

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Fourth Quarter 2024: *Themes in the Gospel of John*

### Lesson 8 “Fulfilling Old Testament Prophecies”

#### Read for this week’s study

John 5:17, 20, 36–40, 46, 47; John 13:18; John 17:12; Jeremiah 2:13; Zechariah 9:9; John 8:12–30.

#### Memory Text

“ ‘But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me’ ” (John 5:36, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Signs, Works, and Wonders
- III. The Authoritative Role of Scripture
- IV. Old Testament Prophecies About Jesus: Part I
- V. Old Testament Prophecies About Jesus: Part II
- VI. From Beneath
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week we will look at more ways John revealed Jesus as the Messiah, and also, we will look at why some people still continued to reject Him—despite all the powerful reasons affirming Him as the Christ.” (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. What is the significance of “signs, works, and wonders” in the first half of the book? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. In his introduction, John presents Jesus as one from above, as the Word who was with God and was God (1:1-18). At the same time, Jesus comes below, as Word made flesh who “tabernacled” among us. Then John gives seven designations for Jesus that indicated Israel’s expectation of deliverance (1:20-51). These are connected with seven miracle-signs in chs. 2-10 that both confirm and explain Jesus’ titles. God sends Jesus into the world to accomplish this crucial work (17:4; 5:36).
4. The basic pattern in the stories in chs. 2-12 is that Jesus performs a sign or makes a claim and people misunderstand it or get angry at Jesus. God is glorified by Jesus doing the work that signifies the intimacy of God and the Word (1:1-2), Father and

Son (1:18). These miracles are signs of the believer's transformation from mortal to child of God (1:12). Performing and explaining these miracle-signs is the "work" that God sent Jesus to do. That's why the Word became flesh.

5. What does the text 5:39-47 tell us about how the Scripture functioned in second temple Judaism? What is its real purpose, according to Jesus? (Monday's lesson) Jesus' charge against his contemporaries is that they have been looking at the right book but reading it the wrong way. In what sense can that apply to us as well?
6. Tuesday's and Wednesday's lessons give eight examples of Old Testament "prophecies" which were fulfilled in the life of Jesus. Just as life is understood backwards, but lived forward, only after these things happened was it possible to make the connection between the "prophecy" (e.g. Numbers 9:12; Zechariah 12:10; 13:1, 6) and the "fulfilment".
7. Read John 8:12-30. What is the dynamic between Jesus and these religious leaders? Who is on trial here? Jesus and his Father are giving the evidence that he is the Messiah, thus bringing the light that people and their leaders reject. Israel, which was supposed to be the light of the world (Isaiah 60:1-2), is providing only darkness. It is easy to forget just how deep the darkness goes within each of us!
8. When Jesus warns his contemporaries that they "will die in their sins", he has in mind the destruction of Jerusalem, not only annihilation at the end of ages (cf. 11:48-50). Jesus recognizes that people aren't going to respond to him positively. In spite of the fact that they were God's people, the God of whom Jesus spoke didn't seem to be the same, didn't fit with the God they thought they knew.
9. Jesus is undeterred by the opposition and the death threats. His resolve was strengthened to complete the work that God gave him to do. The final two miracle-signs which confirm and enhance his claim to be God, only serve to increase the fury of his opponents.
10. How can we be open-minded and sensitive to what God is trying to teach each of us? Where is my life heading at the moment? Where is your country heading at the moment? What difference should believing in God, his character and values make in someone's life? To what extent are we tempted to use our religion to validate our biases? How can we avoid doing that and become a blessing to people and the community around us?

## Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Lou: That ties in; talking about the Bible and trusting the Bible. What do you say to a person who says “Look, I just want to take the Bible as it reads! And when I read in the Bible that (as for example in Romans 11:33 in that doxology that Paul concludes there with) ‘God’s ways are inscrutable. How can anyone know the mind of God?’ Now, if I just accept the Bible, why can’t I just accept that statement and say, ‘why have conversations about God? How can we even know God? I’ll just believe the Bible.’”

Graham: Depending on the person who is saying this, one might reply differently, but let’s assume this is a very devout person. He really does accept the Scriptures. I would want to make the most of that. I would want to say, “Well, what about these other places in the Bible? Do you accept those too? Or do you just accept this one?”

Lou: What other places?

Graham: Like places in Romans chapter one that say God can be known. In fact, this individual is accepting one verse in Romans and skipping another one. If that doesn’t work, then I might turn to a place that says, “Give wine to the poor, that they may forget their misery,” and verses like that, until maybe he is shocked into realizing you can’t take “here a little and there a little.”

When you say you accept the Bible, you accept it all the way through. And probably that’s what he meant when he said, “I accept God’s word. If it says it, I believe it, and that’s all there is to it.” Then I would want to point to these other verses that say that God can be known. And if He can’t be known, why all this content of Scripture? Why did Christ come to make His Father known? So this use of one little verse can lead us down all kinds of pathways I’m sure he wouldn’t want to go.

Lou: So you are saying that the basic attitude of “I want to accept the Bible as it reads,” is a good attitude provided it takes the Bible as a whole, all sixty-six books, the total message of Scripture.

Graham: Right. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #3 with Lou Venden, “All God Asks Is Trust” recorded January 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/3MMCAG>

But the most impressive illustration of how God seeks to convince us, not on authority and power, but on the basis of truth, was provided by Jesus Himself on the road to Emmaus. And that’s described in Luke 24, on the Bible Reference Sheet. I wish we could read the whole story:

But while they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him [they didn’t know Christ was walking with them]. And he said to them, “What is this conversation which you are

holding” [You see, they were having a conversation about God (as we are) on the road to Emmaus.]? And they stood still, looking sad. . . . And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. . . . Later, when he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him. (RSV)

Why did He not reveal who He was at the beginning, and say, “What are your questions? You know that I will give you authoritative answers, and I will expect you to believe them.” He did not reveal who He was until He had led them to an intelligent confidence based on the unquestionable evidence of Scripture. Then He revealed who He was. If the Infinite One will do that, how dare we presume to take any shortcuts? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #4, “God’s Way of Restoring Trust” recorded February 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/4MMCAG>*

### **Recommended Listening:**

**For additional study for Tuesday’s and Wednesday’s lessons, see the series “Jesus in the Old Testament” moderated by Jon Paulien**

[https://legacy.pineknoll.org/audio-resources?media\\_group=JJOT&show\\_dropdown=0](https://legacy.pineknoll.org/audio-resources?media_group=JJOT&show_dropdown=0)

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

The Bible was not written for the scholar alone; on the contrary, it was designed for the common people. The great truths necessary for salvation are made as clear as noonday; and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God. {SC 89.2}

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God’s original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found. {Ed 190.2}

All whom God has blessed with reasoning powers are to become intellectual Christians. They are not requested to believe without evidence; therefore Jesus has enjoined upon all to search the Scriptures. Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, exert his mental powers to search out the truth as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the peril of the soul. We must know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. . . . We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment. . . . We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. . . . The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures. {RH, March 8, 1887 par. 1}

It is the voice of Christ that speaks through patriarchs and prophets, from the days of Adam even to the closing scenes of time. The Saviour is revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New. It is the light from the prophetic past that brings out the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament with clearness and beauty. The miracles of Christ are a proof of His divinity; but a stronger proof that He is the world's Redeemer is found in comparing the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New. {DA 799.2}

Here is a test which all may apply if they will. None need be left in uncertainty and doubt. There is always sufficient evidence upon which to base an intelligent faith. But God will never remove from any man all occasion for doubts. Those who love to dwell in the atmosphere of doubt and questioning unbelief can have the unenviable privilege. He who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things that he cannot make plain to his finite understanding, will be left to the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and skepticism, and will make shipwreck of faith. {ST, December 30, 1886 par. 6}

Faith in a lie will not have a sanctifying influence upon the life or character. No error is truth, or can be made truth by repetition, or by faith in it. Sincerity will never save a soul from the consequences of believing an error. Without sincerity there is no true religion, but sincerity in a false religion will never save a man. I may be perfectly sincere in following a wrong road, but that will not make it the right road, or bring me to the place I wished to reach. The Lord does not want us to have a blind credulity, and call that the faith that sanctifies. The truth is the principle that sanctifies, and therefore it becomes us to know what is truth. We must compare spiritual things with spiritual. We must prove all things, but hold fast only that which is good, that which bears the divine credentials, which lays before us the true motives and principles which should prompt us to action.—Letter 12, 1890. {2SM 56.1}

We must study the truth for ourselves. No man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who he is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject one to another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us, in order to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individually develop a character that will stand

the test in the day of God. We must not become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions. {TM 109.4}

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions. {Ed 17.2}

All whom God has blessed with reasoning powers are to become intellectual Christians. They are not requested to believe without evidence; therefore Jesus has enjoined upon all to search the Scriptures. Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, exert his mental powers to search out the truth as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the peril of the soul. We must know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. . . . We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment. . . . We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. . . . The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures. {RH, March 8, 1887 par. 1}

But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men and accept the decisions they make; and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them. {TM 106.4}

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty it is left with us to decide our course. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4}