

## **NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP ADVENT SEASON WEEKLY FAMILY DEVOTIONS**

### **WEEK 3: WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION**

In martial arts, there is a saying: “If you master a technique, you have one technique. If you master a principle, you have a thousand techniques.” A true student of the martial arts embraces this. Moreover, he understands that katas or forms are meant to be studied and applied, not simply memorized or performed. Sadly, there remain very few true students of the martial arts. Can the same be said for true students of the Scriptures? Perhaps we are well-versed concerning the characters and events surrounding the Birth of Jesus Christ as prophesied in places like Isaiah 7, Isaiah 9, and Micah 5 and as recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. But, are we versed enough to discern the enduring underlying principles and the things that happened to others for ensamples, written for our admonition? Are we able to cross-reference the characters of the Christmas Narrative with others in the Old Testament who teach us the very same things? Most importantly, have we simply memorized this and other Bible stories, or are we those who study and apply what is written to our lives in the very dark and troubling times in which we live?

#### **DAY 1**

Scripture Reading: I Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4; Matthew 4:1-11; Deuteronomy 8:2-3; Psalm 91

1. The Apostle Paul exhorted the early Christians in Corinth and Rome about the importance of the Old Testament for the New Testament Church long before the New Testament writings were complete. For us, “upon whom the ends of the world are come,” why are the historical events and genealogies recorded in the Bible, both Old & New Testaments, indispensable and very important?
2. The historical events in the Bible teach us through examples to follow, and they admonish us via errors and blunders to avoid. In the narrative concerning Jesus’ birth, discuss an admonishing ensample after the manner of I Corinthians 10:11 and a comforting example written for our learning after the manner of Romans 15:4?
3. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, he showed us an example of applying the exhortations of I Corinthians 10:11 and Romans 15:4 years before Paul penned these letters under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. From what historical event recorded in the Old Testament did Jesus apply biblical truth to rebuke Satan regarding the first temptation?
4. Concerning the second temptation, what very important Scriptural principle did Jesus apply when responding to the devil’s citation of Psalm 91? What key phrase did the devil slyly exclude when quoting Psalm 91:11-12?
5. Concerning the devil’s final temptation, Jesus responded by alluding to Deuteronomy 6:13-14. How does the principle of I Corinthians 10:11 and the subsequent history of Israel in the Old Testament relate to Jesus’ response and confirm the Lord’s command?
6. What three simple words did Jesus use each time the devil tempted Him? What does this teach us?

## **DAY 2**

Scripture Readings: Luke 1:11-20; II Kings 5:1-15; Acts 12:5-17; James 1:5-8

1. What did Zacharias, Naaman the Syrian, and the Christians praying at Mary's house have in common?
2. How is the biblical principle outline in James 1:5-8 related to the biblical narratives from Luke 1, II Kings 5, and Acts 12?
3. Discuss an example from your life when you responded to God's Word or His answer to your prayers like Zacharias, Naaman, or the Christians in Acts 12?
4. What do you think it means to "ask in faith, nothing wavering"? What recurrent action does this necessitate after prayer?

## **DAY 3**

Scripture Readings: Luke 1:30-38; Genesis 15:1-6; Romans 4:1-5; Ecclesiastes 5:1-2

1. What did Mary and Abraham have in common?
2. According to the Apostle Paul, what does Abraham's example teach us about being right with God?
3. The angel told Mary that God would give unto the fruit of her womb the throne of His father David. Has Jesus ever sat on the throne of David? When will that happen?
4. How was Mary an example of adherence to Solomon's exhortation in Ecclesiastes 5:1-2? What do we learn from this?
5. What justified Abraham before God? What justified Mary before God (i.e. contrary to false Catholic doctrine)?

## **DAY 4**

Scripture Readings: Matthew 1:18-25; Ezekiel 12:1-7; Ezekiel 24:15-18; Ezekiel 37:1-10; James 2:20-24; Titus 3:8

1. What did Joseph and the prophet Ezekiel on multiple occasions have in common?
2. In view of the commands given, what made Joseph and Ezekiel's responses notable acts of faith?
3. Does James 2:20-24 contradict Romans 4:1-5 concerning Abraham's justification? Why or why not?
4. If faith justified Abraham before God, before whom did His works justify his faith (see Titus 3:8)?
5. Before whom did Joseph's works in Matthew 1 justify him, and why was what is recorded in verse 25 important in this?

6. Before whom did Ezekiel's works justify him and thereby validate that he was a prophet?

## **DAY 5**

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:24-30

1. To what Old Testament narrative already visited this week is Luke 4:24-30 related?
2. What does Jesus' example in this passage teach us about how to use the Scriptures?
3. Revisit I Corinthians 10:11 briefly. What Old Testament archetype (including God's dealings with this archetype) is extremely relevant to American society today? How can we use this archetype and follow Jesus' example in his hometown while sharing the Gospel and rebuking the wickedness in our own hometowns?