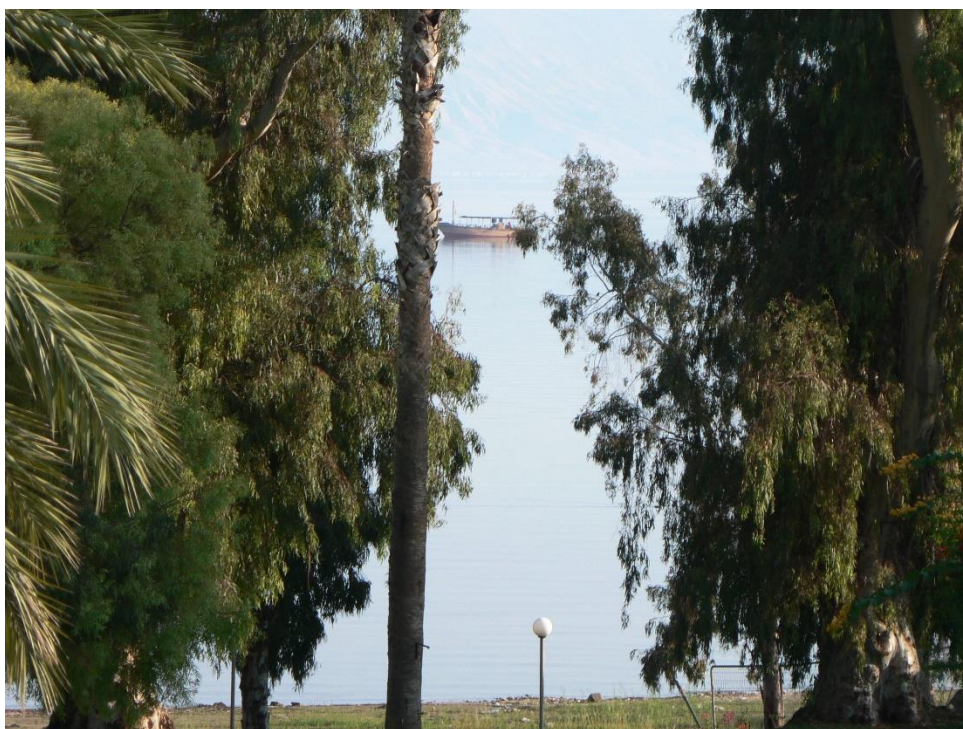


# BIBLE STUDY FOR BEGINNERS



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## Study One

# THE BIBLE











The Bible is the Word of God.

It is our Guide for life.

It is a Book written by the power of God's Inspiration working through many different people many years ago.

Consider these interesting facts -

-  40 independent writers were used to write it
-  These writers had 20 different occupations
-  They lived in 10 different countries
-  They wrote over a 1,500 year time span
-  The book uses 3 different languages
-  It has a cast of 2,930 characters in 1,551 places
-  It covers a vast number of different subjects
-  Its message is expressed in poetry, prose, and epistles (letters)

The Word *Bible* means "book" but actually the Bible is a library of 66 Books, 39 of which are in the Old Testament and 27 in the New. Both Old and New Testaments are equally God's message to men and women that they may understand His purpose, learn how to please Him and how to accept His offer of life.

The illustration on the next page shows how the Books of the Bible are organised.

Let us examine the Bible's claim to be the Word of God. In the **2nd Epistle** (or Letter) to **Timothy chapter 3 and verse 16**, the Apostle Paul says that *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*

The **2nd Epistle of Peter, Chapter 1 and verse 21** says *"For the prophecy of God came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."* **Romans 15 verse 4** tells us *"whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."*

**John 17:17** states *"Thy Word is truth."*



Artwork Sarah Clark

There are various ways to confirm the accuracy of the Bible.

## 1. ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology is the study of the way people lived in the past. During the last 100 years many ancient cities which had been buried in the sand have been uncovered and discoveries have been made about the people who lived in them thousands of years ago.

These discoveries have shown that the Bible gives a true history of people and places. The old city of Ur (mentioned in **Genesis 11:31**) has been found. The names of some of the Jewish kings have been found in the records



Tell Qasile Archaeological Site Tel Aviv Israel

which were kept in other countries. For example, King Jehu of Israel, who is mentioned in **2 Kings 9** is also mentioned in an account which was carved in stone and has been discovered in Assyria. Before 1905 nothing was known about the nation of the Hittites, except what was written in the Bible, but since that date many things have been found to show that the Bible account is true.

In 1947 a Bedouin Arab found some scrolls in earthenware in a cliff cave. They were nearly 2,000 years old and included scrolls of nearly every Old Testament Book. These Dead Sea Scrolls confirm the accuracy of the Scripture texts.

The accuracy of the New Testament Scriptures have likewise been proved true by Archaeology.

## 2. PROPHECY.

The Bible informs us that only God is able to foretell the future. **Daniel 2:28** *"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets"*.

**Isaiah 46:9,10** *"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done"*.

The prophets of the Bible by inspiration from God were able to forecast with absolute accuracy the future of many of the ancient nations. No-one else has been able to do that!



Cyrus Cylinder British Museum

As predicted, Babylon is still in heaps - **Jeremiah 51:37**; Nineveh still lies empty, void and waste - **Nahum 2:10**; Egypt still remains a base (minor) nation - **Ezekiel 29:15**; Tyre has been submerged by the sea and literally remains a place for the spreading of nets - **Ezekiel 26:5**; Israel has been scattered among the nations - **Deuteronomy 28:64**; Jerusalem was given over to the Gentiles for 2,000 years - **Luke 21:24**, but today the Jews are returning to their land and restoring the wastes - **Jeremiah 30:18-24**, **Amos 9:14**; and Jerusalem is gradually gaining more independence, exactly as foretold.

In **Daniel 2** God caused Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon to have a dream which greatly astonished the King. He saw a great image of a man consisting of 4 different metals - head of gold, then silver, brass, iron and finally feet of iron and clay. A stone smote the feet of the image, it was broken and crushed whereas the stone grew and filled the whole earth. Only Daniel, the Hebrew prophet could give the king God's answer to the dream. Starting with Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold the image represented the succession of world empires until the mixed and divided state of the world today. This is an accurate prophecy of world history which will be complete when the Lord Jesus Christ as the stone power will take control of world government. We will look at Daniel's image in more detail in Study 8.

The Bible is undoubtedly the only book in the world that can predict future events with certainty, because the God of the Bible is also the controller of the nations - **Daniel 4:25**.

### 3. FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD.



It states things as they are! For example David the King whom God loved, was at one time in his life an adulterer; Peter, Christ's beloved disciple, denied his Lord and the great Apostle Paul had persecuted the true believers before his conversion. The Bible shows human nature as it really is, while showing us how we can overcome our nature and please God.



The Bible has stood the test of time. It is still the most published and most quoted Book. No other book has endured so many questions, criticisms and ridicule yet the Bible stands firm.



Jesus himself believed every word of the Old Testament which in his days was all that had been written. He always supported his words and actions by referring to the Old Testament.

The Bible tells us about God Himself - that He dwells in heaven (**Matthew 6:9**), from where His Spirit power fills heaven and earth (**1 Chronicles 29:11-12**). He is ever-living (**1 Timothy 6:16**); completely wise and powerful (**1 Timothy 1:17, Job 37:23**) and the only true God (**Isaiah 37:20; John 17:3**).

As we progress in our understanding of God's Word, the Bible, we will learn the value in these words of the Lord Jesus Christ *"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me"* **John 5:39**.



## QUESTIONS

1. Who is the author of the Bible?
2. Were the author's thoughts recorded by more than one writer?
3. Is it right to reject the Old Testament seeing that both Old and New Testaments form the one Book and are God's revelation to man?
4. Give 2 ways we can show the Bible is God's Word.
5. What does the Bible tell us about God Himself?



## Study Two



# THE BEGINNING - CREATION

In our first study we established that the Bible is the Word of God and can be thoroughly trusted. Now we look at its thrilling message which is so important to us personally.

The best place to start is at the “beginning” which is what the word GENESIS means. So in **Genesis chapter 1 verse 1** we read *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”*. God used His angels, or messengers, to do this creative work. The word “God” in the Hebrew is Elohim - a plural word. When you see “God” used in the Old Testament it is usually Elohim and refers to God working through His angels. **See Exodus 23:23, 25**

The earth was waste, empty, dark and covered with water, but God’s spirit, or power, hovered over it. His creative work was about to begin.

### “AND GOD SAID ...”

Notice the wording of **verse 3** *“And God said, let there be light: and there was light”*. One of the first lessons we learn from the Bible is that what God says is always done.

**Psalms 33:6** *“By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth”*.

**2 Peter 3:5** *“By the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water”*

**Hebrews 11:3** *“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God”*.



Image from NASA

We are also told that God created all things for His pleasure - **Revelation 4:11**, and that all the earth will be filled with His glory - **Numbers 14:21**.

Our first study introduced us to some of God’s wonderful prophecies which came to pass exactly as His Word had said they would. We can be confident that future events also will take place just as He said.



## LIGHT

**Genesis 1:4** says *“And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness”*. In the very beginning God’s Word separated light (described as good) from darkness. In a spiritual sense God’s Word has been doing the same ever since. So in **1 John 1:5** we read *“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all”*, and in **Psalms 119:130** *“The entrance of Thy words giveth light”*. **Ephesians 5:8** warns us *“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light”*. There are many more such passages which encourage us to keep on reading and studying God’s Word which will give us wisdom for *“Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness”* **Ecclesiastes 2:13**.

It is interesting to note that at the end of **Genesis 1:5** *“the evening and the morning were the first day”*. This follows the Jewish pattern of the day commencing at sunset and continuing until sunset the next day - evening and morning, not morning then evening as we reckon our days. It is also an indication to us that the six days of Creation were 6 literal days of 24 hours each.

## CREATION OF MAN

Note **Genesis 1:26** *“God (the Elohim) said, Let us (plural) make man in our image, after our likeness ...”*. This is an extremely important verse with several interesting points to note. We have already been introduced to the fact that the word “God” is a plural word, in this case the Angels reflecting the will of the Creator. It is NOT a Trinity - the Bible knows nothing of such a doctrine (we will see this in a later study). The Angels made man in their IMAGE and after their LIKENESS. These are two different words denoting two quite different aspects. IMAGE is the physical, bodily form - we are made in the physical image of the angels. LIKENESS is the mental capacity. Our minds are made in similar form to the angels and thus have the power to discern spiritual matters and moral issues, which privilege none of the other creatures were given. Remember this as we continue through Genesis. ONLY man has the capacity to think and reason on Divine matters, and only man can have a conscience. Furthermore, man was given dominion over all other creatures - **verse 26** *“over fish, fowl, cattle and over every creeping thing”* - over every living thing (**verse 28**).

Genesis chapter 1 concludes with the comment that God saw that everything He had made was very good. **Genesis 2:1-3** completes the overall picture of the Creation for us and tells us that God rested or ceased from all His work. He sanctified, or set apart, the seventh day and blessed it. Later, under the Law of Moses in **Exodus 20:8-11** the Jews were instructed to keep the Sabbath. Since Christ, who fulfilled the Law, came along, true believers have not been constrained to observe the seventh day, or Sabbath. Rather they meet, as did the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the first day of the week to remember their Master (**Acts 20:7**). Before we leave the subject of the six days of Creation and the seventh day of rest we have a very interesting parallel. **2 Peter 3:8** says *“that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day”*.

We are living at the end of the 6,000 years of God’s spiritual Creation. During this time He has been preparing faithful men and women to reign on earth with His son the Lord Jesus Christ as supreme King. God’s kingdom on Earth will last for 1,000 years paralleling the seventh day of rest. **Hebrews 4:4, 5, 9-11**. More details on this Kingdom will be given in a future study.



## SUMMARY

Let us summarise the main points from this study:



In the beginning God created the heaven and earth, the sun, moon and stars, and all things upon the earth. He spoke the word and His angels (Elohim) did the work by His Spirit power.



God separated light from darkness and this becomes an important theme right throughout the Scriptures.



The work of Creation was completed in 6 days, being six 24 hour periods.



Adam was the crowning act of the creation. He alone was created in the image (physical) and after the likeness (mental) of the Angels and he was given dominion over the earth.



## QUESTIONS

1. Does God always do what He says will be done?
2. Explain why “God” is a plural word.
3. Give some quotations to show that we must follow the light of God’s Word.
4. How long did the Creation take?
5. In what way does man differ from all other creatures?



## THE GARDEN OF EDEN AND HOW SIN ENTERED THE WORLD

### Study Three

The first few verses of **Genesis chapter 2** summarise the work of the Creation. In verse 7 man was formed out of the dust of the earth, the breath of life was breathed into his nostrils and he became a “*living soul*”. Man became a living soul or living being in exactly the same way as all other living creatures. Although made in the image and after the likeness of the angels his nature was the same as the creatures of **chapter 1 verses 20, 21, 24** etc. He had no immortal spark. The term soul means creature or breathing frame. The words “immortal” and “soul” are nowhere found together in the Bible.

As we progress through our studies it will become quite clear that the hope of the faithful is resurrection from the dead. That is the only way of having life after death. The idea of an immortal soul is quite wrong and can be traced back to the lie of the serpent which we consider in this lesson - “*Thou shalt not surely die*”. **Psalm 49:12** tells us that man is like the beasts that perish.

### IN THE GARDEN

In **verse 8 of Genesis chapter 2** we read that the LORD God placed the man, Adam, in a beautiful garden full of trees that looked pleasant and tasted good, including two important trees - the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. **Verse 15** tells us that Adam was to “*dress and keep*” the Garden. In modern terms that means to ‘cultivate’ and ‘guard’ it. This enjoyable work prepared him to care for a wife for as yet he was alone. There was no suitable companion for him as animal minds were not designed to think like his on spiritual matters. This was shown to him as the angels brought all the living creatures to Adam for him to name them. He gave names to all “*but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him*” **verse 20**.

You may have noticed that in Genesis chapters 2 and 3 instead of the word “God”, the words “LORD God” are used. There is a significance in this that we will explain in Study 6. It involves God’s glorious purpose with this earth which His Name and Titles describe.

### THE COMMANDMENT GIVEN

Back then to **Genesis 2 verse 16**. Adam was given one commandment to obey, and his continuing enjoyment of life in the Garden depended upon his obedience. “*Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*”. Adam (and later Eve) was neither mortal nor immortal at this stage. They were “*very good*” but as yet untried. Mortality and eventually death would only come as the result of sin.

## THE BRIDE IS GIVEN - A BEAUTIFUL MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP

After Adam had been given the commandment he went through sacrifice to gain his bride. In **verse 21** we read that the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, took one of his ribs, and then closed up the flesh again. From this rib a woman was made and the LORD God brought her to the man. What joy Adam experienced as he saw the woman he had laboured in the garden and sacrificed for! *“This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man”*.

**Verse 24** is quoted by the Apostle Paul in **Ephesians 5:31**. He shows that the husband/wife relationship which was established in Eden becomes a beautiful type, or pattern, of the true believers' relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ went through the sacrifice of death on the cross so that he will eventually be able to gain his bride.

Marriage, from the beginning was to be between one man and one woman. A man was to leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife so that they might establish a family unit. And so, in openness and innocence *“they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed”*.

## TRAGEDY IN THE GARDEN

The innocent joy of Adam and Eve did not last. In **Genesis 3:1** we read that the serpent, which was more subtle than any beast of the field approached the woman when her husband was not present. The serpent had observation and reasoning powers, but -



1. It could only reason on what it saw. Remember it was one of the creatures inferior to man.
2. It could not discern the difference between right and wrong, between obedience and disobedience. It had no moral feelings, or understanding.
3. What it said was a clumsy mixture of truth and error. It was certainly not a supernatural devil, there is no such thing. It was a creature of God's Creation. This creature was later cursed *“above all cattle”* for its part in the transgression, **Genesis 3:14**.

The serpent questioned the woman's belief. *“Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden”*. The woman knew the answer but the serpent did not stop. *“Ye shall not surely die for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods (Elohim) knowing good and evil”*. The Elohim did know good and evil, this part was true (**Genesis 3:22**) and angels live for ever. BUT in telling the woman she would not die the serpent was directly contradicting God's Word. Eve was tempted by the serpent's idea of being equal to the angels. Then she saw the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes. She took the fruit thereof and ate. Not only that but she gave also to her husband and he ate, **Genesis 3:6**. This is described in **1 John 2:16** as *“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life”*

The results of this sin drastically altered conditions in the earth. We shall look at this in our next lesson, and also see the wonderful Hope given to mankind.

## QUESTIONS

1. What does the word “soul” mean in the Bible?
2. Why weren’t the animals suitable companions for Adam?
3. What would be the punishment for disobeying God’s commandment?
4. From the beginning what was to be true marriage?
5. List the problems with serpent reasoning.



## Study Four

# THE RESULTS OF SIN AND GOD'S OFFER OF HOPE

## GUILTY

Adam and Eve had sinned, **Genesis 3:6**. They had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which they had been forbidden to do. Now *"their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked"* **verse 7**. They were aware of what they had done and they felt their guilt. The immediate reaction was to try to cover themselves with fig leaves. It wasn't enough to hide their guilt from their Creator! Although they hid among the trees the LORD God called them and gradually drew out a confession of their sin, **Genesis 3:8** onwards.

Each attempted to shift the blame to another.

The man : *"The woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat"*

The woman: *"The serpent beguiled me and I did eat"*

## THE RESULTS OF SIN

Punishment was immediately pronounced, and began with the serpent. It was cursed, to go upon its belly, to eat dust, and finally God said *"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"* **verse 15**. Then to the woman - sorrow and conception were to be multiplied, *"and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee"*. Lastly to Adam, *"Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife ... cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return"* **verse 19**.



The tragic outcome of a wonderful beginning we read in **verses 23 and 24**. The man and his wife were driven out of the garden. As the result of sin they had become mortal, or dying creatures. Disease, suffering and death came upon all of their posterity. Their children did, and still do, inherit a nature prone to sin. *"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"* **Jeremiah 17:9**. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"* **Romans 5:12**.

## WHAT IS THE DEVIL?

Much confusion is caused by the commonly held belief in a supernatural devil, which is supposed to cause people to sin. But we have seen that it is our human nature, inherited from Adam and Eve that gives us a tendency to sin. *“Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death”*. **James 1:14,15**. **Romans 5:12** says *“by one man (not a devil) sin entered the world, and death by sin”*. In **Hebrews 2:14** we are told that Jesus took part of the same flesh and blood as we have *“that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.”* It was not a supernatural being that Jesus destroyed in his death, but the power of sin.

The word “devil” has been used as a translation for two entirely different Greek words, *diamonion* and *diabolos*. The first word should be translated “demons”. It was applied to those diseases (mainly mental disorders) which Jesus miraculously “cast out” of afflicted persons. An example occurs in **John 7:19-20**. Jesus asks the Jews *“Why go ye about to kill me?”* They answered him *“Thou hast a devil (diamonion), who goeth about to kill thee?”* The Jews reply *“Thou hast a devil!”* is equivalent to the modern expression “You are mad!” The New Testament was merely using the expression of the times by which mental disorders were described.

The word *diabolos* means slanderer or false accuser. It is translated slanderer in **1 Timothy 3:11** and false accuser in **Titus 2:3** and **2 Timothy 3:3**. It is translated devil 35 times. It was used to describe Judas as a devil to Christ in **John 6:70-71**, persecuting civil authorities in **Ephesians 6:11** and **Revelation 2:10**. It also is used to describe our nature (as dying and prone to sin) in **Hebrews 2:14**.

The word Satan is a Hebrew word meaning “adversary”, “opponent”, “withstand”. The first use of it in the Bible relates to a good Satan - an obedient divine angel! - **Numbers 22:22,32**. Peter was a Satan or adversary trying to stop Jesus from doing his Father’s will - **Matthew 16:23**. The following are also referred to as Satan:

Hadad the Edomite	<b>1 Kings 11:14</b>
David	<b>1 Samuel 29:4</b>
The sons of Zeruiah	<b>2 Samuel 19:22</b>
Adverse religious authorities	<b>Revelation 2:9</b>

We will refer to one other quotation often used to uphold the idea of a supernatural devil. See **Isaiah 14:12** If you look at verse 4 of the same chapter you will see it refers to the King of Babylon. This powerful nation which had exalted itself was to be brought down low to hell (which means the grave).

## GOD OFFERS HOPE

God did not completely cast off His Creation. A careful reading shows the hope He held out to Adam and Eve and we too can be included in it. Let's see how this is so. Come back to **Genesis 3 v 15**.

God put enmity between the serpent and the woman and between the SERPENT'S SEED and the WOMAN'S SEED. These 2 'seeds' were to be enemies. Who are they? The Bible tells us that those who follow the reasoning of the serpent are the seed of the serpent. They disbelieve God's word and change the truth of God into a lie, **Matthew 3:7; 23:31-33, Romans 8:7, John 8:44, 47**.

The woman's seed however are those who follow the ways of God. Chief among these was to be the Lord Jesus Christ, God's own Son. Although born with our nature, he did no sin, but completely overcame the flesh, **Matthew 1:20-23, Galatians 4:4**.

NOW! There is a very wonderful point in **Genesis 3:15**. Christ, as the seed of the woman, would "*bruise the head*" or mortally wound the serpent power of sin. Christ's "heel" was bruised - he died because he was mortal and a descendant of Adam. But his wound was not permanent. Because Christ had done no sin, His Father raised him from the dead to everlasting life.

A bruised heel could be healed. A bruised head could not. The following diagram explains:

### THE TWO SEEDS

#### SEED OF SERPENT

Those who disbelieve and change the Truth of God into a lie.



#### SEED OF WOMAN

Jesus himself overcame the natural way we think as human beings, completing the victory in his death. Because of his victory those who believe the Word of God and faithfully strive to do His will are then also classified as the seed of the woman.



**Genesis 3:21** tells us that the LORD God made coats of skins and clothed them. Far more effective than their own attempt at covering their sin, God showed that they could be covered only by a sacrifice. This again points forward to the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman.

## EVERYDAY LIFE

Adam would now commence the work of caring for a garden that brought forth thorns and thistles, reminding him he should have cared for his wifely garden.

Eve was told that her desire would be to her husband and that he was to 'rule' over her. What does this mean? In all godly households the husband is to be the head - not by force or cruelty, but by loving care he guides his wife and children. In the words of **Ephesians 5**, which extends the picture of **Genesis 2:24**, the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Ecclesia, and he is the saviour of the body. He is to love her and she is to reverence him. How different this world would be if this was more widely practised today!



## QUESTIONS

1. What happened to Adam and Eve as a result of their sin?
2. How did God provide a covering for their nakedness?
3. Explain Genesis 3:15.
4. What is the Bible Devil?



## Study Five

# THE HISTORY OF THE TWO SEEDS

### DIFFERENCES BECOME APPARENT: CAIN AND ABEL

The two seeds of **Genesis 3:15** soon established themselves in the earth and the differences became apparent. Sadly, it was the self-centred seed of the serpent who became dominant rather than the godly seed of the woman. And so it has always been. Multitudes follow the ways of the flesh but very few follow the true ways of God. The pattern was shown in Adam's two children, Cain and Abel, **Genesis 4**. Abel offered a sacrifice to God which God accepted - a lamb involving the shedding of blood. Cain's offering of the fruits of the ground was rejected. Abel believed God and offered in faith what was acceptable as we are told in **Hebrews 11:4**. This shows the importance of worshipping God in the way He has laid down, not what we think He should want, **John 4:24**, **Proverbs 15:8**. Cain was jealous of his brother and killed him. Cain was banished from God's presence and his offspring became the seed of the serpent, at enmity with the seed of the woman. This seed of the woman continued through Seth who was raised up to succeed righteous Abel.

### NOAH AND THE FLOOD



By the time of Noah the two seeds had intermarried and mingled so much there was only Noah and his family who remained faithful to God - see **Genesis 6:1-13**. All flesh except these 8 people were destroyed by a flood (1656 years after the Creation). Noah's family were saved, as by baptism – **1 Peter 3:20,21**, **Hebrews 11:7**. The flood waters washed away the corrupt population but Noah's family were saved. Likewise we must be saved by baptism if we are to be saved from this wicked generation. Read **Matthew 24:36-39**. We will be discussing baptism more fully as we progress with our studies. Through Noah's 3 sons the earth was again populated and the seed of the woman came through Shem, Noah's oldest son.



### TOWER OF BABEL

Man had not learned the lesson of the flood. Soon there was division among Noah's descendants into good and evil and the majority turned away from the true God. In defiance of God a city and tower were built. God confounded their language and mankind was scattered abroad throughout the earth. Many false gods were worshipped and the big cities such as Ur and Nineveh were centres of idolatry.

## THE CALL OF ABRAHAM

God appeared to a man called Abram who lived in Ur of the Chaldees near Babel. God called Abram to separate himself from his country and family and go to a land that He would show him. If he faithfully obeyed he would be rewarded. **Genesis 11:27-32; 12:1-3. Hebrews 1:8; Acts 7:3; Nehemiah 9:7-8.**



Ziggurat of Ur



**Genesis 12:1-3** Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

We learn from this event that if people would be saved they must believe God's Word, separate themselves from the world and its practices and join themselves to God, His ways, and His "Ecclesia", (the people He has called out).

**2 Corinthians 6:14-18** and **7:1**. Abram and his family faithfully obeyed and followed the course of the River Euphrates in a north westerly direction and came to Haran. When Terah Abram's father died, Abram crossed the River and came south in to the land of Canaan, to Shechem and later to Bethel - **Genesis 12:4-9**.

## THE VERY IMPORTANT PROMISES

God made a Covenant with Abram as he had done with Adam and Eve in Eden.



God's promises in this covenant are called the Gospel in **Galatians 3:8**



Abraham (as his name became) was the father of the nation of Israel and the promises made to him were their hope too. It was Paul's hope too and can be ours also. **Galatians 3:26-29**



Jesus confirmed the covenant **Luke 1:54-55; 72-73; Matthew 1:1; Romans 15:8.**

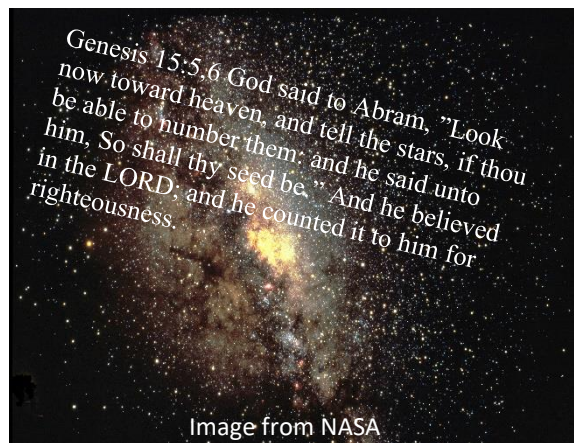
The promises, beginning in **Genesis 12**, were gradually revealed to Abraham over a period of time. God promised that He would make of Abraham a great nation and a great name. God would bless those who blessed Abraham and curse those who cursed him and in him all nations would be blessed. He was also told that his 'seed' would inherit the land of Canaan for ever. Later, because of his faithful acts, Abraham was told that his seed would be multiplied as many as the stars in heaven and the sand which is upon the seashore and that his seed would possess the gate of his enemies, ie be victorious over them in battle **Genesis 22:15-18**.

You have probably noticed that this is an extension of **Genesis 3:15**. Here we have a further reference to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the seed mentioned in **Galatians 3**. Consider the importance of these words *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us: for it is written Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith ... Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ"* **verses 13-16**.

So all the blessings promised to Abraham would come through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which we have considered in Study 4. Abraham's faithful acceptance of God's Word is an example for us to follow and it is well worth reading about his life and the promises God made to him in **Genesis 11:26 - Genesis 25**. Abraham never received the fulfilment of the promises in his lifetime, as **Hebrews 11:8-16** tells us. He will receive it when he is raised from the dead and given eternal life when his 'seed' the Lord Jesus Christ returns to set up God's Kingdom.

## OUR HOPE TOO

The most beautiful thing to us is that we too can be partakers in Abraham's Hope - the Hope of Israel. If we turn to Galatians 3 once more we read in **verses 26-29**. *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"*.



We will learn more about baptism later. God has included all people in His offer of salvation, but we must be teachable, we must turn away from the darkness of the ways of the Serpent seed to serve the living God.

## QUESTIONS

1. Why did God accept Abel's sacrifice and reject Cain's?
2. Why did God destroy the world with a flood?
3. How was the flood like baptism?
4. Who is the "seed" promised to Abraham?
5. How can you be a partaker in the promises made to Abraham?



## Study Six

# THE NATION OF ISRAEL - GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

The promises God made to Abraham were given also to his son Isaac and grandson Jacob, **Genesis 26:2-5** and **Genesis 28:10-15**. These both became faithful men as we read in **Hebrews chapter 11**.

Both Isaac and Jacob had brothers (in the case of Isaac a half-brother Ishmael, Jacob's was his twin brother Esau) who did not follow the ways of God. Although they had faithful fathers these men followed the sinful ways of the seed of the serpent and so did not receive the Promises. It is up to us all, as individuals, to choose the right way and forsake the wrong.

## THE GROWTH OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

Jacob, after many ups and downs in life, finally had his name changed by God from Jacob - which means heel-catcher or supplanter, to Israel - which means Prince with God, **Genesis 32:24-32**. From these three men, known as "*the Fathers*", **Deuteronomy 6:10**, was born the nation of Israel. God was pleased to adopt this nation as His people, as He had promised their forefather Abraham.

Jacob had 12 sons whose descendants became the 12 Tribes of Israel. They greatly multiplied until because of famine they left the land of Canaan and settled in Egypt. One of Jacob's sons, Joseph, had been cruelly sold into bondage in Egypt by his brothers. Because he faithfully trusted in God who allowed him to find favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, he was in a position to help his family in Egypt. The Israelites grew and prospered in Egypt until "*there arose a new king in Egypt, which knew not Joseph*" **Exodus 1:7-8**. Fearing the growing numbers and strength of the Israelites Pharaoh put them under severe bondage until they cried to God in their distress. **Exodus 2:24** tells us "*God heard their groaning and God remembered His covenant with Abraham with Isaac and with Jacob*". He sent Moses to deliver His people.



Egyptian Hieroglyphics stone Archaeological Museum of Bologna



## MOSES

The story of Moses is fascinating, **Exodus chapters 2 and 3**. As a baby he had been saved from Pharaoh's slaughter of the Israelite baby boys by being placed in a basket in the bulrushes of the River Nile. He was rescued by Pharaoh's daughter, who gave him into the care of his own mother. In his parent's home he was instructed in the understanding of the true God, including the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Later he was taken into Pharaoh's household in the Egyptian court. When he was forty, Moses forsook the pleasures of Egypt, choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God (**Hebrews 11:24-26**). Later he became the Deliverer of God's People. Being forced to flee for his life he spent 40 years in the wilderness before returning to Egypt. During that time he married and had two sons.

## THE NAME OF GOD



A most important event happened to Moses in the wilderness. God appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush that was not consumed by the fire (**Exodus 3**). God told Moses that He was the God of Moses's father Amram, and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God gave Moses a commission to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let God's people go. When the Israelites asked Moses the name of the God who would save them Moses was to reply "*I AM THAT I AM*" which is more correctly rendered "*I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE*". This signifies God's purpose to redeem people and manifest or show forth Himself through them. His name is translated LORD or GOD (in capital letters) in the Authorised Version of the Bible and should be understood as His Name "Yahweh". **Exodus 3:15** says "*The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever and this is my memorial to all generations*". Often in Scripture we find the words LORD and God together (Yahweh Elohim in Hebrew) and this signifies God's wonderful purpose with mankind "He who will be manifest in Mighty Ones".. As God took Israel out of Egypt that he might bring them into the land of Canaan, so today He is visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people FOR HIS NAME (**Acts 15:14**) that we might go in to His Kingdom. In **Exodus 34:6-7** and **Psalms 103** God's wonderful qualities of mercy, grace and truth are described for us. These qualities were perfectly shown in the Lord Jesus Christ and we should strive to show them also.

In our last study we learned how we can be partakers in Abraham's Hope. We can be included in those Mighty Ones working with the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns to set up God's Kingdom on the earth.

## THE EXODUS



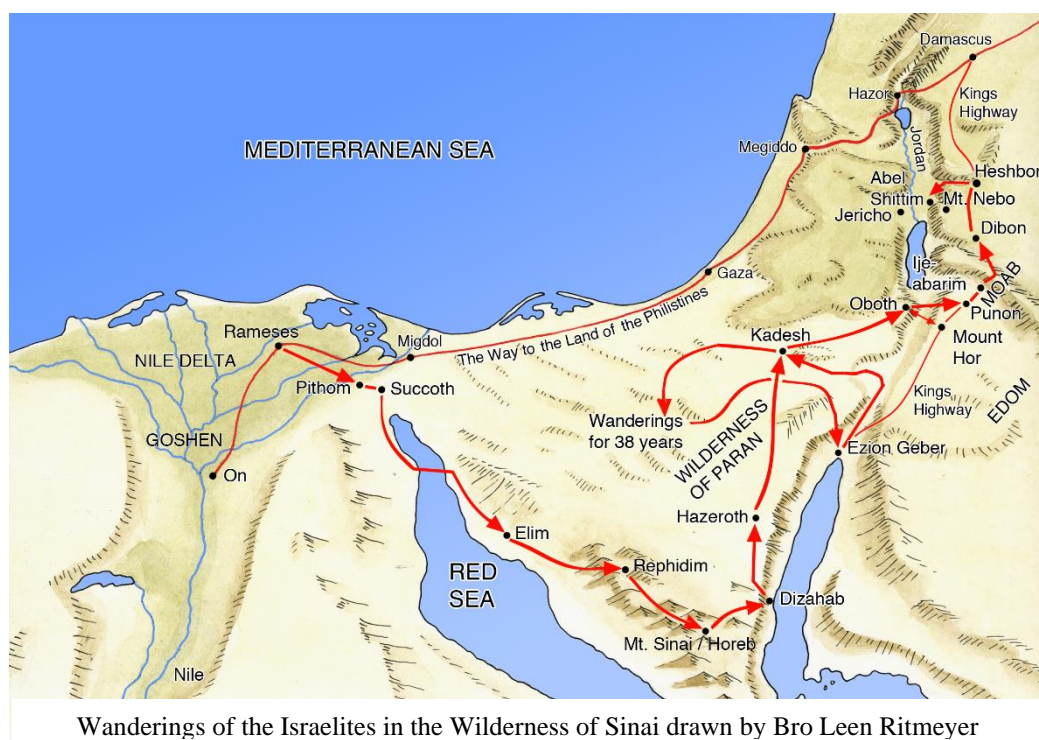
Moses and his brother Aaron had several confrontations with Pharaoh. Finally, after God brought 10 severe plagues on the land and people of Egypt, Moses and Aaron led God's people out of Egypt on their way back to the Promised Land. The final and worst plague brought upon the Egyptians took place on the night of the Israelites' deliverance. That was the slaying of the Egyptian firstborn. To escape this plague the Israelites had to put the blood of a slain lamb upon the side posts and lintels of their doors so that the Angel of Death might "Pass over". This lamb had to be a male, without blemish, and was to be eaten with unleavened bread. It prefigures the work of the Lord Jesus Christ who through leading a blameless life and being a willing sacrifice, makes it possible for us to be saved. He is the "*bread of life*"

because he was without sin or leaven (compare with **1 Corinthians 5:7-8** and **John 1:29, 6:35**). Thus the emblems of the memorial feast which we commemorate weekly were revealed in type to Israel long before Christ came (**Matthew 26:26-28, Exodus 12:14**). The Israelites were to remember this yearly in the Feast of Passover (**Exodus 12**).

## CROSSING THE RED SEA AND THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS

The Egyptians soon regretted allowing their Israelite slaves to depart and to the consternation of Israel their army was seen to be advancing upon them. By a wonderful miracle God opened up the Red Sea to them enabling all the Israelites to cross unharmed. When the Egyptians tried to follow, God returned the waters of the sea completely destroying their army (**Exodus 13:17-22; 14**).

This crossing of the Red Sea meant to Israel what baptism means to the believer today. “*Israel was baptised unto Moses ... in the sea*” **1 Corinthians 10:2**. In baptism the old way of life or the “*old man*” is slain (**Romans 6:3-6**). This lesson was dramatically brought home to the Israelites when they looked and saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians upon the sea shore while they themselves were alive, saved by Yahweh, and about to commence a new life (**Exodus 14:30**).



## QUESTIONS

1. Who were the son and grandson of Abraham who had the promises repeated to them?
2. What did the 12 sons of Jacob become?
3. What was Jacob's name changed to?
4. What is God's Name and what does it mean?
5. How did the Passover Lamb show the work of Christ?

## Study Seven

# ISRAEL - THE KINGDOM OF GOD

## ISRAEL GIVEN THE LAW

After 3 months the children of Israel reached Sinai. There they became the Kingdom of God on earth. God was their King. They were His People. God gave them, through Moses, a Law to keep and they had the Promised Land of Canaan in prospect. They promised to keep the Law and thus made a covenant with Yahweh their God. **Exodus 24:1-8**. See also **Exodus 19:1-6**, **Deuteronomy 4:6-13**. In a similar way all believers who come out of spiritual darkness (like Egypt) are called to God's glorious light. **1 Peter 2:9-10**. The diagram below describes the 10 Commandments given to Israel at Sinai.

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS



1st to the 3rd relate to God



The 4th relates to the Sabbath Day



The 5th relates to parents



The 6th to the 10th relate to fellow man

It is notable that man's responsibilities to God are put first. The last five are put in a definite order, the last being the most difficult of all to obey:

- |     |                                   |   |                    |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 6.  | Thou shalt not kill               | } |                    |
| 7.  | Thou shalt not commit adultery    | } | Concerns behaviour |
| 8.  | Thou shalt not steal              | } |                    |
| 9.  | Thou shalt not bear false witness |   | Concerns speech    |
| 10. | Thou shalt not covet              |   | Concerns thoughts  |

The Lord Jesus Christ when asked for the "*greatest commandment*" gave two commandments which are also found in the Law of Moses.

1. "*Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy might*"  
**Deuteronomy 6:4-5**
2. "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" **Leviticus 19:18**.

These 2 commandments are put together in **1 John 4:21** "*and this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also*".

## WILDERNESS WANDERINGS, THEN INTO THE LAND



Unfortunately the nation of Israel was disobedient. Time and time again the people rejected their God and disobeyed Him. Instead of 11 days journey from Sinai to the Promised Land they were condemned to 38 years wandering in the wilderness until the disobedient generation were all dead. (See **Numbers 14:26-33**).

In the Old and New Testaments of the Bible God often refers to these times and we ourselves can gain many lessons from their mistakes. Take particular note of **1 Corinthians 10:1-15**.

Finally, Moses, the servant of Yahweh, died. Joshua led the nation of Israel into their Promised Land. He was given great encouragement from God which we too need so much. **Joshua 1** *“Be strong and of a good courage” (verse 6), “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the Law, which Moses My servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth: but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and then thou shalt have good success” (verses 7-8).* God said He would be with them (**verse 9**).

This was a time of great opportunity. Joshua was a man of great faith. His name Joshua in the Hebrew is “Jesus” in the Greek. Much of the land of Israel was subdued under his leadership. While he lived, the nation served Yahweh their God, **Joshua 24:31**, and promised they would always do so - **verses 16 to 24**. Sadly, they soon forgot their promise and for 450 years *“everyone did that which was right in his own eyes”* **Judges 2:10-13; 21:25**. When Israel sinned God caused them to suffer at the hands of their enemies. They then sought God in distress and he raised up judges who delivered them, only to have them sin even more. Samuel was the last and greatest of the Judges, who reformed Israel and paved the way for the Kings. He anointed Saul and later David to be Kings over Israel.

## COVENANT MADE WITH DAVID

God was their King but the people desired a king like the nations around them. Saul, the first king of the people’s choice, was rejected because he rejected the Word of God. **1 Samuel 15:22-23**. David was chosen of God to be their next king. David’s name means “beloved” and indeed he was a man after God’s own heart, **1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22**. In spite of his own weaknesses which he acknowledged and repented of, David was a most illustrious and faithful king. He trusted in Yahweh his God and subdued the nations around as the Lord Jesus Christ will when he returns to set up God’s Kingdom on earth once more.



David wrote many Psalms which in their fullest sense apply to the Lord Jesus Christ in his sufferings. For example see **Psalms 22** and **Matthew 27:46**. **Psalms 69:9** is quoted in **John 2:17** and **Romans 15:3**.

David prepared the Kingdom so that his son Solomon had a glorious and peaceful reign. David knew that it was Yahweh his God that had given him victory over his enemies and made his reign prosperous. In gratitude David desired to build God a house where He could be worshipped. Nathan the prophet welcomed the proposal but God spoke to him and forbade it for in David's reign much blood had been shed **1 Chronicles 28:3**. Instead of David building God a house God declared that He would build David a house **2 Samuel 7**. It is valuable to read through all of **2 Samuel 7**. Here David was given the same covenant promise that was given in Eden - **Genesis 3:15**, and to Abraham as we have seen in Study 5. Now the promises are developed further. God said that David's greater son, not Solomon but the Lord Jesus Christ, would sit on David's throne, in David's presence and rule over the whole earth. It is very important to note that the Bible does not promise eternal life anywhere but on this earth. The people of Israel are to be settled, to move no more and be no more afflicted. David's seed would be his flesh and blood descendant (through Mary – **Luke 1:30-33**) and this seed would build a house for God's name.

The house will be a literal Temple as described in **Ezekiel's** prophecy **chapters 40-48**. It will be a House of Prayer for all nations, **Isaiah 2:2-3**, **Mark 11:17**, **Zechariah 6:12-13**. It also means a spiritual house of people "in Christ", **Hebrews 3:6**, **Ephesians 2:19-22**, **1 Peter 2:5**.

God also promised that He, as well as David, would be Jesus' father. Jesus would be the Son of God. See **2 Samuel 7:14**, **Isaiah 7:14**; **9:6-7** which are all quoted to Mary in **Luke 1:31-35**.

## **RESURRECTION**

David knew that he would die, **2 Samuel 7:12**, but that he would one day see his seed ruling from David's throne (**verse 16**). The promises could only be obtained by obedience and by RESURRECTION from the dead, both of himself and of his seed, the Lord Jesus Christ. This can be our Hope also as we shall see in Study 12.

When David died his son Solomon reigned over the twelve tribes of Israel in great glory in a golden age of wisdom, peace, prosperity and riches with international renown. This foreshadowed the time when Christ will restore God's Kingdom in Glory. Solomon built a magnificent temple as a figure of the one which will be built at Christ's Return.



## QUESTIONS

1. When did the Children of Israel become the Kingdom of God on earth?
2. What are the greatest commandments?
3. We learn many lessons from the wanderings of the Children of Israel as we go through the wilderness of life. What was Joshua told would help him to be strong and courageous?
4. Who was the “seed” promised to David and when will he sit on David’s throne?
5. David is dead. How will he see his seed reigning on his throne?

## Study Eight

# FROM DAVID TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The history of Israel through the books of the Kings and Chronicles tells of the Kings who followed David and Solomon. Solomon's son Rehoboam foolishly refused to ease the burden of taxation on the people. Ten northern tribes revolted and were reigned over by Jeroboam. Jeroboam established idolatry in the north by making two calves of gold and placing one in Dan and the other in Bethel so that the people would worship those instead of going up to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh. Thus he "*made Israel to sin*" and tragically all of Israel's kings followed in his steps. The 10 northern tribes were known as Israel and the two tribes in the south as Judah. Judah was ruled by an unbroken line of kings descended from David. Some of these were men of outstanding faith, for example Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, while others were evil for example Ahaz, Manasseh and Zedekiah. At length both the northern and southern kingdoms became evil and idolatrous and God punished them by sending them into captivity.

### CAPTIVITY AND THE WORK OF THE PROPHETS

The 10 Tribes (Israel) were taken into captivity by the Assyrian king Shalmaneser in the year 721 BC (**2 Kings 17**). The 2 Tribes (Judah) were taken into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar 606 - 586 BC (**2 Chronicles 36**). The last king to sit on David's throne was Zedekiah and there will be no more until the Messiah - the Lord Jesus Christ. After 70 years in Babylon a few people returned to the land under another Joshua the High Priest, and Zerubbabel, the Governor. Once back in Judah they commenced to restore worship and rebuild the Temple which had been broken down. They were opposed by the mixed people left in the land but were encouraged by the inspired prophets, Haggai and Zechariah. There were later returns under Ezra and Nehemiah.

If you refer to the diagram of the Books of the Bible in Study 1 you will see that God sent many prophets to His people during their long history - to teach, reprove and warn them. The prophets also spoke of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and gave glorious visions of the future to those who were faithful. These prophecies are very important and fascinating. In **Amos 3:7** God said He would do nothing without revealing it to His servants, the prophets. **2 Peter 1:19-21** tells us that God moved the prophets to speak by His Holy Spirit or power, and that we do well to hear their prophecies!

### DANIEL'S IMAGE

We will look at an interesting and significant prophecy given by God through the prophet Daniel. This prophecy was briefly mentioned in Study One.

As a young man Daniel had been among those taken into captivity in Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Through many trials and the reign of several kings Daniel remained faithful to the God of Israel.

## The changing world dominions as shown to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream Daniel chapter 2



When Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which troubled him God gave Daniel the interpretation of the dream. **Daniel 2:31-45**. Nebuchadnezzar had seen an image made of various metals which signified the world kingdoms from that time until the return of Christ. The first, the head of gold, was Babylon. The second dominion was that of the Medes and Persians which came to pass while Daniel was still alive. The third was the Greeks, the fourth, the Romans who had world dominion when Jesus was born. From the breakdown of the Roman dominion came the mix of nations we still see today - the feet part of iron and part of clay.

Into these iron and clay times, in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, came the stone cut out of the mountain without hands which smote the image on the feet and broke it to pieces. All the kingdoms of the world were then carried away like chaff and the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

It is exciting for us to realise that we live in the "feet and toes" times. The Lord Jesus Christ as the stone "*cut out of the mountain without hands*" will shortly come back to fulfil **Daniel 2:44** "*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever*".

God wants us to be in this kingdom! Through studying His Word we can learn what He requires us to do. The purpose of these studies is to help us to be ready when the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

### 600 YEARS OF DOMINATION

After the last of the minor prophets Malachi, God's Spirit was withdrawn and there was no more vision or word from God for 400 years. See **Amos 8:11-12**, **Micah 3:6**.

At the time of the birth of Christ the Jewish people were still under the domination of Gentile powers. There had been a short time around the year 168 BC when the Maccabees, a Jewish priestly family, overthrew the rule of the Greeks in Judea. In 63 BC the Romans extended their power into Judea. They were the foreign overlords at the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus. They had appointed an Idumean (Edomite) Herod as king. This man was only interested in his own power and keeping in with the Romans. He was a cruel, tyrannical man who slew most of the members of his own family because he suspected them of plotting to overthrow him. Herod also killed all the baby boys in Bethlehem when Jesus was born, **Matthew 2:1-18**. Herod built fortresses and magnificent buildings in the cities he ruled over, including Jerusalem. Here he rebuilt the Temple to keep the Jews content. By this time the Jewish religion had degenerated into formalism. The Jews had waited so long for the Messiah that many had ceased to cherish the hope of his coming.

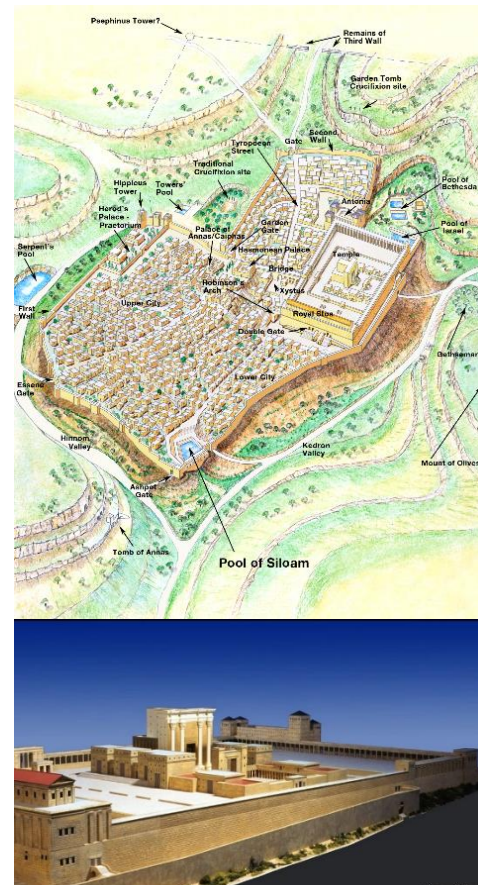
The suppressed nation was divided into factions, namely:

1. The Herodians, who were loyal to Herod.
2. The Pharisees and Scribes, who strictly followed the letter of the law and traditions of the elders.
3. The Sadducees, who bought the priesthood and were materialistic. They only accepted the first 5 books of the Bible as inspired and did not believe in angels or the resurrection.
4. The Zealots, Jewish nationalists who opposed all foreign rule.

Even in these difficult times there were some who faithfully waited for the fulfilment of God's word. We are told of the faith of two old people for example, Simeon and Anna and others who *"looked for redemption in Jerusalem"* **Luke 2:25-38**. Jesus, the son of God was born in these days. In the next study we will look at his life and teachings. You will see that they are totally based on the Old Testament Scripture. That is why an understanding of the Old Testament is so important.

Our studies have shown how the Old Testament is laid out. We have looked at the Creation and the formation of man and woman, how sin entered the world and the state of the whole human race. The seed of the woman was promised in Eden, then to Abraham and later to King David. We will now see the beginning of its fulfilment at the birth of the Lord Jesus.

The Bible is no more a "closed" book to you. Rather, it has opened its treasures and its wonderful Hope. In our concluding studies, God willing, we will see how the New Testament draws all the threads together and presents us with the completion of the Gospel message.



Herodian Jerusalem and Herod's Temple  
Reconstruction by Bro. Leen Ritmever

## QUESTIONS

1. Why were the 10 tribes of Israel and later the two tribes of Judah sent by God into captivity?
2. What is the importance of the work of the prophets?
3. Daniel's image depicted the world kingdoms from Babylon unto this day. Who is the stone power that will topple the image and rule over the whole earth?
4. Why is it important to understand Old and New Testaments, not just one or the other?



## Study Nine

# THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

## FULFILMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

**Matthew 1:1** shows the link between the Old Testament and the New, *“The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham”*.

The life, death and resurrection of the Lord are described for us in each of the first four books of the New Testament. Four of Christ’s disciples each wrote his own account - all by the inspiration of God and all tying in beautifully together. These were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Many Jews were looking for the coming of the promised Messiah as we have seen in **Luke 2:25-26, 36-38**, also **John 1:45**. But they were looking for a powerful leader and mighty warrior who would overthrow their enemies immediately and fulfil the glorious visions of the Prophets. This will happen, as we know from many parts of Scripture for example **Jeremiah 3:17; Isaiah 2:2-4; Amos 9:11-12** and **Psalms 2, 16, 110**, but it was not to happen then. At Christ’s first coming he was the *“Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world”* **John 1:29**, the Passover lamb as foreshadowed in **Exodus 12**. He was the promised seed of **Genesis 3:15** bruised in the heel as the suffering Saviour of **Isaiah chapter 53**. See also **Daniel 9:2** and **Psalms 22, 118**. Even the disciples of the Lord did not understand this as after his death they said *“we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel”* **Luke 24:21**. They were like those who thought that *“the Kingdom of God should immediately appear”* **Luke 19:11**.

The Lord Jesus was the personification of all the promises and prophecies. He was the Word which had been proclaimed from the beginning - **John 1:1** - *“made flesh”* **verse 14**. He was the seed of the woman destined to bruise the serpent’s head - **Genesis 3:15**, the son of Abraham who will bring blessings to all nations - **Genesis 22**, the prophet like unto Moses - **Deuteronomy 18:15-19** - whose words the people will ultimately be compelled to accept - **Acts 3:22-26**. He was the King promised to David who was to be both Son of David and Son of God, **2 Samuel 7**.

### SON OF GOD, NOT PART OF A TRINITY

During our studies we have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ was in the purpose of God from the Creation. He was a very necessary part of God’s plan of salvation - *“the lamb slain from the foundation of the earth”* - **Revelation 13:8; Matthew 1:21**. Jesus always said he was not equal to the Father - *“My Father is greater than I”* - **John 14:28**. *“I can of my own self do nothing”* - **John 5:30**; *“Not as I will but as Thou wilt”* **Matthew 26:39**. The erroneous idea of a triune god (three in one) did not even appear until the 4th Century after Christ, by which time “the Christian church” was far astray from Bible Truth. We are told there is one God, and one Lord Jesus Christ, **1 Corinthians 8:6, 1 Timothy 2:5, Ephesians 4:5,6, Acts 2:22, Acts 5:31**.

Jesus demonstrated the character of his Father so perfectly that he was truthfully able to say *“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father”* **John 14:9** and *“I and my Father are one”* **John 10:30**.

**10:30. In John chapter 17** he takes this even further and includes his disciples in this oneness, **John 17:11, 21-26**. In his prayer to his Father (**verse 6**) the Lord explains how this is done *“I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou hast given them me: and they have kept Thy Word”*.

In Study 6 we saw that the Name of The LORD God is Yahweh Elohim and signifies “He who will be manifest in Mighty ones”. The Lord Jesus Christ is the foremost of these mighty ones - the perfect example. The remainder will be all those faithful people from all ages who, although imperfect, have endeavoured to manifest (demonstrate) the character of God in their lives.

## SON OF GOD AND SON OF MAN

Jesus’ mission was to save his brethren from their sins and to do that he had to be both Son of God and son of man as a representative of both. He had to be the Son of God because no man left to himself could be perfect as a spotless sacrifice. Jesus had constant access to the Father. He had an intimate, unequalled knowledge of God and His Word. He understood what was in man - **John 2:24-25** - and he chose to do his Father’s will. Sonship did not make him sinless but it made sinlessness possible. See **John 5:19-20; Isaiah 11:1-4**.

He had to be the son of man in order to inherit the consequences of Adam’s transgression, a weak and mortal nature prone to sin, so that he might declare God’s righteousness in condemning sin. He had to be tempted in all points like us and yet be sinless in order to be the Saviour. Sin could only be condemned by one possessing the same flesh that normally sins. **Hebrews 2:14; 4:15; Romans 8:3**.

## HIS EARLY LIFE AND BAPTISM

We know little of his early life. He was the eldest child in a family of at least 7 children, and became a carpenter, like Joseph the husband of Mary - **Mark 6:3**. God, by His Holy Spirit (special power) caused a virgin by the name of Mary (in the lineage of David and Abraham) to conceive and bring forth a child. **Matthew chapter 1** and **Luke chapters 1 and 2** give us the facts of this beautiful story. The child Jesus grew up in a homely hardworking atmosphere. **Luke 2:40** tells us *“and the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him”*. *“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man”* **verse 52**.



**Ancient carpenter's workshop  
Haaretz Museum Tel Aviv**

God had caused Mary’s cousin Elisabeth to conceive when she was past child bearing age. Her son, John the Baptist, was sent *“to make ready a people prepared for the Lord”*. **Luke 1:17**. John went into the wilderness of Judea to preach repentance - **Matthew 3**. Many were baptised, confessing their sins. At the age of 30 Jesus went down to the banks of the River Jordan to be baptised through total immersion in water by John the Baptist. When John saw Jesus coming he at first refused to

baptise him saying he had need to be baptised of Jesus. Jesus had no sins to confess. But he insisted *“Suffer it to be so now for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness”* Jesus belonged to Adam’s fallen race and therefore had to put down the will of the flesh. Thus he submitted to *baptism “to fulfil all righteousness”*. At the beginning of his work of ministry he did in symbol what he would submit to in fact at the end of his life - the crucifixion of the flesh.

Following his baptism he received the Holy Spirit which descended on him in its fullness with the accompanying word from heaven *“This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”*. God thus showed His approval - **Matthew 3:13-17; John 3:34-35**.

## THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

Jesus called 12 disciples who went with him during his 3½ year ministry. They were from differing backgrounds. Jesus worked with them to prepare them for their work of preaching. Jesus called upon men to repent and believe the Gospel, for the Kingdom of God was at hand - **Matthew 4:17**. Multitudes from all parts flocked to hear him speak and witness his miracles for his fame had spread abroad.

To people who were used to the cold formal teachings of the leaders of that day the words of Jesus were refreshing and compelling. While born under the Law of Moses Jesus expanded and explained the principles of the Law. He taught that obedience must come from the heart, through the Word of God understood and believed, and result in a changed way of life. His “sermon on the mount” shows what is required from those who will find acceptance in his Kingdom - the truly humble, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful - see **Matthew 5:1-12**. The Lord taught that deeds, words and thoughts are all vitally important. There must be a genuine heart without hypocrisy. Jesus illustrated his teachings with parables - stories of everyday life with a deeper spiritual meaning. In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we are taught how to think like the Lord.

We see his kind and loving dealings with the people. He even showed his enemies the right way. When asked questions he replied from the Old Testament Scriptures. He was indeed the Word made flesh. In **Matthew 7:28-29** we are told *“and it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes”*.



As well as preaching, Jesus did many mighty miracles as predicted in **Isaiah 35:5-6**. The blind saw - **John 9**; the dumb spake - **Matthew 12:22**; the deaf heard - **Mark 7:32-37**; the lame leaped - **John 5**; and even the dead were raised - **John 11**. He did these works that men might believe that God had sent him - **John 10:37-38**. Many did believe him. As we are told in **Mark 12:37** *“the common people heard him gladly”*. Some of the leaders believed in him too, some secretly for fear of the Jews” - **John 19:38**. But as Jesus’ popularity grew so also did the hatred of his enemies. The Pharisees, Sadducees and lawyers all tried to trick and discredit him with hard questions. Jesus, with complete dignity, answered them all with authority from the Word of God. But their envy grew and in Study 10 we shall consider his death and resurrection.

## QUESTIONS

1. What mistake did the people of Israel make concerning the first coming of the Lord?
2. Was Jesus son of God and Son of Man? Why?
3. Why was Jesus baptised?
4. How was his teaching different from the Pharisees and Sadducees?

## Study Ten

# JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION

During the last week of his life Jesus rode an unbroken colt down the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem. This clearly showed he was the son of David and King of Israel - **Matthew 21:1-5; Zechariah 9:9**. A “*very great multitude*” cast clothing and branches in the way and hailed him as the son of David, coming in the Name of Yahweh. The people would have taken him and made him King but Jesus knew they would shortly be crying out “*Crucify him, crucify him*” **Mark 15:11-14**. Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because he knew it was to be destroyed as a result of the people’s rejection of him - **Luke 19:41-44**. This came to pass in AD70 when the Romans sacked the city.



In the few remaining days Jesus taught daily in the Temple while his enemies went about to plot how they might kill him. It was Judas, one of Jesus’ own 12 disciples who finally betrayed him, by accepting a sum of money as a bribe and leading the soldiers to the place where Jesus was. Before this Jesus held a “last supper” with his disciples. At this feast Jesus himself served the disciples, washing their feet and showing that they must show love and service to others. Judas left this upper room where the supper was being held and went out into darkness to betray his Lord. We will look at the significance of the “memorial supper” in Study 11.

Jesus and the remaining 11 disciples then went out to the Garden of Gethsemane where gradually the disciples fell asleep and Jesus felt the full agony of his forthcoming death. In prayer to his Father three times he prayed earnestly “*O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup (death) pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt*” **Matthew 26:39**. The conflict of wills was settled now in favour of his Father. With his final victory over himself he found strength and peace and serenity.

## GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS UPHOLD IN THE SACRIFICE OF A PERFECT MAN

*“God’s method for the return of sinful man to favour required and appointed the putting to death of man’s condemned and evil nature in a representative man of spotless character, whom he should provide, to declare and uphold the righteousness of God, as the first condition of restoration, that he might be just while justifying the unjust, who should believingly approach through him in humility, confession, and reformation.”*<sup>1</sup> **Romans 3:24-26; Hebrews 2:14-15; Romans 5:21.**

<sup>1</sup> (2001). [The Christadelphian](#), 33(electronic ed.), 340.



The above statement is an excellent summary (by Robert Roberts). It explains why the sacrifice of an animal which cannot be tempted like we are cannot take away sin. The animal sacrifices which Yahweh required under the Law of Moses pointed forward to the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. It taught the people that they were sinful and in need of the covering provided by God Himself as we saw in Study 4. Indeed Jesus was the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world, **John 1:29**.

There is an important point to note here. Jesus did not die as a substitute for us. He was a representative sacrifice. We still have to die. We still bear the effects of our sinful nature and our own sin. But his sacrifice as a perfect, sinless offering means we can have Hope of life eternal through resurrection from the dead, if we believe the Truth and are baptised, Mark16:v15-16.

**Isaiah chapter 53** describes the way our Lord met his death - wounded, bruised, chastised, oppressed, afflicted, brought as a lamb to the slaughter; he submitted without a word to the dreadful things his captors subjected him to.

His trial was a mockery and completely unjust. He pleaded guilty to the charge of being Christ, the Son of God. He was scourged, mocked and derided. Eventually he was led out to be crucified between thieves before a jeering mob. In all this terrible time Jesus sinned not. His victory over the flesh was completed with the triumphant words *"It is finished!"* **John 19:30**. In the death of this sinless man sin was condemned, God's Righteousness was upheld and a basis was laid for the forgiveness of sins.

## RESURRECTION

The disciples of the Lord were devastated at his death. Broken hearted and fearful, they had scattered. Some of the women however remained nearby to see where he was buried and to bring spices to anoint his body. Slowly the news spread that he was indeed risen from the dead. The disciples' sadness turned to unspeakable joy when he reappeared and spoke to them, ate with them and was touched by them, **Luke 24:13-32: John 20:11-29**. He was indeed physically resurrected, not mortal any more, but immortal. He was not a spirit as he said to his disciples - **Luke 24:39** *"Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have"*.



The Lord remained with his disciples for 40 days, teaching them the things of the Kingdom of God - **Acts 1:3**. At the end of this time he ascended to heaven and a cloud received him out of their sight. Two angels then told them that Jesus would come again in like manner as he went (**verses 9-11**). Jesus became the "Christ" which means the "Anointed" as a result of his resurrection and glorification. From then he was to be known not just as Jesus, but the Lord Jesus Christ. **Acts 2:36**.

📖 The Resurrection was the final proof that Jesus was indeed the Son of God as well as Son of Man and that all the Old Testament prophecies about his life, mission, death and resurrection had been fulfilled.





It is also proof that the prophecies yet unfulfilled will surely come to pass.



Further, it proves that we too can be raised from the dead if we do what is commanded us. **1 Corinthians 15:17-20.**



It confirms the 3 great Covenants of Promise - in Eden, to Abraham and to David. These could only be fulfilled if Christ rose from the dead.

The disciples were changed men after the Resurrection of their Lord. Now they understood the whole purpose of God in Christ. No longer despondent but full of joy they went forth to preach the **Gospel, as we shall see in Study 11.**

## THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to his disciples once he had ascended into heaven - **John 15:26; 16:7.** After his resurrection he told his disciples to remain in Jerusalem that they might receive the gift, **Acts 1:4,** and this happened 50 days later. The Holy Spirit came upon them with the sound of a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues of fire - **Acts 2.** It made them able to speak foreign languages, prophesy, heal and perform other miracles. It drew attention to the apostles' preaching and confirmed the truth they proclaimed, **Acts 2:4; 14:3; Mark 16:17-18.** The Holy Spirit gifts were for the instruction of the ecclesias, **Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Corinthians 14:3; 12:7-10.** The Holy Spirit gifts were given to believers by the laying on of the apostles' hands (apart from 3 exceptional cases).

So the gifts were not seen during the second century and have not been seen since. **Acts 8:14-20; 19:6; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Corinthians 13:8.** They had fulfilled their purpose and so were withdrawn. The Spirit of Truth was to guide the believers into all truth. Once the Book of Revelation was finished the Scriptures of Truth were complete and we have need of nothing more to lead us to the truth and teach us the gospel, *"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* **2 Timothy 3:15-17.**

Those who profess to possess Holy Spirit gifts today must be examined in the light of their beliefs. As **1 John 4:1** says *"Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world"*.



## QUESTIONS

1. How did the death of Jesus uphold God's Righteousness?
2. Why do we still have to die?
3. What does the resurrection of Christ prove?
4. The Holy Spirit gifts were given to believers in the 1st Century. Are they available today?

## Study Eleven

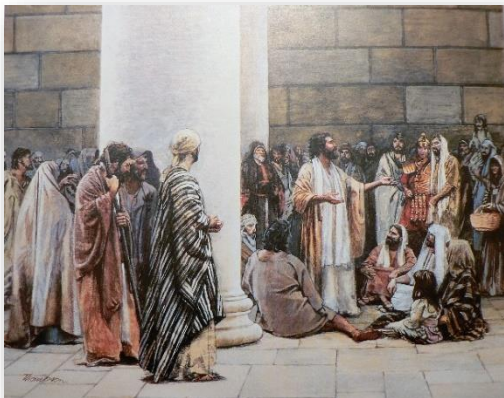
# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## BAPTISM

### FIRST CENTURY BELIEVERS

Following the four Gospel records where we learnt of the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, also his works and teachings, we next have the Acts of the Apostles. Apostle means “one sent” and refers to the men whom the Lord gave special responsibility among his disciples. The apostles were comparatively few in number and none lived longer than the end of the first century. The Lord had gone to his Father in heaven. His disciples and apostles continued the work of preaching the Gospel. Many people gladly received the Word and were baptised. **Acts 2:41-47** tells us that they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

### Growth of the Ecclesias



This was the time of the establishment of the Ecclesia. Ecclesia is a Greek word that means “called out ones”, that is the assembly of believers. It is used in preference to the word “church”. Church has come to mean the building, or any group of believers whether they believe the original Gospel or not. In the New Testament every time except one where the word “church” is used it is “ecclesia” in the Greek. Ecclesia is a much better rendering of the original sense of the word. Significantly, the only exception is **Acts 19:37** where “churches” is used to describe heathen temples.

### BAPTISM

Some of the last words of instruction that the Lord Jesus gave to his disciples were these - “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned” **Mark 16:15-16**. To become a member of the true ecclesia a person had to follow this process:



Believe in the one true Gospel



Repent and genuinely desire to change one’s way of life to give glory to God



Be baptised

Without baptism a person is said to be “a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God, in the world” **Ephesians 2:1-13**.

The message has never changed. It is the same today. What is the Gospel that must be believed? It is the *“things of the Kingdom of God and the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ”* - **Acts 8:12;28:23,31**. It was the hope preached to Abraham - **Galatians 3:8**. This takes us back to the beginning of our studies and shows it is the same message preached throughout the Bible. Although it is an Israelitish hope it is not confined to Israel. All people everywhere can be part of that hope. The apostle Peter, himself a Jew, was chosen to go to the first Gentile (non-Jews), **Acts 10:44-48**. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, spread the gospel to the Roman world, **Romans 11:13**.

## COMPLETE IMMERSION



Bible baptism is a complete immersion in water. There was always plenty of water where baptisms took place - **Mark 1:5, 9-10; John 3:23, Acts 8:36-39**. The Greek word for baptism is “baptiso” and it means to dip, immerse, sink. It also implies a change because it was the word used in the dyeing trade. It does not mean to sprinkle or pour, and infant christening has no power whatever to save. **Hebrews 11:6** tells us that there must be faith and belief before baptism. A baby is not able to repent of sins - **Acts 2:38**.

Immersion in water without true belief cannot save either. Pre-baptismal understanding and belief is so important that we read of some being re-baptised when it was shown they had previously lacked some essential beliefs - **Acts 19:4-5**.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM

Baptism is a symbolic act. When we go under the water in baptism we identify with the death and burial of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we come out of the water we are *“risen with Christ”* to a new way of life - **Colossians 3:1**. In **Romans 6:3-6** Paul wrote *“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”*. Jesus’ death was a sacrifice. By being baptised a person publicly shows he/she will try to follow in the footsteps of the Lord, in the hope of attaining life eternal at his return. We acknowledge the righteousness of God and that death is the just penalty for sin. We are then free from our *“old man”* to put on the *“new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness”* **Ephesians 4:22-24**. We are part (in prospect) of the glorious promises we have been considering in our studies. *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile), there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”* **Galatians 3:26-29**.

## A NEW WAY OF LIFE

Now when we have “put on Christ” and become a son or daughter of God through baptism we have certain privileges and responsibilities.

## 1. THE WORD

We continue to study the Word of God for by it He speaks to us and from it we gain guidance, comfort and strength, cp **Joshua 1:6-9**. We are washed daily by the reading of God's Word. Christadelphians have a Bible reading Chart which takes us through the Old Testament once and the New Testament twice every year, and this is a helpful guide. There are also many Bible Study notes which will help in more detailed study.



## 2. PRAYER

This is a very special privilege. By it we can praise and thank our Heavenly Father for He loves His children to do so - **Psalm 29:1-2; Psalm 33; 34:1; Acts 16:25**. By prayer we can gain forgiveness for our sins. Our weakness is such that even though we are endeavouring to lead a new life we still come short of the glory of God. We can ask forgiveness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ who is at the right hand of the Father in heaven and intercedes for us - **Hebrews 4:14-16**. God will always forgive if we ask in sincerity and humbly try to change our ways. The Lord taught his disciples to pray - **Luke 11:2-4; Matthew 6:9-13**, see also **verses 5 to 8**. As well as praising God and asking forgiveness we pray for the provision of what we need in this life and for His Kingdom to be established on this earth.

## 3. GATHERING TOGETHER

By baptism the believer enters into covenant relationship with God and becomes a member of the household of faith. Paul says in **Hebrews 10:19-25** "*Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*". We need to associate often with other believers and partake of the bread and wine following the example of the early believers - **Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2**. The bread represents the body of Christ - **John 6:32-33** which is "*broken for you*". The wine represents his blood - the blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission (forgiveness) of sins - **Matthew 26:28**. This follows the pattern of the supper the Lord had with his disciples the night he was betrayed - **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**. In doing this we are constantly reminded of the way we have been saved and the need to follow the Saviour.

In the Books of the Bible chart (page 3) you will see that following the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles there are Epistles, or letters, written to various ecclesias by some of the apostles - again under the inspiration of God. These letters are full of loving guidance for the followers of Christ, in their personal lives and also in the ecclesia. They also warned that the ecclesias would fall away from the truth and this gradually happened. The last book is "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*". It was given to his servant John about 96 AD. The key to Revelation is in verse 1 "*things which must shortly come to pass*". It was also to be in sign language. It is the last letter of the Lord to his servants of all generations, from the days of John onwards. In every age believers have been able to take courage from what was written to see that even in times of terrible trouble the Lord Jesus Christ has been accomplishing the will of God. Revelation concludes with the wonderful words "*He which testifieth these things saith 'Surely I come quickly'*". The subject of his return will be our concluding study.

## QUESTIONS

1. What is the Ecclesia?
2. What are the steps to becoming a member of the true ecclesia?
3. What is baptism?
4. What do we need in our new way of life?

### **THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON THE EARTH THE PROMISES TO ABRAHAM AND DAVID FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST THE LORD**

**ISAIAH 2:2 -4 AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS, THAT THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOUSE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS, AND SHALL BE EXALTED ABOVE THE HILLS; AND ALL NATIONS SHALL FLOW UNTO IT.**

**AND MANY PEOPLE SHALL GO AND SAY, COME YE, AND LET US GO UP TO THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD, TO THE HOUSE OF THE GOD OF JACOB; AND HE WILL TEACH US OF HIS WAYS, AND WE WILL WALK IN HIS PATHS: FOR OUT OF ZION SHALL GO FORTH THE LAW, AND THE WORD OF THE LORD FROM JERUSALEM.**

**AND HE SHALL JUDGE AMONG THE NATIONS, AND SHALL REBUKE MANY PEOPLE: AND THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES, AND THEIR SPEARS INTO PRUNINGHOOKS: NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE.**

**THE HOUSE OF PRAYER TO BE BUILT IN JERUSALEM  
IS DESCRIBED IN EZEKIEL 40-48**



## Study Twelve

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

## CHRIST WILL COME

The Lord Jesus Christ will return as he went, personally, bodily, visibly and literally. He will come with the holy angels, and the power and authority of heaven - **Acts 1:9-11; 3:19-21; Matthew 16:27; Psalm 110:1.**

The following signs tell us his return is near:

1. The regathering of Israel to Palestine after 1,900 years of dispersion, and the new nation given the name of Israel. **Jeremiah 31:10-14; Ezekiel 37:21-23.** Throughout their history they have been conquered, scattered, persecuted and yet after 4,000 years from the calling of Abraham they still remain. The survival of the Jew is a witness to the truth of the Bible - **Jeremiah 30:11.** Now they have their own homeland once more, in readiness for the return of their King.
2. The development of Russia - a mighty power to the north of Israel with designs on the Middle East - **Ezekiel 38.**
3. World-wide political chaos - **Daniel 12:2; Luke 21:25-28; Revelation 11:18.**
4. Vast preparations for war - **Joel 3:9-11.**
5. Gross immorality and ungodliness - **2 Timothy 3:1-13; Matthew 24:37-39**

These clear and dramatic signs warn like signposts of Christ's imminent return and the need to watch - **Revelation 16:15; 22:12.**

## HIS FIRST WORK - RESURRECTION

His first work will be to raise the dead who will be gathered to him along with *"those who are alive and remain"* for judgment - **2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17.**

## RESPONSIBILITY AND JUDGMENT

Only those responsible will appear at the Judgement Seat of Christ - that is those who have had the opportunity to know God's will - **Luke 12:47-48; John 3:19; 9:41; 15:22-24; James 4:17.**

Mankind is divided into the following classes:

1. Those who are not responsible - This is most of mankind. Seeing they have not heard the Gospel of Christ, they will not be required to give a personal account, and if dead

will not even be raised. Most then, will not be raised - **Psalm 49:19-20; Isaiah 26:13-14; Jeremiah 51:39-40; Ephesians 2:1,12.**

2. The responsible will be required to give an account at Christ's Judgement Seat -
  - a) if found worthy thy will be granted a part in the Kingdom and given "*glory, honour and immortality*" - a joyful time indeed!
  - b) if found unworthy, they will be condemned, depart in shame and contempt, and die the "*second death*" - **1 Corinthians 4:3-5; 2 Corinthians 5:10; John 5:27-29; Daniel 12:2,3; Romans 2:6-16; Revelation 2:11.**They will be judged according to "*their works*".

## IMMORTALITY

The dead will be raised in a mortal state for judgement. If judged worthy of eternal life they will "*put on immortality*". This body will then be instantly changed into the immortal. The immortal body can be seen and touched. It has flesh and bone as have the bodies of the risen Lord and the angels, and of course is incorruptible, living for ever - **1 Corinthians 15:50-54; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; Philippians 3:20-21.**



A victor's laurel crown

**2 Timothy 4:8** Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

## ARMAGEDDON

Following the "*marriage of the Lamb*" - a time of joyous communion between the Lord the Redeemer and the Redeemed, the Lord with his redeemed and glorified Bride will intervene at Armageddon and fight

against all the nations gathered "*to Jerusalem to battle*" - **Revelation 19:7-9; Zechariah 14:1-5; Psalm 149:4-9; John 18:36.**

## ALL NATIONS TO SUBMIT

By earthquake, fire and other manifestations of God's Divine power the nations will be subdued. The victorious Lord will issue a command to the nations to submit to him - **Ezekiel 38:18-23; Psalm 2; Revelation 14:6-8; Isaiah 60:12.**

1. Some nations, apparently of the western alliance will submit to Christ as the Queen of Sheba did to Solomon - **Psalm 72:8-11; Isaiah 60:9.**
2. Others, notably the Catholic European Confederacy, will revolt against the new King of Mt Zion but will be overcome - **Psalm 2; Micah 4:3; Isaiah 60:12; Revelation 17:12-14; chapters 18,19.**

The Lord Jesus Christ will then rule over the whole world, helped by his co-rulers as kings and priests - the glorified saints - **Revelation 5:9-10.** His throne will be in Jerusalem - **Jeremiah 3:17.** The saved nation of Israel who have acknowledged as Lord the one they rejected and crucified, will be the foremost nation - **Micah 4:6-7.**

## WONDERFUL CONDITIONS


The nations will learn righteousness. All the earth will worship the One True God - **Zechariah 14:9**. Every year the nations will go up to Jerusalem to keep the feast of Tabernacles and to sacrifice before the LORD of Hosts. Life will be prolonged and people will enjoy the fruit of their labours - **Isaiah 65:20-23**. Sin will be restrained - **Revelation 20:2-3**. **Psalm 72** and many other passages give us descriptions of this wonderful time.

## REBELLION AT THE END OF THE MILLENNIUM

The Lord will reign for 1,000 years together with his saints after which the saints will be withdrawn into the “*beloved city*” Jerusalem. Human nature will again assert itself and the nations will rebel and gather together against the Lord to their destruction - **Revelation 20:6-9**.

## THE FINAL JUDGEMENT - “GOD ALL IN ALL”

The final Resurrection will then take place of all those who have lived during the Millennium (1,000 year reign of Christ). The righteous from that era will be granted eternal life and the wicked will die. After this there will be no more death. God’s purpose with man and the earth will be complete and “*God will be all in all*” - **Revelation 20:1-15; 21:1-5; 1 Corinthians 15:25-28; Numbers 14:21**. The glorious purpose of His name will be fulfilled as He will indeed be manifested in Mighty Ones.



## QUESTIONS

1. Are the Jews still part of God’s purpose?
2. Who will be raised? What makes us responsible?
3. What will the Kingdom be like?

## CONCLUSION

*The Studies of the Word of God have showed the plan of God from the Creation to the fulfilment of God’s purpose with mankind on the earth.*

*It is a clear and logical Word holding out to us a Glorious Hope. Bible Study is the most satisfying activity we can do, and as we open its pages we will gain the benefits. Let us then endeavour to do what God requires of us that we may indeed “Be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” Revelation 19:7,8.*