

OPENING THE LIFE GATE

LESSON #14



CHRONICLES OF
REDEMPTION

Opening the Life Gate

Excerpts from the Gospels

INTRODUCTION

As the previous two lessons highlighted the works and words of Jesus Christ, the promised Redeemer of mankind, this lesson will trace His steps during His final week of ministry. We will harmonize events from each of the four gospels in order to present a seamless and sequential account.

Every aspect of His dynamic three-year ministry moved Jesus closer to the hour for which He had been born. Each display of miraculous power, each revelation of deity, each act of loving grace drew Him toward His greatest work and mission – the purchase of world redemption.

Jesus' fame reached its zenith at the resurrection of Lazarus at Bethany. Never before had a person, already dead four days, been raised back to life. Many Jews who witnessed this miracle were moved to faith, and as the devotion of His followers grew, so did the hatred of the Jewish leaders who feared that in all the fervor over Jesus they would lose control and that Rome would intervene and destroy the nation. The Bible gives us a behind-the-scenes look at the intentions of the enemies of Christ directly after the great miracle in Bethany.



John 11:47-48

"...The chief priests and the Pharisees convened a counsel, and were saying, 'What are we doing? For this Man is performing many signs. If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation...' So from that day on they planned to kill Him."

1

Presentation of the King



HIS TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Jerusalem was swelling with thousands of pilgrims from all over Israel who had come to celebrate _____–the annual memorial reminding Israel of their past bondage in Egypt and the miraculous redemption of their firstborn children who were saved when the destroying angel “passed over” each house marked by the blood of a sacrificial lamb. When word got out that Jesus was coming to the city, large crowds gathered to meet Him.



John 12:12-19

“...The great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.’ And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, ‘... Behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.’ ... And so the multitude who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, were bearing Him witness. For this cause also the multitude went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign. The Pharisees therefore said to one another, ‘... Look, the world has gone after Him.’”

- **“Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord” (12:13).**

This *great multitude*, many of whom were present when Lazarus was raised from the dead six weeks earlier, met Jesus shouting ‘*Hosanna!*’ meaning *save now*. Quoting from Psalm 118, these Jews clearly believed Jesus to be the long-awaited Descendant of David Who had come to establish His _____–the kingdom of peace, joy, righteousness, and justice, the kingdom which would end all sorrow, waiting, and most importantly, the long years of Gentile domination (cf. Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1-9; 25:8-9; 61:7).

- **“Behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt” (12:15).**

Christ entering Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt fulfilled an Old Testament _____ and sent a clear message that He was indeed their King (cf. Zech 9:9). The ecstatic outburst of worship from the crowd infuriated the Pharisees and further fueled their desire to kill Him.

2 Sacrifice of the Lamb

† HIS PREDICTION OF DEATH

The crowds expected Jesus to assume the throne of Israel. But rather than taking His place as King, in a startling turn of events, Jesus told His followers that He would soon be _____.



Matthew 26:1-2

"...[Jesus] said to His disciples, 'You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be delivered up for crucifixion.'"

Jesus knew that the events which were about to unfold—including the manner in which He would die—were the culmination of God's eternal plan to _____ mankind. Along with predictions of death, Jesus also declared that He would rise again after three days (cf. Matt. 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22).



Matthew 26:3-4; 14-16

"Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth, and kill Him."

"Then one of the twelve named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, and said, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him up to you?' And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Him."

While Jewish leaders plotted Christ's destruction, Judas became the tool, willingly betraying Him for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a common _____.

- **“My body... My blood...”**

Jesus used the bread and wine to illustrate what would soon transpire. The bread referred to His body, soon to be broken in the crucifixion. The cup symbolized His blood, soon to be poured out for _____ of sins. Jesus referred to His blood as being that which would usher in the New Covenant prophesied by Jeremiah.



Jeremiah 31:31, 34

“Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”



HIS BETRAYAL AND ARREST



Matthew 26:36-46

“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, ‘Sit here while I go over and pray.’ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. Then He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.’ And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt.’ And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, ‘So you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour?...’ He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Thy will be done.’ And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. And He left them again, went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. Then He came to the disciples and said to them, ‘Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!’”

- **“Thy will be done”**

Knowing fully the suffering He was about to endure, Jesus remained steadfast and _____ to His Father’s will. His disciples, on the other hand, display a vivid picture of human weakness, being unable to stay awake even at this most critical hour.



John 18:2-6

"Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place; for Jesus had often met there with His disciples. Judas then, having received the Roman cohort, and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth, and said to them, 'Whom do you seek?' They answered Him, 'Jesus the Nazarene.' He said to them, 'I am He.' And Judas also who was betraying Him, was standing with them. When therefore He said to them, 'I am He,' they drew back, and fell to the ground."

• "I AM"

Jesus identified Himself with the powerful name *I AM*, echoing the very name _____ used to declare Himself as the eternal, self-existent God (cf. Ex. 3:13-15). The sheer power of hearing the name brought the Roman soldiers and Jewish officers to their knees. That they stood back up to proceed with the arrest is the height of foolishness and pride.



Matthew 26:51-56

"And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place. ... Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen this way?' At that time Jesus said to the multitudes, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as against a robber? Everyday I used to sit in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples left Him and fled."

• "...It must happen this way..."

These events were no surprise to Jesus. His mission was at hand. Everything ordained by God and foretold by the prophets was now playing out _____ as God had planned (cf. Psa. 41:9; Acts 4:27-28).



John 18:12-13

"So the Roman cohort and the commander, and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him, and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year."

HIS TRIAL

Jesus was tried by both Jewish religious leaders and Roman civil authorities. Because the Romans reserved the right to exact the _____ penalty, the Jews had to find some way to convince the Romans that Jesus should die.

1 Before Annas



John 18:13, 19-24

"...[Annas] therefore questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. Jesus answered him, 'I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret. Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, these know what I said.' And when He had said this, one of the officers standing by gave Jesus a blow, saying, 'Is this the way You answer the high priest?' Jesus answered him, 'If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?' Annas therefore sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest."

2 Before Caiaphas



Matthew 26:57, 59-67

"And those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and elders were gathered together... Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, in order that they might put Him to death; and they did not find any even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, and said, 'This man stated, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days."' And the high priest stood up and said to Him, 'Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?' But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, 'I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.' Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, 'He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?' They answered and said, 'He is deserving of death!' Then they spat in His face and beat Him..."



John 18:28-38

"They led Jesus therefore from Caiaphas into the Praetorium [Roman judgment hall], and it was early. . . . Pilate therefore went out to them, and said, 'What accusation do you bring against this Man?' They answered and said to him, 'If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.' Pilate therefore said to them, 'Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.' The Jews said to him, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.' . . . Pilate therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, 'Are You the King of the Jews?' . . . Jesus answered, 'You say correctly that I am King. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.' Pilate said to Him, 'What is truth?' And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, 'I find no guilt in Him.'"

4 Before Herod, provincial governor of Galilee

Jewish leaders continued to argue and pressure Pilate (cf. Lk. 23:5). When he learned that the case fell under Herod's jurisdiction, Pilate attempted to pass off the whole affair to him. Standing before Herod, the man who had put _____ to death, Christ refused to defend Himself and remained silent.



Luke 23:6-11

"...[Pilate] sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at the time. Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently. And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate."

5 Before Pilate, the second and final time



Matthew 27:15-26

"Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the multitude any one prisoner whom they wanted. And they were holding at that time a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. When therefore they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas, or Jesus, Who is called Christ?' For he knew that because of envy they had delivered Him up. . . ."



Matthew 27:15-26 (cont.)

And while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, 'Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him.' But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes to ask for Barabbas, and to put Jesus to death. But the governor answered and said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Let Him be crucified!' And he said, 'Why? What evil has He done?' But they kept shouting all the more, saying, 'Let Him be crucified!'" And when Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves.' And all the people answered and said, 'His blood be on us and our children!' Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he delivered Him to be crucified."

Although Pilate declared Jesus to be guiltless time and time again (cf. Matt. 27:24; Mk. 15:14; Lk. 23:4, 13-15, 22; Jn. 18:38; 19:4, 6), he finally caved in to the persistent badgering of the Jews and gave Him over to be crucified. So reads the sacred text, unveiling for all generations this ludicrous farce of a trial where the Jews chose to release a known murderer, a _____ of life, and kill their Messiah, the _____ and _____ of life, accepting full responsibility for His blood.



HIS HUMILIATION



Matthew 27:27-30

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. And they stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe on Him. And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' And they spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head."

HIS CRUCIFIXION



Matthew 27:31, 33-34

"And after they had mocked Him, they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.... And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, they gave Him wine to drink mingled with gall; and after tasting it, He was unwilling to drink."

Crucifixion was the most barbaric form of criminal execution used by Rome. Nailed at the wrist and instep to a cross and hung to die, the accused suffered prolonged and unbearable pain – often for days, until finally expiring by _____.



Luke 23:33-43

"...There they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves. Now there was also an inscription above Him, 'THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.' And the people stood by looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, 'He has saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One.' And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, and saying, 'If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!' And one of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, 'Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!' But the other answered, and rebuking him said, 'Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.' And he was saying, 'Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!' And He said to him, 'Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.'"

HIS DEATH



Matthew 27:45-46

"Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'"

The full penalty for sin was paid by Jesus Christ. What man could not do for himself, God did for him through His chosen _____. There is nothing more to be done for the forgiveness of sins, but to turn from trusting in one's self, one's works, or anything else, and to rely fully on this completed work of Jesus Christ.

In an act of sovereign finality Jesus "gave up His spirit." The notion that Jesus was a victim of human wickedness does not come from the Bible. Even though His enemies planned and carried out His execution, no man took the life of Jesus. Rather, the Son of Man _____ offered up His perfect life as ransom for sinful man.

In addition to the supernatural darkness that hung heavily over the land, other signs accompanied the death of Jesus.



Matthew 27:51-54

"And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split.... Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, 'Truly this was the Son of God!'"



Luke 23:48

"And all the multitudes who came together for this spectacle, when they observed what had happened, began to return, beating their breasts."

The sky, which darkened for three hours after noon, lifted at the consummation of Christ's suffering. The temple veil, a heavy curtain described in Jewish literature as being as thick as man's hand and which closed off the Holy of Holies, was _____ in two. Moreover, a supernaturally imposed earthquake, powerful enough to split rocks, shook the earth like a divine exclamation mark and drove a Roman officer who witnessed these things to confess Christ's true identity as the Son of God.

3 Exaltation of the Lord

† HIS RESURRECTION



Matthew 28:1-10

"Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. And his appearance was like lightning, and his garment as white as snow; and the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. And the angel answered and said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus Who has been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they shall see Me.'"



Matthew 28:11-15

"Now while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. And when they had assembled with the elders and counseled together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, and said, 'You are to say, "His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep." And if this should come to the governor's ear, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble.' And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews, and is to this day."



John 20:19-20

"When therefore it was evening, on the day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side...."

The importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be overestimated. The founder of every other world religion has died and remained in the grave. Not so Jesus! His tomb is empty. Each time Jesus spoke of His death to His followers He stated that He would also _____ from the dead (cf. Matt. 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:19; Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ...

- Declares that Jesus was the _____ (cf. Rom. 1:4).
- Affirms the Father's acceptance of the Son's sacrificial payment for sin (cf. 1 Cor. 15:17).
- Secures the believer's right _____ with God (cf. Rom. 4:24).
- Justifies sinners before God (cf. Rom. 4:25).
- Gives assurance for victory over _____ to all who believe (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20-22).

HIS ASCENSION

For _____ days after His resurrection, Jesus appeared several times to His followers, once to a gathering of over 500 people. These multiple eyewitness testimonies affirm the reality of the resurrection (cf. Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:5-8). With Christ again in their presence, His disciples hoped that the time had finally come for Jesus to establish His earthly kingdom and asked,



Acts 1:7-8

"Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority...[but] you shall be My witnesses...even to the remotest part of the earth.'"

Although the precise time remains unknown, Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, will one day return to establish His kingdom on earth (cf. Mark 13:24-27, 32). Meanwhile, His followers are to be witnesses, proclaiming the Gospel—the good news of His death, burial, and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins—to all the earth (cf. Luke 24:47).



Acts 1:9-11

"And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, Who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'"



Luke 24:52-53

"And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising God."

CONCLUSION

The work of redemption, conceived in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, began in the garden with the sin of Adam and Eve. Their disobedience brought separation and death into the world. But God promised to send a Redeemer to rescue man from sin and Satan, and thus began the drama of redemption on earth. This Redeemer, spoken of by prophets and foreshadowed in the sacrifices, paid sin's debt and opened the life gate for all who believe.

*"Hear the story from God's Word that kings and priests and prophets heard;
There would be a sacrifice and blood would flow to pay sin's price...*

*On the cross God loved the world while all the powers of hell were hurled;
No one there could understand the One they saw was Christ the Lamb.*

*Precious Lamb of glory, love's most wondrous story.
Heart of God's redemption of man; worship the Lamb of Glory."
(Nelson/McHugh)*



Questions

1. What was the significance of Jesus entering Jerusalem seated on a donkey's colt?

2. What were the Jews expecting their Messiah to do?

3. Why was Jesus hated by the Jewish leaders?

4. At His last supper with the disciples, what did Christ illustrate with the bread and wine?

5. Why was the hurried trial of Jesus illegal?

6. For what crime did the Jews condemn Him?

7. Why did Jesus cry out on the cross that God had forsaken Him?

8. How did Jesus intercede for sinners?

9. What did Jesus "*finish*" on the cross?



Questions

10. How did the Jews secure the tomb of Jesus?

11. Why is the resurrection of Christ important?

12. Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, what work did He give His followers to do?

13. What is the future hope of Israel?

14. How did Christ *open the life gate* for man?
