



THE BLAZING TRAIL
VOLUME 3
Jesus' Earthly Life

THE BLAZING TRAIL

VOLUME 3

Jesus' Earthly Life

CONTENTS

page 1 of 5

Welcome.....	7
RESCUE PLAN LAID DOWN FROM AGES PAST	7
INCREDIBLE COST.....	8
THE SON'S LONELY TRIAL OF REJECTION AND SUFFERING	9
THE FATHER'S INCOMPREHENSIBLE GIFT	9
FATHER'S AND SON'S BONDING LOVE.....	10
THE SON'S BONDING TO OUR CREATED HUMANITY	11
DIVIDING EARTH'S HISTORIC TIMES – B C – A D.....	11
SON OF GOD CONCEIVED INTO HUMAN LIFE.....	12
SON OF GOD AND SON OF MAN	12
JESUS INHERITS THE FALLEN HUMAN NATURE.....	12
FALLEN NATURE NOT THE SUBSTANCE OF SIN	13
A DUAL NATURE	13
AMAZING ASPECT OF JESUS' TESTED CHARACTER	14
ALL POINTS TEMPTED BY SIN	14
JESUS RESTORES GOD'S TRANSGRESSED LAW.....	15
THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' EARTHLY LIFE	15
JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM.....	16
JESUS KNOCKS UPON THE DOORS TO OUR HEARTS	17
TIDINGS OF GOOD NEWS.....	17
JESUS' LIFE THREATENED.....	18

CONTENTS

page 2 of 5

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT	19
DIVINE EDUCATION	19
ABOUT HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS	20
JESUS 'YOUTHFUL YEARS	20
JESUS' ADULT LIFE	21
NAZARETH'S DEPRAVITY	21
UNCONDITIONAL LOVE	22
JESUS' SPIRIT OF RIGHTEOUS LIFE	22
CLOSING THE CARPENTRY DOOR	22
JESUS' BAPTISM.....	23
THE FATHER'S CONFIRMING VOICE.....	23
BAPTIZED INTO JESUS' DEATH.....	24
JESUS' BAPTISM OF SUFFERING	24
FASTING FORTY DAYS	25
MIND-TO-MIND DUEL	25
ROUND TWO	26
ROUND THREE	26
FILLED WITH SPIRITUAL POWER.....	27
PREACHER-TEACHER-HEALER	27
MIRROR IMAGE OF THE FATHER.....	28
DEMONS CAST FROM PEOPLE'S LIVES	29

CONTENTS

page 3 of 5

JESUS CHOOSES TWELVE DISCIPLES	29
THE DISCIPLES' MINISTRY.....	30
THE ETERNAL REWARD	31
JESUS TEACHES PARABLES	31
THE COMMON SPARROW	32
THE LOST SHEEP	33
LIGHT OF THE WORLD.....	33
A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE FOUR GOSPELS.....	33
JESUS' MIRACULOUS PROVISIONS.....	34
THE SINKING BOAT	34
RISING FROM THE DEAD	34
HEALING ON THE SABBATH.....	35
LOVE AND SPIRIT OF GOD'S LAW.....	36
THE SECRET MEETING.....	36
THE MEETING FROM HEAVEN.....	37
TEARS OF SADNESS	37
A SPIRITUAL CROWNING	37
OUR END TIMES	38
AN ENDLESS SPIRITUAL LANDSCAPE	39
JESUS LIFE THREATENED	39
LEADING TOWARD THE CROSS.....	40

CONTENTS

page 4 of 5

JESUS FOREWARNS HIS DISCIPLES	41
THE CONTRAST.....	41
JESUS' HOUR.....	42
A TRAITOR'S DEAL.....	42
THE LAST PASSOVER.....	43
THE MEMORIAL OF JESUS' DEATH IN NEW TESTAMENT ERA	44
JESUS' INTERCESSORY PRAYER FOR HIS DISCIPLES	45
INTO GETHSEMANE.....	46
WORLD'S SIN LAID UPON JESUS.....	46
STRIVING AGAINST SIN	47
THE ARREST.....	48
A MOCK TRIAL	48
ROME'S JUDGMENT	49
TO THE CRUCIFIXION CROSS.....	51
NAILED UPON THE CROSS.....	52
THE TWO CRIMINALS	52
RAISED UP BEFORE OUR WORLD	53
JESUS 'SUFFERING THOUGHTS.....	54
MARY AT THE CROSS.....	54
THE DARK FORCE ATTACKS.....	55
DARKNESS CLOUDS THE CROSS.....	55

CONTENTS

page 5 of 5

BEARING OUR ETERNAL DEATH SEPARATION	56
RANSOM PRICE PAID IN FULL.....	57
JESUS' EXPIRING BREATH OF LIFE.....	57
AN END TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SYSTEM OF ANIMAL SACRIFICE	57
JESUS' EVERLASTING LEGACY OF ENDURING LOVE.....	58
DIED OF A BROKEN HEART	59
JESUS' BLOOD DISCOVERED UPON THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.....	60
The Blazing Trail Volume 1-7.....	65



WELCOME

Welcome to Volume 3 of *The Blazing Trail*. We begin this volume by trekking back in time, to where and when God the Father and His only begotten Son lay down spiritual plans for their rescue mission to Planet Earth. Then venturing down their rescue trail to our fallen world we behold the Son of God's human birth and His maturing years of earthly life. At age 30, Jesus leaves His carpentry trade and begins His miraculous ministry among the multitudes.

But not all accept Jesus' wonderful works of restoring grace. Soon malicious enemies arise and scheme to put Jesus to death. And so Jesus' three and a half years of healing and teaching comes to a horrendous close when He is executed upon Rome's crucifixion cross.

Yet all this spiritual warfare, raging in the midst of the Father's and Son's rescue mission, is foreseen and foretold by Them from ages past.

RESCUE PLAN LAID DOWN FROM AGES PAST

Standing in the midst of eternal time, God the Father and His only begotten Son behold the past, present and future as one motion of life. *"Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done..." Isaiah 46:10*

And so Satan's evil invasion of Planet Earth, and Adam's and Eve's fall to sin in Eden's paradise garden is not a surprise to Father and Son, but foreseen by them from past ages of eternity. Yet while beholding this foreboding future on Planet Earth, evil will not be permitted to stranglehold God's creation plan, or to stop His free will of choice to further create.

And neither will God withhold free will of choice from humanity, but shall gift a mind with reasoning power to govern each individual's destiny of life. And so with all-encompassing power God does not permit evil to sabotage His universal sovereignty.

"How awesome are Your works! Through the greatness of Your power Your enemies shall submit themselves to You." Psalm 66:3 - "He rules by His power forever; His eyes observe the nations; Do not let the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah." Psalm 66:7 - "God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God." Psalm 62:11

And so Father and Son shall shoulder the greater responsibility to remedy humanity's sinful choice. With merciful love for lost humanity, Father and Son meet in divine council and map out a future rescue mission to Planet Earth.

Engaging the demonic dark force in spiritual warfare, they shall ransom back sinful humanity from Satan's evil rule and reclaim humanity's lost dominion over earth's fallen world. *"For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; From heaven the LORD viewed the earth, To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To release those appointed to death..." Psalm 102:19-20* - *"...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus **before time began...**"* 2 Timothy 1:9 - *"He indeed was **foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you..."* 1 Peter 1:20 - *"...in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised **before time began...**"* Titus 1:2

INCREDIBLE COST

Yet the ransom price to free human lives from sin cannot be made in mere silver or gold, but only in a down payment of sinless life-giving blood, shed in sacrificial death. *"...For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul."* Leviticus 17:11 - *"...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* 1 Peter 1:19

Yes, a sinless death in place of a sinner's death is the asking price to pardon sinful human lives and release them from their condemnation of God's transgressed law.

And even more astounding, to meet the law's divine claim upon sinful human life, this entails nothing less than a divine sacrifice blended with a sinless human life.

This means to rescue the fallen human race there is only one divine and human answer, and that is the divine life of the Father's only begotten Son blended in human life. The one and only Lamb of the divine flock, *"...as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* 1 Peter 1:19

And so at an inestimable cost to Father and Son, heart-to-heart with His Father, the Son of God pledges His divine life to pay the ransom price to buy back sinful human kind. *"For you were bought at a price..."* 1 Corinthians 6:2 - *"...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."* Matthew 20:28 - *"He indeed was **foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you..."* 1 Peter 1:20

THE SON'S LONELY TRIAL OF REJECTION AND SUFFERING

Yet, Fatherly sadness overflows from the Father's grieving heart, that for the first time in their divine relationship His one and only beloved Son shall leave their heavenly abode and descend into the lowest depths of humanity's degrading sin. Immersed in humanity's sinful woes, the Son of God shall walk a rescue trail of sorrow and suffering ending in torturous death.

Yes, the Father knows the masses will reject His Son as the promised Messiah, and lonely days will follow lonely nights, until the Son is forsaken by all. – *“He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.” John 1:11* – *“He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” Isaiah 53:3*

“For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet...” Psalm 22:16 – *“...one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear...” John 19:34* – *“...then they will look on Me whom they pierced...” Zechariah 12:10* – *“And one will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’” Zechariah 13:6* – *“My delights were with the sons of men.” Proverbs 8:31* – *“See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands...” Isaiah 49:16* – *“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” John 12:32* – *“...having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” John 13:1*

And so unto the end, heart-to-heart, soul-to-soul, manifesting Their unconditional love, Father and Son will ascend the dark mount of humanity's amassed sin, and They know upon Calvary's deathly cross They will pay the ultimate sacrifice to deliver our sinful human lives. – *“...The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, ‘In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided.’” Genesis 22:14*

THE FATHER'S INCOMPREHENSIBLE GIFT

Yet foreseeing all this fierce conflict waged upon His beloved Son, the Father spares not His Son but delivers Him up to rescue our sinful unworthy lives. The Father does what He must do and lays upon His innocent Son all of humanity's deathly sins. Yes, yours and mine: A selfless giving of His precious Son, exceeding all human comprehension.

Indeed, we can only bow before our Father God in humble gratitude and with reciprocal love flowing from our being, thank Him for His most precious gift, the giving of His only begotten Son in place of our sinful lives.

“Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” 2 Corinthians 9:15 – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John 3:16-17* – *“He who did*

not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32

"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." John 4:9-10 – "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. Isaiah 53:10 – "All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6 – "For God is my King from of old, Working salvation in the midst of the earth." Psalm 74:12

FATHER'S AND SON'S BONDING LOVE

Soon to be separated by a sprawling gulf of cosmic space, parting emotions ripple upon the Father's and Son's spiritual relationship.

Through ages of eternity, Father and Son have shared close companionship. Life-to-life, divinity-to-divinity, spirit-to-spirit, heart-to-heart, mind-to-mind, soul-to-soul, *"I and My Father are one." John 10:30*

One in close divinity of life, one in close emotion of bonding love. *"...God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16 – All the while God the Father showers His Fatherly love upon His only begotten Son. - "...the Son of His love..." Colossians 1:13 – "...the firstborn over all creation." Colossians 1:15*

"The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father..." John 1:18 – "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand." John 3:35 -- "My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased!" Matthew 12:18 – "And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" Luke 9:35

Such is the Father's love, rejoicing over His only begotten Son. All the while the Son of God rejoices over His spiritual relationship with His Father God:

*"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before His works of old. **I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.** When there were no depths, **I was brought forth**; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills **was I brought forth**: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, **I was there**: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth: When He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: When He gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: **Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and My delights were with the sons***

of men. Now therefore hearken unto Me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep My ways.” Proverbs 8:22–32 KJV

THE SON’S BONDING TO OUR CREATED HUMANITY

Moving down the trail of eternal time to Planet Earth’s beginnings, we meet another extraordinary bonding of love.

Whereupon the sixth day of creation we behold the Son’s divinity bonding to our created humanity. For as the Son of God moulds Adam and Eve into human life, He beholds far down the trail of earthly time, His own self, begotten again in the lowly form of a human being. And so with an emotion of bonding love, with each tender touch of His creative hands deepens His love commitment to rescue the future fallen human race. Yes, even you and I in the days of earth’s closing history.

And so from Eden’s paradise, the Son’s love commitment leads Him onwards, towards the crucifixion cross far in the future. *“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” Mark 10:33–34*

DIVIDING EARTH’S HISTORIC TIMES – B C – A D

Now God’s predestined time arrives. Four millennium BC have descended over Planet Earth’s historic times, and now AD 1 rises with heavenly power.

“...when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman...” Galatians 4:4

“...who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:6–8

At the footstool of His Father’s throne, the Son of God lays down His co-sceptre of universal rule. Now Father and Son are about to embark upon the greatest rescue mission of all universal time. And this is where our limited human minds attempt to grasp the Son’s miraculous incarnation. Becoming Jesus Christ, the Son’s divine life blended with full human life, a spiritual phenomenon that all universal life gazes upon with exceeding wonder.

“...His name is called The Word of God.” Revelation 19:13 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.” John 1:1–2 – “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His

glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14

“Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.” Hebrews 10:7 - “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 6:38

SON OF GOD CONCEIVED INTO HUMAN LIFE

Sent by God, the angel Gabriel leaves heaven’s paradise on perhaps the greatest mission of his life. You may know Gabriel is now the angelic leader over the heavenly host, replacing Lucifer’s fallen life.

“...the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!’ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.’ Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.’” Luke 1:26–35

SON OF GOD AND SON OF MAN

Begotten the second time of His Father’s divine spirit, the Son remains the divine “...Son of God...” Luke 1:35 - while in human life He is also *the* “...Son of Man...” John 8:28 - “Jesus Christ” Romans 1:3 - the God Man, divinity blended with humanity, His humanity interwoven with our humanity forever.

JESUS INHERITS THE FALLEN HUMAN NATURE

Now we come to a mysterious question. In human life was Jesus any different compared with us today? If so what is this difference? Well, exploring an answer, we begin at Jesus’ earthly conception: Like all humans born into our sinful world, upon His conception in Mary’s womb, Jesus receives the sinful flesh of humanity and thus inherits from His mother the fallen human nature, “...**in the likeness of sinful flesh...**” Romans 8:3 - “...Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh...” Romans 1:3. - “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same” Hebrews 2:14 - “**For verily he took not on him**

the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” Hebrews 2:16 KJV - “... in all things He had to be made like His brethren...” Hebrews 2:17

So in this respect, receiving the “...likeness of sinful flesh...” Jesus naturally receives mankind’s nature, the same fallen nature we inherit today. This leads us to the next question: What makes up our human nature?

Simply, our human nature comprises our interconnected being: Our personality, our character, our mind to think, to process thoughts, to reason, to exercise our free will of individual choice. And this nature of entwining life forms our human soul, the spirit of our living being.

But we have seen with Adam’s and Eve’s fall to sin in earths’ beginnings, that the original holy blend of human nature is sabotaged by sin, thus imprinting a compromised inferior condition of human life. In spiritual terms, this fallen condition of human life is referred to as the “fallen human nature” or the “carnal mind” because each of us has mixed propensities towards good and evil. “*For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.*” Romans 7:14

Sadly, this is the living reality of our carnal fallen nature that we inherit at conception. Yet as we will discover further down the blazing trail, supernaturally receiving the spirit of Jesus’ sinless nature there is exceeding hope, freeing us from our imprisonment of the fleshly carnal mind. “*For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*” Romans 8:6

FALLEN NATURE NOT THE SUBSTANCE OF SIN

And so having the inherited chromosomal DNA of fallen human life, is akin to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil planted in our life and also Jesus’ life.

However with this analogy it is important to realise that the inherited fallen nature with mixed propensities toward good and evil is not the actual substance of sin.

The substance of sin occurs when a person, “...*who knows to do good...*” chooses to participate in sin and then becomes what is commonly called a “sinner”. “*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*” James 4:17 – Then clearly, receiving our fallen human nature, Jesus’ conception and developing life is not contaminated nor corrupted by sin, and choosing not to participate in sin He remains completely sinless, holy in mind body and soul. “*And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.*” 1 John 3:5

A DUAL NATURE

Now we explore the unique blending in Jesus’ human nature: Remaining the Son of God, Jesus retains His divine nature inherited from His Father God “...*partakers of the*

divine nature...” 2 Peter 1:4 - And so in blended life, Jesus inherits a dual nature, the holy attributes of God’s divine nature and the mixed propensities of the fallen human nature.

Within this unique blend rages the fierce battle between good and evil, inflicting intensity upon Jesus’ mind, body, and soul – magnitudes more than any human could ever experience. All the while, Satan’s supernatural dark force wages relentless war upon Jesus, hoping to plunge Him into contaminating sin. Throughout the raging conflict, Jesus must fend off all temptations of luring sin, bear the heavy burden of humanity’s sin weighing upon His sinless life, while through the testing ordeal He must remain sinless, holy in character.

AMAZING ASPECT OF JESUS’ TESTED CHARACTER

This leads us to an amazing aspect of Jesus’ tested character, the difference between Jesus’ tested character and Adam’s and Eve’s test of character in Eden’s sinless paradise is profoundly this:

Upon their creation, Adam and Eve receive the holy attributes of God’s divine nature, forming their human nature with only righteous propensities for wholesome Godly living, “...*partakers of the divine nature...*” 2 Peter 1:4 - Whereas 4000 years down the generations of human life, Jesus inherits Adam’s and Eve’s fallen nature with even greater propensities toward good and evil.

And so to emphasise again, fortified by His Father’s indwelling spirit, Jesus must subdue the lurking propensities of the fallen human nature and resist all internal and external temptations to participate in sin. “*Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.’*” John 5:19

ALL POINTS TEMPTED BY SIN

Every moment of Jesus’ life on Planet Earth is leading toward the climactic event of earth’s history, and from childhood to manhood Jesus lives in the same sinful environment as sinful humankind. More so than any human faces in his or her lifetime, Jesus faces multiple layers of tempting sin, “...*was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*” Hebrews 4:15 - Shunning all evil, Jesus remains sinless, pure in mind body, and soul. No hint of sin, no secret thought of sin contaminates Jesus’ faultless Godly life.

“*Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.*” 1 Peter 2:22–23 - “*And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.*” John 3:55

JESUS RESTORES GOD'S TRANSGRESSED LAW

On our sinful behalf, in our sinful place, overcoming the power of sin, Jesus restores God's broken law shattered in our lives. Living the law's holy principles in daily life without hint of transgression, Jesus exalts God's law to its original sacred place of honour. *"The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will exalt the law and make it honorable."* Isaiah 42:21

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:17-19

"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." Psalm 111:7-8 KJV

And so with God's law amended on our sinful behalf, restored and exalted in Jesus' righteous life, He is worthy to take our transgressions upon His sinless life and offer Himself up in our place of death.

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." Romans 8:4 – *"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, **He Himself likewise shared in the same**, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* Hebrews 2:14-15

And so we have gained important insight to Jesus' unique conception and explored the spiritual road map of His rescue mission. Now we are set to walk with Him along the winding trail of His earthly life, leading toward Calvary's cross for our deliverance.

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' EARTHLY LIFE

Mary's pregnancy is nearing full term, and true to prophesied events, Joseph and Mary are predestined to journey to the city of Bethlehem. *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."* Micah 5:2

"And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went

up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.” Luke 2:1-5

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

And so with his betrothed wife resting upon their trusty donkey, Joseph leads the way over the meandering trail toward Bethlehem city. At journey’s end the fading afternoon sun brushes the Judean hills, and the gladdened travellers enter Bethlehem’s welcoming gates. Merging with the hustle and bustle of city life, Joseph searches for lodgings, yet again and again innkeepers utter their sorry reply, there is no spare room tonight. Twilight descends, and with growing concern and a prayer in his heart, Joseph searches yet another hopeful street, but only comes to what seems a hopeless end.

Then miraculously, as if guided by an angel of light, Joseph sees a sign to an inn and a wall with a large wooden door. He knocks, and the door opens wide revealing a muttering innkeeper peering into the shadows of the night.

He beholds Mary beginning in labour and the tired donkey, ears drooped in the dampening dew. Joseph explains their urgent request, that Mary is about to give birth to her first child and needs shelter to rest. Yet again, they hear the same sorry reply, like all innkeepers told before, dashing their hopes once more.

But suddenly, the innkeeper’s face lightens up with heavenly grace. As if struck by a saving thought, he gestures for Joseph to follow and leads all three into the cobbled court. Passing by the water well, they hear muffled voices drifting on the still night air. If only lodgers realised who is about to be born, surely they would give Him their room of sheltering care.

But heaven’s promised gift passes before their slumbering lives as the innkeeper leads Mary, Joseph and donkey to a stable nearby. His guiding hand unlatches the weather-beaten door and the animals housed within stir with a chorus of welcoming calls. And so the travelers, weary and worn, enter the smelly stable embedded with straw and in this lowly earthy place, Jesus Christ our Saviour is born.

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.” Matthew 1:18–21 – “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12 - “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name

Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.' Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS."Matthew 1:23-25

"And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:7 – Yes, sadly leaving a stain upon earth's spiritual landscape, the bottom line shall always remain that upon Jesus' earthly birth, slumbering humanity has no room to receive Him. And what of our times today, has slumbering human life no room to receive Jesus into their lives?

JESUS KNOCKS UPON THE DOORS TO OUR HEARTS

Far into the dark night of sin, Jesus searches the byways and highways of our slumbering world, tenderly knocking upon humanity's heart door, longing to be invited within. For you see, Jesus' heart's desire is to share His spiritual bread of nourishing life with us, His own spiritual life. *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20 – "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' Then they said to Him, 'Lord, give us this bread always.' And Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.'" John 6:33-35*

TIDINGS OF GOOD NEWS

Yet upon Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, not all humanity is slumbering in complacent sleep; humble shepherds watching over their flocks by night are wide awake to the prophetic times they are living in, earnestly looking for the coming of the promised saviour.

"Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'" Luke 2:8-14

JESUS' LIFE THREATENED

From the manger in Bethlehem, Jesus grows in infancy but soon His fledging life is threatened by King Herod.

Herod learns from three wise men travelling from the east, that the destined King of Israel is born in their midst. The Jewish King believes Jesus' kingdom is to be an earthly kingdom and therefore a rising threat to Herod's ruling throne. And so in league with Satan, stirred by his cruel power, Herod plans to murder the Son of God. *"...And the dragon (Satan) stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born." Revelation 12:4*

Secretly meeting with the wise men from the east, Herod parades a false impression that He wishes to worship Jesus as the destined King over Israel, but deathly malice seethes in Herod's scheming heart.

"Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.' When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way." Matthew 2:7-12

Meanwhile Jesus' vulnerable infant life remains in fearful danger - *"...behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.'" Matthew 2:13*

"Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more.'" Matthew 2:16-18

Such is the horrific massacre staining New Testament beginnings with innocent blood. In various ways, innocent bloodshed is enacted again and again through mass genocide of earth's populations even to our very day. And so with the deliverance of our lost world swaying in the balance between life and death, Jesus' infant life is divinely delivered from King Herod's death decree. Exiled from their homeland, the Jewish family dwells safely in the foreign land of Egypt.

“...and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Out of Egypt I called My Son.’” Matthew 2:15 – “Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ‘Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are dead.’ Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, ‘He shall be called a Nazarene.’” Matthew 2:19–23

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Living in Nazareth, Jesus grows through His tender years of childhood.

“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant...” Isaiah 53:1

Eventually, children are born to Joseph’s and Mary’s sacred marriage, and so the family environment grows. Now with His half brothers and half sisters Jesus lives in a blended family.

“...the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” Mark 6:3

Being the Son of God’s divinity and the Son of humanity also, Jesus is uniquely different from His half brothers and half sisters. At times, Jesus is misunderstood and scorned by those around Him. But His compassionate heart forgives every grievous word spoken against Him. *“For even His brothers did not believe in Him.” John 7:5 - “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” Luke 23:34*

With eager hands and a ready smile, Jesus helps in the family home, setting a Godly example before His younger siblings. *“For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” John 13:15*

DIVINE EDUCATION

Avoiding Jewish rabbinical schooling, Jesus is schooled in the home environment and out in the fields of nature. *“The works of the LORD are great, Studied by all who have pleasure in them.” Psalm 111:2*

Yet above all, Jesus is educated by His Father’s divine spirit, and watched over by ministering angels. And so Jesus receives spiritual lessons far beyond lessons any human education could ever provide, *“...not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” 1 Corinthians*

2:13 – Today, we too can receive divine schooling through Jesus’ spirit of educating life. Yes, even you and me.

All the while, day-by-day, Jesus grows in profound knowledge and strength of character. *“And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.” Luke 2:40 – “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” Luke 2:52*

ABOUT HIS FATHER’S BUSINESS

Reaching age 12, accompanied by His parents, *“...they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.” Luke 2:42*

At the end of the feast, beginning their homeward journey to Nazareth, Joseph and Mary discover Jesus is absent, *“...supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day’s journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, ‘Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.’” And He said to them, ‘Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?’” Luke 2:44-49*

And so more and more, Jesus grows in the realisation that in spiritual life, He truly is the Son of His Father’s divinity. *“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily...” Colossians 2:9 – “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell...” Colossians 1:19 – “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself...” John 5:26 – “I and My Father are one.” John 10:30 – One in holy thought and purpose of divine life. – “As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father...” John 10:15 – “For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does...” John 5:20*

JESUS ‘YOUTHFUL YEARS

Maturing through His youthful years, Jesus’ Godly life declares His Father God in ways never heard or seen before. For many Nazarenes, Jesus’ witnessing life is their first true glimpse of God the Father, the one true God. *“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” John 1:18*

While meeting with people from all circumstances of life, Jesus shares a kindly word, uplifting the downcast and the outcast to a higher hope of restoring life. *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45 – “For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.”*

Matthew 18:11 - "The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary." Isaiah 50:4 - "...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10

JESUS' ADULT LIFE

Entering the working lot of adult life, Jesus joins His stepfather Joseph in the carpentry trade. *"Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary..." Mark 6:3*

Soon the fame of Jesus' exemplary craftsmanship migrates over the Galilean landscape and into the regions beyond. Yet few people realise that Jesus' carpentry skills bear the divine imprint of the master craftsmen, the Son of God, co-creator of the intricate universe.

And so items crafted by Jesus' divine, human hands are of inestimable value, a buyer's grand prize. All the while, always fair and just in His business transactions, Jesus' integrity captures the respect of His clients and many begin to marvel and wonder about this fine young man. Yet another extraordinary theme of Jesus' life is apparent in Nazareth: As Jesus' peers strive for worldly wealth and worldly applause, Jesus gives freely of His wealth, humbly providing for the poverty-stricken, those in need of shelter and life sustaining food. *"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38 - "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark 8:36-37*

NAZARETH'S DEPRAVITY

Living among Nazareth's depraved society, Jesus often encounters the dark side of life. *"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" John 1:46*

Sustaining a clear mind to choose that which is holy of God, and that which is morally and ethically right between fellow humans, Jesus partakes of a healthy temperate diet. *"Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." Isaiah 7:15 -* While in daily life Jesus lives a balanced lifestyle, promoting health of His mind, body and soul, the human temple created by God. *"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are." 1 Corinthians 3:16-17*

And so abhorrence of sin runs deep in Jesus' sinless life, while His living example of true Godliness draws all classes of people into a greater hope of eternal life. *"And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:40 - "And this is the*

testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” 1 John 5:11-12

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Mingling with diverse nationalities and cultures of the east, there is no hint of racism, no taint of bigotry in Jesus’ heart of unconditional love; Jesus treats all people equally. *“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.” John 6:37 – “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28 – “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, ‘In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality...’” Acts 10:34*

JESUS’ SPIRIT OF RIGHTEOUS LIFE

Jesus’ spirit filled life manifests a spiritual aura of benevolent goodness. Always humble, polite, kind, gentle, caring, patient, *“...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...” Galatians 5:22 – “...for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth...” Ephesians 5:9*

Yes, each entwining thread of Jesus’ righteous life weaves His spiritual garment of salvation, clothing our naked sinful lives in His merits of saving grace. *“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.” Isaiah 61:10 – “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God...” Ephesians 2:8*

CLOSING THE CARPENTRY DOOR

Reaching the prime of adult life, Jesus answers His heavenly Father’s call to minister among the multitudes, all people of differing race and culture. *“I will keep You and give You as covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.” Isaiah 42:6-8*

“Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age...” Luke 3:23 – “...for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10 – “I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.” John 10:14-15

For the final time, Jesus closes the door to the carpentry shop; His robe, and sandals being His only earthly possessions. Although co-creator and co-owner of our world, in humble earthly life Jesus has no place to call His own.

“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.” Matthew 8:20

JESUS' BAPTISM

Venturing into the languishing world, Jesus joins the bustling crowd on their way to the river Jordan.

At the riverside, Jesus beholds the rugged form of his cousin John preaching his startling message, pointing toward the promised Messiah. *“This is he of whom it is written: ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.’” Luke 7:27* – *“Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.” Matthew 3:5–6* – being baptized by John *“...clothed with camel’s hair and with a leather belt around his waist...” Mark 1:6* – The people are submerged in the flowing river where their sins are symbolically washed from their lives.

“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” Acts 22:16

Now the Spirit of God speaks to John, and looking up he beholds Jesus the Messiah, the divine promised One who is to come into the world. Raising his hand toward Jesus and his voice ringing with the Spirit of God, John cries aloud to the unsuspecting crowd. *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29* - The one and only precious lamb of the Father’s divine flock – *“...a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:19* - All eyes turn toward Jesus but they only see what they perceive to be a very ordinary man.

“For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.” Isaiah 53:2

Jesus enters the Jordan’s water flow, for baptism. Of course, Jesus has no sin to wash from His clean, sinless life.

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him.” Matthew 3:13–15 – And so Jesus is baptized leaving us an example for the washing away of our confessed sin.

THE FATHER’S CONFIRMING VOICE

“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a

dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'” Matthew 3:16-17

Receiving His Father’s spiritual manifestation of confirming love, now anointed with His Father’s spirit of ministerial power, Jesus is publically ordained to begin His global ministry even to our day. *“Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; And in His name Gentiles will trust.”* Matthew 12:18–21

While rippling beyond the river Jordan, Jesus’ baptism foreshadows His coming death and resurrection to victorious life in which we are spiritually baptized.

BAPTIZED INTO JESUS’ DEATH

When submerged under water in baptism , the spiritual manifestation is that we are buried with Jesus in His death. And as we emerge from the water, we rise in His merits of newborn spiritual life. *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:3–11

JESUS’ BAPTISM OF SUFFERING

“I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!” Luke 12:50

Jesus second baptism, is a baptism of mind, body and soul, of suffering and distress in place of our punishment for sin: Bearing our shame and our guilt to the cross of sacrificial death, and submerged in the depth of our everlasting death, then emerging in everlasting life, *“...endured the cross, despising the shame...”* Hebrews 12:2 - *“...that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.”* Hebrews 2:9 - *“This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ...”* 1 John 5:6 - And so at the Jordan, Jesus’ baptism of baptisms begins, bearing our deathly sins to the cross. *“For Christ also suffered once*

for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God...” 1 Peter 3:18 - “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!” Luke 12:50

FASTING FORTY DAYS

Before Jesus enters His restoring ministry of hope among the destitute multitude, He must first pass over fierce testing ground defended and challenged by Satan.

From the river Jordan, God’s Spirit leads Jesus into the desert wilderness roamed by, “...wild beasts...” *Mark 1:13*. - Forty days and nights Jesus fasts from food, and now weak to the point of starvation, Jesus’ emaciated body is craving sustenance to remain alive. – “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.” *Matthew 4:1-2* – “My knees are weak through fasting, And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness. Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men...” *Psalm 109:24*

MIND-TO-MIND DUEL

Now alone in this desolate, howling wilderness, Jesus is about to face a mind-to-mind duel with Satan. Masquerading in a false guise of benevolent light, Satan appears on the barren landscape. “For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.” *2 Corinthians 11:14*

And so Satan’s battle for Jesus’ soul begins. With subtle temptations, Satan hopes to entice Jesus into presumptuous sin, severing His life line to His Father. Wielding the little word “if” as his weapon of doubt, Satan challenges Jesus’ divine relationship with His Father. “***If You are the Son of God...***” Satan’s age-old quest to undermine Jesus’ literal Son-ship with God the Father continues, even to our day in the 21st century.

“And the devil said to Him, ‘*If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.*’ But Jesus answered him, saying, ‘It is written, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*”’” *Luke 4:3-4*

Fortified by God’s word of truth, Jesus fends off Satan’s false gospel of lies, whereas long ago in Eden’s paradise garden Adam and Eve failed to trust in God’s word of truth.

Had Adam and Eve truly lived “...by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” *Matthew 4:4*, they would not have eaten of the deathly fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. And so upon this second contesting ground between good and evil, on sinful humanity’s behalf, Jesus is victorious over the tempting sin of indulging appetite. Round One goes to Jesus.

ROUND TWO

Satan rallies for another deceitful attack.

Now masquerading as if he were supreme God over the universe, Satan spreads before Jesus an alluring panorama of earth's kingdoms: Global nations falsely embellished with great wealth and glory, perfect in holiness with no hint of evil, no need of a liberating Deliverer, as if Jesus is somehow deluded about His rescue mission. *"Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.'" Luke 4:5-7*

Another of Satan's age old quests: Masquerading as a phantom person of the Godhead, seeking to rob worship due only to God, and enthrone his satanic self over and above the one true God. *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* John 17:3

Remember, whom you worship is to whom you give your allegiance.

If Jesus should bow before Satan and worship him, the contest between good and evil shall be over, won by Satan forever. Jesus' rightful claim to Planet Earth shall be forfeited to Satan's evil rule forever. Then the lost world shall be Satan's kingdom forever. Lost humanity shall remain in Satan's bondage forever. Such is the decisive moment at hand. But in a flash of power Jesus draws *"...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God..." Ephesians 6:17*

And before Jesus' discerning eyes, Satan's magical powers of illusion vanish in an empty mirage. *"And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"* Luke 4:8

Round Two goes to Jesus, *"...it is written."*

ROUND THREE

Now Round Three begins in the mind-to-mind duel between good and evil.

Satan's sinister aim is to cause Jesus to commit spiritual suicide, and in the same instant to end his physical life. *"Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered and said to him, 'It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time." Luke 4:9-13*

“...the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.” John 14:30 - “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” Luke 10:18 - “...because the ruler of this world is judged.” John 16:11

As Satan slinks away utterly defeated, a heavenly light borne of ministering angels radiates over the wilderness landscape and envelops Jesus’ emaciated body, imparting the Father’s spiritual balm: Jesus is revitalized in mind, body and soul. *“Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.” Matthew 4:9-11*

FILLED WITH SPIRITUAL POWER

And now having wrestled and overcome Satan in the mind-to-mind duel, Jesus treks from the wilderness into the spiritual frontier of our fallen world. Now manifesting His Father’s reigning power, Jesus begins His gospel ministry to free souls from their bondage to sin.

“Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.’ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.’ So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, ‘Is this not Joseph’s son?’” Luke 4:14-22

“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As raindrops on the tender herb, And as showers on the grass.” Deuteronomy 32:1-2

PREACHER-TEACHER-HEALER

Now Jesus is preacher, teacher, and miracle healer traversing the highways and byways of eastern lands. Entering villages, towns and cities, Jesus proclaims the good news of God’s love to deliver lost souls from their defilement of sin. From every direction of life, the young, the old, mothers with babes in their arms, flock to Jesus’ side to receive His blessings of restoring life. *“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.” - “...And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.” Mark 10:14-16*

Jesus' gracious words of merciful love enlivens the spiritual emotions of hearts, minds, and souls, and many believe in God the Father's saving power to deliver from sin. *"I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.' I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness In the great assembly; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your loving kindness and Your truth From the great assembly."* Psalm 40:8-10

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan." Matthew 4:23-25

Receiving Jesus' healing touch, the sick are healed of their disease, the crippled rise to their feet and walk, the eyes of the blind are opened to behold sight. Lepers cast out from society are miraculously healed and reunited with family and friends. Even more startling, with resurrection power, Jesus raises the dead to life. Like a pebble cast upon a still pond, rippling the surface water, God's compassionate love ripples throughout the landscape of suffering humanity, restoring souls with newborn spiritual life.

"And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick." Matthew 14:14 - *"...and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities."* Luke 5:15 - *"...that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses.'" Matthew 8:17*

"Wherever He entered into villages, cities, or in the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well." Mark 6:56

"...the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed." Luke 5:15-16

MIRROR IMAGE OF THE FATHER

Communing with His Father in fervent prayer for the lost, the Father's compassionate love flows from Jesus' prayerful life in healing miracles. All the while, those awakened to spiritual truth behold in Jesus' life the mirror image of His Father's divine life. *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."* John 1:18 - *"...He who has seen Me has seen the Father..."* John 14:9 - *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."* John 1:14

“Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.’”
John 5:19–20

DEMONS CAST FROM PEOPLE’S LIVES

As Jesus’ ministry advances in spiritual warfare against the dark force of evil, He is confronted by demon spirits possessing human lives. At Jesus’ commanding word, demons are cast out from imprisoned lives, releasing suffering souls from Satan’s dungeons of torment.

“Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One, of God!’ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ‘Be quiet, and come out of him!’ And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, ‘What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.’” Luke 4:33–36

“And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, ‘You are the Son of God.’” Mark 3:11 – *“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe- and tremble!”* James 2:19

“And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.”
Luke 6:17–19

JESUS CHOOSES TWELVE DISCIPLES

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve He also named apostles...” Luke 6: 12–1

“Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, ‘Sons of Thunder’; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.” Mark 3:14–19

Some of these chosen men are rugged individuals, uneducated in the scholarly teachings of Judaism but well-schooled in circumstantial lessons of daily life. There is the impetuous fishermen Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. And the fiery-tempered fishing partners James and John, *“to whom He (Jesus) gave the name Boanerges, that is, ‘Sons of Thunder’...”* Mark 3:17

“And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’ They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.” Mark 1:16-20

Then there is *“...Thomas who is called the twin...”* John 11:16 and *“...Matthew the tax collector...”* Matthew 10:3, and the notorious rogue *“...Judas Iscariot...”* who lives a secretive life, thieving money from the ministerial purse, dedicated to support the gospel message. – *“...because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.”* John 12:6 - Sadly Judas’ downward spiral of theft becomes his end demise, betraying his master for the love of money.

THE DISCIPLES’ MINISTRY

Answering Jesus’ call to the gospel ministry, the disciples leave their livelihoods, and lay down their lives, to proclaim the liberating message of Jesus Christ, their Lord and Master. All have their faults and failings, but bonding with Jesus in close fellowship and receiving His refining tuition, the disciples’ characters are gradually transformed into Jesus’ likeness.

In a few short years Jesus shall return to heaven, while the disciples are destined to become apostolic leaders of the first Christian church. *“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.”* Acts 4:13

“Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And He said to them, ‘Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.’ So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.” Luke 9:1-6

THE ETERNAL REWARD

On their gospel journeys, the disciple's daily needs are supplied by God's providential provisions, lacking nothing in their lives. Jesus asks of His disciples. *"When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?"* So they said, *'Nothing.'* Luke 22:35 - At another place, another time another conversation - *"...Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?'"* So Jesus said to them, *'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.'* Matthew 19:27-30

JESUS TEACHES PARABLES

Jesus teaches saving knowledge in spiritual parables – simple stories that all people of different ages, different learning and different cultures might understand and thus receive spiritual truth. *"All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.'"* Matthew 13:34-35 – *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."* John 6:63

"Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As raindrops on the tender herb, And as showers on the grass." Deuteronomy 32:1-2 – *"He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing: Like showers that water the earth."* Psalm 72:6

Multitudes from all walks of life, listen intently to Jesus' educating parables, and learn of God's spiritual kingdom that resides in the human temple of mind, body and soul. *"The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."* Luke 17:20-21

"Then He said, 'To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.' And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it. But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples." Mark 4:30-34

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

“Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

“Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” Matthew 6:19-34 - “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

THE COMMON SPARROW

“Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” Luke 12:6-7

The common sparrow is quite prolific in Jesus' day, nesting in nooks and crannies of residential buildings lining the city, town and village streets. But the prolific number of sparrows become their deathly demise, as flocks of sparrows are driven into nets and once captured become affordable food for poorer families.

And so before His astonished listeners, Jesus points to the common sparrow, seemingly having no great value of life and yet not one fallen sparrow is forgotten by God. Then how greater the value of each human being made in God's likeness of divine life. *"Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows"* Luke 12:7

THE LOST SHEEP

"So He spoke this parable to them, saying: 'What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!" I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.'" Luke 15:3-7

"Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young." Isaiah 40:10-11

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

"Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.'" Matthew 4:12-16 – "I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'" Isaiah 49:6 – "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.'" John 8:12

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE FOUR GOSPELS

What we have seen of Jesus' ministry is only a small glimpse. Recorded in the four gospels, called the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we behold so much more.

Please set aside time to open the gospel pages and walk beside Jesus into the Palestinian countryside and beyond.

JESUS' MIRACULOUS PROVISIONS

In a deserted place, join the gathered thousands and rest upon the green carpeted grass to hear Jesus speak words of spiritual life - *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."* John 6:63

As the day draws to a close, with miraculous amazement the gathered thousands partake of Jesus' provision of food, multiplied from a small boy's lunch of five loaves and two fish, feeding *"...five thousand men besides women and children."* Then, perhaps 15,000 people in total, or maybe even more enjoyed the miraculous lunch!

"Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. So they all ate and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men." Mark 6:39-44

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." John 6:47-51

THE SINKING BOAT

Sail with the disciples in a storm-tossed boat, and hear Jesus' commanding voice of peace calm the raging waters. *"Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.' And they launched out. But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. But He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, 'Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!'"* Luke 8:22-25

RISING FROM THE DEAD

Meet with Mary and Martha deeply mourning their brother Lazarus' death. *"Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the*

resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.'" John 11:21-27

"And He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to Him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved him!' And some of them said, 'Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?' Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?' Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, 'Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.' Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come forth!' And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Loose him, and let him go.'" John 11:34-44

And so behold, Jesus calls forth Lazarus to resurrected life; a promised prelude to the great resurrection of the saved at the imminent second coming of Jesus. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

HEALING ON THE SABBATH

On a remarkable seventh day Sabbath, attend a Jewish synagogue with Jesus "...as his custom was..." and behold Him healing a man's withered hand, declaring to the accusing Pharisees that it is spiritually lawful to do that which is good on the Sabbath.

"Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'—that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, 'What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.' Then He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other." Matthew 12:8-13 - And He said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.'" Mark 2:27-28

LOVE AND SPIRIT OF GOD'S LAW

Gather around Jesus while He speaks with a rich young ruler, who keeps the letter of God's law but fails to keep the spirit of God's law and commit all to God in obedient love.

“Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ So Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not bear false witness,” “Honor your father and your mother.”’ And he said, ‘All these things I have kept from my youth.’ So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, ‘You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.’ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ And those who heard it said, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But He said, ‘The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.’” Luke 18:18–27 – “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” John 14:15 – “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” John 14:21 – “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” John 15:10

THE SECRET MEETING

Join Nicodemus on a secretive midnight meeting with Jesus. Listen to the divine teacher explaining how we must be spiritually born again to enter into God's spiritual kingdom.

“There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

“Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, “You must be born again.” The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.’” John 3:1–8 – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

THE MEETING FROM HEAVEN

Climb a high mountain with Jesus, Peter, James, and John and behold Jesus transfigured: Enveloped by His Father's divine presence of glorious light.

Behold Moses and Elijah appearing from heaven, encouraging Jesus for the coming ordeal that leads Him to the execution cross. Once again, hear the Father's comforting voice assuring His beloved Son that He is well pleased with Him, and admonishing us to hear His Son.

"...and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!' Matthew 17:2-5

TEARS OF SADNESS

Weep with Jesus as he weeps over Jerusalem city, longing to gather His rebellious people to himself. *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!" Luke 13:34*

A SPIRITUAL CROWNING

Enter Jerusalem's crowded city streets and join the multitude of men, women and children waving palm branches, crying aloud "Hosanna!" as Jesus rides upon a donkey into His spiritual kingdom.

"Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them," and immediately he will send them.' All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'Tell the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'" So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them.

And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Hosanna in the highest!' And when He had come into

Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?' So the multitudes said, 'This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.'" Matthew 21:1-11

OUR END TIMES

Sit with Jesus upon the Mount of Olives, and through His prophetic words behold the end times we are living in today.

"Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?' And Jesus answered and said to them: 'Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.'" Matthew 24:3-14

"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days

of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24: 21 – 39 - “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14:1-3

AN ENDLESS SPIRITUAL LANDSCAPE

Continue on to explore the gospel landscape in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and receive the fullness of Jesus’ spiritual blessings into your life.

“And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.” John 21: 25 - “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” John 20:30-31

JESUS LIFE THREATENED

During this gospel era of good news, not all are rejoicing in Jesus’ restoring ministry. There are those who stalk Jesus every step of His ministry seeking to discredit and destroy His good works.

“Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. And many of them said, ‘He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’” John 10:19–21

Division among the Jews deepens, and now some attempt to stone Jesus to death.

“Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.” John 8:59 - “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.” John 10:31 - “Now some of them from Jerusalem said, ‘Is this not He whom they seek to kill? But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ?’” John 7:25–26

As Jesus’ spiritual charisma draws the multitudes, the religious rulers of Judaism seethe with envy, and galling bitterness deadens their souls. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.” Matthew 23:27

“And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail

Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.”
Luke 11:53-54

“Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk.”
Matthew 22:15 – *“All day they twist my words; All their thoughts are against me for evil.”*
Psalm 56:5

“And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.” Luke 19:47-48

“But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, ‘What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.’ And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, ‘You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.’ Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.”
John 11:46-53

“Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him.” Matthew 26:3-4

“...according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience...” Ephesians 2:2 – *“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”* - 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

LEADING TOWARD THE CROSS

And so upon the closing battle front of three and a half years, Jesus’ extraordinary ministry leads Him towards the execution cross of Rome. Each step of the way, sin-burdened souls weigh heavy upon Jesus’ merciful heart. Seeking spiritual strength, Jesus increasingly retires from the bustle of the pressing multitudes and in earnest prayer communes with His Father God.

“So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” Luke 5:16 - *“Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom*

You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.” John 17:1–8

JESUS FOREWARNS HIS DISCIPLES

Now with His final days before Him, Jesus informs the disciples of His coming betrayal and impending death, “...while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, ‘The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.’ And they were exceedingly sorrowful.” Matthew 17:22–23

Sorrowful at the thought of Jesus’ death, the disciples also think about their own lives - they have left all to follow their Lord. And now their dreams of an exalted future in Jesus’ Kingdom reigning over the world, seem about to end with His unexpected death. Like many Jews at this time, the disciples do not comprehend that Jesus’ Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Because of the Jewish teaching, many still believe Jesus’ kingdom is an earthly kingdom. They think Jesus will be crowned king over Israel ending Rome’s oppressive rule.

THE CONTRAST

And so lately, Jesus’ disciples have been disputing among themselves as to who shall be the greatest in God’s kingdom. “Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, ‘Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.’” Luke 9:46–48

The contrast between the small child and the towering disciples, is astoundingly clear and impressive: The burly fishermen have spent much of their lives dragging in heavy fishing nets from the lakes and sea, their strength and stature overshadow the meek and lowly child. The fishermen’s callused hands speak of toil and hardship worthy of all recognition and praise. And the astute businessmen among them, with a sharp eye for a prosperous deal, eclipse the young child’s inexperience in life. Yet standing before them in his unassuming innocence, the child’s humility beams from his small stature and leaves an imprint of true greatness upon the proud disciple’s lives.

For Jesus says to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever

humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ‘Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.’” Matthew 18:3-5

“Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, ‘The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.’” Luke 17:20-21

JESUS’ HOUR

Now Jesus’ destined hour unfolds in ultimate fulfillment.

“But Jesus answered them, saying, ‘The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? “Father, save Me from this hour”? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.’

“Then a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.’ Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to Him.’ Jesus answered and said, ‘This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.’ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.” John 12:23-33 - “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:14-15

A TRAITOR’S DEAL

Meanwhile, secretly, Judas Iscariot is scheming to sell Jesus out for a lucrative price.

“Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people. Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.” Luke 22:1-6

“... And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.” Matthew 26:15 - “...So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver...that princely price they set on me.” Zechariah 11:12-13

THE LAST PASSOVER

“Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” John 13:1

And so the very last Passover feast is at hand, and again Jesus informs His disciples that soon He shall be crucified. *“You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” Matthew 26:2*

Steeped in Old Testament history, the Passover is a pass over from death, a yearly memorial to the Israelite nation commemorating their freedom from Egyptian bondage.

You may remember when God intervenes to free the Israelite nation from slavery; Pharaoh refuses to let the Israelites go free. And so God sends plagues of judgement to break the king's hold upon the enslaved people. Finally the tenth and final plague brings judgement of death upon the entire first born in all of Egypt.

To protect the first born of His own people, God instructs the Israelites through Moses, to select from their flocks a perfect lamb without blemish. Of course, symbolically the precious lamb without blemish represents Jesus' perfect life of sacrifice. Before the night of impending death at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, each Israelite household kills the symbolic lamb of deliverance.

Then following God's command, the families brush the lamb's shed blood upon the door posts and lintels to the entrances of their home.

At midnight, the plague of death strikes the land of Egypt. Yet death passes over the Israelites' homes that display the lamb's delivering blood and so the first born of Israel are protected and saved. All the while a wail of mourning for the Egyptian dead ascends over the lands, and now with his tyrannical pride broken Pharaoh finally lets the Israelites go free from bondage. And thus, this day becomes one of remembrance for the liberated Israelites, praising God for His delivering power.

“So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.” Exodus 12:14

Over generations of passing time, the Passover memorial foreshadows Jesus' future sacrificial death. For taking our place of death, Jesus becomes our “Passover” from everlasting death: His sinless shed blood delivering us from our bondage of sin, *“... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:18–19*

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.”
Leviticus 17:11

Atonement means making amends for wrong. And so Jesus' shed blood makes atonement for our sin, while His sinless life makes amends for our transgressions of God's law.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4 KJV – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9 – “All unrighteousness is sin...” 1 John 5:17 – “...and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7 – “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” Romans 6:23

Now in New Testament times, Jesus the true Passover lamb, stands in the midst of His people, about to be sacrificed for their sins, that they might apply His delivering atoning blood to their hearts, minds and souls.

THE MEMORIAL OF JESUS' DEATH IN NEW TESTAMENT ERA

And so the last Passover evening arrives. Jesus and His disciples, who are also called apostles, gather in an upper room.

“When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, ‘With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, ‘Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.’ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.’ Luke 22:14–20

This is a pivotal moment in ceremonial history, as Jesus transfers the Old Testament Passover ceremony to the New Testament ceremony, often called the Lord's supper and communion. The apostle Paul of New Testament times states that he also received this ceremonial remembrance from the Lord.

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.” 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.” 1 Corinthians 5:7

JESUS’ INTERCESSORY PRAYER FOR HIS DISCIPLES

Meanwhile facing His torturous trial of death to come, Jesus’ spirit groans within His troubled soul. Yet losing sight of self-preservation, Jesus earnestly looks upon His beloved disciples whom He knows will soon scatter into the darkness of night. And so, Jesus prays an intercessory prayer to preserve the disciple’s own afflicted souls.

“Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

“But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

“Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”
John 17:1–26

INTO GETHSEMANE

“And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him...” John 13:2 - And so as the last Passover supper draws to a solemn close, the disciple Judas slips away to deliver Jesus into the hands of “...the chief priests...” this very night. – *“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.”* Psalm 41:9

Still perplexed at Jesus’ foreboding words, the remaining disciples remain blind to their own vexing ordeal soon to burst upon them.

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: “I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.” But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.” Mark 14:28 - *“Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”* John 16:32–33

“The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.” Luke 24:7

“When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.” John 18:1–2

WORLD’S SIN LAID UPON JESUS

“Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and (Jesus) He said to His disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.’ He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.” Mark 14:32–36 – *“...though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”* Hebrews 5:8

Step in step, hand in hand with His only begotten Son, the Father's trying hour also arrives. With breaking heart, God the Father does what He must do and lays the world's polluted sins upon His beloved Son's sinless life. The most putrid sins, the vilest sins, the most horrendous sins that mankind has ever committed, seep into the soul temple of the Son of God and Son of man. *"All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."* Isaiah 53:6 - *"...When You make His soul an offering for sin..."* Isaiah 53:10 - *"Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many."* Hebrews 9:28 - *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* 2 Corinthians 5:21 - *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."* Romans 5:19

STRIVING AGAINST SIN

With penetrating power, all the culminated sins of the world rage in Jesus' tortured mind, exerting such mental anguish no other human has ever endured. Striving against the putrid sins of the world, atoning blood in cleansing power oozes from Jesus' perspiring flesh staining His garment bloodied red.

"...And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke 22:43-44

"For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin." Hebrews 12:3-4

As Jesus' oozing blood begins to make atonement for our sin, His life-giving blood transfuses His spiritual life into our being, cleansing our lives from sin.

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood... to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." Leviticus 17:11 - *"...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."* 1 John 1:7 - *"...in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins..."* Colossians 1:14 - *"To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood..."* Revelation 1:5

Rising from the bloodied ground, Jesus seeks human comfort from his disciples, but finds them fallen in oblivious sleep. And so encumbered with His weakened state of humanity, Jesus faces the dark side alone. Shadowed in the garden, Satan and his demonic dark force encloses Jesus in their atmospheric, supernatural power.

Returning to His Father in earnest prayer, tears of suffering roll down Jesus' sodden cheeks. From heaven's portal God the Father beholds His beloved Son and sends His mighty angel to fly swiftly to Gethsemane. In a moment the angel's presence illuminates the garden and he gently draws Jesus' limp body under his sheltering wings.

Tenderly the angel whispers the Father's comforting words and now infused with his Father's abiding love, Jesus' humanity is empowered with divine strength and He rises to face the impending onslaught.

THE ARREST

Meanwhile an army of flaming torches advances through Gethsemane. The traitor Judas appears in the flickering light, leading a raucous crowd bearing weapons of death. Now with His betraying kiss, Judas delivers Jesus into the enemy's bloodthirsty hands.

Aroused by the rabble crowd, Jesus' eleven disciples rally to His side. *"When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, 'Lord, shall we strike with the sword?' And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, 'Permit even this.' And He touched his ear and healed Him." Luke 22: 49-51* - *"Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, 'Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.'" Luke 22:52-53*

Overcome with fear and indignation, the disciples flee into their dark night of trial. - *"But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled." Matthew 26:*

Now alone without human support, Jesus is seized by the rebel crowd. As if He were a violent criminal, they bind Jesus' hands and with blood curdling cries they hustle their prisoner through the shadowy garden and into the council of the priests for judgement. *"For my enemies speak against me; And those who lie in wait for my life take counsel together..." Psalm 71:10*

A MOCK TRIAL

In a display of hierarchical pomp, the religious leaders attempt to ridicule Jesus into submission. But without thought of retaliation Jesus silently faces his accusers. And fierce interrogation begins, seeking to darken Jesus' innocence with sin. The high priest calls forth false witnesses to frame Jesus with spiritual crimes against Judaism.

"Fierce witnesses rise up; They ask me things that I do not know. They reward me evil for good, To the sorrow of my soul." Psalm 35:11-12 - *"For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful Have opened against me; They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, And fought against me without a cause. In return for my love they are my accusers, But I give myself to prayer. Thus they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love." Psalm 109:2-5*

“He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.” Isaiah 59:16

“Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, ‘This fellow said, “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.”’ And the high priest arose and said to Him, ‘Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?’ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.’ Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?’ They answered and said, ‘He is deserving of death.’ Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, ‘Prophecy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?’” Matthew 26:60–68

“I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.” Isaiah 50:6

“When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.” Matthew 27:1-2

And so Jesus' fate is sealed, delivered to Rome's imperial power for execution.

“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.” Isaiah 53:7

ROME'S JUDGMENT

Jesus stands on trial before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor over Palestine. Pilate interrogates Jesus, yet finds Him innocent of all charges pressed against Him. And so Pilate stands before Jesus' accusers and declares his verdict, *“...I find no fault in Him.” John 18: 38 - “For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.” Matthew 27:18*

Yet the raucous crowd demands death upon Jesus' innocent life. With bloodcurdling cries, they bellow aloud, *“...crucify Him, crucify Him.”* Pacifying their death cries and hoping to release Jesus, the governor orders his troops to scourge Jesus. *“Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him” Matthew 27:27 -*

Roman soldiers of brutal battles fought, surround Jesus in the inner Judgment Hall. Without remorse or shame, the Roman garrison strip Jesus of His robes, and with a razor-sharp whip they lash Jesus' naked body cutting deep into his flesh. Blood streams from Jesus' lacerated body, His suffering stripes the healing balm for our open wounds of sin.

"Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:4-5

Now with scathing mockery, soldiers cast a purple robe over Jesus' naked body and upon His kingly brow they press a crown of piercing thorns. Blood trickles down Jesus' bruised face seeping into His "...plucked beard." The garrison press around Jesus, and blaspheming the Son of God they, "...salute Him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him..." Mark 15:18-20

Gathered in the invisible realm, heavenly angels of supernatural might behold their brutalised commander. With one stroke of their power the angelic army could obliterate the Roman garrison from existence and save their loved commander.

"Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" Matthew 26:53

Yet Jesus' sorrowing angels can only turn their eyes away from the raging brutality, least they should sabotage Jesus' rescue mission to free sin bound humanity.

Meanwhile gathered outside Pilate's court of judgement, Satan and his dark force are stirring the accusing crowd into a violent frenzy.

Jostled by Roman troops, Jesus staggers from the Praetorium and again stands with Pilate before the raucous crowd. *"And Pilate said to them, 'Behold the Man!'" John 19:5* - *"Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men..." Isaiah 52:14* - *"My knees are weak through fasting, And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness." Psalm 109:24*

Peering through blurred blackened eyes, Jesus looks upon the creation of His own hands and forgiveness wells in His heart of unconditional love.

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." Luke 23:34

"He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him." John 1:10-11

Although forsaken by all humanity, Jesus' merciful thoughts gather strength, that whatever the cost to Himself He will not forsake sinful humanity even unto death - "... *having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*" John 13:1

Again before the gathered crowd, Pilate declares his just judgment - "*I find no fault in Him...*" but again the rebel crowd bellow their deathly roar - "*Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!*" John 19:15

"*Then the governor said, 'Why, what evil has He done?' But they cried out all the more, saying, 'Let Him be crucified!' When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.'* And all the people answered and said, '*His blood be on us and on our children.*" Matthew 27:23-25

And so it shall be as they have spoken, while the Jewish cup of guilt overflows with murder, "...*Jesus whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. But you denied the Holy One and the Just...and killed the Prince of life...*" Acts 3:13-15

TO THE CRUCIFIXION CROSS

Before the gathering crowds, Roman troops lay a wooden beam over Jesus lacerated shoulders. "*And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha...*" John 19:17

Bearing the excruciating weight of the horizontal beam, Jesus' dehydrated body slumps upon the cobbled pavement.

Nearby a Roman soldier hails "...*a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.*" Matthew 27:32

And so toward the crucifixion site, stained with blood of executed criminals, Jesus is "...*lead as a lamb to the slaughter.*" Isaiah 53:7

Men, women, children of all ages, mothers with babes in their arms who were blessed by Jesus' comforting touch, all line Jerusalem's cobbled streets. The wicked spit and jeer, while those healed by Jesus' compassionate love, wonder what might have gone wrong and their hearts are wrung with sorrow. "*And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him.*" Luke 23:27 - All the while bearing humanity's burden of sin, Jesus passes through the gate of the great walled city and arrives at the crucifixion site. - "*Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.*" Hebrews 13:12 - "*There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death.*" Luke 23:32

NAILED UPON THE CROSS

Stalking among the surging crowd, Satan and his dark force rally for their supernatural onslaught at the cross. Cussing Roman troops fix the horizontal beam to the vertical post and stretch Jesus' battered body over the assembled cross. Now with pounding blows, iron spikes are driven through Jesus' hands and feet, firing shooting pain throughout His convulsing body.

“For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me.” Psalm 22:16-17

Troops heave up the bloodied cross and drop the vertical post into the deep cross-hole cut into the bedrock. All the while Jesus prays for his persecutors that they might be freely forgiven.

“And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.’ Luke 23: 33-34 – Soldiers - “divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: ‘They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.’ Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. Matthew 27: 35-36 – “And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, ‘You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” Matthew 27:35-43

“And the people stood looking on But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, ‘He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.’ The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, ‘If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.’ And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.” Luke 23: 35-38

THE TWO CRIMINALS

Meanwhile the two criminal executed either side of Jesus, gaze upon Jesus' mutilated body.

“Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, ‘If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.’ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.’ Then he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.’” Luke 23:39-43

Shadowed in the criminals' condemned lives are two classes of earth's population: the saved and unsaved. The criminal executed on Jesus' left, shadows those who reject and exclude God from their lives. While the criminal on Jesus' right, beholds in Jesus' innocent life the down payment of death to pardon his guilt of sin, releasing him from his penalty of everlasting death.

And when Jesus says to the delivered criminal, *"Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise..."* - He does not mean this very same day, for Jesus Himself shall not be in heaven's paradise this very same day.

Simply, when translating the original manuscripts into English, the comma was placed on the left of *"...today..."* when it should have been placed to the right of *"...today..."*. And so Jesus' blessing upon the believing criminal would rightly read: *"Assuredly, I say to you **today**, you will be with Me in Paradise."*

And so upon the eleventh hour of the criminal's expiring life, facing impending death, Jesus assures the criminal that he is accepted this very day and in a future time he shall be received into Jesus' heavenly paradise Kingdom.

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...'" Matthew 25:31-34

RAISED UP BEFORE OUR WORLD

Raised up in the midst of our lost fallen world, Jesus suffers our punishment, our shame, our guilt of sin. *"For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself..."* Hebrews 12:3 - *"...who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame..."* Hebrews 12:2

"...even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:14-15 - *"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself."* John 12:32 - *"See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me."* Isaiah 49:16

With His outstretched arms straddling the cross, Jesus enfolds our sinful world and our lives into his compassionate heart of redeeming love. His atoning, delivering blood oozes from His pierced hands, His pierced feet, and splatters upon the foot of the cross, seeping into humanity's depths of sin.

"For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross." Colossians 1:19-20

Yet with taunting words the crowd continues to jeer and mock the one who came so far to save them. *“They hated Me without a cause.” John 15:25 – “He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” Isaiah 53:3 – “And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, ‘You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.’” Matthew 27:39-40*

JESUS ‘SUFFERING THOUGHTS

Now the words prophesied long ago in Old Testament times become painfully fulfilled in Jesus’ suffering thoughts. *“But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’ But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother’s breasts. I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother’s womb You have been My God. Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help.” Psalm 22:6-11*

“Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.” Psalm 22:12-15

MARY AT THE CROSS

Weeping before the cross, Mary beholds her suffering Son and her thoughts run to when Jesus was a babe cradled safely in her motherly arms. His childish years, His adult years that brought great joy and hope, now seem unbelievably lost forever. Simeon’s prophetic words spoken many years ago when Jesus was a new born babe resound in Mary’s sorrowing soul, *“...a sword will pierce through your own soul also...”*

“And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” Luke 2:33-35

Jesus beholds His grieving mother, the one who comforted Him through the trying years as a mother can only do. And so Mary’s grieving heart pierces Jesus’ grieving soul and He tenderly commits the care of His beloved mother into John’s trustworthy hands. *“When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold your son!’ Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold your*

mother!’ And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.” John 19:26–27

In this connecting moment of humanity, the Father’s divinity flashes through his Son’s divine human life, and connects to our humanity as sons and daughters of God, adopted into the divine family of Father and Son, “...*that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself...*” 2 Corinthians 5:19 - “*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!*” 1 John 3:1

THE DARK FORCE ATTACKS

Now marshalled in their legions for an all-out attack, the supernatural dark force hurl their demonic darts into Jesus’ battling mind. Should Jesus’ mental fortitude fall to the dark force then Satan’s warfare against God shall be won. The dark side know that at any cost they must destroy the soul temple of the Son of God, or be destroyed themselves on God’s great Judgement Day. “*And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day...*” Jude 6

“*Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.*” Revelation 12:12 - “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*” 1 Peter 5:8

DARKNESS CLOUDS THE CROSS

“*Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.*” Mark 15: 33 – The sixth hour is the hour we know as noon, or midday, twelve o’clock Friday.

The startled crowd gropes in the cosmic darkening and their taunting words fade into deathly silence and a heavenly presence of power envelopes the crucifixion site, blanking out the sun. For you see, since the times of Nimrod and the tower of Babel, sun worship has filtered down the centuries of pagan religions even to our day. “*So He brought me into the inner court of the Lord’s house; and there, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple (church) of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east.*” Ezekiel 8:16

Even in the realm of Christendom today, in the 21st century, certain churches openly display symbols of the sun exalting Luciferian sun worship.

And so before the blaspheming presence of Satan, God the Father blanks out the sun least the crucifixion site should be defiled by ritualistic sun worship. With striking vengeance from the cosmic heavens, lightning streaks over the darkened landscape, trailing clashing thunder over the crucifixion site.

the foot of the cross, the world's deathly sins violently clash in the soul temple of the Son of God.

"...that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone." Hebrews 2:9 - "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God..." 1 Peter 3:18

With penetrating power, sin's polluted darkness engulfs Jesus' dying form, blotting out the Father's presence from His beloved only begotten Son. *"You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness." Habakkuk 1:13*

BEARING OUR ETERNAL DEATH SEPARATION

Now it is three o'clock on Friday afternoon, and Jesus' ebbing life is drawing to a decisive end. Having endured nine torturous hours. *"And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?'" which is translated, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'" Mark 15:34*

The terrifying doom of being forsaken by His Father God rises from the depths of Jesus' mourning soul. Echoing in Jesus' mournful cry, we hear our own mournful separation from God. *"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you..." Isaiah 59:2*

Suffering alone, separated from His beloved Father, engulfed in our abyss of sin, Jesus bears our eternal death sentence and our eternal separation from God. Rallying every ounce of His failing strength, Jesus wars against the power of sin engulfing our deathly lives. The spiritual war of earth's ages intensifies with swords of death and the battle for our souls rages in the soul temple of the Son. Penetrating anguish continues to grip Jesus' dying form until triumphing in the pall of darkness, Jesus' battle cry rings from the cross - *"It is finished!" John 19:30*

"It is finished!" echoes from the cross, down the ages to our very day and abounds to each sinful soul with God's deliverance, overthrowing the power of sin imprisoning our lives, casting down everlasting death as our conquered foe.

"Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" 1 Corinthians 15: 54-55 - "...God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave...Selah." Psalm 49:15 - "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction!" Hosea 13:14 - "...Over such the second death has no power..." Revelation 20:6 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

RANSOM PRICE PAID IN FULL

Sins' defeated darkness scatters from the crucifixion site. Now divine light streaming from the Father's heavenly throne, illuminates Jesus' dying body. Again, God the Father beholds His beloved Son slumped upon the sacrificial cross. Forever, Jesus' victory over human sin proclaims to the ends of Planet Earth "THE RANSOM PRICE FROM SIN IS PAID IN FULL, SEALED AND DELIVERED BY GOD'S SAVING GRACE."

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Mark 10:45 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God..." Ephesians 2:8

JESUS' EXPIRING BREATH OF LIFE

"After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, 'I thirst!' Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth." John 19:28-29 - "They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Psalm 69:21

"And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.' Having said this, He breathed His last." Luke 23:46

"Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser (Satan) of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.'" Revelation 12:10

"Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, 'Truly this was the Son of God!' Matthew 27:51

AN END TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SYSTEM OF ANIMAL SACRIFICE

Precisely at three o'clock on Friday afternoon, as Jesus' last breath expires from His sacrificed body, the heavy curtain in the temple, the veil dividing the holy room from the most holy room, is supernaturally torn in two, "...the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom".

Precisely at this moment of time, the ministering priest in Jerusalem's temple raises his hand to slay the Passover lamb, but hearing the terrifying sound of the veil tearing, the flashing knife of death falls from the priest's trembling hand and the symbolic lamb for sacrifice escapes with its life.

Thus Jesus' sacrificial death and torn veil of the temple brings an end to the yearly Passover ceremony. "...For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." *1 Corinthians 5:7* – While in the same fulfilling moment of Jesus' passover death, the Old Testament system of animal sacrifice also comes to a conclusive end, literally fulfilled by Jesus sacrificial death upon the altar of the cross. The literal Lamb of God, in one sacrifice for ALL. "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

"...now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many." *Hebrews 9:26–28*

"... For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, "Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God."'” *Hebrews 10:4-7*

And so as the Old Testament covenant ends with Jesus' sacrificial death upon the cross, the era of the New Testament covenant begins just as God the Father and His only begotten Son had planned so long ago. ...**He takes away the first that He may establish the second.**" *Hebrews 10:9* - Having rejected Jesus as the promised Messiah and still clinging to the Old Testament covenant, the temple priests continue to offer sacrifice until the year 70 AD. At this time, Jerusalem is besieged by Rome's imperial army and the temple is utterly destroyed, foretold by Jesus when He ministered among city dwellers. - "Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, 'These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.'" *Luke 21:5–6*

JESUS' EVERLASTING LEGACY OF ENDURING LOVE

"He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken." *Isaiah 53:8*

"For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." *Romans 5:6-8*

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was

numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.” Isaiah 53:10–12

No human has endured so much, given so much, done so much, for so many. The acclaimed great and famous of our world enter upon the stage of temporal life, act their part, and soon pass away in obscurity. But alone, Jesus conquers the world’s power of sin, pays our sinful debt with His sinless life and death, while His eternal victory lives on in the lives of the saved. *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23*

DIED OF A BROKEN HEART

Now arriving in the latter hours of Friday afternoon, a presence of heavenly peace settles over the crucifixion site, the haunted crowd harassed with questioning doubt drift away. *“And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.” Luke 23:48–49*

As the afternoon sun descends towards the welcoming hours of Sabbath rest, upon Pilate’s command Roman soldiers reappear at the crucifixion site. To hasten death the legs of the crucified are broken, causing the body to collapse inward upon vital organs, hastening death. But Jesus’ bloodied body is deathly still.

“Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ‘Not one of His bones shall be broken.’ And again another Scripture says, ‘They shall look on Him whom they pierced.’” John 19:31–37 - “For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet...” Psalm 22:16

Beyond all pain that could ever be inflicted upon a human soul, rescuing us from our sins, Jesus’ merciful heart ruptured within His battling soul, revealed by the water and blood gushing from His pierced side.

*“This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ...”¹ John 5:6 - “**Reproach has broken my heart**, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none.” Psalm 69:20*

JESUS' BLOOD DISCOVERED UPON THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

Yet there is more wonder blazing from the cross. By God's guiding providence, Ron Wyatt makes a discovery that outshines all biblical discoveries in the history of our fallen world: Wyatt takes us to Jerusalem City, and the excavation site of the Ark of the Covenant.

But first to re-examine the Ark of the Covenant and what this treasure means, we shall take a short walk down memory lane and then we shall fast track to receive an astounding surprise. And so we return to the base of Mount Sinai where the millions of Israelites are gathered, so recently freed from generations of Egyptian slavery. With great power God descends upon the mountain summit speaking His law of Ten Commandments.

Very soon after, God gives Moses a hard copy of the Ten Commandments inscribed upon two stone tablets with God's own divine finger. The two stone tablets are placed in a sacred chest designed by God, and crafted by talented Israelite men. This special chest is overlaid with gold, and joined together the chest and the Ten Commandments are called the Ark of the Covenant. This Ark is God's covenant promise made to lost humanity that He will deliver them from the transgression of His law.

You may remember the Ark of the Covenant is placed in a spiritual tent called a sanctuary. Whenever the nation reached a new encampment, the sanctuary tent was always placed in the centre of the encampment. The Ark rests in the second room of the sanctuary called the Most Holy place . And above the Ark, God's spiritual presence resides, literally in the midst of His people.

Centuries forward in Old Testament times, the Ark of the Covenant finds a new resting place, in a magnificent temple built by King Solomon in Jerusalem city. Then, approximately 600 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marches upon Jerusalem. To prevent the Ark of the Covenant falling into enemy hands, Jeremiah hides the Ark of the Covenant in a cave. Over time the cave is covered over with multilayers of ruins as Jerusalem is ransacked and rebuilt several times. And so for centuries, hidden deep in the earth at Jerusalem, the Ark of the Covenant is concealed from the world. Then in the late 1980's, Ron Wyatt receives miraculous directions and guidance from God, he finds himself pointing to an earth bank, saying the Ark is to be found in the earth, containing the Ten Commandments. And so an excavation begins.

The digging is difficult and dangerous, taking longer than Wyatt and his team imagined. But a surprise lies in store for the weary diggers. For as they unearth layers of old city ruins, they discover what they believe to be the true crucifixion site of Jesus Christ!

Wyatt and his sons come back several times over the next few years and spend hundreds of hours digging at that location.

What follows is Ron Wyatt's account, as told to his friends, about what happened next, as Wyatt continues to tunnel down, deep below the earth's surface.

"On this trip his two sons become ill and return home early. Wyatt continues working in the cave systems with only a young Arab as his assistant. He finds a narrow vertical crevice in a rock wall, too narrow for him to fit in, but with a little work, it is 'just right' for his helper. The helper squeezes into the opening. But before Ron can hand him a flashlight to look around within, the young Arab comes scurrying out of that chamber as fast as he can, saying, 'What's in there? What's in there??' and he is scared to death! The young Arab refuses ever again to enter that cave system..." Retrieved November 11, 2012 from <http://www.pinkoski.com/ark-of-the-covenant/aoc-flyer.html>

This was 2pm on January 6, 1982.

"Now alone in this vast cave system, he (Ron) enlarges the hole, crawling through. With only about 18 inches clearance, he has to lie on his stomach with nothing but his flashlight in his hand for light. Shining his flashlight down through the massive pile of large rocks, his eye catches a glimpse of something shiny. He begins slowly removing the rocks one at a time and discovers some dry-rotted wooden timbers just beneath the rocks, and then some also dry-rotted remains of animal's skins that turn to powder when he moves them. The animal skins are covering a gold veneered table with raised moldings around the sides which consists of an alternating pattern of a bell and a pomegranate. But he is in such a confined space; he cannot uncover the entire table. He later concludes after closer examination, that this is the Table of Shewbread that resided in the first room of the ancient sanctuary tent, then later placed in Solomon's temple." Ibid

With great anticipation, Ron looks around to see what else he can see, which isn't much. He shines his flashlight around the open area and then up to the cave ceiling. There, he sees something that catches his eye. What is it? It is a crack in the rock ceiling with a black substance within the crack. Crawling slowly and painfully over the rocks to the rear of the chamber, he now sees a stone case partially uncovered by rocks. The case has a flat stone lid which is cracked completely in two and the smaller section is moved aside, creating an opening. But the top of the case is too near the cave ceiling for him to look inside. Yet he knows in his heart what is inside the case.

The crack in the cave ceiling is directly above the cracked part of the stone lid, where the opening is, and the black substance fell from the crack into the case because there are some black splash marks on the lid.

At this moment, as Ron recalls, he instantly realises what has happened in this cave nearly 2000 years ago, and he passes out. What he realises is that the crack in the cave ceiling is the bottom end of the crack he found in the elevated cross-hole many feet above him on the surface, and the black substance is blood which fell through the crack and into the stone case.

“Then Ron realizes that the Ark of the Covenant is in the stone case: And Christ’s Blood actually fell onto the Mercy Seat.” Retrieved November 11, 2012 from <http://www.wyattmuseum.com/arkofthecovenant.htm#>

What an astounding miracle of God! And so precise: Firstly, by God’s providence the Romans unknowingly built the crucifixion site directly over the Ark of the Covenant, some 600 years after the Ark was hidden in the cavern. Secondly, Jesus’ blood dripped on the very same Mercy Seat which the blood of sacrificed animals had been sprinkled on, during Old Testament times.

Yes, the Old Testament sacrificial system - the acting out of Jesus’ sacrificial death - had finally met with the blood of the True Sacrifice.

You see, once a year in a solemn Old Testament service given by God, blood of a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the Mercy Seat to make atonement for the people’s sins, to blot out their sins before God. This special service was called the “...*Day of Atonement...*” *Leviticus 23:27*. Prior to the service, three perfectly formed animals, a bull and two goats, “... *without blemish...*” *Leviticus 4:3*, were selected by the High Priest. These animals were symbolic of Jesus’ perfect life of righteousness.

In the first part of the service, the bull was killed to atone for the High Priest’s sins. Then one of the special goats was killed. Collecting some of the sacrificed goat’s blood, the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place, the second compartment of the tabernacle. He sprinkled the blood upon the Mercy Seat, to make atonement for the peoples’ confessed sins, and to cleanse the sanctuary from the pollution of sin. “*Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins...*” *Leviticus 16:15-16 20*

God tells us that breaking His Holy law is sin, and He also tells us that only blood can make atonement for sin, or in other words, only blood can cleanse and pardon sin, “...*for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.*” *Leviticus 17:11* - “*And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.*” *Hebrews 9:22*

Yes, the death of the sacrificed animal represented Jesus’ life sacrificed upon the cross, while the animal’s sprinkled blood represented Jesus’ blood, which was foreordained to cleanse and pardon humanity’s sins.

And so the appointed time arrived, and Jesus died an agonising death upon the cross for our sins. “*And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split...*” *Matthew 27:50-51*

Later that afternoon, a Roman soldier thrust his spear into Jesus' side, *"...and immediately blood and water came out."* John 19:34 - Then, as we read earlier, Jesus' blood ran down the cracks in the rocks, dripping upon the Mercy Seat in the cavern directly below. And lying directly beneath the Mercy Seat are the stone tablets, engraved with the Ten Commandments.

Thus, here upon earth, as Jesus' blood dripped onto the Mercy Seat, over God's law of life, literal atonement was made to pardon sin. And astoundingly, in Jesus' death and His blood sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat, we see a literal fulfillment, and an end to the symbolic Old Testament sacrificial system.

The spiritual connection between Jesus' blood, the Mercy Seat and the Ten Commandments is profoundly this:

Jesus' saving blood mingled with God's mercy pardons our transgressions of His law. But this pardon for sin is granted only when we repent of our sins, and confess our sins to God, accepting Jesus as our Saviour and Lord over our lives.

At this time the Ark of the Covenant still remains hidden in the cavern, deep below the earth's surface, and those involved with its discovery, believe all will be revealed in God's time. *"Truth shall spring out of the earth, And righteousness shall look down from heaven."* Psalm 85:11:21

Yet astoundingly there is more.

Ron took a sample of the dry blood to an Israeli laboratory. The laboratory technicians were very doubtful they could activate and analyse the dry, black substance. And yet the blood was miraculously reactivated to a living state.

The lab test revealed an astounding truth. Even the lab technicians were shocked.

Firstly, as normal, the blood has 23 chromosomes from the mother's side.

However, from the father's side, instead of the normal 23 chromosomes from a human father, this blood has only 1 chromosome. And that chromosome is a male Y chromosome.

And this is where the blazing trail of God's promised seed trailing through humanity, blends with the Y chromosome of God's divinity. Because this blood analysis explains in clear scientific results the divine and human conception of Jesus, the *"...son of God..."* and *"...Son of man..."*

Let's look at this again, so our minds can grasp this enormous truth: Twenty three human chromosomes received from Mary. One divine male chromosome received from God the Father.

"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David."

The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, 'Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!' But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.' Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I do not know a man?' And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.' Luke 1:26-35

You can read or watch Ron Wyatt's discoveries at these internet sites:

Website: <https://wyattmuseum.com>

or <https://ronwyatttruth.com> (Same website with 2 names)

Website: <https://ronwyatt.com>

Youtube.com: [ronwyatt.com](https://www.youtube.com/ronwyatt.com)

Vimeo.com: dennis schelles (dennis schelles is the name of the Vimeo channel

- Dennis Schelles is Ron Wyatt's son-in-law)

Runmble.com: search for Ron Wyatt Discoveries 2022 Documentary.

What an amazing discovery to end Volume 3.

In Volume 4 of *The Blazing Trail*, we trail from the crucifixion site to Jesus' garden tomb and there we meet up with Ron Wyatt to behold another amazing discovery.

After Jesus has risen from death we spend 40 days with Jesus and His disciples. Then we trail to the mount of Olives and behold Jesus rising into heaven where again He is seated at the right hand of His Father's universal throne. From the Mount of Olives we continue on in *The Blazing Trail* and discover more biblical knowledge for our searching souls. And so until then may each of us receive God's bountiful blessing upon our lives.

“The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.” Numbers 6:24-26





THE BLAZING TRAIL

A biblical exploration comprising seven volumes

- VOLUME 1** *The Beginnings*
- VOLUME 2** *Exploring Old Testament Times*
- VOLUME 3** *Jesus' Earthly Life*
- VOLUME 4** *Jesus Raised from Death to Life*
- VOLUME 5** *Jesus our Heavenly Priest*
- VOLUME 6** *Exploring New Testament Times*
- VOLUME 7** *Into Eternity*

To learn more, and find more free books, we invite you to visit:

<https://vitalforce.org.nz>



THE BLAZING TRAIL is a biblical exploration, seeking God's knowledge of truth, answering spiritual questions in our troubled world today.

Providing a foundational overview of the Bible, The Blazing Trail is set out in 7 volumes, each volume divided into parts by sub titles for quick, easy reference to any biblical topic you wish to refer to. If you are impressed to seek further insight, the given text references can be used to dive deeper into the Bible and explore surrounding background knowledge of biblical lives and spiritual events.

And so, if you wish to learn about God and what the Bible entails, The Blazing Trail, could be the answer for you.

VOLUME 1: *The Beginnings*

VOLUME 2: *Sketch of Old Testament Times*

VOLUME 3: *Jesus' Earthly Life*

VOLUME 4: *Jesus Raised from Death*

VOLUME 5: *Jesus our Heavenly High Priest*

VOLUME 6: *Sketch of New Testament Times*

VOLUME 7: *Into Eternity*