



DAYBREAK *with*

**BIBLE READING**

**OCT - DEC 2023**

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17, ESV).

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English Standard Version (ESV)  
New King James Version (NKJV)  
Life Application Study Bible (LASB)  
New International Version (NIV)

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## PREAMBLE

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All Saints' Cathedral, Kampala's (ASCK), theme for this year, 2023 is: ***United for Service and Growth***, derived from ***Ephesians 4:11-16***. As a church we have gone through a difficult period, and yet it seems more challenges are coming. However, we need to be united and grow together in Christ! Unity does not come naturally, it requires hard work as you apply the Word of God, so does service to God and His people. Therefore, let us endeavor to study and apply the Word; it is the weapon with which we shall defeat the thief, the tempter, the devil (*Matthew 4:4-10*). You will benefit from the Word only when you apply what you study from the Bible! The Word will turn us into humble persons, encourage us to serve God effectively and make us heroes/heroines for Christ! The Church is admonished not to be swayed by all kinds of false teachings that are common these days. As a believer engages daily in the discipline of Bible reading and study, she or he gets spiritual nourishment and hope. We encourage parishioners to read the Bible daily - that way, they may be rooted in the Word of God (*Psalms 119:7-8, 11*) in order to be fruitful wherever they are, and gain hope beyond difficulties.

*"Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway" (Proverbs 8:34, NIV)*. Nothing is more blissfully profitable than "spending time with God", daily. You do not have to spend hours studying the Word of God and praying, just set aside 15 to 30 minutes every day, at an appointed time, preferably in the morning. Then, He will guard and guide you throughout the day. It is a cardinal error to go anywhere without talking to God. It is like setting out on a journey without fuel. *"...If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here" (Exodus 33:15, NKJV)*.

So, every day, sit somewhere in inner silence and let God talk to you, through devotionals such as contained in this booklet, as you study His Word. Then pray about what is going on in your life and around you; in the lives of those you care about, in your nation and the world as a whole. In your prayer, talk to God like a friend, because He is, and let Him speak to you as well. Learn to listen to God and recognise His call, like Samuel eventually did (*1 Samuel 3:4-10*), by reading and studying His Word.

Dear Reader, as we edge towards the end of the year, 2023, we will continue to focus on *thematic issues* for each quarter of the year. For

this fourth quarter, we will still examine issues centered on “Unity for Service and Growth” as our theme; and sub themes of **Sexual perversion, Lawlessness and the coming of the Messiah.**

For each sub-theme, we will pick excerpts from all over the Bible; Genesis to Revelation. Equip yourself with a good Bible, preferably NIV, ESV, NKJV, or LASB, a pen and a note book. If you can, please acquire a good Bible dictionary, commentary and a concordance. But central of all these, is the BIBLE as the critical authoritative reference.

Let it be known to all that the entire Bible is about God’s redemptive plan for mankind. Jesus Christ Himself told His disciples that, *“...These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (Luke 24:44-ESV).* Therefore, as you read the Bible every day, figure out what the passage teaches about the Person or work of Jesus Christ and apply that teaching to your own life.

As you read the Bible, look out for a **command to obey, a promise to claim, a rebuke to heed, a sin to repent of** and an opportunity to share with another person. Most importantly, the essence of this publication is to facilitate godly transformation by applying the Word of God in your life. Be expectant to hear your loving Father tenderly give you direction every day, telling you; *“...This is the way, walk in it...” (Isaiah 30:21).*



The Very Rev. Canon Dr. Rebecca Nyegenye

**The Provost**

**All Saints’ Cathedral, Kampala.**

## READERS' GUIDE

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*In this daily guide, the Bible Study for believers, each day's portion is structured as below;*

- (i)Referential indication of the reading for the day, with a summative statement of what it is about;*
- (ii)Brief notes for the day's text;*
- (iii)A meditation verse for the day; and*
- (iv)A suggested prayer.*

*It is suggested that you acquire and maintain a notebook for your Bible study. It is further recommended that (i) You start off your quiet time with a short prayer, confessing your sins and seeking God's forgiveness, and then invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you listen to God through His Word; (ii) then read the text slowly and meditatively; and (iii) equally so the attendant notes, noting the suggested daily takeaway (or takeaways) italicized in the notes, which you should try to manage as your "spiritual shield" for the day.*

*As you read and meditate: (i) take notes of any important convictions you encounter, including but not limited to the pick for the day as italicized in the notes, and (ii) also note down your own picks as per the final paragraph of the preamble.*

*Structure your notebook into your daily notes with dates and the relevant reading. At the end of the study of each theme, you may read through all the notes you have taken on the theme in order to "gather the sheaves" you have harvested from the Book, noting in particular, the holiness and goodness of God.*

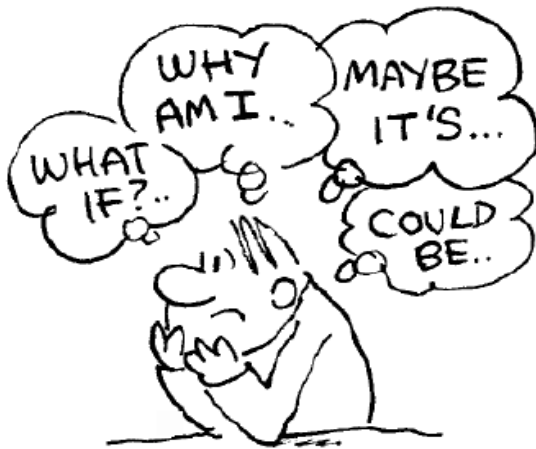
*May the Lord bless you as He speaks to you through His Word.*

**THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2023**

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# SEXUAL PERVERSION

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*Sexual perversion is sexual behaviour that is abnormal and repulsive. Sexual perversion is the sexual deviation from what God had intended from the beginning. From the beginning, God created sex before the fall to reproduce and multiply (Gen.1:28). A sexual act is not sinful, but must only be enjoyed between one man and one woman in the context of marriage.*

*Therefore, any deviation from what God intended sex for, and its practice is perversion and sinful. And God punishes such pervasive acts. The sexual deviations we see today existed before, as there is nothing new under the sun (Ecc.1:9), and God punished such, and His promise to punish such acts still stands today, for God does not change (Num.23:19)*

*Some examples of sexual perversions are pedophilia, incest, transvestism, necrophilia sadism, bestiality, masochism, homosexually and sodomy. Sexual perversion can occur in different forms, including those we share on in the sequel.*

**Sunday, 1st October 2023. Do not have sex with close relatives; Text: Leviticus 18:6-18**

The Bible forbids any sexual intimacy between close relatives (v.6). Relatives can either be by blood (mother, sister, granddaughter and aunt) or by marriage step mother, step sister, step daughter, step granddaughter, sister in law, daughter in law and aunt by marriage. By not mentioning daughter, it does not mean the Bible permits having intimacy with her; it is probably because the very prohibition was well known in the laws of other cultures.

To avoid sexual immorality, the Bible encourages that each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband (*1 Cor.7:2-3*), and both be committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Only Jesus Christ can quench the thirst of immorality (*John 7:37*). Many marriages have failed not because one has more than one wife, but because they do not *have Christ* as their Saviour and Lord in those marriages.



***Meditate on verse 6. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our loving Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us for being sexually immoral in our land. Amen.**

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**Monday, 2nd October 2023. Practicing homosexuality; Text: Leviticus 20:10-21**

God forbids homosexuality; a man having sex with a fellow man (v.13). The punishment for such sin is death for it is done against nature.

We see that the homosexuals' blood will be upon themselves, however in Jesus Christ they can be forgiven if they ask and repent of such evil practice. Jesus Christ, the righteous of God, became sin so that sinners, including homosexuals, might become the righteous of God (*2 Cor. 5:21*). If you committed or supported homosexuality, *the loving God is extending the grace for you to ask for forgiveness and repent* in the Mighty name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.



***Meditate on verse 13. What is God teaching in this verse?***



**Our loving Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray for many who are lost in homosexuality to repent and accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Amen.**

**Tuesday, 3rd October 2023. The sin of homosexuality destroyed Sodom; Text: Genesis 19:4-13**

The outcry against the sin of homosexuality, among other sins, reached God (v.13), and He subsequently burnt down the city. It is sad that when Lot told his sons-in-law to flee and escape the coming punishment because of the evil in the land, they did not take him seriously (v.14)

This sin of homosexuality is here with us today, and some who are not practicing it are behaving like the sons-in-law of Lot; they are indifferent. Thank God for some of our church and political leaders who have come to condemn such evil in our land. More importantly, we thank God for Jesus Christ who bore our sins on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to the righteousness of Christ, not of our own (1 Peter 2:24). *Only in Christ can one genuinely overcome homosexuality.*



***Meditate on verse 14. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, I pray that people will take the warning against sin seriously. Amen.**

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**Wednesday, 4th October 2023. Avoid company of wrong people; Text: Genesis 13:1-8**

What looked like good pasture land with water lured Lot to stay close to Sodom, indwellers of which people were wicked before the Lord. (vv.12-13). It is important to avoid company of wrong people. For you, you may be strong but some of your family members may be not, and they will easily be led into wrong doing.

The Bible teaches us that *bad company corrupts good character* (1 Cor.15:33). Sometimes choosing good people may not be easy, the reason you need the Holy Spirit to guide you. You receive the Holy Spirit only when Christ is in you and controlling your life. You receive Christ by faith through prayer. You receive and believe Jesus Christ today and the Holy Spirit will begin to guide you on how to avoid bad company.



***Meditate on verses 12-13. What is God teaching you in these verses?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me avoid bad groups. Amen.**

**Thursday, 5th October 2023. Homosexuality caused the destruction of Benjamites; Text: Judges 19:22; 20:41-48**

Sexual perversion of the men of Benjamin (19:22) caused many of them to die as God judged them (20:46). Of course, we observe selfishness on the part of the two men who fronted their ladies rather than themselves. However, all the same, God punished the Benjamites for sexual perversion.

You could be guilty of what you have done in the past, *call on the name of the Lord and Saviour*, Jesus Christ, He will forgive you all your sins (Col.2:13) and you then have eternal life (Rom. 16:13).



***Meditate on Judge 19:22. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ, heal us of homosexuality. Amen.**

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**Friday, 6th October 2023. Wrong church leaders promote evil in society; Text: Jeremiah 23:1-15**

The nation of Israel got engulfed in sin because of fake prophets (v.4). These wrong prophets had large and enthusiastic audiences and were popular because they gave people false hope contrary to prophet Jeremiah who spoke the truth, and therefore, was not popular. This is happening in our time, fake church leaders and other civic leaders are popular and have much money because they support evil, including homosexuality. They will not get away with this sin.

*Jesus Christ called such leaders white-washed tombs, they look holy outside but are full of evil inside (Matt.23:27).* They must repent and Lord Jesus Christ will forgive them and establish fellowship with God.



***Meditate verse 14. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help Your church leaders to practice and teach righteousness in Christ. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 7th October 2023. Sexual perversion is idol worship; Text: Romans 1:18-32**

When people reject God and begin to worship idols, including sex

perversion, He allows them to be further established in their wickedness (v.24). *God does not stop anyone from making wrong choices.* Idol worship is refusing to recognise that God is the centre of everything including sex. Do not worship the creature, but the Creator.

Jesus Christ, God the Son, is worthy to be worshiped and glorified (*Phil. 2:9-11*). You can only worship Christ when you are in Him. You received Him by faith through prayer. Receive and believe in Christ today, and begin a *fellowship with God as you worship Him.*



***Meditate on verse 24. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, in Your judgment have mercy on us. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 8th October 2023. Those who practice sex perversion will not go to heaven; Text: 1 Corinthians 6:1-11**

Some Churches and civil leaders have legitimized homosexuality as an alternative life-style, claiming that the people involved have a right to choose their sexual preference. However, the Bible calls homosexual behaviour, sin. It is important, however, to condemn the practice not the people involved. Let us not fear, hate, or ridicule them. Let the church be a place of forgiveness and healing for all the sinners including the homosexuals who are repentant. However, we should never compromise in regard to homosexual behaviour.

The homosexuals and all those who do evil must repent of their sins and only God will forgive them (*Acts 3:19*). *Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour is willing to receive all those who are repenting,* and will forgive them all their sins. Receive and believe in Him today!



***Meditate on verse 9. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray for all who have embraced homosexuality to repent and seek Your forgiveness. Amen.**

**Monday, 9th October 2023. Do not indulge in sexual immorality; Text: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

The Bible tells us not to engage in sexual immorality. As for those who did it in the past, God punished them (v.8). In the past, the Lord punished His children, the Israelites, for engaging in sexual immorality with Moabite women (*Num. 25:1-9*).

The Bible teaches us to *flee from sexual immorality* (1 Cor.6:18). You will effectively flee from evil, including sexual sin, only when you are in Christ. It is only when you are in Christ that the Holy Spirit will help and enable you to flee. On your own, you will struggle much and fail.



***Meditate on verse 8. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to have self-control and flee from evil. Amen.**

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**Tuesday, 10th October 2023. Sexual perversion is the work of the flesh; Text: Galatians 5: 16-25**

The works of the flesh include; sexual immorality, impurity and sensuality (v.19). Sensuality or lawlessness originally was any excessive behaviour or lack of restraint and is now associated with sexual excess and indulgence.

Only Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, can stop this sexual excess and indulgence, receive and believe in Him today and He will give you victory over all indulgence.



***Meditate on verse 19. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, kill the sinful sexual desires in me. Amen.**

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**Wednesday, 11th October 2023. Do not give yourself over to sexual immorality: Jude 1 - 11**

Sodom and Gomorrah are often used as examples of God's judgement against immorality (v.7). Sexual immorality and unnatural desires refer to both; the heterosexual (*Gen.19:8*) and homosexual lust (*Gen.19:4,5*). These are condemned by God. *Heterosexual sex should only be between one*

*man and one woman in the context of marriage.*

The Scripture is teaching us that sinners who do not seek forgiveness from God will face eternal separation from God. Therefore, all those who rebel against God or ignore or reject Him will face eternal fire. The good news is that if you receive and believe in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, you shall be forgiven. Receive and believe in in Jesus Christ today!



***Meditate on verse 7. What is God teaching you in verse 7?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, save us from all evils that are surrounding us. Amen.**

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**Thursday, 12th October 2023. All evil doers will not enter the city of God; Text: Revelation 22:6-21**

All evil doers, including sexual perverts, will not enter the holy city of God (v.15). Those who love Satanic falsehood, murder and sexual immorality will be tormented outside the gate of the city of God. The intention will be to punish them for their wrong-doing and also to protect the city from contamination.

You will only *enter the holy city of God through Jesus Christ*. He is our Gate through whom we enter the city of God (*John 10:9*). Receive and believe in Him today and qualify to enter the holy city of God. You receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord by faith through prayer.



***Meditate on verse 15. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, wash me clean so that I'm able to enter the city of God. Amen.**

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**Friday, 13th October 2023. Overcome evil by repenting; Text: Proverbs 28:1-19**

The Bible encourages us *to confess and forsake all wrong doing so that we find mercy in God* (v.13). However, if we conceal our transgressions we will not prosper. Remember you cannot hide anything from God.

We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and we are justified

freely by the grace of God through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross (*Rom.3:23-24*). *A believing sinner is justified, not condemned by virtue of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.* Justification is final and irreversible! Halleluiah! Today, receive and believe in Jesus Christ and you will be justified or declared just by God.



***Meditate on verse 13. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive me for all my transgressions. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 14th October 2023. Lustful thoughts are evil; Text: Matthew 5:27-30**

You must maintain physical purity, and also guard against mental acts of unfaithfulness (v.28). If lustful thoughts are sin, then should one go ahead and commit lustful acts as well? No! Acting out sinful desires is dangerous because: it is a deliberate rebellion against God's Word and it destroys marriages. Sinful desires should not be acted out because they are more dangerous than just desiring. Nevertheless, sinful desires are as bad, and if not checked, will result in wrong actions that will separate you from God.

Jesus Christ said that, *we are defiled by our thoughts, not what we eat or drink (Matt. 15:11)*. We can overcome these evil thoughts or desires only when we are in Jesus Christ who is able to transform us by renewing our minds (*Rom. 12:2*). Receive and believe in Jesus Christ today!



***Meditate on verse 5. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to check my thoughts always. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 15th October 2023. A Christian's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit; Text: 1Corinthians 6:1-17**

A believer's body is the spiritual temple where the Holy Spirit lives (v.15). Therefore, when a believer commits sexual sin, then he is yoking Christ to harlotry. All sexual sin is harlotry. Therefore, as a believer or Christian never involve yourself in any sexual perversion. Never!

Jesus Christ calls all the believers to be perfect as our Father is (*Matt. 5:48*). *You will never be perfect unless you are in Christ*, so that you have the perfection of Christ, not of your own. Your own perfection is false and dirty like filth rags (*Isaiah 64:6*).



***Meditate on verse 15. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, let my body worship You always. Amen.**

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**Monday, 16th October 2023. Sexual sin attacks your own body; Text: 1 Corinthians 6:18-20**

While a believer or Christian can be free to be all he/she can be for God, he/she is not free from God. Sex outside marriage relationship hurts God because it shows the preference of following our own desires other than the leading of the Holy Spirit (*v.18*). It also hurts others because it violates the vows made in the relationship. Sexual sin often brings diseases to our bodies and affects our personality.

You could be struggling with the result of sexual sin you committed, or you are feeling empty and dry because of what you did sexually, come to Jesus Christ. *Christ bore our sins on the cross so that we die to sin and live to righteousness (1 Peter 2:24)*. You receive Christ by faith through personal prayer.



***Meditate on verse 18. How are you going to apply it to yourself?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive me for the sexual sin I have committed. Amen.**

---

**Tuesday, 17th October 2023. Sex should be in the context of marriage; Text: 1 Corinthians 7:1-7**

When single, there is danger of immorality, unless the calling to singleness is from God, there is need to marry (*v.2*). However, marriage should not be reduced to having sex only. Here Paul is stressing the area of sexual sin for unmarried people.

Remember even when you are married, sexual desires will always

materialize! And some of these, very strong, at times, leading you to commit sexual acts. *You can only defeat sexual temptations in Christ.* Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world (*John 1:29*).



***Meditate on verse 2. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, guard me against sexual temptations. Amen.**

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**Wednesday, 18th October 2023. Sexual immorality has no place among Christians; Text: 1 Corinthians 6:15**

It is unfortunate, that today, there is much sexual sin among Christians. This should never be, even when one's culture permits it. All sex outside marriage is sin. Whoever has done it needs to repent, and God will forgive him/her and *he/she will receive forgiveness in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.*



***Meditate on verse 15. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for the gift of salvation, for in You, I am united to the Father. Amen.**

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**Thursday, 19th October 2023. Do not keep company with sexually immoral people; Text: 1 Corinthians 5:1-8**

Much as we need to love all the people, we need to be careful not to keep company with immoral people (*vv.9-10*). This is because they are able to influence you to compromise.

The Bible teaches us to be alert and of sober mind (*1 Peter 5:8*). *You cannot be alert enough without the help of the Holy Spirit.* The Holy Spirit comes in you at the point when you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. Receive Christ and the Holy Spirit will guide all your steps.



***Meditate on verses 9-10. How are you going to respond to them?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to choose and move with good company. Amen.**

**Friday, 20th October 2023. Let us destroy every lustful thoughts in our minds; Text: 2 Corinthians 10:1-8**

We must destroy every argument and these include speculations, reasoning, ideas and thoughts and false religions in which we hide to do wrong and rebel against Christ and His gospel (v.5).

You cannot destroy those arguments on your own because you are not fighting flesh and blood, but the power of darkness and spiritual forces (Eph. 6:12). So, you need the Holy Spirit to guard and guide you. You must have Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord. Jesus Christ said He will be with us until the end of the age (Matt. 28:20).



***Meditate on verses 5-6. How are you going to respond to them?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, give us the ability to defeat the devil. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 21st October 2023. In your singleness serve God; Text: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35**

Some unmarried people, sometimes come under tremendous pressure to be married. Therefore, some think their lives are only complete with a spouse. However, the Scripture is giving us an advantage of being single (v.34). That a single person has the potential to focus more on serving Christ and His work.

Being married has several distractions and is not a remedy for sexual sin. *The only solution to sexual sin is the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 3:6-7).*



***Meditate on verse 34. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray for all the singles in our communities that they will remain in Your will. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 22nd October 2023. Resist temptations; Text: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

The Corinthians had a culture filled with moral depravity and sin enticing pressures. Therefore, the need for Paul to talk to them about temptation

(v.13). In this text, we see that temptations happen to everyone, and we are given examples of those who have resisted temptation, so you can too. Our loving Father will give you a way out as you resist any temptation.

*Jesus Christ is our Hero in resisting temptation (Heb. 4:15).* Receive and believe in Him, He will give you power and victory over every temptation. On your own you will be defeated as many have been, unfortunately.



***Meditate on verse 13. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for the victories over temptations You have given me. Amen.**

---

**Monday, 23rd October 2023. Repent of appearances of evil; Text: Colossians 3:1-11**

Repent of any evil you have done, including sexual perversion, and put on the new nature of having Christ as your Saviour and Lord (v.10). When Christ is in control, your conduct should match your faith.

Being a follower of Christ is more than head knowledge or having good intentions, it is doing right actions. You get rid of evil actions as you continue to grow in Christ. It is a lifelong process. We receive Christ by faith not by works or good intentions.



***Meditate on verse 10. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Our loving Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to continue growing in You. Amen.**

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**Tuesday, 24th October 2023. Flee from Youthful lusts; Text: 2 Timothy 2:14-26**

When you run away from danger, some people may look at you as a coward. Yet actually a wise person will remove himself from an area of temptation (v.22). Run away from anything that provokes evil thoughts. Move away physically from any situation that brings temptation.

You will be able to run away from evil situations when you are in Christ as the Holy Spirit guides and empowers you (*John 16:13*). *Run to Christ today*

*and receive power of the Holy Spirit to guide you moment by moment.*



***Meditate on verse 22. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Loving Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to overcome temptation. Amen.**

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**Wednesday, 25th October 2023. Sexual immorality should not be mentioned among God's children; Text: Ephesians 5:1-14**

The Bible is teaching us, the children of God, that sexual immorality and covetousness should not be mentioned among us (v.3). Yet many times several people have been caught in these areas. Why? Because many of us do not have power to flee from situations of temptations. Even some 'Christians' from wrong churches are taught by false pastors to claim other peoples' properties. Do you see the danger we are in? This is why *it is important to study the Word and apply it moment by moment (Ps. 119:11).*



***Meditate on verse 3. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us for sexual immorality and covetousness that have been mentioned among us. Amen.**

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**Thursday, 26th October 2023. God's Will is that you abstain from sexual immorality; Text: 1Thessalonians 4: 1-8**

How can one go by the Will of God of being holy? This is not the state of your own doing, of hard work, good deeds or in constant fear of failure. It just happens in the process of applying the Word in your life as you live the Christian life (v.3). *You are holy if Christ is in your life.* The Holy Spirit in you works to conform you to the image of Christ. Accept Christ's sacrifice on your behalf and attain holiness of Christ before God.



***Meditate on verse 3. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for Christ's sacrifice, to make me holy. Amen.**

**Friday, 27th October 2023. Do not willingly practice immorality; Text: Hebrews 12:14-17**

It is very dangerous to do immoral acts knowingly (v.16). Esau is an example of those who sinned against God knowingly and was given no second chance because of earlier knowledge of the truth about God. So, it is dangerous for you to go ahead and practice sexual immorality yet you have been exposed to the truth. This is the reason why we need to *thank God beyond our ability for giving us the opportunity to repent and be saved!* It is a miracle! We do not deserve it, it is by grace of God! Look at fallen angels, they had been exposed to the truth of God, and when they fell, they were not given the opportunity to repent (*Jude 1:6*).



***Meditate on the verse 16. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for forgiving me all my sins. Amen**

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**Saturday, 28th October 2023. Remain faithful to your marriage; Text: Hebrews 13:1-6**

The Bible teaches us that married people should be faithful to each other for God judges those that are immoral (v.4). Today many families are in pain because of the unfaithfulness of the spouses involved. Both men and women have become unfaithful to each other in their respective marriages. They need Christ to come into their marriages to cause repentance and forgiveness. *Unless the Lord builds our families, our labours are in vain (Ps.127:1).*



***Meditate on verse 4. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help couples to be faithful to each other. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 29th October 2023. Abstain from fleshly lusts; 1 Peter 2:11-12**

Christians are foreigners on earth because their citizenship is in heaven and are called to abstain from fleshly lusts (v.11). Christians must be disciplined in order to have impact in the world. Discipline in the sense of avoiding desires of the fallen nature. *Fleshly desires are at war within Christians.* Fleshly desires take away the Christians' joy, usefulness and peace found only in Christ. You are able to resist these fleshly desires when you are

genuinely in Christ.



***Meditate on verse 11. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me resist these fleshly desires. Amen.**

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**Monday, 30th October 2023. Your sins will affect your children and your children's children. Text: Exodus 34:1-9**

While children are not punished for the sins of their parents (*Exod.24:16, Ezek. 18:19-32*), they live with and feel the impact of the breaches of God's laws by their disobedient parents (*vv.6-7*). When children are raised in an environment of rebellion against God, they are likely to imbibe and then practice similar sins; expressing disobedience to God on their own. Therefore, as parents, we need to be careful because while rebellion towards God may cause us little pain now, it could severely affect our children and grandchildren in future.

The good news is that when you are in Christ, you are a new creation. The old is gone and the new comes (*2 Cor.5:17*). The moment you receive Christ, the generational curses and sins are cut off and you become new in Christ. *Nothing evil from the devil can follow you while you are in Christ.* The challenge is when one claims to be saved and yet continues to live in sin deliberately. Then the sin of rebellion of their parents will follow them. Then they begin looking for deliverance, but all in vain. If you are saved, then be serious, follow the leading of the Holy Spirit moment by moment, no evil of your parents, if they are or were not saved, will follow you! If you are saved, then you are delivered and redeemed! You need to continue walking in light and repentance, not looking for deliverance?



***Meditate on verses 6-7. How are you going to respond to them?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for making me a new creation in Christ. Amen**

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**Tuesday, 31st October 2023. God forgives us when we confess our sins; Text: 1John 1:5-10**

God will forgive us all our sins when we confess them (*v.9*). 'Confession', means saying the same thing about sin as God does; to acknowledge

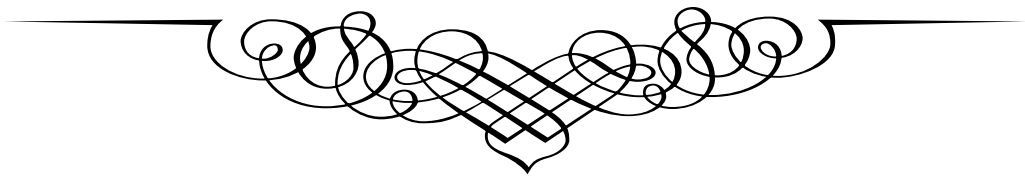
His perspective about sin. Confession frees us to enjoy fellowship with God. In Christ alone, God forgives all the sins we have committed or will ever commit. We do not need to fear that God will reject us if we do not keep our state perfectly clean. It is important that we should continue to confess our sins, but not because failure to do so will make us lose our salvation. Our relationship with God is permanent and secure. We confess so that we can enjoy maximum fellowship with Him. If you are struggling and feeling guilty of any sin, including sexual sin, confess to the Lord and He will restore your joy of salvation.



***Meditate on verse 9. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, I confess all my sins.  
Thank You for forgiving me. Amen.**



**THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2023**

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# LAWLESSNESS

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*The word “lawlessness” can also mean “iniquity”, and the root of lawlessness is the man’s rebellion towards God (1John 3:4).*

*Lawlessness is often contrasted with righteousness (Rom 6:19; 2 Cor.6:14; Heb. 1:9). a Christian should shun evil doers and refuse to associate with the wicked (Ps.26:5). It is only in Christ that one attains true righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, not of one’s own. There is always lawlessness when people avoid God and fail to apply His Word in their lives.*

**Wednesday, 1st November 2023. The Israel avoid God; Text: Judges 21: 16 - 25**

The Bible says that, *"In those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes (Jud.21:25, ESV).* The verse is, indeed, both literal and symbolic; Literal in the sense that Israel had no central monarchy at the time, and symbolic as Israel had ignored God and became spiritually lawless. As a result, there was idol worship, evil practices, chaos and lawlessness.

The lawlessness and chaos we witness today in our societies is because many have shunned Jesus Christ, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings (Rev.17:14). Even some who have confessed Christ as their Lord and Saviour have compromised and failed to live up to Christ's standards. Despite having a government in place, majority, especially those in leadership, seem to do what is right in their own eyes. *Unless we receive Christ as our King, and apply His Word in our lives, corruption and idolatry are going to kill this beautiful country!*



***Meditate on verse 25. How are you going to respond to this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us for the lawlessness we have practiced in this country. Amen.**

---

**Thursday, 2nd November 2023. When people become wise in doing evil; Text: Jeremiah 4:19-31**

That the children of Israel did not know God. They were only wise in doing evil. Therefore, they were foolish, stupid and had no understanding (v.22). The Lord uses this strong language so that the people can be shocked into repentance and for Jeremiah not to sympathise with them.

In Uganda today, we see many people who are foolish, stupid and lacking understanding and wise in doing evil. Look at false pastors and some of those in authority. Deprived of truthfulness, they are very wise in doing evil and misleading and depriving many of their resources, in spite of the truth. The Bible encourages us to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil (Rom.16:19). *You can genuinely know what is good, only when you are in Christ.* We receive and believe in Christ by faith (John 1:12)



***Meditate on verse 22. How are you going to respond to this verse?***



**Our loving heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, give us a yearning to be wise in what is good. Amen.**

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**Friday, 3rd November 2023. Failure to know God; Text: Jeremiah 9:1-6**

God is speaking through prophet Jeremiah that Judah is not knowing Him, instead they speak lies, not valiant for the truth but determined to do evil (v.3). Despite God's love for the people of Judah through which He gave them a prophet to warn them against doing evil, they did not listen and pay heed to God; instead, they were moving from one evil to another.

This is what is happening in this country. Many people, in this country, have rejected God, the reason, we see Chwezi, and others calling themselves gods attracting many people. Some who confess Christ as their Lord and Saviour, compromise, *having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power (2 Tim 3:5)*. You can only know God through His Son, Jesus Christ (*John 14:9*). You receive and believe in Jesus Christ by faith (*John 1:12*).



***Meditate on verse 3. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, give us the grace to know You. Amen.**

---

**Saturday, 4th November 2023. Hypocrisy causes lawlessness; Text: Matthew 23:13-30**

The Pharisees and Scribes appeared righteous outwardly, but inside was all spiritually dead. They seemed to be following the Scripture and they even added rules and regulations for the people to follow; but inwardly they were liars and rebels (v.28). The Bible encourages us to not only hear the Word, but also be the doers of the same. Otherwise, we would be hypocrites (*James 1:22*).

You can only avoid hypocrisy if you genuinely receive and believe in Jesus Christ (*John 1:12*). At the point you receive Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit also comes to dwell in you (*Eph.1:13*). Only the Holy Spirit will enable you to obey God moment by moment, and in the process *avoid hypocrisy and lawlessness*.



*Meditate on verse 28; What are you learning from this verse?*



Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, take away hypocrisy and lawlessness from me. Amen.

---

**Sunday, 5th November 2023. Towards Jesus' second coming; Text: Matthew 24:4-14**

Jesus Christ told His disciples that before His second coming, there would be several signs; including the false prophets, who will rise up and deceive many (v.11). So, do not be surprised when you see many false pastors, men posing as gods, worshiping Chwezi and all manner of idolatry that is going on. All these are signs that our Lord Jesus Christ is coming soon.

*Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord encourages us not to be taken up by impostors and lawless people (v.25). Instead, we should know Him alone, and Him crucified (1 Cor.2:2).*



*Meditate on verse 11. How are you going to respond to it?*



Our loving Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help many who are deceived by false pastors to see Your grace and repent. We pray for false pastors to repent and shepherd the sheep well in holiness and righteousness of Christ. Amen.

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**Monday, 6th November 2023. Anger with no cause is part of lawlessness; Text: Matthew 5:21-26**

Jesus Christ is teaching His disciples that one being angry without justification is part of lawlessness (v.22). As much as God cares for actions, He cares more about the heart. To abuse a person created in the image of God that he or she is 'raka' is as bad as killing him or her. "Raka" means worthless or empty headed or a fool.

Many in Uganda are angry people and many have become tribalistic. Some do not even want to hear of another tribe. Nepotism is high. All these are part of lawlessness. We must repent of being tribalistic and nepotistic, and *the Lord will cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).*



*Meditate on verse 22. How are you going to respond to this verse?*



Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us for the many times we have been unnecessarily angry to one another. Amen.

---

**Tuesday, 7th November 2023. Carnal mind is enmity against God; Text: Romans 8:1-11**

A carnal mind is part of lawlessness because it is an enemy of God (v.7). A carnal mind relishes sinful things and opposes the pure and holy law of God, becoming an enmity against God. A carnal Christian can act like a non-believer.

*A carnal Christian should repent and receive forgiveness from God (1John 1:9). Some of the evil actions should not even be heard among them (Eph. 5:3). Come to Jesus Christ, He will forgive you and give you rest (Matt.11:28).*



***Meditate on verse 7. How are you going to respond to it?***



Our loving Father, in heaven in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us all our sins. Amen.

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**Wednesday, 8th November 2023. We are dead to sin and alive in Christ; Text: Romans 6:1-4**

If you have been saved by grace, then you cannot continue to live in sin (vv.1-2). If you are saved, then you are a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come (2 Cor.5:17). You cannot be a child of God (John 1:12) and continue to live like the devil, being part of lawlessness.

*When you are in Christ, you are dead to sin.* Jesus Christ said that we shall know them by their fruit (Matt.7:16). A saved person is part of the solution to the lawlessness that we are witnessing in our society today.



***Meditate on verses 1-2. What is God teaching you in these verses?***



Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to overcome the temptations. Amen.

---

**Thursday, 9th November 2023. Sin is lawlessness; Text: 1 John 3:4-9**

If you have not received and believed in Jesus Christ, then you are part of the lawlessness in our society (v.4). The evil we see every day is being perpetuated by people who are engaged in lawlessness.

*To avoid being lawlessness, you must repent and receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord (Acts 2:38). Let everyone who sins repent and embrace Christ as His/her Lord and Saviour.*



***Meditate on verse 4. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Our loving heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us for all the sins we have committed. Amen.**

---

**Friday, 10th November 2023. Those who walk according to the flesh; Text: 2 Peter 2:4-11**

The Bible is teaching us that lawlessness is also caused by those who walk according to the flesh (v.10). That they lust for uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous and self-willed. Such can cause headache to the society.

This is what we are experiencing in Uganda. Look at how some people drive on roads, look at how some people are building in urban areas, how some leaders are handling people, you just see lawlessness! *The solution is to receive Christ by faith and apply His Word to their lives (2 Tim 3: 16-17).*



***Meditate on verse 10. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive and heal our land. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 11th November 2023. Sin no longer; Text: Romans 6:5-14**

We should not continue in sin. We are commanded to obey God and quit sinning (v.12). *Let sin not have its way with you any longer;* but, instead, let God control you moment by moment (v.13). Let God win the battle of control in you, not sin. Because if sin wins the battle, then you are set to become part of lawlessness.

Jesus Christ told the man who had been healed to sin no more (*John 5:14*). You cannot be a Christian and continue living in sin. You should obey the Holy Spirit working in you moment by moment. You received the Holy Spirit at the point you received Jesus Christ by faith. Unfortunately, some of the Christians are part of the lawlessness in our society. They must repent and Jesus Christ will forgive them.



***Meditate on verses 12-13. How are you going to apply them to your life?***



**Our Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ, give me victory over all temptations. Amen.**

---

**Sunday, 12th November 2023. Subject yourself under the authority of God; Text: Romans 6:15-23**

Paul tells us that those who have Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour should present their members, that is, bodies, minds and will, *as slaves in the service of righteousness*, (v.9). This is in contrast to how they lived before conversion, when they were slaves to sin and lawlessness.

The challenge we have in our societies, today, is that some of the Christians have not submitted their members fully to the Lordship of Christ. They are living defeated lives, no fresh testimonies and many times they act like non-Christians. The good news is that they still have a chance to repent today, not tomorrow and Jesus Christ will forgive them all their sins.



***Meditate on verse 19. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to subject my members to the Lordship of Christ. Amen.**

---

**Monday, 13th November 2023. You are blessed if your lawlessness is forgiven; Text: Romans 4:1-8**

You are blessed if your lawless acts are forgiven (v.7). Here, Paul quoting from King David, is emphasizing that Old Testament Scriptures always point to faith, not good works as the way to become righteous by God to all who believe. Forgiveness can only be given by God, and cannot be earned.

*You cannot earn forgiveness; it is just given to you by the grace of God. Your worked out righteousness is like filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). Now that you are under the authority of Christ and His righteousness, continue to live in Him (Col.2:6). Avoid being part of lawlessness in your society.*



***Meditate on verse 7. What encouragement do you get from this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ thank You for forgiving me all my sins. Amen.**

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**Tuesday, 14th November 2023. All manner of unrighteousness is lawlessness; Text: Romans 1:28-31**

All manner of unrighteousness, including envy, murder, strife, gossips, boastfulness etc are part of lawlessness (vv.29-31). God will give up on those who do not repent of such (v.28). If you persist in sin, God will give you over to a depraved mind.

The good news is that Jesus Christ is calling you to go to Him for rest (Matt.11:28). Jesus Christ calls you to come to Him, for *His yoke is easy and His burden is light* (Matt.11:30). The lawlessness we witness in society today, is because people have not genuinely come to Christ to be their Saviour and Lord.



***Meditate on verses 29-31. How are you going to respond to them?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Amen.**

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**Wednesday, 15th November 2023. Do not approve lawlessness; Text: Roman 1:32**

One can be part of lawlessness by either directly getting involved in evil practices or by approving those who do evil (v.32). Many, especially carnal Christians, do evil knowingly and others may not, but they approve of the evil doing. For example, if one continues to receive money, knowing it comes from wrong channels, this is approval of the source.

You can be part of lawlessness if you encourage evil to flourish. For

example, *if you do nothing about those perpetuating evil in society*. Be accountable and ask accountability from those that you deal with so that you are not part of lawlessness. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you moment by moment.



***Meditate on verse 32. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me not to directly or indirectly approve of lawlessness in my society. Amen.**

---

**Thursday, 16th November 2023. We were all part of lawlessness; Text: Romans 3:21-32**

All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (v.23). Thank God that He chose us from eternity by His own grace and saved us through Jesus Christ (v.24). Let all those who have been saved by God's grace alone, live to serve and please God. Let them *flee from temptation and avoid being part of lawlessness in our society today!*



***Meditate on verse 24. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Amen.**

---

**Friday, 17th November 2023. Not everyone does the will of God; Text: Matthew 7:21**

Christians should be aware of false leaders and pastors. (v.21) They claim to be knowing and serving God, when actually they are not. Mere words and actions are not enough. Only sincerity and truth are. Acts of righteousness and calling Christ Lord as you hear many do is not enough.

Many times you see false pastors holding Holy Bibles, calling Jesus Christ the Lord. Indeed, He is, but leading many people to hell, including themselves. Many of those who confess Christ as their savior and Lord are part of the problem, part of lawlessness. If you are a church leader and you sell church land or divert church money, you are part of lawlessness, part of the problem. *Repent and Jesus Christ will forgive you and begin to fellowship with Him.*



*Meditate on verse 21. How are you going to respond to it?*



Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me call on Your name and work for Your glory with sincerity and truth. Amen.

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**Saturday, 18th November 2023. People practicing lawlessness will not go to heaven; Text: Matthew 7:22**

Not everyone who calls Jesus Christ Lord will enter heaven! *Only those who do His will shall be saved.* You may be someone leading a ministry, church or a fellowship, you must do everything with a sincere heart and truth, not for a show. Some of our leaders, do not practice what they teach, some teach wrong things and do wrong things, deceiving many. Such are part of lawlessness and they must genuinely repent and God will forgive them in the name of Jesus Christ.



*Meditate on verse 22. What is God teaching you in this verse?*



Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me serve You as guided by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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**Sunday, 19th November 2023. You do not know God if you are an evil doer; Text: Mathew 7:23**

*Great works will never earn you salvation.* Salvation is for those who do the will of God. The will of God is to believe in Jesus Christ and receive the gift of forgiveness of sin through the death of Jesus Christ. In this verse 23, Jesus Christ is the judge who will grant right of entry to those who believe and condemn those who will not qualify. Therefore, *get it right, receive Christ as your Saviour and Lord.* And then serve Him as an act of gratitude of what He has done for you. It is when you are in Christ that you sincerely serve Him in truth.



*Meditate on verse 23. What is God teaching you in this verse?*



Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ help me not to be a worker of lawlessness. Amen.

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**Monday, 20th November 2023. Expose lawlessness; Text: Ephesians 5:1-12**

The Bible tells us not to take part in lawlessness, instead, to expose it (v.11). Exposing it does not mean speaking in graphic details about a particular sin (v.12). *Believers should point out sin for the benefit of others; otherwise, sin grows and spoils the whole fellowship or church.*

Many times Christians keep quiet when there is evil going on, around them. Yet we should not fear even for our lives (Rev.12:11). Some are accomplices; they live defeated lives. They need to pray for repentance and the filling by the Holy Spirit. You will be bold to speak for God only when you are in Christ (Acts 4:13). You receive Christ by faith alone through prayer.



*Meditate on verse 11. How are you going to apply it to your life?*



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, give us the boldness to expose evil in our society. Amen.**

---

**Tuesday, 21st November 2023. Those engaged in lawlessness need to repent; Text: Acts 2:36-41**

There is good news for those engaged in lawlessness. *They must repent and receive forgiveness* of their sins (v.38). Jesus Christ is the only name given to man through which one must be saved (4:12). Today, is the time for you to receive Christ as your Lord and Saviour, in case you are not yet saved (2 Cor.6:2). You receive Christ by faith through prayer. (John 1:12).



*Meditate on verse 38. How are you going to apply it to your life?*



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, I pray for many who are lost that they repent and receive Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Amen.**

---

**Wednesday, 22nd November 2023. Jesus Christ will separate the godly from the ungodly; Text: Matthew 13:36-43**

While God will separate the godly from the ungodly, He will also separate godly from ungodliness (v.40). It is important to note that this verse, Jesus Christ by saying that *"the Son of Man ..."* (v.41) clearly asserts divine authority. That those that practice lawlessness will be judged harshly (v.42). Those who are practicing evil and cause mayhem for others will be thrown into the fiery furnace.

*The good news is that Jesus came so that His own may receive abundant life (John 10:10). Repent and receive Him today and have eternal life (1 John 5:13)*



***Meditate on verse 42. How are you going to respond to this verse?***



**Heavenly father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us all our sins. In your judgement, have mercy on us. Amen.**

---

**Thursday, 23rd November 2023. Watch out for lawlessness; Text: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

Christians need to be very careful so that they are not deceived by the man of lawlessness and fall away (v.3). Do not be part of those who are deceived and are perishing because they refuse to love the truth and so be saved (v.10). The man of lawlessness will commit the sacrilege of imposing himself upon humanity as its object of worship (v.4). He comes by the power of Satan, as Christ came by the power of God. and works fraudulent wonders as Christ worked the true ones (v.9).

However, those who are genuinely in Christ cannot be deceived for no one can snatch them from the hand of God. (John 10:28). *In Christ, you are more than conquerors (Rom.8:3).* Receive Christ today and have the eternal life!



***Meditate on verse 3. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, I pray that Your children will not be deceived by the devil. Amen.**

---

**Friday, 24th November 2023. Your actions should be in tandem with a changed life; Text: Titus 1:10-16**

*As a Christian, if your actions are not consistent with a changed life in Christ, then you are not genuinely saved, you are part of the lawlessness (v.16).* One may not be sure of what is happening in another heart; but their actions speak volumes. Hypocrisy is part of lawlessness.

If you are truly saved by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, then you are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). You continue to show the fruit of the Holy

Spirit more and more (Gal. 5:22-23).



***Meditate on verse 16. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, give me the spirit of obedience. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 25th November 2023. Watch out for wrong people, part 1:  
Text: 2 Timothy 3:2**

During the time of the reign of lawlessness some people will be selfish, rather than serving others, obsessed with wealth, they will be proud as they are pre-occupied with people looking at them, they will be arrogant, putting themselves above others, they will be abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful and unholy (v.2).

This is what we see in Uganda today. Because someone is obsessed with wealth, he can kill, steal, pass substandard items, grab property from the poor, administer fake drugs and take money for government projects such as roads, school and hospitals. *One can be satisfied and contented only in Christ (John 4:14).*



***Meditate on verse 2. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Our loving Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me to have genuine love for You. Amen.**

---

**Sunday, 26th November 2023. Watch out for wrong people, part 2: Text:  
2 Timothy 3:3**

Lawlessness will come with heartlessness, meaning being inhuman towards others; unpleasable, viz- refusal to honor agreements, slanderous, making false accusations, they lack self-control, they are brutal and haters of godly things and good people (v.3). You cannot be surprised with what you see today! To get services, in this country, is becoming increasingly difficult, for a godly person. Lack of self-control is rampant today, the reason we have so many under-age pregnancies.

However, fore-warned is fore-armed, Jesus Christ had warned that those who follow Him will be hated by the world (John 13:18-21). And He

*encouraged that He has overcome the world for us (John 16:13). Therefore, stand firm only in Christ.*



***Meditate on verse 3. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ protect us from the lawless people. Amen.**

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**Monday, 27th November 2023. Watch out for wrong people, part 3:  
Text: 2Timothy 3:4**

The evil people in these “last days”, meaning in today’s era of the church, are treacherous – they are traitors, they are reckless – they do not think before they act; they are “conceited”, meaning they are blinded by their own sense of self-worth; they are consumed with hedonism and entertainment other than the will of God.

*It is only in Jesus Christ that you find order (1 Cor.14:33). In Christ, recklessness is gone and genuine love for God is established. Repent and receive Christ today.*



***Meditate on verse 4. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, help me not to be reckless with my salvation. Amen.**

---

**Tuesday, 28th November 2023. Watch out for wrong people, part 4:  
Text: 2 Timothy 3:5**

The false pastors are dangerous as they pretend to be genuine Christians (v.5). They know how to “window dress”; believing in God, but not allowing the power of the Holy Spirit to control them. You must avoid such people.

*The Bible encourages us to separate ourselves from evil people or else we will share in their sins (Rev. 18:4). You will be able to separate yourself from wrong company with the help of the Holy Spirit, who you receive at a point you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord.*



***Meditate on verse 5. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ give me the ability to**

avoid wrong company. Amen.

---

**Wednesday, 29th November 2023. Do not live in sin; Text: Hebrew 10:19-31**

A number of people who have come to the knowledge of the gospel sometimes reject it and embrace sinning. This is reason you see many churches full of people; but when you go to some of the offices you notice a lot of evil going on (v.26). If a Christian continues to live in sin, it means he never genuinely got saved in the first place.



***Meditate on verse 26. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, cleanse us with the blood of Jesus. Amen.**

---

**Thursday, 30th November 2023. Disobedience causes lawlessness: Text: Ephesians 2:1-10**

By nature, all humanity is spiritually dead; we are all children of wrath, both; Gentiles (v.2) and Jews (v.3). We are rebellious against God, and we are unable to change ourselves from rebellion against God (John 3:3). Since we are subject to evil rule of Satan, we rebel against God and cause lawlessness instinctively.

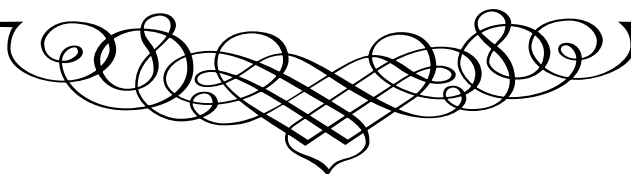
Praise God for Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, for in Him, children of wrath, can be born again and receive forgiveness from God. Only Jesus Christ can change a child of wrath, of lawlessness to have fellowship and serve God, rather than Satan. Receive Jesus Christ today by faith and begin to fellowship with God.



***Meditate on verse 5. How are you going to respond to it?***



**Our loving Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for the gift of salvation. Help me, by Your Spirit, to hold it unto eternity. Amen.**



## THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2023

# THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH, OUR HOPE



*This month of December is one of great importance to the Christian community – the celebration of Christmas; the fulfillment of the promise of the Saviour's arrival. Of course, much of the excitement is for children, who will be on school break and will be eager to receive a gift and have a nice meal on Christmas day!*

*Several years ago, about a week before Christmas, I was standing in a shop waiting to make a purchase when I heard a primary school girl tell her younger brother, "Church ruins Christmas this year!" That year Christmas day fell on a Sunday, and the girl knew the family would be attending worship, which somewhat downhearted her. Of course, it was a childish comment, but still sad. The exact opposite sentiment should be in our hearts – what a great blessing to have Christmas day fall on the Lord's Day. That is what the Lord's Day worship is about – Jesus Christ, who He is and what He did. The Christmas season is about Christ's arrival, about the fulfillment of the prophecies that pointed to Him, about the Scriptures He would be fulfilling in His life, especially about the salvation He would accomplish, and about the promise (certainty) of His second advent on some future day. These themes will be the subject of the December devotional messages, within the overarching theme of: The Coming of the Messiah, our Hope.*

*This month, consider making the DAYBREAK meditations something you and your family do each day as part of your preparations for the Christmas celebration. Perhaps you can read these as you gather at the evening meal or before the children go to bed, etc. May God richly bless you and your family.*

**Friday, 1st December 2023. The first announcement of the Saviour's birth; Text: Genesis 3:1-15**

When the LORD God, Yahweh, created Adam, He commanded Adam not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he did eat, he would die, separated from God forever. When Adam sinned, disobeyed Yahweh, and ate the forbidden fruit, death did enter the world. But God also brought the promise of grace: from the woman would come a Saviour (*υ.15*), a man who alone will destroy the work of Satan, reverse the curse brought by Adam's sin, and restore the blessing of eternal life with God. God's promise was about Jesus Christ. Sadly, many millions of people have been separated from God for eternity. But also, ever since God made that announcement, millions have trusted the promise of God and will be with Him forever.

Jesus Christ accomplished what Adam failed to do. Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to God's Law, and *His obedience is put to the believer's account, as if the believer was the one who obeyed*. Then, when Jesus was on the cross, God the Father put the believers' sin and guilt upon Jesus, and punished Jesus instead of believers, so that their penalty is completely paid. On the third day Jesus came back to life, breaking the power of death. Jesus then returned to the Father to intercede for believers. If you believe this message, if you will trust that Jesus did all this for you, then God promises that you will be with Him forever. Your proper response is to live a life of gratitude, loving obedience to God, according to God's Word, the Bible. Your obedience will not be perfect, and you will still sin, but do not fear. Jesus has already secured your salvation. Trust Him alone.



***Meditate on verse 15. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for Your promise of grace, which was secured by Jesus. I pray You give me grace to trust Jesus more every day; and grace to live a grateful, loving, obedient life, to the glory of Christ, through whom I pray. Amen.**

**Saturday, 2nd December 2023. The principles of trust and substitution; Text: Genesis 22:1-18**

This story of Abraham's willingness to kill his son, Isaac, provides many lessons for us. Today, we will consider trust and substitution. Abraham and his wife, Sarah, had no children, and he was 75 years of age when Yahweh first promised to give him descendants so that all the families of

the earth would be blessed (*Gen.12:3-4*). Twenty-five years later Isaac was born. When Isaac was still a youth, God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, as a test of Abraham's trust in God's promise. Abraham did as he was commanded because he had faith in Yahweh's promise of world-wide blessing through Isaac, and, if necessary, he knew Yahweh was able to bring Isaac back to life (*Heb.11:19*). Abraham also knew that God would provide a substitute for Isaac (*22:8*). What happened with Abraham and Isaac is a picture of what would happen with Yahweh and Jesus.

The world-wide blessing of peace with God did indeed come through Abraham, then through Isaac, and eventually reaching God's eternal Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the true, perfect substitute and sacrifice. *When Jesus was on the cross, the sins of His people were put on Him, and He paid their death penalty and satisfied God's justice.* This blessing of substitution for sinners is now going out to all the world. If you trust that Jesus paid your penalty for your sin, then you will in fact be clean before God, accepted by Him, and received into eternal life. This Christmas season, remember and celebrate that blessing. The sacrifice Jesus made is why He was born into the world.



***Meditate on verse 8. What encouragement do you get from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for providing a substitute, Your eternal Son, Jesus Christ, to pay my death penalty for my sin. Make me rejoice and live in that blessing every day. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 3rd December 2023. First Sunday of Advent (which means coming or arrival); Text: Exodus 12:1-13.**

For many churches, the four Sundays before Christmas are given special Christmas emphasis. But we should always remember, every Sunday is "the Lord's Day", a day to worship Jesus Christ, a day to praise Him for who He is and what He has done. Today, the first Sunday of Advent, is often referred to as the *Prophecy Sunday*. It gives special remembrance to the many Scripture passages that speak about the arrival of the Messiah, the anointed Saviour Jesus. Today, we read about the first Passover, the night when Israel was delivered from their enslavement to Egypt. In the Israelites homes a lamb was killed, roasted, and eaten. The lamb's blood was smeared on the door frame outside. Families that displayed the blood were protected from having their first-born sons killed by God; the house was passed over (*12:13*).

That prophecy is not categorically stated, per se, but it is clearly implied in the activity. Deliverance was gotten when the lamb was slain and the blood was applied. This deliverance looks forward to the work of Jesus Christ, the true, perfect Lamb of God (*1 Cor.5:7*). Those who trust Jesus to be their Saviour, who apply Christ's death to their lives, they will not face eternal condemnation from God. *Believers are delivered from their enslavement to sin*. They deserve condemnation, but Christ paid their penalty, His blood is applied to them, so they are free. This Christmas, as you gather with your church and family, speak about this great gift of deliverance, rejoice in it, encourage one another to love the Christ-child, because He came to die for His people and set them free to serve God.



***Meditate on verse 13. How are you going to apply it to your life?***



**Our Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, whose death-blood You have applied to us so that we are saved from condemnation and are set free from the power of sin. Give us grace to serve You in this life as well as in eternity. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

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**Monday, 4th December 2023. Christ is lifted up to die to destroy death;  
Text: Numbers 21:4-9**

In the verses before today's passage, we read of Israel asking Yahweh to bless them with a military victory over some people of southern Canaan. And Yahweh granted their prayer. In today's passage, Yahweh continues leading Israel; but in a direction they do not like. So they complain. One day they love God and the next day they hate Him. So, God punishes them by sending poisonous snakes into the camp, and many people die. Then the people confess their sin and beg Moses to pray for deliverance. God's solution is for a bronze statue of a serpent be made and put on a pole. If a person who is bitten looks at the statue of the thing that is killing him, then he will be saved. This provision also prepared the people for the redemptive work of Christ.

Please read *John 3:14-15* now. Jesus was speaking about His own death, saying that He would serve His people the same way the bronze serpent served the Israelites. They looked at the thing that was killing them and lived. *So, what is killing us?* Sin is. Does that mean when we "look at" Jesus on the cross we are seeing sin? Yes! Apostle Paul writes, God made Jesus, who never committed any sin, to be sin for us ... (*2 Cor.5:21*). When

a person looks at Jesus, meaning trusts that Jesus alone took his sin and punishment, then that person will be saved from death (sent away from God) and be saved to eternal life with God. This Christmas, please remember that the infant Jesus was born for the purpose of bearing our condemnation so that we can be saved from condemnation.



***Meditate on verse 9. How do you apply such a verse to your life?***



**Our Father, we know we sin every day and deserve condemnation. Thank You for providing free salvation through Your Eternal Son! Your grace is amazing. In Christ we pray. Amen.**

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**Tuesday, 5th December 2023. A prophet like Moses; Text: Deuteronomy 18:15-19**

Deuteronomy records the final words of Moses. In the passage right before today's reading, Moses warns of evil prophets (mediums, necromancers, etc.), who claim to look into the future by using wicked, ungodly methods. But Moses informs the people that there is coming to them another prophet who will be like Moses. Moses is different from all others. His information about God and of God's will was received directly from God in a face-to-face revelation. Before Christ, there would always be proper prophets who receive new revelation from Yahweh (*Num.12:6*). But there would only be one more prophet who would see God face-to-face and receive revelation in that fashion – Jesus Christ, and His revelation will be delivered as God the eternal Son Himself dwelling among His people.

Because we are so long past the birth of Jesus and His fulfillment of the prophecy, and much longer past Moses, we do not have the sense of great expectation. So, as we think about the infant Jesus in the barn, sleeping in a food box, let us be very intentional about remembering this promise from Moses. *God Himself entered our existence to meet with us and to speak with us face-to-face!* Everything we need to know; the Lord Jesus gave to His disciples to record in Scripture. We need no more prophets, no more apostles. We do not need to wonder what God wants from us. All we need to hear we have received from God directly. Spend time reading God's Word every day. Listen as He speaks to you through it.



***Meditate on verse 18. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for speaking to us in the Bible, and thank**

**You for sending Your Son into our existence to speak to us directly and to save us from our sins and their punishment. Move us to read each day so that we can mature in faith. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

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**Wednesday, 6th December 2023. Yahweh will build an eternal house for King David; Text: 2 Samuel 7:8-17**

King David was a man who only worshipped the one true and living God – Yahweh. As David sat in his nice house, he was sad that the ark of God (*the representation of God's presence*) sat in a tent. David wanted to build a fine temple for the ark, the altar, etc., for God's worship. It was a proper desire; but God did not want David to build it, because David was a man of war. God chose David's son, Solomon, to build the Temple. We read about Solomon building the Temple in *1 Kings 6*. But in the passage today, we also read that David's son would reign forever (*7:13*), and Solomon died. How did Yahweh keep His promise?

God was speaking about Jesus Christ, who is God the eternal Son and physically descended from David (*Luk.3:31,38*). (*Jesus is one person, with two distinct natures, which are inseparably joined, not mixed.*). Jesus was born into our world to *build an eternal house for God, a house not made of brick but of people* (*Eph.2:19-22; 1 Pet.2:5*). In order to do that, Jesus must first make His people fit to be bricks for this spiritual house. From the moment of conception in Mary's womb, Jesus lived a perfect righteous life; He died to pay the sin penalty of His people; and He broke the power of death, which showed that the death penalty was finished. Thus, Jesus made peace between God and man. Please, if you trust that Jesus did these things for you, then you also will be a living stone placed in God's eternal house. Then you should live like it.



***Meditate on verse 13. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for making us to be Your dwelling place. It is an honour we never deserve. Please, bless us with Your grace to live as those who have God living in them. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

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### Thursday, 7th December 2023. God has installed His Eternal Son upon the throne; Text: Psalm 2:1-12

For today, and for the next three days, we will be looking at Messianic Psalms, that speak about the Messiah, the One who is anointed for the office of Redeemer, who will be King – Jesus Christ. *Psalm 2* begins by asking why the authorities and people of the world rise up against God and His Anointed King. They do so because Adam turned away from God to serve his own interests. Since then, humanity has tried to remove God. But it is a futile effort, ending in certain defeat, because God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and everything else is just a creature, a vapor that cannot survive on its own. God has the last word. *Psalm 2* looks into the future when God will set up His own chosen King to rule over all the kingdoms.

This battle continues into our own day, but the strongest rebellion was against Jesus during His earthly ministry. Even when Jesus was a small child, Herod tried to kill Him (*Mat.2:13*). And throughout Jesus' ministry the religious authorities opposed Jesus. Eventually they put Him to death, a death that was according to God's plan and work for securing redemption. We might expect the King to send an army of angelic destroyers. But God Himself, King Jesus, came into the midst of the rebellious people for the purpose of being killed in order to pay His peoples' sin penalty, so that they could be brought into eternal life. *The death penalty for rebellion must be paid. Jesus paid it for us*, and He returned to the throne above all creation. Let us worship and serve the King with all our being.



***Meditate on verse 1. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, we confess that we are by nature rebels at heart, in mind, and life. Thank You for not destroying us, but rather, for giving us a Saviour. We pray, in the name of King Jesus. Amen.**

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### Friday, 8th December 2023. God's promise of resurrection; Text: Psalm 16:1-11

This *Psalm* is written by King David, who cries out to Yahweh for protection. But it is also a *Psalm* that looks 1000 years into the future to the time of Messiah Jesus. David says to Yahweh that He is everything to him (*vv.2,6*), and God's people are David's delight (*v.3*). Sorrows will be many for those who will trust and worship false gods rather than worshipping Yahweh (*v.4*), and David will not join with those people. He also knew there would

be eternal delights by serving Yahweh (v.17). There is an implication that eternity for idolaters will be full of misery. Among the blessings for believers is resurrection, "... *You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay*" (v.10).

Apostles Peter and Paul understood that this Psalm was also pointing to Jesus Christ (Ac.2:28,3; 13:35). Peter reminded his listeners that David died, and his grave was still with them, meaning he had decayed. But the promise in Ps.16 is that there would be no decay. The *Psalm*, therefore, was fulfilled not by David but by Jesus; He was raised and did not see decay. All of us will die someday, and our bodies will decay in the grave. But Jesus broke the power that death has over us, *and one day those who belong to Christ will also be raised, with perfect bodies*, and we will live with the Lord forever. The *great gift of Christmas is eternal life in perfection with God*, where there will never again be decay. By God's grace, let us live as resurrected people now and not as those who are decaying in death.



***Meditate on verse 11. What encouragement do you get from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for the promise of eternal life with You, the promise which is made certain by Christ's resurrection. Make us live now as people raised in Christ. We pray in His name. Amen.**

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### **Saturday, 9th December 2023. Forsaken by Yahweh; Text: Psalm 22:1-31**

The pain and despair expressed in this Psalm might make you think David is not even a believer, because a believer would never think of God abandoning His child. Or perhaps the Psalm will make someone think that God is unreliable or cruel or fickle. Scripture teaches clearly Yahweh is not like that, and He does not abandon His people. However, occasionally He "hides" Himself for a time, as He did with Jōb (*Jōb 23:3*) and gives distress so that the Christian will grow in knowledge of, and trust in, God, or see the emptiness of the world's ways, among others. The anguish David writes about is very great, but it is actually an expression of faith, as the rest of the *Psalm* shows. He knows God is there, and he is crying out for understanding.

When Jesus was suffering on the cross, bearing the sin-penalty of His people, He cried out in the words of David (v.1; *Mat.27:46*). Jesus did not doubt His Father's presence, and He did not need to learn a lesson. His

Words were for us to understand what was happening. But what was different in Jesus' cry was, at that moment, He was in fact really being forsaken by the Father. We sinners should have been abandoned by Yahweh – justly, but Jesus' cry shows us that He took our forsakenness. Those who do not belong to Jesus Christ will one day be cast away from God forever. *But we who belong to Him will be brought into His Kingdom and embraced!* Could there be a greater Christmas gift than that?! Go out and live like someone living in the loving arms of God.



***Meditate on verse 1. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for Your amazing grace to us. What unspeakable love it is that You forsook Your Eternal Son, from whom you were never apart, so that offenders could enjoy Your eternal embrace. Make us to live like children of God. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 10th December 2023. Jesus Christ is the Cornerstone of God's living Temple; Text: Psalm 118:22-24**

In each of the first four verses of this Psalm, the writer states boldly that the steadfast love of Yahweh endures forever (*an excellent phrase we all should memorize!*). *God's love is gotten by covenant and cannot be broken.* The writer is quick to declare that all his troubles are overcome by God's love, which is steadfast and unchangeable. Even when the writer was surrounded by enemies and pushed down, Yahweh cut them off and raised His servant, His worshipper. The writer illustrates his difficulties, and Yahweh's salvation, by comparing it to a stone which the builders do not want to use, yet Yahweh uses that stone for the corner. A cornerstone is the most important stone of a foundation; it is placed first, and from it the level, depth, and directions of the other foundation blocks are established.

Jesus refers to *Psalm 118:22*, and the principle of it, when He speaks to the religious authorities (*Mat.21:42*). Jesus knows that He will be killed by these authorities (and others); Jesus is the "stone" that is "rejected" (*crucified*) by the leadership, who are the failed "builders" of Israel. But His resurrection on the third day shows that Jesus is chosen by God to be the cornerstone of God's living Temple (*1 Pet.2:5-8*). There is often a celebration when construction on a new building starts, and *during Christmas we celebrate the arrival of the all-important stone upon which God's people are building-blocks of His Temple.* Are you living like someone who celebrates

Christ and who is a grateful spiritual “stone” of His Temple?



***Meditate on verse 22. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for Your steadfast love. How grateful we are that You have joined us to one another and have founded us upon Your Son. Strengthen us to live that way, for His honour. Amen.**

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**Monday, 11th December 2023. Jesus Christ is the light for the nations;  
Text: Isaiah 42:1-7**

In other places of Scripture, we are taught that God is light, as in *1 John 1:5*, “*God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.*” When God created light, He was making a physical representation of His nature. But light also has a spiritual significance. Knowledge of God and life in Him is also light (*Ps.119:130; John 1:4; 2 Cor.4:6*). When Adam sinned, he chose a life of darkness for all humanity, a life apart from God, especially apart from knowledge about deliverance from sin and about reconciliation with God. Yahweh’s promise in *Isaiah 42* is that He will send a person to be the light for sinners (*v.6*), to remove spiritual darkness, and to give spiritual light – knowledge of God and salvation. That person is Jesus Christ.

On the day, Jesus was born to Mary, God’s light for the nations entered our existence. Jesus’ earthly ministry pointed to that. When Jesus healed a person’s blindness, it was not only about physical sight. The miracle showed that Jesus was the spiritual light of the world (*John 9:5-7*). The removal of physical blindness was performed for us to understand that *Jesus removes spiritual blindness and gives spiritual sight, the light of life (John 8:12)*. In Christ we have knowledge of God and of His will for us, especially the light of salvation. During the Christmas season, when many beautiful lights are displayed, let us remember that this festive season is about God’s gift of true light, Jesus Christ, the light of life. Please, trust Jesus to be your Saviour, live in His pure light, and be a messenger of the light to those who are still in the darkness of sin.



***Meditate on verses 6-7. What is God teaching you in these verses?***



**Our Father, thank You for giving to us the light of life – Jesus Christ. Please forgive our dark ways and give us Your grace to walk in the light, as He is in the light. In Christ, we pray. Amen.**

**Tuesday, 12th December 2023. God's suffering servant is our substitute and peacemaker; Text: Isaiah 52:13-53:12**

Today's passage is focused on the expectation that Messiah (*anointed by God as Saviour*) will take the place of sinners so that He could take their punishment for their sin. The word used by Prophet Isaiah is very clear about this substitution. In 53:5 alone, he writes about Messiah substituting for His people four times; twice he mentions that Messiah takes our sin (*transgressions, iniquities*) and twice he writes that Messiah faced punishment so that we could have peace and well-being. Peace refers to peace with Yahweh. Sinners by nature break God's laws; so, they are His enemies. But when *the Messiah pays the penalty for sin, God's people are then at peace with Him.*

Jesus was born to live a perfectly righteous life according to God's Law so that He could be the perfect substitute for His people's sin penalty. When He was nailed to the tree, God put the sins of His people onto Jesus (*1 Pet.2:24*). Then God punished Jesus instead of punishing His people. Also, Christ's righteousness was put to His people's account. As a result, we have peace with God – our sin and guilt were removed, our penalty was paid, and we are accepted by God as righteous. What a wonderful gift to celebrate at this Christmas season – peace with God (*Luk.2:14*). *Have you received and opened that gift from God?* If not, then trust that Jesus paid your sin penalty so that you can be free from condemnation and be at peace with God now and forever.



***Meditate on Isaiah 53:12. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for the gift of pardon and peace through Your Eternal son, Jesus Christ. I receive it gladly. Please give me grace to live it. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.**

**Wednesday, 13th December 2023. Yahweh anointed Messiah to proclaim liberty; Text: Isaiah 61:1-11**

When Prophet Isaiah was writing, the ten northern *tribes of Israel were within one generation away from destruction (which happened about 722 BC)*, and then a generation after that, exile to Babylon would begin for the southern tribe of Judah. The reason for the devastation was because of idolatry; the people abandoned Yahweh and worshipped man-made gods. But in the chapter you just read, before destruction came, we see a gracious covenant promise from Yahweh to bring His people back to the

land, “liberty to the captives ... opening the prison” (61:1). Bible history tells us the people of Israel were brought back, beginning about 536 BC.

At the start of Jesus’ public ministry, when He was in His hometown, He read this passage to the synagogue and said it was fulfilled in Him (*Luk.4:21*). But if Israel was already returned from exile, how was the promise fulfilled by Jesus? When Adam disobeyed God, he was cast out of the garden, exiled from God’s presence, and in Adam all humanity was exiled. Israel’s return was a physical example of what would happen spiritually for God’s people. *Your sin that exiled you away from God was placed upon Jesus at the cross; Jesus paid your death penalty; He took your exile (Mat.27:46)*. And because believers are united to Christ, His resurrection brought you back to God. Going back home to God – what a wonderful Christmas gift. Now, live no longer like a person who is far from God.



*Meditate on verse 1. How are you going to apply it to your life?*



**Our Father, living away from You is dark and frightening. Thank You for restoring us to Yourself, through Jesus. Please give us grace to live like those who belong to God. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

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**Thursday, 14th December 2023. Messiah will bring in everlasting righteousness; Text: Daniel 9:24-27**

Prophet Daniel was a man of God, who was probably a teenager, when he was taken into Babylon with the first exiles from Judah, exiled because of idolatry. Yahweh promised to return His people to their land after 70 years (*Jer.29:10*). Daniel recognizes the time for return has arrived; so, he enters into prayer about that. In this chapter, Daniel spends much time confessing his sins and the sins of his people and interceding for Judah. Then Gabriel, a messenger from heaven, was sent by God to speak to Daniel about answered prayer. The people of Judah will be returned; but the message Gabriel brings is about the time when Messiah will come. Israel was never able to maintain righteousness, and difficult times were still ahead for them. But in the midst of their distress, Messiah will establish everlasting righteousness.

Righteousness is not something any human can accomplish. But Jesus Christ, the God-man, was able to, and did, accomplish righteousness. His perfect work of life, death, and resurrection for His people allows them to

be accepted by God as righteous, and together they are God's righteous nation. *Because Jesus obeyed righteousness for His people and paid their death penalty for their sin (Dan.9:), righteousness was thus established.* Like Daniel, we must always confess our sins and ask for grace to live righteously, according to God's Law. Your righteous deeds do not make you acceptable to God. You only deserve condemnation. It is essential to understand that your deeds are the fruit, the result of the salvation that God gives freely by His grace in Christ.



***Meditate on verse 24. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, it is a most gracious privilege to be declared righteous and brought into Your righteous nation. Give us grace to live before You in righteousness. In the name of our righteous Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

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### **Friday, 15th December 2023. God brings Israel out of Egypt; Text: Hosea 11:1-12**

The nation of Israel was enslaved in Egypt for about 400 years, and then Yahweh used Moses to lead them out of that bondage. Prophet Hosea was writing to Israel about 700 years after that deliverance. The chapter you read today (*I hope*) looks back at that deliverance for the people to remember. Even though Israel was delivered by God's grace, they did not live grateful, obedient, loving lives to their Deliverer. They worshipped and served false gods, man-made gods (v.2). Israel deserved to be punished greatly (v.9), but God said, *"I will not execute my burning anger ... I will not come in wrath"* (vv.8-9). *Yahweh's eternal plan was to bring permanent spiritual healing to His people.*

There is a certain theology called "typology", which means things, persons, events, etc., in the Scripture before Christ, serve as pictures of things in the person and/or work of Christ, of the Church, etc. Apostle Matthew sees Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from Egypt as a type. In today's passage, just as God brought Israel out of Egypt to serve Him, even so infant Jesus, God's Son, was brought out of Egypt (*Mat.2:15*) so that He could serve God, as Israel failed to do. Jesus is true Israel, and He established pure worship of God. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection are applied to His people; *the Holy Spirit indwells His people; and we have been made true worshippers of God.*



***Meditate on verse 9. What encouragement do you get from this verse?***



**Our Father, by Your grace, please make me to be a true worshipper of God in my thoughts, affections, words, and deeds, all for the glory of our Saviour Jesus. I pray through Him. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 16th December 2023. Messiah King of Israel comes to His people with humility; Text: Zechariah 9:1-17**

After the Israelites returned from exile, the prophets Zechariah and Haggai were writing to the people. They are especially focused on encouraging the people to rebuild Yahweh's Temple and re-start proper worship of God. In the first half of the chapter for today, Zechariah strengthens the people by telling them of God's judgment against foreign nations and protection of His people (v.8). King Messiah will not bring destruction like an enemy, but blessing. He will come to them in peace and humility (*riding a young donkey, not a war horse*). The end of the chapter tells about the great blessings King Yahweh will bring to His nation.

This scene foreshadows the day Jesus entered Jerusalem for the final week of His earthly ministry, just a few days before He would be crucified. When Matthew records this event (*Mat.21:4-5*), he says Jesus is fulfilling what was written by the prophet (*Zech.9:9*). It is especially important to note that in the context of *Zechariah 9*, the King who comes to Israel is Yahweh Himself. Thus, Matthew wants us to understand that Jesus is both King and God. Indeed, the people walking into the city with Jesus were shouting, "Hosanna", which is a word of praise and a cry for salvation, which only God can provide. Christmas is not just a time of happiness and joy; it is about why there is joy. *The King, Jesus Christ, has come to us and has provided salvation*. Let us rejoice and be glad (*Ps.118:24*).



***Meditate on verse 9. What encouragement do you get from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for this time of year when we remember again that You came to us and provided salvation through Your Son, our King. In His name, we pray. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 17th December 2023. The Shepherd betrayed for silver; Text: Zechariah 11:12-13**

Sheep are helpless creatures. They are not fast enough to run away from attackers; they have no claws or fangs that kill predators; they wander away from proper food and water. Sheep need a shepherd to guide, protect, and care for them. The nation of Israel/Judah are spiritual sheep, and *they need a spiritual shepherd to keep them away from the evils that destroy their souls*. Yahweh removed evil shepherds and became their Shepherd (v.7). But the sheep hated Him (v.8b), which is the nature of sin. The sheep (*Israel*) pretend like they appreciated the Shepherd's help and gave Him 30 pieces of silver as a "thank you" gift (v.12); but they were mocking; they were glad He was gone. So, He threw the money back into the Temple in disgust (v.13). Israel had always thrown off Yahweh's presence and blessings, ever since He brought them out of Egypt.

The passage for today looks forward to the time when Jesus Christ, the Good and True Shepherd (*John 10:11*), would appear in the flesh for the purpose of drawing His people to Himself. Again, the Jews refused (*Mat.23:37*). When Judas betrayed Jesus, he was willing to take only 30 pieces of silver for His great crime (*Mat.26:15*). When he realized his sin, he threw the money into the Temple and then killed himself. We also naturally wander away from God, and no one has perfect righteousness to give God for Him to accept us. So, God, instead, gives it to us. The Lord Jesus Christ gave His life and death to protect us, His sheep, from the condemnation due for sin. *Christmas is about God's gift of eternal life with Himself*. Have you received that gift? He gives it freely. Just trust Jesus to be your Saviour.



***Meditate on verse 7. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, we know that we naturally put you away from ourselves. We pray, You forgive us, and grant to us your grace to trust and follow our Good Shepherd Jesus. In His name, we pray. Amen.**

**Monday, 18th December 2023. The Messiah is pierced by His people; Text: Zechariah 12:1-14**

Prophet Zechariah again looks to the future time of Messiah. The previous chapter spoke of the people casting off Messiah, even though He wanted to be their shepherd. In today's passage, Yahweh speaks through the prophet and declares that He will defeat the enemies of His people (vv.3-

4), and He will protect and bless Jerusalem (*His people*) and bring them salvation (v.7). The promise is written like a political or military deliverance; but Zechariah speaks about the *eternal spiritual salvation for the souls of Yahweh's people*. The blessing is obtained by Messiah being "pierced" (v.10). This piercing is a reference to the previous chapter when Messiah was cast away. But looking to (*trusting*) the piercing of Messiah is how the salvation of Jerusalem is gotten.

When Jesus was crucified (*pierced*), he was put on the cross by the people of Jerusalem. At the same time, it was what God used to deliver and bless His people. We who are God's people have terrible enemies: the world (*philosophies and actions opposed to God*); the flesh (*the anti-God, fallen nature we all have*); and the devil (*who always works to pull us away from God*). Everyone is under the power of these enemies. But those who trust that Jesus' death paid their sin penalty, only they are delivered from the final destruction of the enemies. If someone attacked you to kill you, and then someone else stopped that attacker, you would see that as a great gift, for which you would be very thankful. *Christmas is a time when we give gifts, which remind us of God's great gift of deliverance, accomplished by the death of Christ.*



***Meditate on verses 3-4. What is God teaching you in these verses?***



**Our Father, thank You for your deliverance and blessings to us. Make us treasure Your salvation and live grateful lives to Jesus, through whom we pray. Amen.**

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## **Tuesday, 19th December 2023. The sign of Immanuel; Text: Isaiah 7:10-16**

This is the first day of Christmas week. Our passage looks at a promise Yahweh made to Ahaz, King of Judah. The armies of Syria with the northern 10 tribes of Israel wanted to make war against Judah. Yahweh is not going to let Judah be destroyed, because the city of Jerusalem is the city of God's covenant promises to King David, where God's Temple is located, the place of God's true worship, which points to, and is fulfilled by, Messiah. So, God tells Ahaz to ask for a sign to prove God's protection (v.11). Ahaz refuses to ask, as if he were being holy, but he is actually being stubborn in his sin. So, Yahweh Himself provides the sign – a virgin will conceive a child. It is an impossible act, but God will do it in order to

demonstrate His faithfulness to His covenant.

In *Matthew 1:23*, we read about the fulfillment of God's miraculous sign. God the Holy Spirit placed Jesus into the womb of the virgin Mary. Not only was Mary miraculously impregnated, but she had within her womb God the Eternal Son, Emmanuel/God with us. Christmas is not about how we all should be innocent like little babies. It is about how God gave His Son to deliver us from the enemies who are seeking to destroy the souls of His people (*see yesterday's meditation*). *The gift of Jesus frees us from our bondage to sin, from condemnation due to sin, and gives us eternal peace with God.* That first "Christmas" gift from God is better than any other gift that could ever be given. God gave Himself. This Christmas, remember to give yourself to God in trust, love, and obedience.



***Meditate on verse 14. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, I pray that You forgive my stubborn ways. Thank You for the miraculous gift of Your Son, who lived and died for my salvation from sin. Please give me your grace so that I can give You my life in return. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.**

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### **Wednesday, 20th December 2023. Unto us a child is born; Text: Isaiah 9:1-7**

The two tribes mentioned in this chapter were at the very northern part of Israel's territory. As the Assyrian empire grows in strength and expands, these two tribes would have experienced an invasion. That would have been a time of deep darkness. But it is a symbol of the spiritual darkness that came into the nation because of idolatry. Isaiah is shown a future time when Yahweh will send spiritual light. The instruments of enslavement and the weapons of war will be destroyed. The cause of this deliverance is the child of *chapter 7*, who will be implanted in the womb of the virgin. Please read again the titles of this child (*9:6*). These titles point to only one person. The child is God Himself in the flesh. He will be King and will establish justice and bring peace.

That is what we remember at Christmas. Christmas is the arrival of the "offspring of the virgin's womb" (*Hark, the Herald Angels*), the child who is the Mighty God. There was war between us and God because of sin, but now the war is ended (*Isa.40:2*). *Jesus accomplished righteousness for us*

*and paid our death penalty for our sin.* If we trust Him for our salvation, then we are at peace with God. We no longer live in the darkness of sin, the darkness of separation from God. Jesus Christ, who is the light (*John 8:12*), now dwells within us. *When you see the lights during this Christmas week, remember that the beauty of light is in our hearts and minds.* Thanks be to God.



***Meditate from verse 6. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for sending Your Eternal Son, the Prince of Peace, to make peace between us and God. We pray that You give us grace to walk according to Your Wonderful Counsel. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

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**Thursday, 21st December 2023. The virgin Mary is told she will bear the Son of God; Text: Luke 1:26-38**

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she has been chosen to bear the Messiah. She naturally assumes that the conception would have to be by sexual relations with her husband, but at that point she was still a virgin (*v.34*). Gabriel assures her that her conception will be miraculous, just like the one for her much older relatives Elizabeth and Zechariah. A pregnancy for Mary would be difficult to accept because she was not yet married, and being pregnant in her culture at that time would be a disgrace upon herself and her family. But Mary believed the message, trusted that God would give grace through the challenges, and she humbly submitted to God's purpose and care (*v.38*).

Let us consider one reason why Jesus' mother had to be a virgin. *First*, when Adam sinned, a sin nature came to all human beings, *and only a human being can pay the penalty for human sin*; so, the Saviour had to be fully human, a humanity He got from Mary. *Second*, the penalty to be paid is infinite (*no limits*). Any creature, no matter how powerful it is, will be finite (*limited*), and *will not be able to complete the infinite penalty and satisfy infinite justice*. Only God can do that. So, the Saviour also had to be God, a nature He maintained when God the Holy Spirit placed God the Son into Mary's womb. The Saviour had to be 100% human and 100% God, two distinct natures in one person. So, Mary had to be an uncontested virgin, and God had to be the "father". *Christmas is about that gift of a sure salvation.* Receive it, trust Jesus as your Saviour, and live accordingly.



***Meditate on verse 38. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, make us humble, as Mary was humble. What an amazing plan for the Saviour to be both human and divine. Assist us to believe it and trust it more every day. In the Saviour's name. Amen.**

---

**Friday, 22nd December 2023. Why Joseph could not be the father of Jesus; Text: Matthew 1:18-25**

This passage gives us the important information that Joseph was not the father of Jesus Christ. Rather, we learn that Mary conceived the child by the work of God the Holy Spirit. Pagan mythology taught that the “gods” had sexual relations with human women. That is not what happened for Jesus. The details of how the Holy Spirit placed God the Eternal Son into Mary's womb are not given to us, Scripture does not say. However, Scripture does teach clearly that Mary's pregnancy is the work of the Holy Spirit (v.18), who would “overshadow” her (*Luk.1:35*); Mary was impregnated supernaturally, miraculously, with no physical contact, no human involvement. She simply received. Joseph understood the message, believed it, trusted God, and took Mary into his home.

Another important reason why Joseph could not be the father of Messiah is the issue of sin. *Messiah had to be pure, just as Adam was pure when he was created.* Jesus had to start where Adam started (sinless), and He had to accomplish what Adam failed to do. If Jesus had been conceived in the normal sexual way (*as with other miracle babies, e.g., Gen.13:16*), then sin would have been passed to Christ's human nature. But because Jesus was conceived by the work of the Holy Spirit, sin was not part of Christ's nature; Jesus was fully human, yet without sin (*Heb.4:15*). Because Jesus was without sin, He did not have His own sin-penalty to pay. Therefore, *Jesus was able to be the pure substitute for sinners (Lev.1:3).*



***Meditate on verse 18. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for providing a pure substitute to take the punishment for our sin. It is surely the greatest gift there could be. Teach us always to trust Jesus alone for our salvation. We pray in His name. Amen.**

**Saturday, 23rd December 2023. The Christ comes to us in poverty; Text:**

## **Luke 2:1-7**

There were many expectations about Messiah. According to *Isaiah 9:6*, Messiah was to be a divine person (*Mighty God*), so the natural assumption is that He would be leading the armies of Israel into victorious battle against the enemies. Messiah was also to be “Prince of Peace”, so He would be in the palace, sitting on the throne of David, having an entourage of important people gathered around Him, including the kings of other nations who would come to Him seeking political, economic, and social alliances. Sure, Messiah would be gentle (*Zech.9:9*), but He would be King! All those things are true, but that is not the way Messiah’s ministry would begin.

When Jesus came to His earthly ministry, it would begin in humility and obscurity. His “parents” would be poor, his first home would be a barn, and His first bed would be a feeding box for cows. The reason is because, *we His people, were in spiritual poverty*, and Jesus had to come to His people where they were. From there He would bring us up to God because we were absolutely unable to go to Him by our own efforts; *the dead cannot raise themselves*. Also, Messiah’s humility is an example for us to follow. As our Saviour was humble and served, so, too must His people be humble and serve. *Christmas is not about getting; it is about giving*. Whether you are in poverty, wealth, or somewhere in between, live gladly where God has placed you, and live humbly in service to others.



***Meditate on verse 7. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, we are most grateful for the humble work of our Saviour Jesus. Please make us humble so that we can give ourselves to You and to others properly. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

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## **Sunday, 24th December 2023. The arrival of the Christ child is announced to shepherds; Text: Luke 2:8-20**

In keeping with yesterday’s meditation about Christ’s arrival into poverty, today we will consider those who are the first to hear about His birth. Yahweh could have sent an angel to the High Priest of Israel’s Temple, but He did not. He could have sent the high-ranking angel Gabriel to the Roman governor who ruled over the city of Jerusalem, but He did not. Yahweh did not even send a common angel to the leader of the village of Bethlehem. The first people to hear about Jesus’ birth were a few shepherds who were out in the fields watching sheep. A certain angel

gave them the wonderful message, and then many heavenly beings sang praises to God while the shepherds sat in amazement.

People who study the ancient cultures of the middle east tell us that shepherds were untrustworthy people who were religiously unclean and were despised by everyone. Those are exactly the kind of people Jesus came to save, the kind of people who knew they needed Him and would listen to Him (*Mat.9:10-13*), just like a sick person knows he needs a doctor. (*Actually, everyone is spiritually sick and dying!*) Jesus' arrival on earth was an entrance into a world where everyone is a spiritual leper. Christmas Eve is a time to remember how humanity waited for the doctor to arrive so that we can be cured of our incurable, deadly disease of sin. Tonight, celebrate the arrival of eternal spiritual health in Christ, and live like someone who has been cured.



***Meditate on verses 8-10. What is God teaching you in these verses?***



**Our Father, thank You that Jesus came all the way down to my sin-sick existence and unworthiness to give me life. Please, give me grace to live before you in spiritual wholeness. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.**

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### **Monday, 25th December 2023. Wise men from the east visit the Christ child; Text: Matthew 2:1-12**

Merry Christmas! Today, we remember and celebrate when God fulfilled His promise to send a redeemer, a man who would save us from the curse brought by Adam's sin (*Gen.3:15*) and from the condemnation due to our own sin (*Rom.8:1*). That Saviour arrived over 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. In today's passage, we read about certain wise men who lived east of Judah. They were men who studied God's creation; but they were also familiar with the Scriptures. Something informed them about Jesus' birth; they said they were guided by a "star", though what it was is not certain. The men came eagerly to Jerusalem and were then directed to Bethlehem. When the visitors arrived, Jesus was no longer an infant (*v.16*), and He was no longer staying in the barn (*v.17*).

There is an interesting contrast between the eagerness of the wise men to worship the divine child (*God in the flesh*), and the eagerness of Herod to kill the child. The wise men waited patiently, travelled far, brought gifts, and worshipped Him. Herod wanted to be so sure that he destroyed the

newborn King that he even killed all the small boys in Bethlehem and in the surrounding area (v.16). There were even the Jewish scholars who had no interest at all, which describes so many people today. *Please, do not view this day as any other holiday.* The arrival of Jesus Christ and His work of redemption is the very thing that gives you the assurance of eternal life – IF you trust Him alone for it. God bless.



***Meditate on verse 11. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for this day to remember Your great gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer. Make us to be thankful every day, living worshipful lives every moment. In His name, we pray. Amen.**

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**Tuesday, 26th December 2023. Yahweh sends His messenger before He arrives; Text: Malachi 3:1-5**

This small book by Prophet Malachi is the final book written by God the Holy Spirit before the arrival of Jesus Christ, and it will be more than 400 years before Christ's disciples write the Gospels and epistles. Those years of silence will be like the years that Israel was enslaved in Egypt. In the time of Malachi, the people of Judah had been returned from exile in Babylon less than one generation, and already they were lax in their worship of, and obedience to, Yahweh. *The patience of God with His people has been far more than gracious.* The next time, Yahweh reveals Himself to them He will not speak through the prophets. He will physically go to them in the flesh and dwell among them (*John 1:14*).

We are looking at this passage today because of what it says about the person of Christ. During the Christmas season we have thought about Christ's birth; but for a moment, let us consider His divinity before birth. In the passage, we read about a messenger being sent. That messenger is John the Baptizer (*Mat.11:10*). God says the messenger goes before Himself to announce His arrival (*Mal.3:1*). So, who is John going before? He is going before Jesus. The deduction/conclusion is that Jesus is pre-existent God who came in human flesh; God in full, perfect human nature. *The Christmas season is over for some people, but the glory and splendor of who Jesus is should remain with you.*



***Meditate on verse 1. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**O God, it is a glorious thing that You came to us in human nature**

to be the perfect mediator and reconciler between God and man.  
Thank You for making me believe it. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

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**Wednesday, 27th December 2023. Jesus was a gift to us by The Father;  
Text: John 3:1-18**

At this point in John's Gospel, we see that Jesus is already causing disturbance among the Jewish religious leaders. One of those leaders, Nicodemus, comes to Jesus secretly at night for a private conversation. It seems that Nicodemus is starting to understand Jesus, perhaps he is even starting to believe. As the conversation begins, Jesus goes right to the main issue. The religious leaders thought they were in the Kingdom of God because of their strict obedience to God's Law; but Jesus says no. The only way to enter God's Kingdom is by birth. Kingdom birth is not a physical thing that someone can do (v.4). Rather, it is a birth accomplished by God the Holy Spirit (vv.5-6).

It is easy to think becoming a Christian is just by deciding. But Jesus' illustration about birth shows that a person has *nothing* to do with it. Birth is always the decision of parents, and *spiritual birth is always the decision of the Heavenly Father*. When a person trusts Jesus' life, death, and resurrection for salvation, it is because the Holy Spirit has already given spiritual birth. A born-again person will understand the Good Message about Jesus and then trust Him as Saviour. *If you are trusting Jesus to be your Saviour, it is because God has given you the gift of new birth and faith*. When a baby is born into the human kingdom, s/he lives like a human. If you have been born-again into the Kingdom of God, then live like a person who is a child of God by His grace.



***Meditate on verse 5. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for giving to me the gift of birth into Your Kingdom. I pray that You give me grace to live as a follower of Christ. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

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**Thursday, 28th December 2023. The New Covenant; Text: Jeremiah 31:31-40**

Prophet Jeremiah would be the one to tell Judah they were about to be exiled for 70 years (25:11-12). But in *chapter 30 and 31* Jeremiah writes

about Yahweh's promise to bring about salvation and restoration. God was going to make a new covenant with them unlike the one that He made with the people at Mt. Sinai with Moses. That was a good covenant with good laws; but they were laws external to the human heart; and, thus, could not be obeyed with human strength. Humanity is naturally opposed to God and His Laws, resulting in idolatry, which is why God cast them away from His land. So, God promised a new covenant with laws that would be written on the heart.

That new covenant was secured by Jesus Christ. Because of His righteous life, substitutionary death, and resurrection, which broke the power of death, the new covenant was established. He sends His Holy Spirit to dwell within His people and to give them new hearts, where His laws are now written. This does not mean there were never true born-again believers before Jesus. There always were. But God's laws are no longer only external, as they were before Christ. Those pointed to Jesus and He fulfilled them. *If you are trusting Jesus to be your Saviour, then you are united to God by His covenant of grace*, you have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you, and God's Laws are written upon your heart. Glorify God by gratefully living like that.



***Meditate on verse 31. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for giving us Your covenant of grace, for the work of Your Son, and for the indwelling of Your Holy Spirit. We pray that You give us strength to live in a way that will honour You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

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**Friday, 29th December 2023. God's free gift of eternal life; Text: Romans 6:15-23**

During the time of Apostle Paul, there was an evil teaching declaring that Christians are permitted to live sinfully because salvation is from God's grace and not by obedience to God's Law. The wrong thinking was, "If obedience to God's Law cannot save a person, and if it is only God's grace that can save a person, then a believer may live anyway s/he wants, even sinfully, as long as s/he trusts God's grace in Christ." That is a lie! As Paul teaches in today's passage, if you behave sinfully, intentionally, uncaringly, then you are a slave to sin. That means sin owns you, and you are not owned by Jesus Christ, implying you are not saved.

*Those who belong to Christ are actually owned by Christ.* He purchased

us with His blood, with His death, so we are now slaves to Christ and slaves to righteousness. Yes, you will always sin, and that cannot be escaped in this life. But, if you belong to Christ, then you have new desires and new abilities to live pleasingly to God. As we read a couple of days ago, God gives His Holy Spirit to dwell within us, and He gives us strength. Verse 23 says this is a gift. At this time of year, when gifts are exchanged with loved ones, *let us especially remember the great gift from our loving Heavenly Father*; let us open God's gift of eternal life in Christ, put it on, and live it out. Thanks be to God.



***Meditate on verse 17. What is God teaching you in this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for purchasing us for Yourself and that we are owned by You. We pray that You give us increasing measures of faith so that we may live before You righteously. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

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**Saturday, 30th December 2023. Jesus Christ will return for His people;  
Text: Hebrews 9:19-28**

This month we have read many passages from the Scriptures before Christ, prophecies that looked forward to His arrival, anticipating His life, death, and resurrection for the redemption of His people. Today and tomorrow, we will look at passages written by Christ's apostles that look forward to His return. Today's chapter compares the animal sacrifices of ancient Israel with the death of Jesus Christ. The death of an animal was a substitute for the death of God's people, a death they deserved because of their sins. The death of the animal was applied to the people when Moses sprinkled the animal's blood onto their gathering. Thus, they were symbolically cleansed, and the ones who had faith in the spiritual work Yahweh was doing had their souls cleansed in reality.

The writer of Hebrews then states that the sacrifice of the animals for the people of Israel is what Christ did for His people (*v.28 "so Christ also ..."; NASB*). His death is a substitute for our deaths; He paid our death penalty – once, not daily, as Israel had to do. But then there is the added promise that Jesus will return for His people. *First*, He cleanses us, then He will bring us to Himself. *We do not know when that will be, but we know He will return (Acts 1:11)*. If you are trusting Jesus to be your Saviour, then He will return for you some day. And if you die before that day, you will still go to be with Him. Are you living like someone who has been graciously cleansed? Like someone who is ready to meet the Lord? *Pray for grace to*

improve, so that you can honour God with grateful obedience.



***Meditate on verse 28. What are you learning from this verse?***



**Our Father, thank You for cleansing us with the blood of Christ. We pray that You endow us grace to live like cleansed people, to live like those who will not be ashamed when He returns. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

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**Sunday, 31st December 2023. All the children of God will live forever; Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

This is the last day of the year 2023, and it will never come again, gone forever. *Likewise, there will be a day, someday, that will be the last day for all of human history.* The world as we know it will be completely finished, and for believers, anything bad will be gone forever. When Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Thessalonica, they were concerned that fellow believers who died would not be able to enter eternal life. Paul assures his readers that they will not be overlooked by Christ when He returns. In fact, the believers who are dead will be the first to meet Christ at His arrival. Then the believers who are alive at that time will follow. Together they will all meet the Lord in the air.

As you look to the New Year, which begins tomorrow, remind yourself to look to the Eternal new day, where there will be no end of goodness and joy. *For Christians, it will be an existence of perfect human life and peace with God.* If you belong to Jesus Christ, then you have already entered, spiritually, into that day. Of course, we do not see that or feel that now; but Scripture teaches it (*Eph.2:6*). In this life pain, temptations, failures, sin, etcetera, will still be with us. But we do not have to be governed by misery. With your eyes of faith look onto Jesus, be daily in God's Word and, stay with God's people. Let us pray that God will give us the strength to live accordingly, as those who are already there, and glorify God every moment.



***Meditate on verses 16-17. What encouragement do you get from these verses?***



**Our Father in heaven, thank You for the Year 2023. We humbly pray that You forgive our many sins, and thank You for Your promise of forgiveness. Give us grace to please You more and more every day in 2024. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

WE WISH YOU  
**A FRUITFUL &  
A SPIRIT-FILLED**  
*New Year* **2024**

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2. *Lawlessness, by Mr. Apollo Mwehamiza*
3. *The Coming of the Messiah, our Hope, by Rev. Theo. Doksa*



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