

From the Beginning

John I John

Part II

Through Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
“Salvation Is of the Jews”

(Part I of this four-part article dealt mainly with the proper use of three words — *aion*, *aionios*, and *kosmos* — in John’s gospel, his first epistle, and Revelation. And it should go without saying that the usage of these three words would be *EXACTLY the SAME* any other place in the N.T. where they are found.

The second part to this article is comprised of foundational material, necessary to properly understand [along with understanding how *aion*, *aionios*, and *kosmos* are used in the N.T.] what is then developed from parts of John’s gospel [dealt with in Part III] and his first epistle [dealt with in Part IV].

As well, this second part contains introductory material for Parts III, IV.)

The foundations have *ALL* previously been laid in Moses, particularly in Genesis; and *EVERYTHING* beyond the foundations rests on previously laid foundational material.

An individual *MUST* understand the previously laid foundational material in order to properly understand subsequent superstructure material. Proper building will result in correct interpretation. *BUT*, improper building—ignoring the foundation and beginning with the superstructure — *can ONLY result in...*

In the Tents of Shem, Abraham

“And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem...

God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem...” (Gen. 9:26a, 27a).

“Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3).

“Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22).

God has always carried out His plans and purposes *ONE unchanging way* — through *individuals* in the lineage from Adam through Seth, Shem, and Abraham to Moses (twenty-six generations), then through *a nation* brought into existence during Moses' day (thirty-six more generations to Christ).

Then, even during the ensuing time, during the present dispensation — with Israel set aside and God dealing with *the one new man* “in Christ” — *matters have NOT changed in the preceding respect.*

The one new man *uses a Jewish book, has a Jewish Saviour, has a positional standing “in Christ” (resulting in the individual being seen as “Abraham’s seed”), and has been grafted into a Jewish trunk* (Rom. 11:1-29; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26-29).

And God HAS carried and WILL ALWAYS carry matters out in this respect (through individuals in ONE lineage, resulting in a nation and Saviour/Messiah from this lineage) for ONE unchanging, central purpose — the government of the earth, ultimately effecting a cosmos out of what had become a chaos.

A far-reaching purpose had to do with *the new heavens, the new earth, and evidently God's government of the universe. BUT*, this is only briefly dealt with in Scripture, mainly in Rev. 21, 22.

Insofar as Christians occupying positions with Christ in a future kingdom, Scripture confines itself *to the present proffered kingdom, to be realized during the existence of the present heavens and earth.*

With God working out matters toward the preceding end — *having to do with regality in connection with the present heavens and earth* — Shem is seen in Genesis chapter nine (sixteen and one-half centuries beyond the creation of Adam) *as the ONLY one of Noah's three sons having a God.* And, in this respect, *IF the other two sons (Ham and Japheth) were to receive spiritual blessings, they could receive these blessings ONLY one way.*

In the words of Scripture, they could receive spiritual blessings *ONLY through dwelling "in the tents of Shem."* That is, they could receive these blessings *ONLY through an affiliation with the ONE son possessing a God, wherein these blessings lay* (Gen. 9:25-27).

AS WELL, this *SAME* thing would have been true in the loins of Shem going back eleven generations to Adam, or forward nine generations in Shem's lineage to Abraham (2,000 years from Adam to Abraham).

THEN, the *SAME* promises are made to Abraham, with the offspring from his lineage — four hundred thirty years, six generations later, during Moses' day — *forming a nation through which THESE promises would be fulfilled, with the Saviour appearing following another thirty-six generations* (Matt. 1:17; Gal. 3:16-18).

Throughout the first 4,000 years of human history, from Adam to Christ, *God worked out His plans and purposes THROUGH particular individuals in ONE continuous lineage, later forming a nation, from which the Messiah ultimately came.*

And things have NOT changed during the 2,000 years since Messiah's appearance.

Spiritual blessings can be derived today *ONLY* through the *SAME MEANS* originally seen in Genesis chapter nine — dwelling “in the tents of Shem” — taking you back to Seth, then Adam (the first man, the first Adam), and forward to the nation of Israel and Christ (the second Man, the last Adam).

NOR will things relative to Israel and the nations *EVER* change in this respect.

Note in Zech. 8:23 the position which Israel will occupy during the future Millennium, following their conversion and restoration:

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations [‘ten,’ a number showing *completion*, referring to individuals from *ALL* the nations (‘*ALL* languages of the nations’)], even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”

And ALL of this MUST be kept in mind when interpreting Scripture. The *WAY* which God works out His plans and purposes, in the preceding respect, *permeates ALL Scripture.*

And *IF* God's ways and purposes are *NOT* followed, which they all too often are *NOT*, this can *ONLY* result in havoc in Biblical interpretation.

Foundational, Then Building on the Foundation

But the preceding is only foundational; it is where one begins. There are numerous things built on the foundation *which MUST be understood as well.*

To illustrate and deal with things in this respect, note two parallel passages in the opening three chapters of John's

Gospel — being brought forth from above, followed by references to Christ as the Lamb of God in chapter one; and being brought forth from above, followed by a reference to Christ's crucifixion (which would be as both the Son of Man and the Lamb of God) in chapter three.

There are several things invariably done with both of these passages which, from a Scriptural standpoint, *CANNOT be done with either passage.*

Both passages are invariably dealt with *in relation to the unsaved, worldwide.*

BUT, Scripture would clearly reveal that the unsaved and salvation by grace is NOT the subject matter in EITHER passage.

NOR can EITHER passage have ANYTHING to do with individuals worldwide.

As well, in the second part of the passage in chapter three, "everlasting" appearing in the English text, *CANNOT be the correct translation either.*

And *ALL* of the preceding can easily be shown (dealt with in Part III of this article).

Note Isa. 8:20 in the preceding respect:

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them [*lit.*, '...there is no dawn to them']."

IF the passages in John 1, 3, or elsewhere in Scripture, are dealt with in a manner, "not according to this word," *WHERE, according to THIS verse, does THAT leave the interpreter?*

Passages do have primary and secondary interpretations. *BUT*, when an interpreter takes a secondary interpretation and makes it to be the primary, which *can ONLY* do away with the primary, *WHERE, in the light of THIS verse from Isaiah, would THAT leave the interpreter?*

Any answer to the latter question will be left to the reader.

Parallel Sections

In John's gospel, as in the three synoptic gospels, the Jews during the offer of the kingdom were being dealt with in the historical data.

But John, unlike the writers of the synoptics, stated that he had recorded the data — with a specific reference to the “signs” — *as a continuing effort to effect belief among the Jewish people, which would have been during the re-offer of the kingdom* (during about twenty-nine continuing years, covered by the Book of Acts, from 33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.).

And the referenced signs had to do with eight specific signs which the Spirit had led John to record in his gospel, with three of these signs found in the synoptics as well.

Note *HOW* John clearly stated the preceding in a purpose statement toward the end of his gospel:

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But *THESE* [the eight preceding signs] are written, that *YE* [the Jewish people] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing *YE* might have life [life in the proffered kingdom] through his name” (20:30, 31).

(Note that these two verses would show an early date for the writing of John's gospel [before about 62 A.D. (evidently well before this date)] rather than the oft accepted late date [90-95 A.D.].

And late scholarship by men who study these things would favor an earlier date, possibly as early as 40 A.D.

As well, a purpose statement seen near the end of John's first epistle is *NOT ONLY* very similar to the one seen near the end of his gospel *BUT* given for *EXACTLY* the *SAME* purpose, though relative to Christians instead of Jews and apart from “signs” [ref. Part IV of this article].)

A manifestation of supernatural signs, by an individual, is first seen in Scripture during Moses' day in Ex. 4:1-31. And these signs had to do with *effecting belief among the Jewish people relative to God delivering them from Egypt and ultimately establishing them in the land previously covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in a theocracy* (Ex. 3:1-10; 12:1ff).

Thus, "signs," as originally and unchangeably established, had to do with *a deliverance of the Jewish people relative to the kingdom*.

And any manifestation of "signs" beyond Moses' day (only two times — during Elijah and Elisha's day, and over eight centuries later during the time of the gospels and Acts) *could ONLY have had to do with EXACTLY the SAME thing seen at the time they were previously introduced in Ex. 4*.

THIS is *WHY* "signs" are seen throughout the gospels during the offer of the kingdom to Israel and throughout Acts during the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel.

And God *NOT ONLY* used John's gospel to introduce the three synoptics and Acts *BUT* it appears evident that He also used John's gospel — with its purpose statement regarding "signs" — to set the stage for the appearance of the vast number of signs seen and referenced throughout the synoptics and Acts.

With the initial information regarding these signs given during Moses' day, the continued information provided during Elijah's day, and John's statement relative to the reason for the signs recorded in his gospel (completely in line with that seen in the O.T.), *the stage would be SET for a proper understanding of signs throughout the synoptics and Acts*.

(For additional information concerning "signs" in Scripture, beginning with Moses, refer to the author's article, "Signs, Wonders, Miracles.")

As stated in John 20:31, supernatural signs were being

manifested to effect belief among the Jewish people that Jesus was EXACTLY Who He claimed to be — God's Christ, God's Son, the One Who would take the proffered kingdom and rule and reign in the stead of the present "Christ," the present "son," Satan.

That's what "Christ" ("Messiah") and "Son" in the verse, textually and contextually, have to do with. *And regality in connection with the proffered kingdom is the ONLY thing which could possibly be in view, for THAT, as well, is correspondingly WHAT the "signs" have to do with.*

"Sonship" implies rulership, and ONLY Sons can rule in God's kingdom — past, present, or future.

In a corresponding respect, the "signs" portended that Satan, the present "Messiah" and "son" (Ezek. 28:14; Job 1:6-2:2), was about to be replaced by Jesus, God's "Messiah" and "Son" (Matt. 16:16, 17; John 11:25-27). And those ruling with Satan (other "sons") were about to be replaced by Christ's co-heirs (a new order of "sons" [Rom. 8:14-19; Heb. 2:5]).

Then, "LIFE" in this verse had to do with deliverance/salvation to be realized in the kingdom through BELIEF "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

And the supernatural signs were being manifested in connection with the message concerning the kingdom to effect BELIEF among the Jewish people concerning Christ's true identity, along with showing them what they could have through belief.

(On the latter, each sign was designed to set forth a message for the Jewish people regarding the Messenger and His message.

For example, the supernatural healing of an individual on the Sabbath pointed to the supernatural healing of the nation ON the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period.

A supernatural provision for individuals pointed to a supernatural provision for the nation, which would be ON the SAME seventh day, for EVERYTHING, after some fashion, moved toward and had to do with THIS day.

And so it was with ANY of the signs. ALL had to do with specific, designed events; and ALL pointed to different facets of the SAME thing — that which the Jewish people could realize in the proffered kingdom on the seventh day, the seventh and last 1,000-year period having to do with the present heavens and earth.

BUT, for that which the signs dealt with to occur, national belief, which would be accompanied by national repentance, had to occur first.)

Now, with the foundational material from this and the preceding part to this article in mind, along with the introductory material to John's gospel on the latter pages of this part, we're ready to look at some things in John's gospel (Part III), then John's first epistle (Part IV).

(In relation to that previously dealt with in this second part of the article, along with that stated in Matt. 10:5, 6; 15:22-24, note Jesus' dealings with the Samaritans in John 4:3-43 — "...he must needs go through Samaria" [v. 4], rather than travel on the east side of the Jordan — as He and His disciples journeyed from Judaea to Galilee.

In the light of the way God deals with Israel and the nations, Jesus, in John chapter four, *could NOT* have carried the same message to the Samaritans that was being carried to Israel [which He made quite clear to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (vv. 21, 22)].

The Samaritans were *NOT* to be brought into a place where the message regarding the kingdom could be proclaimed to and received by them *UNTIL following Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension*. They were to be brought into this place in conjunction with the Gentile nations, the bringing into existence of the Church, the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, and all that is involved therein [Acts 1:8; 2:1ff].

NOR does John chapter four, from that seen in the overall text, involve a message pertaining to salvation by grace.

Jesus' message to the Jewish people at this time had to do with the kingdom, attended by signs. And His message to the Samaritans had to do with the same kingdom as well, though *NOT* in the same respect that it was being proclaimed to Israel [offered to Israel].

As well, the message in Samaria [at this time] *could NOT* be attended by signs.

The preceding is evident from similarities seen in the two messages.

Jesus is seen by the Samaritans as the "Christ," *the Messiah* [vv. 25, 26, 29, 42; cf. John 20:30, 31], and reference is made to the coming age, the Messianic Era.

On the latter, note v. 14, with *aion* and *aionios* both used in the verse [*ref.* Part I of this article]:

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ['shall by no means thirst with respect to the age (...*eis ton aiona*')]; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life ['age-lasting (*aionion*) life']."

Any message delivered to the Samaritans at this time could do *NO* more than anticipate that which would occur ten days following Christ's ascension, beginning in Acts chapter two. The message at and following events in this chapter, unlike before this time, could *NOW* be taken to the Samaritans and the Gentile nations, in that order [Acts 1:8].

The preceding appears to have been the reason for Jesus going through Samaria and spending two days with the Samaritans before it was time to take the message to them, *i.e.*, to prepare the Samaritans for that which was about to occur, having a waiting people in Samaria ready to accept the proclaimed message [Acts 8:5-8; cf. Luke 1:16, 17].)