April 9

Life of Jesus

Flight to Egypt

Now Herod did not take too kindly to being tricked by the Wise Men and sent soldiers to Bethlehem and the surrounding area to kill all the boy babies up to two years old. Herod was determined to get this baby called King of the Jews!

Before Herod had a chance to carry out his deadly mission against innocent babies, God came to Joseph in a dream and told him to flee with his family to Egypt, to keep Jesus safe from Herod. In the middle of the night Joseph, Mary and Jesus left for Egypt.

What a horrible ordeal the killing of all those babies must have been! As the prophet Jeremiah said – Read: Matthew 2:17, 18 (Jeremiah 31:15)

The deaths of all those children were in vain, because Jesus was safe and sound in Egypt and stayed there until Herod was dead. Herod’s son was not much better, so as instructed in dreams Joseph brought Jesus out of Egypt but instead of settling in the land of Israel, they moved to Nazareth in Galilee. Two prophesies were fulfilled – Read: Matthew 2:15b, 23b.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Hosea 11:1.

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, I pray for protection like that you gave Jesus, in these days of evil and murder, also protection for my children and grandchildren as they go out into the world.

April 10

Life of Jesus

Boyhood

Not much is said about Jesus as a boy – Read: Luke 2:40.

An incident is recorded by Luke, when Jesus was twelve; he went with his parents to Jerusalem for Passover as they did every year. This year was different, for on their way home they discover that Jesus was not in the group and they had to return to Jerusalem after a day’s journey and try to find the boy. They finally found him, after looking for three days, in the Temple surrounded by Jewish teachers, amazed at the intelligent answers the boy was giving! You can imagine how relieved yet upset Mary and Joseph must have been – Read: Luke 2:48b-49. Mary and Joseph didn’t understand all of this, but Jesus returned home with them as an obedient son.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Luke 2:52.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I, Lord, when you look upon me, may I be about your business too.

April 11

Life of Jesus

The Baptism of Jesus

Jesus started his ministry, by coming to John the Baptist, who was preaching in the wilderness by the River Jordon, to be baptized. John baptized people in the Jordon to show they had repented of their sins. John knew there was another coming after him – Read: Mark 1:7, 8.

When Jesus arrived at the Jordan to be baptized, John didn’t want to baptize Jesus – Read: Matthew 3:14-15.

After Jesus was baptized, the bodily form of the Holy Spirit, a dove, descended and sat upon Jesus and a voice came from heaven that said, Read: Matthew 3:17b. Through the dove John the Baptist knew that Jesus was the Messiah, the one to follow him.

VERSE FOR TODAY: John 1:34.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I, like John, know the true love of God when I see it.

April 12

Life of Jesus

The Temptation of Jesus

After the baptism of Jesus, he was sent by the Holy Spirit immediately into the wilderness to be tempted. After forty days of fasting, Jesus was hungry and the Devil came to him and tried to tempt him into sinning by getting Jesus to change the stones into bread – Read: Matthew 4:4. The same is for us we cannot live on just food, but we need the Word of God to sustain us through eternity.

The Devil did not give up, he tried to get Jesus to throw himself from the top of the Temple and get the angels to save him, again – Read: Matthew 4:7. A good point for us too, we must not try to get ourselves into trouble that would take a miracle to save us.

Once more the Devil tried to tempt Jesus, he showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and told Jesus to kneel down and worship him, and then Jesus could be ruler of all – Read: Matthew 4:10. We must also serve only the Lord.

We see here that Jesus knew the scriptures, he quoted them for Satan on each temptation, we too need to be equipped with the scriptures, to strengthen us against temptation.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Matthew 4:11.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I always resist temptation and remain faithful to you, O Lord.

April 13

Life of Jesus

John’s Successor

After the time of temptation, Jesus heard that John the Baptist was in prison, so He more or less took over where John left off – Read: Mark 1:14b, 15.

The fact that Jesus went to Capernaum, in the territory of Zebulun and Naptali fulfilled a prophesy made by Isaiah – Read: Matthew 4:15, 16. (Isaiah 9:1-2) Jesus was and is that Great Light. The way for us to live in the Light!

Jesus had arrived on the scene and picked up the path of John the Baptist, but in a much different way, Jesus went about preaching, teaching and healing, leaving an example of love and service to others in His path, as we will see in the days to come.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Luke 4:14.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to always live in the Light and to let your light shine through me.

Life of Jesus April 14

Rejection in Nazareth

Jesus stood and read the scriptures in his own native Nazareth synagogue. Read: Luke 4:18, 19. (Isaiah 61:1, 2)

Jesus returned the scroll – as he said to them, Read: Luke 4:21. They were all surprised at what they heard! They thought how could this man, son of Joseph, a carpenter, be so well spoken?

Jesus was now in good company, Elijah and Elisha were both prophets that could not help their own people.

The people did not like what they heard, they took out to throw him off a hill but in the confusion he left through the crowd.

We are guilty of rejecting people we know that return after training because we don’t understand how they can be an authority on something because we know them and their families.

Jesus did not give up after one rejection; he just went somewhere else to preach the Word.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Luke 4:24.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Please help me to never give up after a rejection, but always to keep trying to find those who want to hear the Word.

April 15

Life of Jesus

Calling the Disciples

As Jesus preached, taught and healed in the area around Galilee, his fame spread through that area.

One day as he was walking around the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon Peter and Andrew, doing their job catching fish – Jesus said to them, “Come with me, and I will teach you to catch men.” Matthew 4:19.

Just a little way down the lake shore, Jesus saw two more brothers, James and John, sons of Zebedee. They like Peter and Andrew, left their nets without question followed Jesus. They became disciples or pupils of Jesus, their Master.

We must also drop our worldly ways and follow Jesus. If we follow His teachings, He will also teach us to become “fishers of men.” We cannot see Jesus as the original disciples did but we can hear the teachings of Jesus through the Bible.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Luke 5:10b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to be an effective fisher of men, in this world filled with souls in need of being caught

April 16

Life of Jesus

Calling Matthew

Matthew was a tax collector. In those days, tax collectors were not very well liked, because the Roman government gave tax collectors a free hand to collect above and beyond the amount required for personal gain.

Jesus saw Matthew and called him to be a disciple, Matthew followed Jesus.

Jesus went to Matthew’s house for dinner, while Jesus was eating with Matthew and other tax collectors and outcasts; the Pharisees had an interesting question– Read: Matthew 9:11b.

Read: Mark 2:17. People who are not sick don’t need a doctor; neither do righteous people need a Saviour, Jesus came to save us sinners.

We can take a lesson from this too, we need to be careful for the company we keep, but if we never talk or associate with non-Christians, how can we witness to them?

VERSE FOR TODAY: I Timothy 1:15.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank-you, O Lord, for your Son, my Saviour! May I always know that I need a Savior, that I am a sinner saved by grace.