THE ONE YEAR® BOOK OF Discovering FILE DISCOVERING DISCOVERING STATES TO A STATES OF A STA

NANCY GUTHRIE

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The One Year Book of Discovering Jesus in the Old Testament

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Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

LUKE 24:27

INTRODUCTION

I grew up going to Sunday school . . . and vacation Bible school and church camp and training union (which was our Sunday night version of Sunday school). Along the way, I learned my share of Old Testament Bible stories. From the story of Adam and Eve I learned that I should not listen to the devil's lies. From Noah I learned that I should be willing to stand alone against an evil world. From Abraham I learned that I should be willing to sacrifice what is most precious to me. From Jacob I learned that I should expect to experience the consequences of my deceit. From Joseph I learned that I should run from temptation. And it goes on from there.

Most of my life I have read and been taught the Old Testament as a series of life lessons or faith lessons. Its chief characters were held up as heroes to emulate or villains to disdain. I knew that the Old Testament spoke of Christ, but in my mind that was limited to the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah. I did not see that, in fact, all of the Old Testament is preparing us to understand who Christ is and what he came to do. I did not understand that the people in the Old Testament were not true heroes. In fact, the Bible takes care to expose their flagrant flaws. Their imperfections and limitations serve to point to the need for a true hero, a perfect son, a better provider, deliverer, savior, judge, prophet, priest, and king.

What I did not see is that the Old Testament tells a story that only finds its completion in Jesus Christ. I did not see that Jesus is the offspring of the woman who will crush the head of the serpent. Jesus is the ark that protects the faithful remnant from judgment. Jesus is the fulfillment of all the blessings promised to Abraham. He is the greater Isaac, the beloved Son of his Father, offered as a sacrifice, who was not spared from the knife. Jesus is the stairway Jacob saw in his dream on which God comes down to earth. Jesus is the greater Joseph, the One whose suffering put him in place to become Savior to all who come to him for food amid the famine of this world.

And those are just a few highlights from Genesis.

Jesus is the reality to which all of the sacrifices and offerings and festivals point. He is the fulfillment of the Tabernacle and Temple, making his home among us. He is the greater Moses who brings his people out of slavery to sin, the greater Israel who is not disobedient in the wilderness, the greater son of David whose Kingdom will last forever, the greater Solomon who is the Prince of Peace. He is the weeping prophet, the greater Jonah who runs toward sinners rather than away from them, the Bridegroom, the Branch, Isaiah's child who is born.

Though this is not the way I learned to read and understand the Old Testament—and perhaps not the way you have read and understood it up to now—this is clearly the way Jesus read, understood, and taught it, and therefore the way his disciples began to teach it after his departure.

Jesus often said that he fulfilled specific Old Testament passages. At the beginning of his ministry, he went to the synagogue in Nazareth and stood up to read from the Old Testament scroll of Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon me,

for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,

that the blind will see,

that the oppressed will be set free,

and that the time of the LORD's favor has come."

He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. Then he began to speak to them. "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!" (Luke 4:18-21)

Those who heard Jesus say this were amazed, but ultimately infuriated, because they understood exactly what he was claiming.

Yet according to Jesus, it is not just individual prophecies or passages that point to him. It is the Old Testament Scriptures as a whole. Jesus said to the religious leaders, "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!" (John 5:39). Jesus was saying that the entirety of the Old Testament—its history, its promises, its people, its laws, its ceremonies, its songs—all of it is all about him.

Perhaps the clearest and most intriguing thing Jesus said about fulfilling the Scriptures came after his resurrection, as he walked along with two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus. They didn't recognize that it was Jesus who was walking with them, and they began telling him how heartbroken they were. They had hoped Jesus was the Messiah, and now, in light of his crucifixion, it seemed their hopes had been dashed.

Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?" Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:25-27) When I read this, I am disappointed that the account stops there. This is a conversation I would have liked to have listened in on in full! How amazing itmust have been to have Jesus himself walk through Genesis, Leviticus, Judges, Psalms, Proverbs, and Isaiah, saying, "This is about me... This is about the work I came to do... This is about the mercy I came to lavish on sinners... This is about the sufficiency of my salvation... This is about my deliverance from slavery to sin... This is about the judgment that was poured out on me at the cross...."

Later Jesus appeared to the rest of the disciples and said, "When I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). Then, once again, he did what he had done before. Luke records: "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (24:45).

When we read through the sermons in Acts and through the rest of the New Testament, we realize that those who learned how to read the Old Testament from Jesus went on to present the gospel of Jesus in the same manner he did—not beginning with his birth or his teachings or even his death and resurrection, but beginning with the Old Testament. The New Testament writers teach us how to read and understand the entire Old Testament with gospel eyes.

This is how we will seek to discover Jesus through the pages of this book over the coming year. We're not looking to impose or insert what is not there but to bring to light what is clearly there—though we might have never seen it before. As we move through the books of the Old Testament, we'll see that they anticipate Christ's suffering and glory in their own ways. We'll embrace the story of the acts of God in human history in light of where it leads—to the climactic achievement of Christ.

It is my prayer that you will, along with me, stand back in wonder at the magnificence of God's plan for redemption and at his providence and power to bring about that plan. I hope that, along with me, you'll discover more reasons to trust the whole of Scripture and to love the God of Scripture. I hope your mind will be challenged and your heart will be broken by the beauty of Christ on display through the whole of the Old Testament. And I hope that as we look together at how the Old Testament prepares us for the person and work of Christ, we will move closer to worshiping him according to his marvelous and matchless worth.

Nancy Guthrie

PENTATEUCH

ch. J. J.

BEFORE HE MADE THE WORLD

Usually it makes sense to start at the beginning. But when looking for footprints of the eternal Jesus, we have to start before the beginning—before the "in the beginning" of Genesis 1:1—because the Bible repeatedly speaks of a time before time when God's plan for the world, centered in Jesus Christ, took shape.

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What was the plan God was making before time began? Paul tells us in a letter he wrote to Timothy: "God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from *before the beginning of time*—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 1:9, emphasis added).

Since before time began, God has wanted to show us something—something significant that puts the glory of who he is on display. He has wanted to show us his grace—to shower his forgiveness on people who don't deserve it. Jesus has always been and will always be at the center of that plan.

The sending of Jesus into our world as a man who died for sin was no afterthought to fix what Adam and Eve ruined. Sending Jesus was no plan B but God's glorious plan A from before the beginning! "God chose him as your ransom long before the world began," Peter explained (1 Peter 1:20). Paul put it this way, "Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure" (Ephesians 1:4-5).

Before the beginning, God knew that he would make us and that we would reject him. He knew that we would need a Savior and that the only One who could save us would be his own Son. From eternity past, Jesus has been the center of God's plan. And into eternity future, Jesus and his work on the cross will continue to be the center of God's glorious plan.

[†] You who loved me before time began, how could I ever question your plans for this world and for my life? Your magnificent plan to display your glory and your loving plan for me began before the beginning, and I am humbled and quieted before such a Sovereign God.

JANUARY 2 CREATOR

"In the beginning God created" (Genesis 1:1). How did God create? He spoke each aspect of creation into being. Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, we continue to see the power of God's creative word as it comes again and again through the prophets: "This is what the LORD says."

It is no accident that the first words in the Gospel of John are exactly the same as the first words in the book of Genesis. John writes: "*In the beginning* the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him" (John 1:1-3, emphasis added). This sheds light on the mystery of who the "us" was when God said, "Let *us* make human beings in our image, to be like us" (Genesis 1:26, emphasis added). John tells us, "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." John wanted us to understand that Jesus is the agent through whom everything created was called into being. He tells us that Jesus is the *logos*, the outward expression of all God is. So every time we read the phrase "then God said" in the first chapter of Genesis, we know that it is Jesus, the living Word of God, accomplishing God's creative work.

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.
He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,
for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth.
He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—
such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.
Everything was created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:15-16)

If everything was created not only *through* him but also *for* him, that means everything that exists, exists for Jesus. Nothing in the universe was created or exists for its own sake, but rather to make the glory of God more fully known.

[†] Creator of all there is, I marvel at what you have made, what you have spoken into being. Seeing you as Creator helps me to see what I was made for. I was made for you, and I am yours.

HIS SPIRIT FILLS THE EMPTINESS

God's story begins with God's Spirit hovering, filling what was empty with his own power and life: "The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Genesis 1:2-3).

So from the very beginning, and over and over again in Scripture, we see that this is who God is and the nature of what he does: God, through his Spirit, fills up what is empty to accomplish his purposes in the world. God filled Sarah's empty womb. "It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise. And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead—a nation with so many people that, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them" (Hebrews 11:11-12).

The same Spirit who filled the emptiness of earth and the emptiness of Sarah's womb was at work when the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born to you will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

This earth was filled with the light of Christ as he walked upon it, and even as he left this earth, he promised the Spirit would still be at work. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Jesus promised that the Spirit of God would come and fill the emptiness his followers felt at his departure in a way that would comfort them and empower them to impact the world around them (John 14).

[†] Spirit of God, how I thank you for coming upon me and overshadowing me, making new life where there was deadness, bringing light where there was darkness. I simply cannot create new spiritual life on my own. I need your power to work inside me so that Christ can be born in me.

THE TRUE LIGHT

The world began as one huge mass of unarranged material shrouded by impenetrable night. Then, on the first day of creation, "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day' and the darkness 'night'" (Genesis 1:3-5).

It wasn't until the fourth day of creation that "God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night" (Genesis 1:16). Before that, there was light in the world, but no sun in the sky.

John identified the source of this light when he began his Gospel with a poetic tribute to this Light. He recognized Jesus as the Light that penetrated the darkness even before the sun was set in the sky:

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. (John 1:1-5)

"The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world," John wrote (John 1:9). This Light is no mere reflector of the sun's light but is the source of light, the One who spoke the sun into being.

Jesus later spoke of a time to come when "the sun will be darkened, the moon will give no light" (Matthew 24:29). For those who have rejected the true Light, that will be a day of deep mourning. But for those who have embraced the Light, that day will usher in a new way of living in the Light. Jesus himself will be present among his people, and we will live with him in a city that "has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light" (Revelation 21:23).

 ‡ True Light, your radiance penetrates the darkest places in the world I live in and the darkest places in my heart. Shine on me now and into eternity.

MADE IN HIS IMAGE

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The final creative act on day six of creation began with this divine deliberation: "God said, 'Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us'" (Genesis 1:26).

What does it mean to be made in God's image? We are in God's image in our ability to think and feel and love, in our ability to understand right from wrong, and in our ability to make choices. We're like him in that he is Spirit and we have a spirit. We are patterned after our Maker.

But something terrible happened to that divine image when Adam and Eve sinned. The image of God in humans became distorted and damaged. So now, although we are still in his image, aspects of that image have become twisted, and the sinful nature we inherited from Adam and Eve has been passed from generation to generation. We long for the day when that marred image of God in us will be restored to its original beauty. Yet God has planned to do something even greater than restore what his image in us once was in the Garden. God intends for the original image of God in humankind to be restored and even superseded by the greater glory of becoming a new creation in Christ.

Jesus is "the visible image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15), "the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3, NIV). And "those God foreknew he also predestined to be *conformed to the likeness* of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers" (Romans 8:29, NIV, emphasis added).

God intends to conform us to the image of Christ—and the completion of this process is still in the future for us, on the day Christ returns and we are given resurrection bodies. Yet we are, even now, being glorified—our inner lives and characters are being gradually changed into his likeness by the sanctifying power of his Holy Spirit. This is not something we do, but something we receive. The righteousness and holiness that are the image of God in us are created in us, not elicited from us. "We are God's workmanship" (Ephesians 2:10, NIV).

[†] I am your child, made in your image, but you have not yet shown me all of what I will be like when you appear. But I know I will be like you, for on that day I will see you as you really are.

HE FULFILLS OUR DESTINY

God created humanity with a magnificent destiny in mind:

God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground." (Genesis 1:26-28)

Psalm 8 celebrates this magnificent destiny of human beings: "You made them only a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor. You gave them charge of everything you made, putting all things under their authority" (8:5-6).

But when we read these verses in Psalm 8, we're struck that they do not line up with the reality we're now living in. God made the world and gave it to us to cultivate and nurture. But this was before sin's ruin entered the world and everything changed. Now nothing is the way it was created to be. Rather than ruling over the earth, we are painfully subject to a cursed creation. Rather than being fruitful, we find ourselves living in futility.

The writer of Hebrews quotes Psalm 8 and confirms the disconnect between our destiny and our reality when he says, "We have not yet seen all things put under their authority." Then he points us toward the answer, the ultimate, perfect man who has fulfilled everything God originally intended for humanity: "What we do see is Jesus" (Hebrews 2:8-9).

We know Psalm 8 is not yet fully true of us. But it is true of Jesus. And through our identification with Christ, our oneness with Christ, we also fulfill the destiny originally designed for us.

[†] Fulfiller of humankind's destiny, here I am, living in this in-between time that is marked by tears and pain and death. But as I identify myself with you I can say, "Because I am in Christ, all things will one day be under my authority. I will rule with Christ in glory forever and ever!"

HE WAS MADE Restless so We Can Rest

Genesis offers us a day-by-day account of the creative work of God in making the world, as well as the rest he enjoyed after that work was done.

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God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.... On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation. (Genesis 1:31; 2:2-3)

God looked over what he had done and saw that it was good, so he could rest. But when we look over the work of our hands, the attitudes of our hearts, the words on our lips, and we realize that they are *not* good, we wonder how we will ever be able to rest.

The writer of Hebrews points the way: "All who have entered into God's rest have rested from their labors, just as God did after creating the world" (Hebrews 4:10). There is only one way we can rest from our labor: by depending on the work of another whose works are infinitely good.

The writer of Hebrews wants us to understand that the reason we can rest is because of the work Jesus has done. When we enter into Christ, we can rest, not because we are good or because what we've done is good, but because Jesus is good. He has given us his own goodness as a gift.

Our rest is made possible because of the restlessness Jesus endured on the cross in our stead and the work he accomplished for our benefit. On the cross, Jesus writhed in agony, struggling for breath. But it was not mere physical agony. Jesus was experiencing the restlessness that is continual for those who persist in rejecting God. It was *our* restlessness he took upon himself, not his own. On the cross, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV). Jesus experienced the infinite restlessness we deserve so that we can enjoy his all-encompassing rest.

[†] Jesus, only in you can I find the rest my soul craves. Only through being united to you can I be confident that God looks at my life and says, "It is good." You have accomplished the work that I never could. So I choose to rest in you and your finished work, now and for eternity.

JANUARY 8 SECOND ADAM

In Romans 5:14 Paul tells us something amazing about the first man, Adam, and about God's purpose in creating him. Paul said that Adam was a pattern or type of One who was to come—Christ. Adam was a real man, and his experiences were real, yet his life was never only about him. Adam was created as a type, or representation, of Christ, the One who was to come. As a type, Adam foreshadowed a greater Man to come.

Why does this matter? It shows us that when Adam sinned, God, though certainly saddened by it, was not surprised. God knew that they would sin, and he had a plan from the very beginning to show his sin-conquering grace through the death of Jesus Christ on behalf of guilty sinners.

Long before Adam sinned in the Garden, God had determined to put his glorious character—his patience and forgiveness and justice and wrath on display by sending his Son, the second Adam, who would be superior to the first Adam in every way. While the first Adam took something good from us and brought death, the second Adam gives us everything we need to live. "The Scriptures tell us, 'The first man, Adam, became a living person.' But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45).

From eternity past, God intended that the sin-bringing Adam would serve to point us to the sin-bearing second Adam. "The sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

Every one of us lives under an unavoidable eternal reality: either we are connected to Adam and destined to die, or we are connected to Christ and destined to live forever with him.

[†] Second Adam who brings forgiveness instead of condemnation and life instead of death, you were there long before we needed you. Your grace in abundance is available to us—grace that is greater than all our sin.

WITH ME IN PARADISE

Before earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, and human desecration ever began, there was a beautiful place on planet Earth unlike anything our eyes have ever seen. It was indeed a paradise—a garden located in a place called Eden. Adam and Eve lived in this paradise where they lacked nothing and enjoyed everything—including the personal presence of God.

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But in the midst of this paradise, Adam and Eve, representing the human race, grabbed hold of something other than God in an attempt to find joy and satisfaction. They opened the door to sin that day, and it came rushing into every aspect of existence, taking away their freedom and unfettered enjoyment of God himself. Into the purity of the paradise God had created, sin brought a poison that penetrated everything. Adam and Eve were sent away from the paradise, banished from the perfection they once enjoyed.

But God, in his mercy, determined that those who are his would not be shut out of paradise forever. He has made a way to enter in. Jesus made it clear to the thief hanging on the cross next to him that he opens paradise to those who turn to him in repentance and faith.

One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, "So you're the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you're at it!"

But the other criminal protested, "Don't you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:39-43)

Jesus welcomed this thief—and one day he will welcome all those who come to him—into a paradise even more grand than Eden. He is, even now, preparing a paradise for his people to live in—the new heaven and new earth. The paradise of Eden was just a preview of the paradise to come. Jesus will be there, in the center, to welcome us in.

[†] Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom. Remember my sorrowful repentance. Remember your great mercy. And welcome me into the paradise of God.

JANUARY 10 TAKE AND EAT

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God planted a garden that was the perfect habitation for Adam and Eve. Everything Adam and Eve could possibly want was there. "The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. But the LORD God warned him, 'You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die" (Genesis 2:15-17).

God generously provided food and welcomed Adam and Eve to his table to eat—with only one prohibition. Then Satan slithered into this picture, offering his own invitation to eat. He urged Eve to eat freely the fruit of the forbidden tree. And tragically she and Adam indulged their appetite for satisfaction apart from God. Suddenly the joy and peace they had known disappeared. New feelings raged in their hearts—horror, wretchedness, insecurity, remorse, shame. They looked at each other and knew that things would never be the same again. The chill of danger and the fear of darkness swept through Eden.

Through Adam and Eve's simple act of taking and eating, humankind lost spiritual life. But it is also through the act of taking and eating that spiritual and eternal life is restored. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you" (John 6:53). "Take and eat" is a sign of restored fellowship with God. Just as taking and eating what was prohibited by God led to damnation, so does taking and eating of God's provision of Christ lead to salvation. "As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take this and eat it, for this is my body'" (Matthew 26:26).

Was Jesus thinking of his Father's first invitation to take and eat of his goodness in the Garden? Was he thinking about Satan's wicked and twisted invitation to take and eat?

When Jesus invited his followers to take and eat his body, he knew what that invitation would cost. It would require the death of his body. But it would also require the resurrection of his body. As we take and eat of both the death and the resurrection of Christ, we proclaim that we truly have life.

[‡] Feast of heaven, provided generously by God, I come to your table, and by faith I take and eat your body, your life. I find my nourishment—indeed, my very existence—as I feed upon you.

THE TREE OF THE Knowledge of Good and Evil

Adam and Eve were welcome to enjoy all the goodness in the Garden of Eden to their hearts' content. But God's permission was paired with his prohibition: "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die" (Genesis 2:16-17).

What was this tree of the knowledge of good and evil? To have the knowledge of good and evil means to claim the independent right to decide for oneself what is good and evil (true and false, beautiful and ugly). It was proper for God to have that right, not humans. God knew that it would be utterly devastating for people to cut the cord of dependence from him and claim "the knowledge of good and evil" for themselves. That's why he said, "You must not eat it . . . if you do, you will die" (Genesis 3:3).

But the fruit of this tree looked delicious to Eve, who ate it and then gave some to Adam. And they did indeed attain the knowledge of good and evil, but their new knowledge was from the standpoint of *becoming* evil and *remembering* how good they once were. They traded the freedom of enjoying what is good for slavery to what is evil.

God had told them this would happen, but they didn't believe him. Now they realized that what God had said was true and what Satan had said was a lie. How would Adam and Eve and all those who came after them find a way out of this?

The only way out is by eating the fruit of another tree—the Cross of Christ. On this tree hung the One who restores the knowledge of the good that Adam and Eve lost when they chose evil. No other tree so fully manifests such a vast knowledge of good and evil—the infinite goodness of Christ and the damning evil of those for whom he died. By eating of the fruit of this tree, all those who have descended from Adam and Eve can reclaim the life they lost and restore the relationship of glad dependence and obedience they left behind. "The sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

 $^{\text{T}}$ I, too, am tempted to seek wisdom apart from your Word, God. I, too, lust after independence from your wise boundaries. But now I take and eat of the fruit of your Cross, and I am sure to live.

BONE OF HIS BONES

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God has always had it in his heart not only to create humanity, but also to become human and to relate with us as one of us. In making man in his image, he made him for relationship.

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."...

So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the opening. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

"At last!" the man exclaimed. "This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken from 'man."" (Genesis 2:18, 21-23)

At this point, the biblical writer injects some perspective on what God has done: "This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one" (Genesis 2:24).

Much later, another biblical writer points us to what God did in this union to help us to understand not only marriage between a man and a woman but also the mysterious union between Christ and his church: "As the Scriptures say, 'A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.' This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one" (Ephesians 5:31-32).

The joy Adam expressed in this being who was drawn from his body is a foreshadowing of the joy Jesus takes in his church, which is his very body. As the woman came from Adam's side while he was in a deep sleep, so the church came from the bleeding, wounded side of Jesus when he was in a three-day deep sleep of death. "The church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ" (Ephesians 1:23).

The day is coming when Jesus will rejoice over his bride, the church, like Adam did when he shouted, "At last!" Finally Christ's bride will be with him, in his presence forevermore.

[†] How is it that I could be united as one with you, Jesus? What a glorious and mysterious work you have done to make me worthy of such infinite oneness!

HE COVERS OUR NAKEDNESS

There was once a day when there was no shame because there was no sin to be ashamed of. "The man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame" (Genesis 2:25).

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But then came sin, and in came the shame. "She took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves" (Genesis 3:6-7).

Adam and Eve tried to perpetrate a literal cover-up. The shame of what they had done and who they had become was overwhelming. So they tried to close the gap between what they once had been and what they now were by covering up and presenting themselves in a new way. This was the origin of hypocrisy.

But sin is not a problem we can simply cover up by our own efforts. Neither is it a problem that can be solved by a bunch of leaves—but only by pain and blood. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). God met Adam and Eve in mercy, providing robes made of the skins of animals to cover their nakedness. The God who made the world with a word could have made garments of cloth for Adam and Eve, but their clothes were made from the skins of animals. In this way he not only provided what they needed to make their way in a new world marked by sin, but he pointed to the day when he would solve the problem of their sin and shame decisively and permanently. He would do it with the blood of his own Son who, "because of the joy awaiting him . . . endured the cross, disregarding its shame" (Hebrews 12:2).

The clothing of Christ is available to all who come to him for it. But many are blind to their own nakedness and suppress their sense of shame. Jesus said to the church in Laodicea, "You don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.... Buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness" (Revelation 3:17-18). His offer extends to all who know the shame of sin and desire to be covered in the clothing of Christ himself.

[†] Jesus, I am naked and ashamed, and there is nowhere to hide. I'm weary of my hypocrisy and my attempts to cover up. I need your sacrifice to cover my nakedness. I need your grace to take away my shame.

JANUARY 14 TEMPTED IN THE GARDEN

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When God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, he said, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die" (Genesis 2:16-17). But soon the serpent came along and questioned what God had said: "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden? . . . You won't die!" (3:1, 4).

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Adam and Eve were put to the test in the Garden by the temptation of Satan. He took God's words and twisted them, causing Adam and Eve to doubt God's goodness and provision. Satan suggested that God was withholding something good from them and tempted them to reach out and grab what would make them like God himself. Sadly, Adam and Eve failed the test.

There was only one way to turn the tide of death brought about by the first Adam's failure when tempted, and that was through the second Adam's faithfulness when tempted. But while Adam faced temptation in the bountiful Garden, where his every need was met, Jesus was "led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted" (Matthew 4:1). While Adam and Eve lacked nothing when approached by Satan, Jesus was in the last stages of starvation.

Whereas Adam and Eve started questioning God's words when they were tempted, Jesus met temptation at every turn by quoting God's sure and certain Word. Whereas Adam and Eve questioned God's provision, Jesus celebrated it. And whereas Adam inherited shame and alienation from life with God in the Garden, Jesus inherited a dominion and Kingdom that is God's own Kingdom.

Later Jesus did, however, also face temptation in a garden. It was not the Garden of Eden, but the garden of Gethsemane. He was tempted to avoid the Cross, tempted to turn away from God's plan and provision for him. But once again Jesus passed the test. Once again he submitted himself to God and entrusted himself to God, saying, "I want your will to be done, not mine" (Matthew 26:39).

[†] Tested and proven One, because you have gone through suffering and testing, you are able to help me when I am being tested. And I know that you will not allow me to be tempted beyond what I can stand, but you will show me a way out so I can endure faithfully.

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Writing this book has been a journey of discovery for me as I have "gone to school" on numerous biblical scholars and pastors who have shown me the beauty of Christ throughout the Old Testament through their commentaries, articles, sermons, and books. I am very grateful to Dr. Stephen Estock, Minister of Christian Education at Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church and Adjunct Professor of Homeletics at Covenant Theological Seminary, for his gracious theological guidance as well as his generous encouragement. Here are the sources I have relied on most heavily, all of which I commend to you for further study.

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Recorded audio of the "Preaching Christ in a Postmodern World" seminar taught by Dr. Edmund P. Clowney and Dr. Timothy J. Keller at Reformed Theological Seminary

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SCRIPTURE INDEX

Genesis 1:1 Genesis 1:2-3 Genesis 1:3-5 Genesis 1:16 Genesis 1:26 Genesis 1:26-28 Genesis 1:31 Genesis 1:31, 2:3 Genesis 2:15-17 Genesis 2.16-17 Genesis 2:18, 21-24 Genesis 2:25 Genesis 3:1.4 Genesis 3:3 Genesis 3:6-7 Genesis 3:15 Genesis 3:17 Genesis 3:17-18 Genesis 3:20 Genesis 3:22-24 Genesis 3:23 Genesis 3:24 Genesis 4:1 Genesis 4:9-11 Genesis 4.16 Genesis 4:16-17 Genesis 4:25-26 Genesis 5:3 Genesis 5:29 Genesis 6:5 Genesis 6:5-6 Genesis 6:5-9 Genesis 6:9 Genesis 6:14 Genesis 6:18 Genesis 7:23 Genesis 9:1 Genesis 9:13-15 Genesis 11:2. 6-8 Genesis 11:4-7 Genesis 11:4-5, 8 Genesis 12:1 Genesis 12:2-3 Genesis 14 Genesis 15:1 Genesis 15:6

January 1, 2 January 3 January 4 January 4 January 2, 5 January 6 January 26 Januarv 7 January 10 January 11, 14 January 12 January 13 January 14 January 11 January 13 January 15, 16; February 7 January 20 January 21 January 17 January 18 May 20 February 2 January 22 January 23 February 2 January 24 January 24 January 25 January 31 August 8 January 26 January 27 February 10 January 29 February 18 January 29 February 3 January 30 February 2 February 3 February 1 February 4 February 5, 6 February 8 February 9 February 10, 11

Genesis 15:8 Genesis 15:13 Genesis 15:16 Genesis 15:18 Genesis 16:13 Genesis 17:1 Genesis 17:7 Genesis 17:8 Genesis 17:10.13 Genesis 17:17, 21 Genesis 18:10 Genesis 18:12 Genesis 18:13-14 Genesis 18:25 Genesis 21:6 Genesis 22:1-3 Genesis 22:3 Genesis 22:6.8 Genesis 22:7-8 Genesis 22:12 Genesis 22:13-14 Genesis 22:16-18 Genesis 22:17 Genesis 24:15-16 Genesis 25.23 Genesis 27:13 Genesis 27:19 Genesis 28:12 Genesis 28:15 Genesis 29:17 Genesis 29:30-32, 35 Genesis 32:25-26 Genesis 32:30 Genesis 35:17-18 Genesis 37:3 Genesis 37.4 Genesis 37:18 Genesis 38:1-2 Genesis 40:13.19 Genesis 41:48-49 Genesis 41:51-52 Genesis 41:55-56 Genesis 41:56-57 Genesis 43:9 Genesis 44:16 Genesis 44:32-33

February 12 February 13; March 6 June 13 February 14 February 15 February 16, 17, 18 February 18; May 26; October 28 February 14 February 17 February 19 February 20 February 19 February 20 February 21 February 19 February 22 February 23 February 23 February 24 February 22 February 24 February 25 February 15; June 23 February 26 February 27 February 27 February 27 February 28 February 28 March 1 March 1 March 2 March 2 October 29 March 3 March 3 March 3, 4 February 7 March 5 March 7 March 6 March 7 March 8 March 9 March 10

March 9

Genesis 45:4-5, 7-8	March 10	Exodus 33:13	April 25
Genesis 48:15-16	March 11	Exodus 33:14	April 22
Genesis 49:9-10	March 12	Exodus 33:18-19, 21-23	April 23
Genesis 50:20	March 14	Exodus 34	April 27
Exodus 2:23	March 17	Exodus 34:5	March 18
Exodus 3:2-3, 5	March 16	Exodus 34:6	April 24
Exodus 3:4	February 15	Exodus 34:6-7	April 25; July 6
Exodus 3:5	February 15	Exodus 34:34	April 28
Exodus 3:7-8	March 17	Exodus 40:12	April 18
Exodus 3:8	March 18	Exodus 40:13-15	April 26
Exodus 3:13-15	March 19	Leviticus 1:4-5	May 1
Exodus 3:14	March 20	Leviticus 1:9	May 2
Exodus 4:2-5	March 21	Leviticus 2	May 4
Exodus 4:22-23	March 22	Leviticus 3	May 5
Exodus 6:7	October 28	Leviticus 4:5-7	May 6
Exodus 9:16	April 7	Leviticus 5:16	May 7
Exodus 11:5	March 24	Leviticus 8:4-6	May 8
Exodus 12:3, 5-6, 8, 46	March 26	Leviticus 11	May 9
Exodus 12:6-7, 12-13	March 25	Leviticus 13:45-46	May 10
Exodus 12:6-7, 23	March 24	Leviticus 14:2-7	May 11
Exodus 12:8, 10	March 27	Leviticus 16	April 14
Exodus 12:12	March 23	Leviticus 16:15, 21-22	May 12
Exodus 12:14, 25-27	March 29	Leviticus 16:29-30	May 13
Exodus 12:17, 19-20	March 28	Leviticus 16:32-33	May 14
Exodus 13:21-22	March 30	Leviticus 20:8	November 8
Exodus 14:11	April 1	Leviticus 22:32	November 8
Exodus 14:13-14	April 1	Leviticus 23:3	May 15
Exodus 14:13-14, 21-22	March 31	Leviticus 23:10	May 16
Exodus 15:1-2	April 1	Leviticus 23:16-17	May 17
Exodus 15:3-5, 16-18	April 2	Leviticus 23:24-25	May 18
Exodus 15:22-23, 25	April 3	Leviticus 23:42-43	May 19
Exodus 15:26	April 4	Leviticus 25:8-55	May 20
Exodus 16:3-4	April 5	Leviticus 25:10	May 20
Exodus 17:5-7	April 6	Leviticus 26:12-13	February 13
Exodus 19:5	April 29; October 31	Leviticus 26:13	March 17
Exodus 19:18	April 9	Numbers 11:29	June 4
Exodus 19:18-19	April 8	Numbers 12:3	May 21
Exodus 20:2	October 31	Numbers 13:16	June 7
Exodus 20:6	April 29; May 25	Numbers 14:34	May 25
Exodus 20:24	April 12	Numbers 20:9-12	May 21
Exodus 23:29-30	June 9	Numbers 21:6, 8-9	May 22
Exodus 24:8	February 18	Numbers 23:19-20	May 23
Exodus 25:8	April 12	Numbers 24:17-19	May 24
Exodus 25:8-9	April 13	Numbers 35:10-11	June 14
Exodus 25:10-11, 16-18	April 14	Deuteronomy 3:21-22	June 8
Exodus 25:14	July 1	Deuteronomy 4:24	March 16
Exodus 25:31-32, 37, 40	April 16	Deuteronomy 6:4-5	May 25
Exodus 26:31-33	April 15	Deuteronomy 7:7-8	May 26
Exodus 28	April 17	Deuteronomy 8:2-3	May 27
Exodus 28:1	April 18	Deuteronomy 10:16	February 17
Exodus 28:2, 4, 9-21, 36-38	April 19	Deuteronomy 11:26-28	May 28
Exodus 31:13	November 8	Deuteronomy 17:14-15	May 29
Exodus 31:18	April 20	Deuteronomy 18:15	May 21, 30
Exodus 32:11-14	April 21	Deuteronomy 18:16-18	May 31
Exodus 32:32	July 19	Deuteronomy 21:22-23	June 2

Deuteronomy 27–28	October 30	2 Samuel 7:16	June 23; July 4;
Deuteronomy 28:12	July 15		October 13
Deuteronomy 28:23	July 15	2 Samuel 9:1, 3, 7	July 5
Deuteronomy 28:29, 48, 65-66	May 28	2 Samuel 11:27	July 6
Deuteronomy 29:4, 29	June 3	2 Samuel 12:11	July 7
Deuteronomy 30:6	June 4	2 Samuel 14:25	October 4
Deuteronomy 31:26-27	June 5	2 Samuel 15:23	July 7
Deuteronomy 34:9	June 7	2 Samuel 23:16-17	July 8
Joshua 1:3	June 9	1 Kings 4:29	July 9
Joshua 1:3, 5	June 8	1 Kings 6:11-13	July 10
Joshua 1:3, 6, 11	June 7	1 Kings 8:27	October 23
Joshua 2:9-12	June 10	e e	July 11
		1 Kings 8:28-30	
Joshua 3:3, 5, 14-16	June 11	1 Kings 12:25-33	December 2
Joshua 5:13-15	June 12	1 Kings 18:24, 38	July 12
Joshua 7	November 24	2 Kings 1–2	July 12
Joshua 8:29	June 2	2 Kings 4	July 13
Joshua 10:20	June 13	2 Kings 4:32-34	July 14
Joshua 10:26-27	June 2	2 Kings 4:38-39, 40-41	July 15
Joshua 20	June 14	2 Kings 4:42-44	July 13
Joshua 21:43-44	June 15	2 Kings 5	July 13
Joshua 21:44	April 22	2 Kings 5:10, 13	July 16
Joshua 24:2	February 4	2 Kings 6:1-7, 17	July 13
Judges 2:12, 16, 18	June 16	2 Kings 9:13	August 7
Judges 6:1, 12, 14-15	June 17	2 Kings 19:30-31	July 17
Judges 13:3, 5	June 18	2 Kings 25:8-9	July 10
Judges 13:22	February 15	2 Kings 25:10-11	July 18
Judges 16:29-30	June 19	1 Chronicles 10:13	July 23
Ruth 3:1-4, 8-9	June 20	1 Chronicles 14:2	February 18
1 Samuel 1:11	June 21	1 Chronicles 21:1, 16-17	July 19
1 Samuel 2:6	June 21	1 Chronicles 22:6-10	July 20
1 Samuel 2:10	June 22	1 Chronicles 29:9, 17-19	July 21
1 Samuel 2:14, 22, 35	June 23	2 Chronicles 7:3	March 18
1 Samuel 6:20	December 25	2 Chronicles 9:1-4	July 9
1 Samuel 7:1	July 1	2 Chronicles 34:14, 19	July 22
1 Samuel 7:10	June 22	2 Chronicles 35:7-9, 11	July 22
1 Samuel 8:5	May 29; June 24	2 Chronicles 36:14	July 23
1 Samuel 8:7	May 29	Ezra 7:10	July 24
1 Samuel 9:2	October 4	Nehemiah 1:3	July 25
1 Samuel 12:22	April 7	Nehemiah 1:8-9	July 27
1 Samuel 15:12, 17-19	June 25	Nehemiah 4:2	July 25
1 Samuel 16:6, 7	October 4		July 25 July 27
		Nehemiah 5:19	,
1 Samuel 16:12-13	June 26	Nehemiah 6:3, 9	July 26
1 Samuel 17:4	June 27	Nehemiah 6:14	July 27
1 Samuel 18:1, 3-4	June 28	Nehemiah 13:13-14, 22, 29	July 27
1 Samuel 20:14-15	July 5	Esther 4:14-16	July 28
1 Samuel 22:1-2	June 29	Job 1:1	July 29
2 Samuel 2:4	June 26	Job 1:12	July 30
2 Samuel 5:3	June 26	Job 2:6	July 30
2 Samuel 5:6-7	June 30	Job 9:8-10, 12	July 31
2 Samuel 5:7	December 15	Job 9:32-35	August 1
2 Samuel 6:6-7	July 1	Job 10:1	July 29
2 Samuel 6:17	July 11	Job 13:15	July 29; August 2
2 Samuel 7:11-13	July 3	Job 14:14	August 3
2 Samuel 7:12-13, 16	July 2	Job 19:25-26	August 3
2 Samuel 7:12-13, 19	August 22	Job 19:26	July 29

Psalm 118:15-16

Job 27:5 July 29 Psalm 118:19-20. 22 September 2 Psalm 2 August 4 Psalm 118:22 September 23 Psalm 2:6 August 5; December 15 Psalm 119:99-100 September 3 Psalm 2:6-8 August 6 Psalm 130:1-2, 7-8 September 4 Psalm 7:11-13 January 30 Psalm 130:3-4 September 5 Psalm 8:1-2 August 7 Psalm 132:17 August 10 Psalm 8:5-6 January 6 Psalm 133.2 April 26 Psalm 14:2-3 August 8; October 8 Proverbs 1:30-31 September 7 Psalm 14:7 December 15 Proverbs 2:8, 13, 15 September 6 Psalm 16:9-10 August 9 Proverbs 14:12 September 6 Psalm 16:10-11 August 13 Ecclesiastes 1:2 September 8 Psalm 18:2 August 10 Ecclesiastes 1:14 September 9 Psalm 18:30 May 23; August 11 Ecclesiastes 2:16 September 8 Psalm 19:1 August 12 Ecclesiastes 7:1 September 9 Psalm 22:1 August 13; September 12 Ecclesiastes 12:13 September 9 Psalm 22:7 October 1 Song of Songs 2:16 September 10 Psalm 22:7-8 August 14 Song of Songs 4:7, 9-10 September 11 Psalm 22:14-15 August 15 Song of Songs 6:3 September 10 Psalm 22:22 August 16 Song of Songs 7:10 September 10 Psalm 23 Isaiah 1:6 March 11 October 25 Psalm 23:1 August 29 Isaiah 6:1-3 September 13 Psalm 24:3 December 25 Isaiah 6:3 October 12 Psalm 27:1 April 16 Isaiah 6:5, 7 September 14 Psalm 32:1-2 August 17; September 5 Isaiah 7:14-16 September 15 Psalm 40:6-7 May 2 Isaiah 8:14 September 23 Psalm 41:9 Isaiah 9:1-2 August 18 September 16 Psalm 51:1-2 July 6 Isaiah 9:2 April 16 Psalm 51:1-2.7 August 19 Isaiah 9:6 February 16; Psalm 51:10 May 9 September 17 Psalm 51:16-17 August 20 Isaiah 9:6-7 July 2; September 18 Psalm 53:6 December 15 Isaiah 10:27 March 17 Psalm 61:2-3 August 21 Isaiah 11:1 September 19 Psalm 61:6-8 August 22 Isaiah 11:1-9 January 20 Psalm 69.9 August 23 Isaiah 11:6 September 12 Psalm 69:21 Isaiah 11:11 October 15 August 15 Psalm 72:10-11 August 24 Isaiah 13:9 December 1 Psalm 78:1-3 August 25 Isaiah 13:13 December 30 Psalm 78:21-22, 38, 58-59 August 26 Isaiah 25:6 September 20 Psalm 78:67-68 March 12 Isaiah 25:7-8 September 21 Psalm 80:1 August 29 Isaiah 25:8 October 5 Psalm 81:10 August 27 Isaiah 25:9 September 22 Isaiah 26:19 Psalm 84:10 September 21 August 30 Psalm 89:20 June 26 Isaiah 27:13 May 18 Psalm 92:9-10 August 10 Isaiah 28:16 September 23 Psalm 98:1-3 Isaiah 34:8 December 30 August 28 Psalm 100:3 Isaiah 35:1-10 August 29 January 20 Psalm 103:8-10 August 26 Isaiah 35:4 September 24 Psalm 103:12 May 12 Isaiah 40:3-4 September 25 Psalm 103:13 April 24 Isaiah 40:5 September 26 Psalm 105:18 March 4 Isaiah 40:10 September 12; October 3 Psalm 106:20 Isaiah 42:1 August 30 September 29 Psalm 110:1 September 1 Isaiah 44:3 November 28 Psalm 110:1-2.4 August 31 Isaiah 45:22-23 April 7 Psalm 110:4 February 8 Isaiah 45:23 September 27

ݠݾݵݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݬݘݜݤݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤ

August 7

Isaiah 48:14

October 3

Isaiah 40.7 Isaiah 49:14-16 Isaiah 50:4-5 Isaiah 50.6 Isaiah 50:6-7 Isaiah 51:5 Isaiah 51.9 Isaiah 51:17. 21-22 Isaiah 52:13 Isaiah 53:2 Isaiah 53:3 Isaiah 53:3, 5 Isaiah 53:4-5 Isaiah 53:4-6 Isaiah 53.5 Isaiah 53:6 Isaiah 53:7 Isaiah 53:10 Isaiah 53:10-11 Isaiah 53:11 Isaiah 53:12 Isaiah 54:5 Isaiah 55:1, 3 Isaiah 56:3-5 Isaiah 57:17-19 Isaiah 58:6-9 Isaiah 59:17 Isaiah 60:3 Isaiah 60:19 Isaiah 61:1 Isaiah 61.1-2 Isaiah 61:10 Isaiah 62:1, 11-12 Isaiah 63:1-3 Isaiah 64:6 Isaiah 65:17-19 Isaiah 65:17-25 Isaiah 66:1-2 Jeremiah 2:5 Jeremiah 8:14-15, 21-22 Jeremiah 9:24 Jeremiah 10:15 Jeremiah 10:15-16 Jeremiah 13:11 Jeremiah 17:9 Jeremiah 23:5-6 Jeremiah 27:22 Jeremiah 30:18 Jeremiah 31:1 Jeremiah 31:15, 22 Jeremiah 31:31-33 Jeremiah 31:33

October 1 September 28 September 3 September 12 September 30 October 3 October 3 October 2 September 29 April 13; October 4 October 1.5 September 12 October 6 October 7 September 18 May 12: August 29: October 8 October 9 March 14; October 10; December 20 October 11 September 29 March 5 October 12 October 13 October 15 October 14 October 16 October 19 August 24 September 12 September 24; October 17 October 18 October 19 October 20 October 21 October 19 October 22 January 20 October 23 October 24 October 25 October 26 December 30 October 24 May 26 August 8 October 27 December 30 October 28 October 28 October 29 October 30 June 4: October 31

Jeremiah 32 Jeremiah 32:36-37, 40-41 Jeremiah 33:14-15 Jeremiah 50:20 Lamentations 2:11, 13 Lamentations 4:11 Fzekiel 1.26-28 Ezekiel 10:18 Ezekiel 11:9-12 Ezekiel 11:16 Fzekiel 16 Fzekiel 16:8 Ezekiel 18:4 Ezekiel 24:25 Fzekiel 33-12-15 Ezekiel 34:17 Ezekiel 34:22-24, 28-29 Ezekiel 36:25-27 Ezekiel 36:26-27 Ezekiel 36:27 Ezekiel 36:33-36 Ezekiel 37:5-6. 11-12 Fzekiel 37:26-27 Ezekiel 39:17-18, 20 Ezekiel 47:12 Ezekiel 48:35 Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45 Daniel 3:6, 16-18, 24-25, 29 Daniel 6:8, 16, 22 Daniel 6:10 Daniel 7:9 Daniel 7:9-10, 22 Daniel 7:9, 13-14 Daniel 7:13 Daniel 7:13-14 Daniel 7:15-16 Daniel 9.2 Daniel 9:24-26 Daniel 10:5-6 Daniel 12:8-9 Hosea 1:2 Hosea 1:6, 9-10: 2:23 Hosea 2:15 Hosea 2:23 Hosea 3.1-2 Hosea 6:4, 6 Hosea 10:1 Hosea 11:1 Hosea 13:14 Hosea 14:8 Joel 2:11, 28-29, 31-32 Joel 2:23 Joel 2:31-32 Joel 3:17 Amos 1:2

ᆕᢉ᠔ᡏᢆᢄᢞᡧᢧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆᠕ᢣ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧᢣ᠋᠋᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧᢣ᠘᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧᢣ᠋᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ᠆ᡧ

December 17 November 1 November 2 July 17 November 3 November 3 September 13 November 12 November 12 November 10 November 4 June 20 July 28 December 30 November 5 November 7 November 6 May 9 October 30 June 4; November 8 January 20 November 9 November 10 November 11 November 10 November 12 November 13 November 14 November 16 November 15 September 13 November 17 November 19 August 31 November 18 November 22 November 22 November 20 November 21 November 22 November 23 November 25 November 24 November 25 November 23 November 26 November 27 March 22: November 28 September 21 November 27 December 1 November 29 November 30 December 15 November 16

	<u>ىمەراپەرە</u> بىرەختىقەتراپەرغە	المستقاسية والمستقصية والمست	⋰⋳⋺⋍⋏⋬ ⋰⋳⋺ ⋺∊⋏⋼⋺∊⋏⋼⋚ <mark>⋺⋲⋬⋺⋍⋏</mark> ⋬⋺⋹⋠
Amos 3:14	December 30	Matthew 4:24	December 26
Amos 5:18	December 1	Matthew 5:1-2	November 28
Amos 5:21-24	December 2	Matthew 5:3	October 17
Amos 7:7-8	December 3	Matthew 5:4	October 14
Obadiah	December 4	Matthew 5:7	November 26
Jonah	December 5	Matthew 5:17	June 1; July 24
Jonah 1:2	December 6	Matthew 5:19	July 4
Jonah 1:4, 12	December 7	Matthew 6:10	July 4
Jonah 1:14	December 9	Matthew 7:13-14	July 17; September 6
Jonah 2:9	December 6, 8	Matthew 7:22-23	July 16
Jonah 3:4	December 9	Matthew 8:14-17	October 6
Micah 5:2-5	December 10	Matthew 8:20	June 29
Nahum 1:15	December 11	Matthew 9:2	April 4
Habakkuk 2:4	December 12	Matthew 9:6	July 11
Zephaniah 1:7-18	December 1	Matthew 9:10-13	November 26
Zephaniah 3:8	December 30	Matthew 9:18-25	July 13
Zephaniah 3:9 Zephaniah 3:16-17	February 3	Matthew 9:20-22	July 1 April 24
	December 13	Matthew 9:36	April 24 March 12
Haggai 1:4	December 14	Matthew 10:2-4	March 13
Haggai 2:6-7	December 14	Matthew 11:2-6	September 24
Zechariah 9:9	December 15, 16	Matthew 11:12-13	January 16
Zechariah 11	December 17	Matthew 11:28-29	May 21
Zechariah 12:10	December 18	Matthew 11:28-30	April 22
Zechariah 13:1	December 19	Matthew 12	May 15
Zechariah 13:7	December 20	Matthew 12:39-40	December 5
Zechariah 13:9	December 20	Matthew 12:41	December 7, 9
Zechariah 14:9	December 21	Matthew 12:42	July 2, 9; September 9
Malachi 2:7-8	December 22	Matthew 13:16-17	May 30; December 28
Malachi 2:17	December 23	Matthew 13:34-35	August 25
Malachi 3:1	December 23	Matthew 13:44-46	August 30
Malachi 3:1-3	December 24	Matthew 13:45-46	October 24
Malachi 3:2	December 25	Matthew 14:13-21	July 13
Malachi 3:17	December 30	Matthew 14:25	July 31
Malachi 4:2	December 26	Matthew 16:18	July 25
Malachi 4:5	December 27	Matthew 16:24-25	February 4
Matthew 1:2-3	March 12	Matthew 16:24-26	September 9
Matthew 1:5	June 10	Matthew 17:1-2	April 27
Matthew 1:18, 22-23	September 15	Matthew 17:2-3	April 23
Matthew 1:21	June 7	Matthew 17:5	March 3
Matthew 2:1-2, 9, 11	August 24	Matthew 18:27	September 5
Matthew 2:1-6	December 10	Matthew 19:28	March 13
Matthew 2:14-15	November 28	Matthew 19:28-29	February 4
Matthew 2:15	March 15	Matthew 21:2-5	December 16
Matthew 2:16	October 29	Matthew 21:9	August 7
Matthew 2:23	October 1	Matthew 21:15-16	August 7
Matthew 3:10-12	July 12	Matthew 21:33-46	September 2
Matthew 3:16-17	April 26; November 28	Matthew 21:43-44	September 23
Matthew 3:17	February 22; March 3;	Matthew 22:12	October 19
Watting V J. 17	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Matthew 22:37-38	
Matthow 4:1	September 17		May 25
Matthew 4:1	January 14; April 13;	Matthew 23:4-5, 23, 28	December 2
	November 28	Matthew 23:27-28	November 29
Matthew 4:3-4	May 27	Matthew 23:37	September 28
Matthew 4:8-10	January 24	Matthew 23:37-38	October 20
Matthew 4:0-10 Matthew 4:12-14	September 16	Matthew 24:9	February 4

Matthew 24:30 Matthew 24:30-31 Matthew 24:37-39 Matthew 25.21 Matthew 25:31-34, 41 Matthew 26:2 Matthew 26:14-15 Matthew 26:26 Matthew 26:29 Matthew 26:31 Matthew 26:37-38 Matthew 26:38 Matthew 26:39 Matthew 26:50 Matthew 26:53-54 Matthew 26:62-63 Matthew 26:63-64 Matthew 26:64 Matthew 27:3-10 Matthew 27:11 Matthew 27:12 Matthew 27:26 Matthew 27:35 Matthew 27:39-43 Matthew 27:46 Matthew 27:50-51 Matthew 28:18-20 Mark 1:9 Mark 1:11 Mark 1.15 Mark 1:22 Mark 1:40-41 Mark 2:17 Mark 3:6 Mark 3:11 Mark 4:41 Mark 5:19 Mark 5:34 Mark 7:15 Mark 7:34 Mark 8:31 Mark 9:7 Mark 10.23-27 Mark 10:52 Mark 12:34 Mark 12:35-37 Mark 13:26-27 Mark 14:24 Mark 14:61-62 Mark 15:2 Mark 15:4-5 Mark 15:29-32 Mark 15:39

August 12 May 18 January 28 July 23 November 7 March 26 December 17 January 10; August 20 September 20 December 20 October 5 October 10 January 14; October 2; December 7, 9 August 18 August 14: November 16 October 9 November 19 August 31 December 17 June 24 Julv 29 October 10 March 3 August 14 August 13 April 9, 15 June 8 June 7 August 4 January 22; December 21 July 9 May 10 September 4 March 3 August 4 August 4 April 4 April 4 May 9 April 4 December 5 August 4 February 20 April 4 July 31 September 19 February 1 February 18; July 8 April 17; August 4 June 24 October 9 Julv 26 August 4

Mark 16:19 Luke 1:16-17 Luke 1:17 Luke 1:32-33 Luke 1:34 Luke 1:35 Luke 1:37 Luke 1:53 Luke 1:55 Luke 1:68. 72-73 Luke 1:68-72, 74-75 Luke 1:69-70, 72-73 Luke 2:7 Luke 2:9 Luke 2:11 Luke 2:13-14 Luke 2:29-30 Luke 2:32 Luke 2:46-47 Luke 2:47, 52 Luke 2:49 Luke 2:52 Luke 3:21-22 Luke 3:23 Luke 3:23-38 Luke 4:16-21 Luke 4:18 Luke 4:21 Luke 4:33-35 Luke 5:6 Luke 5:16 Luke 6:27 Luke 6:36 Luke 6:40 Luke 7:13-16 Luke 8:32 Luke 9.22 Luke 9:28-31 Luke 10 Luke 11:11-13 Luke 14:16-24 Luke 15:4-7 Luke 15:6, 9-10, 23-24 Luke 15:23-24 Luke 16.24 Luke 17:21 Luke 18:31-33 Luke 19:8-9 Luke 19:10 Luke 19:41-42 Luke 19:45-47 Luke 19:47 Luke 22:14-15, 19-20 Luke 22:19 Luke 22:31-32

September 1 December 27 July 12 July 2, 4 February 20 January 3; June 26 February 20 August 27 February 5, 18 February 5 August 10 February 18 May 14 September 26 August 28 September 18 September 22 February 6 July 24; September 3 September 7 March 22: September 17 September 3 June 26 March 25 January 25 October 18 April 26 October 17 October 12 August 27 November 15 December 6 April 24 July 24 July 14 July 30 July 29 April 30 February 1 November 1 September 20 October 8 December 13 May 5 August 15 November 13 September 30 May 7 October 8 June 16; November 3 December 23 October 10 March 29 March 28 July 30

	لفسراب ويستويستويستوسراب لفسر		՟֎ՠ֍ՠ֎ՠ֎ՠ ֎ՠ֎ՠ֎ՠ֎ՠ֎ՠ֎ՠ֎ՠ
Luke 22:37	March 5	John 6:53	January 10
Luke 23:3	June 24	John 6:53-56	March 27
Luke 23:9	October 9	John 6:57-58	July 15
Luke 23:34	March 10	John 6:69	October 12
Luke 23:39	March 5	John 7:5	March 3
Luke 23:39-43	January 9	John 7:37-38	October 13
Luke 23:40-43	March 5	John 7:41-43	December 10
Luke 23:46	July 27; August 13	John 8:4-7	April 20
Luke 24:21	August 14	John 8:7	April 10
Luke 24:27	August 9; October 10	John 8:12	March 20, 30;
John 1:1-3	January 2		September 16
John 1:1-5	January 4	John 8:24	March 20
John 1:4	April 16	John 8:29	March 2
John 1:9	January 4; April 16	John 8:34-36	March 17
John 1:11	March 3	John 8:36	December 26
John 1:12	March 23	John 8:42	May 25
John 1:14		John 8:56	
JUIII 1.14	April 13; May 19; June 23; December 13		February 11, 19 March 10: December 10
John 1:14 10		John 8:58 John 10:9	March 19; December 10 March 20
John 1:14, 18	April 23 Marah 7		March 20
John 1:16	March 7	John 10:10	January 15; October 8 March 11, 20: August 20:
John 1:16-18	August 27	John 10:11	March 11, 20; August 29;
John 1:17	June 6		October 8
John 1:23	September 25	John 10:11, 16	November 6
John 1:29	February 24; March 25	John 10:18	February 23;
John 1:45-46	October 1	LL 40.00	December 5
John 1:47	February 28	John 10:28	September 10
John 1:51	February 28	John 10:38	July 31
John 2	August 27	John 11	April 4
John 2:14-17	August 23	John 11:25	March 20; September 21
John 2:18-22	July 10	John 12:14-15	December 16
John 2:19, 21	December 14	John 12:23-24	May 16
John 3:13	March 18	John 12:23, 27	July 28
John 3:14-15	May 22	John 12:24	August 20
John 3:16	February 22	John 12:27	November 24
John 3:16-17	January 28;	John 12:27-31	June 22
	September 17	John 12:28	March 3
John 3:16-18	March 23	John 12:32	April 13
John 3:17	June 16; July 15;	John 12:37	March 23
	December 13	John 12:37-38	October 3
John 3:31-34	May 31	John 12:41	September 13;
John 4:1-29	February 26		October 12
John 4:10-11, 13-14	April 3	John 12:47	March 23
John 4:32, 34	May 4	John 12:48	September 7
John 4:34	September 17	John 12:49-50	May 31
John 5:24-25	January 17	John 13:1	June 28
John 5:25, 28-29	September 21	John 13:2, 10-11, 18-19	August 18
John 5:28-29	November 9	John 13:4-5	May 14; September 29
John 5:30	November 15	John 13:7-8	May 14
John 5:39	August 9; December 31	John 13:31	September 26
John 6:13	August 27	John 14	January 3
John 6:14	May 30	John 14:1	November 24
John 6:32-35	April 5	John 14:6	March 20; April 13;
John 6:41	March 18		September 6
John 6:45	July 24	John 14:17	March 30
00111 0110	March 20	John 15:1	maron oo

John 15:1.4 November 27 Romans 5:6. 9 August 8 John 15:3 May 8 Romans 5:10 September 18; John 15:13-15 June 28 December 6 John 15.16 May 26 Romans 5:14 January 8 John 16:7-10 November 8 Romans 5:14, 17 January 25 John 16:13 March 30 Romans 5:17 January 8, 11; March 8 John 16.13-14 November 1 Romans 5.20 June 5 John 17:6 July 17 Romans 8:3 June 6; October 31 Romans 8:3-4 John 17:11 September 27 June 5 John 17:19 June 26: November 8 Romans 8:11 November 9 John 18.1 Julv 7 Romans 8:20 September 8 John 18:33-34 June 24 Romans 8:20-21 January 31 John 19:1-3 January 21 Romans 8:20-22 January 20 Romans 8:28 John 19:17 February 23 March 14 John 19:28-29 August 15 Romans 8:29 January 5; March 22 John 19:30 May 1: November 2 Romans 8:31, 33-34 December 25 March 25 Romans 8:32 John 19:33 February 18; John 19:33-34, 36-37 December 18 November 1 John 19:40 May 14 Romans 8:34 April 21 Romans 8:37 John 20:26-27 September 28 June 27 John 20:28 April 13 Romans 8:38-39 August 2 John 20:31 December 5 Romans 9:25 November 25 Acts 1:8 January 3 Romans 9:33 September 23 Romans 10:4 Acts 2:4 February 3 October 31 Acts 2:5, 37-38, 41 May 17 Romans 11:5-6 July 17 Romans 11:11 March 8 Acts 2:16 December 1 Acts 2:17-21.36 November 30 Romans 11:26 March 8 Acts 2:23 August 1 Romans 12:1 May 2 Acts 2:23-24 October 10 Romans 15:4 December 29 Acts 2:27 March 28 Romans 15:8 May 23 Acts 2:29-31 August 9 Romans 16:20 January 16 Acts 2:32-33, 36 August 6 1 Corinthians 1:8 December 30 Acts 3:22, 24 May 30 1 Corinthians 1:24-25 February 16 Acts 3:25-26 February 5 1 Corinthians 1:30 July 9; September 7 Acts 4:12 March 7; November 30 1 Corinthians 2:2, 7 March 14 Acts 4:24-28 August 5 1 Corinthians 3:11-14 September 8 Acts 7 October 23 1 Corinthians 5:7 March 25, 26 Acts 7:48-50 October 23 1 Corinthians 6:11 May 9 Acts 8:28. 32-33 October 15 1 Corinthians 10:1.4 April 6 Acts 10:36, 42-43 December 11 1 Corinthians 10:11-12 December 29 Acts 13:33 August 4 1 Corinthians 10:13 January 14 Acts 15:11 1 Corinthians 15:3 March 15 January 27 Acts 26:20 November 5 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23 May 16 Romans 1:18, 20 August 12 1 Corinthians 15:23, 42-44 August 20 Romans 2.29 1 Corinthians 15:42. 57 February 17 August 3 Romans 3:10 1 Corinthians 15:45 November 17 January 8 Romans 3:20 June 6 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 September 21 Romans 3:22 October 27 1 Corinthians 15:57 April 1; June 27 Romans 3:23 December 3 1 Corinthians 15:58 September 8 Romans 3:23-25 April 14 2 Corinthians 1:20 February 10; August 11 Romans 3:24-26 October 26: 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 April 26 December 12 2 Corinthians 3:13 April 27 Romans 3:25-26 February 21; May 3 2 Corinthians 3:14, 16-17 April 28 Romans 4:7-8 September 5 2 Corinthians 3:18 April 28; September 26 Romans 5:1-2 2 Corinthians 4:4 July 20 April 28

2 Corinthians 4:6 March 2; April 27 Philippians 3:5, 7-9 2 Corinthians 5:21 January 7; July 29 Philippians 3:8-9 2 Corinthians 8:9 October 17 2 Corinthians 12.9 June 17 2 Corinthians 13:4 February 16 Galatians 1:4 August 14 Galatians 3.8 14 February 6 Galatians 3:10-13 March 21 Galatians 3:13 January 21; May 28; June 2 Galatians 3:13-14 February 12 Galatians 3:16 February 7 Galatians 3:19 June 5 Galatians 3:24 October 31 Galatians 3:26 March 22 Galatians 3:28-29 November 25 Galatians 4:4 January 22; February 17 Galatians 4:5 February 13 Galatians 5:22 July 23 Galatians 5:22-23 November 27 Ephesians 1:3 February 14; March 2; May 23 Ephesians 1:4-5 January 1; May 26 Ephesians 1:5 November 17 Ephesians 1:9-13 June 3 Ephesians 1:11 January 19 Ephesians 1:22-23 August 27 Ephesians 1:23 January 12 Ephesians 2:4-5 November 4 Ephesians 2:6 January 19; July 14 Ephesians 2:7 January 19; July 5 Ephesians 2:8-10 January 27; December 8 Ephesians 2:10 January 5 Ephesians 2:13-14 May 5 Ephesians 2:19-20 July 3 Ephesians 4:10 August 27 Ephesians 5:2 May 2 Ephesians 5:25-27 September 11 Ephesians 5:30 January 19 Ephesians 5:31-32 January 12 Ephesians 6:24 September 10 Philippians 1:6 November 6: December 30 Philippians 1:21 September 8 June 25 Philippians 2:5-7 September 29 Philippians 2:6-7 Philippians 2:7 March 4; September 3 Philippians 2:7-8 May 21; October 4 Philippians 2:7-11 September 27 March 16, 18; Philippians 2:8 December 9 Philippians 2:9 March 4 Philippians 2:9-11 April 7 Philippians 2:16 December 30

Philippians 3:9 Philippians 3:12-14 Philippians 4:13 Philippians 4:19 Colossians 1:15 Colossians 1:15-16 Colossians 1:22 Colossians 1:27 Colossians 2:2 Colossians 2:3 Colossians 2:9 Colossians 2:14 Colossians 2:15 Colossians 3:3 Colossians 3:4 1 Thessalonians 1:10 1 Thessalonians 4:16 1 Thessalonians 5:2 1 Thessalonians 5:9 1 Thessalonians 5:24 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 1 Timothy 1:15 1 Timothy 2:5 2 Timothy 1:9 2 Timothy 2:13 2 Timothy 4:7 Titus 3:3-7 Titus 3:4-6 Hebrews 1:1 Hebrews 1:1-2 Hebrews 1:2 Hebrews 1:3 Hebrews 1:8-9 Hebrews 2:8-9 Hebrews 2:10 Hebrews 2:10-12 Hebrews 2:11 Hebrews 2:14 Hebrews 3:3 Hebrews 3:6 Hebrews 4:1 Hebrews 4:8-9 Hebrews 4:10 Hebrews 4:14-16 Hebrews 4:15 Hebrews 5:1 Hebrews 5:7-8 Hebrews 5:8

ݠݾݵݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݬݘݜݤݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤݵݜݬݤݜݤ

April 11 August 30; October 24 January 19; July 29 June 9 February 16 February 9 January 5; February 27 January 2 March 16 February 9; June 3 June 3 September 7 October 23 September 5 January 15 January 29 April 23; December 21 January 29; August 14, 28 March 18; May 18; August 3 December 30 August 26, 28 July 23 June 16 May 1 December 30 December 8 August 1 January 1 July 23 June 9 January 26 July 6 February 28 March 19 April 8 January 5; September 26 June 26 January 6 June 29 August 16 January 19 January 15 March 15 June 23 April 22 June 15 January 7 April 17 December 22 April 17 October 5 February 28

March 6

Hebrews 5:8-9

February 17

Philippians 3:3

Hebrews 5:9	April 29	1 Peter 1:11	January 22; September 12
Hebrews 5:10	February 8		November 22
Hebrews 6:17	February 18	1 Peter 1:12	November 22
Hebrews 6:18	January 29; June 14	1 Peter 1:18-19	August 17; November 23
Hebrews 6:18-20	February 25	1 Peter 1:19	March 25, 26
Hebrews 7:3	February 8	1 Peter 1:20	January 1
Hebrews 7:16	March 16	1 Peter 2:5	July 3; November 13
Hebrews 7:19	August 21	1 Peter 2:9-10	November 25
Hebrews 7:22	March 9	1 Peter 2:23	October 9
Hebrews 7:23-24	December 22	1 Peter 2:24	October 25
Hebrews 7:23-25	April 21	1 Peter 2:25	August 29
Hebrews 7:25	July 11	1 Peter 3:18	March 22; December 7
Hebrews 7:26	December 22	1 Peter 4:17	December 23
Hebrews 7:26, 28	May 13	1 Peter 5:4	March 11; August 29
Hebrews 9:12	December 22	2 Peter 1:4	January 19
Hebrews 9:13-14	May 6; July 22	2 Peter 1:20-21	September 12
Hebrews 9:22	January 13	2 Peter 3:9-10	June 13
Hebrews 9:24	June 11; December 22	1 John 1:1	July 1, 31
Hebrews 10:1	June 14	1 John 1:7	August 19
Hebrews 10:1-4, 22	December 19	1 John 3:2	January 5
Hebrews 10:1-4, 22	May 11	1 John 3:8	January 15
		1 John 4:9	February 22
Hebrews 10:10	May 3 April 12	1 John 4:15-16, 18-19	September 10
Hebrews 10:12	April 13 Santambar 1	Jude 1:5	April 30
Hebrews 10:12-13	September 1	Jude 1:24-25	March 15
Hebrews 10:17	June 14	Revelation 1:7	December 18
Hebrews 10:19-20	April 15	Revelation 1:12-13	November 18
Hebrews 10:22	April 18; August 19	Revelation 1:13-16	November 21
Hebrews 10:27	May 1	Revelation 1:16	April 27
Hebrews 11:4	February 10	Revelation 1:17-18	June 21
Hebrews 11:6	February 10	Revelation 1:18	August 2
Hebrews 11:7	January 28; February 10	Revelation 2:27	March 21
Hebrews 11:8	February 4	Revelation 3:17-18	January 13; October 19
Hebrews 11:9-10, 13, 16	February 14	Revelation 3:21	September 13
Hebrews 11:11-12	January 3	Revelation 4:2	July 2
Hebrews 11:13	January 22; February 10	Revelation 4:11	January 21
Hebrews 11:16	January 20; July 18	Revelation 5:5	March 12; July 2
Hebrews 11:19	February 19	Revelation 5:6	March 12
Hebrews 11:31	June 10	Revelation 5:6; 7:15-17	March 11
Hebrews 12:2	January 13; July 11;	Revelation 5:9	March 8, 25
	October 11	Revelation 5:12	October 24
Hebrews 12:15	December 29	Revelation 6:12, 15-17	April 9
Hebrews 12:18-19, 22, 24	April 8	Revelation 7:9	February 6
Hebrews 12:18, 22, 24	December 15	Revelation 7:9-10	February 3
Hebrews 12:23	February 27	Revelation 7:16-17	August 29
Hebrews 12:24	January 23	Revelation 13:8	February 24
Hebrews 12:25	April 8	Revelation 15:1	August 12
Hebrews 12:26	April 9	Revelation 16:5-6	December 4
Hebrews 13:5	August 13	Revelation 18:2	January 24
Hebrews 13:20	August 29	Revelation 18:21	February 2
Hebrews 13:20-21	March 11		
1 Peter 1:7	December 24	Revelation 19:3	January 24
1 Peter 1:10		Revelation 19:7, 17-18	November 11
I FELEI I.IU	September 22;	Revelation 19:11	July 23; December 16
	December 28	Revelation 19:13, 15	October 21

Revelation 19:16	June 24	Revelation 21:10, 27	June 30
Revelation 20:10	January 16	Revelation 21:18-19, 27	July 18
Revelation 20:11-12	November 17	Revelation 21:22	November 10;
Revelation 21	March 13		December 14
Revelation 21:1	January 20	Revelation 21:23	January 4; April 16;
Revelation 21:1, 5 Revelation 21:2	October 22	horoidaion 21.20	September 26
Reveration 21:2	January 24; March 1; September 11; October 4	Revelation 21:24	August 24
Revelation 21:2-3	October 20	Revelation 22:1-2	November 10
Revelation 21:2-3, 22	November 12		
Revelation 21:3	May 19; October 28	Revelation 22:2	January 18
Revelation 21:4	October 5	Revelation 22:3	January 21
Revelation 21:5	January 31	Revelation 22:16	May 24; September 19
Revelation 21:6	November 2	Revelation 22:17	October 13

. ݠݭݵݜݵݜݬݕݜݠݜݬݕݭݠݜݵݜݵݜݵݕݜݠݜݬݕݭݠݭݵݜݵݕݜݵݜݬݕݭݠݜݬݕݭݠݜݵݜݵݜݵݕݜݵݜݬݕݭݠݭݵݜݵݕݜݵݕݜݵݕݜݵݕݽݵݜݵݷݘݵݜݵݷݜݵ