

MICA (P) 022/12/2010

DAILY *manna*

JANUARY – MARCH 2018

GENERAL EDITOR

Rev Isaac Ong

Daily devotions for reading through the Bible

Dear *Daily Manna* readers,

Blessed New Year.

2017 has been relegated to the annals of history. 2018 presents new challenges and uncertainties, as well as new hopes and opportunities. That is what the Acts of the Apostles is like. It was a drastic change for the disciples that day when our Lord Jesus ascended to heaven. They had been with our Lord Jesus for the last 3 years. He led them. He taught them. He comforted them. Now the disciples were not only left alone, but they were also given a command to be witnesses for Jesus from Judea unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

However, it was a commission that was accompanied by a promise. “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ...” [Acts 1:8]. And when the Holy Spirit’s power came upon the disciples, they never looked back. For the next two years, we will be looking forward to an in-depth study of Acts, and be refreshed in our minds what fragile human weaklings can accomplish by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me also encourage you to write in with your comments as to how we may improve *Daily Manna* (email: english@calvarybpc.com). Parents, we want to remind you that *DM Junior* is also available for your children.

A note to new *Daily Manna* readers

In this book, you’ll find a reading plan that will guide you through reading the Bible in two years. You will also find a simple exposition based on the reading of the day. From the day’s Bible passages, *Daily Manna* highlights Biblical principles which may be applied in the Christian’s daily living. We pray that the *Daily Manna* readings will make your reading through the Bible a more meaningful experience. Over the next two years, our focus will be on the Old Testament with the aim of giving you a more in-depth study of the OT books.

A step-by-step approach:

1. Read the day’s Bible chapters assigned in *Daily Manna*.
2. Review the Bible chapters to get an overview of what you’ve just read.
3. Read the accompanying devotions in *Daily Manna* and reflect on the lessons learnt.
4. Pray and ask God to help you apply His Word to your life.

Yours in Christ
Pastor Isaac Ong
Calvary B-P Church

1 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON

Christianity is a fact!

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

The Acts of the Apostles has a very special and important place in the New Testament. It is the bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles. Without the Acts of the Apostles, we would be left with a huge gap in the historical record of the first century church because we would have no idea how the church came about and what it did.

The four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – introduce and present to us the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Gospels, you will find the birth of Jesus, His public ministry of three years, His death and His resurrection.

In the 21 epistles – Romans through to Jude – 21 of them, 13 were written by Paul. In the epistles, we have the interpretation of the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the epistles, we do not have any extensive account on the life of Jesus, but we will find expositions of His doctrines. In the epistles, we have the explanation as well as the application of truths that were presented by the Lord Jesus. The Epistle of Romans is a very good example.

Snuggled in between the Gospels and the Epistles is the Acts of the Apostles. It is a historical record of the beginnings of the Christian church. By the time we come to Acts, the Lord Jesus had been crucified, resurrected and soon to be ascended to heaven. By the end of Acts, the Christian faith had been around for some 30 years, and the body of believers had grown from a 120 frightened and confused believers huddled in an upper room in Jerusalem to tens of thousands spread over the entire Roman Empire.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA I
MATTHEW I

THOUGHT

“Christianity is a phenomenon of history. It is a fact.” (Martyn Lloyd-Jones)

2 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON The Purpose

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

The story of Acts begins with the end – the end of the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Following the ascension of Christ, Luke traces the ongoing work of Christ through the church. After describing the empowering of the first disciples by the Holy Ghost, Acts records the exciting story of the beginnings of the church in Jerusalem, to Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Within the 28 chapters, Luke gives a colourful and dramatic account of the early disciples – the miracles of Peter, the first martyr, the ministry of Philip, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and so on. Acts reads like a travel journal as Luke brings us from small towns in Judea to the big metropolises of the day – Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, etc.

After penning his Gospel, why did Luke add a second volume? It does not seem like the most natural thing to do if the focus of biblical writers is to be on Christ – the Son of God – and not the sons of man. One reason could be that Luke sees the story of Christ in the Gospel and the story of the early believers in Acts as a time-lapse record of the church. The former explains how Christianity began, and the latter how it grew.

This growth would be geographical. The Gospel would cover the entire Mediterranean world from Jerusalem to Rome. The growth would also be cross-cultural. Christianity begins with a race of people – the Jews – to include men and women from different cultures and social strata. Thus we can say that the twin-volume of Luke–Acts presents and confirms Christ, His finished work and the continuing reality of His saving grace.

THOUGHT

Paul was “preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him” [Acts 28:31]. The work of the Gospel is never done until the Master calls.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 1
MATTHEW 2

3 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON

The Gospel is true!

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

It was a handful of simple ordinary folks consisting mostly of fishermen and their families. Neither the Jewish religious elites nor the Roman authorities paid much attention to them because they were untrained and uneducated men and women. They had no letters after their names. They had no money. They exerted no influence. They had no means of mass communication. They were nobodies. And yet, they turned “the world upside down” [Acts 17:6]. How was this possible?

Consider the “impossibilities”. This small group of people shook the very pillars of the Jewish religious establishment. The Gospel they preached, and for which they were willing to die, spread so rapidly that within a space of 30 years, it had reached the seat of the Roman Empire. Despite the numerous attempts to snuff it out, Christianity thrived. By the Fourth Century, it had shaken off the label of an anti-Caesar cult and become as one of the official religions of the Roman Empire.

Was it because they preached politics? Did they gain acceptance by being popular? Absolutely not! It was not by human effort or ingenuity.

If no human effort, then what? Only one thing can account for the phenomenon of the growth of the Christian church despite the opposition of the world, the weakness of flesh, and the wiles of the devil. It is the Spirit-filled preaching of the Gospel of Christ. The explanation for the success of the Christian faith is the power of the Holy Spirit, which is why some retitled –aptly – the fifth book of the New Testament, the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

And this compels the 21st century Christian church to consider this – that if we want to make an impact on the world, we have to return to the principles set forth in the Book of Acts.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 3
MATTHEW 3

THOUGHT

This is the Word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, Saith the LORD of hosts. [Zechariah 4:6b]

4 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON

The Church is vibrant!

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

The ascension of Jesus was not the end of the story of redemption. The work of redemption is done. The work of salvation is completed at the cross of Calvary. However, the work of evangelism has just begun, and it continues to this day, and it will continue as long as the Lord tarries.

The Acts of the Apostles is the only book of the New Testament that does not have an ending. Unlike the epistles which usually end with a benediction, Acts ended with the account that Paul was under house arrest in Rome. There was no ending to the story for a good reason – the work of evangelism and witnessing is not done.

We are part of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are the 29th Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We are to continue with the work that God has entrusted to us in the pattern He has set forth in Acts.

As we study the book of Acts, we see the great power of the first century church, and the testimonies of the first century Christians. They were the pioneers. They set the pattern for the church for church planting, missions, church government and administration, and for church growth.

Consider the following questions as you follow Luke's travelogue.

- What are the things that the early Christians had done that were right?
- What are the things that they had done to make the first century church so vibrant?
- How did they go about resolving differences within the body of Christ?
- How did they go about their mission work? Whom did they send?
- Finally, what we can we learn from them?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 4
MATTHEW 4

THOUGHT

If the 21st century church is to be a faithful and have an effective testimony for the Lord, we have to return to the patterns of the first century church.

5 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON

The message –
Christ is risen!

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

Acts is primarily a historical record of the church; its expansion from a few disciples in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost to the thousands of believers throughout Europe by the time of Paul's house arrest in Rome.

While it is historical, Luke did not set out to write a comprehensive history of the first century church. He recorded events and people, but he did not record all events and all peoples. Luke also did not give a full record of the spread of the gospel.

Luke's intention was to give an apology – a defence – for the Christian faith. Thus, in the 28 chapters in Acts, Luke included 19 sermons – mostly from Paul's testimony of his own conversion, Peter's sermons, as well as the longest one by Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian church. There is one common theme that runs through these sermons, and it is the message of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (read Acts 2:22-24; 3:13-15; etc.).

This is the message that the 21st century church must preach. Our Lord Jesus says, "Because I live, ye shall live also" [John 14:19b]. This is the Christian's good news. We do not honour a dead leader; we worship a risen Saviour. We do not just preach about the sacrifice on the cross; we preach also the victory over the grave. We do not just preach an empty cross, more than that, we preach an empty tomb.

And that is the message of the church, and the disciples of Christ through the ages are told to be witnesses of this blessed truth.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 5
MATTHEW 5

THOUGHT

Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. [1 Corinthians 9:16b]

6 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON

Luke

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

From the introductory words “The former treatise have I made”, we know that the “I” here is Dr Luke who accompanied the Apostle Paul in his ministry of the Gospel and church planting.

Luke is the author of The Acts of the Apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He did not name himself in his writing nor included himself with those who were eye-witnesses to Jesus’ ministry. It was the Apostle Paul who included Luke in his greetings to the church: “Luke, the beloved physician ... greet you” [Colossians 4:14].

There are however internal evidences in the book of Acts to prove Luke’s authorship. It can be found in the way he repeatedly used the word “we” in describing Paul’s missions, indicating his presence with them. There are three “we-sections” recorded in the book. [Acts 16:10-40 during Paul’s second missionary journey in AD 49-50; Acts 20:5-21:18 at the end of Paul’s third missionary journey in April/May AD 57; Acts 27:1-28:16 during the sea voyage to Rome in AD 59-60].

Luke’s example in serving the Lord in humility and not calling attention to himself showed his esteem of others. It reminds us to serve the Lord in meekness, esteeming others better than ourselves [Philippians 2:3].

Furthermore, just like how Luke served as Paul’s co-worker with his medical training, we should use our God-given gifts and abilities to serve the Lord diligently. Would you respond to the Lord’s call to proclaim the Gospel wherever He places you?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 6
MATTHEW 6

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me to follow the example of Dr Luke to serve You using what You have given me to proclaim the Gospel to touch and change lives to Your Glory.

7 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1

LESSON Theophilus

VERSE 1

*The former treatise have I
made, O Theophilus,
of all that Jesus began
both to do and teach.*

Theophilus was the same person to whom Luke wrote two books, namely the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:1, Luke used the words “The former treatise” to refer to the Gospel he wrote emphasising how “Jesus began both to do and teach”. He then went on to show the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ on earth in the book of Acts.

There is a difference in how Luke addressed Theophilus. In Luke 1:3, Luke addressed Theophilus as the “most excellent Theophilus”, a title of rank and honour held by high-ranking Roman officials, but in Acts, Luke left out the words “most excellent”. Why? This strongly implied that due to his personal relationship with Christ, Theophilus did not want his title to be used among his Christian friends.

Two reasons support this. (1) Theophilus means “beloved by God”. The fact that Luke’s Gospel and Acts were addressed to him showed his love for God and hunger for God’s Word. As God’s beloved children we should demonstrate our love for God and our hunger for His Word as well.

(2) It also underlined his humility to allow the insertion of his name [not his title] to be a channel of blessing for Christ in a world of unbelief. Are we willing to put our names on the line and stand up for Christ? “For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father’s and of the holy angels” [Luke 9:26].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 7
MATTHEW 7

COMMITMENT

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. – Romans 1:16

8 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:1-3

LESSON
Jesus shewed
Himself alive

VERSE 3

*To whom also He shewed
Himself alive...*

To the multitudes who cried out “crucify Him” when Pontus Pilate acceded to their demand to put Jesus to death, it was a shocking surprise to realise that Jesus was not dead but alive. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the touchstone of Christianity. If Jesus did not rise from the dead according to what He had said, then our faith in Him is in vain.

Today’s devotion focuses on the ministry of the risen Lord Jesus Christ till His ascension [taken up] into Heaven. There are three reasons why Jesus shewed Himself alive. Firstly, it was to endorse His work of preaching and teaching that He began while He was with His disciples before His crucifixion. Secondly, it was to continue the same work after His resurrection while He was on earth before His ascension. Thirdly, it was to emphasise the work of the Holy Spirit who will empower the disciples to carry on His Great Commission on earth to save the elect and build up the believers in the most holy faith.

Three lessons our living Saviour teach us:

1. Be faithful witnesses to proclaim the Gospel for it is the power of God to save souls. There is no retirement so long as we have breath to share God’s love that the lost be convicted and turned to Christ from sin and be saved.
2. Saved by grace, blessed with new life in Christ and equipped with the inerrant, infallible authoritative Word of God, we will rely on the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel in obedience to His Word.
3. We reflect the reality of our living Saviour by our changed lives.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 8
MATTHEW 8

SING

Living He loved me, dying He saved me, buried He carried my sins far away; Rising He justified freely forever, One day He’s coming – O glorious day!

9 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:3

LESSON

Infallible proofs
of the Resurrection

VERSE 3

*To whom also He shewed
Himself alive after His
passion by many infallible
proofs, being seen of them
forty days, and speaking of
the things pertaining to the
kingdom of God:*

Proofs are required whenever anything is to be substantiated as authentic in a court of law. Witnesses are called upon to testify – nothing but the truth. The same is true of Jesus’ ministry on earth that reached its climax with His passion and resurrection. The word “passion” means suffering. It refers to His sufferings and death on the cross for our sins. But that was not the end. Following His burial, on the morning of the third day Jesus rose triumphantly from the dead conquering sin, death and the devil. What infallible proofs do we have?

We are given infallible proofs that are convincing and trustworthy evidences of the Lord’s appearance for forty days on earth before He ascended to heaven. Jesus showed Himself alive to Mary Magdalene [Mark 16:9-11]; to Peter and all His disciples [John 20:19-25]; to five hundred believers [I Corinthians 15:7] and many more. We read of Thomas’ doubt concerning the resurrection of Jesus in John 20:25 – “... Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe”. But his doubts evaporated when the Lord appeared to him. Thomas broke forth in worship – “My Lord and my God” [John 20:28].

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed”. Today none of us have seen our risen Lord. However, we see Him by faith through the eyes of Thomas. Seeing is believing. Better still, believing is seeing.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 9
MATTHEW 9

THOUGHT

The resurrection of Jesus Christ assures the salvation of every repentant sinner who turns to Christ from sin and crown Him as his or her only Lord and Saviour.

10 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:4

LESSON

Christ's promise

VERSE 4

*And, being assembled together
with them, commanded them
that they should not depart
from Jerusalem,
but wait for the promise of the
Father, which, saith He,
ye have heard of Me.*

The risen Lord Jesus had commissioned His disciples to preach the Gospel. Just before His ascension to heaven, He told them that they should not depart from Jerusalem but should instead wait for the promise of the Father, which, He had often spoken about when He was with them. The promise is the coming of The Holy Spirit. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit was not present before. In Old Testament time, we read that the Holy Spirit worked in different individuals of God's people empowering them for special ministry to Israel, like Gideon for instance [Judges 6:34].

Since then Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts goes beyond His immediate disciples, to indwell believers and to empower them to obey the Great Commission of Christ. But for now, for this to take effect the disciples must wait patiently and prayerfully for the arrival of the Holy Spirit who did come at Pentecost [Acts 2:4].

One thing we could learn here is that in doing the Lord's work we cannot do it in our own strength without relying on the Holy Spirit to work in and through us. We have the tendency to neglect prayer and spending time with God. We tend to depend on our human resources and because of that we have no joy in serving Jesus. Our sin of prayerlessness causes us to forget the promises of God in the whole counsel of His holy Word. But just as the early believers obeyed the Lord, waited in prayer and remembered His promise of the Holy Spirit, we should examine ourselves. May we get right with God and have faith in keeping His promises with joy.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
EZRA 10
MATTHEW 10

THOUGHT

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. – Isaiah 40:31

11 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:5

LESSON

Christ's command

VERSE 5

*For John truly baptized with
water; but ye shall be baptized
with the Holy Ghost
not many days hence.*

These were Jesus' words fulfilling the prophecy of John the Baptist [Matthew 3:11].

Till now, repentance of sin and obedience to God, as John preached, was marked by coming under water baptism. But a greater manifestation of God in a believer would soon be ushered in – the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which all who confess Christ will receive. This was the Lord's promise to His disciples, that even though He would soon leave them bodily to return to His heavenly throne, they were not abandoned as they might be tempted to think, for God now sends the Holy Spirit to take abode in their hearts, and in every true believer's heart henceforth. What does this mean?

For the unbeliever still in sin and under condemnation, the Holy Spirit must find His place in your heart. Then will sin be forgiven and condemnation be lifted. And this can only happen by surrendering to Christ, Who alone saves, for He paid our sin's penalty and satisfied holy justice at Calvary's cross. So repent of your sins, seek God's forgiveness by accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. By this, the Holy Spirit is baptised into your heart. You are born again to a new and changed life by His power.

For the disciple of Christ, blessed are you for you are God's precious possession. You are never alone because the Spirit indwells you permanently and you are sealed forever as a child of God. All His promises belong to you as you live for His glory by His power.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH I
MATTHEW II

THOUGHT

I am owned by God forever and He lives in me. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.
– 2 Corinthians 1:20

12 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:6

LESSON

Disciples' concern

VERSE 6

When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Jesus had come into the world to be their king, and the Jewry expected from Him deliverance from Roman rule and the restoration of Israel's kingdom. But Christ went to the cross instead, and every Jewish hope was dashed. Now Jesus was alive again, and their hopes likewise. Would the promised kingdom be realised this time round? How prone we are to be concerned only with things of sight and touch. The Lord's closest disciples were no exception despite having spent three years in His intimate circle, listening and learning from their Master. That God's plan and provision for His own are infinitely higher than human expectations were difficult for even these to grasp.

God's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom and His greatest blessings are spiritual blessings. So said the apostle, The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And this kingdom would be established in every heart that confessed Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour.

This is the essence of God's love. Our Father gives His beloved always the highest and best, its value far beyond what mere sense can measure. He gave His only begotten Son to die for us. He promises treasures which cannot be lost to rust or thieves. He gives eternal life, so that we will live evermore with Him in glory never to be separated again. These are hard things to comprehend. But God has also sent us the Holy Spirit and His written Word. Now, we can understand and rejoice.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 2
MATTHEW 12

THOUGHT

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.
– John 18:36

13 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:7-8

LESSON Christ's priority

VERSE 7

*And He said unto them,
It is not for you to know
the times or the seasons,
which the Father hath put
in His own power.*

There are needful things which God has revealed for us to know and there is knowledge that belongs to God alone. The timing of God's kingdom on earth and the restoration of Israel which the disciples desired was God's prerogative alone. Christ was occupied only with His Father's will and more important duties awaited His disciples. This work, God had designed to be done through the means of His disciples, and they He would also enable.

The Holy Spirit would come upon them giving them power and boldness to testify for Christ. The Spirit will teach them what to say, direct their steps, supply their needs, strengthen them in tribulation, and comfort them in distress. This was the priority the Lord has set for His disciples for His kingdom's sake. Jesus had come as a suffering servant and would soon return to heaven. But He will come again the final time as a conquering king and righteous judge. Then, will be the judgment. Now only is the window of mercy and the time of grace for mankind lost in sin. This requires the urgent sowing of the gospel seed. The good news of the saving power of Jesus Christ must be proclaimed far and wide before man meets His maker again by death or by His return.

Saving lost and dying souls was the Lord's priority throughout and therefore it must be ours too. Every life is running out of time. There is not a moment to lose. We have the Holy Spirit, so speak out for Christ.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 3
MATTHEW 13

THOUGHT

Lord, help me to recognise the shortness of my days and to set my priorities right. Help me to be a witness for you. Give me boldness and teach me what to say. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation".

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:8

LESSON

The Great Commission

VERSE 8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The disciples were concerned with the prophecy of a Messiah coming to restore the kingdom of David in Israel. Jesus, that Messiah, was concerned only to do the will of His heavenly Father in saving man from his sins, thus ushering them into the spiritual kingdom of God. His mission on earth completed, this saving message would now be entrusted to the disciples around Him, and every disciple through the ages. He has given a commission to all His disciples. So often do we think that the King's commission is only for His ministers, preachers and missionaries of the Word. That somehow we are ill-prepared, untrained and unsuited to meet this call. Here we see it is not so, for when the Lord requires, He also enables.

As Christ left them bodily, the Holy Spirit is now sent to them, to be their source of strength and constant companion [Matthew 28:20]. Thus empowered, the disciple is to be a witness, carrying the life-imparting truth, living faithfully for his Lord, without favour or fear of man. And they were to carry this message, to be witnesses in the cities and in the countryside - not only in Israel, but even to the farthestmost parts of the world.

The message of God's kingdom is "Salvation in Christ alone". The banner of this kingdom is God's love through Christ and the borders of this kingdom extend wherever a true and faithful disciple stands witness for Him. Now, Messiah's mission and this commission is understood. What are you doing about it today? Mere vessels of clay, yet we are used by God. Be a shining light.

THOUGHT

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. - 2 Corinthians 4:6-7

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 4
MATTHEW 14

15 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:9-10

LESSON Christ's ascension

VERSE 9

*And when He had spoken
these things, while they beheld,
He was taken up;
and a cloud received Him
out of their sight.*

Many events in the life of Christ were attested by eyewitnesses and recorded to affirm for us the veracity of our religion – His birth in Bethlehem, ministry in Galilee, death at Calvary, resurrection from the tomb, and now this final great event, His ascension to heaven at Olivet.

This must be for our benefit, for by it:

(1) We know unequivocally that Christ did not simply disappear but has returned to His heavenly throne. And He will come again as revealed in His Word.

(2) We know that He is now interceding for us at the Father's right hand according to the Scriptures.

(3) We know that the kingdom of God is not physical, but spiritual encompassing both heaven and earth, wherever His saints inhabit.

(4) We know that the Holy Spirit is now present with us to perform His part of redemption work in human hearts, all over the world, and over time.

(5) We see the glorious and triumphant conclusion to the Lord's earthly ministry manifesting a final time in His power over nature, surrounded by His servant angels.

Christ's disciples were fearful at His arrest, distressed when the cross claimed Him and doubtful when they found the empty tomb. But now finally, they were victorious and vindicated, for before their very eyes, they saw the crucified and resurrected Christ rising in majesty into the clouds to heaven above. And thus Luke records, "And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God". So should we be.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 5
MATTHEW 15

SING

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, because He lives all fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future, And life is worth the living, just because He lives.

16 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:11

LESSON

Christ will return

VERSE 11

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.

It was obvious that having been with Jesus and having witnessed His resurrection that the people gazed as Jesus ascended heavenwards. Never has anyone seen a person rising into the air against gravity. This is a supernatural phenomenon. Yes, there are illusionists who can perform this to a limited height, but quickly they would have to come back to earth. None is able to keep ascending until the point when he is out of sight. It is amazing that Jesus kept ascending. His ascension gives us hope that one day we will be where He is.

Jesus, with whom they have been for the last three years, has gone home to Heaven. What would the disciples do? To lift up their spirits (and that of ours), the angel revealed that Jesus will return in like manner. That is to say that our Lord Jesus will come back to earth in like manner. He will be seen. His appearance will not be an illusion. What an assurance it is to all those who believe in Jesus and accept Him as their Saviour. The promise of His return is this – “when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

When will Jesus return? No one knows, even the angel was silent because he did not know. Only God the Father knows. Meanwhile, as our Lord tarries in returning, we are to occupy ourselves. We are to preach the Gospel so that many more will hear the good news of salvation through Jesus and have the hope of going to heaven to be eternally with God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 6
MATTHEW 16

THOUGHT

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. – 2 Peter 3:9

17 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:12-13

LESSON

The disciples' obedience

VERSE 13

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomen, and Matthen, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

After the ascension of Jesus, the disciples could have each gone his own way. They could have returned to their “free and easy” life. Instead, they went to the upper room which was the place where they gathered with Jesus before His ascension to pray. They obediently went to the upper room for the purpose of praying together and encouraging one another.

This upper room can be deemed as the first church building. It was there that Jesus regularly met His disciples. Jesus had the last meal with the disciples there before His crucifixion. It was, as it were, a place of familiarity and comfort.

Churches used to be open and the main meeting place for people. People would gather there for worship, Bible studies, weddings, celebrations and funerals. It was a focal point of the community. Sadly today many churches have changed their purpose. Churches are emptying out for various reasons. People are not going to church due to unbelief and disobedience. The church has become side-lined, and reduced to a non-essential.

Besides worshipping God, obedience also means that we have to do what the Bible requires us to do – to do is to accept Jesus as our Saviour; to keep God’s commandment; to not wilfully sin; to spread the gospel and to follow Jesus. Jesus set us an example for us to follow. He submitted His will to that of God the Father. He was obedient to death in order to redeem man. How obedient are you?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 7
MATTHEW 17

THOUGHT

For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my
God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

– Psalm 84:10

18 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:14

LESSON

The disciples
in prayer

VERSE 14

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.

How did the people pray? They prayed together in one accord, meaning to say that they prayed in harmony and corporately. Each of them would have his specific needs, but these were superseded by what they have in common.

They probably would have prayed in the same pattern that Jesus taught them. One common acronym for prayer is A.C.T.S. (A)doration for God is to praise Him and express how great He is. He is the Almighty, Creator of the universe and each of us. We adore Him for who He is.

(C)onfession is to acknowledge our shortcomings before God. We have a tendency to fall into sin and to do things that please ourselves instead of pleasing God. Our desires and thoughts can be dishonouring to God. Confession of our sins set us straight in our walk with God and to live a holy life.

(I)thanksgiving would be endless if you consider what God has given us. He has given us His Son the Lord Jesus to die on our behalf. He has dealt with us according to His grace and mercy. He blesses us with ability to worship Him. Besides, He blesses us with material gifts beyond what we need. Thank Him also for being our conscience and counsellor speaking to us in that “still small voice”.

(S)upplication is pleading with God to grant our requests according to His will. Each of us has different needs. We pray for the well-being of friends, family and for ourselves. We pray for the sick. We pray for God’s provision. We are to bring these matters before God, and He will meet our needs in due time according to His will.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 8
MATTHEW 18

THOUGHT

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
— James 5:16

19 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:15

LESSON

The 120

VERSE 15

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty)

We read that Jesus fed 5,000 people and that the multitude followed Him. How was it that there were only 120 in the upper room? God does not look only for numbers. He looks at the hearts. He would bless even if only two came to the upper room to pray.

The early church started with 120 in the upper room. Man always look at figures. Numbers do not mean anything to God. He has never considered the number of people in a gathering before He pours down His blessings. He saved only Noah and his family of eight. Moses told the children of Israel – “The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people” (Deut. 7:7). He asked Gideon to reduce his troops from 32,000 to 300. That was number of people God needed to fight against the Midianites who had an army 135,000 strong.

The same way God may bless a big church, and He will also bless a small faithful church. While we are not counting numbers, we ought to be witnessing to as many as the opportunity arises, so that many more will come to salvation through Jesus. It is important that we are numbered among the saved and that the “Book of Life” has our name recorded.

Today we still have many faithful worshippers in many different churches all around the world. The 120 faithful ones spread the Gospel and God deemed it fit to bless through the work of them. They were obedient and faithful.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 9
MATTHEW 19

THOUGHT

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. – Luke 16:10

20 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:16

LESSON

Scriptures must needs
be fulfilled

VERSE 16

*Men and brethren,
this scripture must needs have
been fulfilled, which
the Holy Ghost by the mouth
of David spake before
concerning Judas, which was
guide to them that took Jesus.*

In the upper room, Peter encouraged the people not to be sad nor be bitter with Judas who betrayed Jesus. This betrayal was in fulfilment of God's Word. The Bible is full of fulfilled prophecies. Beginning at Genesis, when God told the serpent – “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” [Genesis 3:15], and from then on, God's redemptive plan slowly unfolds by fulfilling the promises that He had made, until “the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” [Galatians 4:4-5].

When Adam and Eve fell, they tried to cover up themselves with fig leaves. But the leaves would not do. They were not adequate. God had to provide animal skins for Adam and Eve [Genesis 3:21]. Likewise, the redemption of our sins requires something beyond what we can offer. A life had to be given so that another life can live. Just as God provided animal skins for Adam and Eve, meaning the killing of animals and the shedding of blood; likewise, God sent His only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And Christ came to give His life a ransom for many.

Every Messianic prophecy has been fulfilled. The one outstanding prophecy yet to be fulfilled is the return of our Lord Jesus, and that too will come to pass because God is faithful, and Scriptures must be and will be fulfilled.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 10
MATTHEW 20

THOUGHT

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. – Matthew 5:18

21 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:16-18

LESSON

The death of
Judas Iscariot

VERSE 18

*Now this man purchased
a field with the reward of
iniquity; and falling headlong,
he burst asunder in the midst,
and all his bowels gushed out.*

Judas Iscariot, called to apostleship by the Lord Jesus was highly privileged to know the Lord very intimately – His works and His person, that He is the Son of God. Judas was empowered to guide the unsaved to Jesus for salvation, but instead he guided evil priests to kill Jesus. His greed for money [John 12:6] and lust for position and power drove him to betray his master for a paltry thirty pieces of silver.

The condemnation of Jesus shattered Judas' dream of a high position in an earthly kingdom. He was in utter despair and guilt. Although he acknowledged that he had sinned and "betrayed innocent blood" [Matthew 27:4], Judas did not truly repent for he had no love for Jesus. Instead of turning to Jesus for forgiveness, he returned to the priests who could offer no salve for his pain of guilt and shame. In his despair and utter hopelessness, he chose self-destruction rather than forgiveness. He wilfully committed the sin of unbelief – rejecting the deity of Christ, His compassion, grace, mercy and power to forgive. Judas usurped the sovereignty of God and broke the sixth commandment. His life of empty hope culminated in a hopeless end.

Having been saved by Jesus to be His friend, ambassador [2 Corinthians 5:20], "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" [Romans 8:17], have we betrayed Him in any way? Have we lived up to Jesus' love and trust in us? Have we lived lives holy and pleasing to God, leading others to Christ, the Saviour of the world, that in Him and Him alone is love, hope, salvation, forgiveness of sin, peace and everlasting life?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 11
MATTHEW 21

THOUGHT

The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.
– Proverbs 10:28

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:19

LESSON

The field of blood

VERSE 19

*And it was known unto all
the dwellers at Jerusalem;
insomuch as that field is
called in their proper tongue,
Aceldama, that is to say,
The field of blood.*

Overcome by despair and guilt, Judas returned to the chief priests and elders at the temple, cast down the thirty pieces of silver – “the reward of iniquity” – departed and hanged himself. The legalistic and hypocritical chief priests, having deemed that it was not lawful to return the silver to the treasury because “it is the price of blood”, used it to purchase the potter’s field to bury strangers [Matthew 27:4-7]. Judas hung himself from a branch which broke “and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst and all his bowels gushed out” [Acts 1:18]. For his heinous betrayal of his Master, Judas died a gory death himself.

The field was called “Aceldama, field of blood” because:

1. It was purchased by the “price of blood”. This was “blood money” used to betray the innocent blood of Jesus.
2. The field was splattered and stained with Judas’ blood, as his body smashed onto the ground.
3. It became a memorial of Judas’ infamous betrayal of his Master and his cowardly suicide.

The traitor’s blood splattering on to the potter’s field is the emblem of the wicked and unbelieving that Christ was referring to when He said of the wicked servant that He would “cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” [Matthew 24:51].

Yet how paradoxical and exceedingly marvellous that the innocent blood shed by the sinless, Holy Son of man on Calvary’s cross has washed away our sins, purchased our redemption, salvation, everlasting life and reconciliation with God our heavenly Father.

THOUGHT

In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. – Ephesians 1:7

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 12
MATTHEW 22

23 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:20

LESSON

Desolate habitation

VERSE 20

*For it is written
in the book of Psalms,
Let his habitation be desolate,
and let no man dwell therein:
and his bishoprick
let another take.*

The Apostle Peter assured the believers gathered together that David had foretold the betrayal of Jesus the Messiah [Psalm 41:9] and God's punishment on Judas [Psalm 69:24-25], therefore scriptures must be fulfilled.

"Let their habitation be desolate" [Psalm 69:25]. Not only would Judas' abode be unoccupied because everybody was afraid to live in it, he would be left without heirs as God would wipe out his whole family. So severe and drastic is the judgement of a righteous, holy and just God for He is a "consuming fire" [Hebrews 12:29]. God the Father would not allow the murder of His beloved Son Jesus to go unpunished. For disobedience merely over the Babylonish garments and treasures, Achan brought God's fierce judgement upon himself and his family [Joshua 7:25]. Judas deserved no lesser punishment. The fierce proclamation of Nebuchadnezzar "That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill" [Daniel 3:29a] is a prophetic warning for God's enemies of the hour to come when they will be wiped out of their land. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" [Hebrews 10:31].

As for His blood-bought children, thank God for the assurance from His Word, "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them"[Psalm 103:17-18]. May we never take God's love and mercy for granted.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
NEHEMIAH 13
MATTHEW 23

THOUGHT

It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.

– Lamentations 3:22-23

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:21-23

LESSONQualifications
of an apostle**VERSE 22**

*Beginning from the baptism
of John, unto that same day
that He was taken up from us,
must one be ordained
to be a witness with us
of His resurrection.*

God's plan and work will never be hampered nor prevented by the desertion and death of a traitor. God has willed "... let another take his office" [Psalm 109:8b]. Led by the Holy Spirit, Peter moved the motion to choose another apostle from among the believers, stating clearly the qualifications of an apostle.

The newly appointed apostle would have had to witness the Lord's entire ministry, beginning at His baptism and culminating with the ascension. An apostle must be one who had accompanied Jesus and the other apostles continually and intimately known the instructions and works of the Lord. He must have seen the resurrected Christ since the resurrection was the central theme of apostolic preaching [Acts 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:41].

The apostles were ordained not to high secular positions of power and dominion but to preach Christ and the power of His resurrection [Philippians 3:10] because this was the great proof of His being the Messiah and foundation of our hope in Him.

Likewise, those appointed to be ministers of Christ, preachers of His gospel and rulers of His church must be fully acquainted with His person, works and doctrine. They are to serve the Master in holy fear and humility, not for filthy lucre but with a ready mind to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" [2 Timothy 4:2]. They are to take heed unto themselves, feed the flock and oversee the church which Christ has purchased with His own blood. Neither should they be "lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock"[1 Peter 5:3].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER I
MATTHEW 24

THOUGHT

That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;
– Philippians 3:10

25 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:24

LESSON
God knows
the hearts

VERSE 24

*And they prayed,
and said, Thou, Lord,
which knowest the hearts of
all men, shew whether of
these two Thou hast chosen.*

Among themselves, the hundred and twenty appointed two whom they considered most suitable to fill the position of apostleship vacated by Judas. He was a traitor who had wilfully forsaken his high calling of apostleship and “turned aside to go to his own place” – the place he chose and deserved – hell. We note that the initial selection was by the whole congregation and not the exclusive right of the eleven apostles. The two chosen, Joseph Barnabas and Matthias did not strive to propose themselves but sat humbly and submitted to the Lord’s will. They were undoubtedly most qualified but only one was required and he had to be chosen by the risen Lord. In holy fear, humility and unity, the disciples sought the Lord in prayer. “Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen.”

With the passing of the apostles, the grave responsibility of the preaching of God’s Word, the ministry of the church and the Great Commission is now passed on to the pastors, preachers and church leaders whom the local churches must now appoint.

Those who aspire to be leaders in the church of Jesus ought to beseech God’s help to search their own hearts in humility as to their suitability. The omniscient God is the only One who knows the hearts of men better than they know themselves. Their desire must be pure, motivated only by their love for Jesus – for His pre-eminence and glory. Like the disciples of old, the church must seek the Lord for His own choosing.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 2
MATTHEW 25

THOUGHT

... know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts...

– 1 Chronicles 28:9

26 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 1:26

LESSON

Casting lots

VERSE 26

*And they gave forth their lots;
and the lot fell upon Matthias;
and he was numbered with the
eleven apostles.*

Making such an important decision through casting lots may seem controversial to many Christians at first glance. While some commentators have tried to resolve this by explaining that “casting lots” should be understood that the disciples voted on who would be Judas’ replacement, the context of the verse, especially in the idea that “the lot fell upon” would imply otherwise. It was left up to chance. However, was chance the only factor that influenced the decision?

Let us take note that the disciples made sure that they had done their due diligence in following scripture. In verses 20-22, the idea for choosing a replacement for Judas was derived from scripture, while the criteria for eligibility was determined by the Apostles such that the witness of this new Apostle would be whole and complete, having seen first-hand Christ’s deeds, which would lead to his testimony being without doubt. It is with these fixed criteria in mind that the Apostles selected two men, and with much prayer, carried out the casting of the lots. Finally, let us also be reminded that chance is not purely random. God is still in control [Proverbs 16:33]. Therefore, the Apostles could be certain that the result obtained would be in line with the will of God.

Today, we no longer need to go to such great lengths to discern God’s will. Instead of relying on methods such as the Urim and Thummim, or on the casting of lots, we have a completed, more sure word of prophecy which the disciples did not have – the Word of God [2 Peter 1:19].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 3
MATTHEW 26

PONDER

How does having a more sure word of prophecy strengthen our faith in God?

27 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:1

LESSON

Pentecost

VERSE 1

*And when the day of
Pentecost was fully come,
they were all with one accord
in one place.*

Among conservative Christians today, the word “Pentecost” seems to have negative connotations. However, in its original context, Pentecost was a day that was predicted by Christ and was to be a day that the disciples would look forward to. The coming of “another Comforter” [John 14:16] meant that the disciples would now have an even closer, more intimate relationship with God the Father.

On the road to Emmaus, when the resurrected Christ expounded the scriptures to the disciples, their hearts burnt within them [Luke 24:32]. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we too are able to understand the Word of God such that our hearts can similarly burn within us despite not having a visible Christ. This was immediately apparent in Acts 2:16. Before, Christ reproved the disciples for their inability to understand and hear spiritual things [John 16:12], but now, Peter is able to recall and preach Christ from the Old Testament, quoting from Joel and pointing the people to Christ. This demonstrates the fulfilment of the promise that with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are able to understand the Word of God.

Furthermore, the coming of the Holy Spirit also fully enabled us to go to God the Father in prayer. This is an immense privilege. A sinner is now able to stand before a holy God and have all his needs met – all because he is now enabled to pray in Jesus’ name, and has been taught by the Holy Spirit to do so [John 14:26].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 4
MATTHEW 27

PONDER

Do I use the privileges that are bestowed on all Christians through the Holy Spirit?

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:1

LESSONOne accord
in one place**VERSE 1**

*And when the day of
Pentecost was fully come,
they were all with one accord
in one place.*

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were all with one accord and in one place. What were they doing? Acts 1:14 gives us an idea of the activities in those times. Even though the Holy Spirit had not fully come in Acts 1, the disciples were already gathering regularly to pray and to consider scripture [Acts 1:16]. They were not just physically in one place, but were also of one accord – denoting a singleness of mind and a common determination.

In Acts 1, the disciples were noted to be making supplication to God. Perhaps, this also included making supplication for their spiritual needs, where the disciples were asking in full sincerity for the Holy Ghost that was promised them in Acts 1:5-6. It was therefore not merely the gathering of disciples for the purpose of considering matters of church governance such as choosing a replacement for Judas. It was more importantly, a gathering of like-minded brethren meeting to search the scriptures together and to pray one for another. We see that their prayers were effective – it was during one of these prayer meetings that the disciples' earnest desire for the Holy Spirit was fulfilled.

Today, we already have the Holy Spirit. However, we still have many things that we can pray for, spiritual revival being one important item. While private prayer definitely has a place in the Christian life, let us also be reminded that the gathering of God's people to pray is also a biblical pattern set for us to emulate.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 5
MATTHEW 28

PONDER

When I come to prayer meeting, I am in one place. However, am I with one accord with my fellow Christians?

29 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:2

LESSON
Rushing
mighty wind

VERSE 2

*And suddenly there came
a sound from heaven as of
a rushing mighty wind,
and it filled all the house
where they were sitting.*

Throughout the Bible, wind has been a means of describing the Holy Spirit by analogy. For example, one can look at John 3:8 and Ezekiel 37:9-10. Like the wind, the Holy Spirit cannot be seen. However, it can be powerfully felt in the hearts of the believers, and its effects can be seen visibly by others in the actions of those filled with the Spirit. Here, we see that the Bible records that the Holy Spirit's coming was announced by a sound from heaven that was analogous to the sound made, not just by any sort of wind, but by a rushing, mighty wind.

As believers in Christ, we have the Holy Spirit indwelling in us. How are we manifesting forth its presence in our lives? Are we more like little breezes which have little, scarcely visible effects on those around us, or are we like a rushing mighty wind which have a powerful impact on others?

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity and is equal in power with God the Father and Christ the Son. It is involved in the work of sanctifying us to be more like Christ each day, and will work in Christians to develop spiritual fruit as listed in Galatians 5. As we read through the different aspects of the fruit listed, let us consider if we are walking in the Spirit [Galatians 5:16] or if through the way we live, we are quenching it [1 Thessalonians 5:19].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 6
MARK 1

PRACTISE

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. – Matthew 5:16

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:3

LESSONTongues
as of fire**VERSE 3**

*And there appeared unto them
cloven tongues like as of fire,
and it sat upon each of them.*

The appearance of “cloven tongues” which sat upon the disciples signified the gift that the Holy Spirit immediately imparted to these disciples. Just as God had shown that He was the God and Creator of all languages at the Tower of Babel [Genesis 11:9], here God bestowed upon the disciples the ability to speak in diverse human languages such that those who listened could testify that the disciples were heard in their own languages [Acts 2:6].

More interestingly, these cloven tongues were compared to “fire”. Just as fire imparts heat and light, the gift to speak in tongues was so that the disciples were better equipped to spread the gospel message which would bring light to a people stumbling in darkness [Isaiah 9:2] – with great zeal and heat. This heat was not hot air. It was a genuine passion for the Word of God which was able to make people wise unto salvation [2 Timothy 3:15], and for the God of the Word who had revealed Himself to them.

Today, we might not be able to speak many different languages. However, the Holy Spirit still impresses upon our hearts a great love for God, His Word and His work. Do we convey this to those around us? Can others see in us an unquenchable fire for God and His work? Let us strive to cultivate a greater love for spiritual things, such that we are able to emulate the disciples who could not help but speak the things that they had seen and heard [Acts 4:20].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 7
MARK 2

CHALLENGE

... I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. – Acts 21:13b

31 JANUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:4

LESSON
Filled with
the Holy Ghost

VERSE 4

*And they were all filled with
the Holy Ghost, and began to
speak with other tongues, as
the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Held fifty days after Passover, Pentecost [also called Feast of Weeks] was a festival of thanksgiving for the harvested crops. Jews of many nations gathered in Jerusalem for this festival.

The believers of Christ had gathered and were waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit. As stated in Luke 24:49, Jesus had instructed the disciples to stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on high.

The Holy Spirit came and filled each individual believer. The Spirit appeared in the form of a tongue of fire. This symbolises the instrument of preaching the gospel. All the people in the room were infused by the power of the Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues. They felt the presence of Christ. His Spirit dwelt in their hearts and they were filled with joy. With the burning desire to share the gospel and God's love for the world, the disciples were bold and excited to witness for the Lord. They were given the gift to preach in the languages of the different nationalities gathered together.

The Holy Spirit empowers the followers of Jesus to proclaim the convincing message of Christ. Do pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with us all the time. We need God's presence, His courage and love to share the gospel with the non-believers around us. The unsaved souls need to hear the powerful and wonderful message of Christ. Pray for God to purify our hearts and fill us with His Spirit.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

ESTHER 8
MARK 3

REMEMBER

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" – Romans 8:9. Thank God for His presence in us.

1 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:5-6

LESSON Holy commotion

VERSE 6

*Now when this was noised
abroad, the multitude came
together, and were confounded,
because that every man
heard them speak in his own
language.*

The disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, were speaking languages which the native speakers could understand, but which the disciples had never learnt. With the sound of the thunderous blast caused by God when the Holy Spirit filled the place, and when the crowd heard that the disciples supernaturally conversed in their own dialects or native languages, they were curious and had come. This gave the disciples an opportunity to share God's message to Jews from all nations, who were gathered at Jerusalem then to celebrate Pentecost.

God gave the special gift of speech to the disciples at the time of Pentecost because He would like them to bear witness to the nations for His eternal glory. It was not for the disciples to take personal pride for this special ability to speak in tongues. God's purpose was to equip His church with mighty power of the Holy Spirit to carry out His plan for His people. The Lord touched the lives of His disciples with love and forgiveness. In return, the disciples poured out their lives with the zealous response, spreading the gospel and converting many to become followers of Christ, with the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is the responsibility of every believer to preach and share Christ's gospel.

Let all of us answer to the call of Christ to fulfil the Great Commission. Get excited to share the gospel and pray for the desire to share with people around us about God's love all the time. Let all of us be a vital tool for God to win more souls for His kingdom.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ESTHER 9-10
MARK 4

QUESTION

Am I a good witness for Christ? Have I been doing enough to share God's gospel with those who are lost and perishing?

2 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:7

LESSON

Are these not
Galileans?

VERSE 7

*And they were all amazed
and marvelled, saying one to
another, Behold, are not all
these which speak Galileans?*

It was remarkable that the disciples were able to speak all the foreign languages given that they were Galileans. The Galileans, inhabitants of Galilee, were despised by the Jews as they were known as rude, ignorant and uncivilised. The crowd marvelled that the disciples of Jesus were able to articulate clearly in the refined foreign languages given that they did not go through proper education and were from a less reputable and unpolished region. This made the miracle more striking. Many who heard the gospel believed in Christ instantly.

Many times, believers of Christ tend not to take up the roles to serve the Lord in the church, or are shy to follow the outreach team to share the gospel, or are uncomfortable to be the bold witnesses of Christ to share their testimonies. They are of the view that there is a lack of talent to serve and there are more talented people than themselves who should take up the duties to serve in the church. Some may think that great things are to be done by capable, well trained, smart and impressive leaders. But this is not how God works. David was chosen by God to be the king of Israel because of his humble heart, his love and reverence for God. Even though David was small in size, God's almighty power was with him. He killed the giant Goliath and glorify God's name.

God tends to use the most unexpected people to carry out big tasks. The weaknesses of God's ministers make the work and glory of God more amazing.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 1
MARK 5

MEDITATE

Pray for God to use me as His channel of blessings. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. – 1 Corinthians 1:27

3 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:8

LESSON
Every man
in his own tongue

VERSE 8

*And how hear we
every man in our own tongue,
wherein we were born?*

The Jewish pilgrims who gathered at Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost spoke a variety of dialects and languages. It would be a major obstacle for the disciples of Jesus to share the great news of the glorious gospel effectively if they did not have such supernatural power to utter the languages that the crowd would understand. All the nationalities from different native lands recognised their own languages being preached.

The crowd witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit and felt the strong presence of God. Their hearts were touched by the wonderful news of the gospel. Many believed in Christ and went back to share the good news with their own people. Without the gift of the Holy Spirit, the apostles would not have made much speedy progress to convert many to become the followers of Christ. This proved that their authority to expand the kingdom of God was from God.

God has a great plan for each one of us. God does not want to see a single soul perish – “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” [1 Timothy 2:4]. We need to be the vessel of God to share the truth with the lost souls regardless of their race, nationality or background. Do not cease praying for the people who are still outside the Kingdom of God. Pray for the salvation of your loved ones, the people surrounding you and far from you. Be a good witness of Jesus Christ and believe that God will use you as His instruments to touch the hearts of those He has chosen.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 2
MARK 6

THOUGHT

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men. – 1 Timothy 2:1

4 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:9, 11

LESSON

Parthians, Medes,
Cretes, Arabians

VERSE 11

*Cretes and Arabians, we do
bear them speak in our tongues
the wonderful works of God.*

The list of nationalities who heard the good news and witnessed the miracle of God in verses 9 to 11 was not meant to be complete but to show the wide varieties of nations represented then at Jerusalem. These Jews had been dispersed throughout the world due to displacement and persecutions.

The crowd included the representatives from the further east to the west. The Parthians were from Parthia, the land in the east, a part of Persia. Medes were the inhabitants of Media. It was located westward of the Caspian Sea. Elamites were the descendants of Elam, the son of Shem [Genesis 10:22]. Their nation was bounded by Persia on the east and Media on the north, Persian Gulf on the south. Mesopotamia is the region lying between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, the plain of Syria, a fertile country. God's words were spread farther westward to Judea.

Cappadocia and Pontus were a region of Asia Minor. The Lord had used these people to spread the good news of salvation back in their own nations. Many were converted in those nations as we read that the apostle Peter wrote to the believers in these places to encourage them. God also prepared for His anointed messengers like Paul to continue shepherding His people.

Luke recorded in this chapter of Acts the long list of people from a wide nation at the Pentecost, even to the Cretans and Arabians. It indicates that the gospel needs to be spread to many nations in their own tongues so that many more souls are saved, in the will of the Lord.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 3
MARK 7

THOUGHT

Thank God for extending His blessings and salvation to all nations. As promised by God to Abraham, He would bless all mankind with his seed. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." [Genesis 12:3]; "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" [Genesis 22:18a].

5 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:10

LESSON

Strangers, Jews
and proselytes

VERSE 10

*Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in
Egypt, and in the parts of
Libya about Cyrene,
and strangers of Rome,
Jews and proselytes,*

The book of Acts records the history of the ministry and miracles of the apostles of Christ. It links the Gospels with the Epistles.

The author, Luke, describes their actions in detail. It began with the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The difference in languages here was understood by those in different places who heard and understood in their own tongues. This could only be attributed to the empowering work of the Holy Spirit.

To quote Matthew Henry, “Between the promise of the Messiah (even the latest of those promises) and His coming many ages intervened; but between the promise of the Spirit and His coming there were but a few days; and during those days the apostles, though they had received orders to preach the gospel to every creature, and to begin at Jerusalem, yet lay perfectly wind-bound, incognito—concealed, and not offering to preach.” At that time Jerusalem was the rendezvous of religious people from all parts of the world. Listed in verses 9 to 11 were the different countries from where those strangers came. Included in that list was the posterity of Shem.

Beginning with the farthest east, the Parthians, the enumeration proceeds farther and farther westward till it comes to Judea; next come the western countries, from Cappadocia to Pamphylia; then the southern, from Egypt to Cyrene. The places covered here is proof of God’s empowering work in the apostles. Even the hearers were astonished at the widespread result of the gospel.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 4
MARK 8

THOUGHT

Read Acts 1:8.

6 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:12-13

LESSON

What meaneth this?

VERSE 12

*And they were all amazed,
and were in doubt,
saying one to another,
What meaneth this?*

Continuing on with the list of places mentioned, it was of no wonder that the people present were astounded. They simply could not understand what and how it had taken place. Even those devout men, Jews and proselytes, were amazed at such an occurrence. They did not question the authenticity of the message. What they could not grasp was the cause of such a dispensation. Those who doubted were most likely the native inhabitants of Jerusalem, the common people. Since they could not understand the foreign languages spoken by the apostles, they ridiculed them, both by words and by gestures.

The Syriac version adds, “and are drunk”. If it were true, it would be a very ridiculous statement. In actual fact, men generally lose control of their tongues through intemperance. Drunkenness could never have enabled them to have the faculty of speaking in many tongues.

The insinuation, that they were drunk with wine, would hopefully be believed by the people present since it was a time of feasting, the feast of Pentecost. However, the apostle Peter declared that it was too early in the day to imagine this to be their case.

The apostles were indeed filled with wine, not the juice of the grape, but with spiritual wine, that is, the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is the only sole reason for their ability to speak in diverse tongues. This marked the big difference from that which happened at Babel. This proved that their authority was from God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 5
MARK 9

THOUGHT

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. – Matthew 19:26

7 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:14

LESSON

The new Peter

VERSE 14

*But Peter, standing up with
the eleven, lifted up his voice,
and said unto them,
Ye men of Judaea,
and all ye that dwell at
Jerusalem, be this known unto
you, and hearken to my words.*

The sermon which Peter preached to the people shows that this pouring out of the Spirit was the accomplishment of an Old Testament promise. That was a great event in the history of the Church. All of them spoke in diverse languages. Though the other 11 apostles spoke as well, their sermons were not recorded. This is to confirm that Peter had been restored and reinstated from his earlier denial of the Lord.

Note the great change in the apostle Peter. Living up to the meaning of his name, Peter was now as firm and steadfast as a rock. Filled with the Holy Spirit, the spokesman Peter showed his zeal, fervour of spirit and fortitude of mind. Peter, who was intimidated by a servant maid before, stood up courageously to address the crowd.

“Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem” refers to their very own people who mocked and scoffed at the apostles. Peter’s homily was addressed to his own natives and citizens of Jerusalem. His intention was to encourage his hearers to embrace the faith of Christ. That sermon was proof of the fulfilment of Scripture concerning Christ’s resurrection and ascension.

Here is an account of the public notice of such an extraordinary gift. Do not be surprised at the response of the people in Jerusalem. In sharing the gospel message, we encounter such oppositions, including from our own loved ones, too. Even our Lord Jesus was ridiculed by many, including His own kinfolks.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 6
MARK 10

THOUGHT

But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. – Mark 6:4

8 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:15

LESSON Peter's denial

VERSE 15

*For these are not drunken,
as ye suppose, seeing it is but
the third hour of the day.*

Peter's sermon here was the proof that he had been restored from his previous fall to Christ's divine favour. Now he stood up confidently and courageously for the Lord. Those who ridiculed were mostly scribes and Pharisees as well as the priests. They were the people who consistently made light of the gospel.

"These are not drunken" not only referred to the eleven apostles but also included the hundred and twenty. They were also empowered with the gift of the Holy Spirit and endowed with Christ's extraordinary gifts.

According to Jewish custom, "It is forbidden for a man to taste anything, or do any work after break of day, until he has prayed the morning prayer. The morning prayer, the precept concerning it is, that a man should begin to pray as soon as the sun shines out; and its time is until the end of the fourth hour, which is the third part of the day" (John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible). The apostle Peter defended his own people by quoting this Jewish custom. It is too early in the day to indulge in drinking.

It is not surprising that their own people rejected such a miracle. They did likewise in disbelieving Christ's miracles. "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils" [Mark 3:22]. They called the Master of the house a wine-bibber, saying the same of His apostles.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 7
MARK 11

THOUGHT

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit. – Ephesians 5:18

9 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:16

LESSON

Peter's resort
to the Scriptures

VERSE 16

*But this is that which was
spoken by the prophet Joel.*

The Apostles had just been given the fullness of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and had spoken in diverse tongues to the general public. However, when the public wanted to know why they were behaving as such, Peter chose not to explain himself by relying on Christ's private communications with the disciples nor did he rely on his newfound gifts to authenticate what he was going to say.

Instead, he appealed to the Old Testament, which was public knowledge to the Jews. They would see, from the Scriptures rather than from any other source, that the message that the apostles were preaching was the correct one. Thus, from the beginning, we can see that the one sure way of knowing whether a message is from God is through cross-referencing the message with the more sure word of prophecy [2 Peter 1:19].

This has practical application for us as believers. When we seek to evangelise, we should follow the disciples' example of ensuring that the things we tell them are biblical. For example, while it is perhaps easier to explain why we believe in God through sharing personal testimonies, or through a "personal experience of God", we should always take care to highlight the biblical answer – faith.

Next, before Peter spoke, it is noted in Acts 1:14 that the disciples were regularly gathering to pray and it is highly probable that they would study Scripture together as well. For us to know the biblical answer, we too have to be diligent in our private and public devotions.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 8
MARK 12

HYMN

The old Book and the old faith are the rock on
which I stand!



10 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:17-18

LESSON

Joel's prophecy
– a present advent

VERSE 17

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Peter standing among the waiting crowd sees the fulfilment of an old prophecy of Joel [Joel 2:28-32]. The phenomenon that attracted the attention of the people was evidence of the Holy Spirit's prophesied advent.

The prophet Joel used "afterward" which Peter interpreted as "in the last days". He also added "saith God" to the quotation to emphasise that these were the words of God written by the prophet Joel. He concluded with "and they shall prophesy" at the end of verse 18. The expression "in the last days" refers to a period of time. From that Day of Pentecost until the completion of the "last days", the Holy Spirit would be with the true people of God. The last days began when Christ came as the suffering Servant to die for the sins of the world. It will end when He returns to earth in glory and majesty to establish His millennial Kingdom.

Peter announced to the Jews that through Jesus Christ, God has now brought in the promised New Covenant. This meant that the Holy Spirit shall be poured out on "all flesh" – all those who accepted God's gift of salvation through Christ. In the last days, all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ – sons and daughters, young and old men, His servants and handmaidens – shall be given the gift of the Holy Spirit and shall prophesy. They shall receive the Spirit and bear witness of Christ and the will of God to the end of the age of His Second Coming.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 9

MARK 13

PRAYER

Lord, deliver me from the slothfulness, keep me quickened to deliver Your message of salvation to everyone who will listen, until the day I die or You return again.





11 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:19-20

LESSON

Joel's prophecy
– a future judgement

VERSE 19

*And I will shew wonders in
heaven above, and signs in the
earth beneath; blood, and fire,
and vapour of smoke.*

It is evident from the reference to the “day of the Lord” that Pentecost was only a partial fulfilment of Joel’s prophecy. “The great and the terrible day of the Lord...” [Joel 2:31] will be fulfilled at the end of the tribulation in connection with the second coming of Christ.

The judgement day is known as the “day of the Lord”. At the end of the last days, God will come in judgement and then the Messianic kingdom will begin. Joel 2:30-31 (quoted by Peter in Acts 2:19-20) referring to the prophecy concerning signs and wonders in heaven and on earth blood, fire, vapour of smoke and cosmic changes in the sun and moon have yet to be fulfilled. These were loud warnings given to the unbelieving and unrepentant crowd to prepare for the judgement coming upon them. When Paul spoke to the unbelievers at Mars’ hill in Athens, he mentioned that God had appointed a day when He will judge the world in righteousness [Acts 17:31].

The last days would be days of restoration and reconciliation. The gospel will be preached and proclaimed to everyone. Believers have now a foretaste of the glory that is awaiting them. God is patient. People have time to repent of their sins and be saved from this stubborn generation [v. 40]. The exaltation of Jesus as Lord and Messiah intensifies the urgency of the summons of faith. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved [v. 21]. Judgement is near but praise God that salvation is nearer. Will you receive Jesus and be saved today?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 10
MARK 14

THOUGHT

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. – Romans 10:13



12 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:20

LESSON

The notable day
of the Lord

VERSE 20

*The sun shall be turned into
darkness, and the moon into
blood, before that great and
notable day of the Lord come.*

The great and notable day of the Lord is most naturally associated with the Day of Judgement and reference to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The event of His return is called the Day of the LORD throughout Scripture: “Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come” [Joel 1:15]. Peter preached about it. Paul also tells us about that event: “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” [1 Thessalonians 5:2-3].

These Scripture verses refer to a time when the Lord Jesus will return to earth to prove to Satan and his followers that He remains the sovereign God of the universe and will take over the rule of this earth.

Peter continued to explain that what had happened at Pentecost was the fulfilment of the prophecy spoken by the prophet Joel that in the last days God would pour out of His Spirit upon all people and more wonders and signs of great magnitude would appear before the great and notable day of the Lord. The description here pertains to the beginning of the last days [v. 17].

The end of the last days would be preceded by heavenly signs which will occur at the second coming of Jesus Christ. Peter proclaimed, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” [v. 21].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 11

MARK 15

THOUGHT

God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world.

13 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:21

LESSON The great hope

VERSE 21

*And it shall come to pass,
that whosoever shall call on the
name of the Lord
shall be saved.*

Joel predicted that God will pour out His Spirit upon all people [Joel 2:28-29]. The outpouring will be accompanied by signs in the heavens [Joel 2:30-31]. The timing of the Spirit's outpouring is at the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the millennium. At that time, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" [Joel 2:32]. The deliverance will be both physical and spiritual.

Peter preached a text from a Jewish book (Joel) to a Jewish audience, warning them of impending judgement and offering them salvation in the name of Jesus. Little did he know or see that this same text from Joel 2 would later be cited by Paul, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" [Romans 10:13]. He meant everyone and not just the Jews.

To call on the name of the Lord means that one realises that Jesus is the only hope for salvation that they have. They cannot save themselves or atone for their own sins through good works, their own moral goodness or acts of tremendous self-sacrifice.

The great hope is to be saved. All that God requires of us is to call upon "the name of the Lord", to know, believe and trust that Jesus is the Lord and to be ready to submit to His lordship, to serve Him as our Lord. While the Lord is the hope of His people, there is no more hope for those who reject Him. Today is the day of salvation. Receive Jesus now and be saved.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 12
MARK 16

THOUGHT

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. – Romans 10:9-10



14 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:22-40

LESSON

Peter's sermon

VERSE 32

*This Jesus hath God raised up,
whereof we all are witnesses.*

Peter proceeded to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the people's long-awaited Messiah and Lord. He was approved by God through miracles, wonders and signs. These signs overwhelmingly authenticated Jesus' claim of Who He is – the Son of God. Peter revealed that Christ was crucified by the pre-determined sovereignty of God and by the action of wicked men. The death of Jesus was attributed simultaneously both to the purpose of God and to the wickedness of men.

God the Father raised Him with a glorified supernatural body thereby freeing Him from the suffering and permanency of the grave. Death cannot stop the power of God. The miracles, crucifixion and death of Jesus were alluded to as well-known facts. The risen Jesus is the sovereign God and Redeemer.

The testimony and prophecy of David in Psalm 16:8-11 [verses 25-28] underline this. God exalted Jesus to His right hand, making Him both Lord and Christ. From this exalted position, Jesus received the "promised Holy Spirit" from God the Father and "has poured out what you now see and hear". That this was foretold in Scripture is clear from Psalm 110:1 [verses 34-35]. If not for the resurrection, Christ would not be our Master and Saviour.

The message of the Lord Jesus Christ cut the hearers to the heart and they asked Peter what they must do. Peter urged them to be saved and to repent of their sins. This repentance and faith in Christ would be manifested in baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. As a result, they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 13

LUKE 1:1-38

THOUGHT

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the key foundations of Christianity.



15 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:22

LESSON

Jesus –
a man approved of God

VERSE 22

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.

God was in Christ to heal the sick, calm the storm, cast out demons and raise the dead. God Himself did the miracles through Jesus. While He was on the earth, God gave Jesus the fullest endorsement any human ever had. Jesus is approved of God. This approval was shown in Christ by the working of His power. Likewise, in the believer, God's approval should be indicated by the working of His power because God has given us the spirit of power. It is wonderful to have God's approval.

Everything a man does is a search for validation. Yet the real question for any search for approval are these: From where are you seeking validation? How does God validate you? What makes you feel valuable and worthy? Our priority should be seeking God's approval. Everyday we need to do our very best to present ourselves to God and ask for His approval. We need to examine our minds and hearts based on God's words and humbly ask Him for His forgiveness of our sins and correct ourselves to be His true servants by His Word.

Make God your source of validation. It does not mean you will never experience disappointment or abandonment but with Christ as your Foundation you will be able to cope as He supplies the grace that you require. God's love and acceptance is the key to value and significance. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved. God's approval is what matters and counts.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 14
LUKE 1:39-80

THOUGHT

It is one thing to be accepted by God; it is quite another thing to be approved by God.



16 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:23

LESSON

Jesus delivered by
the determinate counsel
of God

VERSE 23

*Him, being delivered by
the determinate counsel and
foreknowledge of God, ye have
taken, and by wicked hands
have crucified and slain:*

The emphasis here is that although it is true that sinful men rejected and crucified our Lord Jesus Christ, it was all in the predetermined plan of God. The wicked nailed Him to the cross bearing the sins of men. This was no accident, for God purposed ahead of time that this would happen. He had this plan in place and the Son carried it out. God used wicked men to bring about the work of redemption by His Son.

If left to ourselves without God, we will get caught in the endless cycle of trying to do better, doing things faster, and having more stuff. We might say we love God but in reality, our real ambition and drive is worldly success and significance. We are drifting through life until one day you wake up feeling empty and confused.

God has a plan for each of us. We may not always understand His plan, but we still need to be obedient as we try to fulfill it. How do we do that? In Micah 6:8, the prophet asked the same thing: “And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Discover how He has made you. Take an honest look at whom you are – not seeing yourself too highly nor too lowly – and taking inventory of your strengths and weaknesses. The plan is not that you become a doctor or a missionary, an engineer or a scientist. God’s plan is for us to be faithful to Him and to follow Him in everything we do.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 15
LUKE 2

PRAYER

You are where God wants you to be at this very moment.



17 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:23

LESSON

Jesus rejected
by man

VERSE 23

*Him, being delivered by
the determinate counsel and
foreknowledge of God, ye have
taken, and by wicked hands
have crucified and slain:*

People don't want God interfering with what they consider a good time. They don't believe the warnings of Scripture that they are under God's judgement now and will face it eternally when they die. They think that they are essentially good and that God will overlook their faults and give them credit for their good deeds on judgement day. Thus they don't repent of their sins and believe not in Jesus Christ to save them from God's judgement.

We are all prone to disappointment and feelings of rejection. We have rejected others and have been rejected by others as well. However, what we choose to do with the hurt and disappointment will affect our walk with the Lord. We will either grow stronger or we will falter. The outcomes depend on what we choose.

The rejection Jesus endured shows us that He is our perfect, faithful Friend. His love for us is not fickle. It is not dependent upon what we do for Him, and it does not change. Looking at the pain and abandonment Jesus faced for you will help you face rejections. The gospel of what Jesus did through His life, death, and resurrection will give you hope in the midst of your pain. Jesus never promised to protect us from pain or sorrow, but He did assure us that He would be with us in all situations and that He would eventually deliver us through the difficulties to Himself.

God makes it possible for us to walk through the disappointments in life with a knowledge that His provision for us works. His grace and His comfort are ours as we rest in Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 16
LUKE 3

THOUGHT

Jesus endured our rejection that we might have His acceptance with the Father.

18 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:24

LESSON

Jesus raised
from death

VERSE 24

*Whom God hath raised up,
having loosed the pains of
death: because it was not
possible that he should be
holden of it.*

Despite all the scientific and medical progress made by man, he has yet to eradicate death. Death is the consequence of sin. No man can omit himself from this inevitable outcome. Hence, this inescapable situation makes Jesus' resurrection important. It means that we are no longer under the dominion of death and the power of sin. We are now alive in God through what Jesus did.

The resurrection is the promise of God that all who trust Jesus will be the beneficiaries of God's power to lead us in paths of righteousness and through the valley of death. The power of God for us was seen when God the Father raised Christ from the dead. That very power is available to us. We do not control this power. Rather, we have access to such power because God dwells in us and among us through the Holy Spirit. As we do the work God has given us to do, He helps us with the power that exceeds our comprehension and expectations.

Believing in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead is more than accepting a fact. It means being confident that God is for you, and that He has closed ranks with you, that He is transforming your life, and that He will save you for eternity. Believing in the resurrection means trusting in all the promises of life and hope and righteousness for which it stands. It means being so confident of God's power and love that no fear of worldly loss or greed for worldly gain will lure us to disobey His will.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 17
LUKE 4

THOUGHT

Jesus was crucified for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

19 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:25

LESSON

Jesus foreseen
by David

VERSE 25

*For David speaketh concerning
Him, I foresaw the Lord
always before my face,
for He is on my right hand,
that I should not be moved:*

God's plan is flawless and it is not by any coincidence that Jesus was from the lineage of David and recorded down by David in the psalms long before the miraculous birth. David had always set the Lord before him; had always brought himself to realise the continual presence of God, alike in happiness and in trouble, to feel God to be ever with him. God will not be in any true sense before our face unless we set Him there. To set the Lord before us means to have a deliberate and conscious resolve to have God in all of our thinking, so that the thought of God captivates all of our senses and all our activities and focus in life.

To set the Lord always before us is the secret of Christian living. It is the true preparation for heaven. This is one reason why regular habits of prayer, of worship, of reading God's Word, of Holy Communion are so helpful and cannot safely be neglected. They are means of drawing near to God, of coming into His presence. If we are doing anything, whether work or leisure, in which we could not bear to think of God, we may be sure that work or recreation is wrong.

As we go through our days, we should see God's hand in every situation. Every trial He brings lovingly to shape us into the image of Jesus Christ. Every blessing He graciously gives to show us His love. Every delight to our senses, whether the taste of food or the beauty of creation or the sounds of bird chirping, should cause us to rejoice in the presence of our God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 18
LUKE 5

THOUGHT

When you feel far away from God – guess who moved?



20 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:26

LESSON

Rest in hope

VERSE 26

*Therefore did my heart rejoice,
and my tongue was glad;
moreover also my flesh shall
rest in hope:*

The hope in David is the same hope in Peter, and it is still our hope today. Our Lord watches over us from day to day like a loving father watching his child as he plays in the playground. He lets us explore and wander, but he is always watching over us. Sometimes we may want to assert our own independence and attempt to wander out of his sight, but the father is always watching his child. And when we fall down or when we cry for help, he always hears us. Like what verse 25 assures us, He is always there for us.

Yet the more blessed truth is this: at the end of the day when it grows long and dark, and when we begin to realise that the playground, with all its seeming colours and excitement, is after all not home, and when we yearn for rest in the place where we truly belong, Christ is always there, waiting to bring us back.

What a blessed assurance we have in the promise of Christ! Though this flesh may waste away, though our eyes may grow dim and our hearing grow dull, we are on the other hand nearer and nearer to seeing our Lord and Saviour face to face. Surely our heart would rejoice and our tongues be glad for we know that we have a home waiting for us after this sojourning on earth. And with this hope in our hearts, the more we should live victorious lives on earth, for the battle has long been won through and by our Lord.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 19
LUKE 6

THOUGHT

Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. – Matthew 11:28



21 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:27

LESSON
Kept from
corruption

VERSE 27

*Because Thou wilt not leave
my soul in hell, neither wilt
Thou suffer Thine Holy One
to see corruption.*

Christ not only took the punishment we should take, He won for us the resurrection that we would have. Like how the Holy One was kept from corruption, believers in the Lord will not suffer the devastating torment in hell. The imputation of righteousness and the miraculous work of resurrection was not man-made imagination or human-devised logic; it was God's very revelation in His Word proven to be true and reliable throughout generations.

How, you may ask, should I believe in what was written in the Bible? Aside from the consistency of testimonies of all writers whom God has graciously used, we have hundreds of prophecies which had been realised through the ages. Time has proven that God is true to His promise and that though the grass may wither and the flowers fade, the Word of God stands forevermore.

Yet the most important proof is the work of the Holy Spirit in our heart. Pray for God to help us especially when we are weak and doubting. Pray that God will help us see the light in darkness and turn our eyes upon the Lord, for He is the One who would not suffer His children to see corruption.

Trust in the Lord. The floods may overcome you. The fire may be seven times hotter. The wind may howl like you have never heard before. We may even have to face death. Yet be still and know that He is the holy God who would see us through. He raised Christ; in the same manner He would raise you up as well.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 20
LUKE 7

THOUGHT

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

– 1 Peter 1:3



22 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:28

LESSON

Ways of life

VERSE 28

*Thou hast made known to me
the ways of life; Thou shalt
make me full of joy
with Thy countenance.*

God has made man in such a way that he could feel and think, learn and improve. Though some animals can do that too, it is man whom God has created in His own image, who has the most wisdom to even have dominion over the rest of creation. Man is always seeking what is true, what is right and what is beautiful.

Yet God has already revealed the answer for our quest - and that answer is found in none other than our Lord Jesus, who is true, right and beautiful, for He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. God has made known to us the ways of life - what is life and how do we go about living it. In God's Word we find directions and instructions; in the Scriptures, we find answers and wise counsel. Sadly, instead of looking into God's Word, millions of lives were wasted on a futile quest in the wilderness.

But life is more than solving our pressing problems or even improving on what we have. God's Word is revealed to us so that we can grow in Christ and lead well-pleasing lives in the sight of God.

Seek not to live life asking, "How can I solve this problem that for some reasons comes my way?" Instead, ask, "How can I overcome this challenge which God has allowed to best glorify Him?" The first principle is always to please God. Read His Word. Pray unceasingly. Continue to serve. Blessings and joy would come when you least expect it.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 21
LUKE 8

THOUGHT

Shew me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day. - Psalm 25:4-5





23 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:29

LESSON

David's prophecy

VERSE 29

*Men and brethren,
let me freely speak unto you of
the patriarch David,
that he is both dead and
buried, and his sepulchre is
with us unto this day.*

The prophecy of David is this: The Messiah will come from his family line. Peter here again channelled the attention of his listeners to a person everyone there and then would know, be he a believer or not. A reference to this patriarch would again strike a chord in the hearts of his audience.

David is a special man - a king after God's own heart, a sovereign who became the yardstick for all the kings after him. But he, like all men, was both dead and buried - his very tomb reminded the people of this cruel truth. All that he has done would go into oblivion: only who he is in the Lord stays - He is the man whose line God has chosen to give the world His only begotten son.

But before that, let us consider this: All of us would die some day. And one day someone would stand at our grave in memory of us. Is there anything of eternal value that could be said of us? Can someone thank you for bringing him to the saving knowledge of Christ? Can somebody say that you have not only fought the good fight of faith but also left a good legacy? Or are we like the numerous kings after David, only having lived, to eventually die and be buried?

Brethren, when we are both dead and buried, let men freely speak unto others of us; that we have walked worthy of Him who has called us out of darkness unto His marvellous light.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 22

LUKE 9

THOUGHT

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.
- Colossians 1:10-11





24 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:30

LESSON

Christ as David's son

VERSE 30

Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

David was not only God's prophet; he was the king with whom God had sworn a covenant. Our verse today reminds us of the Davidic covenant – a promise by God to grant David's descendants an everlasting kingdom - a place for God's people, where they would dwell forever and move no more, away from wickedness; a house in God's name, a throne established forever [2 Samuel 7:8-13].

Finite as David was in his understanding, he would not be able to understand what was to come after him. Little would he fathom the soteriological will of God culminating in the coming of the Messiah. Yet as history slowly unfolds, we see the wisdom of the sovereign God Who not only knows the future but has also ordained for everything that comes to pass. The whole story of mankind anchors on this prophecy that God has put in David's mouth and sealed with God's promise; the most important piece in the whole redemptive plan would come from the Davidic line.

The mystery of incarnation is never fully explained to us - neither do we need to know the minutest detail. However, from the very revelation of God, we know the purpose: that only the death of the Perfect Man could redeem us from the bondage of sin and that only the raising up of the second Adam could guarantee us of our own resurrection.

Upon what do you place your trust? Is it in the speculative wisdom of man or in the sure prophecy and promise of God?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 23
LUKE 10

THOUGHT

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.

– 1 Corinthians 15:45-47





25 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:30b-31

LESSON

Christ as
David's sovereign

VERSE 30b

... *he would raise up Christ to
sit on his throne.*

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son? And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.” [Matthew 22:41-46]

And in Psalm 110:1, David wrote, “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” This is a Messianic Psalm. Jesus identified David as the author of this Psalm as the title [of Psalm 110] indicates. The salient words in this verse is ‘my Lord’. Who is ‘my Lord’? Christ said that in this verse, David had referred to someone else greater than himself. Since no common son of David can be greater than he, the reference ‘the Lord’ must refer to the coming Messiah, God’s begotten Son, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Jesus asked the Pharisees, “If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?”, they had no answer. Instead of falling down on their knees worshipping our Lord, they plotted to kill Him!

Remember, God has raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honour at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms. Now He is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else – not only in this world but also in the world to come.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 24

LUKE 11

ASSURANCE

God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made Him head over all things for the benefit of the church.





26 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:32-33

LESSON

The fulfilment of David's prophecy

VERSE 32

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

The Book of Acts is out to prove that the sufferings and death of Christ were the fulfilment of prophecy. The earliest preachers had to do that. To the Jews, the idea of a crucified Messiah was unimaginable. Their law said, "... His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God)" [Deuteronomy 21:23]. To the orthodox Jew the Cross made it completely impossible that Jesus could be the Messiah. And to this, the early preachers answered, "If you would only read the scriptures rightly you would see that all was foretold."

In addition, Acts also stresses the resurrection as the final proof that Jesus was indeed God's Chosen One. The Acts of the Apostles has been called The Gospel of the Resurrection. To the early Church, the resurrection was all-important. We must remember this – without the resurrection, there would have been no Christian Church at all. If Christ had not risen, then we would be of all sinners most miserable.

Nothing proves the authenticity of the accounts in Acts better than the testimonies of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection. When the disciples preached the centrality of the resurrection they were arguing from experience. After the Cross they were bewildered, broken men, with their dream gone and their lives shattered. It was the resurrection which changed all that and turned them from cowards into heroes.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 25
LUKE 12

THOUGHT

It is one of the tragedies of the Church that so often the preaching of the resurrection is confined to Easter time. Every Sunday is the Lord's Day and every Lord's Day should be kept as resurrection day.





27 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:34-35

LESSON

The LORD
said to my Lord

VERSE 34

*For David is not ascended
into the heavens: but he saith
himself, The LORD said unto
my Lord, Sit Thou on my
right hand,*

Peter here proves that these words spoken by David were not principally to be understood as concerning David himself, but regarding Christ the Messiah; as for David, his body was in the tomb, which on that account was still amongst the Hebrews.

For David is not ascended into the heavens – That is, David has not risen from the dead and ascended to heaven. This further shows that Psalm 16:8-11 quoted in 2:25-27 finds its fulfilment in the Messiah, that is, it is a Messianic Psalm. Great as they esteemed David, and much as they were accustomed to apply these expressions of the Scripture to him, yet they could not be applicable to him. They must refer to Someone else; and especially that passage which Peter now proceeds to quote. It was of great importance to show that these expressions could not apply to David, and also that David bore testimony to the exalted character and dignity of the Messiah.

Hence, Peter here presents David himself as affirming that the Messiah was to be exalted to a dignity far above his own. This does not affirm that David was not saved, or that his spirit had not ascended to heaven, but that he had not been exalted in the heavens in the sense in which Peter was speaking of the Messiah.

The Lord said unto my Lord; the eternal Father unto his eternal Son, who was now made flesh – hence our Saviour proves His divinity [Matthew 22:45]. The words here referred to are Psalm 110:1.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 26

LUKE 13

THOUGHT

In Jesus the Messiah has come, the Messianic prophecies are fulfilled and the New Age has dawned. The early Church had a tremendous sense that Jesus was the hinge of all history; that with His coming, eternity had invaded time; and that, therefore, life and the world could never be the same again.





28 FEBRUARY

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:36

LESSON

The indictment

VERSE 36

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Let all the house of Israel know assuredly the conclusion of this discourse, the gist of this first apostolic sermon. Peter in his argument lays little stress on the miracles of the Lord. He only alludes to them in passing, and argues alone from fulfilled prophecy, with which a Jew would be familiar.

Peter showed from a passage in the Old Testament Book of Joel, well-known to his listeners, that the outpouring of the Spirit and its results, which they had just witnessed, was exactly what was foretold for the days of the Messiah. He then proceeded to point out that his Master, who had died and risen again, had fulfilled in every particular the strange prophecies contained in two famous Messianic Psalms. God hath made that same Jesus Lord and Christ; God hath made Him 'Lord of all' by exalting Him to His right hand, and 'Christ' [the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew 'Messiah' or the 'Anointed'] the One whom Israel looked forward to as their Deliverer and Redeemer for time and eternity. This glorious One, now reigning with all power from His throne at the right hand of God – Messiah and King – is no other than that Jesus whom ye crucified.

Jesus is not only the Messiah, but both Lord and Christ – the supreme Governor of all things and all persons, Jews and Gentiles, angels and men.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 27

LUKE 14

THOUGHT

While on earth Jesus was equally 'Lord and Christ', but that then He was in the form of a servant, having emptied Himself of His power and glory, but by the resurrection and ascension was He openly declared to be so.



1 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:37

LESSON

Pricked in
the heart

VERSE 37

*Now when they heard this,
they were pricked in their
heart, and said unto Peter and
to the rest of the apostles,
Men and brethren,
what shall we do?*

Behold the wonderful grace of God, as here manifested! How sudden, how powerful, how gracious! Surely, the Holy Spirit here wrought his Almighty sovereignty on the hearts of those Jerusalem sinners. And, was not this proof of what Jesus had said and promised? [John 1:50; John 14:12]. But let us not forget, that the same Lord still carries on the same works of grace, and is as much the Almighty Lord in his Church, as ever!

And notice the characters of those to whom such grace was shown. No doubt from what Peter said [Acts 2:23] many of those who were now pricked in their heart, were among those who joined the rabble, to crucify the Lord of life and glory. Oh! May we rejoice in these wonderful events and exclaim what God has wrought! This event reminds us of the fulfilment of God's Word, "Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of My mouth: and thy judgements are as the light that goeth forth." [Hosea 6:5]

How very natural it is with sinners of all descriptions and characters, under the first alarms of sin, to cry out, what must I do to be saved! Every mind of an unregenerate heart goes on sinning until the Word convicts them of their sinful state.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 28
LUKE 15

THOUGHT

Is not My Word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?
— Jeremiah 23:29.

2 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:38

LESSON

Repent and
be baptised

VERSE 38

*Then Peter said unto them,
Repent, and be baptised every
one of you in the name of
Jesus Christ for the remission
of sins, and ye shall receive the
gift of the Holy Ghost.*

The Apostle Peter had preached the Word with power, the hearers were pricked in their heart, and by his direction they were commanded to repent and be baptised. Repentance is expressively named, and faith is necessarily implied in the phrase, being baptised “in the name of Jesus Christ”. In the New Testament, repentance was first preached by John the Baptist, and by our Lord – repent: for the kingdom of God is at hand [Matthew 3:2; 4:17]. This is followed by the call to believe.

As the sermon preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost was the first sermon preached in the Church of God, so the baptism of which we have here an account was also the first ministration of that sacrament. Our Lord’s last command to His apostles was, “Make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”, and now for the first time that command was carried out.

And this is exactly the teaching of the Church in the Catechism, where the answer to the question, “What is required of persons to be baptised?” is, “Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament”. This is the real point and meaning of the rite of baptism, which is the public act in which our faith in Christ is declared.

If we are sincere in our faith, we should be willing to make it known. If we are earnest in our faith, we would want to spread it forth. The kingdom of Christ is to be spread by this public confession and acknowledgment of Him.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 29

LUKE 16

THOUGHT

The Gospel preached demands from men repentance, faith and confession. Untold blessings and eternal blessedness await those who respond and submit themselves to its demand.

3 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:39

LESSON Household faith

VERSE 39

*For the promise is unto you,
and to your children, and to
all that are afar off, even as
many as the Lord our God
shall call.*

The promise referred to here is the gift of the Holy Spirit, His powerful and gracious influences, making them children of God and granting them eternal salvation. This promise he mentioned earlier [v. 17], and he now applies it to these Jews, their sons and daughters then.

Under this promise parents may be encouraged to train up their children for God under the sound of the gospel; they are authorised to devote them to Him in the ordinance of Christian baptism, and they may trust in His gracious purpose thus to perpetuate the blessings of salvation from age to age (Albert Barnes).

“As for me, this is My covenant with them, saith the LORD; My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever” [Isaiah 59:21]. The word “mouth” is mentioned 4 times in this verse, denoting speaking, in the form of preaching or teaching [Luke 21:15], where through such means the covenant of God is fulfilled.

Many among us can testify to this fulfilment of promise in their family where they witness a multi-generation of Christians. In all their single-hearted labour, attended to by divine grace, they echo the Psalmist, “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it” [Psalm 127:1a].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 30
LUKE 17

THOUGHT

That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. – Deuteronomy 6:2

4 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:40

LESSON

The plea

VERSE 40

*And with many other words
did he testify and exhort,
saying, Save yourselves from
this untoward generation.*

The sermon in this chapter, though one of the longest in the New Testament, is but an outline. It contains, however, the substance of the plan of salvation, and is admirably arranged to attain its object. He bore witness to the promises of the gospel of Christ; to the truths pertaining to the danger of sinners; to the truth respecting the character of that generation.

That age of Jewish people then living were perverse, refractory, not easily guided or taught. They were to apprehend danger from being with them, from the influence of their opinions and feelings, that was corrupt and wicked. These would denounce, or persecute them, inducing them to abandon their seriousness, and to turn back to their sins. From these they ought to flee and escape.

The principal danger which besets those who are awakened arises from their former companions. They may be their kindred or friends, and have a powerful hold on their affections. These will seek to drive off their serious impressions by derision, argument, or persecution, to prevent those who are awakened from becoming Christians.

Those who are awakened should resolve at once to break off from their evil companions, and unite themselves to Christ and His people. There may be no other way in which this can be done than by resolving to forsake altogether the society of those who are infidels, scoffers, and profane. They should forsake the world, and give themselves up to God, and resolve to have only so much contact with the world, in any respect, as may be required by duty, and as may be consistent with a supreme purpose to live to the honour of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 31

LUKE 18

THOUGHT

Salvation is ever from a present evil, a predominance of immoral habits, affecting not only the individual but the society. As evil changes its forms from age to age, so is the hope and message of salvation eternally fresh and new.

5 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:41

LESSON

Christians
– a separated people

VERSE 41

*Then they that gladly received
his word were baptised: and
the same day there were added
unto them about
three thousand souls.*

The preaching of the Word of God by the Apostle Peter was powerfully attended by the presence of the Holy Spirit that effected a joyful and cheerful reception among the Jewish hearers. This was the first plentiful effusion or outpouring of the Holy Spirit under the preaching of the Gospel and the conversion was instantaneous. They received it, rejoicing in the privilege of becoming reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. These who embraced the offer of salvation readily yielded themselves at once to God and the ordinance of baptism which sealed their profession administered without delay.

They were baptised in the name of Jesus [Acts 2:38], for this was the criterion of a Jew's conversion; and when a Jew had received baptism in this name he was excluded from all communication with his countrymen; and no man would have forfeited such privileges but on the fullest and clearest conviction. This baptism was a very powerful means to prevent their apostasy; they had, by receiving baptism in the name of Jesus, renounced Judaism, and all the political advantages connected with it; and they found it indispensably necessary to make the best use of that holy religion which they had received in its stead [Adam Clarke].

Believers are baptised into the body of Christ, into which they became members one of another where Christ Himself is the Head. They are a people separated from other gods, from this fallen world and evils of sin. They are no more their own masters but are instead servants to Christ, who is their Master, Lord and King. They are endued with divine graces and virtues where they find great delight and fervor serving Him, contributing both to His work and growth of the heavenly kingdom on earth.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 32
LUKE 19

THOUGHT

For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. –Galatians 3:27

6 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:42

LESSON

Christians
– a steadfast people

VERSE 42

*And they continued stedfastly
in the apostles' doctrine and
fellowship, and in breaking of
bread, and in prayers.*

Here, the New Testament Church is born, setting forth a divine standard and pattern, for which Churches that spring out of it should hereafter follow. It was born out of the preaching of the Word of God. As with the Church of Jesus Christ, so is the individual believer, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever [1 Peter 1:23].

Life was breathed into a spiritually dead soul – spiritual life, eternal life, the life of God in the soul of man! Such a man will inevitably or naturally incline towards things divine and eternal, and God Himself. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth [John 3:6, 31]. The man that is born again spiritually will yearn for things spiritual.

This divine eternal life in man will spur him to steadfast continuance in the Apostles' doctrine, that is, the Word of God, which embodies vital and eternal truths. It is ever one of the indispensable methods of nourishing the soul in godly piety and practical holiness. It will desire after the gathering of man of like-nature, the mystical body of Christ, to fellowship, and worship of God in the breaking of bread, that leads into special communion with the Lord in the mystery of His great sacrifice in their behalf. It is a divine family gathering that links to God by their offering up of prayers unto their heavenly Father. Such prayer is the breath of the Christian life, and the life of the Christian Church corporately.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 33
LUKE 20

THOUGHT

A Church that departed from the standard and pattern of New Testament Christianity is but a modern Churchianity!

7 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:43

LESSON

Christians
– a sanctified people

VERSE 43

*And fear came upon every
soul: and many wonders and
signs were done by the apostles.*

When Jesus was with the people, many who witnessed His miracles “feared exceedingly” and had asked, “What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” [Mark 4:41]. Here in Acts 2:43, we are told that the same fear came upon the new believers as the Holy Spirit spoke to their hearts and as they witnessed the miracles performed by the apostles. The fear here refers to a sense of awe and wonder, and a reverence of God for what He was doing. There was also a sense of sinfulness and unworthiness, especially when they recalled how they had called for the crucifixion of Jesus, and even told Pilate that “His blood be on us and on our children” [Matthew 27:25].

Psalm 103 teaches that the mercy of the Lord is upon all who fear Him. Reverential fear is therefore a mark of all who claim to be followers of Christ. It makes them a sanctified people; a people who have been set aside to worship Him and serve Him; who desire to keep His covenant and remember His commandment to do them [Psalm 103:18]. Such fear makes Christians different from the people of the world.

Sadly, we do not see such reverential fear in many churches today. They introduce rock music and show business-type entertainment into their worship to attract churchgoers. Many of the leaders live like Hollywood superstars. Let us pray that they would study God’s Word and realise what manner of persons they ought to be in holy conversation and godliness [2 Peter 3:11].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 34
LUKE 21

THOUGHT

But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.”
– Acts 10:35

8 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:44

LESSON

Christians
– a sharing people

VERSE 44

*And all that believed were
together, and had all things
common;*

On the night before He went to the cross, our Lord promised to send His followers the Comforter and He gave them a new commandment to love one another. Here in Acts 2, we see evidence of the Holy Spirit working in the hearts of the new believers who came together frequently and shared their possessions and helped those in need.

At that time, many new Christians faced persecution and discrimination by the Jewish authorities to the extent that their very livelihoods were threatened. Although this was not intended for an example, or to be a constant and binding rule to all Christians, in all places and ages; we can see that such a spirit of sacrificial love and mutual concern is by and large missing from our modern day churches.

Although a small proportion of our church members do meet and interact regularly, the majority come to church only to attend the Lord's Day worship service and the major festivals like Christmas and Good Friday. As for sharing our material possessions, even though our circumstances are very different today, it is undeniable that we tend to cling to our wealth more tightly than we should – which is why James' admonition in James 2:15-17 is timely: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 35
LUKE 22

THOUGHT

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. – 1 John 2:15a

9 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:46

LESSON

Christians
– a spiritual people

VERSE 46

*And they, continuing daily
with one accord in the temple,
and breaking bread
from house to house,
did eat their meat
with gladness
and singleness of heart,*

This one verse tells us a great deal about the early Christians. They were a people who worshipped God every day. They were worshipping in the temple, praying and attending the regular hours of worship. They were worshipping in their homes, moving from home to home; sharing together in fellowship meals and observing the Lord's Supper, remembering the Lord's death. They were worshipping with gladness and singleness of heart. The words "singleness" means sincere, without hardness. Their hearts were soft and tender, easily touched and giving. There was no selfishness or withholding on their part. Where there was need, they gave. They were rejoicing in the Lord. In other words, they were leading Spirit-filled lives.

It is important for us to understand that the Spirit-filled life is God's plan and provision for every Christian. The fullness of the Holy Spirit is not given to a spiritual aristocracy, to the more mature Christian, the minister or the missionary only. On the Day of Pentecost, all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit [Acts 2:4]. The promise is to "all" [Acts 2:39], and the command is to every Christian [Ephesians 5:18]. As we look at these early Christians, we see a people who were full of the Holy Spirit.

Let us take time to reflect on how we are worshipping our God in this day and age. Is our worship anything like that of the early Christians? If not, then let us repent and ask God to "turn us and cause Thine anger toward us to cease" [Psalm 85:4].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 36
LUKE 23

SING

Fill me now, fill me now, Holy Spirit, fill me now;
Fill me with Thy hallowed presence, Come, oh,
come, and fill me now; – Elwood H. Stokes

10 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 2:47

LESSON

The Lord
adds to the church

VERSE 47

*Praising God, and having
favour with all the people.
And the Lord added
to the church daily
such as should be saved.*

When Joseph was in Egypt, whether it was in the house of his master Potiphar, or in prison, or before the throne of Pharaoh, those around him could see that “the Lord was with him” [Genesis 39:3], and that he was “a man in whom the Spirit of God is” [Genesis 41:38]. Similarly, this was the case with Daniel in Babylon. King Darius promoted Daniel to be the chief over his vast empire because he trusted him and saw in him “an excellent spirit” [Daniel 6:3].

The lesson is that when God’s people lead spirit-filled lives, those around can see. Thus it was with the early Christians. Their transformed lives were a great testimony to God. The results were twofold: they gained favour with the people, and the Lord added souls to the church.

As we try to share the Gospel with those around us, our families and our church, we would do well to remember this important lesson. Our Lord puts it this way; “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” [Matthew 5:16]. Pauls says in 1 Corinthians 6:20; “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”. God forbid that we should be like salt that has lost its savour, which is “thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” [Matthew 5:13].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 37
LUKE 24

MEDITATE

Lord, forgive us for the many times when our lives have not glorified Thee, but instead given Your enemies “occasions to blaspheme”.

– 2 Samuel 12:14.

11 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:1-2

LESSON

The lame man

VERSE 2

*And a certain man lame from
his mother's womb was carried,
whom they laid daily
at the gate of the temple
which is called Beautiful,
to ask alms of them
that entered into the temple;*

John 9 describes Jesus healing a man who had been blind since birth. Jesus' disciples asked if the man's blindness was caused by his sin or that of his parents. Jesus replied, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" [v. 3]. In this case, God allowed sickness in order that His glory might be shown.

The same can be said of the healing of the lame beggar at the gate of the temple. Here, we read of the church's first recorded miracle. God is now ready to reach another great harvest of souls. It was now time to attract the attention of the people, so He reached down and healed a single man, a man whom everyone knew, and the result was that God's name was glorified.

We see that Jesus is now working through His disciples. This is one thing Jesus wants people to know; His presence and His power are still at work, still available to men. His great love and concern for the world is still being manifested through the lives of His disciples. Jesus works through those who look and see the desperate need of the suffering, both those who suffer in spirit and body. Jesus can also work through us. We may not be able to perform spectacular miracles like John and Peter. But, if we allow our limited talents and resources to be used by the Lord, He can work even greater works through us ... if we only believe [John 14:12].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 38
JOHN 1

THOUGHT

And He said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. – Luke 18:27

12 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:3-5

LESSON

The helpless man

VERSE 3

*Who seeing Peter and John
about to go into the temple
asked an alms.*

We saw yesterday, how a certain lame man laid waiting at the Beautiful gate, asking for alms from temple-goers. We do not know any more details of his helpless circumstance, but only to read that he had to be carried there. So, this man was more than just lame; his condition was such that the people at that time did not know how else to help him, but had to carry him daily to the temple to beg. He was totally without strength, and unable to bear even his own weight to move about, and worse, unable to work and provide for himself.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The lame man at the Beautiful Gate exemplifies such a person. He is born with a physical disability that incapacitates him for life. He is totally dependent on others for his daily needs. Helplessness of man leads to poverty in spirit. But such are the people whom Jesus says are blessed. Unless fallen man sees his own helpless state, he will never come to realise his need for Christ's saving grace.

Are you helpless, and poor in spirit? Does it seem like no matter what you do, you are not able to get yourself out of the state that you are in? Then, turn your eyes upwards, and turn to the One who can help you. Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 39

JOHN 2

MEDITATE

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you. – 1 Peter 5:6-7

13 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:6

LESSON
Better than
silver and gold

VERSE 6

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

When the lame man responded to Peter and looked to him, Peter proceeded to speak to the helpless man, to show him the power and authority of Jesus Christ. Peter told the man that he had something better than any alms. Peter was referring to the gift of the miracle of healing that can only be wrought through Christ. Indeed, Peter was not rich, he did not have any silver or gold to give the lame man, but he had something better, something more excellent: he had faith in Jesus and it is that faith in Jesus that ultimately healed the lame man.

It is important to note that Peter was not able to heal the lame man using his own strength. He had to rely solely on Christ for the divine healing. Peter was not a “faith healer” in the modern sense, but he was used by God on that day to show God’s compassion towards the helpless man, and to heal the man. Peter and John were servants of Christ, and they gave all glory to God on that day, when the miracle of healing was accomplished.

Do you, like Peter and John, have something that is better than any silver or gold in this world? Do you truly confess that Jesus is Christ and that Jesus died for you on the cross, and rose again from the dead on the third day, that, believing, you may have eternal life? Do you walk close to Him every day? These indeed are things more precious than silver and gold.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JOB 40
JOHN 3

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I confess my sins before You and ask that You be the Lord of my life, from today until I see You face to face. Amen.

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:7

LESSON

The transformed man

VERSE 7

And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

After commanding the lame man to rise up and walk, Peter proceeded to take him by the hand and to lift him up. When the lame man accepted the help, and obeyed Peter, he found that his feet and ankle bones were miraculously healed and strengthened. Only divine power can transform such a man, lame from birth, to be able to receive physical strength to stand on his feet. A man injured in an accident would ordinarily take weeks or months to recover, but this lame man was able to walk immediately once Peter lifted him up. In contrast, the lame man's healing was instantaneous, it was unsolicited, it was real and permanent, and it was miraculous! Praise the Lord for such a miraculous transformation!

The way the lame man was healed exemplifies the way a sinner is transformed, from the moment that he was saved by the grace of God. He is a transformed man, and he is able to stand on his spiritual feet, once he is touched by the Holy Spirit and is converted. He is no longer dead in sin, and he is no longer without help. The transformation is instantaneous, unsolicited, real and permanent, and it is miraculous!

Dear reader, have you been transformed by the grace of God, to be a child of God? If so, praise the Lord! As a redeemed child of God, it is then our duty to reach out to others whom God puts in our lives, so that they, too, can come to the saving knowledge of Christ, and be transformed as well.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 41
JOHN 4

MEDITATE

... but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

– Romans 12:2

15 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:8-9

LESSON

The praising man

VERSE 8

And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

As Peter reached out his hands and lifted up the lame man, the man received strength in his legs and ankles, and was immediately healed. This fact is further emphasised in the account, where he was described as leaping up, to stand up. It was as if he had been doing this every day, and there was no indication of his former infirmity. He was no longer weak and unable to walk, he was no longer unable to help himself, to fend for himself, to work and receive a livelihood. And then he walked and entered into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God! What an amazing transformation: from a helpless, weak man who was unable to work and provide for his own basic needs, into a strong and fit man, able to walk and leap, and grateful to God for all that God had done for him!

The effect of the transformation upon the lame man is a picture of a truly regenerate man. At the moment of conversion, the sinner is changed, from a man dead in sin, to a new man, alive in the Spirit, having a heart full of joy and gratitude towards God, the author of his salvation.

If you have truly tasted the joy of God's salvation, continue to rejoice and praise Him, and continue to be grateful to Him, as long as you live. Let us also walk in this, our newness of life in Christ, faithfully obeying His words, and bringing others to Him as He had commanded us to do.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE

IN 2 YEARS, READ

JOB 42

JOHN 5

MEDITATE

... even so we also should walk in newness of life.

– Romans 6:4

16 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:10-11

LESSON

The
astonished multitude

VERSE 10

*And they knew that it was
he which sat for alms at the
Beautiful gate of the temple:
and they were filled with
wonder and amazement
at that which had happened
unto him.*

Peter and John became the instruments of God's power, when they healed the lame man, who had been crippled from birth, at the entrance of the temple, at the gate named Beautiful. This was witnessed by the crowd that was there, being the hour of prayer. This public display of God's miracle was undeniably shocking, and could not be explained by any other means. Peter had commanded the lame man to arise, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the same title that was put upon the cross when Jesus was crucified. Peter made the same reference in Acts 2:22, during his sermon at Pentecost which saw the salvation of 3,000 souls.

The miracle wrought by Peter and John were astonishing for the following facts. Firstly, the immediate nature of the healing, followed by the fact that the man not just stood up, but was immediately walking and leaping, showed that this was not a natural healing process, but divine healing from God. Next, it was wrought by Christ's apostles, and not by the Person of Christ, but in His name only. This points to the reality of the divinity of Christ, and the reality of His resurrection and power. Christ is the Son of the living God, because a dead god cannot bring about such a display of divine power.

We rejoice today because we worship a living God, Christ Jesus of Nazareth. He is the One Who has called us and healed us from our mortal punishment. We, like the lame man, had been healed, and reconciled to God. Let us rejoice and be glad, be grateful for what He had done for us.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES I
JOHN 6

MEDITATE

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. – Isaiah 25:9

17 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:12

LESSON
Not by might
nor by power

VERSE 12

And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

A lame man had just been healed and it is quite natural for everyone to want to know the person who did the healing. He would be the talk of the town and would certainly gain popularity and fame. And sure enough, Peter and John were swarmed with so many people looking at them as if they were some gods sent from heaven to bring healing to suffering individuals.

But Peter was careful not to be taken into this web of pride and self-confidence; instead he would have given them his unequivocal response. "We have nothing to do with his complete recovery. Who do you think we are? Look at once to God!" Men by nature are too prone to idolise the exceptional individuals who have contributed for their good. But we are to look farther, even to Him who alone could give the increase.

It has to be pointed out that miracles have always been appointed by God to convince especially the unbelieving. Therefore any abuse of them would only lead one to establish idolatry and superstition. God provides miracles for the purpose of producing true knowledge for the worship of God. Thus the most successful ministers must be humble; the more they are admired of others, the lower they must lie down at the feet of Jesus, ascribing to Him the glory and the honour.

We are reminded that whatever good we have done or encouragement we have been to others comes only from the grace of God. What a privilege that He would see us fit to be His holy instruments!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 2
JOHN 7

PRAYER

Lord, You alone deserve the recognition and the praise for all the great works which You have done in and through us. Amen!

18 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:13

LESSON The God of our fathers

VERSE 13

*The God of Abraham,
and of Isaac, and of Jacob,
the God of our fathers,
bath glorified His Son Jesus;
whom ye delivered up,
and denied Him in the
presence of Pilate, when he
was determined to let Him go.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 3
JOHN 8

THOUGHT

After the apostles have shown that it was not by their own authority or any personal virtues that this miracle was done, it became necessary to declare who really was indeed the Author of it. Peter, speaking to a Jewish audience, commences with an endearing appellation, “the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob”. This is a well-known designation for God among the Jewish people and it immediately caught on with them.

He is called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for a peculiar reason, namely because of the promise made to these patriarchs. It was important to show that it was the same God who had done this that had been acknowledged by their forefathers. They were not to introduce the worship of any other gods. More importantly, the promise was made to Abraham, that in his seed “should all the families of the earth be blessed” [Genesis 12:3].

Our Lord Jesus further amplifies on who really was this Person that Moses met at Mount Sinai, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” [Exodus 3:6; Matthew 22:32]. This was long after Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead, yet God declared to Moses that He is still their God. It follows therefore, these are not dead, but alive; alive with God!

How wonderful it is to know that though some day many of us may be dead, this God of the Promise is still our own God, forever and ever!

For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death. – Psalm 48:14

19 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:14

LESSON

The Holy One
and the Just

VERSE 14

*But ye denied
the Holy One and the Just,
and desired a murderer
to be granted unto you;*

The Lord Jesus could stand innocent before His judge against any allegation of wrongdoing. He could not be proven guilty. Even then He was charged by the religious council for blasphemy [Matthew 26:65], and based on this charge the Sanhedrin condemned Him to die! Pontius Pilate, then the presiding judge may be a pagan, and a hated Roman Governor in Israel but he appears to be in a better light than these religious leaders.

During the final trial of Jesus, Pilate was “determined to let Him go”, having found no fault in Him. However, he put forward a choice before the people for he assumed that the crowd would logically choose Jesus to be spared instead of the murdering revolutionary Barabbas. But on the contrary, the Jewish crowd chose a convicted murderer and thus by their choice they made Jesus worse than a murderer!

This choice of a murderer by the Jewish populace was a tragic event that had ever occurred in the history of the Jews. It formed part and parcel of the final rejection and eventual crucifixion of Jesus. The consequences of it were of colossal proportions for they stained their hands with innocent blood. This they did to their own destruction and confusion even unto this present day.

It was necessary that our Lord Jesus maintained these spiritual characters even in the most trying moments of His earthly life. He has not hurt or done harm to anyone but on the contrary He blessed those who were in dire need. He remained holy and just so that He can be our perfect sacrifice, acceptable to the justice of God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 4
JOHN 9

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You are truly the blameless and blessed Son of God who became the Sacrifice for my sin. Amen!

20 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:14

LESSON

Desiring
a murderer

VERSE 14

*But ye denied
the Holy One and the Just,
and desired a murderer
to be granted unto you;*

Barabbas must certainly have been fresh in the mind of this Jewish crowd. He was a prisoner or criminal. As mentioned in all the four gospels, he was chosen by the crowd, over Jesus Christ, to be released in a customary pardon before the feast of Passover. In Matthew 27:16, Barabbas was called a “notable prisoner”. He had acted brazenly in a seditious riot, and was known to be a robber and had committed murder in the process. He would be on the death row awaiting his execution perhaps on the same day as Jesus.

But it was a custom of the Roman government, for the sake of satisfying the Jews, to release one Jewish prisoner, whom they would choose, at the yearly Passover. Here Pilate the governor desired to release Jesus, but the Jews demanded for Barabbas. He is like a sinner released to new life while the death he deserves is paid by an Innocent Substitute. Jesus’ condemnation leads to the release of a multitude of spiritual captives from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, so also His death sentence leads to the release of the captive Barabbas.

There would probably be two responses that every sinner can make towards what Christ has done in setting you free from sin. Firstly, you could respond by surrendering your life to God to follow and to obey Him. Secondly, you could go on living like you have been living – apart from the Lord – apart from freedom – even though Jesus has made it so you could be free. The choice is each of yours to make.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 5
JOHN 10

PRAYER

LORD, give me such gratitude in my heart for the spiritual freedom that You have given to me, so I can serve You freely and always. Amen!

21 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:15

LESSON

The Prince of life

VERSE 15

*And killed the Prince of life,
whom God hath raised
from the dead;
whereof we are witnesses.*

Here we have another title given to our Lord Jesus Christ, He is called “the Prince of life”. Christ is the beginning, the head, or the chief of life. His doctrine is one of life and salvation. He alone has life in Himself, and is able to give life to others. He is considered the author of life. Not only does it imply that all life proceeds from Him as its source, but He is the only person who has power to life everlasting as well (John 4:10; 10:28). It also implies that He has dominion over life (John 17:2).

When the Apostle Peter accused his audience of seeking the release of a murderer and the killing of the Author of life, it was a total human madness! While a murderer, one who takes and destroys human lives is spared, the Champion of life is put to death! This is indeed “the magnificent antithesis” according to Luthern theologian Johann Albrecht Bengel. What a glorious paradox! And so the Jews preferred a son of death and a destroyer of life, to the Author and Procurer of life and immortality.

We know that it is of necessity that Christ must suffer and die physically, so that we the sons of men can live eternally. And thus “it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Hebrews 2:10). O what a wonderful Saviour, who is our Prince of life!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 6
JOHN 11

PRAYER

O LORD, You deserve the honour and glory of all creation when You are willing to cease from living so that we can have life. Amen!

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:16-17

LESSON

The power of
the Name of Christ

VERSE 16

*And his name, through faith
in His name hath made this
man strong, whom ye see and
know: yea, the faith which
is by Him hath given him
this perfect soundness in the
presence of you all.*

In the Holy Scriptures, the names which God has chosen to reveal Himself have a purposeful intent to explain His character and nature. The name “CHRIST” means “the Messiah” or “the Anointed One”. Anointing in the Old Testament referred to God’s choosing, setting apart and empowering one to perform a selected task. This individual through anointing was identified as being qualified to perform the particular God-given task.

The greatest need man has had since the Fall in the Garden of Eden was a Mediator between God and him. Since the Fall, mankind has been at war with a holy and just God. Before we were reconciled, we were enemies of God [Romans 5:10]. Every thought [Romans 8:7] and action was against God’s glory. We were enemies of the cross [Philippians 3:18], which was God’s means to bring mankind back to God, his Creator. Sinful man being dead in trespasses and sins [Ephesians 2:1] and not even seeking after God [Romans 3:10-11] is totally unable to save himself from God’s righteous judgement on his sin.

In this case, Christ the second Person of the Godhead, being just [v. 14], righteous – innocent of any crime against God i.e. sinless [1 John 3:5], and holy (separated to God) is to be the perfect and only Way to God. He being sinless, yet fully God and fully man [God incarnate] was the only one who could be the Mediator between a sinless, holy God and sinful, wicked mankind. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” [1 Timothy 2:5].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 7
JOHN 12

THOUGHT

Christ’s offices as Mediator are Prophet (represent God to man), Priest (represent man to God) and King (to rule over man). Many want Christ as Priest and Prophet but not as King. Is this true belief in Christ?

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:18

LESSONProphecy and fulfilment
of Christ's suffering**VERSE 18**

*But those things, which God
before had shewed by the
mouth of all His prophets,
that Christ should suffer, He
hath so fulfilled.*

Peter tells the hearers that their sin of rejecting Christ had not thwarted God's eternal plan. That Jesus Christ, the Son of God would be rejected by those He came to save and suffer unjustly has been repeatedly prophesied in the Old Testament. Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 are familiar passages on the God-sent Messiah's suffering.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." [Isaiah 53:3-4].

Christ Himself expounded scriptures to unsuspecting Cleopas and his companion [Luke 24:25-27], how He should suffer according to prophecy. "Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Once they understood the Scriptures, the breaking of bread brought to mind the Lord's Supper and institution of the new covenant. Their eyes were opened and the two disciples recounted how their hearts burnt within them as their Messiah explained Scriptures to them [Luke 24:30-32]. May this thought give reassurance to us too and cause our hearts to burn with love and humble gratitude towards God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 8
JOHN 13

THOUGHT

God's ways are higher than our ways and nothing happens outside of His control, even though we may not always understand. Read Isaiah 55:8-11.

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:19

LESSON
Repent and
be converted

VERSE 19

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

The sermon demands a response on the part of the hearers. The preceding statements were given as knowledge with an intended endpoint – to cause the crowd to realise they had to respond to God based on His revealed character and fulfilled prophecy. “Repent” means a changing of one’s mind. However, it is more than a mere intellectual exercise. This changing of one’s mind must result in a changed behaviour.

There can be no doubt as the Apostle Peter further uses the word “converted” which means to “return to the love and obedience of God”. The hearers are to weigh up the truth presented before them, and come to a precise knowledge of this truth, turn to the living and true God in faith, and change their minds with a resulting changed behaviour.

All mankind are creatures made by a gracious, loving and holy God who is continually calling all men to repent and return to the blessed state of peace and intimate communion with God. He has mercifully provided the means through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Whenever we hear the Word of God, there must be a response to it as being from the very mouth of Jehovah to us. “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” [1 Thessalonians 2:13].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 9
JOHN 14

THOUGHT

Knowledge of God and His truth must move from being a head-only knowledge to influence our lives and actions. This is true repentance towards God.

25 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:19

LESSON

Times of refreshing

VERSE 19

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

The effect of repentance and conversion will be that God will blot out our sins. Blotting out our sins by God implies that they will be erased and totally obliterated. This brings to mind the idea of ink being removed completely from the surface of a record.

Read Colossians 2:14. God's forgiveness of our trespasses has resulted in the "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross".

This record of ordinances is a record of debt against us resulting from our sin. God has to judge our sin as He is righteous and just. God out of His grace has given Christ to be the Substitute for us, in order that we who believe in Christ will not have to face God's wrath and judgement. Christ bore the penalty of our sin on the cross, in our stead, cancelling out our debt. The Holy Spirit has applied Christ's cleansing blood to us in salvation. This is the means by which He wishes to give those reconciled to Him, times of refreshing.

The refreshing of the spirit of man is a result of the presence of the Lord Jesus [v. 19]. There is already a season of refreshing begun in each and every regenerated soul. However, these times of refreshing will come into its God-intended fullness when Christ returns again. His rule and very presence as Lord will be welcomed by all His true children, granting perfect peace, joy, rest and blessing we can only currently imagine! [1 Corinthians 2:9].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 10
JOHN 15

THOUGHT

Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men! – Psalm 31:19

26 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:20-21

LESSON

Restitution of
all things

VERSE 21

*Whom the heaven must receive
until the times of restitution
of all things, which God hath
spoken by the mouth of all
His holy prophets
since the world began.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES II
JOHN 16

THOUGHT

The prophecies of Christ's suffering, death and bodily resurrection have already been fulfilled [v. 18]. This undergirds the apostle now prophesying Christ's future return, that God "shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you" [v. 20]. Christ has been received up into heaven until a future time – a time of restitution of all things.

Restitution implies a restoration to a former state that existed before the fall of mankind into sin. The future will be even better – a perfect state of a true theocracy. There will be rule by God over all creation recognising and submitting to Him fully for Who He is. This millennial kingdom will be marked by peace, joy, holiness, a full knowledge of God, health and prosperity.

Peter emphasises this is not something he thought up by himself. It has been spoken by "the mouth of holy prophets since the world began" [Isaiah 65:17-18; Joel 2:26-27]. By pointing out that past prophecies have already been fulfilled [v. 18], he was saying it would be foolish to think that as yet unfulfilled prophecies would remain that way! "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" [Acts 1:6].

Christ's bodily resurrection, appearance and ministering to the disciples gave them confidence and reassurance that the prophecies of His future kingdom would definitely happen. Thus, by God the Father and Son sending the Holy Spirit to empower them, they turned from a band of fearful men who deserted their Master in Gethsemane, to become bold, faithful witnesses unto Him to the uttermost part of the earth [Acts 1:8].

Am I looking forward to the Lord's soon return? Is my life showing that I DO BELIEVE in Jesus' Second Coming? Am I ushering in God's Kingdom by declaring His Son by word and deed?

27 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:22

LESSON

The message
of Moses

VERSE 22

*For Moses truly said
unto the fathers,
A Prophet shall
the Lord your God raise up
unto you of your brethren,
like unto me; Him shall ye
hear in all things whatsoever
He shall say unto you.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
ECCLESIASTES 12
JOHN 17

THOUGHT

Since Moses' prophecy [Deuteronomy 18:15], the Jews had been expecting a Messiah but failed to recognise Him when He was among them. Peter's explanation about God's plan for Jesus to suffer and die to save mankind made everything clearer.

The Messiah would be a Prophet, like Moses, and the people were to hear and obey His message. This Prophet-Messiah was Jesus Christ who had died on the cross and risen again. Jesus was like Moses, possessing a human nature so that He was able to understand and sympathise with all whom He met. Jesus was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" [Hebrews 4:15]. He was "able to succour them that are tempted" [Hebrews 2:18]. Moses had been God's spokesman to the nation of Israel, teaching them the Law. Jesus taught His disciples many spiritual truths during His ministry and spoke as one having authority. Just as Moses had been a mediator between his brethren and the Great Jehovah, Jesus our Great High Priest, intercedes on our behalf with the Almighty God. Moses had led the nation of Israel out of slavery towards the Promise Land. Similarly, Jesus would lead us out of bondage in sin into the heavenly Promised Land.

Yet Jesus was greater than Moses because He was both God and Man, holy and righteous. He was crucified on the cross and then resurrected in glory to save us from sin, thus His work on Earth was far greater and more important than anything any man had done.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; – Hebrews 1:1-2

28 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:23-24

LESSON

The message
of the prophets

VERSE 23

*And it shall come to pass,
that every soul, which will not
hear that prophet,
shall be destroyed
from among the people.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON I
JOHN 18

THOUGHT

The message of the prophets comprised several parts. Firstly, they anticipated the coming of Jesus the Messiah. Soon after Adam and Eve sinned, Jesus Christ's incarnation and the fact that He would be our Saviour was foretold [Genesis 3:15]. Isaiah prophesied Jesus' suffering and death as the means of our salvation [Isaiah 53]. Other aspects of His birth and ministry on earth were also revealed in prophecy.

Secondly, the prophets urged the people to obey God because God desires our obedience more than anything else [1 Samuel 15:22]. The Old Testament prophets brought warnings to Israel, Judah and the surrounding nations that God would pour out His wrath on them and judge them for their sins if they refused to repent. These prophesies were fulfilled later when these nations were defeated and even the Northern and Southern Kingdoms were taken into captivity with the Jewish people dispersed in foreign lands as a result of their sins. These prophets were true prophets of God bearing a truthful message. They were not preaching fanciful imaginations of their heart.

Finally, Jesus Christ, our Prophet, Priest and King, affirmed that He came to earth to save sinners [Luke 19:10]. Although salvation was freely available to all, only those who believed in Him and accepted Him as Lord of their life would be saved. All those who refuse to believe will suffer God's wrath [John 3:36]. Such is the grace, mercy and love of God that He would not leave us ignorant of the coming judgement but even gave us His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Saviour.

And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. – Luke 24:44

29 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:25

LESSON

The response
of the hearers

VERSE 25

*Ye are the children
of the prophets, and of the
covenant which God made
with our fathers, saying unto
Abraham, And in thy seed
shall all the kindreds
of the earth be blessed.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 2
JOHN 19

THOUGHT

The Israelites were drawn by the ungodly nations around them to worship idols even though they knew they were disobeying God's Law. There were periods of repentance and obedience when God mercifully raised up godly leaders who led the people in worshipping God and putting away their idols. But after the death of these individuals, the people fell into sin yet again.

Despite the numerous warnings given by the prophets, Israel and Judah largely ignored the prophets' message of repentance. They blatantly refused to abandon their pagan ways despite warnings of God's punishment [Jeremiah 44:15-19]. Even when they did appear to worship God, they were content with a mechanical and perfunctory observance of the Law, neglecting true worship of God. When confronted with their sins, the people had the audacity to deny that they were the object of God's love [Malachi 2:17] and implied that they did not have to love God in return; they also denied accusations that they had despised God's name through their actions [Malachi 1:6]. They enjoyed their sins so much they did not want to let them go.

Even when Jesus taught the people and identified Himself as the fulfilment of Old Testament Messianic prophecies, the people rejected Him and thrust Him out of their cities [Luke 4:28-29]. Their hatred culminated in their crucifying Him.

Such is the pride and stubbornness of Man's heart that we refuse to acknowledge our sins and God's warnings for us to repent. May we be humble to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, confess our sins to Him and seek God's forgiveness.

Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. – Isaiah 55:6-7

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:25

LESSON

The seed
of Abraham

VERSE 25

*Ye are the children
of the prophets, and of the
covenant which God made
with our fathers, saying unto
Abraham, And in thy seed
shall all the kindreds
of the earth be blessed.*

God made a covenant with Abraham in which God placed upon Himself the obligation to fulfil it. God reassured Abraham several times that He would bless Abraham and his seed when Abraham demonstrated his whole-hearted faith in God [Genesis 22:16-18].

Now Peter addressed the people as “children of the prophets, and of the covenant ...” implying that they were the spiritual and biological children of the prophets and Abraham. As their sons and heirs, they were entitled to inherit the same blessing promised to Abraham in the covenant. Abraham and their fore-fathers had lived and died in faith and anticipation that God would send Jesus as their Messiah. Despite not having seen Jesus, they believed God’s promise that He would come down to Earth, save them from their sins and give them eternal life in heaven [Job 19:25-26]. Peter declared the vital point that Jesus Christ was that promised blessing and that Jesus would bring redemption and salvation to all the nations of the earth. It was not the Jewish people as a whole who would bring that blessing, as was mistakenly supposed by the Jews.

Since Jesus had already come, the people had in fact already received the blessings of the covenant God made with Abraham. Their inheritance had been paid out to them already. We can count ourselves as spiritual children of the covenant because we have received redemption and salvation through Jesus, even though we are not descendants of Abraham. Thank God that He has included us into His great salvation plan.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 3
JOHN 20

THOUGHT

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus ... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. – Galatians 3:26, 29

31 MARCH

BIBLE LESSON

Acts 3:26

LESSON

The blessing
of Jesus

VERSE 26

*Unto you first God,
having raised up His Son
Jesus, sent Him to bless you,
in turning away every one of
you from his iniquities.*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
SONG OF SOLOMON 4
JOHN 21

THOUGHT

God sent His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to Earth. Jesus was baptised at the beginning of His ministry which was authenticated by the voice of God the Father and the appearance of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove [Luke 3:22].

Jesus was sent to Earth to seek and save that which was lost [Luke 19:10]. “God’s wisdom fashioned the redemption plan, God’s Son executed the redemption purpose. God is the source of salvation, Christ is the medium of salvation” (Pulpit Commentary). Through His ministry, Jesus healed the blind, lame, palsied, leprous, demon-possessed and raised the dead. He preached the message of repentance from sin and salvation by believing in Him as the only way to heaven [John 14:6]. He taught the people to love God and one another. He explained to them many spiritual truths about God and heaven, as well as how to pray. Jesus’ ministry was primarily aimed at the Jews but He did preach and perform miracles on Gentiles too. Finally, Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection earned us forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God and eternal life in heaven. His apostles later spread the gospel message far beyond to many Gentile nations so that they could be blessed too.

Truly, multitudes have been blessed when they confessed their sins and were released from the shackles and burden of sin. Have you accepted God’s gift of salvation? This is the only way you can be blessed by the coming of Jesus, His death and resurrection to give us everlasting life.

And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise Him up at the last day. – John 6:40

