



# *Feast of Tabernacles*

## *Gulf Shores, AL*

*Join us in Gulf Shores, AL for this year's Feast of Tabernacles. Strengthen your relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ with sermons directed to your daily life challenges. Interact with young people who have the same faith as you and enjoy uplifting music.*

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# infuse

SPRING 2005

## Features

**03** **COMING OF CHRIST FORETOLD IN THE PROPHETS** *Christ's birth, life and death prophesied in the OT.*

**06** **WHO IS JESUS?** *Only the Jesus of the Bible is worth knowing, not one of scholarly imagination.*

**09** **ROMAN OCCUPATION** *And a promise of hope.*

**11** **MIRACLES OF CHRIST** *How you can become a miracle worker.*

**12** **THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION** *Their purposes and the meanings of the signs given.*

**14** **WHAT DOES JESUS EXPECT FROM ME?** *Setting goals to grow and to meet Christ's expectations.*

## Highlights

**04** **PROPHECY FULFILLED!** *The birth of Jesus Christ.*

**08** **BY YOU:** *Poetry by Jamie Grace-H and Zion Hezekiah.*

**10** **EXPECT A MIRACLE** *Do miracles still happen today?*

*infuse at the Feast of Tabernacles in Gulf Shores, Alabama. Get the scoop!*

**13** **JESUS CHRIST'S MISSION** *What Christ taught and the purpose of His mission.*

**15** **SIMPLE WORDS** *Really listening to the words Christ spoke.*

**16** **EXERCISE METHOD MAY HAVE SPIRITUAL APPLICATION** *Using all parts makes a stronger church.*



The relationship each of us has with our savior is personal. To describe who and what Jesus Christ means personally within one's heart and soul is difficult. Eventually the capabilities of any language to do this adequately are exhausted.

I can tell you He is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God and the son of man. He is the prophesied Messiah of the Old Testament and in the New Testament He is described as the being that is both fully human and divine. He is the chief cornerstone and foundation of Christianity. While here on earth, He was a teacher, prophet and without a doubt a very good man. But, what has Jesus Christ done for me and how has He had an effect on my life?

Jesus Christ has performed a miracle in my life and my life will never be the same again. I have the ability to love someone I have never seen with my eyes, touched with my hands or heard with my ears. However, I still love Him with all my heart, mind, soul and strength. He made this miracle possible because He loved me first.

I know Jesus is my savior and soon coming King, but it is my desire that every human being will have the opportunity to experience the miracle of Jesus Christ. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8), "when we were enemies" (v. 10) and not yet friends, Jesus laid down His life for us. Certainly the giving of His life on the stake for all humanity was the greatest example of the greatest love, which can be shown.

As Christians it is our responsibility to introduce Him to our world by using words that one can easily understand. This issue explores Christ's life—who He is, what He did and what He expects of us.

*Noni*  
Noni McVey  
Editor in Chief

**How You Can Contribute to the Summer 2005 Issue of *infuse***

We're looking for articles, short stories, artwork, poetry, essays, personal experiences and reviews from you.

**GUIDELINES:** Articles should be approximately 750-1,000 words. Only electronic versions are accepted. Submissions should be centered on the next issue's theme of **How to be a Christian Man/Woman.**

**DEADLINE:** All submissions must be received by **May 1, 2005.**

If you are interested in contributing to the next issue of **infuse**, contact Noni McVey by writing to [infuse@cgi.org](mailto:infuse@cgi.org) or call 831-625-0231.

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# Coming of Christ Foretold in the Prophets

By Mike James

**T**here are many reasons for believing in the existence of God. You could argue that because nature is governed by laws there had to be a lawgiver who formulated the natural laws. Others believe in God because of the complexity of nature. Yet another example we could cite is the fulfillment of prophecy. Let's take a look at some specific prophecies about Christ that we find in the Old Testament.

One of the most well known prophecies relating to the birth of Jesus is found in Micah 5:2. Here we read that a ruler for Israel will come from Bethlehem. This ruler is said to have origins from ancient times. Now how could a baby being born in Bethlehem have origins from ancient times? Well this question is easily answered by other scriptures like John 1:1 which tells us that Jesus (The Word) was in the beginning (ancient times) with God. What is astounding about this is Micah wrote this prophecy 700 years before the birth of Christ.

Another interesting example is Psalm 22. Once again this Psalm was written hundreds of years before Christ, yet it addresses events that occurred the day Christ was crucified. In verse one of this Psalm it says, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" This is exactly what Jesus said the day he was crucified (Matthew 27:46). Compare Psalm 22:8 to Matthew 27:43. This addresses the mocking that Jesus was forced to endure. Once again you see the close connection between what the Psalmist wrote and what happened to Jesus. Psalm 22:16 states the hands and feet of this servant would be

pierced. This is exactly what happened to Jesus when he was nailed to the cross. Verse 18 of the same Psalm speaks of the dividing of our Savior's garments and lots that were cast for the clothes. This is also in Matthew's account (Matthew 27:35).

The prophet Isaiah is another example about prophecy relating to Jesus. Notice Isaiah 52:13-15. Verse 14 addresses the physical beating Jesus was to suffer which disfigured him. Isaiah 53:7-10 deals with Jesus suffering too. Verse 7 states that Jesus did not open his mouth. John 19:9 would seem to fulfill this prophecy. Also, in verse 10 of Isaiah 53 we read that this individual's life would become a guilt offering. This can only be speaking of Jesus sacrifice for the sins (guilt) of humanity.

Let's look at one more Old Testament prophecy of Jesus. It is found in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. This scripture speaks of a prophet who would rise up and tell the people everything God commanded him. This scripture finds fulfillment in John 6:14 because the people believed Jesus was that prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy because of the miracle Jesus performed. John 7:37-40 is another example where the people came to believe Jesus was the prophet referred to in Deuteronomy 18.

There are a number of other examples of Old Testament scriptures that foretell the coming of Jesus Christ. Perhaps in a future article we can look at some prophecies that speak of Jesus' second coming when His role on earth will be that of a King rather than a prophet/suffering servant. **i**

## OT PROPHECIES NT FULFILLMENTS

### **THE MESSIAH WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM**

OT Prophecy: Micah 5:2  
NT Fulfillment: Matthew 2:1-6  
Luke 2:1-20

### **THE MESSIAH WAS TO BE BORN OF A VIRGIN**

OT Prophecy: Isaiah 7:14  
NT Fulfillment: Matthew 1:18-25  
Luke 1:26-38

### **THE MESSIAH WAS TO BE A PROPHET LIKE MOSES**

OT Prophecy: Deut.18:15,18, 19  
NT Fulfillment: John 7:40

### **THE MESSIAH WAS TO ENTER JERUSALEM IN TRIUMPH**

OT Prophecy: Zechariah 9:9  
NT Fulfillment: Matthew 21:1-9  
John 12:12-16

### **THE MESSIAH WAS TO BE REJECTED BY HIS OWN PEOPLE**

OT Prophecy: Isaiah 53:1,3  
Psalm 118:22  
NT Fulfillment: Matthew:3,4  
John 12:37-43  
Acts:1-12

### **THE MESSIAH WAS TO BE TRIED AND CONDEMNED**

OT Prophecy: Isaiah 53:8  
NT Fulfillment: Luke 23:1-25  
Matthew 27:1, 2

# Prophecy Fulfilled!

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

By Patricia Chamberlain

**T**his is the prophecy of the birth of Jesus in the Old Testament.

Through the prophet Micah comes the revealed knowledge of where the Messiah's birth will take place. "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" (Micah 5:2).

This whole process of showing just who Jesus is narrows down to the simple truth of Him being born in Bethlehem. This little town of Bethlehem is now an Arab town, about two miles south of Jerusalem. This is the place where Jesus was to be born. He was born there. His birth was to be very unusual. He was to be born of a virgin.

God had given His covenant to David, promising a son of his would sit on the throne and rule over Jerusalem. A further study into genealogy will show the connection of Joseph and Mary to the House of David. This covenant was to be accompanied by a "sign." The sign would reveal that God had fulfilled His covenant. "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel, which means 'God with us'" (Isaiah 7:14).

It is interesting to note, Jewish scholars say the scriptures refer to Messiah 456 times, but they reject Isaiah 7:14, saying it does not refer to Christ Jesus the Messiah.

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary and she said, "Greetings you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

It was made very clear to Mary in the New Testament as recorded by Luke just how she would conceive and give birth to Jesus (Luke 1:31-35). Verse 35 declares, "the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." The Virgin birth was important to make possible the "incarnation," meaning God became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14).

It is important to understand the purpose of the incarnation. Mary would give birth to a Son and name Him Jesus. He will save His people from their sins. Jesus was born to accomplish salvation for us. He was the One in which both full divinity and full humanity was

present, distinct and unique.

Joseph, Mary's husband to be, was encouraged by the angel of the Lord (Matthew 1:18-23). "This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said Joseph son of David do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel, which means 'God with us'" (Isaiah 7:14).

The sinlessness of Jesus was not because of the virgin birth, it was because of His eternal relationship with the Father, He was eternally sinless, being supernaturally conceived and born of a virgin. God the Son voluntarily entered Mary's womb and egg in a miraculous and supernatural way under the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Luke locates for us the exact time period of the birth of Jesus. His gospel is the only one to name a Roman emperor, Caesar Augustus, emperor of Rome from 30 B.C. to A.D. 14, he issued an imperial decree everyone must register for the purposes of taxation (Luke 2:1-3). And so it was the Savior was born in Bethlehem.

Joseph had to go to Bethlehem, the town of David to register for taxation because he belonged to the House and line of David. The lodging places were all filled, so Joseph had to find accommodations in a stable that was probably part of an inn (Luke 2:4-7).

From the manger, Luke moved to the fields outside the village. It was night. Shepherds were there, guarding their flocks of sheep. An angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. The angel gave them the "good news," a child has just been born in Bethlehem. The child is "The Savior Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:8-12).

After the angels gave the shepherds the "good

news” they wanted to see this wonderful thing that had happened. They hurried into the village of Bethlehem to find the baby. The shepherds told everyone what happened and what the angel had said. Surely the shepherds told Mary and Joseph what the angels had said. Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart. The shepherds returned back to their fields and flocks glorifying and praising God (Luke 2:13-20).

**ARRIVAL OF THE MAGI**

It was during the reign of King Herod that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem asking, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him” (Matthew 2:1-2). Herod was troubled and secretly called the wise men, to ascertain from them the

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:6

time the star appeared. Herod also asked to be informed where Jesus was when the wise men located Him.

Jesus was probably one or two years old when the wise men found Him. “They came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshipped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned by God in a dream not to

return to Herod, they departed for their own country by another way” (Matthew 2:11-12).

The gifts the wise men brought were; gold (gold is for kings), frankincense (only used by priests in the Temple) and myrrh (used for embalming, representing death). The wise men may have been looking into the future to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

All these things came about as God had decreed:

1. Unto us a child is born—Virgin Birth
2. Unto us a Son is given— God gave his son by adoption to Joseph and to us on the cross.
3. The Angelic hosts are sons of God by creation; Believers are sons of God by adoption (Sonship).
4. Jesus Christ is the Son of God by His eternal relationship to God The Father. **i**

# Practice Humility

**T**he act of being humble is to lower your pride and not boast about yourself to others. Continually proving yourself to others takes a lot of work and energy. Always bragging about your accomplishments and trying to convince others of your worth is a meaningless task. When someone is constantly bragging about him or herself, it causes others to not want to be around that person and it dilutes the positive feelings he or she feels about an accomplishment.

People are drawn to those who have an inner confidence and don't always have to prove themselves to others. The less you care about seeking approval, the more approval you will get. Christ taught us to be humble in Luke 14:7-11;

When Jesus noticed that some of the guests were choosing the best places to sit, he told this story. When someone invites you to a wedding feast, don't take the most important seat, because some-

one more important than you may have been invited. The host, who invited both of you, will come to you and say 'Give this person your seat.' Then you will be embarrassed and will have to move to the last place. So when you are invited, go sit in a seat that is not important. When the host comes to you, he may say, 'Friend, move up here to a more important place.' Then all the other guests will respect you. All who make themselves great will be made humble, but those who make themselves humble will be made great.

The best way to be humble is to practice humility. The next time you feel the urge to brag stop yourself. Wait and see the results of your actions.

Reference: *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff . . . and it's all small stuff* by Richard Carlson, Ph.D. pp. 101-102.

# Who is JESUS

By Loren M. Chamberlain

**A**fter some two thousand years the controversy still rages, “Who Is Jesus.” While the person Buddha is not essential to the teaching of Buddhism, nor is the person Mohammed needful to the Islamic faith, everything about Christianity rises or falls in the person of Jesus Christ. You cannot accept the teachings of Jesus without coming to a decision about Him. In fact, Christ-less Christianity is a contradiction of terms.

Many scholars are busily searching for the “historical” Jesus, which means, they are dissatisfied with the Jesus who is revealed in the Scriptures. It would seem they are chasing around looking for the Jesus of their own imagination. Only the Jesus of the Bible is worth knowing, and only the Bible can reveal, “Who Jesus Is.”

## TWO IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES

If we really want to know “Who Jesus is,” we must first understand a couple of very important principles.

**FIRST**, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). A translation closer to the original Greek might be, “All Scripture is God-breathed.”

**SECONDLY**, “For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21).

To sum it up, all scripture is God breathed, and holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. The scriptures did not come from the creative work or invention of the prophets, but was inspired by God. To depart from these two principles is to suppose your own intellect is greater than Jesus Christ and God the Father.

## FACTS ABOUT HIS MINISTRY

The purpose of this brief article is not to establish the pre-existence, or deity of Jesus, but to demonstrate whom the Jesus of the Bible was and the many interesting facts of the life He was born into and lived. Jesus was Jewish from birth to burial, as demonstrated by Matthew who connected Jesus to the two most important covenants in Judaism: the Abrahamic and the Davidic (Matthew 1).

Both Matthew and Luke took special care to show that Jesus was born of a Jewish Mother (Matthew 1:16, 18). Matthew’s genealogy gives Jesus’ legal (or royal) lineage through

Joseph. Mary’s ancestral line is recorded in Luke 3:23-38. Both Mary and Joseph were direct descendants of David. Matthew traced the genealogy back to Abraham while Luke traced it back to Adam. Matthew wrote to the Jews, so Jesus was shown as a descendant of their father, Abraham. Luke wrote to the Gentiles and emphasized Jesus as the Savior of all people.

Jesus was circumcised the eighth day and presented to God as the firstborn according to Jewish Law (Luke 2:21-23). He would naturally have been educated as any Jewish child would have been so much so that all were shocked at His knowledge as a youth (Luke 2:46).

Jesus’ baptism was totally in keeping with Jewish ritual immersion, and identified Him with the “Kingdom of God” (Matthew 3:15). “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased’” (Matthew 3:16-17).

Soon after Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. This temptation by Satan shows us Jesus was human, and it gave Jesus the opportunity to reaffirm God’s plan for His ministry. It also gives us an example to follow when we are tempted. Jesus’ temptation was an important demonstration of His sinlessness. This time of testing showed that Jesus really was the Son of God, able to overcome Satan and his temptations. Just as God lead Israel into the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:2) to humble and prove them, so God allowed His Son Jesus to be tried and tested (Matthew 4:1).

## CHRIST’S HEALING TOUCH

A leper came to Jesus worshipping Him and asked Jesus for healing. Jesus reached out and touched him, saying, “I will; be thou clean.” Immediately the leper was cleansed. There was no known cure in Jesus’ day. Jesus told the leper not to tell anyone, but to go and show himself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them (Matthew 8:1-4). The law required a healed leper to be examined by the priest (Leviticus 14). Jesus wanted this man to give his story firsthand to the priest to prove that his leprosy was completely gone so he could be restored to his community.

Sin is also an incurable disease—and we all have it. Only Christ’s healing touch can miraculously take away our sins and restore us to real living. But first we must

realize our inability to cure ourselves and go to Jesus Christ for His saving help.

**JESUS AND THE LAW**

One Sabbath day Jesus and His disciples were hungry. As they passed through a cornfield they plucked and ate the ears of corn. “When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, ‘Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath!’” (Matthew 12:2). The Pharisees had established 39 categories of actions forbidden on the Sabbath, based on interpretations of God’s Law and on Jewish custom. Harvesting was one of those forbidden actions. By picking wheat and rubbing it in their hands, the disciples were technically harvesting according to the religious leaders. Jesus and the disciples were picking grain because they were hungry, not because they wanted to harvest the grain for profit. They were not working on the Sabbath. The Pharisees were so self righteous they could not see beyond their own interpretation of God’s laws and their own technicalities (Matthew 12:2).

Jesus reminded them that David, when he was hungry, ate the shewbread in the house of God that only the priests are allowed to eat (Matthew 12:1-8). God did not punish David because his need for food was more important than the legal technicalities. Jesus was saying, if you condemn me you must also condemn David. This is something the religious leaders could never do without causing a great uproar among the people. Jesus was not condoning disobedience to God’s laws, instead He was emphasizing discernment and compassion in enforcing the

laws.

Jesus always upheld the basic principles of Judaism, He made it clear that mercy and love came first and were more important than all the sacrifices that could be offered in the Temple (Matthew 12:6-8).

Jesus criticized severely the Scribes and the Pharisees for setting aside the written Law of Moses by honoring their traditions (Matthew 15:1-6). Because traditions have been practiced for years does not justify elevating them above the laws of God. Traditions are to help us understand God’s laws better, not become laws.

Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matthew 5:17). So Jesus validated the law in word, thought and deed.

Jesus taught the sacredness and inspiration of the very letters of the words of the Torah as most other Scribes did (Matthew 5:18). “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).

This is a clear statement of the truth of the Bible. If we accept Jesus Christ as Lord, we also accept His confirmation of the Bible as God’s Word.

By memorizing large portions of the scriptures, Jesus was able to use them to defeat Satan in the wilderness validating the authority of the written text (Matthew 4:4,7,10).

He referred to the three-fold division of the Jewish Scriptures: The Law, Prophets, and the Writings (Matthew 11:13; 22:40; 23:35; Luke 24:27, 44).

He affirmed the basic foundation of Judaism: Love for God first, love for



**CHRIST CLAIMED...**

**...to be the only way.**

**John 14:6**

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.’”

**...He forgave sin.**

**Luke 5:20-21**

“Seeing their faith, Jesus said, ‘Friend, your sins are forgiven.’ The Jewish teachers of the law and the Pharisees thought to themselves, ‘Who is this man who is speaking as if he were God? Only God can forgive sins.’”

**... He would rise again.**

**Luke 18:31-33**

“Then Jesus took the twelve apostles aside and said to them, ‘We are going to Jerusalem. Everything the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will happen. He will be turned over to those who are evil. They will laugh at him, insult him, spit on him, beat him with whips, and kill him. But on the third day, he will rise to life again.’”

**...He gives eternal life.**

**John 3:16-17**

“God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world guilty, but to save the world through him.”

There are many examples of what Christ claimed and He did everything He said.

*continued on page 17*



# THAT NIGHT

By Jamie Grace-H  
*(known as ZOEGIRL4MYNEVERLIFE in the Infuse Forum)*

She was beat 11 times,  
By her father-she thinks

She was afraid,  
Oh yes she was,  
She could not even blink.

But listen to her, just right now,  
“It wasn’t like a spankin’,  
I believe I was abused, most definitely,  
More than you could ever Imagine.”

As her father raised his hand, to beat her the 12th time,  
She gave him that “No daddy look”,  
And tears streamed out his eyes.

“So he took me in his arms,  
and begged me not to tell”  
I promised that she wouldn’t,  
although my feelings about such weren’t to well.

“But I felt as if my dad,  
needed a time to be free.  
He needed this time to think,  
on what Jesus did on Calvary.”

She really stood right here and said,  
With her parents in her sight,  
that that was one powerful time,  
When daddy accepted Jesus, That Night.



  
**Share Your Poems,  
Stories and Artwork.**

  
Email your work to  
noni@cgi.org and we'll  
print them in the  
next issue of **infuse**.



What to do in this time of stress?  
To God my burdens I must confess.

Lord I need you, I feel all alone and scared  
Please restore my faith which has become impaired

My soul full of troubles, I consider the grave  
I need to be salvaged from this roaring wave

In this imminent valley of the shadow of death  
Please guide and protect me till my final breath

My fear now immense, I beseech you God  
Please comfort me with thy staff and thy rod

Please turn my sorrow into sweet bliss  
Please guide me through this daunting mist

Please send me manna from above  
Please comfort me Lord with all your love

In you I rest my every care,  
I come to you Lord in fervent prayer

If I stay faithful, if I remain true  
My Lord and my Savior will carry me through.

God will deliver me from this strain,  
God will eradicate all my pain.  
His yoke is easy, his burden light  
He will take away my distressing fright

The good shepherd won't desert his faithful sheep  
He will hearken to my fervent weep

In God I trust, I have no fear  
I now feel his Holy Spirit near

Blessed are we, the poor in spirit  
For the Kingdom of heaven we will inherit

Blessed are we who thirst and hunger at this time  
For soon we shall be filled from the sacred vine

Blessed are we who weep now in deep gloom  
For we shall laugh in due time, no more pain no more doom

Lord, I am leaning on your everlasting arms of care  
It is you God who has released me from this yawning snare

You have lifted my head from above the nest  
You have delivered me and given me rest

You have assuaged all of my pain and fears  
You have wiped away all of my many tears

Thank you dear Lord for delivering me  
Thank you dear God for setting me free.

# Roman Occupation

## And A Promise of Hope

By Ruth Kerr

The Romans took global domination very seriously. They were determined to run a world of culture and enlightenment. While the Romans conquered and pillaged, they also brought paved roads, running water and sporting facilities to every corner of the empire. They also allowed surrendered nations to keep their own customs and gods—as long as everyone honored Caesar as supreme.

Generally, things ran fairly smoothly, with one exception. There was one province that was an endless source of irritation to the Romans. That province was Judea, a dreary cultural backwater, home to countless rebellions and stubborn Jews. Some of the Jews were so defiant they would not touch Roman coins and averted their eyes from Roman soldiers.

In an attempt to keep a lid on things, Rome appointed a governor to Judea in 26 A.D., the despised Pontius Pilate. He was so disliked even his fellow Romans couldn't stand him. The Roman historian, Philo, described him as being "of spiteful disposition and an exceeding wrathful man."

Pilate loved antagonizing the Jews. According to the New Bible dictionary, he sent the military to Jerusalem every Holy Day in a show of Roman strength. He seized control of the temple, its funds and even the high priest's vestments. He also erected images of Emperor Tiberius in Jerusalem to howls of protest, until Tiberius himself told Pilate to remove them.

The historian Josephus says Pilate siphoned money from the Temple to build an aqueduct to divert water from Jerusalem. The New Bible Dictionary says, "tens of thousands of Jews demonstrated against this project." Pilate responded by ordering the army to kill



protesters. (The New Bible Dictionary suggests Jesus referred to this incident in Luke 13:1-3 when He talked about Pilate mingling the blood of Galileans with their own sacrifices).

Things ended badly for Pilate. He orchestrated the slaughter of several Samaritans and when news of this reached Rome, he was brought into stand trial. According to the New Bible Dictionary, it was not long afterwards he was "forced to commit suicide."

The Romans allowed the Jews to have a puppet king, the hated Herod the Great. Herod felt no allegiance to the Jewish religion. He rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem while he built

pagan temples in Caesarea. He also arranged the murders of his own family, including his wife and three of his sons. Not surprisingly, this was the same Herod who ordered the slaughter of all the children of less than two years of age in an attempt to kill Jesus as a young child (Matthew 2:17).

Herod the Great was succeeded by a son who managed to stay on his father's good side, and like his father, Herod Antipas led an eventful life. He divorced his first wife to marry his half-brother's wife, a scandal that ended in the unfortunate beheading of John the Baptist (Mark 6:17-28). This Herod loved to spy on Pilate and wrote scathing letters about him to Rome. Strangely enough, it was the trial and execution of Jesus that caused the two to become friends (Luke 23:12). Herod Antipas was eventually overthrown by his nephew, Agrippa, and lived out his days in exile.

It was into this world of so-called culture and enlightenment that Jesus came. He lived with the same violence and political unrest that we see in our world today. So when Jesus stood on a mountain and talked about the poor in spirit, the persecuted and the falsely accused, His words were heavy with meaning (Matthew 5:1-12). To those living under foreign occupation and a corrupt government, Jesus' message was revolutionary.

With Roman soldiers patrolling every mile of Judea, He warned people not to give their allegiance to Caesar. Even though it's hard to see beyond military might, you must put your faith in the One who is greater than this great empire. It was a promise of hope to those who craved justice and righteousness.

It still is. **i**

# EXPECT A MIRACLE

By Bob Swimm

When I accepted the challenge to “count the cost” and was “drafted” into the army of Jesus Christ at the young age of twenty, I was counseled that trials (1 Peter 4:12) and tests (1 Thessalonians 2:4) came with the assignment; little did I suspect it was Satan’s obsession to pinpoint major weaknesses, weaken our faith, or merely discourage us.

As a relatively young Christian I was told my mom had inoperable cancer of the esophagus, and had about six months to live—tops. To set this up: Mom and I were more than just mother and son. She was my buddy. My Pal. Although not a church member yet, she always went to the Feast. I had no brothers or sisters. She was my only relative after my grandparents passed away. She was all I had. I was literally sick at heart. What was I to do?

In the Spring 2004 *Infuse* I wrote an article “Do I Matter to God?” As a little boy I “bugged” the daylight out of God with prevailing prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), although I didn’t realize it at the time. I thought, hey, it worked then, why not now?

I’m a very simple person. So I just looked in the back of my Bible at the list of the miracles of Jesus, but first my mind wandered to that story about Hezekiah in Isaiah 38:1-5. In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, “This is what the LORD says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover.” Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, “remember, O LORD, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly. Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: Go and tell Hezekiah, This is what the LORD, the God of your Father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life.”

So we see that Almighty God is a God who can and will change His mind when He is entreated. He can be reminded of past good deeds and remembrances. And notice what He further does in verse six, “And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city.” He is doing even more than asked of Him.

Jesus performed dozens and dozens of miracles, and note, He never, ever turned anyone down. The one that paralleled my situation was the one found in Luke 7:11-15. The only

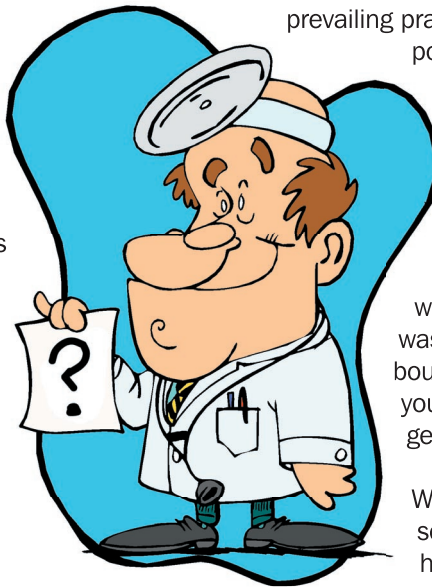
son of a mother had died. Jesus stopped and dried her tears, told her not to cry any more and brought her ONLY son back to life.

Jesus said to him, “...get up!” And He gave him back to his mom. Can you imagine the goose bumps? I had to have the same thing only in reverse. I was just like that lady (again in reverse) and the unjust judge in Luke 18:1-7—constant prevailing prayer hour after hour, begging, expecting a positive response—because I was prevailing upon the JUST JUDGE.

On July 23, 1978, after one final trip to the throne of grace, I awaited with my buddy, my pal, my mom, in the Oncologist’s office for his report (all the chemo and radiation treatments were completed). The purpose of his report was to let me know how much time was bought—another six months or so, because you see, the statistical cure rate for esophageal cancer is zero.

When the doctor entered the room, he was scratching his head with a quizzical look on his face as he said the tumor is completely gone (not in remission) completely GONE!

Never give up, ALWAYS expect a miracle! i



## 10 Miracles of Christ

“John and the other Gospel writers were able to record only a fraction of the people who were touched and healed by Jesus. But enough of Jesus’ words and works have been saved so that we also might be able to know him and be his disciples in this day. There follows a listing of the miracles that are included in the Gospels. They were supernatural events that pointed people to God, and they were acts of love by one who is love.”

*Source: Life Application Bible Page 1865 Tyndale House Publishers*

- |                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Five thousand people are fed  | Matthew 14:15-21 |
| 2. Diseased woman healed         | Mark 5:25-34     |
| 3. A withered hand is restored   | Luke 6:6-11      |
| 4. Two blind men find sight      | Matthew 9:27-31  |
| 5. A widow’s son is raised       | Luke 7:11-16     |
| 6. Jesus turns water into wine   | John 2:1-11      |
| 7. Jesus walks on the sea        | Mark 6:45-52     |
| 8. Ten lepers are cured          | Luke 17: 11-19   |
| 9. A handicapped woman is healed | Luke 13:10-17    |
| 10. Cursing the fig tree         | Matthew 21:18-22 |

# Christ

By Anika E. Sandy-Hanson

## Miracles of

Christ is definitely the greatest known miracle worker and healer. Often, contemporary Christians exclaim disbelief that the people of Jesus' day could see such miraculous works and still disbelieve his divinity and message. Although it is a little hard for me to imagine doubting a person I hear raising the dead, feeding thousands, and removing demons, I am always a little leery whenever I hear of a revival during which people are healed by a touch (or shove) on the forehead. Is this reaction an appropriate Christian caution, a response learned from exposés of false deceivers, or is it exactly how New Testament observers felt when they heard of Jesus' miracles?

Let us answer that question by reviewing our spiritual reference manual, the Bible. An examination of the Bible will first show that many biblical figures performed miracles. In fact, many of Jesus' miracles, much like His words, were precise fulfillments of previous Old Testament recordings. Then we will see that just as Elisha, Moses and Jesus performed miracles through faith, so can believers today.

It may be hard to believe we can perform acts similar to those recorded in the Bible. It was also hard for Jesus' contemporaries to believe He was the Son of God. Even some of the disciples couldn't comprehend how this simple man could be the "Savior of the Jews" they had been taught to expect. Matthew 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-30, and Luke 9:18-20 all recount the fact Peter was the only disciple able to state Jesus was, "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Many Jews, particularly those in power, could not believe the Savior could be someone who would eat and socialize with sinners such as tax collectors, thieves, and prostitutes (Matthew 9:10-11, Mark 2:13-17 and Luke 5:27-32). His refusal to follow the Pharisaic additions to the law also made him an outcast (Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28 and Luke 6: 1-5). Perhaps, against this back-

drop we gain some perspective of why people found it so hard to accept Christ as the Messiah.

Jesus' very miracles may also have been a surprise to many. The Savior healed poor individuals (Matthew 9:35-36); lepers (Matthew 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45, Luke 5:12-16); demon-possessed individuals (Matthew 8:28-34, Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26-38); and women (Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5: 25-34; Luke 8: 43-48). To make matters worse, He often performed healings on the Sabbath, such as the restoration of a man's hand in Matthew 12: 9-13, and the healing of a woman in Luke 13: 10-17. This clear departure from Jewish customs, social norms, and Pharisaic law are other possible reasons reluctant observers overlooked Jesus' miracles for the divine works they were.

However, He was not alone in His ability to perform miraculous acts. His powers were shared by many believers in the Bible—both before His time on earth and after. Many of Christ's greatest miracles were performed under similar circumstances long before He was born.

In all four gospels, Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9 and John 6, the Bible shares the account of Christ feeding thousands from a few loaves of bread and fishes. A similar miracle occurred in 2 Kings 4:42-44 when Elisha used ears of corn and twenty loaves of barley to feed at least one hundred people. Likewise, the Messiah's miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-46) was shared by Elisha (2 Kings 4:17-37) when he raised a young boy who had died in his bed. We can also see miracles performed by Moses, Abraham (Genesis 20:17) and Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30:19-21) to name a few.

Our names can be among those miracle workers as well. This fact is not one that is

*continued on page 17*

# The Death and Resurrection

By Rory Ries

**H**ave you ever seen Arlington National Cemetery? It is a sight to behold with so many tombstones of men and women who have served their country. There is one whitewashed tombstone after another, glistening brightly in the sun, all in military order and rank. Thousands of men and women placed there in their final resting place. Is it their final resting place?

What do you believe? Is there life after death or is this life the only life we will ever know?

Over the years, many have lived and many have died. There have been many different doctrines preached since the beginning of mankind and it can all be very confusing. Is it confusing to you?



Take some time to read what is written here. It may make things clearer for you and you may walk away with a better understanding of Jesus Christ and our heavenly Father who have a great plan in place. This plan has been a mystery to so many who have lived and died.

It is called a mystery (1 Cor. 15:51) because so many have been deceived into believing something that is false. Many have chosen to worship a false christ because they have re-

fused or ignored a very meaningful sign Christ gave to those who are willing to submit to Him.

What is this sign? We can pick up some of the story in John 2:18. The Jews wanted a sign and Christ gave them a sign in verse 19, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up?” The Jews immediately assumed He was talking about the temple and they missed the sign. Christ wasn’t talking about Herod’s temple, He was talking about His own body (John 2:21-22).

Christ also talked about His plan in Matthew 12:38-40. He gave the scribes and Pharisees the sign of Jonah (Jonah 1:17). He told them He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. Most people are going to tell you this sign is insignificant and doesn’t really mean anything. Is that true?

Those who believe in Christ being crucified on the day called Good Friday will tell you the sign Christ gave didn’t really mean three full days and three full nights. They will also tell you His death and resurrection all took place in a matter of roughly 26 hours. Again, two questions are asked, what do you believe and does it matter?

One thing we have to understand and believe is when God says He is going to do something, He means He is going to do something (Isaiah 46:8-11). Christ said He would be in the grave for three days and three nights and He meant just that—three days and three nights. Anything taught differently than this specific sign Christ gave is a counterfeit.

Christ gave us this sign to demonstrate who He is and who God is. As written in Isaiah 46:9, “I am God, and there is none like me!” Can you see the magnificence and power in that statement? Can you see the magnificence and power in the sign God gave

to those who want to know Him? Do not be misled by the counterfeit.

One other point that needs to be made is simple, there are 12 hours in a day. Christ said it Himself (John 11:9). You cannot squeeze 72 hours into Friday evening until Sunday morning. That idea is another lie and has misled many into following a false christ. The Jonah prophecy is truly another sign between God and His people.

We also don’t want to overlook the fact Christ had to die for all of us to be able to have a relationship with the Father and the Son (Matthew 27:51). Our sins have separated us from God (Isaiah 59:2). Thanks be to God and Christ for his death that we may have life.

John the Baptist recognized Christ and called out to everyone, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). All of us

## the kingdom

### **THE TREASURE**

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. One day a man found the treasure, and then he hid it in the field again. He was so happy that he went and sold everything he owned to buy that field.”*

Matthew 13:44

### **THE PEARL**

*“Also, the kingdom of heaven is like a man looking for fine pearls. When he found a very valuable pearl, he went and sold everything he had and bought it.”*

Matthew 13:45-46

### **THE LOST COIN**

*“Suppose a woman has ten silver coins, but loses one. She will light a lamp, sweep her house, and look carefully for the coin until she finds it. And when she finds it, she will call her friends and neighbors and say, ‘Be happy with me because I have found the coin that I lost.’ In the same way, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God when one sinner changes his heart and life.”*

Luke 15:8-10

have killed Christ because of our sins. It wasn't the Jews nor was it the Romans, it was you and me.

Without His death there would be no resurrection. Another reason for the three days and three nights was to show the world He was really dead. The Pharisees were even afraid Christ was trying to pull a fast one so they requested a guard be placed outside the tomb (Matthew 27:62-65).

There was no hocus pocus and there were no tricks being played on anyone. The death was real (John 19:33). His burial was real (John 19:38-42) and of course, the resurrection was real (John 20:11-17).

We cannot possibly cover all of the significance of the resurrection in this article. It's hard enough to just talk about our Lord's death. However, the main point is with His resurrection there is life after death (1 Cor. 15:20-23). Paul even said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Cor. 15:19). The resurrection brings hope for eternal life with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Paul said this hope, that comes from the resurrection is like an anchor to the soul (Hebrews 6:19). It is sure and it is steadfast. No matter what trials you may be facing, no matter what persecution may come your way, this hope will help you through it all—the hope that is in Jesus Christ and what He

has done for me and you.

Jesus Christ has risen! He has entered into the perfect tabernacle as our High Priest (Hebrews 9:11-15). Through His sacrifice, death, and resurrection, He can cleanse your conscience from dead works and create in you a new creature who is willing to serve God Almighty. All one has to do is accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and acknowledge your sins were nailed with Him upon the cross (John 3:16 and 1 Col. 2:13).

The beauty and glory in all of this is beyond compare. The magnificence is beyond anyone's imagination. Yet, you who are reading this are being exposed to something that most of the world doesn't understand. Is the true Christ real to you? Do you understand the Father's great plan for you and for those who will eventually come to the true Christ and the Almighty God?

Those who have been buried at Arlington Cemetery and any other cemetery will come to life someday (1 Cor. 15:20-28 and Rev. 20:11-12). They will come to life because Christ died and was resurrected. That day will come and is a part of God's great plan. That plan is being revealed to those now who are being called out to give up their life and abide in Jesus Christ. Are you willing to answer to that calling? **i**

# Jesus Christ's Mission

By Zion Hezekiah

**J**esus Christ, our Lord and Savior was an exceptionally significant figure on a very imperative mission during His first coming.

At the outset, Jesus' mission written of in the New Testament, was predominantly predicted through prophecy in the Old Testament. Thus we can conclude that one of the reasons why Jesus came to earth and put on flesh was to fulfill prophecy. But what did He teach? What was the purpose of His mission? What prophecies did He fulfill?

## SINNERS TO REPENTANCE

Jesus Christ first revealed He was on a mission (sent by the Father) when He was a young boy at the age of twelve in his hometown of Nazareth (Luke 2:42 & 49).

The foundation of Jesus' mission was the message He repeatedly conveyed during His delegation on earth which was "repentance." "Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). Jesus Christ was on an essential mission to allow mankind the opportunity to convert from our habitual sinful nature into virtuous, just beings. He came to earth to open the eyes of the spiritually blind, teaching the subject of repentance to be the initial provision for eternal salvation.

In Luke 5:32 Jesus states, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

After the death of Jesus, His disciples, beginning with

Peter, steadfastly preached the doctrine of repentance to the men and woman of Judea and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Acts 2:38).

## ACCESS TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus Christ was present on earth preaching the gospel of the Kingdom at a time and location where masses of people, predominately the Israelites, were under the notion they would be saved, and justified by the Law of Moses.

In John 14:6, Jesus candidly professed to the people there is only one manner in which to obtain eternal salvation and access to God the Father, and that way was through Him. By the will of the Father, (John 12:49) Jesus made several declarations He was indeed the Messiah and the world's "key to salvation." "I am the bread of life" (John 6:48-51). "I am the vine" (John 14:15). "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved..." (John 10:9).

We are not justified by the law, circumcision, or the sacrificing of animals. We are justified by Jesus Christ's shed blood and by our good deeds according to His will. Specific provisions for eternal salvation can be found in John 3:5, where Jesus taught the disciples one must be baptized by water and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (after one has repented) in order to gain access to the

*continued on page 17*

# Expect What Does Jesus From Me?

By Brian Christensen

I work as a salesperson for a distributor of commercial supplies. I spend most of my time traveling and meeting with customers. Each year, I must evaluate the previous year to compare the results with the expectations and set new goals for the year ahead. It is always rewarding and much easier to go through this process when sales have increased. However, the expectations will be higher for the next year. During this time, I always think about what goals Jesus would have for me and try to evaluate my Christian performance for the past year.

Do I feel closer to God? Have I gained more of his wisdom? Have I given enough of myself to others? These are some of the questions I ask myself as I establish my goals for the future. I feel as though this exercise is also important to all aspects of our life. It is never easy, but always necessary for us to promote growth, remain focused, and maximize our potential. You will find most successful people will continually practice this regardless of their talent.

Our walk with Jesus is the most important success to achieve because it has eternal rewards! The amount of money we make, how athletic we are, or how many movies we star in, cannot by itself, grant us eternal life. That does not mean we can't be successful in order to be in the Kingdom. The mind-set of success and personal Christian growth can also make us successful in earthly achievements. It requires structure and discipline to maintain a balance between our lives and God's instruction, with the Word of God completely governing the way we live and the decisions we make (Deuteronomy 10:12,13).

Fulfilling Jesus' expectations is more challenging because we cannot ask him face to face what his wishes are. We won't "loose a sale" or be

"fired." We must search for those answers from within and through the Word of God in order to set our goals and measure our success.

Jesus expects us to believe in Him and God the Father. God made a commitment to us and fulfilled His Word by sacrificing the persecution of His Son on earth so that we may all be saved. Our commitment to Jesus as our Savior and master begins with our baptism. From there, he expects us to implement his way into our life and to continue our growth in his wisdom (John 15:1-17).

How much we grow and our level of success may be different for each of us and based on our individual talents. Jesus has made it clear that stagnation or unwillingness to grow is unacceptable (Luke 19:11-27). It is also important to remember that any growth or understanding, no matter how small, is a positive step forward and recognized by God. A simple conversation with a Christian brother or sister and a prayer can be a sign of growth.

***Do not set your goals too high and think you must "conquer the world." It is more effective to set challenging, but obtainable goals. Write them down and look at the smaller steps necessary to achieve the goal.***

Don't be too critical of yourself as trials or shortfalls can be positive and needed to deepen

our understanding (Philippians 1:12-18).

Remember, Jesus is our biggest and loudest cheerleader with a genuine desire for us to succeed. He also was perfect in his life on earth and experienced every type of pain anyone could feel. Celebrate the successes you have achieved and sometimes work together with your brethren.

God has established a level of talent and potential in each of us. Jesus is our master and coach to help us along the way. Whether or not we achieve our potential, is ultimately up to us. Acceptance of Jesus begins the journey. Setting personal goals helps us to grow, understand, and meet the expectations Jesus has for us.

At this moment, I am writing this article to promote the Word of God.

You are reading it. I think we have both met our goals for today! Where do we go from here? i



# SIMPLE WORDS

By Jeff Reed

**M**oses told the children of Israel, “the Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear” (Deuteronomy 18:15). He was prophesying of an individual who would come over 1400 years later whose words needed to be heard. That person was Jesus.

There are many hundreds of millions who claim to follow Jesus today, but the vast majority refuse to hear the things He spoke. It is astonishing, because they say their religion is based solely upon Him. Jesus speaks to those people in the gospels when he says, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say” (Luke 6:15).

There are a great number of things Jesus spoke that contradict what many people have been taught. The words of Jesus give an entirely different perspective about life and death, how to live, and how to serve God. What we are about to examine may be shocking to some and anger others, but they are the simple words of Jesus Christ. If we claim to follow Him and worship Him, shouldn't we also pay attention to the things He said.

Jesus, giving instruction to His disciples on a mountain top told them, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled” (Matthew 5:17-18). This is very simple to understand. Jesus said the law will not pass away as long as we have heaven and earth. Look around you. Is there any doubt that heaven and earth are still here? The only logical conclusion is that God's Law as presented in the Old Testament is still in effect. The vast majority of professing Christians are not listening to Jesus when they disregard the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy. There are churches that practice idolatry by worshiping statues and images. There are entire denominations that promote homosexuality and the murder of unborn children. These people need to hear Jesus' words.

Speaking of His burial and resurrection Jesus says, “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:40). The majority of Christendom and even most scholars refuse to hear what Jesus is saying. They teach that after Christ was crucified, He was buried late

on Friday and resurrected a day and a half later on Sunday morning. Jesus clearly said he would be “three days and three nights” in the grave. It is simple to understand. Who are you going to believe?

In the most quoted, but least listened to scripture Christ says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Again, most professing Christians ignore this easily understood statement. They think if you don't have faith in Christ you will burn forever in fire.

Jesus simply says you will perish. Perish means to suffer complete ruin or destruction. We often use the word when we talk about food. Perishable food will not last forever. I once purchased a cantaloupe and put it in a plastic bag in the bottom of my refrigerator. I forgot I had bought it and several weeks passed. I was cleaning out my refrigerator and found a bag of liquid where the cantaloupe had been. It completely perished!

Most professing Christians also erroneously believe the reward for having faith in Christ is going to heaven. Christ simply states He will give His followers eternal life. He teaches He will resurrect His followers in the future, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26). Unfortunately, most people do not.

Jesus also made clear statements about what having faith in Him is all about. Someone once asked Him what they needed to do to have eternal life. He responded by saying “if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matthew 19:17). Is Jesus teaching salvation by works? No, He is teaching that having faith in Him is a way of life. It is a total commitment. Faith in Christ is expressed by obedience to Him. It is that simple. This is contrary to evangelicals who teach all one needs to do to be saved is to accept Jesus in their heart. It sounds pretty, but doesn't agree with scripture. They don't pay attention to Jesus' simple words.

It is important we listen to what Christ has to say to us. His words are encouraging, challenging, enlightening, and life changing. They are in opposition to the very fabric of this corrupted world. If we are truly Christian, we must live our lives by everything He has to say to us in the gospels and the rest of His Word. **i**



# EXERCISE METHOD MAY HAVE SPIRITUAL APPLICATION

By George James and Mike James

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

I Corinthians 12:12

Christ uses the analogy of our bodies to explain an important spiritual truth. We will address that truth as we continue, but first we need to understand something about our bodies and how they become stronger. This ties into why God wants us to work together in the church like the different parts of our bodies work together.

There is a difference in physical development when comparing the effects of single-joint movements to that of multi-joint exercises. With single-joint exercises, such as the leg extension, a very specific area of muscle is being exercised. One may improve in strength and muscle development by performing the leg extension exercise on a consistent basis. However, performing a multi-joint exercise will yield even greater results and, depending on one's genetic capacity, the results could be quite profound.

Multi-joint exercises have a more common relationship with free weight training. Free weight training uses barbells and dumbbells instead of machines. One of the integral keys to training with free weight is assistance muscles are utilized in the movement. Thus, greater strength and development can occur because a greater area of musculature is being exercised.

Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. I Corinthians 12:14

Our musculature system apparently responds better when it is working as a unit and not as an isolated part. Whether one endeavors to pursue Olympic style weight lifting, bodybuilding, power lifting or simply to enhance general muscular development the best results will come by multi-joint exercises.

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable... I Corinthians 12:21-22

In a recent article from the National Strength and Conditioning Association, four exercises were men-



tioned as giving the best results for just about anyone; the power clean, power snatch, squat and dead lift. There exist no other exercises that recruit more muscle fibers than these.

Yes, it is true these exercises work several large muscle areas, but the significance of these exercises goes even further. Primarily, the muscles of the hips, thigh, and back are worked with these exercises, but these are not the only areas that are strengthened. Rather, the entire body is strengthened. The research suggests there is a neurological component that does not exist with other exercises. Therefore, all the smaller muscles of the body are also being stimulated as well.

...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. I Corinthians 12:25-26

The best way to strengthen your entire body is to employ exercises that use both the small muscle and large muscle groups at the same time. The same thing is true of the body of the church. To make the church stronger we must utilize all of the different parts: young, old, male, female, new and old members. Only when we begin to use all our members will we begin to gain greater strength.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. I Corinthians 12:27

continued from page 07

neighbor second (Matthew 22:35-40).

He attended the Jewish feasts faithfully: Passover (Luke 2:41; John 2:13, 23). The Feast of Tabernacles: John 7:2, 10).

He attended the synagogues and taught from the Hebrew Scriptures (Luke 4:16; Mark 1:21; John 18:20).

Jesus was referred to as "Rabbi" on numerous occasions: (John 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; Luke 7:40).

Jesus honored and revered the Sabbath day (Matthew 12).

Jesus observed the dietary laws: (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14).

Jesus was buried according to Jewish burial customs (John 19:39-40).

## CONCLUSION

In Acts 7 verse 56, Stephen, just prior to being stoned to death said, "Look, I see heaven open and

the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." Stephen saw the glory of God and Jesus the Messiah standing at God's right hand. Stephen's words are similar to Jesus words spoken before the Council, "In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64).

John 17 is the actual prayer of Jesus Christ. Remember what He prayed? "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began" (John 17:5). Stephen saw the fulfillment of the prayer of Jesus, answered by God exactly as Jesus had requested.

There is no doubt the Jesus of the Bible is Jewish, and there is no doubt He is "The Son of God." Who is Jesus? He is our Savior, our High Priest, and our soon coming King! i

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continued from page 11

widely taught in our churches. In fact, many falsely believe God is not currently granting the gift of healing. This belief comes from scriptures such as Matthew 24:11 and 24. Just as Jesus predicted, many false prophets and false healers have arisen and fooled a multitude.

However, this fulfillment of prophecy does not mean God's children should not work to gain Christ's power. According to dictionary.com, a miracle is "An event that appears inexplicable by the laws of nature and so is held to be supernatural in origin or an act of God." This broad definition covers a range of occurrences from healing a small cold to bringing someone back from the dead.

Our church in suburban DC often prays for healings of both brethren and strangers and more often than not, God answers our prayers and miraculously heals the individual. I have prayed for my own healing or that of family members and we have been miraculously delivered. This outcome should not be surprising, or dismissed as something short of miraculous. John 14:12 reads, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

I have learned miracles only occur through faith (Acts 3:16) and it is very important for contemporary Christians to accept that God would grant us this power and privilege. Once we overcome that hurdle, which is a big step, then we can faithfully pray for the Father's mercy and kindness to perform miracles just as His Son, His prophets, and His believers were promised.

Performing grandiose miracles may be a gift that only certain individuals will be granted, but the power to faithfully pray is something we can all count on, and it is a gift we should faithfully use.

Pray fervently for healings, outpourings of God's spirit, guidance for our leaders, and God's love to fill the world. These are things that can affect the world in big ways and perhaps they can allow us to see God's miraculous delay, the chaos that will eventually engulf the world. It is important for each believer to do his/her part because we have each received the miracle of God's truth and salvation in our lives. i

continued from page 13

**infuse**

Kingdom of God.

## JESUS CAME TO DIE FOR THE WORLD

"For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life" (Romans 5:10)! These are the righteous words from the Apostle Paul, instructing us that indeed we have been reunited with God through the gracious sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' death propitiated God's wrath against mankind for our multitude of sins (Hebrews 2:17, Romans 3:25). We know by the testament of the apostle Peter (2 Peter 3:9) that it is not God's will that any souls should perish, but that all should repent and be saved. Therefore Jesus, full of grace and benevolence, ordained by the Father, came down to earth to pay the death penalty (a penalty mankind could not afford to pay, 1 Corinthians 15:3) and to reconcile us to God by purifying our souls with His shed blood (1 John 1:7). "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

We can now be justified in the sight of God by the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son (Romans 5:9). Justification is legal acquittal from damnation by God, our judge, in which He pronounces sinners as righteous subsequent to their repentance and acceptance of Jesus as their personal savior.

Jesus came into the world to fulfill the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17). By His amicable sacrifice, through His shed blood, the prophecies of spiritual deliverance consisting of love was fulfilled; as we know "love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10).

Song writer Robert Lowry puts it best in "Nothing But The Blood," (published in 1876) when he inscribed: "What shall wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

Let us bear in mind that Jesus' mission, although foreseeable, was most certainly not an "easy road" by any stretch of the imagination. As prophesied and thus later fulfilled, Jesus Christ endured many impediments during his illustrious and valiant mission here on earth.

May we walk circumspectly in accordance with Christ and not imprudently allowing His significant mission on earth, including His benevolent sacrifice, to be of no avail to our physical lives at this time, and ultimately our eternal salvation. i