

# TREASURE HUNT THROUGH SCRIPTURE TO FIND JESUS, THE MESSIAH



Advent Devotional for Families by Brenda and Mason Vail

## Treasure Hunt through Scripture to Find Jesus, the Messiah

When Jesus was walking along the road to Emmaus with two of his followers after his resurrection, Luke 24:27 tells us that *“Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”* This study is designed as a “road to Emmaus” treasure hunt through scripture, leading you on a quest through the Bible to find clues that point to Jesus. (Spoiler alert: It’s all about him!)

Rather than come out and declare that he is the Messiah, Jesus often described himself and his kingdom in parables which are word pictures that describe a particular truth. God speaks through the language of symbols in prophecy, dreams and visions because symbols can have many layers of meaning. The more we want to know, the deeper the Lord will take us in our understanding. That’s why Jesus told his disciples, *“Pay close attention to what you hear. The closer you listen, the more understanding you will be given – and you will receive even more” (Mark 4:24, NLT\*)*.

While the Bible can and should be read as a study of God’s revelation to specific people at specific times, God also spoke through the language of symbols to pull us into the eternal realm of revelation. God hints at the nature and works of the Messiah through symbolic language in the Old Testament. We will discover when we delve into the “I am” statements of Jesus that they are his way of pointing us to these Old Testament prophecies.

Jesus said, *“Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old” (Matthew 13:52)*. There are gems of revelation of the nature of Jesus in both the Old and New Testaments, so over the next 25 days we will dig through the scriptures to mine the treasures of deep revelation. Why? Because a deeper revelation of Jesus leads to a deeper level of worship in spirit and in truth. Also, the more we study the identity of Jesus, the more we discover our own identity because *“your real life is hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3)*. As we fix our eyes on Jesus, we become like him (2 Corinthians 3:18).

As you read the scriptures, I encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal who Jesus is as Messiah to you. I will help you make some connections in each devotional, but I’ve purposely limited my commentary because it’s more fun to be led by the Spirit to make the connections yourself! My goal is not only to reveal Jesus as Messiah to you, but also to lead you into a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit who wants to reveal Jesus to you. This study only scratches the surface, as a prompt for you to begin receiving revelation from the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:10 tells us that God’s *“Spirit searches out everything and shows us God’s deep secrets.”* What Jesus did for the men on the road to Emmaus, explaining how the scriptures pointed to him, is what the Holy Spirit wants to do for you!

**If you are reading this as a daily Advent devotional:** I encourage you to celebrate the Lord as you read, fixing your eyes on Jesus. You could light a candle, as a reminder that Jesus appeared as light to people who were in spiritual darkness. If feasible, read this at dinner time, reminding you that God’s word is also your daily bread. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for being who the scriptures reveal him to be in your own life. Sing a song of worship or simply sing, “O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.” If you have the family treasure hunt cards, hide the one corresponding to that day’s devotional for your children to find, as a way of reenforcing the idea that reading the Bible is a hunt for treasure. Older children can read the questions, and little ones can listen for the underlined words. If desired, hang the cards on a Christmas tree as a reminder of who you’re celebrating. If you’re also doing a candy Advent calendar, end devotions with a sweet treat. *“Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8)*.

## Names and Descriptions of Jesus

(Corresponding treasure hunt picture card descriptions are in parentheses.)

Day 1: The Word (mouth speaking)

Day 2: The Branch Who is Both Priest and King (branch)

Day 3: The Anointed One (oil being poured out of a spout)

Day 4: Son of David (shepherd staff, harp, sword, crown)

Day 5: The Suffering Servant (crown of thorns)

Day 6: I AM (I AM)

Day 7: I AM the Door (door)

Day 8: I AM the Light (candle)

Day 9: I AM the Bread (loaf of bread)

Day 10: The New Temple (church)

Day 11: I AM the Resurrection (tomb with stone rolled away)

Day 12: I AM the Good Shepherd (sheep and staff)

Day 13: Passover Lamb (sheep and cross)

Day 14: The Scapegoat (hand on a goat)

Day 15: The Lord Who Heals (broken heart with a Band-Aid)

Day 16: Bridegroom and Redeemer (bridal and groom)

Day 17: Cornerstone and Rock (rock)

Day 18: Fountain of Living Water (fountain)

Day 19: Teacher (scroll)

Day 20: Son of Man (legs of Jesus standing on a cloud)

Day 21: The Shepherd Who Gathers Israel and Separates Sheep from Goats (staff between sheep/goats)

Day 22: King of Kings (crown)

Day 23: Lord of Heaven's Armies (sword) Day

24: The Prince of Peace (dove)

Day 25: Unto Us a Child Is Born (manger)

\*Unless otherwise noted, I have primarily used either the New Living Translation of the Bible or NIV.

## Day 1: The Word

Jesus said, “You study the Scriptures [Old Testament] diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me” (John 5:39). All scripture points to Jesus.

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Word?

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light” (Genesis 1:1-3).

“As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, <sup>11</sup> so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:10-11).

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made” (John 1:1-3, NIV). “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (John 1:14).

Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matthew 5:17-18).

Jesus prayed to the Father, “I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them” (John 17:26).

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Word?

Jesus said, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!” (John 15:7).

Jesus said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

**Reflections:** Jesus is the living Word of God, the fulfillment of every scripture. As the Word or voice of God in the Old Testament, Jesus spoke God’s words. In the New Testament, Jesus is the Word who was made visible so we could not only hear God’s words but see and experience God in a relatable way. God revealed himself to us as a Father through the Word who became human as God’s only Son. He did this so that we may become sons and daughters who enjoy relationship with the Father. Every word from God fulfills its purpose, so Jesus fulfilled God’s purpose of revealing the gracious nature and will of the Father to save us from our sins. He did this so that the love God has for Jesus may be in us as we remain in relationship with him and his words remain in us. Not only does the Word that comes from God accomplish everything God sent him to do, when the Word is living inside us, we can ask for anything, and it will be granted. Our words are empowered by the Holy Spirit to bear witness to Jesus, the Word!

## Day 2: The Branch Who Is Both High Priest and King

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Branch?

*“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.” For this is what the LORD says: “David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of Israel, nor will the Levitical priests ever fail to have a man to stand before me continually to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices” (Jeremiah 33:14-18).*

*“Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua, son of Jehozadak. <sup>12</sup> Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.’” (Zechariah 6:11-13).*

King David prophesied, *“The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit in the place of honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies, making them a footstool under your feet.’ <sup>2</sup> The Lord will extend your powerful kingdom from Jerusalem; you will rule over your enemies. <sup>3</sup> When you go to war, your people will serve you willingly. You are arrayed in holy garments, and your strength will be renewed each day like the morning dew. <sup>4</sup> The Lord has taken an oath and will not break his vow: ‘You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek’” (Psalm 110:1-4).*

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?

*“The law appointed high priests who were limited by human weakness. But after the law was given, God appointed his Son with an oath, and his Son has been made the perfect High Priest forever” (Hebrews 7:28). “Because Jesus lives forever, his priesthood lasts forever. <sup>25</sup> Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf. <sup>26</sup> He is the kind of high priest we need because he is holy and blameless, unstained by sin” (Hebrews 7:24-26).*

Jesus said, *“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).*

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Branch who is both High Priest and King?

Revelation 5:9-10 reveals the song sung in heaven to the Lamb, Jesus, at the end of the age: *“You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. <sup>10</sup> And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth.”*

Jesus said, *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).*

**Reflections:** Hebrews 7 tells us that Jesus came first as High Priest, like Melchizedek who was king of Salem and priest to God. Jesus offered his life as a sacrifice on our behalf and now intercedes for us in heaven until every tribe and nation hear the gospel and ask for his Kingdom to come. We are a Kingdom of priests, worshipping Jesus and inviting people into God’s Kingdom where we will reign with Christ.

## Day 3: The Anointed One

The Hebrew word Messiah, or Christ in the Greek, means “Anointed One.” In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and holy objects were anointed with oil. This symbolized being chosen by God and set apart for a specific assignment. Oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit who is needed to accomplish the task for which a person has been anointed. *“So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David” (1 Samuel 16:13).*

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Anointed One, Israel’s Messiah who will reign forever?**

*“Out of the stump of David’s family will grow a shoot – yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root. <sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. <sup>3</sup> He will delight in obeying the Lord. He will not judge by appearance nor make a decision based on hearsay” (Isaiah 11:1-3).* The seven-branched lampstand in the Tabernacle was symbolic of the sevenfold Spirit from Revelation 4:5 described above.

*“The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to [Jesus]. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: <sup>18</sup> ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, <sup>19</sup> and that the time of the Lord’s favor has come’” (Luke 4:17-19/Isaiah 61).*

### **How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?**

*“One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy” (Luke 3:21-22).*

*“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him” (Acts 10:38).*

*“Then a demon-possessed man, who was blind and couldn’t speak, was brought to Jesus. He healed the man so that he could both speak and see. <sup>23</sup> The crowd was amazed and asked, “Could it be that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah?” (Matthew 12:22-23).*

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Anointed One?**

Jesus said, *“I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father” (John 14:12).*

*“Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. <sup>4</sup> And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability...and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders” (Acts 2:3-4, 43).*

*“But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth” (1 John 2:20, NIV).*

**Reflections:** Jesus was already filled with the Spirit at birth, but the anointing of the Spirit came upon Jesus at his baptism to accomplish specific tasks – teaching, healing, deliverance, prophecy, offering his life in payment of our sin, etc. The same Spirit who came upon Jesus anoints those who are in Christ to continue Jesus’ ministry of preaching the coming kingdom with miracles, signs, and wonders. Jesus promised in Luke 11:9-13 that we would receive the Holy Spirit’s anointing if we ask the Father for it.

## Day 4: Son of David

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Son of David?

In Genesis 49, Jacob blessed the tribe of Judah to rule. David was from the tribe of Judah. *“The Lord said, ‘I have made a covenant with David, my chosen servant. I have sworn this oath to him: <sup>4</sup>I will establish your descendants as kings forever; they will sit on your throne from now until eternity”* (Psalm 89:3-4).

*“My people will serve the Lord their God and their king descended from David—the king I will raise up for them”* (Jeremiah 30:9).

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?

Jesus said, *“And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life”* (John 3:14).

Peter said, *“King David said this about him: ‘I see that the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me. <sup>26</sup> No wonder my heart is glad, and my tongue shouts his praises! My body rests in hope. <sup>27</sup> For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave. <sup>28</sup> You have shown me the way of life, and you will fill me with the joy of your presence.’ <sup>29</sup> “Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn’t referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us. <sup>30</sup> But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David’s own descendants would sit on his throne. <sup>31</sup> David was looking into the future and speaking of the Messiah’s resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave”* (Acts 2:25-31/Psalm 16:8-11).

John sees Jesus revealed in heaven: *“See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals... <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. <sup>10</sup> You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth”* (Revelation 5:5, 9).

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Son of David who was raised up?

*“You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had... <sup>8</sup> he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”* (Philippians 2:5, 8-11).

**Reflections:** Paul said, *“God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, ‘I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.’ <sup>23</sup> “And it is one of King David’s descendants, Jesus, who is God’s promised Savior of Israel!”* (Acts 13:22-23).

Matthew 1 shows that Jesus is a physical descendent of David, but Jesus also is a true son of David, a man after God’s own heart who did everything God wanted him to do. Just as David was betrayed and persecuted by King Saul yet waited on the Lord to raise him up as King, Jesus was obedient to the point of death, being “lifted up” on a cross and “raised up” out of the grave before being exalted as King of Kings. We who are in Christ choose the humility of the cross so that we can be people after God’s heart.

## Day 5: The Suffering Servant

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the suffering servant?

*“My servant grew up in the Lord’s presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected – a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. <sup>8</sup> Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. <sup>9</sup> He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man’s grave” (Isaiah 53:2-3, 7-9).*

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?

*“Then [Jesus] said, ‘When I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled’ (Luke 24:44). Hebrews 10:5-7 quotes Psalm 40:6-8, revealing that “when Christ came into the world, he said to God, ‘You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings. But you have given me a body to offer. <sup>6</sup> You were not pleased with burnt offerings or other offerings for sin. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Look, I have come to do your will, O God – as is written about me in the Scriptures.” Jesus willingly came in a body to offer it to God for us.*

In John 13:18-26 Jesus explicitly explains that he is sharing bread with Judas, his betrayer, “to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned against me’” (Psalm 41:9).

Jesus cries out on the cross, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” from Psalm 22:1 so that those who are witnessing his crucifixion will connect him to the suffering servant of Psalm 22:

- As Jesus was nailed to the cross, he fulfilled verses 16-17, “They pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me.”
- John 19:23-24 describes how the guards divided Jesus’ clothes and cast lots for them in fulfillment of Psalm 22:18, “They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.”
- Matthew 27:39 says, “Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads,” in fulfillment of Psalm 22:7-8. “All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. ‘He trusts in the LORD,’ they say, ‘let the LORD rescue him.’” Those who passed by Jesus said, “Come down from the cross if you are the Son of God” (Matthew 27:40).

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the suffering servant?

Hebrews 5:8-9 reveals why Jesus suffered. “Even though Jesus was God’s Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. <sup>9</sup> In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him.” Hebrews 4:15-16 assures us, “This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” Because of what Jesus suffered, he intercedes with empathy for us.

**Reflections:** Since Jesus suffered and overcame, we can endure persecution for his sake as overcomers!



## Day 6: I AM (King Who Is God)

God first revealed himself by the name I AM (YHWH in the Hebrew, sometimes written as Yahweh, often translated as “The Lord”). In John 8, Jesus reveals that he is I AM, Yahweh, the God of Israel. The people ask Jesus, “Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?” (John 8:53). After some debate, Jesus finally says, “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!”<sup>59</sup> At that point they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden from them and left the Temple” (John 8:58). Why did they pick up stones to throw at him? Because he was using God’s name to describe himself, and stoning was the punishment for blasphemy. However, they failed to recognize the scriptures in the Old Testament that pointed to the Messiah as King who is God.

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as both King and God?

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2)

In Psalm 68:24 David is speaking prophetically about the coming day of victory over God’s enemies. “Your procession, God, has come into view, the procession of my God and King into the sanctuary.”

Isaiah 33:22 declares, “For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD [YHWH] is our king.”

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”<sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this” (Isaiah 9:6-7).

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah as YHWH, I AM, the Son of God?

The angel Gabriel told the virgin Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

The angel announced Jesus’ birth to shepherds, saying, “The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!” (Luke 2:11).

“‘Who are you looking for?’ [Jesus] asked. <sup>5</sup> ‘Jesus the Nazarene,’ they replied. ‘I AM he,’ Jesus said. (Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.) <sup>6</sup> As Jesus said ‘I AM he,’ they all drew back and fell to the ground!” (John 18:4-6). The scripture in the original Greek simply says “ego eimi” or “I am;” translators added the word “he.” Why did they fall to the ground? Jesus wasn’t merely answering a question; in revealing himself he spoke his ancient identity, I AM.

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ who is I AM?

Jesus prayed, “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me” (John 17:22-23).

**Reflections:** Jesus came from the Father and is one with I AM. Jesus was and is and is to come (Revelation 1:8). By the Spirit, we are one with Jesus who is in us, and one with the Father, I AM.

## Day 7: I AM the Door

Throughout scripture, various names of God tell us more about I AM. For example, Yahweh Yireh is I AM Provider (Genesis 22:14). Jesus hinted at his identity through the “I am” statements recorded by the Apostle John, which point us to scriptures revealing the identity of Messiah in the Old Testament.

In John 10:7 Jesus declares, “*I am the door of the sheep*” (ESV). He’s talking about a sheep pen where he takes care of God’s flock. “*If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture*” (John 10:9). If the Door (or gate) is salvation only, why would we ever go out? The Door is not simply salvation from death; Jesus is the doorway through which we access God’s presence, just as the priests went in and out of the Tabernacle to minister to God and to people. We can commune with God as Moses did, going in to God’s presence to worship and receive, then take to people what God gives us.

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Door of access to God’s presence?**

*“That first covenant between God and Israel had regulations for worship and a place of worship here on earth. <sup>2</sup> There were two rooms in that Tabernacle. In the first room were a lampstand, a table, and sacred loaves of bread on the table. This room was called the Holy Place. <sup>3</sup> Then there was a curtain, and behind the curtain was the second room called the Most Holy Place. <sup>4</sup> In that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides... <sup>6</sup> When these things were all in place, the priests regularly entered the first room as they performed their religious duties. <sup>7</sup> But only the high priest ever entered the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. And he always offered blood for his own sins and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. <sup>8</sup> By these regulations the Holy Spirit revealed that the entrance to the Most Holy Place was not freely open as long as the Tabernacle and the system it represented were still in use” (Hebrews 9:1-4, 6-8).*

### **How does Jesus fulfill the scriptures regarding the door of the Tabernacle in the New Covenant?**

*“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).*

*“Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom” (Mark 15:37-38).*

*“By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. <sup>21</sup> And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, <sup>22</sup> let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:20-22).*

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Door of access to the Father?**

*“Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us” (Ephesians 2:18).*

Jesus said, “*You will ask the Father directly, and he will grant your request because you use my name*” (John 16:23).

**Reflections:** We have access to the Father’s presence by the Holy Spirit through Jesus, the Door. I AM is in us because we are in Christ. As Hebrews says, “let’s go right into the presence of God!”

## Day 8: I AM the Light

In John 8:12 Jesus declares, *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as Light?

*“There will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory. <sup>2</sup>The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine” (Isaiah 9:1-2).*

*“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. <sup>6</sup>I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup>to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness” (Isaiah 42:1, 6-7).*

*“The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory” (Isaiah 60:19).*

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah?

Jesus’ ministry was concentrated in the Galilee region, in fulfillment of Isaiah 9. He fulfills Isaiah 42 in John 9:1-7. *“As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ <sup>3</sup>‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned,’ said Jesus, ‘but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup>As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup>While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.’ <sup>6</sup>After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. <sup>7</sup>‘Go,’ he told him, ‘wash in the Pool of Siloam’ (this word means ‘Sent’). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.”*

Jesus will fulfill Isaiah 60:19 when he returns. *“The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Revelation 21:23).*

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Light?

Jesus said, *“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father” (Matthew 5:14-16).*

*“Once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! <sup>9</sup>For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true” (Ephesians 5:8-9).*

**Reflections:** Before the sun and moon were created, God said, *“Let there be light”* – let there be Jesus, the Light. John 1:4-5 tells us, *“The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.”* Jesus, the Word, brings light through revelation of the nature and will of God as his visible representation. In the end, there will only be light, the manifest presence of Jesus lighting up the world. Come Lord Jesus!

## Day 9: I AM the Bread from Heaven

Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. <sup>50</sup> But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"* (John 6:48-51).

### How does the Old Testament hint that the Messiah will be bread from heaven?

In Deuteronomy 8:3 Moses tells the people that God *"humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."*

God instructed the priests to set out twelve loaves of bread, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. *"This bread is to be set out before the LORD regularly, Sabbath after Sabbath, on behalf of the Israelites, as a lasting covenant. <sup>9</sup> It belongs to Aaron and his sons, who are to eat it in the sanctuary area, because it is a most holy part of their perpetual share of the food offerings presented to the LORD"* (Leviticus 24:8-9). This bread on the Bread of the Presence table was a sign of God's continual presence with them.

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?

*"Jesus said to them, 'Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' <sup>34</sup> 'Sir,' they said, 'always give us this bread.' <sup>35</sup> Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty'"* (John 6:30-35).

During the Passover meal, *"Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take this and eat it, for this is my body'"* (Matthew 26:26).

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Messiah?

Jesus said, *"Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. <sup>54</sup> Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. <sup>55</sup> For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. <sup>56</sup> Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them"* (John 6:53-56).

Jesus said, *"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!"* (John 15:7).

**Reflections:** The mystery of eating Jesus' flesh as bread is explained in God's instructions to the priests who were allowed to eat the sacrificial meat and Bread of the Presence. The sacrificial meat was *"to be eaten in the sanctuary area, in the courtyard of the tent of meeting. <sup>27</sup> Whatever touches any of the flesh will become holy"* (Leviticus 6:26-27). 1 Peter 2:9 tells us that we are a royal priesthood. We are made holy not by our own effort, but by continually partaking of the bread of Jesus' presence. In the same way that the bread we eat becomes a part of us, sustaining our lives, Jesus' holy presence remains in us as we consume his words in the Bible as our daily bread, eat the communion bread in remembrance of his sacrifice, and worship him as the Bread of Life. Jesus promised, *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled"* (Matthew 5:6). Let's hunger for Jesus, the Bread from heaven!

## Day 10: The New Temple

In John 2:19-21 Jesus said, *“Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days...”*<sup>21</sup> *But the temple he had spoken of was his body.* In the new covenant, we worship in the Body of Christ, God’s Temple. In Revelation 21:22 there is *“no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.”*

### **What does the Old Testament say about the new Temple?**

*“Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.*<sup>13</sup> *It is he who will build the temple of the LORD”* (Zechariah 6:12-13). In Zechariah 4:6 God declares it is *“not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,”* that his temple is built.

God gave Ezekiel the measurements of a new Temple and told the people to study its plans, saying, *“This is the basic law of the Temple: absolute holiness!”* (Ezekiel 43:12). (See also Revelation 22:14-15.)

Haggai 2:9 mentions a time of shaking in the heavens and earth when *“The future glory of this Temple will be greater than its past glory, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies. And in this place I will bring peace.”*

### **How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?**

Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, *“a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem”* (John 4:21). By allowing the physical temple to be removed and replaced with Jesus’ body, God put an end to the hostility between Samaritans, Jews, and Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:14-18 tells us Jesus *“has made the two groups [Jews and Gentiles] one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,<sup>15</sup> by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace,<sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.<sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.<sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.* In Acts 10 God reveals that both Jews and Gentiles are clean by the shed blood of Jesus so we can all be holy by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### **What does the Bible say about who we are as worshipers in the new Temple, the Body of Christ?**

*“True worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth”* (John 4:23-24).

**Reflections:** Hebrews 8:5 tells us that the Tabernacle was set up as a pattern of God’s throne room in heaven. Every object in the Tabernacle/Temple points to and is fulfilled in Jesus, the way to the Father. You can use it as a mental map of progression in prayer as you worship in the Spirit and in truth:

- At the altar of sacrifice, give thanks to Jesus for your forgiveness by his shed blood.
- Go to Jesus, the Fountain of the Spirit’s living water to be washed clean of guilt and shame.
- Enter God’s presence in the Holy Place of intimacy with thanksgiving to Jesus for being the Door.
- At the lampstand, worship Jesus as the Light. Ask him for the sevenfold Spirit’s anointing.
- At the Bread of the Presence table, invite Jesus, the Bread and Word, to feed you.
- At the incense altar, offer prayers of intercession in the name of Jesus (Revelation 8:3). The coals had to come from the altar of sacrifice which is why the name of Jesus empowers our prayers.
- Receive peace from the Father who sits on a mercy seat for those under covenant with Jesus.

## Day 11: I AM the Resurrection

When Jesus called Lazarus out of the grave after 4 days – something believed to be impossible – he revealed the most powerful I AM statement of all: *“I am the resurrection and the life”* (John 11:25).

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the one who opens graves?**

During Passover (when Jesus was crucified) Ezekiel 37 is read in the synagogue: *“Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup> Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them’”* (Ezekiel 37:12-13).

*“Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey – riding on a donkey’s colt...Because of the covenant I made with you, sealed with blood, I will free your prisoners from death in a waterless dungeon”* (Zechariah 9:9,11). Messiah brings Israel’s national resurrection and a first fruits resurrection on the third day: *“Come, let us return to the LORD... <sup>2</sup> After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence”* (Hosea 6:1-2).

### **How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah who is the Resurrection?**

Jesus came into Jerusalem, riding a donkey’s colt, a sign of the covenant king from Zechariah 9. Matthew 27:52-53 reveals that, *“The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. <sup>53</sup> They came out of the tombs after Jesus’ resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.”*

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Resurrection?**

Jesus said, *“It is my Father’s will that all who see his Son and believe in him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day”* (John 6:40). John records a vision of this resurrection: *“I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years”* (Revelation 20:4-6).

*“For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. <sup>15</sup> We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. <sup>17</sup> Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever”* (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17).

**Reflections:** Jesus’ resurrection was on the First Fruits festival of Leviticus 23:10-11. *“Bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. <sup>11</sup> He is to wave the sheaf before the LORD so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath.”* During this ceremony, on the third day after Passover, the first fruits of resurrected saints ascended with Jesus. *“Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back”* (1 Corinthians 15:23).

## Day 12: I AM the Good Shepherd

In John 10:11-13 Jesus says, *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. <sup>13</sup> The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.”*

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Good Shepherd?

*“I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. <sup>23</sup> I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd” (Ezekiel 34:22-23).*

Isaiah 40 describes the Messiah as he who *“tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young” (Isaiah 40:11).*

*“The LORD their God will save his people on that day as a shepherd saves his flock” (Zechariah 9:16).*

In Ezekiel 34:15-16 God says, *“I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD. <sup>16</sup> I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.”*

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah in the New Testament?

Jesus declared in John 10:14-18, *“I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, <sup>15</sup> just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. <sup>18</sup> No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily.”*

### What does the Bible say about who we are as sheep in the flock of the Good Shepherd?

*“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, <sup>29</sup> for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father’s hand” (John 10:27-29).*

*“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away” (1 Peter 5:2-4, NIV).*

**Reflections:** Jesus laid down his life to gather all who will listen to his voice into his flock. Today, spend time meditating on and praying Psalm 23 to Jesus, worshipping him as the Good Shepherd: Lord Jesus, you are my Shepherd. I lack nothing. You make me lie down in green pastures, you lead me beside quiet waters, you refresh my soul. You guide me along the right paths for your name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever (NLT).

## Day 13: Passover Lamb

When John the Baptist saw Jesus he declared, “Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep by becoming the Lamb of God.

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Passover Lamb?**

Isaiah 53:7 describes the suffering servant as a sacrificial lamb. “He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”

God promised Israel in Exodus 6:6-7, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. <sup>7</sup> I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.”

“On the tenth day of this month each family must choose a lamb or a young goat for a sacrifice, one animal for each household. <sup>5</sup> The animal you select must be a one-year-old male, either a sheep or a goat, with no defects. <sup>6</sup> Take special care of this chosen animal until the evening of the fourteenth day of this first month. Then the whole assembly of the community of Israel must slaughter their lamb or young goat at twilight. <sup>7</sup> They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the sides and top of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the animal. <sup>8</sup> That same night they must roast the meat over a fire and eat it along with bitter salad greens and bread made without yeast” (Exodus 12:3, 5-8).

“When I see the blood, I will pass over you. This plague of death will not touch you” (Exodus 12:13).

### **How does Jesus fulfill the role of the Passover Lamb in the New Testament?**

Jesus, the perfect Lamb, was welcomed by the people on Sunday, the tenth day, then betrayed and killed on Passover. As our Passover Lamb, Jesus redeemed us “with an outstretched arm” on the cross.

In Luke 22 Jesus says, “I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you now that I won’t eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.” The Passover meal is fulfilled as we take the bread and cup in remembrance of Jesus, the Lamb.

Jesus said, “Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person at the last day” (John 6:56). Judgment passes over those who are under Jesus’ blood in God’s house.

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Passover Lamb?**

“Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. <sup>5</sup> God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. <sup>6</sup> So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. <sup>7</sup> He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins” (Ephesians 1:4-7).

**Reflections:** Just as every father was responsible to provide the Passover lamb for his household, God the Father provided our Passover Lamb. It is our acceptance of Jesus as our Passover Lamb that brings us into the Father’s house, under Jesus’ blood as protection from the final judgment, the second death. Colossians 1:13 tells us that God has, “rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Receiving Jesus as our Passover Lamb marks the new beginning of our journey with God during which we leave slavery to sin behind and learn what it means to be God’s child in his house. Glory to the Lamb of God!



## Day 14: The Scapegoat Who Removes Sin

Psalm 103:12 says, *“He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.”* How does Jesus remove our sins? By fulfilling the sacrificial requirements of the Day of Atonement. On that day, all sins of the community were forgiven and removed (Leviticus 16). Two goats were brought before the high priest. One goat was sacrificed as a sin offering because *“without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin”* (Hebrews 9:22). The high priest laid his hands on the other goat, confessing all the sins of the people over it, transferring to the scapegoat the sins of the people. In Jerusalem, the goat was driven out the eastern gate to the wilderness where it was pushed off a cliff to its death, thus removing sin from the community by carrying it to the grave. This took place annually...until Jesus!

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the one who removes sin from us?**

*“Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.<sup>9</sup> See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,” says the LORD Almighty, “and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day!”* (Zechariah 3:8-9).

Isiah 53:4-6 reveals the suffering servant as our scapegoat. *“It was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!<sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.<sup>6</sup> All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.”*

*“I alone will blot out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again”* (Isaiah 43:25).

### **How does Jesus fulfill the role of the scapegoat in the New Testament?**

*“God’s will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.<sup>11</sup> Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins.<sup>12</sup> But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand.<sup>14</sup> For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy”* (Hebrews 10:10-12, 14). Jesus fulfilled every sacrificial requirement of the law to atone for our sin, making us holy.

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the scapegoat who takes away sin?**

*“For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.<sup>13</sup> You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins.<sup>14</sup> He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross”* (Colossians 2:12-14). 1 John 1:9 promises *“If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.”*

**Reflections:** Like the high priest, we confess our sins and agree with God’s definition of righteousness, then God lays them on Jesus, who nails them to the cross. Our sin is buried in the grave because we have died with Christ to sin. God removes our sin from us and forgets it because he wants us to feel clean and loved in his presence so we will draw near. What he forgets, we have permission to forget.

## Day 15: The Lord Who Heals

One of the first revelations God gave to Israel after rescuing them from Egypt was, “*I am the Lord who heals you*” (Exodus 15:26). Healer is God’s identity. When Jesus heals, he reveals who God is.

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Lord who heals?

One of the signs of the Lord’s coming foretold in Isaiah 35:5-6 is that “*when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf. <sup>6</sup> The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!” Isaiah 33:24 says, “*No one living in Zion will say, ‘I am ill’; and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven.*”*

God’s servant “*was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed*” (Isaiah 53:5).

In Psalm 103:3, David says that the Lord “*forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.*”

“*But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings*” (Malachi 4:2). “Wings” also means the edge of a garment, specifically the tassels or fringes on Jewish clothing.

### How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Messiah who brings healing in the New Testament?

“*People brought all their sick to him <sup>36</sup> and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed*” (Matthew 14:35-36, NIV). “*Coming up behind Jesus, she touched the fringe of his robe. Immediately, the bleeding stopped*” (Luke 8:44).

“*They were completely amazed and said again and again, ‘Everything [Jesus] does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak’*” (Mark 7:37). “*A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn’t speak, and many others. They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all*” (Matthew 15:30).

“*That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. <sup>17</sup> This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said, ‘He took our sicknesses and removed our diseases’*” (Matthew 8:16-17/Isaiah 53).

“*I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.*’ Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, ‘*Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!*’ <sup>7</sup> *And the man jumped up and went home!*” (Matthew 9:6-7). Jesus proved his power to forgive by healing, pointing to Psalm 103:3.

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Healer?

“*God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues*” (1 Corinthians 12:28, NIV).

“*Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective*” (James 5:14-16).

**Reflections:** Jesus came as an exact representation of the Father who heals. We represent Christ, the healer, when we pray for the sick and share the good news of wholeness that is available in Christ.

## Day 16: Bridegroom and Redeemer

In John 3:29 John the Baptist calls Jesus the Bridegroom, and in Matthew 25, Jesus speaks of his return as a Bridegroom coming for a bride. In the Old Testament, God is described as Israel's husband. **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Bridegroom who redeems us?**

*"For your Maker is your husband – the LORD Almighty is his name – the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth" (Isaiah 54:5).*

*"The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD. <sup>21</sup> 'As for me, this is my covenant with them,' says the LORD. 'My Spirit, who is on you, will not depart from you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will always be on your lips, on the lips of your children and on the lips of their descendants—from this time on and forever,' says the LORD" (Isaiah 59:20-21).*

*"In that day," declares the LORD, "you will call me 'my husband'; you will no longer call me 'my master.' <sup>19</sup> I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. <sup>20</sup> I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD" (Hosea 2:16, 19-20).*

*"Your new name will be "The City of God's Delight" and "The Bride of God," for the Lord delights in you and will claim you as his bride" (Isaiah 62:4).*

### **How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Redeemer as a Bridegroom who makes a covenant with us?**

Leviticus 25:25 makes it possible for a close relative to redeem what's been sold. Jesus redeems us as our kinsman redeemer, like Boaz who married Ruth. Just as a bridegroom had to pay a bride price, Jesus proposed a covenant during the last supper and purchased us with his blood. We belong to him forever.

After proposing a marriage covenant, the bridegroom leaves to prepare a place to live with his bride. On the night Jesus proposed the new covenant, he said that he was going to the Father to prepare a place for us in his Father's house. *"When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am."* (John 14:3). That place is the *"new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband" (Revelation 21:2).*

After sealing the new covenant during the last supper with a shared cup of wine, a wedding tradition in Israel, Jesus promised to send the covenant gift mentioned in Isaiah 54:5, the Holy Spirit. *"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. <sup>14</sup> He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me"* (John 16:13-14). The Spirit is the seal or wedding ring of the new covenant bride.

### **What does the Bible say about who we are as the bride of Christ?**

*"Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself. <sup>8</sup> She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear. For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God's holy people"* (Revelation 19:7-8).

**Reflections:** Jesus chose us as his bride while we were still sinners, purchasing our freedom so we could be with him forever. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' covenant gift to us, we can remain set apart for him, forsaking all other loves in favor of Jesus as our first love. *"Nothing can ever separate us from God's love" (Romans 8:39).* Jesus will return for his beloved bride who is made ready by the Holy Spirit.

## Day 17: The Cornerstone and Rock

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the cornerstone or foundation stone?

A cornerstone is the first stone set in construction and all other stones are in reference to this stone. Isaiah 28:16-17 says, *“So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.’<sup>17</sup> I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line; hail will sweep away your refuge, the lie, and water will overflow your hiding place.”*

Isaiah 8:14 says that the Lord *“will be a holy place; for both Israel and Judah he will be a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.”*

Psalms 118:21-22 says, *“I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation. <sup>22</sup> The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”*

### How does Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Cornerstone in the New Testament?

Jesus said, *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash” (Matthew 7:24-27).*

Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar’s statue dream and tells him that the rock he saw is a kingdom God will set up when he sends the rock that was not cut by human hands. *“The rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth” (Daniel 2:35).* Jesus, the Rock, will destroy and replace all the nations represented in the statue that have ruled the earth since the time God sent Judah into captivity until now. *“In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever” (Daniel 2:44).*

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Rock?

*“You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God’s temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. <sup>5</sup> And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple” (1 Peter 2:4-5).*

*“You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).*

**Reflections:** Jesus is the cornerstone who is a stumbling block for those who did not understand how the scriptures pointed to him, and a crushing rock to all who resist the coming kingdom of God. But to those who believe and obey his teachings, Jesus is the sure foundation upon which our lives are built. We are living stones being built together as a dwelling place for God’s Spirit that will one day cover the earth.

## Day 18: Fountain of Living Water

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the fountain of living water?

Zechariah spoke of a coming day when God would redeem Jerusalem and send his chosen King who is also High Priest over Israel. *“On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity” (Zechariah 13:1).*

In Zechariah 12:10 God says, *“They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”*

Zechariah 14 tells us that when Messiah returns, he will stand on the Mount of Olives, causing it to split in two. *“On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it east to the Dead Sea and half of it west to the Mediterranean Sea, in summer and in winter” (Zechariah 14:8).* Ezekiel sees this river of living water that will flow from the temple to the Dead Sea which is too salty for any fish to live there. *“This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Dead Sea. When it empties into the sea, the salty water there becomes fresh. <sup>9</sup> Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live” (Ezekiel 37:8-9).*

As part of the water pouring ceremony during the Festival of Shelters, Isaiah 12:3 is quoted: *“With joy you will drink deeply from the fountain of salvation.”* In Hebrew, the word for salvation is “Yeshua,” which is also Jesus’ name in Hebrew.

### How does Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Rock who was pierced as a fountain of living water?

As spring water (called living water) is poured out during the Festival of Shelters, Jesus announces that he, Yeshua, is the fountain from Isaiah 12:3. *“On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink’ (John 7:37).*

Paul tells us that the rock Moses struck as a fountain of water in Exodus 17:6 foreshadowed Jesus, the Rock. *“For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. <sup>2</sup> They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. <sup>3</sup> They all ate the same spiritual food <sup>4</sup> and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ” (1 Corinthians 10:1-4).*

In fulfillment of the passages in Zechariah, when Jesus was crucified, *“one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water” (John 19:34).* Water poured out of Jesus, the Rock, our fountain of salvation. The water was a sign of the outpouring of the Spirit made available through Jesus.

### What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the fountain of living water?

Jesus said, *“Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” <sup>39</sup> By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified” (John 7:37-39).*

**Reflections:** The living water of the Holy Spirit is given to believers who drink from Jesus, the Fountain of Living Water. This water brings dead things back to life as we allow the Spirit to flow through us to the world around us. Whoever comes to Jesus will never be thirsty. There’s always more of the Spirit!

## Day 19: Teacher

God tells Moses, *“I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him”* (Deuteronomy 18:18).

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as our Teacher?**

*“Though the Lord gave you adversity for food and suffering for drink, he will still be with you to teach you. You will see your teacher with your own eyes. <sup>21</sup> Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, ‘This is the way you should go,’ whether to the right or to the left”* (Isaiah 30:20-21).

*“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. <sup>3</sup> A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope” (Isaiah 42:1-4, NIV).*

Micah 4:2 reveals that when Messiah comes the nations will say, *“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.”*

### **How does Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Messiah who teaches God’s ways?**

*“Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom”* (Matthew 4:23). Matthew 5:1-2 says, *“One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, <sup>2</sup> and he began to teach them.”* The rest of Matthew 5 through 7 contains the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus clarified the law and taught about God’s Kingdom. Jesus taught and demonstrated God’s holiness.

In Matthew 11, Jesus reveals he is the gentle teacher of Isaiah 42, saying, *“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”* Teaching was considered a yoke, and Jesus’ yoke is light.

Women washed Jesus’ feet with tears and perfumed them, for Isaiah 52:7 says, *“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation.”*

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Teacher?**

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to continue his teaching ministry. *“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. <sup>14</sup> He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me”* (John 16:13-14).

*“It was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God’s deep secrets. <sup>11</sup> No one can know a person’s thoughts except that person’s own spirit, and no one can know God’s thoughts except God’s own Spirit. <sup>12</sup> And we have received God’s Spirit (not the world’s spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us”* (1 Corinthians 2:10-12).

**Reflections:** As the Word of God, Jesus came to teach us about the Father. He gave us the Spirit to help us understand and apply his teachings so that *“we have the mind of Christ”* (1 Corinthians 2:16). *“For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true”* (1 John 2:27).

## Day 20: Son of Man Coming on the Clouds

The title Jesus used most often to refer to himself was Son of Man. Though he is God's only Son, he is also fully human. In Matthew 26:24 Jesus says, "*The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him.*"

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Son of Man?**

*"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. <sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed" (Daniel 7:13-14).* When Jesus used the title Son of Man, he was revealing this divine identity.

### **How does Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Son of Man in the New Testament?**

In Daniel's vision, the Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven. In Acts 1:9-11, Jesus "was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. <sup>10</sup> As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. <sup>11</sup> 'Men of Galilee,' they said, 'why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!'" Jesus being taken up into a cloud and later emerging from a cloud point to the God of Israel who descended on Mount Sinai and spoke from a cloud. The Son of Man will return in a cloud as the visible Word who speaks to Israel from the cloud.

Jesus said all "*will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And he will send out his angels with the mighty blast of a trumpet, and they will gather his chosen ones from all over the world – from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven" (Matthew 24:30-31).*

In Revelation 14:14-16, after the last trumpet has sounded, John says, "*Then I saw a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was someone like the Son of Man. He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. <sup>15</sup> Then another angel came from the Temple and shouted to the one sitting on the cloud, 'Swing the sickle, for the time of harvest has come; the crop on earth is ripe.' <sup>16</sup> So the one sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the whole earth was harvested."*

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Son of Man?**

Jesus said that when he returns, "*The Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done" (Matthew 16:27).*

*"When Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).*

**Reflections:** When God calls the prophet Ezekiel "Son of man," the word translated as man is the Hebrew word "adam." God named the first man Adam, which means human or mankind. To be a Son of man or Adam is to be a representative of the human race. God instructed Ezekiel to do certain things as his representative but also as a representative of mankind. Likewise, Jesus is God's representative, but also is a representative of mankind. As a Son of Adam, the first man to sin, Jesus perfectly obeyed God, becoming the new Adam who never sinned so that all who are born of the Spirit are the offspring of the new Adam. "*Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life...Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man" (1 Corinthians 15:22, 49).* Colossians 1:27 describes this mystery as "*Christ in you; the hope of glory.*"

## Day 21: The Shepherd Who Gathers Israel and Separates Sheep from Goats

Today we look at what the Good Shepherd will do when his flock has been gathered and he returns.

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as Shepherd who gathers and separates?

Micah 5:3-4 says, *“Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. <sup>4</sup> He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.”* The child, Jesus, was born, but now we wait for Jesus’ brothers – the scattered Jews – to “return to join the Israelites.” Then Jesus will return to rule them.

*“For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search and find my sheep. <sup>12</sup> I will be like a shepherd looking for his scattered flock. I will find my sheep and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on that dark and cloudy day. <sup>13</sup> I will bring them back home to their own land of Israel from among the peoples and nations” (Ezekiel 34:11-13).*

*“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. <sup>22</sup> I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. <sup>24</sup> My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd” (Ezekiel 37:21-22, 24).* This gathering began in 1948 with the rebirth of Israel.

*“And as for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign LORD says to his people: I will judge between one animal of the flock and another, separating the sheep from the goats... <sup>20</sup> Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will surely judge between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep. <sup>21</sup> For you fat sheep pushed and butted and crowded my sick and hungry flock until you scattered them to distant lands. <sup>22</sup> So I will rescue my flock, and they will no longer be abused. I will judge between one animal of the flock and another” (Ezekiel 34:17, 20-22).*

### How will Jesus fulfill this prophecy of the Good Shepherd when he returns?

Jesus said, *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats” (Matthew 25:31-32).*

### What does the Bible say about the future of the sheep who follow the Good Shepherd?

*“[Jesus] will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup> I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:32-36, 40).* Jesus’ sheep hear his voice and will obey his command to love others as he has loved us.

**Reflections:** Jesus’ “brothers and sisters” are defined in the above passage as his fellow countrymen or Jews. (See also Joel 3:2). When Jesus returns, he will judge the people in the nations (non-believers) by how they treated Jews and followers of Jesus, whom he also calls his brothers in Matthew 12:49.



## Day 22: King of Kings

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as King over Israel and the nations?

*"I have placed my chosen king on the throne in Jerusalem, on my holy mountain." <sup>7</sup> The king proclaims the Lord's decree: 'The Lord said to me, "You are my son. Today I have become your Father. <sup>8</sup> Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the whole earth as your possession'" (Psalm 2:6-8).*

*"When oppression and destruction have ended and enemy raiders have disappeared, <sup>5</sup> then God will establish one of David's descendants as king. He will rule with mercy and truth" (Isaiah 16:4-5).*

*"In that day the heir to David's throne will be a banner of salvation to all the world. The nations will rally to him, and the land where he lives will be a glorious place" (Isaiah 11:10). "With righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist" (Isaiah 11:4-5).*

*"The Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord – his name alone will be worshiped" (Zechariah 14:9).*

### How will Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Messiah as King of the Jews and the Nations?

Revelation 11:15 tells us that when the seventh angel blows his trumpet, heaven will shout: "The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever." **What**

### does the Bible say about those who are in Christ, the King of Kings?

*"The Lord has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music" (Psalm 98:2-4).*

**Reflections:** Hosea 3:4-5 helps us understand the delayed timing of the coming King. "*The Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods. <sup>5</sup> Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings in the last days.*" This waiting period is because Jesus is following the pattern set by David of waiting to be invited to reign as King. "*All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'We are your own flesh and blood. <sup>2</sup> In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, "You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler."*" <sup>3</sup> *When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel" (2 Samuel 5:1-3).* In Matthew 23:37-39 Jesus tells Jerusalem they will not see him again until they say, "*Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*"

Like David, Jesus is waiting to return as King of Kings until every tribe on earth recognizes that he is the Good Shepherd and invites him to be their King. This plan was prophesied in Isaiah 65:1. "*I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, 'Here am I, here am I.'*" In Matthew 24:14 Jesus says, "*the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.*" As we fulfill the great commission, we put feet to our prayer for God's kingdom to come!

## Day 23: Lord of Heaven's Armies

In Genesis 3:15, God cursed the serpent and declared, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel"* (Genesis 3:15). Thus began a war between the adversary, Satan, and the family of Jacob (which means "heel") through whom the offspring would come to crush the serpent's head. When Jesus returns, he will wage the final war and crush Satan. Jesus follows the pattern of David who was first shepherd, warrior, then king.

### What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Lord of Heaven's Armies?

*"In that day the LORD will punish the gods in the heavens and the proud rulers of the nations on earth. <sup>22</sup> They will be rounded up and put in prison. They will be shut up in prison and will finally be punished. <sup>23</sup> Then the glory of the moon will wane, and the brightness of the sun will fade, for the LORD of Heaven's Armies will rule on Mount Zion. He will rule in great glory in Jerusalem"* (Isaiah 24:21-23).

After revealing the coming king, riding on a donkey, Zechariah 9:14-15 says, *"Then the Lord will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign Lord will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, <sup>15</sup> and the Lord Almighty will shield them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones. They will drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar. <sup>16</sup> The Lord their God will save his people on that day as a shepherd saves his flock."*

*"Then the Lord will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. <sup>4</sup> On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem... Then the Lord my God will come, and all his holy ones with him" (Zechariah 14:3-5).*

### How will Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Messiah who fights for Israel and crushes Satan?

John sees the fulfillment of Zechariah 14: *"Then I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him were 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads" (Revelation 14:1).*

John then sees the victorious Jesus crush the enemy: *"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. <sup>13</sup> He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. <sup>14</sup> The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup> Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Revelation 19:11-16).*

### What does the Bible say about who we are as overcomers in Christ, the Lord of Heaven's Armies?

*"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. <sup>4</sup> We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments" (2 Corinthians 10:3-4). "For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm" (Ephesians 6:12-13).*

**Reflections:** Revelation 20 reveals that when Jesus returns, he will crush Satan and remove all rebellion.

## Day 24: Prince of Peace

*“For unto us a child is born...and his name shall be called...Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).*

### **What does the Old Testament say about the Messiah as the Prince of Peace?**

*“Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey—riding on a donkey’s colt.<sup>10</sup> I will remove the battle chariots from Israel and the warhorses from Jerusalem. I will destroy all the weapons used in battle, and your king will bring peace to the nations. His realm will stretch from sea to sea and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth” (Zechariah 9:9-10).*

Micah 4:3 says that the coming King “will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.”

In Jeremiah 23:5-6 the Lord declares a coming day “when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.<sup>6</sup> In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteous Savior.”

*“In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel.<sup>3</sup> Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire.<sup>5</sup> Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over everything the glory will be a canopy.<sup>6</sup> It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain” (Isaiah 4:2-6).*

### **How will Jesus fulfill the prophecy of the Messiah who brings peace?**

Revelation 12:5 tells us that when Jesus comes again, he “will rule the nations with an iron scepter.” “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4). This is because “The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown” (Revelation 20:10). Hallelujah!

### **What does the Bible say about who we are in Christ, the Prince of Peace?**

In Matthew 21:1-11, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey, a sign he’s the king who brings peace. Yet in Matthew 10:39 Jesus says, “Don’t imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword.” The sword he brought was division over who he is. Until Satan is crushed, and Jesus is revealed, we lack world peace. But Jesus gives us his peace. “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid” (John 14:27). His peace guards our heart and mind as we pray with trust and thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6-7). “God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9).

**Reflections:** The Branch, Jesus, will bring same glory cloud and fire of Numbers 14:14 that led Israel in the wilderness. The word canopy is “chuppah” in Hebrew, the canopy that a Jewish bride and groom are married under. God’s glory is the Bridegroom’s wedding chuppah that covers him and his bride.

## Day 25: A Child is Born

If you read the last book of the Old Testament and then go right into reading Luke 1, you will see how the story of God seamlessly picks up 400 years later with a long-delayed birth of the “Elijah” to come. *“Look! I am sending my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. Then the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies” (Malachi 3:1). “Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord arrives. <sup>6</sup> His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse” (Malachi 4:5). These are the last prophetic words spoken to Israel until Luke 1:13.*

*“The angel said, ‘Don’t be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John. <sup>14</sup> You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or other alcoholic drinks. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will cause those who are rebellious to accept the wisdom of the godly” (Luke 1:13-17).*

Zechariah’s child in old age picks up the theme of the story of Abraham, who also had a child in old age, pointing to the fulfillment of God’s covenant with the descendants of Abraham. John the Baptist’s impossible, delayed birth heralded the long-awaited, impossible birth of the Messiah. Luke 1 tells us that six months later an angel visited the virgin, Mary, to tell her that she would conceive a child who is the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah 7:14, a virgin birth was revealed as a sign of God’s presence with them, for the child in that prophecy was named Immanuel, which means “God with us.”

Luke 2 then tells us the miraculous story of Jesus’ birth. *“That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terrified, <sup>10</sup> but the angel reassured them. ‘Don’t be afraid!’ he said. ‘I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. <sup>11</sup> The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! <sup>12</sup> And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.’ <sup>13</sup> Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> ‘Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.’ <sup>15</sup> When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, ‘Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’ <sup>16</sup> They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger” (Luke 2:8-16). Heaven’s armies show up to lead worship!*

Since God fulfilled over 2000 years of promises to send us a Savior, Christ the Lord, we can trust God to keep his promises! Nearly 2000 years later we continue the worship and celebration that began on that glorious night in Bethlehem, proclaiming Jesus’ birth, death, and resurrection until he comes again.

*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this” (Isaiah 9:6-7). Oh come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*