

Shawn Brummund: Hello, and welcome to another edition of the Sabbath School Study Hour. Welcome to the Granite Bay Hilltop Seventh-day Adventist Church, right here in the Roseville, Sacramento area of California, and it's nice to be able to have each and every one of you join us that are joining us online or those of you who are watching on the various networks. It's always good to be able to have our local church family come together as we study the Word on this holy Sabbath day and welcome, special welcome, to you as well. My name is Pastor Shawn Brummund, and it is a privilege to be able to host and be able to be a part of the Sabbath School Study Hour this morning.

Before we invite our musicians to be able to lead us out in song and worship, I just want to make this offer available to you and so I want to encourage you to take advantage of this free gift offer that we would like to give to you. It is a magazine and it's entitled "Kingdoms in Time." And if you've never read this, you want to get a hold of this, and go ahead and dial 1-866-788-3966. Again, that's 1-866-788-3966 and ask for free offer number 901. And that's if you're in North America or the US Territories. Now, if you'd like to get a digital copy of this, as many people like to take advantage, go ahead and text the code "SH153" and you want to text that to 40544 and we'd be happy to be able to link you to a free digital copy. For that, again, if you're in North America, that is available to you. So please take advantage of that free gift offer.

We're going to invite our musicians to be able to lead us out in song as we continue to worship Him.

♪ How do you capture the wind on the water? ♪
♪ How do you count all the stars in the sky? ♪
♪ How do you measure the love of a mother ♪
♪ or how can you write down a baby's first cry? ♪
♪ Candlelight, angel light, firelight, and star-glow ♪
♪ shine on His cradle 'til breaking of dawn. ♪
♪ Gloria, gloria in excelsis deo. ♪
♪ Angels are singing: The Christ child is born. ♪
♪♪
♪ Shepherds and wise men will kneel and adore Him. ♪
♪ Seraphim round Him their vigil will keep. ♪
♪ Nations proclaim Him their Lord and their Savior. ♪
♪ But Mary will hold Him and sing Him to sleep. ♪
♪ Candlelight, angel light, firelight, and star-glow shine ♪
♪ on His cradle 'til breaking of dawn. ♪
♪ Gloria, Gloria in excelsis deo ♪
♪ Angels are singing: The Christ child is born. ♪
♪♪
♪ Find Him at Bethlehem laid in a manger. ♪
♪ Christ our Redeemer asleep in the hay. ♪
♪ Godhead incarnate and hope of salvation, ♪
♪ a Child with His mother that first Christmas Day. ♪

♪ Candlelight, angel light, firelight, and star-glow shine ♪

♪ on His cradle 'til breaking of dawn. ♪

♪ Gloria, gloria in excelsis deo. ♪

♪ Angels are singing: ♪

The Christ child is born. ♪♪

Shawn: Today we're going to be looking at Lesson number 3 in our quarterly, which is entitled, "These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews." So Lesson number 3. Let's open with prayer.

Father in heaven, we want to thank You for the opportunity to be able to worship You here this morning. Thank You for all those who are able to join us, both here in the sanctuary as well as those who are watching. We want to pray that You'll bless all of us and guide us with Your Holy Spirit. We claim Your promise that Your Holy Spirit will come and lead us into all truths as we come to You as students and pray that You'll be with our pastor today, Pastor Alden, as he shares with us the Word of God. In Jesus's name we pray these things, God, amen.

Alden J. Ho: We have a, I guess for you it's a double blessing today, because it is Christmas Day and the message for our Sabbath School Lesson is called "The Promised Son," is that right? It's a triple blessing for me because not only do we have those two, but the third one is I get to present this lesson, isn't that marvelous? For me, I guess I'll say "Amen." We had the prayer so I'd like to take you to our memory text for this lesson. It's found in Hebrews chapter 1, verse 2 and 3. In the Sabbath School quarterly, it quotes from the New International Version, so that's what I'm going to read. "But in these days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom also He made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being."

God has preserved in scripture at least one complete message. One complete message in the scripture, and this message we find is Paul's letter to the Hebrews right here in Hebrews chapter 1. It has been argued that Hebrews is the earliest complete sermon but the Hebrews was addressed to believers who accepted Jesus but then experienced difficulties. Some were publicly shamed, some were persecuted, some also faced financial hardship as well. So the apostle in a stirring sermon, however, challenged them and he's saying to them to preserve their faith in Jesus and to fix their eyes on Jesus who is now in the heavenly sanctuary.

This really is a message for us today, wouldn't you say? I don't--I believe almost everybody is going through some sort of hardship. And if you're not, you will be very shortly. And if it's not health, it's going to be financial, it's going to be something or other. You know, working at Amazing Facts, we get stacks and stacks and stacks of prayer requests, and I can tell you over and over that prayer requests are very, very similar: Pray for my health, pray for my family, pray for my children who have left the church, pray for somebody who has cancer, pray for me to have a closer walk with Jesus.

Does that describe one of you out there? That is the time period in which we're living, which is why this lesson is so applicable to us today, being "The Promised Son." Right after Adam and Eve sinned, God promised them a seed. Now, Isaiah 55, verse 8 and 9 tells us that "'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,' says the Lord. 'But as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My thoughts higher than your thoughts and My ways higher than your ways.'"

In other words, God has His own timing, amen? That timing is not your timing. So when He promised Adam and Eve a seed, what do you think Adam and Eve thought? "It's going to be one of our children." But it wasn't directly one of their children. The Son, Jesus, who would deliver them from the enemy, recover the inheritance that had been lost, and fulfill the purpose for which they had created.

When we look at Genesis chapter 3, verse 15, this is what this verse alludes to when it says, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." Now, the question is what exactly is enmity? The mutual hostility--

this is what I looked up. The mutual hostility between the persecutor and the persecuted for which the Christian following Christ's new morality must substitute a new attitude by which he loves and prays for his enemy. It's kind of hard to do.

How many of you pray for your enemies? Some people like to take revenge but we are told that this is what Christ came to do, is to create this division here. The Son, Jesus, would both represent and redeem them by taking their place and ultimately destroying the serpent, the devil. Here's a quote from Mrs. White who writes in "Desire of Ages," page 31, and she says, "When Adam and Eve heard--first heard the promise, they looked for its speedy fulfillment. They joyfully welcomed their firstborn son, hoping that he might be the deliverer. But the fulfillment of the promise tarried."

Can you imagine the dismay in their hearts? First they were--they had to leave the Garden of Eden. Now they were expecting that this would be the seed of the promised Savior, but no, it wasn't the one. The promise was later also confirmed to Abraham. "God swore to him that he would have a seed, a son through whom all nations of the earth would be blessed." Did it come directly then? No, it would come through generations later. And then God promised the same thing through David as well. He promised David that his descendants would be installed by God as His own Son and would be established as a righteous ruler over the kings of the earth. What neither David nor Adam and Eve, or Abraham probably never imagined was that the Redeemer Son would actually be God Himself.

We look at Sunday's lesson. It's called "In These Last Days." In the first paragraph of Hebrews, Hebrews reveals that Paul believed he was living in the last days. How many of you really believe we're in the last days? Can I see your hands? If you didn't raise your hand, you really need to question yourself: what more signs do you really need to understand we're in the last days here? So we find here that the prophet Paul used the expression "last days" or "latter days" and he was talking, really, about the future.

Compared to Paul, where are we now? If Jesus was here, and then Paul was here, we're kind of over here. So would you say that we're in the latter days, the last days? I would definitely say so. We find in Deuteronomy chapter 4, verse 30, it says, "When you are in distress and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the Lord your God and obey His voice, for the Lord your God is a merciful God, He will not forsake you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant of your fathers, which He swore to them." We also find here that Daniel used this expression, "the time of the end." He used it twice in his writings.

So we also find, jumping back to what Paul says, Paul says that these promises were fulfilled in Jesus. He defeated Satan and, through the proclamation of the gospel, is attracting all the nations to Himself. This is what it means now, but we know in Revelation that we're told that all will wonder after the beast, right? So it's interesting paradigm that we have, when the prophecy says "all will wonder after the beast," yet another prophecy says that they would be attracted to Jesus. But I guess there's two "alls." There are the wicked all and then there's the righteous all as well.

So in a sense, these last days have begun because Jesus has fulfilled God's promise or promises. Our spiritual leaders, our spiritual fathers, they died in the faith. They saw and they greeted the promises from afar. But they did not receive them all. We, on the other hand, we have seen their fulfillment in Jesus. Jesus--think for a moment here, for-- about the promises of Jesus. I want to lay some out before you. The Father, God the Father, promised that He would resurrect His children.

We find this, if you've ever been to a funeral, this is one of the main verses that's always read and it's found in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, verse 15 and 16 that says, "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead will arise," what? "First," so that is the promise. So this wonderful news is that Jesus initiated the resurrection of His children because He Himself was resurrected. So He fulfilled that promise part. We also have another one that tells us in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 20, "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who

have fallen asleep."

So there, in itself, not only did He do it, but we also have later in scripture that Paul writes that Jesus is the fulfillment of that. Here's another promise. God the Father also promised a new creation. Isaiah chapter 65, verse 17 tells us, "For behold, I create new heavens and new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind." So the promise there has been fulfilled because He has begun to fulfill that promise by creating in us a new spiritual life within our own hearts. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 17, Paul writes and he says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

If you are truly a new creation and you've come out from the world and you've come to know of Jesus, your life should change. Your life should be constantly in change. You cannot be the same as you were maybe 30 years ago when you accept Christ. We cannot, as Christians, be spinning in the mud, sitting there. We have to make progress. I like to explain to young people that when Jesus says, "Follow Me," He tries to turn us around and He says, "Follow Me." Now if Jesus walks this way and you simply just stand here, is that following Jesus? No, that's not. Following Jesus means that you have to daily make decided steps towards Him. And that's what we need to be doing on a daily basis. And this is part of what Jesus is trying to do to us to create in us not only a new heart, but a new life, a new spiritual longing for Him.

Here's another promise. He promised us that He would establish His final kingdom. In Daniel chapter 2, verse 44, Daniel writes and he says, "And in the days of these kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to another--to other people. It shall break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms and it shall stand forever." And the promise was inaugurated that the kingdom was delivered to us from Satan because Jesus has become our ruler. This is fulfilled in Luke chapter 10, verse 18 to 20, "And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.'"

This is the only-- this is only the beginning, because the final promise I want to share with you is this: What God began to do in Jesus's First Coming, He will complete in the Second Coming. And we know that that is going to be very, very soon. We jump to Monday's lesson. Monday's lesson is titled "God Has Spoken to Us by His Son." We're going to look at the first four verses here of Hebrews chapter 1. This is the central idea that we're trying to obtain from this. Hebrews 1:1, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets."

Now, remember, this is the opening to Paul's sermon that is the complete sermon that's recorded. Verse 2, "Has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heirs of all things, through whom also He has made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on heaven, having become so much more better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." Four verses.

You know what's interesting? That's actually supposed to be one complete sentence. Not only is this one sentence, it is argued that this is probably the most beautiful in all of the New Testament from the point of view of a rhetorical artist. The lesson points out something very interesting here that I want to bring to your attention. It says, "For the Jews in the 1st century AD, the Word of God had not been heard for a long time. The last revelation to be expressed in the written Word of God had come through the prophet Malachi and the ministries of Ezra and Nehemiah, four centuries before that time period, but now, through Jesus, God is speaking to them again.

Would that kind of spur you on to, like, "Wow, He's speaking to us now. Let's listen." But Jesus is not with us now. Not directly. We can't touch Him. We can't see Him. But we can certainly hear Him through His words because the Bible tells us the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Also, we find that God-- that the Old Testament was the Word of God. The same God who spoke in times past is speaking in time

present. The Old Testament communicated a truer knowledge of God's will. But then we find Jesus brought so much of the Old Testament to light, once again showing us that He truly was the promised Son. In Luke 24:44, we find these words, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you and all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

So Jesus came to be our representative. He came to be our Savior. He would take our place in the fight and the defeat of the serpent. We find many things that are interesting here. And if you think through what it means that Jesus, God, came to this earth, why should this truth bring us much hope? Because everything that He did, He did not for Himself but He did for us.

Tuesday's lessons, "He Is the Radiance of the Glory of God." In this section, Tuesday, we focus on the portion that says, "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature." Now, I'm a musician, I've been playing piano for a long time, studied music education. Johann Sebastian Bach said, "All music should have no other end and aim than the glory of God, and the soul's refreshment. Where this is not remembered, there is no real music, but only devilish hubbub," think about that. He headed his compositions with the letters "J.J.," Jesus juva, which means "Jesus help me." He ended all his compositions with three letters, "S.D.G.," soli deo gloria, meaning "To God alone the praise." That's why Bach's music is always church music, because of how he wrote it.

In the Old Testament, the glory of God refers to His visible presence among His people. Reading from a Bible commentary, it says, "The contrast between the covering cloud that embraced Moses in the blessed fellowship and communion with his maker and the devouring fire is significant." Remember, we're talking about radiance here. Those who, like Moses, walk in God's ways, will be assured of protection and security in the secret place, under the shadow of the Almighty."

Do you wonder why sometimes when we pray it seems that our prayer bounces off the ceilings? Anybody feel like that? It's because sometimes the way we live our lives, it is not really in harmony with God's way. And that's why we feel that our spiritual life is very limited. In this sense, this is what it's saying. Those who turn from the paths of righteousness will find not comfort and assurance, but retributive justice for God will appear to them as a consuming fire.

So God is really wanting us to draw close to Him. But the closer we get to Him, remember the brighter it becomes, the more radiant, the more holy it becomes. But we, in our carnal nature, we can't stand that. Remember what happens to the wicked when Jesus comes. Revelation 6 tells us, "They will run to the mountains and the caves and they will cry out," what? "Fall on us. Hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Reading from this wonderful book, "Patriarchs and Prophets," page 329, it says, "During that long spent-- long time spent in communion with God, the face of Moses had reflected the glory of the divine presence. Unknown to himself, his face shone with a dazzling light when he descended from the mountain. Aaron, as well as the people, shrank away from Moses and they were afraid to come near him. Moses had had to communicate with them and compassionating their fears, he put a veil upon his face, and continued to do so thereafter whenever he returned to the camp from communion with God."

Tell me, Moses's life was incredibly close to God. Nobody has come that close to seeing the radiance of God and live. How close are we walking with God these days? I mean, if God were to come right now, I would be scared to say how many of us would actually be looking up versus running away. What we find is this: Moses was the visible mediator. He was a representative of the true intercessor.

As I was reading through this Sabbath School lesson, this particular portion that was written by the editor caught my attention. And it says here, it's very, very profound. It says, "Just as the sun cannot be perceived except by the radiance of its light, God is known through Jesus. From our perspective, the two are one. Because God's glory is light itself, there is no difference in actual being and character. Between God and Jesus there is no difference between light and its radiance." Is that me only that found that profound?

Let's move to Wednesday's lesson here, "Through Whom He Made the Universe." Some think that Jesus was merely an instrument through whom God created. You know, because we get hung up on a word here and I'll cover that in just a moment. This is not possible, first, because Paul says, "Jesus is the Lord who created the worlds." He was not a helper, by any means. He was there, active. Hebrews 1:10 says that "Jesus is the Lord who created the earth and the heavens." Paul also applies to Him that in Psalms 102:25-27 says that the Lord Yahweh was also the creator.

So here's some logic to think about. There is a perfect agreement between the Father and the Son in purpose and activity. This is the part of the mystery of the Godhead. Jesus created, God created. But there is only one creator: God, which implies that Jesus is God. Hebrews 1:3, "Upholding all things by the word of His power." Each of us here are sustained by God, by Jesus. Do you thank Him in the morning when you wake up that you have life and you have breath? We take those very simplistic things for granted sometimes, and we just assume that we're going to get it. But how many people did not make it through the night last night? In Acts chapter 17:28, "For in Him we live and move and have our being." Everything is to the glory of God.

I want to tell you a little story here, "After the Sunday evening hymns, the church pastor slowly walked up to the podium and, before he gave his sermon that evening, he briefly introduced a special guest minister who was in the service that evening. In the introduction, the pastor told the congregation that this guest minister was one of his dearest childhood friends and that he wanted to have him speak, just for a few moments to greet the church and to share whatever was on his heart. The elderly man stepped up to the podium and he began to speak, and he said, 'A father, his son, and a friend of his son, were sailing off the Pacific coast when a fast-approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to shore. The waves were so high that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright, and the three were swept into the ocean and the boat capsized.'

The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers that were sitting near the front, and he began to tell that they were at least somewhat awake and listening. The aged minister continued his story and he says, 'Grabbing the rescue line, the father had to make a very excruciating decision of his life: to which boy to throw the other end of the lifeline? He only had seconds to make a decision and the father knew that his son was a Christian. He knew that his son had accepted Christ and was walking in His ways, but he knew that his son's friend was not.

The agony of the decision. The father yelled out to his son, "I love you, son," and he threw the lifeline to his son's friend. By the time the father had pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beneath the raging swells and he never saw him again.' By this time, the two teenagers were sitting upright on the end of their seat. 'The father,' the old man continued, 'knew his son would eventually step into eternity at Jesus's resurrection and he knew that he could not bear the thought of his friend's-- his son's friend not doing the same. Therefore, he sacrificed his son to save his son's friend.

How great is the love of God that He would do the same for us. Our heavenly Father sacrificing His only begotten Son that we could be saved.' He makes the appeal. Jesus threw out the lifeline. The pastor again walked slowly to the pulpit after the old minister got done. He made a small sermonette out of this, and then he made an appeal that anybody would like to accept Jesus to come down, but nobody moved. When the service ended, the old minister was standing in the back. The two teenage boys ran up to him. 'That was a nice story,' said one of the boys politely, 'but I don't think it's very realistic that a father would give up his own son in hopes for the other boy to become a Christian.'

'Well, you got a point there,' said the old minister. Glancing down at his well-worn Bible, a big broad smile came across his narrow face. He once again looked up at the boys and he said, 'It sure isn't very realistic, is it? But I'm standing here today to tell you that this story gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up His Son for me.' He said, 'You see, I was that father and your pastor was my son's friend.'"

In Thursday's lesson, we come to the title, "Today I Have Begotten You." Now, this has been a little bit of

a vocabulary contention, I guess you could say, because it says-- it reports in Hebrews chapter 1:5, "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You." Some think that just because the word "begotten" is there that this is the birth of Jesus, but that's not exactly right. This is what I found out when I was studying this. It says, "The term 'only begotten' was actually introduced in the Latin version to indicate that Christ was not a created being. From there, it passed on to other modern languages, including English."

And you know in translation things can always get messed up. Jesus was begotten in the sense that He was installed, He was adopted by God as the promised ruler, the Son of David. The concept of the divine adoption of the ruler was common in the Greco-Roman world, and in the East, and it gave the ruler legitimacy and power over the land. This is why that terminology was used at that time. You see, we find that the symbol of Rome, Caesar, was not the legitimate son of God, the ruler of the nation. Instead, Jesus Christ was. The begetting of Jesus refers to the beginning of Jesus's rule over the nations and not the beginning of His existence because Jesus had always existed. And there was never a time that Jesus did not exist because Jesus is God.

And I want to share something that I think you will find of interest here. Because when we look at--have you ever tried-- well, I used to tell people when they asked me, "Where should I start reading the Bible?" I used to tell them, "Start in the New Testament," until I really realized that Matthew chapter 1 is a very, very tough chapter. You can go to sleep reading all those begats, you know that? And you wonder, "Why in the world are those begats there?" I mean, so-and-so begat so-and-so begat so-and-so. I mean, this is not a bedtime story you want to read your kids.

So why are all those begats there? Here's what I find that is so intriguing. You see, Matthew was a Jew, and Matthew was writing to who? I'll give you a hint, it would be somebody like him, so who do you think that would be? He was writing to a Jew. So that's why Matthew chapter 1 starts off with the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. You see where this is going? It's going that way for a reason, because here we find no Jew would read about the Son who's claiming to be God without showing ancestry and, believe me, the Jews were very, very anal about things. They kept record all the way back. They want to show pedigree. Nobody could be a priest unless they could show pedigree back to the Aaron line--Aaron's lineage. But then that's why Matthew starts off in chapter 1 with all these begats. Because he's got to show that the claim is real.

But did you know that there is another genealogy found in the Bible as well? It's found in the Gospels. It's found in Luke, but Luke is not writing in chapter 1 with the same thing. No, it's not as important to Luke. He starts off with it in Luke chapter 3, and it's not even the beginning of chapter 3. Now, what I find that's very interesting here, and don't miss this, Matthew's primary emphasis is Jesus as the promised Messiah, Savior to the Jews. That's why he's writing that. Where, on the other hand, Luke's primary focus is Jesus as the Savior of all the peoples of the world.

Do you see a difference? You with me? These lights are really tough because I can't tell you. You're all silent. I think you've got Christmas comatose or something. The other thing that's interesting is Matthew traces Joseph's ancestry because it's, you know, if you're a Jew, it's all about being a man. But Luke, on the other hand, he traces Mary's lineage.

Now, you have to understand the Jewish mindset. These Jews would be--they would pray in the morning and they would thank the Lord that they weren't born like a dog or a woman. They just despised women. Women were so lowly that they didn't, you know, you're just kind of nothing. You're down there. You're below men. But if you read Matthew's genealogy, it's very, very intriguing because in the genealogy of tracing the father's side, he tosses in three named women and one more that doesn't have a name. Did you know that?

And if you look at these names, this is what's very, very intriguing here, because the first name you come to is Tamar. What do you know about Tamar? All Judah's boys were all killed off, not because of her, but she plays the prostitute in order to hook her father-in-law, something that you don't find, hopefully, today. But was that good? No, I'd say that wasn't a good thing. Then you get to another name here. You

come to Rahab. What do you know of Rahab? She didn't play the prostitute, she was the prostitute, right? She lied and she's still in Jesus's genealogy. Then you have a third female that's mentioned. Her name's Ruth.

Now, Ruth is a--she's a good woman but just because of her lineage, she's from what? She's a Moabitess. And what did the Israelites think of the Moabites? No, no, not at all. Then there's a fourth name. That fourth name is so wretched that they couldn't even mention her name: Bathsheba. What do you know about Bathsheba? Well, she got--did she get seduced by David, King David?

You know, I used to think when you listen to the story that David came out, he couldn't sleep, and he--you hear about the Kidron Valley, I remember I was standing right there at the archeology area where David's palace would be, and you look at the Kidron Valley and you're thinking it's far away. No, it's just the slope that's right down here. It's right there and when you come back up, right on the other side. And you could see the houses over there so clearly. It would almost be like from here to the first set of cars in the parking lot. At midnight, I don't know why Bathsheba was up there at night, probably on a full moon, taking a bath or a shower or whatever it may be. But it was clear enough that David, you know, [yawning]... and he calls his servant, "Look, go get her." He doesn't know who it is, but, "Go get her." David had his own Watergate scandal going on.

But when you look at all these names, we realize Jesus is the promised Son. Why then did Matthew, who was writing to the Jews, deliberately put these women in his genealogy? It's very clear. Because Matthew writes about Mary, saying, "She will give birth to a Son, and you will give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins." What kind of people can God save through the One born of Mary? And the answer flashes through the genealogy: Jesus can save people like Tamar, people like Rahab, people like Ruth, people like Bathsheba. He can save Gentiles, He can save prostitutes, He can save adulterers. He can save deceivers, He can save murderers. He can save anyone because the Bible tells us, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

But listen to the succeeding verses, "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For anyone practicing evil hates the light and doesn't come to the light, lest his deeds be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that he-- that they have done--been done in God."

We find that Jesus conquers sin on three levels. He conquers us--for us, the penalty of sin. Do you know what we call that? Justification. Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins in which He had no share that we might be justified by His righteousness in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. And with His stripes we are healed: "Desire of Ages," page 25.

So not only does He--He removes the penalty of sin, but He also removes the power of sin. What do we call that? Sanctification. And eventually, hopefully sooner than later, He'll remove the presence of sin, we call that glorification. Time is ticking away for us, not only in this lesson, but also in this life. The promised Son is a gift to each and every one of us, especially for those that are watching, all around this world. For us, when we have everything, it's very difficult to need God. But when you all of a sudden have lost something in a typhoon or a hurricane or a tornado, it's easy for us to cling to Jesus. I would encourage you, walk closely with the Lord. Time is counting down very quickly on this earth. Let us be ready. Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven, as we come to You, we ask that Your Holy Spirit would come into our lives, that You would send the promised One, Jesus, the Son of God, into our lives to make the changes, to prepare us for Your soon Coming. Continue to help us each and every day, Lord, that in all that we do, in all that we say, we might glorify Your name and that we might be true examples for You. This is our prayer, in

Jesus's name, amen.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Connie: Nobody was there to defend me. Nobody was there to protect me. My question was why did that happen to me, God? Why didn't You intervene? Once I hit my teenage years, everything just started coming out. I felt embarrassed of what had happened because for so long I felt it was my fault. There were times that I prayed, but it was prayers of resentment and anger and just yelling at God. I was so confused, so depressed, and I could not bear any more of the pain. You know, what's the point of living? It's might as well just die.

I started cutting myself but I heard a small still voice, and it said, "Stop, give Me a second chance." And right there, I just felt something completely different. I felt a presence there, and I put everything down and I went to my room and I just started crying. I realized that me and God connected so well and I no longer saw Him as just a God that no longer cared, but I actually saw Him as a Father. And I continued praying.

One day I was sleeping. My mom came to the bed, and she said, "Connie, he's here. He's in town, and the Lord impressed me that you need to face the situation. It's time for you to forgive." When something so drastic and so painful has happened, forgiveness is very hard because you're vulnerable. You let go of that ego, that pride that has taken over you for so many years. I prayed and when we confronted the situation, it was the most amazing moment where we could pray, we could cry, and we could forgive. And because of that, I'm able to help others and tell others that there is hope and there's someone that does care.

Announcer: Together, we have spread the gospel much farther than ever before. Thank you for your support.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Nita: I'm Tlingit Indian from Sitka, Alaska. My Tlingit name is [speaking foreign language]. It was a very depressing time for the people of Alaska. A lot of alcohol abuse was taking place and, unfortunately, my mother got caught up in the alcohol. It made myself and my siblings grow up in a pretty horrible environment. It was really hard to understand God. It was really hard to understand what love was.

I ended up having a child in my 12th grade and leaving home when I was 15 years old. But somehow, some way, we made it and I became a loner, I became a hermit. So I went up to the biggest marijuana county, to Humboldt County, and started my new career. Things weren't right, though. No matter how nice I kept thinking life was, living up on top of the mountain, not having to worry about wearing clothing, just waking up and watching the plants grow, searching still for more and more.

I went to the post office and I was standing there by myself. I looked down and here was this, what is called a handbill, a postcard, and the letters on it grabbed my attention and it said, "Revelations." I'd never heard Revelation taught before and I thought, "Gosh, that would have been so good." I looked at the time and the date and I said, "Wow, that's today."

And for six weeks, I sat there in the front seat of that building and could not believe the things that I heard. And I found this hunger that I had in my heart for decades being filled. I was actually like a starving child, you know, wanting to get in to learn more about Revelations. And I chose to be baptized on April 3.

Even though I chose to serve God, I kept falling. I was going to Bible studies, oh, four times a week. And just so hungry to learn as much as possible. God just, overnight, had me studying the Word of God through AFCOE and the miracles that happened through AFCOE is so incredible. The only preacher I was listening to was Pastor Doug Batchelor, who I didn't even call by his name. I called him the caveman. And then here, all of a sudden, I'm sitting in front of him in his classroom, learning from him.

On October 11, I sat there, though, in my room saying, "Lord, here I am, studying Your Word, but what am I doing here? What do I need to do? What is it You want me to do?" And that night, about 1 in the morning, God spoke to me and He said, "I want you to write a note to Pastor Doug and tell him what you do." I sat there and I says, "No, I'm not going to write a note. I'm not going to write a note." And I said, "Okay." So I ripped off a piece of paper and I wrote on the note, and I said, "I'm an experienced fashion designer. I can sew anything, I can make any patterns. If there's any way that I can be of any service to you, God told me to be bold and tell you."

And I walked up and I handed him the note and he didn't know what it was but he said, "Thank you," and four hours later I got a phone call from "Amazing Facts." Pastor Doug told me that I was an answer to their prayers. They had been looking for a wardrobe stylist for their new film that they're producing.

Female: Action!

Male: Two, three.

Nita: "Amazing Facts" has changed my life in the direction that God wants me to go. And now, out of all the knowledge that was taught to me, I'm able to go out into this world and share the gospel and finish the work for Jesus Christ.

Doug Batchelor: Friends, it's because of God's blessing and your support that thousands of others, like Nita, have found Jesus and everlasting life.