

## Scripture Reading

### **Colossians 1:15-20 (NIV)**

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

1) A quick look at Israel's story

### **Genesis 12:1-3 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup> "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

### **Ezekiel 36:26-27 (NIV)**

<sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

2) Jesus enters the scene

### **John 1:1-14 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. <sup>6</sup> There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not

receive him.<sup>12</sup> Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--<sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.<sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### **Romans 8:10-11 (NIV)**

<sup>10</sup> But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.<sup>11</sup> And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

### **Romans 10:9-10 (NIV)**

<sup>9</sup> That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.<sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

3) Don't underestimate the enemy

### **1 Corinthians 2:6-8 (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup> We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.<sup>7</sup> No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.<sup>8</sup> None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

### **Mark 1:9-13 (NIV)**

<sup>9</sup> At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.<sup>10</sup> As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.<sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."<sup>12</sup> At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert,<sup>13</sup> and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.