

Gospel and the Kingdom of God — 3 (Kingdom of the World)

Outline

1. The Rebellious Kingdom—the Kingdom of the World
2. God confronts the Kingdom of the World and shows He is Saviour and Lord
3. Israel's failure to be the Contrasting Kingdom of God
4. Jesus brings the Kingdom of God to earth

1. The Rebellious Kingdom — the Kingdom of the World

Humans are created in the image of God to reflect and represent God by ruling the earth as God's viceroys. However, the devil tempted our first parents (Adam and Eve). The devil began to sow distrust of God in their hearts, and they believed him. So, they decided to define good and evil for themselves apart from what God told them, and their relationship with God broke down. They begin to rule the earth independently of God. Their descendants built the Tower of Babel in opposition to God (Gen 11:9). Humanity's rebellion continued even as God continuously frustrated their plans (Gen 3-11) for their good. Nevertheless, humans kept on rebelling (till today). Humans began to organise themselves into communities, cities and eventually kingdoms — all in rebellion against God's rule. The New Testament calls it by various names, e.g., *the world* (1 John 2:15), *this present evil age* (Gal 1:4) and *the dominion of darkness* (Col 1:13). They all mean **the kingdom of the world (Rev 11:15), a rebellious kingdom against God's rule.**

In Exodus, we see a highly organised kingdom of the world, Egypt, ruled by Pharaoh (Egyptian title for king). While humans were building kingdoms of this world, God chose a Hebrew-speaking man named Abraham, whom He tested and found **he responded to God in faith — which pleased God.** God made a covenant with Abraham that God would make Abraham's descendants His people, who would look to God as their ruler (Gen 12, 15, 17). Thus, Abraham's descendants were cooperating with God to build **a type of the Kingdom of God on earth.**

Through several events, Abraham's descendants settled in Egypt for 400 years (Gen 12-50). By this time, Egypt had become a well-developed kingdom of the world—the first human superpower we see in the Bible and probably in all human history. Pharaoh rules Egypt. Pharaoh is typical of worldly rulers who care only about their **country's security and economy.** They would use any means to

ensure their prosperity, even by oppressing and enslaving people. Moreover, we see this happen throughout human history — whether through colonialism, capitalism, communism etc. All worldly kingdoms and systems enslave and oppress others. All human systems are built on injustice. All of them are in rebellion against God. **ALL**.

2. God confronts the Kingdom of the World and shows He is Saviour & Lord.

So, the Hebrews (Abraham's descendants) are enslaved and oppressed by Pharaoh to build his kingdom. They cry out to God, who remembers His covenant with Abraham and sends Moses as their deliverer. We see this as **the first confrontation by God against the kingdom of the world**. And, of course, God wins ultimately. God uses weak people (Hebrews) who depend upon Him to defeat the world's most powerful superpower at that time—Egypt. Through the Passover and the parting of the Red Sea, God uses Moses to defeat Pharaoh's great army and save His people from slavery. **The first worship song** in the Bible (Exodus 15) tells the whole story of deliverance. It contains the **first use of the word salvation** in the Bible.

Exod 15:1-2, 18 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. 2 "The LORD is my strength and my defence; he has become my salvation... ..18 The Lord reigns forever and ever.

The Exodus 15 song goes on and ends in v18: *"The LORD **reigns** forever and ever."* It is the **Bible's first time God is shown to reign as king**. Abraham's descendants realise that Pharaoh is not the king, but the God of Abraham is king. **The Exodus story is the first confrontation by God against the kingdom of the world, and it shows that God is Saviour and Lord. Moreover, remember, the critical event in this confrontation was the Passover. Here the destroyer killed the firstborn of the Egyptians, and the Israelites were set free by the blood of the Passover lamb.**

3. Israel's repeated failure to be the Contrasting Kingdom of God

Abraham's descendants acknowledged God as their Saviour and Lord in Exodus 15:1-18. So, God shows them what it means to live under His reign. He enters into another covenant with them on Mount Sinai. He reveals the Ten Commandments and other teachings in the Torah (first five Old Testament Books). God's instructions flow from His moral essence — He is love (1 John 4:8, 16). He is holy (Ps 99:9). He is a God of justice, righteousness, faithful love and truth (Ps 89:14).

God expects His people to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly before Him (Micah 6:8). Following these guidelines, Abraham's descendants who settled in the promised land of Israel, were to be a "**contrast kingdom**" totally unlike the kingdoms of the world. They were God's chosen people to reflect and represent God to the world. They agreed to obey God as their king at Sinai. However, God knew their hearts. He knew that the Israelites would one day want a king like the other nations (Deut 17:14). Nevertheless, God gave them laws of what an Israelite king should be in Deut 17:16-20. Let us have a look at God's Law of the King.

Deut 17:16 The king must not have a great number of horses. God limits the king's primary weapon (horse and chariot). Instead, God wants the king to depend on Him (*Ps 20:7* *Some trust in chariots and some trust in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God*)

Deut 17:17 The king must not take many wives nor accumulate much silver and gold.

Deut 17:18 The king must personally write the Torah on a scroll

Deut 17:19 The king must daily read the Torah that he wrote.

Regarding national security (v16) and economy (v17b), Israel must depend on the Lord. Furthermore, God says that the land must have a Sabbath rest once every seven years (Lev 25:4-5)—this limits agricultural production and once again

makes

Israel dependent on the Lord.

When they go to war, God gives them commands that provide freedom to soldiers whether to fight or not (Deut 20:1-9)

Can you see how God wants Israel to be a contrasting kingdom dependent on Him, unlike the world's kingdoms?

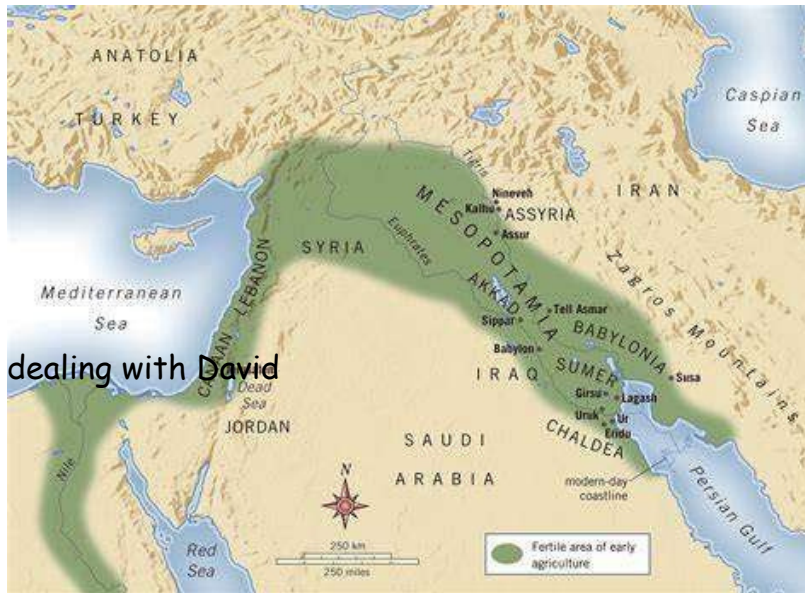
At first, Israel wanted God to be king. However, when the Ammonites threatened them, they forgot how God had defeated a far greater enemy, Pharaoh, by His strength. They asked Samuel for a king like all the worldly

nations

around them, as God had predicted they would. God knew they rejected Him as king even at Sinai, for He knew their hearts (1 Sam 8:6-7). Israel became no different from the nations around them. The history of Israel in the Old Testament was a failure to reflect and represent God **because their hearts**

were

rebellious. There are forty kings mentioned between Judah and Israel in the Old Testament. Virtually all failed miserably to represent and reflect God's rule on earth. Even King David, a man after God's heart, fell short. He committed adultery and murder in his affair with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11-12). He numbered



his troops showing he depended more on worldly strength than relying on God (2 Sam 24). In both instances, God clearly showed His displeasure by severely

Mesopotamia & Egypt were the superpowers of the ancient world. At the same time,

Israel (Canaan on the map) was a small and narrow strip between them—called the "**sacred strip**", nourished by the River Jordan. God allowed Israel to be weak in worldly strength so they would depend wholly on Him and reflect His glory to the world.

The principle of depending on God is valid even today. Christianity's essential message is the gospel message of the cross (trust the gospel of grace, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus). It gets diluted, sidelined and corrupted the more worldly we get. This principle applies to individual Christians, Christian Churches, and Christian nations. When we sideline the cross, the Christian witness becomes ineffective. However, when we embrace the cross, we can thrive, even if we advance materially (e.g. South Korea is 40% Christian and still prospering materially). That is why preaching the gospel and making disciples are essential.

After King David, his son King Solomon ascended the throne of Israel. God gave Solomon great wisdom to rule His people wisely. Solomon knew how a model king of Israel should rule. He composed Ps 72, where justice reigns, there is no oppression, and there is compassion and care for the poor and afflicted. However, knowing all this, he uses wisdom to build his kingdom by enslaving people selfishly. Solomon breaks the Laws of the King given in Deut 17:16-20 and eventually goes astray. His people hated him and divided his kingdom after his death.

The history of Israel in the Old Testament is a failed kingdom. The world's kingdoms took them as captives either in exile to Babylon or ruled them as the Romans did in Israel. In the past, God had shown His mighty arm to save Israel

from the Egyptian Pharaoh. **God is indeed King** and even made a covenant with Israel. However, now, beaten down, first by the Babylonians, then by the Romans, the Israelites began to wonder whether God would arise again to save them. They asked if the Kingdom of God, as in Ps 72, would ever come to Israel. The prophets had severely warned Israel when they became worldly like other nations. However, they also brought the marvellous prophecy of a messenger of the good news of salvation and the Kingdom of God (*Your God reigns*) in Isa 52.

Isa 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

4. Jesus brings the Kingdom of God on earth.

Isa 52:1-10 Awake, awake, Zion, clothe yourself with strength! Put on your garments of splendour, Jerusalem, the holy city. The uncircumcised and defiled will not enter you again. 2 Shake off your dust; rise up, sit enthroned, Jerusalem. Free yourself from the chains on your neck, Daughter Zion, now a captive. 3

For

this is what the LORD says: "You were sold for nothing, and without money, you

will be redeemed." 4 For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "At first my

people

went down to Egypt to live; lately, Assyria has oppressed them. 5 "And now what do I have here?" declares the LORD. "For my people have been taken away

for

nothing, and those who rule them mock," declares the LORD. "And all day long my

name is constantly blasphemed. 6 Therefore my people will know my name;

therefore, in that day they will know that it is I who foretold it. Yes, it is I."

7

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" 8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together, they

shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own

eyes.

⁹ Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. 10 The LORD will lay bare

his

holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

However, the Bible says in Isa 53:1, "*Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*" Because the Messiah comes as a suffering servant to pay for the sins of Humanity, the Jews find it difficult to believe Him and turn away. They did not understand that God's kingdom's essence was the opposite of the world's kingdom. Jesus was the **Passover Lamb** who shed His blood on the cross to bring salvation to all who believe in Him. Jesus was **crowned** with thorns, **exalted** on the cross and **proclaimed King** of the Jews by the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. He ordered them to write "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews", on the cross, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The three languages were those spoken by the people in that region.

In summary, God comes in the person of Jesus Christ as King. He confronts evil and invites people to live under His reign. His kingdom contrasts with the values of the world's kingdom because He fully submits to God. God is holy, and God is love. Jesus fully embraces this truth in His life. He invites us to join Him in His **contrast community**. After Jesus' resurrection, the apostles preached, "*Repent and believe the good news.*".

The good news means Jesus lived the life you should have lived of being fully submitted to God but did not. Then He fully paid the penalty of your rebellion to God, which you should have paid but could not. **Repent** means to stop and turn back. Surrender to Jesus the King. Embrace His values opposite to the world's values out of love for the Father.

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

Jesus gives the values of the kingdom of God in Matthew Chapters 5, 6 & 7.

Gospel and Kingdom of God — 4 (Plan of the Ages)

Outline

1. Meaning of the Kingdom of God
2. Different terms used for the Kingdom of God
3. The two ages—this age and the age to come
4. The Gospel and the Kingdom of God

1. Meaning of the Kingdom of God: In English, "kingdom" means an action (to rule) and, secondarily, a place where a king rules. God rules in Heaven but not on Earth because our first parents listened to Satan and turned away from God. **Since then, Satan has ruled the world through humanity—and it has caused human misery, sin and death.** Therefore, Jesus taught us to pray, "*Our Father in heaven, holy be Your Name, Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.*" And the kingdom (rule) of God must begin in our hearts. Therefore, Jesus tells us, "*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well: (Matt 6:33).*"

2. Different terms used for the Kingdom of God: Now, let us examine Mark 10:17-30. *As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit **eternal life?**" . . . 21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 At this, the man's face fell. He went away sad because he had great wealth. 23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the **kingdom of God!**" 26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can **be saved?**" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man, this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." 28 Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!" 29 "Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children ~~and fields~~ — along with persecutions -- and in the **age to come**, eternal life.*

In the scripture above, I have marked four terms in bold: **eternal life**, **the kingdom of God**, **be saved** (or salvation), and **age to come**. We can see that the rich young man, Jesus, and His disciples all referred to the same thing but used

different terms. The **kingdom of God** is fully realised only in **the age to come**. It is **eternal**. To enter it, God must save one from this present age. [Note: this present age (v30) is also known as the kingdom of the world that Satan rules. The age to come is the kingdom of God, ruled by God. These two kingdoms conflict with each other]

3. The two ages — this age and the age to come: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (*Gen 1:1*), and He created man and woman in His image and likeness (*Gen 1:27, 5:1*). He blessed them, told them to multiply, rule and subdue the earth (*Gen 1:28-30*). Being in God's image and likeness, humans were in a perfect relationship with God. But Satan (a rebellious angel) tempted them to rebel against God, which they did and **fell out of the relationship with God** — known as the Fall of Man. God warned Adam that if they disobeyed Him, they would die. Since then, generations that followed were born in Adam's likeness and image — a fractured image of God because of sin (*Gen 5:3*).

Gen 5:1-3 When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them mankind when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image, and he named him Seth.

Henceforth, humans were born sinners and kept sinning, resulting in disorder, misery, and death. Humanity now has three giant enemies- sin, Satan and death. The Fall of Man was the beginning of "**this age**" (also called "*the present evil age*" in Gal 1:4). The God of this age is the devil who has blinded the eyes of people so that they cannot see the glory of God (2 Cor 4:4). **Creation is now perishing. No religious leader can stop it. Only the Creator Himself must intervene."**

2 Cor 4:4 The God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light that displays the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

4. The Gospel and the Kingdom of God: The good news (known as the **gospel**) is that God sent His Son, Jesus, to destroy the works of the devil, rescue us from the present evil age and transform us, give us a new heart and new spirit that we willingly love God and follow His ways and be in the kingdom of God (His rule).

1 John 3:8 The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

Ezk 36:25-27 I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from

you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Heb 8:10-12 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 11 No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

When we receive the solution God provides for our rescue, we become children born of God and not children of man. We are transformed into a new creation; we will not be a part of the perishing world — "this age". We are no more in the kingdom of darkness, but God places us in the kingdom of God, i.e. the age to come.

Though Christians live in this world, we are already in the age to come and live by its power now.

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

*Luke 18:29-30 "I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God 30 will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in **the age to come, eternal life.**"*

Every born-again Christian is a new creation of God. And God will use His new creation to transform the world. Never underestimate the power of God to do so. For the zeal of God will accomplish it.

Isa 9:7 Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

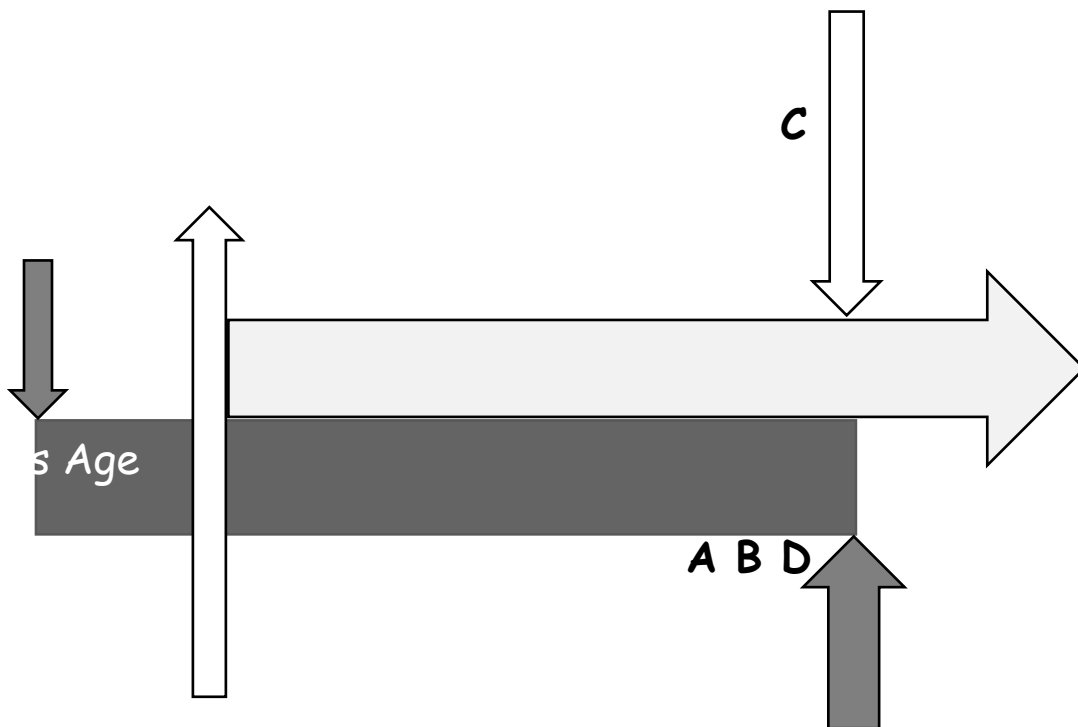
I have given the next page a simplified diagram of God's Plan of the Ages. Notice the Second Coming of Christ, the general resurrection of the dead and the last judgment that follows. Then God will defeat His three enemies (sin, Satan, and death) and throw them in hell along with the wicked (Rev 20:10-15). This present evil age will pass away. Those who belong to Christ will be with Him for eternity in a new creation—a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1-4).

Rev 20: 10-15 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Rev 21:1-4 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

1 Cor 2:9-10 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"— but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

Simplified Diagram of This Age and the Age to Come



A	Fall of Man
B	The Resurrection of Jesus Christ
C	Second Coming of Christ
D	General Resurrection of the Dead & Last Judgment
E	Eternity in a new heaven and new earth

Note: This is only a simplified diagram. It doesn't show details of the Millennium, Great Tribulation, Rapture etc.

Gospel and Zeal of the Lord Almighty

Outline

1. God created the Universe and Humanity — by His word
2. God defeated His Enemies — with a rebuke by His breath.
3. God redeemed Humanity — by His zeal
4. God calls His people to live joyfully in His zeal for them.
5. God calls His people to preach the gospel with His zeal to others

Introduction: In simplest terms, zeal is fuel. The fuel drives people: their passion, purpose, and what they live for. **Now tell me:** What work is God most zealous to accomplish? The outline above gives us the answer— "the redemption of humanity by His zeal". So, let us elaborate.

1. God created the Universe — by His word

Creation was undoubtedly a very mighty work. Billions of galaxies, each having billions of stars. What power! What space! It is staggering to our finite minds! Yet, He spoke a word and all that came into existence. God did not sweat! No mention of zeal!

Gen 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Ps 33:6 By the word of the LORD, the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

Then God created man & woman in His image—as the crown of His creation.

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Gen 2:7 The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

God did not sweat! But no mention of zeal!

2. God defeated His enemies — with a rebuke by His breath

Ex 15:10 But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

2 Sam 22:16 The valleys of the sea were exposed, and the foundations of the earth laid bare at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of breath from his nostrils.

2 Thess 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.

It is effortless for God to defeat His enemies. He does it with just a rebuke by His breath. Once again, God did not sweat. But no mention of zeal.

3. God redeemed Humanity — by His zeal

*Isa 9:6-7 For to us a child is born, to us, a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. **The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.***

We learned from Gen 3 that our first parents sinned and turned away from God. They wanted to live on earth independent from God's rule. Henceforth all Humanity born of Adam inherited his sinful nature. But God had a plan to redeem Humanity by giving His Son Jesus to us (*to us, a son is given—Isa 9:6, John 3:16*) and sent Him to earth born as a human being like us (*to us, a child is born—Isa 9:6*). Through Jesus, the second Adam, God had a great plan **to establish an eternal kingdom** (rule of God), in a **new creation**. The new creation will have a race of men & women who are not angels (angels are ministering servants)—but a race of men & women who could be called His sons and daughters with God-like character. And the zeal of God will accomplish this plan. And this plan is the good news—the gospel.

Satan cunningly defeated our first king (Adam). And the whole of Humanity that followed Adam was afflicted with sin and death that caused human misery. Many well-meaning religious leaders gave us good advice on coping with human misery. But no one can defeat Satan, sin and death that causes misery.

Then God gave His Son to us (*a son is given*). He was born as a human being from birth (*a child is born to us*). He lived on earth with every human disadvantage: homelessness, poverty, rejection, singleness, injustice, etc. Yet He was without sin.

He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. He rose again from the dead, having paid our penalty and defeated Satan, sin and death—the causes of human misery. Jesus is the second Adam. He is the victorious King of the new creation.

The gospel is the news of victory that we unconditionally accept and proclaim.

Let me elaborate on this plan:

i. God conceived this plan before He created man because the Lamb of God was slain before the world's creation.

ii. God carried out this plan meticulously through the age, despite man's repeated failures,

iii. God carried out this plan—the Father conceiving, the Son sacrificing, and the Holy Spirit working out the plan till today.

iv. God planned that His only Son should come into this world and become man in every aspect except sin.

v. God's plan involved the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

vi. God's plan involved Jesus' bloody sweat, tears and loud cries, intense suffering, excruciatingly painful death on the cross and very shedding of the blood of God.

But Why? Why? Why? Because

vii. This plan would involve **wooing us with His love and transforming us** from rebellious, selfish, unbelieving, hard-hearted sinners into soft-hearted and willing lovers of God.

viii. This plan would bring peace between God and man, make us partakers of God's divine nature and help us escape the corruption of this world.

ix. This plan would give Father God many sons and daughters, formed in the image of God's Son. Jesus will be the firstborn of many brothers, **the King of a new creation — a willingly obedient loving creation.**

x. **This plan would give the Son of God a radiant bride without stain, wrinkle, or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.**

Summarising, this plan would make us children of the Father and the Bride of Christ, reigning with Him for eternity in a new creation. Now, dear friends, it was such a plan as this that aroused the zeal of God.

- This plan could not be accomplished by mere breath. It must involve all the attributes of God—His holiness, love, goodness, faithfulness, and power.
- This accomplishment of this plan was worthy of a great Creator;
- The execution of this plan would reveal God as no other work had ever done.

4. God calls His people to live joyfully in His zeal for them.

In simplest terms, zeal is fuel. It is anything that drives people: their passion, purpose, and what they live for. And God Himself is zealous and fervently passionate about His people (His plan of having sons and daughters).

Num 23:21 *"No misfortune is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The LORD, their God, is with them; the **shout** of the King is among them.*

Shout = Teruwa (Hebrew) = a loud battle cry accompanied by trumpets

But Zion said, *"The Lord has forsaken me; the Lord has forgotten me." 15 "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! 16 See, I have engraved you on*

the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me. (Isa 49:14-16)

- Do you feel vulnerable/lonely / abandoned? Are you financially struggling?
- Do you have health issues? Marriage issues? Children issues?
- Are you struggling with poor self-image? Do you remember past failures?
- Are you struggling with sinful habits?
 - Are you discouraged by criticism? Has it stopped you from using your God-given gifts and talents?

Then you must hear God's zeal, passion and fervour for you. You must hear God's "loud shout of joy" for you. It would be best if you listened to the shout of the King over your life. How? By believing His zeal for you.

5. God calls His people to preach the gospel with His zeal to others

Remember, nowhere in the Bible says, "Zeal of ALL the Church will accomplish this". But only the zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. However, through the Holy Spirit, He will impart His zeal to His church, and through the church, God will accomplish His plan. God will always partner with man.

Please don't take this plan lightly. Don't be lukewarm about it. Be filled with the Spirit, and you will have a zeal for His plan. We need to know that God's zeal and the power of heaven are with us when we share the gospel with others.

*Isa 42:13 The Lord will march out like a **mighty man**, like a warrior he will stir up his **zeal**; with a **shout**, he will raise the **battle cry** and will triumph over his enemies.*

Zeal= Qinah (Hebrew) = jealousy (not of insecurity but holy jealousy, guarding and protecting what is precious — like a mother tigress protecting her cubs)

Mighty man = Gibbowr (Hebrew) = Champion (of heaven)

Battle cry = Ruwa (Hebrew) = a cry that splits the ear

Shout = Tsawrach (Hebrew) = **a loud shout of joy (Hindi — Maha Jai)**

The three parables in Luke 15 are all about God's loud shout of joy for His people when a passionate and zealous God finds a lost son, a lost sheep and a lost coin.

We must hear God's rejoicing (loud shout of joy) when one sinner turns to Him.

Then despite opposition, we will share the gospel with the zeal of God.

Gospel and the Lamb of God

Outline

1. Uniqueness of the Lamb (Exodus 5:1-2)
2. Power of the Lamb (Exodus 12:12-13, 22-23)
3. Meaning of the Lamb (Exodus 12:22)
4. Behold the Lamb of God (John 1:29)

1. Uniqueness of the Lamb (Exodus 5:1-2)

Exod 5:1-2 Afterward, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'" 2 Pharaoh said, "**Who is the LORD**, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and will not let Israel go."

Pharaoh asked Moses a perfectly reasonable question that any unbeliever would ask, "Who is the LORD?" Or, "Egyptians worshipped many gods, so what's so special about the Hebrew beliefs that he should obey the LORD?"

"The most unique thing about the biblical belief system *is centred on the bloody death of a helpless victim — a Lamb*" (Tim Keller). There's no other religion like it. In Judaism, the helpless victim is the death of a spotless lamb. In Christianity, it is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God.

2. Power of the Lamb (Exodus 12:12-13, 22-23):

*Exodus 12:12-13, 23: On that same night, I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. 13 The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt... 22 Take a bunch of hyssops, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and both sides of the doorframe. None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning. 23 When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit **the destroyer** to enter your houses and strike you down.*

We know if we break God's creation design, whether of environment, human relations, body nutrition, cleanliness and rest — then harmful consequences follow.

But the Passover night was unique. It was not the usual bad consequence of breaking God's design. Instead, it was God's judgment day brought forward for only one night on only one nation — Egypt, which at that time was the greatest superpower of the world. God sent the destroyer to enter every home in Egypt and kill the firstborn of every human family and the firstborn of every animal. And nothing will be able to stop the destroyer (the ultimate destructive force in the entire universe) except the blood of a helpless victim — a lamb. And God told the Israelites, who were held captive in Egypt, that the only way they could prevent the destroyer from entering their own house and killing their firstborn was to kill a spotless lamb, eat it with their family and put its blood on the doorpost of their own house. Furthermore, in *Exod 12:22*, they must remain in the house for Passover night with blood on the doorpost.

God's judgement doesn't worry most people today. But the Bible tells us that everyone will stand before Him to give an account of their life. Death is sure for all of us. But so is judgment after death. God's judgment is final, and no higher court of appeal exists. If you hope for a favourable decision in God's court, put your hope entirely in Jesus Christ. Then rejoice that God's judgment on you will be based on the perfect life of His Son, Jesus, the ultimate Lamb of God — who will stand in your place. This is the **gospel** — the good news of God.

Heb 9:27-28 Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

3. Meaning of the Lamb (Exodus 12:22)

Exodus 12:22: None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning.

Now God meant **three** things by this verse:

(i) God was not just coming for the Egyptians. The destroyer was no respecter of persons, race or belief systems. Everybody is guilty of sin. **Everybody knows they should love God with all their hearts and love their neighbour as themselves, but they fail miserably. Everybody knows how they should live but does not live by their moral standards.** Even though the Egyptians were the oppressors and believed in idols, and the Israelites were oppressed and believed in the One True God, both were guilty of sin, and the destroyer was coming for them. In the final spiritual analysis, even if a person is decent, the destroyer will slay them out of the blood covering if they go out that Passover night. The only thing that could

save anybody was to remain at home, hidden under the lamb's blood on the doorpost.

(ii) There is debt to be paid to God for sin — and the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). In Ancient Middle-Eastern culture, that debt was paid by the sacrificial death of the firstborn male of every family—that was their culture; that was their belief system, even though it was not of God. This is the context of God asking Abraham to sacrifice his firstborn son Isaac. God tested Abraham on his belief system (God would not have asked Abraham to sacrifice his wife Sarah because wife sacrifice was not what the early Hebrews believed). Here is an extract concerning the **firstborn** from the International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia (ISBE), "*All the data point to the conclusion that among the ancestors of the Hebrews, the sacrifice of the firstborn was practised, just as the firstlings of the flocks and the first-fruits of the produce of the earth were devoted to the deity*".

But later, this barbarous practice was replaced by paying 5 shekels to the priest as the redemption price for every firstborn son (given in the Mishna, which is the oral tradition of the Jews). The ISBE says: *The custom of redeeming the firstborn son is preserved among the Jews to this day. The "Kohen" (a descendant of Aaron) asks the father which he prefers, his child or the five shekels; the father answers that he prefers his son and pays the Kohen a sum equivalent to five shekels. After receiving the redemption money, the Kohen puts his hands on the child's head and pronounces the Aaronite blessing (Num 6:22-27).*

Returning to the Passover night in Egypt, there was either a dead firstborn son in the Egyptian home or a dead lamb in the Israelite home. In other words, the lamb got what the firstborn son deserved in the Israelite home covered by the blood on the doorpost. And every Israelite firstborn son looked at the dead Passover lamb on the table and thought to himself, the only reason why he is

alive

is that the Passover lamb is dead.

(iii) Despite the lamb's blood on the doorpost, if any Israelite went out, the destroyer would slay them. So, God says, I am delivering you tonight from political and economic bondage, yet it is not the ultimate deliverance you need. You are still in debt of sin and need a deeper deliverance because you have deeper bondage to sin. Of course, this pointed to the death of the ultimate Lamb of

God.

The Holy Spirit prompted John the Baptist to say this as he saw Jesus in John

1:29, "**Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.**" The Holy Spirit inspired John the Baptist to **see** that we are all saved because God gave up His firstborn son Jesus to pay for our sins and set us free from sin's deeper spiritual bondage. This news is **the gospel**, the good news. Jesus lived the life we should have lived but didn't, and He died the death we should have died, but He died instead. Christ is our Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7).

4. Behold the Lamb of God (John 1:29)

John 1:29 Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

"Behold" means looking intently, deeply engaging your mind, and looking again because God wants to transform you. **A God who says, I love you but doesn't have anything to demonstrate it—won't grip your attention and won't transform you.** But seeing the incarnate Son of God dying on the cross for you as the Lamb of God will demonstrate His love for you, grip you, and transform you in at least two ways:

- (a) It changes your heart. All human beings have sinned and deserve eternal punishment. You realise you are no better than anybody else, even no better than those you dislike or consider inferior. God loves you and other believers only in Christ. We are all on the same level. It humbles you.
- (b) It changes your values. Without the cross, your value is based on how much wealth you have and how much you have achieved. At the foot of the cross, all your old value system means nothing. You realise your new value is to love God and love others (Gal 5:6)

We will behold the Lamb in heaven. The word "lamb" occurs 103 times in the Bible, 31 times (30%) as the title for Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation that speaks about the end-times and heaven. So, even after His resurrection and ascension into heaven, "the Lamb" is Jesus' favourite title. But I thought Jesus came as a lamb to die on earth, so why is He still the Lamb in heaven? **Because even in heaven, the thing that enables you to enjoy heaven is the gospel.** When you look at the Lamb of God, who loves you and gave His life for you, you will experience His infinite love for you. It will cause you to love, enjoy, and worship Him forever. You will realise that no good work can ever get you to heaven. Only trusting in His love for you, shown in the gospel, can get you there.

Many people think it is so narrow-minded to say that only people who believe the gospel will get to heaven. But without the gospel, there is no true worship. And without true worship, there is no heaven. So, when you deeply believe in the

gospel and realise you get to heaven strictly by His grace—He died for you as the Lamb, as your substitute—you don't use God to get things from Him. Instead, you enjoy Him in worship forever. The gospel alone makes you want to thank, love, rejoice, worship and enjoy God for who He is, for His beauty. God's presence fills heaven, and you will behold the Lamb for eternity and never get tired of enjoying and receiving His love for you.

We can behold the Lamb on the cross as we meditate on Phil 2:5-8. *"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!"*
Then, as we behold Him, the Holy Spirit gradually transforms us into Christlikeness (2 Cor 3:18 *And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit).*

We can behold Him in the Word of God: It's not that every verse in the Bible speaks of Jesus, but every theme and every book in the Bible speaks of Him.
On the road to Emmaus, the risen Christ appeared to two disciples and opened the scriptures to them, and their hearts were burning within them.
Luke 24:27,32 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself....32They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

We can behold Him in the Lord's Supper. Robert Bruce (1551-1631), a famous Scottish preacher, said, *"You do not get any different Christ in the Lord's Supper than you get in the preaching of the Word; you do not get a better Christ in the Lord's Supper than in the preaching of the Word, but you may get the same better". How so?*

Consider the relationship between a husband and wife. They may speak words of love to each other. But in addition, the gentle caressing, the squeeze as they hold hands, the touch, the smile, and the concern, are all visible signs between them that make their words of love more meaningful. These visible signs can never be termed as a ritual. Similarly, as we partake of the bread at the Lord's

body was given for you because I love you. And this wine, you know what it means? It signifies My blood poured out for you because I love you" And as we hear Jesus saying these words to us when we partake of the bread and wine, our hearts are drawn to Him, and we can say, "Lord Jesus, I love You, and I open the door of my heart to You. Come, sup with me as I join You at Your Supper" (Rev 3:20).

Now when two lovers swear their love for each other—they seal it with a kiss. When two honourable gentlemen agree, they seal it with a warm and firm handshake. The kiss and handshake can be repeated often, confirming and strengthening the relationship. Likewise, we can view the Lord's Supper **as** a seal of the New Covenant. (*1 Cor 11:25 In the same way, after supper, he took the*

cup,

saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."). It is as if our Lord Jesus hands over **the document of the New Covenant** to us **sealed in His blood**, with all its promises that:

- He remembers our sins no more (Heb 8:12)
- We are adopted as children in God's family (John 1:12-13, 1 John 3:1).
- Every curse on us is broken (Gal 3:13) & every spiritual blessing given (Eph 1:3)

We should receive this **document** by faith as we drink the cup. Then the Holy Spirit (the actual seal) will testify the truth of this document to us (Heb 10:14-15).

*Heb 10:14-15 For by one sacrifice, he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. 15 The Holy Spirit also **testifies** to us about this.*

*Eph 1:13-14 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a **seal**, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a **deposit** guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

Therefore, partaking of the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper must never be a ritual because they are precious visible signs and seal of the New Covenant between Jesus and believers. As we eat the bread and drink the wine with thanksgiving and faith, the Holy Spirit testifies to us the promises of the New Covenant (Heb 10:14-15). He enables us to behold the Lamb of God and deepens our love for Him. We begin to feel the presence of the Lord Jesus in our midst, and we are being transformed into His image.

Gospel and the Bread of Life

Outline

1. The Search for Lasting Contentment and Fulfillment
2. Two Types of People and their Search
3. Our Heart needs Transformation
4. Gospel and the Bread of Life

1. The Search for Lasting Contentment and Fulfillment.

We all have a desire for something deep within our hearts. You may call it happiness, success, fame, or fortune. But eventually, most of us long for something that gives us **lasting contentment and fulfilment** and deeply satisfies our hearts (and our hearts are bottomless). When you're young, you think that if you get the right career, the right spouse, and make money, you will have lasting contentment. You dream about it. But as years pass, those who achieve a promising career, good marriage, and make money — instead of deep and lasting contentment, still find something missing. What is missing, something they can't define or name is the sense of an **unknown emptiness** in their heart. And unless they fill that emptiness, they will not find lasting contentment and fulfilment. Though there are times when people experience pleasure and satisfaction, they cannot hold on to it. And that makes them long for something lasting that they could keep.

2. Two Types of People, their search for lasting contentment and fulfilment

Type (A) thinks lasting contentment and fulfilment are still out there.

Type (B) thinks lasting contentment and fulfilment don't exist.

Type (A) thinks lasting contentment and fulfilment are still out there. There are four approaches:

(i) The optimistic approach of youth: They start with dreams, ideas, and confidence ~~that they will~~ **make it in life**. They don't even think of lasting contentment. They don't even know what that is and don't even care whether it exists.

(ii) The driven approach of the young adult: These people are not youth anymore but ~~still young~~. They have attained some success in their life. But they think there's more in life, so they drive themselves to find lasting contentment & fulfilment. If they only work harder, they think they will find it. They take risks; they change jobs; they change countries. But they still can't find

contentment that lasts. Yet they don't give up. They continue to drive themselves and drive others as well.

(iii) The angry approach of the frustrated: As people move on, many realise that they can't find lasting contentment & fulfilment. And some get angry and blame two things:

- Society is prejudiced against them or won't allow them to do what they like.
- Other people are against them. They often blame their spouse for being negative or discouraging, their bosses or business partners for betrayal etc. Some of the reasons may be partly true. Still, instead of thinking that their search is defective, angry people must blame others for this or that. **But remember, blaming others has an expiry date.** But they don't stop being angry. They take their anger to the grave and become destructive along the way.

(iv) The despair approach of the defeated: These people don't find lasting contentment & fulfilment but blame themselves. They say, "I'm stupid, I'm a loser, I'm just not good enough". These people often suffer from depression.

Type (B) that thinks lasting contentment & fulfilment doesn't exist. There are three approaches here:

(i) The cynical approach of those who have seen it all and realise lasting contentment & fulfilment doesn't exist. These people started life with optimism, but as they became around 50 years old, they concluded that lasting

contentment

& fulfilment never existed in the first place. They even suppose love is temporary.

So, they harden their hearts and laugh at lovers because they believe love will not last. But love is what makes us human. And when you stop believing in love, you stop being human inside. You die inside. Many old couples are like that.

(ii) The Buddhist approach (many Hindus, too, believe in this approach). These people say you are so unhappy because you attach your heart to things and people;

they are all temporary. You will eventually lose them. If you live long enough, you will lose your spouse to death and often even your children, either because they marry and leave you or they too may die before you die. **So, this part is true.** Then they say, so detach yourself from things and people. Remind yourself that, in time, you will lose everything you love. So, detach yourself from everything. Don't love anything or any person too much. **Now, this part will not help you** — because to love is essentially being human.

(iii) The caring, unselfish approach: These people don't believe lasting contentment & fulfilment exist in the running after things in this world (money,

houses, careers etc.). To find meaning in life, they go the opposite way by working for charity and justice in a very caring, unselfish way. But you must have a tremendous spiritual inner contentment because you will find that the many people you are helping don't want to change. Then your charity work becomes so complex and unsatisfying that you could lose your vision. Many people who work for Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) start well but then lose their vision. Then some switch their search for lasting contentment & fulfilment just like other people in Type A. or become like Type B.

3. Our Heart needs Transformation

The Bible teaches in Prov 4:23 that "*above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*" So, the decisions we make in our lives follow what we love most in our heart and do not follow what we reason in our minds. If we love making money more than we love justice, we will tend to underpay our workers even though we know it's wrong. If we find our identity only in our career,

we will neglect the family we love, causing them to suffer. Now, to love making money or to love a career are not wrong in themselves, but the order of love in our hearts is wrong. **The proper order** should be to love justice more than love making money. And the love for family should be more than our love for identity in a career. Jesus gives us two commands, which, if we obey, will reset the

proper

order for our life and love.

Matt 22:37 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

Matt 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

God is relational: Christianity teaches that God is Three Persons in One God (Trinity) — essentially, God is relational. God created us in His image, so we are relational. He made us for a loving relationship with Him and with each other.

The

Cynical or Buddhist approach of detachment is not of God. It's not God's design for us. It's not the solution to finding lasting contentment and fulfilment. The proper human way to find that inner lasting contentment and fulfilment that we search for is to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. It means to love God more than anything else. However, suppose you love anything more than God; then anything else won't be big enough to fill your heart, and it won't last. In that case, it is not permanent, and you will lose it and be disappointed. But if you love God supremely, He is the only one whom no one can take from you — He

is permanent. And when you love God supremely instead of other things or people as your most profound source of contentment, you can enjoy those other things for what they are. Your money, your career, your gifts etc., becomes a great way to be a blessing to your family and others around you. They don't become the source of your contentment and identity. And if you lose them, you will still find God there for you to fill up whatever is temporarily lacking. The psalmist says, "I always keep my eyes on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure (Ps 16:8-9).

The problem with our heart. God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, to love Him and enjoy all creation. But they disobeyed God and turned their hearts to love created things more than love God. In doing so, they turned away from the source of spiritual food that would give them lasting contentment and fulfilment. Since then, all humans have been born with a heart to love creation more than the Creator. All humans are spiritually empty even though they don't know it. And our actions follow what we love most in our heart, not what we think is right in our mind (Prov 4:23). Our selfish and independent hearts love things and people of this world more than we love God. And because all created things will not last, they cannot give us fulfilment and lasting contentment. Our hearts can only be fed and satisfied by God. **Our hearts need transformation.**

4. Gospel and the Bread of Life (Read John 6:25-35).

Background: Jesus had fed 5000 people with just five loaves and two fish. Having

seen the miracle, the people wanted to make Him king (John 6:1-15). But He withdrew and, unknown to them, crossed over the other side of the lake. They eventually found Him. But Jesus said they were looking for Him because He fed them, and He added, **don't work for food that spoils** but work for food that gives eternal life, which only He can give (v27).

Bread (roti) is the staple food in most countries, including North India and the Middle East. We need to eat bread to live. When Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land in Palestine, they travelled through the hot desert in Exodus 16; God fed them with "manna" from heaven every morning. It looked like dew on the ground, but they could gather it and make it bread.

Food that spoils: Jesus uses this example to show us that we all hunger for

lasting

contentment but look for it in the wrong places — in creation rather than the Creator. We look for contentment in things and relationships in this world. But

just like food that eventually spoils and doesn't last, so do everything, including relationships, which will also ultimately spoil and not last. Things and relationships may be good, but they don't last. Like beauty and strength, they fade away as years go by.

Bread of Life: God fed Israelites with manna from heaven when Moses led them through the desert. However, the Israelites eventually died as all people died. But Jesus says in John 6:35, "I AM the Bread of Life", that His Father sent to give eternal life to all who believe in Jesus. (This is the first of seven great I AM in John's Gospel referring to God's Name in Exod 3:14. The others are John 8:12, 10:7,9, 10:11,14, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1,5)

Everything we eat (except for salt and a few minerals) comes from things that must die to provide us with physical life. Plants (vegetables) must die to give us food to eat. Grains must be crushed and die to make bread to give us food to eat—for physical life. God sent His Son Jesus to be crushed and die on the cross to pay for the sin of loving creation more than loving the Creator. And He came to turn our hearts back to God, to satisfy our spiritual hunger for **contentment that lasts for eternity. Jesus died to make God's love real and tangible to us** so we could see how much He loved us and turn our hearts back to Him. He paid for our sins by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. He is alive forever, reaching out to us, offering the Bread of Life to fill our unknown inner emptiness and give us **everlasting contentment and fulfilment**. This is the gospel.

Read John 6:35-59

John 6:49-50 Jesus contrasts two breads (vv. 30-33): eating manna resulted in dying, and "eating" Jesus, the bread from heaven, results in not dying (i.e., eternal life).

John 6:51: **Bread of Life.** (Jesus repeats vv 33,35,47,48) Jesus refers to His coming sacrifice on the cross. Jesus voluntarily lays down His life for sinful humanity.

John 6:52: **The crowd argues** because they don't understand the spiritual significance (as in John 3:4, 4:15). The Law forbids drinking blood and eating meat with blood on it (Lev 17:10-14; Dt 12:16; Ac 15:29). The crowd is unable to go beyond the physical perspective.

John 6:53-58 **eat . . . drink**. Jesus' point has spiritual, rather than literal, significance. Just as eating and drinking are necessary for physical life, so is belief in His sacrificial death on the cross required for eternal life. The eating of His flesh and drinking His blood symbolise the need to accept Jesus' work on the cross. The flesh signifies giving His life, and the blood signifies His death on the cross for our sins. Jesus' reference here to eating and drinking was not referring to the Holy Communion for two significant reasons: (a) Holy Communion was not instituted yet, and (b) if Jesus were referring to Holy Communion, then it would teach that anyone partaking of Holy Communion would receive eternal life.

John 6:37 Whoever comes to me I will never cast out implies that people should never think, "Maybe I am not chosen by God, and therefore maybe Jesus will reject me when I come to Him." Jesus promises to receive everyone who comes to Him and trusts Him for salvation. Yet, in John 6:44, Jesus states another truth: once people come to Jesus, they will realise that behind their willing decision to come and believe lies the mysterious, invisible work of the Father who all along was drawing them to Christ.