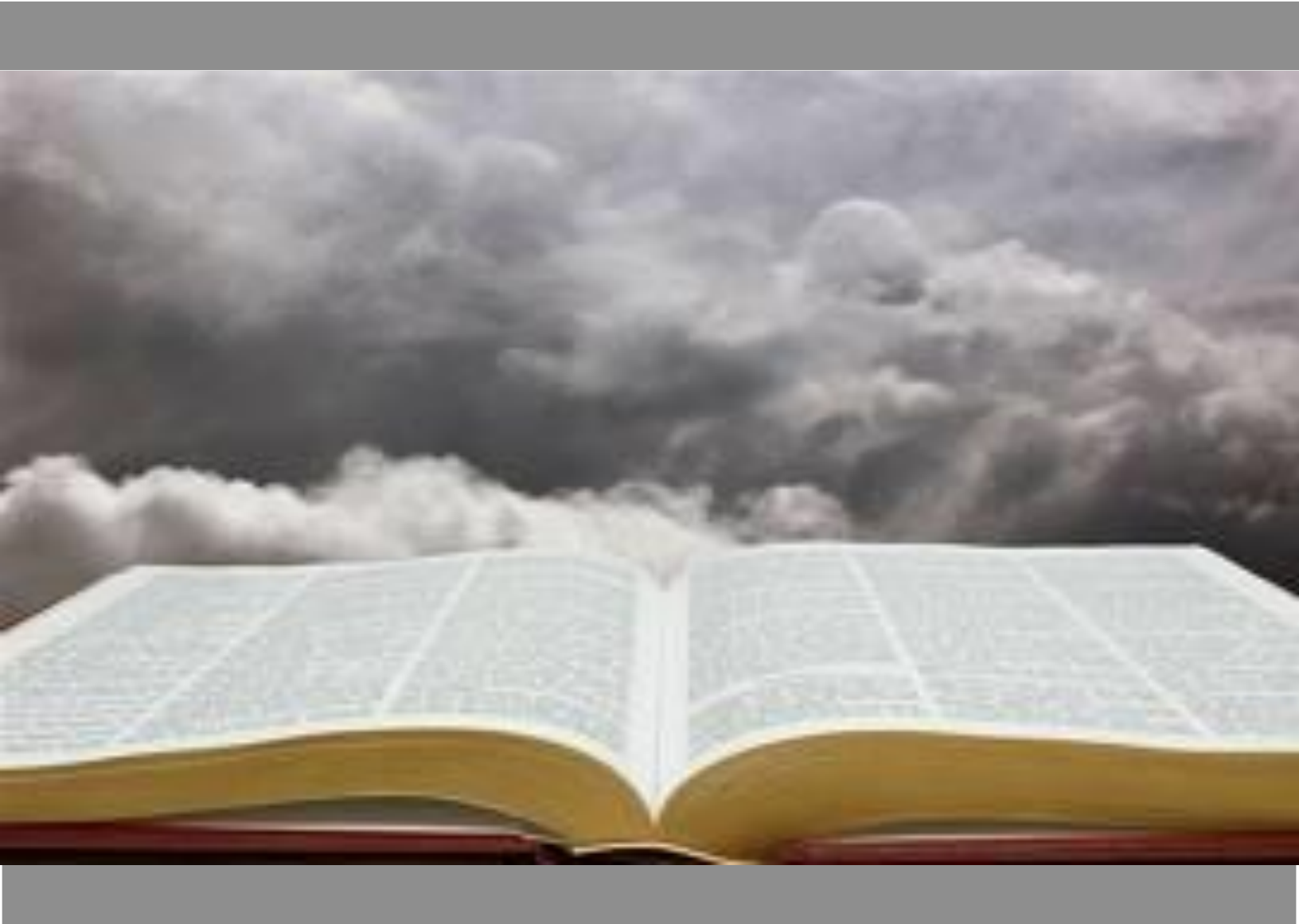


# God's Eternal Plan

## Lesson 3: The Messiah



Discovering God's Word

Bible Study Series

# God's Eternal Plan

## Lesson 3: The Messiah

Learn about the one God sent to fulfill His prophecies and provide the ransom sacrifice for sin

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### Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

**Study Number:** DGW24

Written by Eric Krieg

**About the author:** My name is Eric Krieg. I am a disciple of Jesus, a Bible student, a truth seeker, and an evangelist. My interest is in using the Bible as my only guide in my faith. My desire is to help others understand the message of the Bible and pursue true, New Testament Christianity.

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**My plea:** It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

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## God's Eternal Plan

# Lesson 3: The Messiah

In our last two studies we have established the foundational principles involved in God's eternal plan. We have seen that God did have a plan in place from eternity to redeem mankind from his sin. Then, we have discovered that God would choose the nation of Israel to be His special people – and would fulfill His promise of bringing the Savior into this world through them.

Of course, in order to fully appreciate the value of God's eternal plan, we must remember the serious nature of sin (as we established in lesson 1). Sin separates mankind from God (who is entirely holy). Once again, Isaiah 59:1-2 says, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."

This holy and righteous God demands life as a payment for sin. He says, "without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). However, the animal sacrifices that were given according to the Law of Moses simply were not sufficient in taking away sins. Hebrews 10:4 says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." Therefore, God sent His only begotten Son to the earth as His sacrificial Lamb! John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." In John 1:29, when John, the baptizer, saw Jesus coming toward him, he

proclaimed, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

This story of salvation (revealed through the pages of the Scriptures) is essential to you! Your salvation hinges upon the sacrifice that Jesus Christ (the Messiah) made on the cross! This is how the Bible story is important to your life. Remember, God's promise to Abraham (in Genesis 12:3) was that through Abraham's descendants all nations of the earth would be blessed. This includes you and me! Yet, as we will discuss in the next lesson, He also requires some things from us in order to be saved.

This third lesson will focus on the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and promises God made to bless the entire world through the Seed of Abraham. This is the story of Jesus Christ – the Messiah (the anointed one), the one God had predetermined (according to His eternal plan of redemption) to send to this world to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world and the one He had anointed to be King over His people!

## *The Messiah In Old Testament Prophecy*

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### **Over 300 Old Testament prophecies about Jesus!**

Scholars say that there are over 300 individual prophecies about Jesus Christ (the Messiah) made in the pages of the Old Testament! Clearly, this is the central storyline that is being told in the Old Testament – how God is using His people (Israel) to bring the Savior into the world! While we cannot consider all of these 300+ prophecies during the course of this lesson, I do want to discuss a few.

### **Genesis 3:15**

"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."

As we discussed in lesson 1, this is the first mention in the Scriptures concerning God’s plan to save mankind from his sin! This promise comes right after mankind had sinned for the first time (i.e. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden). Specifically, this promise is directed toward Satan (the enemy of God and man). In it, God promised Satan that, although Satan would temporarily wound the woman’s Seed (“you shall bruise His heel”), the woman’s Seed would destroy Satan (“He shall bruise your head”). This reference is to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ (the Seed of woman) would provide the victory over Satan, even though Satan would inflict a temporary wound to Jesus Christ (by putting Him to death)!

### **Genesis 12:3**

“I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 12:1-5 was a central passage in our last study, as we observed the promises that were made to Abraham. Specifically, this promise (in verse 3) that God would bless all nations of the earth through the descendants of Abraham. Now, in our last study, we saw the fulfillment of the first two promises God had made to Abraham. First, God made a great nation of Abraham (i.e. his descendants became numerous and the great nation of Israel). Second, God gave the descendants of Abraham (the Israelites) the land of Canaan. These promises were fulfilled in the Old Testament. However, God had not yet fulfilled this third promise by the end of the Old Testament (concerning all the nations being blessed through the descendants of Abraham). Jesus Christ would be the fulfillment of this promise! Jesus came through the lineage of Abraham and would offer the forgiveness of sins to the entire world (regardless of nationality)!

### **Genesis 49:10**

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”

As we discussed in lesson 2, Judah would be the tribe of Israel from which the kings would come.

From the time of David to the fall of the kingdom of Judah, there was a king on the throne from the tribe of Judah – despite the efforts that were made to overthrow them and change the lineage! Shiloh (a reference to Jesus Christ) would come from this tribe and would be King in His own right!

### **2 Samuel 7:12-16**

“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”

David’s kingdom would be established forever, according to the promise in this passage. That is, through the lineage of David there would be a kingdom that would last forever. Christ Jesus, coming through the lineage of David, would be the King who would reign over this kingdom. However, this kingdom would *not* be a physical kingdom. Instead, this kingdom would be a spiritual kingdom (read John 18:33-38)! This fact would disappoint many of the Jews who were living during the time of Christ (as they were looking for someone who would restore the physical kingdom of Israel back to its “glory days,” when David and Solomon reigned). As a result, many of them rejected Jesus as the Messiah!

### **Isaiah 7:13-14**

“Then he said, ‘Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.’”

Isaiah is often called the “Messianic Prophet” because of the frequency and number of Messianic prophecies in the book of Isaiah. This specific prophecy points to the fact that Jesus Christ would be

born of a virgin and that His name would be “Immanuel.” Certainly, this would be no ordinary event! Clearly, the one who would be born of a virgin would be proof that He was the Messiah! Also notice that this is specifically addressed to the “house of David” (we have already observed the reason why this is so!).

### **Isaiah 9:6-7**

“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Once again, we observe that Jesus Christ would come through the physical lineage of David and would reign over an everlasting kingdom! He would be called “Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”! We will talk more about this kingdom in lesson 5, when we talk about Christ’s church.

### **Isaiah 53**

“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the

slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked — But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.”

While the other passages we have observed point toward more of a triumphant scene for the coming Messiah, here is a passage that describes what He would have to endure in order to provide that victory over Satan and establish His everlasting kingdom. He would need to willingly offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the entire world! He would bear our grief, carry our sorrows, be wounded for our transgressions, be bruised for our iniquities – so that we could be healed through Him! He would not be forced to endure this oppression, affliction, and death. Instead, He willfully endured it all – allowing Himself to be led as a lamb is led to the slaughter!

### **Christ fulfilled all of these prophecies!**

Again, this is only a sample of the more than 300 Old Testament prophecies about the one God would send into the world to redeem mankind from his sin! Every single one of these prophecies found its fulfillment in Jesus Christ! Thus, Jesus Christ proved to be the Messiah!

In John 1:41-42, Andrew found his brother Simon (Peter) and declared, “We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated, the Christ)” – and brought him to Jesus. In John 4:25-26, a Samaritan

woman said to Jesus, “‘I know that Messiah is coming’ (who is called Christ). ‘When He comes, He will tell us all things.’ To which, Jesus responded, ‘I who speak to you am He.’”

## ***The Fullness Of Time***

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### **Galatians 4:4-5**

Many years passed from the time that God first promised to destroy the work of Satan in Genesis 3:15 to the coming of Jesus Christ! Yet, God never forgot His plan or His promises! Instead, the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ came into the world when “the fullness of time had come.” Galatians 4:4-5 says, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” God knew what time would be the right time – and He was waiting for that time! Then, when that time came, God sent Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, into the world....

### **The birth of Christ**

Mary, a virgin who was betrothed to Joseph, conceived. It was revealed to Joseph that the child conceived in Mary “is of the Holy Spirit” and that Mary would “bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:20-21). Then, Joseph took his betrothed from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be registered (Luke 2:4-6). It was during this time in Bethlehem (during the days of King Herod) that Jesus was born (according to prophecy, see Micah 5:2).

Luke 2:7 says, “And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” Being warned of the desire of King Herod to destroy Jesus, Joseph took Mary and Jesus to Egypt. During this time, Herod instructed that all male children under two years old in Bethlehem be put to death (Matthew 2:13-18). Then, after Herod’s death, Joseph was called back to the

land of Israel, to his homeland of Nazareth (Matthew 2:19-23). This was the fulfillment of three additional Old Testament prophecies (see Matthew 2:15, 18, 23).

One of the important factors about the birth of Jesus Christ is His genealogy – as we have already seen that the Old Testament Scriptures made very specific promises regarding the physical lineage of the Messiah! Take some time to read the genealogical accounts that are given in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38. As you read these, you may notice that there are some points of difference between the two accounts. One of the plausible explanations is that, perhaps, one records the lineage through Joseph and the other records the lineage through Mary (demonstrating that Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecies about His lineage either way). Still, one thing can be certain from observing these texts: Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning His lineage! Jesus Christ came through the lineage of Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David – just as God had said He would!

### **The Deity Of Christ**

While Jesus Christ came through the lineage of these men, there was something different about Jesus! Remember, His name was to be called “Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:13-14). As Matthew records the birth of Jesus, notice what is said in Matthew 1:23: “‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’” Therefore, Jesus was born in the flesh; but, was not *only* flesh (He was not *just* a man)!

Instead, the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ (before coming to earth – and while on the earth) was God! That is, He maintained all of the characteristics of Deity (the nature of being God), as we discussed in lesson 1. John 1:1-3 states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Colossians 2:9 says, “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Thus, as we continue to learn about the life of Jesus, we must remember that Jesus perfectly possessed both the natures of man and God! He is, therefore, rightly declared to be the “Son of Man” and the “Son of God” at the same time (see John 5:27 and John 1:49)! So, whenever we read about Jesus being born of a woman, we need to understand that Jesus willingly left Heaven in order to come to the earth and fulfill the plan of God (see Philippians 2:5-11)! Therefore, as we continue to study the story of Jesus, remember that He willingly left Heaven (a place without suffering, pain, and death) to endure hardship, torture, and death – for you and for me (according to the prophecy of Isaiah 53)! 2 Corinthians 8:9 states (concerning Jesus), “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”

## **John, the Baptist**

Just prior to the birth of Jesus Christ to Mary, John was born to Elizabeth (read Luke 1). John was chosen by God as the one who would be sent ahead of Jesus, in order to prepare the people for Jesus’ ministry. You can read about some of John’s ministry in Matthew chapter 3. His work and ministry was also prophesied in the Old Testament (see Matthew 3:3). It was John who made the following announcement as he saw Jesus coming toward him: “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). Jesus was also baptized by John in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:16-17).

# ***The Life Of Christ***

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## **Christ’s teaching**

Jesus Christ was the Master Teacher. His ministry was focused on seeking and saving those who were lost (Luke 19:10). A central focus of Christ’s ministry and teaching was the coming of His kingdom. This theme is especially seen in the gospel of Luke (i.e. Luke 9:27). He taught concerning what

His kingdom would be like and the true nature of those who would be kingdom citizens.

One of the ways in which Jesus taught was parables. This, too, was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (read Matthew 10:34-35). A parable was simply an earthly story that was taught in order to convey a spiritual truth or application. Jesus taught many parables related to things the people would have been familiar with (i.e. planting and harvesting, a treasure, a lost sheep, a supper, etc.).

As Jesus taught, He was establishing the foundation for His new law (read Matthew 5-7 and notice how many times Jesus contrasts His teaching with the Law of Moses or with the leading opinions of the day). Now, it is important to remember that Jesus lived under the Law of Moses. However, He was establishing His new covenant (which would come into effect after His death). Yet, as Jesus taught concerning His new law, He did not do so to overthrow the Law of Moses. Instead, Jesus was fulfilling the Old Law and working to establish the New Law. In Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

## **Christ’s miracles**

Jesus worked many miracles while He lived upon the earth. You can read about Jesus feeding thousands of people with only a few loaves of bread and a few small fish, walking on the water, cleansing lepers, healing the paralyzed, causing the blind to see, and even raising the dead! These supernatural events were much more than Jesus just showing compassion on those who were suffering (though He certainly did show compassion). Instead, these supernatural events demonstrated to the people that Jesus was who He claimed to be (the Son of the living God)!

Consider how this is demonstrated in Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. Jesus, possessing the perfect knowledge of God, declared to the woman that she had no husband

presently and had five husbands previously (John 4:16-18). As Jesus had been speaking with her, she said that she knew Messiah was coming (John 4:25). Then, Jesus declared to her, “I who speak to you am He” (John 4:26). Then, notice what the woman told others in John 4:29: “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” Clearly, Jesus’ miraculous knowledge demonstrated to this woman that He really was the Son of God and the Messiah!

### **Christ’s sinless life**

While Jesus did possess the nature of being God, He was also fully human while He lived on the earth. As man, Jesus was tempted throughout His life on earth. One specific example of Jesus being tempted is recorded in Matthew 4:1-11. On this occasion, Satan tried to convince Jesus Christ to sin three times by using things that would have appealed to Jesus’ fleshly nature. However, Jesus responded to each temptation (both here and throughout His life) in a way that pleased God, refusing to give in to the temptation! Hebrews 4:15 tells us that Jesus Christ was “in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.”

Jesus lived perfectly according to the Law of Moses (the Law that He lived under). This is significant in that Jesus Christ was going to lay down His life as the sacrifice to take away sin! Therefore, if Jesus would have committed sin, He would not have been acceptable as the sacrifice for sin! God demanded a sacrifice that was entirely without blemish. If Christ would have sinned, God would have needed another to make a sacrifice for sin! However, John writes the following concerning Jesus: “And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin” (1 John 3:5).

### **Many other works...**

The space allotted for this lesson does not permit us to study all of the wonderful things Jesus did while He was on the earth, that are recorded in Scripture. But, even if we could, we still would not be able to know everything that He did! For, the Scriptures record that “there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not

contain the books that would be written” (John 21:25)!

Yet, the things that are recorded in the Scriptures are sufficient to lead us to fully believe in Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah and Son of God! John wrote, “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:30-31).

## ***Christ’s Death, Burial, And Resurrection***

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### **Christ’s death**

Remember that Jesus was (and is) God. Therefore, He had the knowledge of God while He lived on the earth – including the knowledge that He was going to die and how He was going to die. Jesus, then, could even predict His own death and resurrection! For instance, in Matthew 16:21 says, “From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.” Yet, despite knowing what was awaiting Him at the end of His life, He came to earth anyways and went through with it all!

When the time for Jesus’ betrayal and death was drawing near, He prayed to His Father in the Garden of Gethsemane, asking that there might be some other way to accomplish His will (consider Luke 22:42-44). However, Jesus remained devoted to His Father and accomplishing His Father’s will – even when there was no other way provided!

Jesus was then betrayed and denied by His own apostles whom He had chosen. These 12 apostles had been with Jesus through His earthly ministry. However, Judas (one of the 12) agreed to betray Jesus into the hands of those who would crucify Him. Peter (another of the 12) denied any association with Jesus when he was asked



concerning such after Jesus had been arrested. All of the other apostles fled.

Upon being betrayed by Judas, Jesus was arrested by those who desired to kill Him. Jesus was then given an unfair trial by the Jewish Sanhedrin and by Pontius Pilate (the governor). Through these trials, Jesus quietly endured being accused of sin that He did not commit. During His trial before Pilate, the Jews even agreed to have Barabbas (a known prisoner and murderer) released instead of Jesus! Instead of releasing Jesus, the crowd demanded that Jesus Christ (the sinless Son of God and the Messiah) be crucified! Jesus was then mocked – being stripped of His own clothes and clothed with a scarlet robe, a crown of thorns put on His head, and a reed put in His right hand. Then, they bowed before Him and mocked, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” (Matthew 27:29). Throughout this process, Jesus was even scourged (a severe beating that many prisoners would not live through) and spat on.

After all of this, Jesus was led away to be crucified (Matthew 27:31). Crucifixion was considered to be the most horrible form of death and was reserved for the worst criminals. Jesus Christ was stripped of His clothing and laid upon the cross. His hands were fastened to the cross with nails that were driven through them. His feet were fastened in the same way. The process of crucifixion was intended to be full of agony and humiliation. Jesus’ crucifixion and death are recorded in Matthew 27:32-56 (as well as in Mark, Luke, and John).

In Jesus’ last breaths, He said, “It is finished!” (John 19:30). Then, bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. Jesus Christ, the Messiah had died. However, these words remind us that He fully accomplished the eternal plan of God and that He fulfilled the mission God had sent Him to do!

### **Christ’s burial**

After Jesus died, His body was taken down from the cross and was buried in the tomb owned by a man named Joseph (of Arimathea). A large stone was rolled against the door of the tomb. Guards were even appointed to watch over the tomb of Jesus (to ensure that none of Jesus’ disciples would come to steal the body of Jesus). Read Matthew 27:57-66.

It is at this point that we are left to wonder, “Has God been defeated?” However, remember that God had told Satan that Satan would bruise the heel of woman’s Seed (a temporary blow); but, that God would bruise Satan’s head (a catastrophic injury), according to Genesis 3:15. Satan had been successful in filling the Jews with envy and hatred toward Jesus Christ, resulting in Christ’s crucifixion. However....

### **Christ’s resurrection**

On the first day of the week (the third day), Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the tomb. Then, there was a great earthquake as an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven and rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it. The angel appeared like lightning, and his clothing was white as snow. The guards even shook for fear of him and became like dead men. The angel then informed the women that Jesus was not there – that He had risen from the dead and they could see the place where His body had laid. They were to go and tell the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead! As they went to tell the disciples, Jesus appeared to them. Read Matthew 28:1-10. In fact, the risen Christ appeared to many – i.e. to all of the apostles, and was even seen by over 500 at once (1 Corinthians 15:3-9)! Jesus Christ had truly risen from the dead – and has provided the victory over Satan and death!

Jesus remained on the earth a short period of time after His resurrection. During this time He commissioned His apostles to go into all of the world and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15-16) and to wait in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4-8). After this period of time on the earth, Jesus Christ was then taken up in the cloud, out of sight into Heaven. Acts 1:9-11 says, “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.’”

These two men (probably two angels) promised that Jesus would come again in the same manner as those individuals had just witnessed Jesus

go into Heaven! For this return of Jesus Christ, His people continue to eagerly wait (read 2 Peter 3:10-14).

## ***Jesus Christ, God's Sacrificial Lamb***

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### **Putting it all into perspective**

What does the fulfillment of these prophecies through Christ's life, death, burial, and resurrection mean to your life? Let's review some points to help put this all into perspective before closing our study.

#### **God is holy**

God is entirely separated from all that is evil (1 John 1:5; Revelation 4:8). Therefore, He calls upon His people to be holy in order to be in fellowship with Him. 1 Peter 1:15-16 says, "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'"

#### **Sin separates the sinner from God**

Whenever mankind violates the law of God, he sins (1 John 3:4). The consequences of this sin are separation from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and eternal punishment in Hell fire (Revelation 21:8). This is simply because God cannot be in fellowship with evil (it is contrary to His nature)! Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

#### **God's love provides grace and mercy**

Fortunately, God loves us and does not want man to be eternally condemned to Hell. He wants to save us! However, God's justice demands life as the payment for sin. Under the Law of Moses, God instituted animal sacrifices for His people to make in order to be forgiven of their sins (Leviticus 17:11; Leviticus 16:30). However, the blood of bulls and goats was not sufficient in taking away sins (Hebrews 10:1-4). So, God appointed His only begotten Son to come to the earth, live a sinless life,

and offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice (once for all) to take away the sins of the world and appease His wrath (see Romans 5:6-11)!

Thus, Jesus Christ was God's sacrificial Lamb – and we can be cleansed by His blood (Isaiah 53; Matthew 26:28; John 1:29; Hebrews 10:11-18)! 1 Peter 1:18-21 says, "knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."

Thus, Jesus Christ paid the price that was due by the sinner. 1 Peter 2:24 says (concerning Jesus), "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed." 2 Corinthians 5:21 says (concerning Jesus), "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

#### **Christ's resurrection offers hope**

Peter demonstrated the importance of Christ's resurrection when he preached in Acts chapter 2. Paul demonstrated the importance of Christ's resurrection to our eternal salvations when he wrote 1 Corinthians 15. For, he states, "For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Corinthians 15:16-19). Christ's resurrection provides the assurance that God will raise the dead and that those who are faithful to Christ will be victorious through Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:57-58)!

## ***Conclusion***

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"It is finished!" (John 19:30). Jesus has fulfilled the plan of God to bring about salvation for

every nation! “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15). Without Christ, we would be without hope and without God in the world; but, with Christ, we are brought near to God by the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:11-13)!

Romans 5:6-11 provides an excellent summary of the significance of Jesus’ sacrifice: “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

While God has provided salvation through Jesus Christ to all nations, He does require something of men in order to partake of the blessings in Christ. These promises and instructions are contained within the message of the gospel, which will be our focus in the next lesson!

## ***Study Questions***

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Review what you’ve learned thus far.

### **1. The Messiah In Old Testament Prophecy**

Review the following Old Testament prophecies that were made concerning Jesus.

\*Genesis 3:15 –

\*Genesis 12:3 –

\*Genesis 49:10 –

\*1 Samuel 7:12-16 –

\*Isaiah 7:13-14 –

\*Isaiah 9:6-7 –

\*Isaiah 53 –

Would all of the 300+ prophecies about Jesus Christ be fulfilled in Christ?

### **2. The Fullness Of Time**

When would God send Jesus Christ into the world to accomplish His eternal plan?

What was significant about Jesus’ birth? What is significant about Jesus’ genealogy?

What was different about Jesus (i.e. Matthew 1:23)?

### **5. Jesus Christ, God's Sacrificial Lamb**

What does the fulfillment of these Old Testament prophecies through Christ's life, death, burial, and resurrection mean to your life?

What was the role of John, the Baptist?

### **3. The Life Of Christ**

Discuss some significant points concerning the teaching of Christ.

What was the significance of Jesus' miracles?

Was Christ tempted? If so, how did He respond to these temptations? What is the significance of this?

### **4. Christ's Death, Burial, And Resurrection**

Discuss what Christ endured prior to and including His crucifixion.

As Jesus was put to death and buried in the tomb, was God defeated?

What happened on the third day? What was said in Acts 1:9-11?