelation 4:5
Isaiah 11:4	Judge in righteousness	Acts 17:31
Isaiah 11:4	Judges with the sword of His mouth	Revelation 2:16 Revelation 19:11,15
Isaiah 11:5	Character: Righteous & Faithful	Revelation 19:11
Isaiah 22:22	The One given all authority to govern	Revelation 3:7
Isaiah 25:8	The Resurrection predicted	1 Corinthians 15:54
Isaiah 28:16	The Messiah is the precious corner stone	Acts 4:11-12
Isaiah 28:16	The Sure Foundation	1 Corinthians 3:11;
Isaiah 29:14	The wise are confounded by the Word	1 Corinthians 1:18-31

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Isaiah 40:10	He will come to reward	Revelation 22:12
Isaiah 43:11	He is the only Savior	Acts 4:12
Isaiah 45:21-25	He is Lord and Savior	Philippians 3:20 Titus 2:13
Isaiah 45:23	He will be the Judge	Romans 14:11
Isaiah 48:12	The First and the Last	Revelation 1:8, 17
Isaiah 49:5	A Servant from the womb	Philippians 2:7
Isaiah 49:6	He will restore Israel	Acts 3:19-21 Acts 15:16-17
Isaiah 49:6	He is the Light of the Gentiles	Acts 13:47
Isaiah 49:6	He is Salvation unto the ends of the earth	Acts 15:7-18
Isaiah 52:13	The Servant exalted	Acts 1:8-11 Ephesians 1:19-22 Philippians 2:5-9
Isaiah 52:15	His blood shed sprinkles nations	Hebrews 9:13-14; Revelation 1:5
Isaiah 53:2	Appearance of an ordinary man	Philippians 2:6-8
Isaiah 53:3c	Great sorrow and grief	Hebrews 4:15
Isaiah 53:5a	Bears penalty for mankind's iniquities	2 Corinthians 5:21 Hebrews 2:9
Isaiah 53:5b	His sacrifice provides peace between man and God	Colossians 1:20
Isaiah 53:5c	His sacrifice would heal man of sin	1 Peter 2:24
Isaiah 53:6a	He would be the sin-bearer for all mankind	1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10
Isaiah 53:6b	God's will that He bear sin for all mankind	Romans 5:6-8 Galatians 1:4
Isaiah 53:7c	Sacrificial lamb	1 Peter 1:18-19
Isaiah 53:8d	Dies for the sins of the world	1 John 2:2
Isaiah 53:9c	No deceit in his mouth	1 Peter 2:22
Isaiah 53:10b	An offering for sin	Galatians 3:13
Isaiah 53:10c	Resurrected and live forever	Romans 6:9
Isaiah 53:11b	God's servant would justify man	Romans 5:8-9 Romans 18-19
Isaiah 53:11c	The sin-bearer for all mankind	Hebrews 9:28
Isaiah 53:12d	Sin-bearer for all mankind	1 Peter 2:24
Isaiah 53:12e	Intercede to God in behalf of mankind	Romans 8:34
Isaiah 55:3	Resurrected by God	Acts 13:34
Isaiah 55:4b	He is a leader and commander	Hebrews 2:10
Isaiah 55:5	God would glorify Him	Acts 3:13
Isaiah 60:1-3	He would show light to the Gentiles	Acts 26:23
Isaiah 60:1-6	Presented with gifts	Revelation 21:23-26
Isaiah 61:1-2a	Proclaim a period of grace	Galatians 4:4-5
Isaiah 65:2	God has stretched His hands to people who reject	Romans 10:21
Jeremiah 23:5-6	The Messiah would be both God and Man	1 Timothy 3:16
Daniel 7:13-14a	He would ascend into heaven	Acts 1:9-11
Daniel 7:13-14b	Highly exalted	Ephesians 1:20-22
Daniel 9:24a	To make an end to sins	Galatians 1:3-5
Daniel 9:24a	To make reconciliation for iniquity	Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21
Daniel 9:26b	Die for the sins of the world	Hebrews 2:9
Daniel 10:5-6	Messiah in a glorified state	Revelation 1:13-16
Hosea 13:14	He would defeat death	1 Corinthians 15:55-57
Joel 2:32	Offer salvation to all mankind	Romans 10:9-13
Zechariah 6:12-13	Priest and King	Hebrews 8:1
Zechariah 10:4	The cornerstone	Ephesians 2:20

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Zechariah 14:4	He would return to the Mt. of Olives	Acts 1:11-12
Malachi 4:5-6	Elijah one of the two witnesses in the Tribulation	Revelation 11:3-6