THE BOOKFOLIO

When Heaven Speaks, Heaven Agrees

THE SAGA BOOK — STUDENT / FOLLOW-ALONG EDITION

THE FATHER TESTIFIES OF THE SON • THE SON REVEALS THE FATHER • THE SPIRIT GLORIFIES THE SON

All Scripture is from the King James Version. The words of Jesus are printed in red.

Seven sagas, told plainly, with the Scripture word for word, one thing to think about in each saga, and journal space for your own notes.

Terrell Powell

The Prophecy

ISAIAH 42:1 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

Long, long before Jesus was born — hundreds of years before — God spoke first.

The prophet Isaiah was a man who carried God's word to God's people. One day, God gave Isaiah a word about Someone who was still to come. Isaiah did not keep it to himself. He spoke it out loud, and it was written down, so people could read it and wait.

Listen to what God did in this one short verse. First, God pointed. He said, in plain words: *Look at My Servant.* He was not pointing at a crowd. He was pointing at One Person.

Then God told us what He thinks of Him. The Father holds Him up. The Father chose Him. And the Father's own soul is pleased with Him — He delights in Him. God was not forced to send Him. God was glad to send Him.

Then God made a promise about His Spirit: *I have put My Spirit upon Him.* The Servant would not do His work alone, and He would not do it in His own strength. The Holy Spirit would be upon Him.

And then God told us where this was all going. This Servant would bring God's judgment — God's right and true way of setting things right — to the Gentiles. That means to the nations. To people far away. To people who were not born in Israel. This good news was never going to stay in one small place. It was going out to the whole world.

So before there was a manger, before there was a river to be baptized in, before there was a cross — Heaven had already spoken. And when Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees: the Father planned it, the Son would come and do it, and the Holy Spirit would be upon Him to do it.

The Scripture — The Father's Words, Set Apart

> *"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." — ISAIAH 42:1*

These are the Father's spoken words in this saga. Read them slowly, out loud if you can. Every part of this saga comes from this one verse.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He is the One speaking in this verse; He points to His Servant, upholds Him, delights in Him, and puts His Spirit upon Him.

The Son — He is the Servant the Father is pointing to; He does not speak in this verse — Heaven speaks about Him before He comes.

The Holy Spirit — He is the Spirit the Father puts upon the Servant, so the Servant's work is done in the Spirit's power.

One Thing to Think About

> **ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT** — The Father spoke about His Servant, and put His Spirit upon Him, hundreds of years before Jesus came — and then He kept His word, exactly as He said it. What does that

tell you about God, that He plans a thing, says it out loud, and then does just what He said?

Journal

Write it in your own words. What part of this verse stayed with you — that the Father upholds Him, that the Father delights in Him, or that the Father put His Spirit upon Him? Why?

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The Baptism

MATTHEW 3:16-17 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

In Saga 1, the Father spoke hundreds of years early. He said His Spirit would be put upon His Servant. Now watch — it happens, right in front of people's eyes.

Jesus came to the river Jordan, to John, to be baptized. John took Him down into the water and baptized Him. Jesus did not stay in the water. He came straight up out of it.

And then Heaven opened.

The heavens were opened unto Him. He saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove. Not loud. Not rough. Like a dove — soft and gentle — and the Spirit came and rested upon Him. Lighting upon Him. Staying upon Him. This is the very thing the Father promised in Isaiah 42:1: *I have put my spirit upon him.* Promised long ago. Done now, where people could see it.

And Heaven was not done speaking. A voice came from heaven. It was the Father's voice, and He said who Jesus is, out loud, so there would be no guessing: This is My beloved Son. Mine. Beloved. My Son. And the Father added His own heart to it: in Him, I am well pleased.

Stop and see all three, all in one moment, all in one place. The Son stands in the water. The Spirit comes down and rests on the Son. The Father speaks from heaven about the Son. Three Persons. One moment. One truth. Nobody is arguing. Nobody is telling a different story.

When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

The Scripture — Word for Word

> "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:" — MATTHEW 3:16
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> *"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." — MATTHEW 3:17*

The Father's spoken words in this saga are in that second verse. Read them slowly, out loud if you can. The Father wanted them heard.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He speaks from heaven in this saga; His voice says who Jesus is: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The Son — He is Jesus in the water, just baptized; He does not speak in these two verses — the Father speaks about Him, and the Spirit comes upon Him.

The Holy Spirit — He is seen, not heard, in this saga; He comes down like a dove and rests upon Jesus, just as the Father promised.

One Thing to Think About

> **ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT** — The Father did not whisper. He spoke from heaven, out loud, in front of people: "This is my beloved Son." Why do you think the Father wanted everyone there to hear, plain and

clear, who Jesus is?

Journal

Write it in your own words. If you had been standing at that river that day — the heavens open, the Spirit coming down like a dove, the Father's voice speaking — what would you have thought? What part stays with you most?

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The Transfiguration

MATTHEW 17:3, 5 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

At the river, the Father spoke about His Son. Now Jesus takes three of His disciples — Peter, James, and John — and brings them up on a high mountain, away from the crowd.

And there, right in front of their eyes, Jesus was changed. His face shone like the sun. His clothes became white as the light. For a short moment, the three men were allowed to see Jesus as He truly is — full of glory.

And they were not alone on that mountain. Two men appeared and talked with Jesus: Moses and Elijah — in the King James Bible, Elijah's name is written *Elias*. Moses had lived more than a thousand years before. Elijah had lived hundreds of years before. Moses stands for the Law God gave. Elijah stands for the prophets God sent. And now both of them stand on the mountain, talking with Jesus.

Peter was so full of joy that he started talking. He wanted to build three shelters — one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah — as if the three of them were all the same.

But while Peter was still speaking, Heaven spoke again. A bright cloud covered them, and a voice came out of the cloud. It was the Father's voice, and He said the same words He said at the river — *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* — and then He added three more words: *hear ye him.*

Hear *him*. Not Moses. Not Elijah. Him — the Son. Moses and Elijah were great servants of God, and God honors

them. But the Father points past both of them to one Person, and He tells us whose voice to follow.

Stop and see it plain. On the mountain: the Son, shining in glory. Moses and Elijah, standing with Him. And the Father, speaking from the cloud about the Son. When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

The Scripture — Word for Word

> "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him:" — MATTHEW 17:3
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> *"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." — MATTHEW 17:5*

The Father's spoken words in this saga are in that second verse. Read them slowly, out loud if you can. The Father wanted them heard — and then obeyed.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He speaks out of the bright cloud in this saga; He names Jesus His beloved Son, says He is well pleased with Him, and adds, "hear ye him."

The Son — He is Jesus on the mountain, shining in glory and talking with Moses and Elijah; He does not speak in these two verses — the Father speaks about Him.

The Holy Spirit — He is not named in these two verses; in this moment Heaven puts the Father's voice and the Son's glory in front of us, and the Father's one command is to hear the Son.

One Thing to Think About

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT — At the river, the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." On the mountain, He said those same words again — and added three more: "hear ye him." Why do you think the Father added those three words, and what does it mean for you to hear Jesus — to really listen to Him and do what He says?

Journal

Write it in your own words. Moses and Elijah were standing right there, and still the Father said, "hear ye him" — hear Jesus. What is one thing Jesus has said that you need to listen to more closely? Write it down plain.

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The Voice from Heaven

JOHN 12:28-30, 49; JOHN 17:1 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

At the river, the Father spoke about His Son. On the mountain, the Father spoke again. Now the Son Himself lifts up a prayer — and Heaven answers Him out loud.

The hour is getting close. Jesus knows the cross is near, and He does not pray to get out of it. He prays for one thing: that His Father's name would be glorified. In plain words, He prays: Father, glorify thy name.

And the Father answers. A voice came from heaven — a real voice, heard by people standing right there — and the Father said: *I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

Listen to that answer. *Both.* The Father has already glorified His name — through all that Jesus has said and done in His life on earth. And He will glorify it again — through what Jesus is about to do on the cross, and in rising again, and in going back up to glory. Past and future, in one answer. Hold on to that word *both* — your teacher has the full teaching on it.

But now watch the people. They all heard the sound. They did not all hear it the same way. Some of them said it thundered — just weather, just noise. Others said an angel had spoken to Him — closer, but still not the truth. Heaven had spoken, and some of them missed who was speaking.

Then Jesus explained why the voice came. It did not come because Jesus needed it. Jesus already knew His Father.

The voice came for the people standing by — for your sakes — so they could hear the Father answer the Son, and know.

And this is the way Jesus always spoke. Later in this same chapter, He tells us plain: He has not spoken of Himself. The Father who sent Him gave Him a commandment — what He should say, and what He should speak. So when you hear Jesus, you are hearing what the Father gave Him to say. The Son does not make up His own message apart from the Father.

And later still, Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and prayed the same thing from the other side: Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. The Father glorifies the Son. The Son glorifies the Father. Back and forth, like a perfect answer.

Stop and see it plain. The Son prays. The Father answers out loud. And they glorify one another. When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

The Scripture — Word for Word

"Father, glorify thy name." Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, *"I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."* — JOHN 12:28

"The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him." — JOHN 12:29

Jesus answered and said, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes." — JOHN 12:30

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." — JOHN 12:49

> These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:" — JOHN 17:1

The Father's spoken words in this saga are in John 12:28. The words of Jesus are printed in red. Read them slowly, out loud if you can. The voice came so people would hear it.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He speaks from heaven in this saga, answering His Son out loud: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The Son — He prays, "Father, glorify thy name"; He explains that the voice came for the people's sakes; and He teaches that He speaks only what the Father gave Him to say.

The Holy Spirit — He is not named in these verses; in this moment Heaven puts the Son's prayer and the Father's answer in front of us — the Spirit's turn to be named in this story comes in the sagas still ahead.

One Thing to Think About

> **ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT** — The people standing by heard the voice from heaven, and some said it thundered, and some said an angel spoke — and Jesus said the voice came "for your sakes" (John 12:29-30). Can people stand in the presence of a revelation from God and still fail to recognize what God is saying?

Journal

Write it in your own words. The crowd heard the sound, but not everybody knew whose voice it was. What helps you know when God is speaking — and what can make a person miss it? Write it down plain.

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The Promise of the Comforter

JOHN 15:26 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

Jesus is with His disciples, close to the end. He knows He is going away from them — back to the Father — and He knows their hearts are troubled about it. He will not leave them with nothing. He gives them a promise.

He tells them about Someone who is coming: the Comforter. That is the name Jesus gives Him here — the One who comes alongside to help and to comfort. Jesus says, *I will send Him to you.* Not someday in a vague way. Jesus Himself will send Him.

And listen to where He comes from: *from the Father.* Jesus sends Him, and He comes from the Father. The Son and the Father are together in this sending. There is no disagreement in Heaven about this gift. When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

Jesus tells us His name and His nature: He is *the Spirit of truth.* He does not bring a different message, and He does not bring lies or confusion. He is truth, and He comes from truth — He *proceedeth from the Father.*

And Jesus tells us what the Comforter will do when He comes: *He shall testify of me.* He will speak about Jesus. He will point to Jesus. He will bear witness to who Jesus is. The Spirit does not come to point to Himself. He comes to testify of the Son.

Stop and see all three, all in one verse, all in one promise. The Son speaks and sends. The Father is the One from whom the Spirit proceeds. And the Spirit comes to testify

of the Son. Three Persons. One promise. One truth.

When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

The Scripture — Word for Word

> "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:" — JOHN 15:26

These are the words of Jesus in this saga, printed in red. In this verse the Father does not speak out loud — Jesus speaks about the Father and about the Spirit. Read them slowly, out loud if you can. This is a promise Jesus meant His disciples to hold on to.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He does not speak in this verse; He is the One from whom the Spirit of truth proceeds, and from whom Jesus sends the Comforter.

The Son — He is Jesus, speaking to His disciples; He promises to send the Comforter from the Father, and He tells us what the Spirit will do.

The Holy Spirit — He is the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, in this saga; He does not speak in this verse — Jesus speaks about Him, and says He shall testify of Jesus.

One Thing to Think About

> **ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT** — Jesus said the Comforter is the Spirit of truth, sent by the Son from the Father, and that He shall testify of Jesus — He points to Jesus, not to Himself. What does that tell you about how the Holy Spirit works, and how can you tell

when a voice is truly from the Spirit of truth?

Journal

Write it in your own words. Jesus promised He would not leave His disciples without help — He would send the Comforter. What part of this promise do you need most today — that He comes from the Father, that He is the Spirit of truth, or that He testifies of Jesus? Write it down plain.

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The Spirit Glorifies the Son

JOHN 16:13-15 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

In Saga 5, Jesus promised the Comforter was coming. Now Jesus stays with His disciples a little longer, and He tells them more — what the Spirit of truth will do when He comes.

Jesus says: when He comes, He will guide you. Not leave you guessing. Not leave you lost. He will guide you into all truth. Step by step, He leads God's people into the truth.

And listen to how the Spirit speaks. Jesus says He shall not speak of Himself. That means the Spirit does not make up His own message, apart from Heaven. What He hears, that is what He speaks. *Whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak.* And He will show you things to come — He will make known what is ahead, as Heaven gives it to Him.

Then Jesus gives the Spirit's great work in plain words: *He shall glorify me.* To glorify means to honor, to lift up, to make known how great someone is. The Spirit glorifies Jesus — the Son. He does not glorify Himself in Jesus' place. He lifts up the Son.

And Jesus tells us how He does it. The Spirit shall receive of what is Jesus' — He shall take of mine — and He shall show it unto you. What belongs to Jesus, the Spirit takes and makes it plain to His people. Nothing new that fights against Jesus. Nothing apart from Jesus. What is the Son's, shown to us by the Spirit.

Then Jesus says why this can be so: *All things that the*

Father hath are mine. Everything the Father has is also the Son's. That is why the Spirit can take what is the Son's and show it to us — because the Father and the Son are in full agreement, and what is the Father's is the Son's.

Stop and see all three, all in these words. The Son speaks and explains. The Father — all things that the Father has are the Son's. And the Spirit comes, speaks what He hears, and glorifies the Son. Three Persons. One truth. One work.

When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

The Scripture — Word for Word

> "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." — JOHN 16:13
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> "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." — JOHN 16:14
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> "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." — JOHN 16:15

These are the words of Jesus in this saga, printed in red. In these verses the Father does not speak out loud — Jesus speaks about the Father and about the Spirit. Read them slowly, out loud if you can. This is Jesus telling us, ahead of time, what the Spirit will do.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He does not speak in these verses; Jesus tells us that all things the Father has are the Son's, and the Spirit takes of the Son's and shows it to us.

The Son — He is Jesus, speaking to His disciples; He tells us the Spirit will guide into all truth, speak what He hears, and glorify the Son.

The Holy Spirit — He is the Spirit of truth in this saga; He does not speak in these verses — Jesus speaks about Him, and says He shall glorify Jesus and show His things to us.

One Thing to Think About

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT — Jesus said the Spirit shall not speak of Himself, but shall glorify the Son — He shall take what is Jesus' and show it to us. Why do you think the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus instead of Himself, and what does that show you about how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit agree together?

Journal

Write it in your own words. Jesus said the Spirit will guide you into all truth and show you what is His. What part of this stays with you most — that He guides, that He speaks what He hears, or that He glorifies Jesus? Write it down plain.

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The Doorway

EPHESIANS 2:18 • KING JAMES VERSION

The Scene, Told Plainly

This is the last saga, and it shows us where everything in this book has been leading. The Father testified of the Son. The Son revealed the Father. The Spirit glorifies the Son. Now the Apostle Paul, writing to the church, tells us how people like us actually come to God.

Paul is writing about two groups of people who had been kept far apart: the Jews and the Gentiles. They did not eat together. They did not worship together. Between them stood a wall. But Paul says Christ has brought both near, and now — listen to the word — *we both* have access. Both. The same door is open to both.

And Paul tells us how the doorway works, all in one short verse. *Through him* — through Jesus, the Son. Nobody comes around Him, and nobody needs to. He is the way in. *By one Spirit* — by the one Holy Spirit, the same Spirit who came upon Jesus at His baptism, the same Spirit Jesus promised to send, the same Spirit who glorifies the Son. And *unto the Father* — that is where the doorway leads. Not to a feeling. Not to a building. Unto the Father Himself.

Access means a way in — being brought near, being allowed to come close. Once, people stood far off. Now, through the Son and by the Spirit, they have a way in to the Father. That is not a small thing. That is the whole journey of this book landing in one line: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, together, opening the way for worshipers to come home.

And this is the bridge back to where true worship begins. Jesus said the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Ephesians 2:18 shows us the doorway that brings those worshipers in: through the Son, by one Spirit, unto the Father. The worship the Father seeks, and the way in to give it, are held together by the same three Persons.

Stop and see all three, all in one verse, all in one doorway. The Father is the One we come unto. The Son is the One we come through. And the Spirit is the One we come by. Three Persons. One access. One open door.

When Heaven speaks, Heaven agrees.

The Scripture — Word for Word

> "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." — EPHESIANS 2:18
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> "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." — JOHN 4:23
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> "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." — JOHN 4:24

The words of Ephesians 2:18 are the Apostle Paul's teaching, written to the church — they are not printed in red, because in this verse neither Jesus nor the Father is speaking out loud. The words of John 4:23-24 are the words of Jesus, printed in red. Read them all slowly, out loud if you can. This is the doorway, and it is open.

Who Is Speaking

The Father — He does not speak in these verses; He is the

One unto whom we have access — the doorway leads to Him, and He seeketh true worshippers to worship Him.

The Son — He is Jesus; in Ephesians 2:18 He does not speak, but He is the "him" through whom we both have access, and in John 4 He speaks the words printed in red.

The Holy Spirit — He does not speak in these verses; He is the one Spirit by whom we have access unto the Father.

One Thing to Think About

ONE THING TO THINK ABOUT — Paul said we have access unto the Father through the Son and by one Spirit — all three Persons together in one doorway. Why do you think God made the way in like this — through Jesus, by the Spirit, unto the Father — and what does it show you about how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit agree together?

Journal

Write it in your own words. You have a way in: through the Son, by the Spirit, unto the Father. What part of this doorway means the most to you today — that Jesus is the way through, that the one Spirit brings you, or that the Father Himself is where the door leads? Write it down plain.

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