

Jesus in The Old Testament

An Eight Week Survey

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Southside Baptist Church
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Unless Otherwise Noted all Scripture Quotes Come from the New King James Version

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“Oh, magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together.”
(Psalm 34:3)

Week 1 - Outline - Introduction

- Setting the stage
 - John 1 – Jesus and Phillip – A profound recognition
- How can we find Jesus in the Old Testament?
 - Messianic Prophecies - The Sacrificial System - The Tabernacle Furnishings - Levitical feasts - End Times Prophecy
- Why should we search for Jesus in the Old Testament?
 - Because it's necessary to understand who Jesus is
 - The Road to Emmaus - Luke 24 – Moses and the Prophets
 - Jesus said all scripture points to Him
 - Phillip in John 1 - Recognized Jesus from the Old Testament
 - Paul in Acts 28 - Proved Jesus is the Messiah using the Old Testament
 - We need to remember, the Bible is one book with one Author
 - The Holy Spirit - 2 Peter 1
 - It is one story - God's redemptive plan through Jesus
 - Which Jesus promised to teach us - John 14:25
- We'll start by briefly surveying the Bible's structure
 - To help us see it as one book / one Author / one story
- Then we'll focus on seven names of Jesus and their Old Testament origin:
 - Week 2 - The Lamb of God
 - Week 3 - The Son of God / The Son of Man
 - Week 4 - The Bread of Life
 - Week 5 - The Great I AM
 - Week 6 - The Great High Priest
 - Week 7 - The Redeemer
 - Week 8 - The Good Shepherd

Week 1 - Continued

Setting the Stage

Phillip saw the young Rabbi walking towards him. Although he didn't know Him personally, as the Rabbi approached Phillip He said, *"Follow me."* That was certainly an unusual request from someone Phillip barely knew, but admittedly, this was a very unusual Man. He was a Carpenter by trade but from what they heard He had no permanent home of His own. And yet, He knew so much about God's word and spoke with such power. They had even been told His knowledge was so great He amazed the scholars in the temple when He was just a young boy. But not only that, their teacher, John the Baptizer, called this young Carpenter *"the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* That's interesting. The lamb Phillip immediately thought of was an animal sacrificed in the temple to atone the sin of Israel. And yet, their teacher John proclaimed this Man to be a Lamb sent by God to atone the sin of mankind.

But Phillip knew there was something different about this young Man, and from the depths of his spirit he knew exactly what it was. So he ran to his friend Nathaniel and said, *"We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."* Phillip knew this Man was more than just a Carpenter. Even more than a Rabbi. He knew this Man is God.

But how did Phillip know that? How did he look at a young homeless Carpenter and suddenly realize He was no mere Man at all? How did he know this Man is the Messiah, and the Son of God? He certainly didn't look like a god or wear the trappings of a soldier, but Phillip had no doubt who this Man was. He knew this because he had read about Him all of his life from descriptions recorded in the Messianic prophecies written hundreds of years before in the holy scriptures. So based on what he had read Phillip was able to tell his friend, *"We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote."* Moses wrote the first five books of the ancient Hebrew scrolls which included the laws Israel was supposed to follow. These scriptures also included the writings of many prophets up through Malachi who told Israel the Messiah would come. Micah told them He would be born in Bethlehem, and Daniel, Ezekiel, Zachariah and others spoke of Him as a Mighty Warrior who would come to defend Israel. It was Isaiah who said He would be a King, and their teacher John, arguably the last prophet, declared Him to be *"...the Lamb of God..."*. But beyond all that, as Phillip watched the young Rabbi, who didn't look like a Warrior or a King, he knew this Man was the One the prophets wrote about. There was no doubt in his mind that based on what he had seen in the holy scriptures, this Man was the Promised Messiah.

But how could Phillip know that? The same way we can know. Through searching God's word. The same text Phillip used to identify the Carpenter as the Messiah is what we

now call the Old Testament. It is from these writings, and not the more familiar New Testament, which didn't even exist at the time, that Phillip understood who Jesus really is.

But can you? Can you go to the Old Testament and find Jesus? If not, how can you ever hope to truly understand who He is? If we are to really know our Lord and grow closer to Him we must be able to find Him throughout His word. And that's what we intend to do in this class.

(Scripture quotes above come from portions of John 1:2 to 46)

There are many ways to find Jesus in the Old Testament. For example, we could investigate:

- Hundreds of Messianic prophecies,
- The Jewish sacrificial system,
- The Tabernacle and its furnishings,
- The Levitical feasts,
- Old Testament end times prophecies

Each of these and many other passages like them give us amazing background information on our Lord. But for the purpose of our study we're going to focus on several well-known names and titles used to describe Jesus in the New Testament and then trace their origin in the Old Testament.

I really hope you enjoy this study and let it draw you closer to our King.

Why Search for Jesus in the Old Testament?

- An understanding of the Old Testament is critical to understanding the Bible
 - But it is particularly important to help us understand about Jesus
 - In fact, a thorough knowledge of our Lord requires a deep study of the Old Testament

- But why?
 - As Jesus Himself told the men on the Road to Emmaus:
 - ***“25. Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26. Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27. And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”*** (Luke 24:25-27 - Underline Added)
 - Here Jesus cites “...**Moses...**”, who wrote the first five books of the Bible, through “...**the Prophets...**”, which takes us through Malachi.
 - In other words, Jesus is talking about the entire Old Testament, “...**all the Scriptures...**” and tells us they all point to Him.
 - Jesus clarifies that fact in John 5:46 when He said, “...**46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.**”
 - Isn’t that amazing. Jesus tells us the writings of Moses, which most people consider to be ancient archaic text meant for Israel, is actually written about Him. Here Jesus is pointing out the fact the Old Testament is “...**the things concerning Himself...**”.
 - Interestingly, this is the same thing Phillip recognized:
 - ***45. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”*** (John 1:45 - Underline Added)
 - Here Phillip also cites “...**Moses...**” and “...**the prophets...**”, referring to what we know as Old Testament scripture.

- And from the Old Testament scripture Phillip was able to recognize the homeless Carpenter is God
 - Something the educated Pharisees had failed to do.
 - And something many Christians today fail to understand
 - This is also the same fact the apostle Paul recognized years later,
 - ***“23. So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening.” (Acts 28:23)***
 - Paul was able to explain who Jesus is by using just Old Testament scripture.
 - So how can we do the same thing?
- Let's think about it this way:
 - The Old Testament and New Testament are one story - The Story of Jesus.
 - And it was written by one Author, the Holy Spirit. As Peter testifies,
 - ***“20. knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21. for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:20-21)***
 - We tend to view the Bible as a collection of 66 independent books written by over 40 human authors.
 - But in reality, the Bible is one book, written by the Holy Spirit, and recorded by over 40 human scribes
 - And when the Holy Spirit wrote the first word, He already knew the last word.
 - That's why it all ties together so well.
 - And that's why the entire Bible is one story from beginning to end - the story of Jesus.
 - A fact many Christians fail to see.

How we Will Search for Jesus in the Old Testament

- There are over 60 names or titles for Jesus just in Revelation alone
- And hundreds more throughout the Bible
- But an eight week study does not allow enough time to review all of them
- So we will study Jesus by taking seven names used to describe Him in the New Testament.
 - Then we'll search for the origin of each name in the Old Testament.

- In doing so we will seek to understand the Old Testament backstory to add depth to our understanding of who Jesus is.
- To help us through our quick study each participant will be offered a copy of the lessons to read on your own.
 - There is more information provided here than is needed for a one-hour weekly study, but my hope is this document is something you can have to study on your own and to share with others.
- What the lessons will cover:
 - Week 1 - Introduction and Overview of the Bible.
 - Weeks 2-8 - Seven New Testament names and titles of Jesus and their Old Testament source.

A Brief Survey of the Bible

- Let's start with a quick overview of the Bible:
- As we've discussed, many Christians view the Bible in a traditional but incorrect way.
 - They think of it as two distinct and very different books.
 - The Old Testament and the New Testament.
 - They often see the Old Testament as outdated, or written just for ancient Israel.
 - And the New Testament as written for Gentiles and more relevant to modern times.
 - But this is a very superficial view of the Bible.
- So to gain a better understanding, let's consider these facts:
 - The Bible is one grand story. From Genesis to Revelation it builds on itself from creation to re-creation (see Genesis 1:1-2 / John 1:1-14 / Revelation 21:1)
 - Its central theme is the story of God's grace for the redemption of sinful man.
 - Given that, the entire Bible is relevant in one way or another to all generations and all people.
 - Certainly portions were written to Israel and portions to later Christ followers, but we can learn from all of it because the lessons it teaches us are timeless.
 - As Isaiah 55:11 tells us: ***"11. So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."***

- And as we see in Psalm 119 (an entire Psalm about the Bible) God's word will guide us through every season of life. ***"1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the LORD! 2. Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!"*** (Psalm 119:1-2)
- We also need to remember, it was the Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible and used human scribes to record it, ***"...as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."*** (2 Peter 1:21b)
 - And it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us God's word. Just as Jesus promised in John 14:25-26
 - ***"25. 'These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you...'"***
 - So what are ***"...These things I have spoken..."***?
 - Jesus tells us in Luke 24:44-45:
 - ***"44. Then He said to them, 'These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.' 45. And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures."***
 - Isn't that amazing, the Holy Spirit will teach us ***"...all things..."*** ***"...which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms [the Old Testament] concerning Me. [Jesus]"***
 - And when He does we will be able to ***"...comprehend the Scriptures."***
- So given that, let's view the Bible as:
 - One Testament,
 - One story,
 - In one book,
 - Written by one Author
 - And in one way or another, it's all about Jesus

Structure of the Bible

- The Old Testament consisting of 39 books was originally divided into three sections, which in total is called the "Tanakh":
- There are three sections in the Tanakh:
 - The Torah:
 - The "Teaching".
 - Also called the "Pentateuch" or the "Five Books of Moses"
 - Genesis through Deuteronomy.

- The Nevi'im:
 - The "Prophets"
 - Separated into "Former" and "Latter" Prophets
- And the Ketuvim:
 - The "Writings" .
 - This includes the "Megilloth" or "Five Scrolls", Song of Solomon, Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes and Lamentations, and the "Ketuvim" which also includes Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles.
- When combined, these three sections of the Tanakh make up the entire Hebrew Bible. What we now refer to as the Old Testament.
 - The Hebrew Bible contains the same basic text as the Christian Old Testament with a few structural differences:
 - In the Christian translation several of the books are broken into multiple parts (for example: the Book of Kings is divided into I and II Kings),
 - Ezra and Nehemiah are separate books,
 - The Minor Prophets are broken into 12 separate books (minor means shorter, not less important).
- As a result, the Hebrew Bible and the modern Protestant Christian Old Testament have a different number of total books.
 - But other than that the text is essentially the same with very few exceptions.
- The New Testament is 27 additional books or letters written during or shortly after the earthly ministry of Jesus. It includes Revelation which when combined with Old Testament scripture gives us an amazing view of the future.
- The New Testament consists of:
 - The four "Gospels" - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which chronicle the ministry of Jesus
 - Thirteen letters or "Epistles" written by the apostle Paul.
 - These were generally instructional letters written to the early church in places like Corinth or Philippi, or to early church leaders like Timothy and Titus
 - The Acts of the Apostles which chronicles the origin and foundation of the early church
 - The Epistle of Hebrew providing additional details to Jewish converts
 - Seven other Epistles written by Peter, John, James and Jude
 - The Book of Revelation which gives us a future view of the end times

- Another important point to keep in mind is the fact neither the Old Testament or New Testament were originally written in English.
 - In fact, the English language as we know it didn't even exist for over a thousand years after the last New Testament scripture was recorded.
 - However, about the 3rd century B.C. (before Jesus came to earth) the Hebrew text was translated into Greek because the Greek Empire controlled most of the known world at that time and many cultures had adopted the Greek language.
 - As a result, the first non-Hebrew translation of the Old Testament was in Greek and called the "*Septuagint*".
 - This was the principle translation used during the time when the New Testament was being written.
 - That's why the New Testament was written in Greek.
 - In other words, at the time when the New Testament was written most of its writers and readers would have spoken Greek, and none of them spoke English.
 - Interestingly, that actually works to our advantage because both Hebrew and Greek are more expressive languages than English.
 - That's why we'll often refer back to the root language to gain a deeper understanding of the text.

Names of Jesus in the Bible

- For this study we'll select seven names or titles used by Jesus in the New Testament and then show their origin in the Old Testament.
- To start, let's recognize some of the other names and titles used in the Bible to describe our Lord
 - Just in the Book of Revelation alone Jesus is described over 60 different ways. We see several examples in Revelation chapter 1 where He is called:
 - ***"Him who is and who was and who is to come"***
 - ***"The faithful witness"***
 - ***"The firstborn from the dead"***
 - ***"The ruler over the kings of the earth"***
 - ***"Him who loved us"***
 - ***"The Alpha and the Omega"***
 - ***"The Beginning and the End"***
 - ***"The Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."***

- And throughout the Bible Jesus is described in many other ways, including:
 - Our Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3)
 - Our Savior (1 John 4:14),
 - Our Redeemer (Isaiah 59:20)
 - Our Friend (John 15:15)
 - Our Strength, Rock and Fortress (Psalm 18:2)
 - Our Bread of Life (John 6:35)
 - Our Cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6)
 - Our Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6)
 - Our Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)
 - Our Lord who is with us - Immanuel (Matthew 1:23)
 - Our Way, Truth and Life (John 14:6)
 - Our Creator (John 1:3)
 - Our Advocate (1 John 2:1)
 - Our Bridegroom (Matthew 9:15 / Revelation 19:9)
 - Our Prince of Life (Acts 3:15)
 - Our Good Shepherd (John 10:14),
 - Our Deliverer (Romans 11:26),
 - Our Door (John 10:9)
 - Our Faithful Witness (Revelation 1:5)
 - Our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14)
 - Our King (Revelation 19:16),
 - Our God (John 1:1)
- Each of these names or titles has a much deeper meaning we can understand even more clearly through a survey of Old Testament scripture.
 - But for the purpose of this study we'll focus on just seven well known names:
 - Week 2 - The Lamb of God
 - Week 3 - The Son of God / The Son of Man
 - Week 4 - The Bread of Life
 - Week 5 - The Great I AM
 - Week 6 - The Great High Priest
 - Week 7 - The Redeemer
 - Week 8 - The Good Shepherd

Jesus in The Old Testament

An Eight Week Survey

Week 2

The Lamb of God

“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

(John 1:29)

Week 2 - Outline - The Lamb of God

- A view from the apostle John – The Slain Lamb - Revelation 5:6
- A view from John the Baptist - The Lamb of God - John 1:29
- A view from Abraham - the Lamb God would provide - Genesis 22:8
- A view from Abel - Redemption through faith and a lamb - Genesis 4:4
- A view from Moses - The lamb of Passover - Exodus 12:1-4
- A view from the Tabernacle - The lamb as an illustration - Leviticus 1:1-4
- A view from Israel - Failure to recognize the Lamb - Isaiah 49:6
- The Lamb is Jesus
 - Not the lamb of man – But the Holy Lamb of God
- The Crimson Thread
 - The Gospel in the past
 - The Gospel today
 - The Gospel in the future

In the Book of Revelation Jesus is described over 60 different ways, but in Revelation 5:6 we see a very unique description. There the apostle John calls Jesus ***“...a Lamb as though it had been slain...”*** This description is unique because John seems to be the only apostle who stood at the cross and saw Jesus crucified (John 19:25-27). That means John may have been the only apostle who saw Jesus in all three physical conditions of being alive, dead and resurrected. In other words, John may have been the only apostle who would recognize Jesus as the ***“...slain...” “...Lamb...”***; the sacrificed ***“...Lamb of God...”***. This is how the apostle John saw Jesus at the end of the Bible. Now let's go back to the beginning of the Bible to see a very similar view of the ***“...slain Lamb...”***.

The prophet John the Baptist described Jesus in another unique way, ***“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”***, (John 1:29). So to help us understand the origin of the term ***“...Lamb of God...”*** let's survey the story of salvation across the Bible:

Let's begin with Abraham. In Genesis chapter 22 we see a prophecy of Jesus through the eyes of Abraham who saw the future ***“...Lamb...”*** who would be slain,

- ***“6. So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. 7. But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” 8. And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together.”*** (Genesis 22:6-8 - Underline added)

Let's give this a little historical context. Although Abraham is the father of the Jewish people he was actually a Sumerian from the city of Ur in the land of the Chaldeans, in present day Iraq. Sometime around 1,800 B.C., when Abraham was about 75 years old, God called him to leave his home and go west – to Canaan. To a land that would one day become Israel and a homeland for people who would eventually be known as Jews. After a time God gave Abraham and his wife Sarah a son and they named him Isaac. Isaac would eventually have a son named Jacob, and Jacob, whose name was changed by God to "Israel", would have twelve sons who became...the ***“Twelve Tribes of Israel”***.

In Genesis chapter 22 God gave Abraham a very difficult command. He was to make a sacrificial offering of his son: ***“1. Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” 2. Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”*** (Genesis 22:1-2). What an odd request from God; to sacrifice your beloved son – a promised son – as an offering for the forgiveness of sin. But

Abraham obeyed God and took Isaac to Mount Moriah to sacrifice him to the Lord. Along the way Isaac became confused and asked his father, **"...Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"** (Genesis 22:7). To which Abraham replied in a very prophetic way, **"...My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb..."** (Genesis 22:8). Did you catch that? **"...God will provide..."** the **"...lamb..."** for **"...Himself..."**. This was a precursor to the iconic verse of salvation written centuries later, **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son [the Lamb], that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."** (John 3:16). In both passages we see it was God who **"...gave..."** His **"...Son..."**, the **"...lamb..."** for the sin of mankind. The event related to Isaac was simply a prophetic view of the Messiah who would one day come as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Abraham believed God would either provide a substitute for Isaac or resurrect him because Abraham had faith in God's promise that his son would carry his lineage forward, but also because Abraham understood the requirement for a blood sacrifice for sin. By providing the substitutionary sacrifice that day God spared Isaac and figuratively speaking, brought him back from the dead, as we're told in Hebrews 11:17-19, **"17. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called,' 19. concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense."** So why did Abraham believe God would resurrect Isaac or provide a substitute? Because God had promised Abraham in Genesis 12:3, **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."** God promised that all families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's lineage, so Abraham believed this promise would be fulfilled through his son Isaac and therefore he had faith God would either provide a substitute who would die in his place, or raise Isaac from the dead. So in a sense, God raised Isaac to carry forward His promise but also to give us a picture of how He would one day raise Jesus victorious over sin and death, as prophesied in Psalm 16:10, **"... 10. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.."**

This account also illustrates another key point. The gospel is not a New Testament truth. As Paul clarifies in Galatians 3:8, **"8. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.'" Abraham didn't understand the intricacies of the Temple sacrifice or the instructions of the Law - because neither existed at that time - but he understood God would atone sin through a substitutionary sacrifice of innocent blood. That's why he could say, "...My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering..."** (Genesis 22:8)

But Abraham wasn't the first person to see God's grace revealed through faith in a blood sacrifice for sin.

We see the same thing earlier in Genesis 3:21 when Adam and Eve committed the first sin. God could have simply destroyed them and started over. Instead, He offered them grace and covered their sin with the death of an innocent animal, and once He did they were “saved” from God’s wrath through a blood sacrifice for sin.

Likewise, when Abel made an offering to God in Genesis chapter 4, verse 4 says, “**...4. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat...**”. He brought an offering of a firstborn lamb, of the flock, because he had faith in God’s promise of a blood sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 11:4a confirms this when it says, “**4. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous,...**”. It’s important to note, it was by “**...faith...**” and not by the lamb that Abel was made “**...righteous...**” (saved).

Then in the days of Moses when the Hebrew people were in bondage in Egypt, God sent Moses as His messenger to demand their release. But Pharaoh said no. Over and over he said no. Even as God punished Egypt with plagues and pestilence Pharaoh said no. So God brought one final plague on Egypt, the death of their firstborn, “**...4. Then Moses said, ‘Thus says the LORD: ‘About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; 5. and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals.’**” (Exodus 11:4-5). And yet...in His infinite mercy God made a way for man to avoid destruction. He instructed the Israelites to take a lamb without blemish and kill it, “**...7. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.**” (Exodus 12:7) Then, when the destroying angel came through Egypt to kill the firstborn he would “Passover” the homes whose doors were painted with the shed blood of the spotless lamb, and they were saved from God’s wrath because of their faith in God’s promise illustrated by a blood sacrifice for sin.

The same thing was observed for centuries in the Tabernacle and Temple when the priest would bring a firstborn offering without blemish and shed its blood on the altar to represent the payment for sin.

In each case a sacrifice was made. From the beginning of the Bible to the end. And sin was forgiven through their faith in a blood sacrifice for sin. But why was all of that even necessary? Very simply. When we sin, we sin against God, and we separate ourselves from God because our sin is so egregious to God. So, to forgive our sin God requires a heavy debt be paid. A debt only paid one way, through faith in a blood sacrifice for sin. Why? Because as Paul tells us in Romans 3:23, “**...23. For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God...**”, and then he confirms the consequence of our sin in Romans 6:23, “**...For the wages of sin is death...**”. This is the same thing God told Adam and Eve in the garden, “**3. but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’**” (Genesis

3:3). Therefore, our debt must be paid by death through our faith in God's promise as illustrated by a blood sacrifice for sin.

And so it goes. Throughout the history of Israel and the history of mankind. From generation to generation the Bible records the good news – the gospel message – that redemption only comes one way. Through faith in a blood sacrifice for sin. Just like the sacrifice for Adam, Abel, Abraham, Moses, and the priests. But there was an inherent problem with the Tabernacle offering because both the lamb and the human priest were imperfect. So the priest had to first make an offering for his own sin before he could make an offering for the people's sin. And since both the sacrifice and the priest were imperfect the forgiveness was temporary, and the sacrifice had to be repeated over and over, day after day, year after year for centuries. But as unpleasant as all of this may sound it reveals the seriousness of sin and the serious price that must be paid for forgiveness. So serious in fact, forgiveness of sin requires the supreme sacrifice because salvation only comes through faith in God's promise of redemption which He illustrates through the blood sacrifice for sin. But God didn't ask Israel to do this just for themselves. Israel was chosen by God to carry His message of grace to the whole world. As the Lord proclaimed through Isaiah, **"...6. I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth."** (Isaiah 49:6b). Israel was supposed to be God's messengers, to carry His plan of redemption to the whole world, and the blood sacrifice of a lamb was intended to confirm their faith and to illustrate the fact a debt that must be paid for the world's sin. Even to the point the Tabernacle and its furnishings were each a prophecy pointing Israel to a greater sacrifice to come. Pointing to the Messiah – to Jesus. But Israel failed to accept their role and share God's message. Instead, they wallowed in religious self-righteousness and were blinded by their own arrogance.

But God always knew that would happen so He had a plan. A perfect plan, through a perfect Sacrifice. A Sacrifice who needed no human priest because the perfect Sacrifice was also the perfect Priest (see Lesson #6). So God sent Jesus, His only Son, the promised Son, to be the sacrifice God had promised Abraham so long ago. He is the **"...Lamb..."** God gave for **"...Himself..."**. And just as Abraham had been foretold centuries before, it was through Jesus Genesis 12:3 would be fulfilled, **"And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."** The world would be blessed because Jesus was a divine and perfect sacrifice who came from God, and not from man. Why? Because as John 3:16 tells us **"16, For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..."**. Jesus wasn't given to satisfy a Jewish ritual. He was given as a sacrifice so... **"...that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."** Jesus was given so we can be redeemed by our faith in His blood sacrifice for sin.

Sadly Israel failed to see the coming Messiah represented by the earthly sacrifice, so God sent the Messiah as a heavenly sacrifice. That's why Jesus, as John 1:14 declares,

"...became flesh and dwelt among us,...". Jesus dwelt with us as a sinless Man in order to become the sinless Lamb, and in doing so He was the sacrifice promised in Isaiah 53:5-6, **"...5. 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. 6. 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..."**. Jesus, is the Lamb promised by God. Not for the annual atonement of one people, but to cover the trillions upon trillions of sins of all people, for all time. Jesus is the Lamb recognized by John the Baptist who declared Him to be, **"...the Lamb of God..."** (John 1:29b). Jesus is the ultimate and final sacrifice because He is the only Unblemished Lamb, given by God, to die for the sin of mankind.

- As the apostle Paul confirms in Colossians 1:13-14,
 - **"...13. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14. in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins..."**
- And in Ephesians 1:7
 - **"...7. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ..."**
- As John proclaims in 1 John 1:7
 - **"...7. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin..."**
- And as Peter declares in I Peter 1:19
 - **"...19. but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot..."**
- As Paul explains in I Corinthians 15:3-4
 - **"3. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4. and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. "**
- And in 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - **"21. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."**
- And as John proclaims in I John 2:1-2
 - **"1. My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus**

Christ the righteous. 2. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world...".

This is Jesus. Not the lamb of man in the Tabernacle, a blemished and temporary sacrifice. Jesus is the ***"...Lamb of God..."***, who is sinless and perfect, a permanent sacrifice in every way. He is the Lamb. He is the gospel. The blood offering of God. Whether represented by a prophetic sacrifice in the Tabernacle or fulfilled through the ultimate and final sacrifice on the cross. Jesus is the offering for the sins of man, ***"...an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma..."*** (Ephesians 5:2). His sacrifice is a ***"...sweet-smelling aroma..."*** just like the sweet aroma in Leviticus 1:9, ***"...an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD."*** But why is it sweet? Because Jesus' death offers redemption to mankind and brings God's disobedient people back to Him in righteousness. That's because the death and resurrection of Jesus, as the Lamb, was done for us, to cleanse our sin. As Paul declared, ***"...8. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*** (Romans 5:8)

The "Crimson Thread"

Now let's go to the Book of Job to see a view of Jesus in the Old Testament most people never recognize. And through that view we'll uncover the *"Crimson Thread"* that weaves its way through the entire Bible.

When we think of the atonement of sin by the shedding of innocent blood we think of Jesus. But it's not just a New Testament story. Job understood it generations before, when he looked into the future and declared in Job 19:25 - ***"...For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth..."***. Here Job sees his ***"...Redeemer..."***, ***"...on the earth..."***. This is the Messiah, standing victorious over sin. An event also seen in Revelation 14:1a when John said, ***"...Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, , [Israel]..."***. The ***"...Redeemer..."*** Job saw in the oldest book in the Bible is the ***"...Lamb..."*** John saw in the newest book in the Bible. Do you see the connection? The Old Testament and the New Testament is one story. The story of redemption through a blood atonement by the sacrifice of the ***"...Lamb of God..."*** (John 1:29a). But this was never a mystery. This is the ***"Crimson Thread"***. God's consistent message of redemption through faith. It is the blood that must be shed for the forgiveness of sin. A red thread running through the entire Bible:

- From the slain animal in the garden
- To the lamb for Abel
- To the lamb for Abraham
- To the lamb for Passover
- To the lamb in the Temple
- To the ***"...Lamb of God..."*** hanging on the cross

- To the victorious Lamb standing on Mount Zion.

This is the gospel. The good news that redemption comes only by faith in a blood sacrifice for sin. Throughout the whole Bible the story is the same. The debt of sin must be paid for in blood. In the Old Testament it took faith in God's promises looking forward to the Messiah through the lamb of man in the temple. In the New Testament it takes faith looking back to the Messiah Jesus, who was sacrificed for mankind as the **"...Lamb of God..."** on the cross. But either way, the story is the same. The story is Jesus. From Genesis to Revelation Jesus is the Lamb, **"...5. and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood..."** (Revelation 1:5) He is the **"...Lamb..."** that **"...had been slain..."** as the **"...Lamb of God..."**. His story is the Crimson Thread of blood that courses through every vein of God's word. Through hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament to the sacrifice of Jesus in the New Testament, this is the gospel. The atonement of our sin, whether Old Testament or New Testament; whether altar or cross. This is the central theme of God's word.

This is the Lamb. - This is Jesus:

- The bruised Seed in Genesis 3:15,
- The firstborn of Abel's flock in Genesis 4:4
- The lamb of Abraham in Genesis 22:8
- The Redeemer in Job 19:25
- The spotless Passover lamb in Exodus 12
- The lamb of the Tabernacle in Leviticus 3
- The Unleavened Bread In Leviticus 23
- The crucified Messiah in Psalm 22
- The One pierced for us in Isaiah 53
- The Great High Priest in Hebrews 4:14
- The Firstfruits of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15
- The **"...sweet aroma..."** in Ephesians 5:2
- The **"...Lamb of God..."** in John 1:29
- The **"...Lamb as though it had been slain..."** in Revelation 5:6
- The Lamb **"...standing on the mount Zion..."**. in Revelation 14:1

We even see the gospel message of the Lamb in heaven, **"...22. But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light."** (Revelation 21:22-23. The **Lamb** and the **Light** is God in flesh, who came to earth, stood in man's sinful presence, and gave us an offer of grace.

But why did He have to do this? Very simply, so we can be saved from God's wrath and passed over in judgment by accepting what He did when He took our sins to the cross

and crucified them, and when He rose from the dead, defeating all sin and all death. This is confirmed in 1 John 2:2 which tells us that Jesus, **"...2 ...Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."** It was Jesus who took our sin as Colossians 2:14 declares, and, **"...nailed it to the cross..."**, so that, as Romans 6:6-7 says, **"...6. knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7. For he who has died has been freed from sin..."**

So the **"...Lamb of God..."** is not just a New Testament term. It is a unique and beautiful description of our Lord and Savior that can only be applied to Him. It is a title, revealed in the New Testament, but originating in the Old Testament, that attests to the fact He became the sacrifice for our sins.

I pray that by revealing the meaning behind this name will encourage you to dig deep in the Old Testament to find our Lord.

Jesus in The Old Testament

An Eight Week Survey

Week 3

The Son of God and The Son of Man

“Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

(Matthew 26:64)

Week 3 - Outline - The Son of God // The Son of Man

- Jesus is one Person - With two titles - And two roles
- Jesus in the Trinity
 - There is one God in three distinct persons – Father, Son and Spirit
 - They are eternal – Everlasting to Everlasting
 - Together they are perfectly unified, equally holy, and accomplishing different tasks
- Jesus as the Son
 - Equal in divinity - Different in role
 - He is the physical manifestation of God
 - And our mediator
- Jesus as the Word
 - Who became flesh – Which made Him all man
 - But He remained all God
 - Sinless and Holy - So He could take our sin
- Jesus is the perfect Lamb - A perfect sacrifice for sin
 - Jesus is also the Perfect Priest
 - He is the focus of our salvation
- Jesus functions as the Son of God and the Son of Man throughout the Bible

In this lesson we'll discuss two familiar and interrelated names or titles of Jesus found in the Bible - *The Son of God* and *The Son of Man*.

These titles indicate Jesus held two positions at the same time:

- First, in His role as *God*, He is divine and called *The Son of God*
- Second, in His role as a *Man*, He was human and called *The Son of Man*

But how could Jesus function in both positions at the same time? To answer that question let's quickly review the "*Doctrine of the Trinity*" and the role Jesus occupies as God. This will also help us understand why He became a man and why He is called a "Son".

Frankly, it can be difficult for us to understand the person of God. As Isaiah proclaims, **"8. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."** (Isaiah 55:8-9). Everything about God is different. That's because His ways are perfect and **"...higher..."** than our ways. Why? Because He is God. He is the Creator and Ruler of all things, but He Himself is not a created being. He is the Almighty. He is eternal, which means He has always existed, and will always exist in the future. As the Psalmist describes, **"2. Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God."** (Psalm 90:2) In other words, before there was any creation as we know it, God already existed, **"...from everlasting to everlasting..."**, which means He has existed forever and ever. As difficult as that is to comprehend, Jesus reminds us of His eternal condition in Revelation 1:8, **"8. 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,' says the Lord, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'"** Here Jesus, who is God, declares His power across all time: **"...who is..."** [present], **"...who was..."** [past], and **"...who is to come..."** [future].

But beyond the fact God is eternal, we need to understand another important fact. God exists in three individual persons - *God the Father*, *God the Son* and *God the Holy Spirit*. We call this the "*Trinity*". In our human mind it can be difficult for us to understand how three beings can exist and function as One, but they do, and it is that perfect unity that makes them a Trinity. It is a unique position made possible only because They are God and They function in a triune role as three divine but individual beings. That doesn't mean there is one God functioning in three roles or wearing three hats depending on the situation. It means there are three distinct persons of God who function as One, but do so in complete unity, power and authority. That also means each person of God is an individual being, yet in their specific roles they function together as One.

So given all that, let's look into scripture to better understand the triune nature of God and why we believe one God exists as three distinct individuals, in three distinct roles, but who function in unity as One.

The fact there is one God who exists as three persons is made clear in many verses.

Here are just a few (underlines added):

- Isaiah 6:8 - ***"8. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."***
- Genesis 1:26 - ***"26. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."***
- Genesis 3:22a - ***"22. Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil..."***

Each of these verses, and many more like them, speak to the plurality of God by using words like "...Us..." and "...Our...". Plural root words that clearly indicate more than one being. Yet even though the Bible speaks of God in a plural sense it does not specifically use the word "*Trinity*" to describe God's plural nature. And yet scripture is clear that God is identified as three distinct individuals. One of the best examples of this is found in Matthew 28:16-20 where Jesus gives us the "*Great Commission*" to spread the gospel to the world. There in verse 19 He states, ***"19. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,..."***. Here Jesus makes a clear distinction between "...*the Father...*", "...*the Son...*", and "...*the Holy Spirit...*", by describing the three individual persons of God.

As part of the Trinity Jesus occupies a role described as the "*Son*". That doesn't mean He is the physically born "son" as we would define a human Father and Son relationship. Jesus was not born by a human father, nor was He created by a heavenly Father. Jesus is part of the Trinity of God, and as such, He is eternal and is equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. The term "*Son*" indicates the position He occupies in the Trinity and helps us understand His primary function. Let's think about it like this. In their defined triune roles each person of God is equal in every way, but each also has a specific function. God the Father functions in a "oversight" role (for lack of a better term) within the Trinity. That doesn't mean the Father has more authority or superiority over God the Son or God the Holy Spirit, but it means His unique role is to orchestrate events from heaven that are administered by the other two persons of God. For example, we know Jesus ***"...is the image of the invisible God..."*** (Colossians

1:15a), because God the Father and God the Spirit are both spirits and cannot be seen (John 1:18), so God the Son became a human so He could be the visible intermediary between us and the Father. Jesus did this by coming to earth as a man, in order to have a relationship with mankind. But even when Jesus came to earth as a man, who was human, He was still fully God, who is divine. He came functioning in both roles to fulfill the plan of redemption the three persons of God had agreed to. Jesus confirms this when He says, ***“38. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”*** (John 6:38). This doesn't mean God the Father had a plan of His own and Jesus executed it. Their plan was developed together with the Holy Spirit and in perfect unity, and then Jesus became a human to bring application of their plan on earth, ***“4. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”*** (John 17:4-5). This is in essence the role Jesus fulfills as the *Son of God*, who is still fully God and who co-authored the plan of God, but as our Mediator, came to earth as the *Son of Man* to execute the plan They had developed in unity.

So let's dig a little deeper into how Jesus can be both God and man at the same time:

John 1:1 tells us, ***“1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”*** This clarifies the fact Jesus, who is ***“...the Word...”*** is God. But how do we know ***“...the Word...”*** is a reference to Jesus? For that, let's go to verse 14 (underline added). ***“14. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.***

Let's look at this verse in two parts to get a deeper meaning:

- First it tells us Jesus ***“...became flesh...”*** which means He was fully human. This describes His humanity and His physical human attributes.
- But then it says, ***“...we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father...”***. His ***“...glory...”*** defines His divine nature as God and describes His role in relationship to the Father and the Holy Spirit.
- So taken together, His ***“...flesh...”*** describes His human characteristics and His ***“...glory...”*** describes the fact He is still God.

In another very interesting passage of scripture we see both titles being used to describe Jesus. In that story Jesus is at the home of Caiaphas the high priest, and standing before the Sanhedrin the night before His crucifixion. During the interrogation, ***“62. And the high priest arose and said to Him, “Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?” 63. But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!” 64. Jesus said to him, “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and***

coming on the clouds of heaven.” (Matthew 26:62-64) Here Jesus confirms He is the ***“...Son of God...”*** but then says He will be seen coming from heaven as the ***“...Son of Man...”***. An event described in Revelation 14:14, ***“14. Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.”*** These verses confirm both His ***“...flesh...”*** and His ***“...glory...”***. Interestingly, just before he was martyred Stephen had a very similar vision into heaven, ***“55. But he, [Stephen] being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, 56. and said, “Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”*** (Acts 7:55-56)

So, even though Jesus used both titles interchangeably He was not a man who became God, but He is eternally God, who for a time also became a man. Jesus was not created by God but has Himself been God for eternity, and in His role as God the Son, Jesus is part of the Trinity and therefore is equal in divinity and authority with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. That position does not change just because He took the form of a man on earth.

So let's establish that fact in scripture. ***“5. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6. who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7. but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ”*** (Philippians 2:5-9) Here the English term ***“...robbery...”***, in the original Greek, ***“Harpogmon”***, simply means ***“to grasp”*** or, ***“a thing to be seized upon or to be held fast”***. In other words, as a man, Jesus was not living His life on earth like He did in heaven, by living like God. Instead, He was living like a man, but even so, He was still a ***“...form of God...”*** (an equal part of the Trinity of God) and ***“...equal with God...”*** in every way. This helps us understand that as a man Jesus is still fully God. As Paul confirms, ***“9. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”*** (Colossians 2:9). This verse clarifies that in His ***“...bodily...”*** human form, Jesus is still God, still divine, still holy and still part of the ***“...Godhead...”*** of the Trinity. And yet, He came as a man for the intent purpose of dying for the sin of mankind to carry out the plan of redemption. In other words, He became a man to do something no one else could ever do. He could do that because He is a unique and uncreated physical being who is Himself God. So Jesus came to earth in a very unique role. He came in the form of a man in order to take our human sin upon Himself, ***“9. But we see Jesus, who was made [in His human form] a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.*** (Hebrews 2:9). So given that, we can understand that ***“...the Word...”*** is Jesus, who John also clarifies ***“...was God...”*** [is God] (John 1:1&14). Taken together, all of this makes it clear that Jesus is God, just as the Father and the Holy Spirit are God. But in His earthly role He functioned as a ***“Son”*** to physically carry out the plan developed by the Trinity.

Therefore, Jesus is God, and in His role as the Son of God He came as a man in order to be the sinless offering made for our sin, ***“19. but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*** (1 Peter 1:19) And being born a human, He for a time was also a “Son” of mankind - the seed of Eve - as the *Son of Man* (Genesis 3:15). And yet, even as He was fully man, He was still fully God and lived as the Son of Man, but without sin. ***“21. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*** (2 Corinthians 5:21). That’s important to understand. When Jesus went to the cross He took our sin on Himself, but He didn’t become a “*sinner*”. As a man Jesus took our sin, but as God He did not commit any of the sin, because He had no sinful desire to sin. That’s difficult for us to comprehend. Particularly considering the fact that in His 33 years on earth, He lived as a human child, a teenager, young adult and adult, but Jesus never sinned. He was born poor, lived poor, worked hard and suffered the same physical and emotional challenges we do. Yet He never sinned. But how was that possible? Because as the Son of God He had no human internal desire to sin when He became the Son of Man because He did not inherit the desire to sin through Adam. Although Jesus came to earth as a man he was not the human son of Joseph and therefore did not inherit the sin nature of Adam. We need to remember that. Jesus is not like Adam, even though Jesus became a human. Jesus is fully God and was not created nor was He born “of” man. Therefore, even as a human, He did not receive the inherited nature of fallen man. That’s because Jesus came to earth through a surrogate human mother but was divinely conceived through the power of God, ***“35. And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.”*** (Luke 1:35). Therefore, Jesus has no inherited, imputed or in-born desire to rebel against God - which would also be rebelling against Himself because He is God. All other humans have a desire to rebel through the sin of Adam, ***“18. Therefore, as through one man’s [Adam] offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation,...”*** (Romans 5:18). But not Jesus. He was not created like Adam and He was not “of” Adam (or Joseph) but was conceived by God and therefore did not have the internal desire to go against God’s commands. No doubt, Jesus was all man, with human attributes, but Jesus is all God and could not rebel against His own divine nature.

Now, let’s take all of that and think about how the individual roles of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit work together to implement God’s plan of redemption:

- *God the Father* initiates grace for the forgiveness of sin (Genesis 3:21 / John 3:16 / Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - Grace must be applied through the acceptance by faith in a blood sacrifice for the atonement of sin (Leviticus 17:11 / Ephesians 2:8-9).
 - Initially this was illustrated through the Tabernacle sacrifice that was actually a prophecy pointing to the Messiah who is the *Son of God* but would come to earth as the *Son of Man* (Genesis 22:8 / Leviticus 4:29 / Galatians 3:8)

- *God the Father* then “sent” *God the Son* to earth to execute their plan of redemption (John 1:29 / John 3:16-17).
- On earth, *God the Son* (fully God) became the *Son of Man* (fully man) in order to execute the redemptive plan of God and present grace to all mankind through His sacrificial atonement for sin (John 3:17 / Luke 9:56 / Acts 9:15 / II Corinthians 5:21)
 - When *God the Son* came to earth as the *Son of Man*, He operated under the will of *God the Father* and in concert with *God the Holy Spirit* in order to execute Their unified plan of redemption for mankind (John 4:34 / 6:38-40)
- *God the Holy Spirit* calls to our hearts to offer us grace from *God the Father* (Romans 5:5 / Ephesians 4:30 / John 6:44 ; 14:26 / II Corinthians 1:22).
 - This is a calling we can either accept or reject by accepting or rejecting the work of the *Son of God* who went to the cross as the *Son of Man* (Matthew 7:13-14 / Luke 2:18 ; 10:16)
- We are then saved and justified in *God the Father’s* sight when we heed the call of *God the Holy Spirit*, confess our sins and accept the grace offered to us by *God the Father*, through faith in the life, death and resurrection of *God the Son*.
- Once saved we are indwelt by *God the Holy Spirit* who spiritually connects us to *God the Father* and *God the Son*, so that they indwell with us (John 14:23 / Romans 8:9)
- As believers we become children of *God the Father* who are indwelt by *God the Spirit* and co-heirs with *God the Son* as part of God’s family - the “*Body of Christ*” (Romans 5:10 ; 8:17).
- Through this process we are saved by “one” God, through the combined work of the three persons of the Trinity
 - By grace offered to all by *God the Father*
 - Through the calling of *God the Holy Spirit*
 - And by the freewill acceptance of the work of *God the Son* on the cross
- We then become children of *God the Father*, and co-heirs in His family, whom we can call by a term of great endearment, “**...Abba, Father...**” (Romans 8:15).

This is an overly simplistic view of the salvation process but I hope it helps us see the individual role of each person of God and how they collectively function as one. It also helps us see the role of *God the Father* orchestrating the process, *God the Holy Spirit*

announcing the process and *God the Son* applying the process. But remember, this does not mean *God the Father* has more authority or superiority than *God the Son* or *God the Holy Spirit*, but it means the Father's unique role orchestrates events that are administered by the other two persons of God. It's important to understand this process because once we do we can better understand the Son's role in the "Crimson Thread" of redemption through the entire Old and New Testaments (see Lesson #2, The Lamb of God).

All of this helps us see Jesus throughout the entire Bible. From the beginning at creation (Genesis 1:2 plus John 1:1-14), through His final words to us at the end of Revelation chapter 22. But we see this most clearly in Luke 24 when Jesus walked with two men on the road to Emmaus the morning after His resurrection and explained how the entire Old Testament was written about Him, "**44. "...all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me..."**" (Luke 24:44 KJV). By using the phrase "**...Moses, and in the prophets and the psalms..."**" Jesus is describing the entire Old Testament. From Genesis, which was the first book written by Moses, to Malachi, which was the last book written by a prophet. By explaining it this way Jesus is telling us the entire Old Testament is about Him. But sadly, many Christians discount the Old Testament as outdated or written for someone else and miss the profound beauty of its Messianic proclamation. Yet according to Jesus, it is about Him and understanding that is critical to our understanding of who Jesus is as the *Son of God* and the *Son of Man*.

As we have seen, the terms *Son of God* and *Son of Man* are used throughout the Bible. In fact the title *Son of Man* is used over 90 times in the New Testament. But where do we see the root of this title in the Old Testament?

Let's look at a few examples:

- In Genesis 3:15 God tells satan, "**15. And I [the Father] will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; [Jesus] He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.**"
 - Here the Lord speaks of the "**...Seed...**" from Eve (from mankind) who will be crucified [**...bruise His heel...**] and then come to destroy satan's head (Revelation 20:10). This is a reference to Jesus coming as a man descended from Eve, and as an earthly descendent of man He is the "*Son*" of *Man*.
- We also see this reflected again in the earthly genealogy of Jesus:
 - In Matthew 1:1 - "**1. The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:...**". This speaks of Jesus descended from man, and therefore a "*Son*" of *Man*.

- And in Luke 3:37-38 - ***“37. the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, 38. the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”***
 - Both of these passages establish His earthly lineage from Eve which would make Him a *Son of Man*.
- In Daniel 3:24-25 Nebuchadnezzar describes the preincarnate Jesus as a man and as the Son of God, ***“24. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” 25. “Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”***
- In Daniel 7:13 Daniel sees a vision of Jesus and calls Him the *Son of Man*, ***13. “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.”***
- John saw a similar scene in Revelation when Jesus will return at the Second Coming to reap the world in judgment, ***14. Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.”*** (Revelation 14:14)
- Psalm 8:4-5 is a reference to Jesus in His earthly state - ***“4. What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? 5. For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.”***
 -
- We see a New Testament reference to His divinity and humanity in Hebrews 2:9, ***“9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.”***
- Isaiah 53 describes the crucifixion of Jesus, and in Verse 3 refers to Him as a man, ***“3. 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.***
- Isaiah 9 speaks of Jesus in the future Millennial Kingdom, but also reminds us He was born of man, ***“6. 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.”***

- Daniel 7:14 speaks of the same time and references Jesus, ***“14. Then to Him [Jesus] was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.”***
- We see Jesus in Daniel’s vision in Daniel 8:15 - ***“15. Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.”***
- The apostle John had a similar vision in Revelation 1:12-13 - ***“..12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13. and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.”***
- Micah 5:2 speaks to Jesus being born of man - ***“2. But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”***

All of these verses, and many more like them, provide Biblical proof that Jesus is the *Son of God*, and yet, He came to earth as the *Son of Man* to take the sins of man unto Himself, so through Him His creation might be redeemed.

Before we wrap this up, let's look at several other verses that indicate a preincarnate view of Jesus prior to His earthly birth in Bethlehem. We believe scripture points to these examples as being Jesus because we know *God the Father* and *God the Holy Spirit* are unseen and Jesus became the physical manifestation of God to man. We know that from Paul’s description of Jesus who, ***“15. ...is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ”*** (Colossians 1:15), and from John who confirms, ***“12. No one has seen God [the Father] at any time....”*** (John 1:18 // 1 John 4:12a)

So given that, we believe there were times when man saw *God the Son* in physical form before He came to earth as Jesus the Jew. In these examples He would be a preincarnate view of the *Son of Man*.

Let’s look at a few examples:

- Walking in the garden with Adam and Eve -
 - ***“ 8. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from***

the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.”

(Genesis 3:8)

- Speaking to Abraham -
 - ***“1. When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.” (Genesis 17:1)***
 - ***“1. Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. 2. So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, 3 and said, “My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant....”. (Genesis 18:1-3)***
- Wrestling with Jacob -
 - ***“24. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 25. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 30. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. (Genesis 32:24-30)***

In the burning bush -

- ***“2. And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. 3. Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.” 4. So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” 5. Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.” 6. Moreover He said, “I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And***

Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.” (Exodus 3:2-6)

- ***14. And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ” (Exodus 3:14)***
- ***“58. Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” (John 8:58)***

- ***As the Angel of the Lord -***

- ***13. And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” 14. So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?” 15. Then the Commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.” (Joshua 5:13-15)***

- ***Speaking to Moses face to face -***

- ***11. So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.” (Exodus 33:11)***

- ***In the cloud -***

- ***“5. Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6. And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,...” (Exodus 34:5-6)***

- ***In the fiery furnace -***

- ***“24. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” 25. “Look!” he answered, “I see four men***

loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” (Daniel 3:24-25)

These verses speak to the unique role of Jesus as the God we can physically see. As God Jesus functions as the *Son of God*, but He came to earth through a human birth and became the *Son of Man*. This is a unique role only Jesus fulfills and it is the combination of the two roles, defined by two unique names, that exemplify our Lord and our Savior.

Jesus in The Old Testament
 An Eight Week Survey
 Week 4
 The Bread of Life

“And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

(John 6:35)

Week 4 - Outline - The Bread of Life

- Why is bread so important?
 - Its history
 - Its uses
 - Its process - Like our Christian life
- Let's look at two stories:
 - The Feast of Unleavened Bread - Leviticus 23
 - Why leaven?
 - How it points to Jesus
 - Our Passover - 1 Corinthians 5
 - The Bread of Life - John 6
 - In remembrance of Jesus
 - Manna from Heaven
 - Manna as nourishment - Exodus 16
 - As an illustration – John 6
 - As our daily Bread

Throughout history bread has been one of the world's most stable food sources. Archeologists have found the earliest evidence of bread making in the Natufian region of Jordan's northeastern desert, but implements for making flour and ovens for baking bread are found in almost every ancient culture. Even locally, "mortar stones" used by indigenous people-groups to grind grains and seeds are found in the fields around Suffolk.

Bread is a very versatile food source because it can be made from a number of different grains and seeds and produced in a wide variety of products. Bread can be eaten raw, with various spreads, in soups, or processed into crackers, biscuits, loaves, cakes, and many other forms. That's why bread has been one of the world's most common food sources for centuries. Bread is mentioned throughout the Bible, and was used for both food and religious ceremonies. But why is bread so common and desirable? Because bread can sustain life, and people have been known to survive for long periods of time on just bread and water.

But bread doesn't come easy. It doesn't grow in the ground and can't be picked from a tree. It requires a multi-step process, specialized equipment and a lot of hard work to convert grains or seeds to an edible product. From planting, to growing, harvesting, processing, grinding, sifting, mixing, kneading, forming and baking. The final product we recognize as bread has to go through a complex process from seed to loaf. It also requires a source of heat and some type of oven to transform it from flour, to dough, to something we can eat.

This process reminds us of our Christian life. We start with the seed of the gospel in our hearts. Once planted it takes root and grows and as it does it requires a lot of dedication and obedience on our part to mature and be sanctified as we grow closer to Jesus. And sometimes it is the heat we experience in the oven of life that matures us the most and brings out our strongest faith. With that thought I'm reminded of James 1:2-4, **"2. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3. Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."** Here James describes how the trials we endure in life can mature our faith and strengthen our testimony. Much like dough that must be kneaded and reshaped, then transformed and refined with great heat.

So given all that let's look at one of the names Jesus used for Himself - the *"Bread of Life"*. A name describing our Lord as the One who nourishes and sustains us for all eternity.

To better understand the basis for this title let's look at two stories in the Bible:

- The Feast of Unleavened Bread
- Manna From Heaven

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The *Feast of Unleavened Bread* In Leviticus chapter 23 is celebrated as part of the *Passover*, which is one of Israel's most holy celebrations. Passover commemorates God's redemption of Israel from bondage in Egypt when the destroying angel "*passed over*" the homes of those whose doors had been sprinkled with the blood of a sacrificed lamb. This in itself is a profound Messianic prophecy pointing to Jesus as "**...the Lamb of God...**" (John 1:29), because it is Jesus who saves us from destruction by our faith in His sacrifice on the cross.

(See Lesson for Week 2, *The Lamb of God* / See also the Bible Study on The Book of Ruth on our church website for more details on the Feasts of Israel).

But the second part of the Passover feast gives us another important Messianic prophecy - *The Feast of Unleavened Bread*. In preparation for their exodus from Egypt, Israel was told to make bread without leaven (yeast). This reinforced the fact they needed to be ready to escape from Egypt at a moment's notice, but it also demonstrated the redemption of their sin.

Let's see what scripture tells us about the feast in Leviticus 23:6-8

- **"And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it."** (Leviticus 23:6-8)

For seven days during *The Feast of Unleavened Bread* the people ate bread made without yeast (leaven), They would also remove all yeast and yeast-made products from their home which was symbolic of removing sin from their lives (Exodus 12:19 / 13:7). But why was it so important to make "*unleavened*" bread without yeast?

Two primary reasons:

- During the exodus unleavened bread represented Israel's need to react quickly when they were called out of Egypt. In other words, when God commanded them to leave Egypt there would be no time to prepare, or wait, like the time it takes for yeast to rise the dough. So the unleavened bread was a way to help them understand they must be ready to move quickly to follow God's commands.
 - We see this in Exodus 12 where Moses gave specific instructions for eating the Passover meal in haste,
 - **"...And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover."** (Exodus 12:11).

- In other words, you must be fully dressed, with sandals on your feet and a walking staff in hand. That way you're prepared to leave Egypt at a moment's notice.
- This clarifies our obedience to God must be accomplished without delay. Thereby ensuring we're always ready to follow God's lead whenever He calls.
- In a sense, Matthew 24:44 tells us the same thing and reminds us to be ready and obedient in preparation for Christ's return,
 - ***"...Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."***
- But being ready to answer God's call takes effort. It requires us to continually search our heart for sin and seek to remove it. This was demonstrated by the action Israel took to remove leaven from their homes, which illustrates the need to remove leaven from our lives (Exodus 12:15-19).

To stress the importance of this lesson Moses reminded Israel in Exodus 13:3-10 why they were removing leaven from their homes and eating unleavened bread. It was a physical reminder of what God had done to redeem them from their sin. Just as we are reminded of the leaven in our own life by what God has done through Jesus, *The Bread of Life*, to redeem us. This also reminds us that Jesus is the Bread without sin (leaven) who brings us out of the bondage of our own sin through God's redemptive grace (2 Corinthians 5:21).

But why focus on leaven in the bread? In the Bible, leaven (yeast) is often used to represent sin. Just as Jesus did when He warned His disciples to be wary of the sinful Jewish leadership, ***"Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said to them, 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.'***" (Matthew 16:5-6) Paul uses a similar illustration to help us form a mental picture in our minds that even a small amount of sin in our lives can impact us in a very significant way, because just as a small amount of yeast can quickly impact an entire lump of dough, ***"...Do you not know that a little leaven [yeast] leavens the whole lump [dough]? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."*** (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Here Paul links the Passover requirement of purging leaven from our homes, with purging leaven from our lives. This occurs when we accept Jesus as ***"...our Passover..."*** Lamb who ***"...was sacrificed for us..."*** to remove our sin. Jesus, who of course is sinless, perfect and unleavened is our ***"...Bread of Life..."***. (John 6:35). He is the constant nourishment we need as we seek our ***"...daily bread..."*** (Matthew 6:11). And being sinless and perfect, He is represented by bread without leaven - a life without sin - who became sin for us by

taking our leaven on Himself, **"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.** (2 Corinthians 5:21) In that context, Paul implores us to remove the old leaven, our sin, so we will be more like unleavened bread. In other words, more like Jesus. We do this just like a Jewish father removing leaven from his home. By seeking to identify and root out the sin in our lives and by asking the Lord, **"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting."** (Psalm 139:23-24).

In that context we can glean several meanings from *The Feast of Unleavened Bread*:

- It represents the haste with which we must be obedient to God's commands,
- It illustrates the sin redeemed from our lives by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God,
- And, it represents Jesus, who without sin is the *Unleavened Bread of Life* and the source of our eternal life.

So to further illustrate this point Jesus used the unleavened bread at the last Passover meal to show He is our Unleavened Bread, **"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.'**" (Mark 14:22). On the night of the exodus from Egypt God commanded Israel to eat the sacrificed lamb with unleavened bread (Exodus 12:8). Generations later Jesus used the Passover meal to illustrate the fact He is the Passover Lamb - the Lamb of God – represented by the sacrificed lamb in the Tabernacle. The unleavened bread Jesus used at the last Passover and the unleavened bread we use in Communion today represents the sinless body of Christ that hung on the cross for us. Because He is the Bread without leaven, who took our leaven on Himself, He becomes our *Bread of Life*. But please don't be confused by the purpose of Communion. It is not a source of salvation. Communion is simply an act of obedience to demonstrate our belief in the saving grace of Jesus, the sinless Lamb on the cross who died for our sins. Jesus simply used the unleavened bread to illustrate who He really is, **"And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'**" (Luke 22:19) Jesus didn't tell us to observe Communion in order to gain salvation. It is intended to be **"...in remembrance of Me..."**. Much like the Passover bread helped Israel remember their rescue from Egypt, the Communion bread helps us remember our rescue from sin. It is **"...in remembrance..."** of the *Unleavened Bread of Life* became leaven for us. Likewise, the effort to remove sin from our life is not a way to earn salvation. It is simply our effort to walk upright with the Lord so our lives can be a witness for Him.

So now we have a much better understanding of what Jesus meant when He said,

- **"For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."** (John 6:33)
- **"And Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.'**" (John 6:35)

- ***“I am the bread of life.”*** (John 6:48)
- ***“I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”*** (John 6:51)

Jesus is truly the *Bread of Life*. He is unleavened and without sin. That’s why it is Jesus alone who sustains us and nourishes us when we accept His work on the cross to remove the leaven from our own lives.

Manna From Heaven

In John chapter 6 (the Feeding of the Five Thousand) Jesus refers to an event that occurred hundreds of years before in the Old Testament. Let’s look at two passages to see the connection:

- John 6:32-40 — ***“32. Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34. Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.” 35. And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. 36. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. 37. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”***
- John 6:48-58 — ***“48. I am the bread of life. 49. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” 52. The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” 53. Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will***

live because of Me. 58. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

Here Jesus is talking to a group of people who witnessed the miracle of feeding over five thousand people with a few pieces of bread and fish. But rather than just nourishing the crowd with physical food Jesus used the opportunity to nourish them with spiritual food. He does so by describing Himself as, “***...the bread...***”, “***...bread from heaven...***”, “***...the bread of God...***”, “***...the bread of life...***”, and “***...living bread...***”. Here Jesus uses an example everyone in the crowd would understand. Bread - something they needed every day, because bread nourished them, sustained them and was a priority in their lives. But then Jesus gives them the gospel-in-a-nutshell. He tells them He is the bread. He is the One they need. The One who nourishes them and sustains them. He even gives them a future view of His crucifixion and resurrection by telling them it is His body and blood they need because He is the “***...living bread...***”. Did they clearly understand this? Probably not. Not at that time, The crucifixion and resurrection had not yet occurred so they couldn't put the pieces of the puzzle together. But...they should have known. They should have understood Isaiah 53 and the other Messianic prophecies. Just as Jesus had asked the learned Nicodemus, “***Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?***” (John 3:10b). And just as Jesus asked the two men on the road to Emmaus, “***25. Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26. Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27. And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.***” (Luke 24:25-27). And as Phillip figured out, “***We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.***” (John 1:45b). But the Jews were blinded by their own self-righteousness, corrupt leadership and works-based adherence to the Law. As a result, they failed to recognize Jesus for who He is.

But to help them make the connection Jesus points back to Moses and a story the crowd should have been very familiar with. The story of the Exodus. To do so He tells them about “***...Our fathers...***”, the “***...manna...***” they ate, and the fact it “***...came down from heaven...***”. But what does all that mean? For an answer let's go back to the Old Testament, in Exodus chapter 16, to see the nation of Israel as they travel through the wilderness for forty years from Egypt to the Promised Land.

- “***1. And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. 2. Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3. And the children of Israel said to them, “Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the***

land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger. 4. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. 5. And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily." 6. Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, "At evening you shall know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt. 7. And in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD; for He hears your complaints against the LORD. But what are we, that you complain against us?" 8. Also Moses said, "This shall be seen when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for the LORD hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against the LORD." 9. Then Moses spoke to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your complaints.' " 10. Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. 11. And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 12. "I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I am the LORD your God.' " 13. So it was that quail came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. 14. And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground. 15. So when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "This is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat. 16. This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: 'Let every man gather it according to each one's need, one omer for each person, according to the number of persons; let every man take for those who are in his tent.' " (Exodus 16:1-16)

The Hebrew people had been held captive in Egypt for over four hundred years. But in time God sent Moses to retrieve them and take them to the land originally promised to Abraham. This escape, or "Exodus" really happened, but we can now understand, when combined with the *Passover*, it is also symbolic of Jesus coming to get us and save us from the sin in our own lives. But the Israelites were rebellious and continuously turned away from God. As a result, it took them forty years to complete a trip that should have taken weeks. It took that long because God caused them to wander in the wilderness as a result of their disobedience. Sadly, during their circular journey all but two of the original population died and never saw the Promised Land. And yet, the people

continued to complain, and during their frequent fits of disobedience one of their main complaints was the lack of food. ***“...Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”*** (Exodus 16:3). So they kept looking back to Egypt for what it had to offer, even though going back to Egypt would mean going back to slavery and idolatry. But that didn't stop them from constantly griping and complaining about the food they used to have in Egypt. Instead of having faith in God to provide what they needed, Israel wanted to go back to their previous life because of something they wanted. But isn't that how we often look back on temptation in our lives without realizing the consequences of reverting back to a life of sin? We're no different than them and we often fail to be obedient. And yet, in His grace and mercy God didn't destroy them or us, but instead He provides what we need. In the case of the Israelites God fed them with a type of bread that came down from heaven. Just as God gave us the *Bread of Life* to sustain us, God gave manna to Israel, ***“4 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.”*** (Exodus 16:4 / Psalm 78:24). This bread was called Manna, ***“And the house of Israel called its name Manna. And it was like white coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.”*** (Exodus 16:31 / Numbers 11:1-14). Not only was the Manna provided for food but when the Ark of the Covenant was built for the Tabernacle God commanded them to place a jar of Manna in the ark to remind them of His provision for their lives and the redemption of their sin.

- ***“33. And Moses said to Aaron, “Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations.”*** (Exodus 16:33)
- ***“3. and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, 4. which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;”*** (Hebrews 9:3-4)

So given all of that we can understand that God gave Israel manna (bread) to sustain them on their journey. So how does this relate to Jesus? Let's look at a few verses to bring it all together.

- In Deuteronomy 8:1-3, the Lord reminds Israel
 - ***“1. Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. 2. And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these***

forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD."

God gave Israel everything they needed to succeed. Including His commandments - His word - which became the core of what we call the Old Testament. But Israel rebelled and for forty years God humbled them in the wilderness until they learned to be an obedient nation. During that time He fed them Manna from heaven, but reminded them it is His words, not their food, that will sustain them. This reminds us of John chapter 1 and the description of Jesus as ***"...the Word..."***.

- ***"1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*** (John 1:1)
- ***"14. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."*** (John 1:14)
 - Jesus is the ***"...Word..."*** of God, ***"...full of grace and truth..."***.

Jesus used the story of Manna to help them and us understand who He is. He is our ***"...daily bread..."***. The ***"...Bread of Life..."*** given by God, ***"...who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*** (Matthew 6:11 / John 3:16 / John 6:33b). Jesus is the bread. The unleavened and sinless broken body and shed blood which is, ***"...My body which is given for you;..."*** (Luke 22:19b).

Jesus points to this fact again by looking to the future when He will return to retake what is rightfully His and prepare an eternity for His faithful followers, ***"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."*** (Revelation 2:17)

Jesus is truly the *Bread of Life*, given to us by God, to save us, sustain us and nourish us for eternity. So let's remember, the next time we feel we're being kneaded or maybe going through the oven of life, that may very well be the Lord shaping us for who He wants us to be.

Jesus in The Old Testament

An Eight Week Survey

Week 5

The Great I AM

"I, the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he."

(Isaiah 41:4)

Week 5 - Outline - The Great I AM

- What does I AM mean?
 - It describes God's eternity, perfection, sovereignty
- Why is it a name of God?
 - Because He is eternal, perfect, and sovereign
 - He is holy in every way
- What is Yahweh?
 - Why is it spelled YHWH?
 - From it we get Jehovah
 - And I AM
- Examples if I AM in scripture
 - John 6:35
 - John 8:12
 - John 10:9
 - John 10:11-14
 - John 11:25-26
 - John 14:6
 - John 15:1-5
 - Revelation 1:8
 - Revelation 1:17
 - Revelation 1:18
 - Revelation 22:13
 - Revelation 22:16
- When Jesus spoke to the doubters
 - He reminded them – Before Abraham was, I AM - John 8
 - But they were distracted by the law of man instead of the Law of God - Mark 7

One of the names Jesus used is profoundly simple and straightforward. A name expressing His eternal qualities of perfection and sovereignty. A name that embodies His attributes as being omniscient and omnipresent. His name is, **“...I AM...”**.

The following section was written by Heidi Spargur who has graciously allowed me to use it for this class (thanks Heidi).

***“I AM”** is the name God gives to Himself in the Bible, but to modern English speakers, the term can sound odd. Why “I Am”? What does it mean? As we will see, the name of God carries a great amount of meaning and importance.*

*In the time of the patriarchs, God had no known name and was only known to the Jews as **“...he God of our fathers...”** (Exodus 3:13) or the **“...God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...”** (Exodus 3:6). The first time we see God’s name used is in Exodus when Moses is speaking with God at the burning bush. **“13. Then Moses said to God, ‘Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?’”** 14. **And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.”** And He said, **“Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ”** 15. **Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.’”** (Exodus 3:13-15). God was calling Moses to be the person through whom He would work to bring the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt. Moses’ question may have been stalling for time, or it may have been a legitimate question. Although he was a Hebrew, Moses was raised in the Pharaoh’s palace and would have been exposed to their extensive pantheon of gods and goddesses. The Jews to whom he was being sent were no different. Every god and goddess in Egypt had a name and several had multiple names. So it was probably natural that Moses would want to know the name of the God Who was speaking to him.*

*God’s response to Moses’ question in Hebrew is **“אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה”**, (read right to left) and is transliterated as **“ehyah aser eh yah”**. The word **“ehyah”** means **“come to pass, become, or be”**. It comes from the root **“hayah”** and the translation of that word is **“I will be”** or **“being”**. The word does not carry the indication of a beginning or end - it has a sense of eternality to it. It is an ongoing, continuous state of being with no end in sight. In these verses, it expresses the idea that God is eternal and has always been. He was not created and did not come into being like mankind or the rest of creation. When God tells Moses His name is **“I Am Who I Am”** (Exodus 3:14), He is saying **“I always have been, I always will be, I am unchanging and eternal.”***

In Exodus 3:15, God uses the name the Jews still use to this day to refer to Him - "Yahweh". This is actually the proper name of God. The word is derived from "hayah" or "I AM" and means "to be self-existent or eternal". God exists outside of human time and without the need of any other force or being to remain in existence. He is self-sustaining and all-powerful. The use of "I AM" and "Yahweh" shows a supremacy over time, age, decay, and the natural order of things on Earth. Although the way in which God interacted with mankind has changed over time, God Himself does not change. This is the importance behind the use of "I AM" and "Yahweh" both and that importance cannot be understated. Prior to Moses, the patriarchs and others, such as Noah or Enoch, understood the God they worshipped, while not having a name, was boundless, eternal, and all powerful and they believed in His redemptive promise. The patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - had a closer view of God, yet the redemption in which they believed was still far off and perhaps not completely clear to them. This is what makes their faith so great - they believed in the promises of God despite not having a full understanding of what that looked like or how it would come about. With the giving of the name Yahweh, another step was taken in God establishing His redemptive plan for mankind. The Jews, who were about to be called out and become a nation, would gain a much fuller understanding of who God is. Not a god of stone and wood that may fade from memory as time wore on, but a God without beginning or end Who is eternal and unchanging. They would come to understand better His redemptive plan for not only them, but for the whole world. Unfortunately, they did not heed His instructions to be the light to the world, so I AM became human without ceasing to be the eternal God and lived a life among His creation in order that He might fulfill the redemption that had been promised.

In grammatical terms the name of God Yahweh is called a "tetragrammaton", which is a fancy way of describing a word represented by a string of consonants and no vowels. That's because Jews consider the name of God too holy to speak verbally so they developed the word "YHWH" which when combined with vowels from the word "Adonai" (Master or Lord) gives us the name "Yahweh" which we translate in English as "Jehovah". It is a name presented to us in Exodus as **"I AM"**.

So now that we better understand the Hebrew root of **"I AM"** in the Old Testament, where do we see it applied by Jesus in the New Testament?

Let's look at a few examples:

- ***"35. And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."***(John 6:35)

- ***"12. Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." (John 8:12)***
- ***"9. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." (John 10:9)***
- ***"11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own." (John 10:11-14)***
- ***"25. Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)***
- ***"6. Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)***
- ***"1. I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5. "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:1-5)***
- ***"8. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8)***
- ***"17, And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last." (Revelation 1:17)***
- ***"18. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death." (Revelation 1:18)***

- ***"6. And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts." (Revelation 21:6)***
- ***"13. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." (Revelation 22:13)***
- ***"16. "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." (Revelation 22:16)***

Here the New Testament (which was originally written in Greek instead of Hebrew), uses the term "*ego eimi*", which basically means the same thing as *Yahweh*. In other words, Jesus is clarifying for us that He is the ***"I AM"***. He is God. But also, Jesus adds a qualifier to the ***"I AM"*** statement to help us understand a number of His other titles or roles.

He is:

- ***"the bread of life"***(John 6:35)
- ***"the light of the world"*** (John 8:12)
- ***"the door"*** (John 10:9)
- ***"the good shepherd"*** (John 10:11-14)
- ***"the resurrection and the life"*** (John 11:25-26)
- ***"the way, the truth, and the life"*** (John 14:6)
- ***"the true vine"*** (John 15:1-5)
- ***"the Alpha and the Omega, // the Beginning and the End // the Almighty"*** (Revelation 1:8)
- ***"the First and the Last"*** (Revelation 1:17)
- ***"He who lives"*** (Revelation 1:18)
- ***"the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."*** (Revelation 22:13)

We could do an in-depth study on each of these titles and many more like them throughout the Bible. Each one brings more clarity and understanding of who our Lord is and what He does. But for now, the name ***"I AM"*** encompasses all of them because it describes our God who is everything. Although we don't have time in this course to thoroughly investigate the seven ***"I AM"*** statements in The Book of John, I have included an addendum at the end of our lessons written by Heidi Spargur to give you more insight. I hope you can use this in your own studies.

To close out this lesson let's look at a conversation between Jesus and the wicked Pharisees to give us another New Testament link to the term ***"I AM"***..

“54. Jesus answered, ‘If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. 55. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, ‘I do not know Him,’ I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. 56. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.” 57. Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” 58. Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” (John 8:54-58)

The Pharisees were the Jewish religious leaders of ancient Israel. As such they were students of God’s word and should have been able to recognize Jesus from scripture’s many Messianic prophecies. But they were blinded by their own religious arrogance and haughty attitude. Just as Jesus told the Pharisee Nicodemus, ***“Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”*** (John 3:10b). The Pharisees - and therefore most people in Israel - sought righteousness through works. They believed adherence to the Law and their heritage as descendants of Abraham would get them enough credit to get into heaven. Unfortunately, their zeal to earn salvation resulted in more focus on man’s law than it did on God’s law. As the Lord said through Isaiah, ***“13. Therefore the Lord said: ‘Inasmuch as these people drew near with their mouths and honor me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.’”*** (Isaiah 29:13). This is one of the reasons the Jews failed to see Jesus as the Messiah. They were looking for a Warrior King who would free them from Roman oppression. Not a poor homeless Carpenter who would free the world of sin. In the passage above from John 8 the Pharisees are questioning Jesus because they were so spiritually blinded they not only rejected His words and miracles but even attributed His power to satan (John 8:52). This was because they viewed their righteousness as coming from their religion and heritage. That’s why they told Jesus, ***“...Abraham is our father.”*** (John 8:39b). In response, Jesus said something that should have resonated with them. It should have caused them to think back to Moses and his encounter with God at the burning bush (Exodus 3:13-15). And it should have helped them understand who Jesus is. Jesus simply said, ***“...before Abraham was, I AM...”*** (John 8:58b). In other words, before Abraham was, Jesus was. Before there was an Israel, Jesus was. Before there was a Jew, Jesus was. Before there was the Law, Jesus was. By declaring Himself to be the ***“I AM”*** Jesus was telling them *I AM Yahweh, the eternal God*. But sadly they failed to understand and instead of recognizing Him, they crucified Him.

But how did the Jewish people get in such a religious condition they could not recognize Jesus as the Messiah? The answer will also help us better understand the meaning of Isaiah 29:13, ***“13. Therefore the Lord said: ‘Inasmuch as these people drew near with their mouths and honor me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.’”***

The Jewish people were laser focused on earning righteousness by adherence to the Law and their heritage as descendants of Abraham. But in their zeal to follow the Law

things got a little out of control. That's because they began to focus more on their own rules than they did on the requirements God had given them, and over time this effort led them in the wrong direction. The religious leaders of Israel sought a way to stay obedient to God, but rather than relying solely on the commandments presented to them by God in the first part of the Old Testament, the Torah, they began to add more requirements. In doing so they sought righteousness by adherence to the expanded law rather than focusing strictly on the requirements God had given them. Over time, Tabernacle worship transitioned to worship in the synagogue and Rabbinical teachers began to add hundreds of new requirements to the Laws God had already established. These new requirements came primarily from Rabbis who gave their opinion - their own commentary - on what the original Laws actually meant and how the Laws were to be followed. These "*Oral Laws*" came from Rabbinical teaching and were recorded and compiled and over time provided volumes of extra ordinances not found in the original Torah Law of the Bible. Centuries later these new laws were collected and codified in two primary texts - the "*Mishnah*" and the "*Talmud*". These rules are highly revered by the Jewish people to this day, but they are not scripture. They are the opinions and commentary of Rabbis recorded over time as they sought to explain how the Jewish people were to live.

But unfortunately, by the time Jesus came to earth the Rabbinical system had become so focused on these extraneous "laws" they no longer adhered strictly to the Torah Law provided by God in scripture. This created a great deal of confusion as people attempted to follow hundreds of non-Biblical rules imposed on them by their spiritual leaders. Of course that created a conflict with Jesus who taught only from the Torah Law (His Biblical Law) and not from the rules written by man who sought self-righteousness through strict adherence to their own regulations.

We see an example of the conflict between the Biblical Torah Law versus the Oral Law in Mark chapter 7:

- ***"7. Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes came together to Him, having come from Jerusalem. 2. Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. 3. For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding the tradition of the elders. 4. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other things which they have received and hold, like the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches. 5. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, 'Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?' 6. He answered and said to them, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 7. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' 8. For laying aside the commandment of God, you***

hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” 9. He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. 10. For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’ 11. But you say, ‘If a man says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban”—’ (that is, a gift to God), 12. then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, 13. making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”
(Mark 7:7-13)

Let's break this down a bit to better understand the difference:

The Pharisees saw Jesus and his disciples eating bread without washing their hands. So they tried to catch Jesus breaking the “law” by asking Him why He allowed His followers to eat without washing. Now understand, they were not talking about personal hygiene. They were referencing an Oral Law which required ritual cleansing prior to eating similar to how the Levitical priests would perform a ritual cleansing prior to making a sacrifice in the Tabernacle. But this hand washing requirement was not part of God's Torah Law. It was a “***...tradition of the elders...***” passed down through Rabbinical Oral Law. In other words, they were accusing Jesus and His followers of breaking man's law as if it was God's Law. Then the Pharisees went even further and asked, “***...“Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders...”***”. Again, they were not quoting God's Law but asking Jesus why His followers did not live by, or “***...walk...***” by, the additional Oral Laws imposed by man. So Jesus replied with a passage of scripture they should have recognized, “***13. Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.”*** (Isaiah 29:13). In other words, in their zeal to seek self-righteousness the Oral Law had replaced God's Torah Law in the hearts of men, so much so it, “***...removed their hearts far from Me...***” because they taught the “***...commandment of men...***” instead of the commandments of God. Jesus then quotes one of the real commandments and admonishes them because their focus on the Oral Law made, “***...the word of God of no effect...***” in their hearts because of “***...your tradition which you have handed down...***”. The conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders came down to the fact they were seeking righteousness through adherence to the law - instead of faith in God's promises - and had overcomplicated the Torah Law through the addition of Oral Law to the point they no longer understood what God's Law actually meant. But they should have known better. Centuries before, God told them through Moses, “***1. “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you. 2. You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the***

commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.” (Deuteronomy 4:1-2). In their zeal to conform they had done exactly what God told them not to do. They had added to God’s word to suit their own needs and had lost the true meaning of the Biblical Laws He had given them. In doing so, the spiritual leadership of Israel had failed the people as God had warned would happen, **“6. Therefore be careful to observe them [God’s Law]; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’”** (Deuteronomy 4:6). God had warned them that a **“...great nation...”** would be one who observed His Law, which would bring them **“...wisdom...”** and **“...understanding...”**. That’s why Jesus pushed back on these Oral Laws and traditions. He had given them everything they needed to be obedient and yet they made new laws of their own. But Jesus’ resistance to the Oral Laws was seen by Jewish leadership as an affront to their authority and the grip they had over the people. It was seen as rebellion against the new status quo even though His message was directly in line with the Laws God had given them.

So the Pharisees and most Jews saw Jesus as a fraud and an interloper. Not only did He not look like a king or act like a king, He resisted the Oral Laws and traditions they had worked so hard to put in place. Not only that, He insisted that eternal life and immortality depended on simple faith in a homeless Carpenter and not on the hard-earned credit they sought through adherence to the laws they had written. Those two elements - His looks and His attitude - created a barrier they could not overcome. Looking like He did and talking like He did meant He certainly must not be their Messiah. And if that was the case, they needed to move Him out of the way as quickly as they could before He could create any more confusion and lead too many people away from their authority.

In a nutshell, they failed to recognize Jesus as the **“I AM”**. If they had, they would have realized what He meant when He said, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”** (John 14:6b).

One final thought:

A term **“I AM”** is like no other because in reality it is a term that when defined in its root language can only be used by God. But why is that? Because only God is eternal, all-knowing and all-seeing. In fact, when we use the term “I am” to describe ourselves we have to ensure we’re not committing the sin of pride. In other words, if we say, **“I am the best.”**, or **“I am the most beautiful.”**, or **“I am number one.”**, we’re in essence putting our own self-worth and accomplishments above God. Why? Because only God is the best, only God is the most beautiful, only God is number one, and only God is the true **I AM**. Of course using that term for ourselves is not always a sin, but it can be if it results in pride and distracts from our humility. At least it’s something for us to think about as we seek to walk humbly before the Lord.

Jesus in The Old Testament

An Eight Week Survey

Week 6

The Great High Priest

"...14, Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God..."

(Hebrews 4:14a)

Week 6 - Outline - The Great High Priest

- What was a Levite?
- What is a High Priest?
 - What did they do?
 - Why was it insufficient?
- What was an offering in the Tabernacle?
 - A Messianic prophecy
 - But an offering that was tainted and incomplete
- So God sent the Perfect Lamb Abraham envisioned
 - He was the fulfillment of prophecy
 - The Lamb of God - John 6
- Jesus is the Perfect Priest
 - He is perfect, sinless, untainted and complete
 - He is Bread without leaven - A priest without sin
- How is Jesus our atoning sacrifice?
 - As the Son of Man - He is Jewish blessing to the world
 - As the Son of God - He is the only Way, the only Truth, the only Life
 - Because He gave Himself as the Lamb
 - And in Doing to He is the Priest - The Great High Priest
 - Who gave His life as a ransom - Matthew 20

In order to understand what is meant by the title “*Great High Priest*” let's look at a brief history of Israel, the office of high priest in the Temple and their priestly duties.

Abraham had a son named Isaac, and Isaac had a son named Jacob. It was through this lineage God promised to bless mankind (Genesis 12:2-3). Jacob, whose name was changed by God to *Israel*, had twelve sons, who over time became the *Twelve Tribes of Israel*, and it was through these sons God would divide the Promised Land between the tribes. But one son, Levi, did not get a land inheritance. Instead, his descendents were assigned the task of being priests in God's Tabernacle (later called the Temple). They became known as “*Levites*”.

Aaron, who was the brother of Moses, and Aaron's sons were consecrated by God as Israel's first Tabernacle priests, “**Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**” (Exodus 28:1). Their duties were complicated and are described throughout the Old Testament but primarily through the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. In a nutshell, the priests were the spiritual leaders of Israel and administered the sacrificial system in the Tabernacle. It was through them offerings were made to God and by them the people were taught God's commandments and expectations. The Levites were responsible for all aspects of maintaining the Tabernacle. From setting up the structure, its courtyard and furnishings, moving the Tabernacle whenever the tribes moved, carrying the Ark of the Covenant, guarding the Tabernacle, ceremonial cleansing, teaching God's commandments, acting as mediators, seeking God's direction for key decisions, and administering the offerings and daily sacrifices. Their duties were complicated and had to be accomplished exactly as God had said. Failure to do so resulted in severe punishment as we see in Leviticus chapter 10 when God killed two sons of Aaron who elected to perform the offerings the way they wanted instead of the way God had established. Aaron was the first *High Priest*, a special role established by God to lead all of the priests and their priestly duties. It was also the High Priest, and only the High Priest, who could enter the “*Holy of Holies*” section of the Tabernacle once a year, on the Day of Atonement, to make an offering for Israel. Initially the High Priest was a descendent of Levi, but over the centuries other qualifications were established. The role of High Priest still existed at the time of Jesus, but by then they had become largely disobedient to God. You'll recall, it was at the home of Caiaphas the High Priest where Jesus was initially brought before the Sanhedrin to be accused of blasphemy. Caiaphas, who should have been making an offering to God, instead insisted the Romans crucify Him. This is a stark reminder of Aaron, who as the first High Priest lost his way and made a golden calf for the people to worship. In both cases we see the disobedience of key religious figures who failed in the role God had given them to do.

What we know most about the Levites, the High Priest and their duties were the tasks associated with the sacrificial system. It was through the various offerings that Israel showed their worship of God and recognition that all they had belonged to Him. But it was the blood offerings to atone the sins of Israel that were most important. Why? Because the blood offering was a picture of the severe penalty required to forgive sin, but it was also to illustrate the coming Messiah and His death for the sin of mankind (Isaiah 53). A blood offering was the method by which God extracted payment for the sin debt, but as we've discussed, it was not the sacrifice itself that brought salvation to the people. The sacrifice of shed blood simply illustrated the severe penalty required for sin. Their righteousness (salvation) resulted from their faith in God's promise that He would forgive their sin if they would ask for redemption. This is the same way we're saved. Our salvation does not come from our head-knowledge of Jesus or the cross. It comes from our faith in God's promise to forgive our sin if we ask for redemption, and if we do so through faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus who was the sacrifice made for the sin of mankind.

And that's the connection to Jesus as the *Great High Priest*.

As we've already discussed in Lesson #2 (*The Lamb of God*) God told Abraham to make an offering of his son Isaac: **"1. Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' 2. Then He said, 'Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.'**" (Genesis 22:1-2). But this command was to illustrate much more than simply an offering for sin. On one hand, God was testing Abraham's faith in His promise of redemption, but also, the fact God spared the life of Isaac and provided a substitutional sacrifice in his place is a picture of how God would provide a substitutional sacrifice for our sin by the shed blood of Jesus. Abraham lived hundreds of years before the sacrificial system was recorded in scripture and before the first Tabernacle was built, but he knew God would provide a substitute for Isaac because Abraham had faith in God's promise of a blood sacrifice for sin. That's why he said in a very prophetic way, **"...My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering. ..."** (Genesis 22:8). Abraham had faith **"...God will provide..."** the **"...lamb..."** for **"...Himself..."**, and also, by providing the lamb God spared Isaac and essentially brought him back from certain death, **"17. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18. of whom it was said, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called,' 19. concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.."** (Hebrews 11:17-19). And that's exactly what God did with Jesus, **"16. 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. 17. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."** (John 3:16-17) Jesus' life

was not taken from Him, it was given as an offering on the cross to shed holy blood for the unholy sin of mankind. And it is through our faith in His work on the cross that our sins are forgiven and our debt is paid.

So to illustrate the debt and the redemption God established the sacrificial system in the Tabernacle. A system focused on the sacrifice of a lamb to illustrate the debt that must be paid for the sin of Israel. As a result, the Tabernacle, its furnishings, the lamb, the altar and even the High Priest were all prophetic pictures to illustrate the coming Messiah and His sacrifice for mankind. The sacrificed lamb was simply to illustrate the severe payment required for sin to be forgiven. A payment pointing to Jesus, the Messiah, who would give of Himself as a perfect sacrifice for the sin of mankind.

And that is the gospel. Sin results in a debt, and the debt can only be paid by the shedding of innocent blood. Whether for the sin of Israel or the sin of mankind, blood must be shed as a payment for our disobedience against God. That's why Jesus could say, ***"6. ...I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*** (John 14:6). Since Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice for the sin of mankind He is the only route to salvation. There is no other way. Neither through works nor religion because the sin debt must be paid in blood, and none of our works, religion or even our own blood would qualify. So the debt must be paid by the ***"...Lamb of God..."*** (John 1:29b), and it is only through our faith in what the Lamb did on the cross that brings the redemption of our sin.

But is it really that simple? Yes...

- We sin
- Our sin results in a debt that must be paid
- Nothing we can do will pay the debt because we're the ones who committed the sin
- So Jesus, who is God, came as a Man, but without sin, in order to pay the debt we could not pay ourselves
- And our righteousness comes from our faith in who He is and what He did

The death of Jesus was required because there was a problem with the earthly sacrificial system. That's because both the lamb and the human priest were created beings, and as such they were imperfect. So the priest was a sinner who first had to make an offering for his own sin before he could make an offering for the people's sin. As a result, both the sacrifice and the priest were flawed and therefore the forgiveness was temporary. That's why the sacrifice had to be repeated over and over, every day for centuries. Unfortunately, Israel missed the underlying reason for the sacrificial system and failed to carry God's message of redemption to the world, ***"...Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' "*** (Isaiah 49:6).

But God knew that would happen so He sent a sacrifice - a perfect and sinless sacrifice. A sacrifice who needed no human priest because the perfect Sacrifice was the perfect Priest. Jesus came as the promised payment for sin. He came as the ultimate **"...Lamb..."** so that God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 would be fulfilled, **"...And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed..."**. The world, not just Israel, would be offered forgiveness through the sacrifice of Jesus who was given by God, and not by man, so that, **"...whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."** (John 3:16b). Jesus was given so we can be redeemed by faith in His blood sacrifice for sin.

But Jesus was more than the perfect Lamb. He is also the perfect Priest. The *Great High Priest* who gave Himself on the altar of the cross, **"...14, Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God..."**. (Hebrews 4:14a). And since He is sinless Jesus didn't have to offer a sacrifice for His own sin like a human priest, because He had none. His sacrifice was fully applied to us because He assumed the role of Priest when He offered His own life for ours, **"...26. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27. who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself..."**. (Hebrews 7:26-27) As the perfect **"...great High Priest..."**, Jesus offered Himself as the perfect Lamb on the altar of God, on the cross at Calvary, for the sin of mankind. That's why He is the perfect **"...Lamb of God..."**, and the perfect **"...Great High Priest..."**, **"14. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins..."** (Colossians 1:14) As the Lamb and the Priest Jesus is all we need. No other offering, sacrifice or effort on our part is needed because, **"...11. But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14. how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"** (Hebrews 9:11-14).

But there's another important point we need to understand. The Levitical priest in the Tabernacle offered the life of another for the sins of Israel, but Jesus offered His own life for us, **"2. "...as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma..."** (Ephesians 5:2b). His life was not taken from Him, and He did not offer another sacrifice in His place. Jesus gave Himself, willingly, for the sins of man. Sins He did not commit. That's why He is the *Great High Priest*. The Priest above all others who did what none of the other priests could do.

So the lamb whose life was given in the Tabernacle for the sins of Israel was a picture of the **"...Lamb of God..."** who would give His life on the cross for the sins of mankind. Only He could pay the debt because only Jesus could, **"...give His life a ransom for many."** (Matthew 20:28b).

Jesus is not only the Lamb. He is also the Great High Priest who gave Himself as the sacrifice for us. And one day, in His kingdom, we will be able to thank Him for that for eternity.

Praise His Holy Name.

Jesus in The Old Testament

An Eight Week Survey

Week 7

The Redeemer

“For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth.”

(Job 19:25)

Week 7 - Outline - The Redeemer

- What does “Redeemer” mean?
 - “Ga’al” - To buy back
 - “Padah” - A substitute
 - “Lutron” - To liberate
 - “Agorazein” - The high cost of freedom
- We will look at Redeemer as a title
- And discuss what Redemption was for – Our sin
 - Temptation
 - Our fall
 - God’s offered grace
 - Our forgiveness and rebirth
- Redemption is a constant theme seen throughout the Bible
 - It is the result of satan drawing us in with temptation
 - Which is defeated by the offer of grace through Jesus
- We will discuss the power of satan - the prince of the air
 - Who poses as an angel of light
- But it is the power of Jesus - the Almighty and All Powerful God
 - Who will destroy satan and all who follow him
- We’ll look at Redemption in the Old Testament and New Testament
 - What Job saw
 - What John saw
 - What we see

There are many themes and topics in the Bible, but one of the most consistent messages resonating throughout scripture is the contrast between the wickedness of sin and the grace of redemption. It is from that perspective we'll study one of the most endearing titles of Jesus in the Bible – He is our *“Redeemer”*.

Although Jesus didn't call Himself the *“Redeemer”* it is a title commonly used because it describes His unique role of redeeming us from our sin.

The term *“Redeemer”* is derived from several root words.

- In Hebrew the term *“ga'al”* means to *“buy back or redeem by paying a price”*. This is the word used in Exodus 6:6 to describe the redemption of Israel from bondage in Egypt, ***“6. Therefore say to the children of Israel: ‘I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.’”***. We also see this term used in the Book of Ruth to describe Boaz as the *“Kinsman-Redeemer”* who showed mercy to the Moabite Ruth and by marrying her he redeemed her from a life of poverty and sin and gave her a new life of promise (Ruth 4:10-11). In that chronicle, Boaz is a prophetic picture of Christ and Ruth is a picture of the redeemed church - the bride - who is redeemed by His grace.
- Another word used in the Old Testament to describe redemption is *“padah”*, which is related to the Tabernacle system of providing a substitutional sacrifice for sin. We see this word used in Psalm 26, ***“11. But as for me, I will walk in my integrity; Redeem me and be merciful to me.”*** (Psalm 26:11).
- Two other words used to describe the act of redemption are, *“lutron”*, which means *“to liberate or ransom”* and *“agorazein”* which speaks to the high cost of being redeemed.

Although Jesus didn't directly identify Himself as the Redeemer, it's clear from the use of these root words that Redeemer is a fitting title for who He is and what He has done. Just as He said in Matthew 20:28, ***“28. just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”***, and as Paul tells us in Romans 3:23-24, ***“23. for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24. being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”*** Clearly, Jesus redeems, which makes Him our *“Redeemer”*.

But the story of redemption requires an understanding of sin. That's because it is sin that results in the need for redemption.

So let's try to tie this all together.

The story of sin is prevalent throughout the entire Bible because our Lord wants to ensure we know what sin is. So He shows us clear examples of disobedience, idolatry, murder, and every other form of sinful thoughts and actions to help us recognize sin and avoid it. Then He shows us His offer of grace and the process by which our sins can be forgiven. In other words, God wants us to understand it is through faith in Jesus our sin debt can be paid and we can be redeemed. This conflict between sin and redemption is illustrated through:

- satan's temptations,
- The fall of mankind,
- God's offer of redeeming grace,
- Our forgiveness and rebirth as a follower of Christ.

Although God doesn't cause sin or temptation (James 1:13) He allows satan to present mankind with an option. This is the test each of us must take. To either follow satan and the temptations he presents, or follow Jesus and the merciful grace and redemption He offers apart from sin.

That's why the conflict between sin and redemption is a constant theme presented in God's word:

- God provides clear expectations for our lives,
- God allows satan to present an alternative to those expectations (temptation),
- We are given the freewill to accept or reject satan's alternative,
- Conversely, we are given the freewill to accept or reject God's offer of forgiveness by asking for redemption through Jesus,
- Our decision and which we choose will determine our position for eternity.

From the beginning of the Bible in Genesis chapter 3, until near the very end in Revelation chapter 20, satan is one of the most prominent characters in the Bible. In fact, even though he is not always called out by name, he is in some way represented in every book and nearly every chapter. But why? Because he is the source of mankind's sinful thoughts and actions, and his influence is characterized throughout scripture by the examples of sin God gives us. In doing so, God clearly presents the source of sin as satan, and contrasts that with God's source of redemption in Jesus. This contrasting theme - sin and redemption – is probably the most common theme throughout God's word.

We see this contrast in many places, including:

- The fruit eaten in the garden
 - Then the redemption offered through a sacrificed offering
- The unfaithful works-based offering of Cain
 - Then the accepted faith-based offering of Abel

- The disobedience that resulted in the worldwide flood
 - Then the redemption of Noah and his family
- The disobedience of Abraham when he fled to Egypt
 - Then Abraham's obedience and righteousness
- The disobedience of David with Bathsheba
 - Then the forgiveness of David and his role as king of Israel
- Every sin offering in the Tabernacle
 - Then the coming Messiah and offering Himself for mankind
- The cycles of disobedience of Israel when they turned away from God
 - Then the reverse cycles when they turned back to God and were forgiven
- The resistance of the Pharisees who failed to recognize Jesus as the Messiah
 - Then the apparent belief of the Pharisee Nicodemus
- The denial of Peter at the trial of Jesus
 - Then his forgiveness and task from Jesus to feed the sheep
- The crucifixion of the Messiah when He took our sin
 - Then the resurrection of Jesus and His victory over sin and death
- The doubting of Thomas who would not believe without seeing
 - Then his realization that Jesus is his Redeemer
- The end-times in Revelation when the world is destroyed because of sin
 - Then the Wedding Supper of the Lamb when the bride is redeemed because of faith

In each of these passages, and many more like them throughout the Bible, we are presented with the sources and outcomes of sin. Then we are presented with the message of forgiveness and redemption. But why does God's word present this conflict over and over? Because He wants us to be able to understand what He expects of us, and He wants us to be able to recognize the sources of sin so we can resist them and eradicate them from our lives. But more importantly, He wants us to understand that our sin - no matter how bad it might be - can be forgiven through faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus - our *Redeemer*.

But why is it so important to understand sin in order to understand redemption? Because the lure of sin by our enemy is a profoundly powerful force in this world. That's why the Bible calls satan the **"...prince of the power of the air..."** (Ephesians 2:2b). Our adversary is a ruthless, evil being who tirelessly seeks to draw every person away from God, and he does so through the temptation of sin. But the power of sin from satan is far overshadowed by the power of redemption through Jesus. And yet, redemption comes with a price. A price for our sin that had to be paid by our Lord on the cross. But if sin is so egregious in God's eyes why is it so prevalent and accepted in society? Because satan makes it easy to accept. As the Lord tells us through Paul, **"13. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14. And no wonder! For satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform**

themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Our enemy does not work out in the open. He works quietly in the minds of mankind by drawing them in and pulling them away from God. Even to the point of masquerading as **"...apostles of Christ..."**, **"...an angel of light..."** and **"...ministers of righteousness..."**. But how does he do that? Through many venues: prosperity gospels, works-based gospels, aberrant Youtube preachers, false doctrines, false religions, government leaders, entertainment, education systems, and progressive agendas that may sound good on the surface but are vile within. Our enemy doesn't put a gun to your head and force you to sin. Instead, he cleverly disguises sin by wrapping it in the colorful packaging of our desires and the things we covet. That's why examples of sin, and the father of sin, are so prevalent throughout God's word. These examples help us see mankind's failures. Even telling us who failed and how they failed, so we can understand how satan lured them to fail. All of this is to help us clearly understand who satan is and how he works, so we can understand how to recognize him and defeat him in our lives. But most importantly, it helps us understand why we need redemption and who redemption must come from. It must come from Jesus - our Redeemer, because, **"12. Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."** (Acts 4:12)

So let's look at the theme of redemption in the Old Testament:

In Job 19:25 we see a beautiful and prophetic statement about Jesus, **"For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth."** This verse uses **"...Redeemer'..."** as a title for Jesus because our Lord is the author of His word and here He describes Himself as a **"...Redeemer..."**. So let's break this verse down a bit to see an interesting connection between the Old and New Testaments. Job lived hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth, and yet he could look into the future and see the Messiah standing **"...on the earth..."**. In other words, in physical form. This verse could point to Jesus at His first coming, but most likely it points to His Second Coming because Job clarifies the timing of his vision as **"...at last..."**, or at the end. In the original Hebrew the word **"...last..."** is defined by Strong's as, *"eschatos". "Meaning 'last' or 'end,' often used in the New Testament to describe the end times or final events."*

But we see another view of this event by looking further into the future to the Apostle John in Revelation who had a very similar vision of Jesus at His Second Coming during the Tribulation period, **"Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb [Jesus] standing on Mount Zion [Israel]..."** (Revelation 14:1a). Do you see the connection? Job saw his **"...Redeemer..."** **"...stand at last on the earth..."**, and John saw the **"...Lamb..."**, who is Jesus at the end of time, **"...standing on Mount Zion..."**. In both cases Job and John saw a vision of Jesus. John saw the **"...Lamb..."**, which he makes clear in Revelation 5:6b when he describes Jesus as, **"...a Lamb as though it had been**

slain...” and through whom we are **“...redeemed us to God by Your blood...”** (Revelation 5:9b). But what is most profound is the fact Job saw the future Messiah as his **“...Redeemer...”** hundreds of years before the crucifixion or the resurrection. That’s because Job understood it was the Lord and the Lord alone who can redeem us from the sin in our life.

So let's talk about Redemption.

When we sin we sin against God. This results in a price that must be paid for our sin to be forgiven. We see this initially when God commanded Adam and Eve to be obedient in the garden and warned them of the consequences of sin, **“17. but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”** (Genesis 2:17). God gave Adam and Eve a single commandment - not to eat from a specific tree. Then He told them the penalty for disobeying His command would be death. But Adam and Eve failed, and it was through the disobedience of Adam all mankind would inherit a sin debt. Why? As Paul tells us, **“12. Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”** (Romans 5:12). Because of the sin of Adam all mankind inherited the nature to sin and therefore we inherited a debt for our sin that must be paid. But it’s not a debt we can pay on our own. In fact, a thousand lifetimes of good works and religion will not earn us salvation. Why? **“23. ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”** (Romans 3:23). Very simply, we have all sinned, and a sin debt must be paid, and there is nothing we can do to pay it ourselves because our works would be measured against the **“...glory of God...”** which is measured by Jesus on the cross. So Jesus came to earth and paid our debt for us because we could not pay it ourselves. That's what Paul means when he says, **“18. Therefore, as through one man’s offense [Adam] judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act [Jesus] the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”** (Romans 5:18-19). So...Jesus is our Redeemer because it is only through Him our sins can be Redeemed. It is Jesus, and Jesus alone, **“...in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”** (Colossians 1:14). That means we can only be saved - Redeemed - by our faith in Jesus because we are **“24ajustified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”** (Romans 3:24).

So with that background let’s survey a few Old Testament verses pointing to Jesus as our Redeemer:

- Psalm 19:14 – **“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”**

- Psalm 78:35 – ***“Then they remembered that God was their rock, And the Most High God their Redeemer.”***
- Proverbs 23:11 – ***“For their Redeemer is mighty; He will plead their cause against you.”***
- Isaiah 41:14 – ***“Fear not, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! I will help you,” says the LORD And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.”***
- Isaiah 43:1 – ***“But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.”***
- Isaiah 43:14 – ***“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I will send to Babylon, And bring them all down as fugitives— The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships.”***
- Isaiah 44:24 – ***“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: “I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself;”***
- Isaiah 47:4 – ***“As for our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name, The Holy One of Israel.”***

Clearly, our Lord is our *Redeemer*. A title that can only be used for Him.

Praise the Lord.

Jesus in The Old Testament
An Eight Week Survey
Week 8
The Good Shepherd

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” (John 10:11)

Week 8 - Outline - The Good Shepherd

- What is a shepherd?
- Jesus is the Lamb – But He is also our Shepherd
 - That’s why He can relate to us on every level
- As a Ruler Jesus shepherds the flock
- As a Judge Jesus will separate the flock
- As a Provider Jesus has compassion for the flock
- As a Door Jesus shows the flock the way
- As a Shepherd Jesus knows the flock
 - He calls to us by name
 - And we know Him

The occupation of shepherding is discussed many times in the Bible. In fact, over 600 times the Bible talks about shepherds, flocks, herds, herdsmen and sheep. To the point, the term sheep is commonly used to represent those who follow the Lord. Shepherding is one of the most ancient occupations on earth and evidence of shepherds is found even in the most ancient Neolithic cultures. That's because the raising of livestock - and particularly sheep - is critical as a source of food, hides and wool. In fact, even early copies of the Bible were often written on parchment made of sheepskin. But shepherding is not an easy task. Most herding animals cannot defend themselves well and are under constant threat of danger. That means the shepherd must also be a warrior. We see an example of this in king David, who as a young man was a shepherd, and tells us about the dangers he faced, ***"34. ...Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35. I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it."*** (1 Samuel 17:34b-35). This helps us understand the life of a shepherd was not simply watching over a peaceful flock, but was a life of hard work, sacrifice and the willingness to defend the flock from danger. It was a tough life, but it was the life lived by many of the most prominent men in the Bible. David, Moses, Jacob, Abraham, Joseph, Abel and Amos, all spent time herding and protecting flocks. It was also lowly shepherds to whom the angels appeared the night Jesus was born and who then went to tell what they had seen (Luke 2:8-20). Undoubtedly, shepherds and sheep are important to God.

As we have studied in previous weeks Jesus came as ***"...the Lamb of God..."*** by coming in the lowly persona of a sheep (See Lesson #2 and John 1:29b). We also see this prophesied in Isaiah 53:7, ***"7. 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."*** But Jesus was not only the ***Lamb*** who came as a sacrifice for mankind. He was also the Shepherd who came to find His lost flock and bring them back to Him, ***"24. But He answered and said, 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'" (Matthew 15:24).*** Jesus had assigned Israel the task of carrying His message of redemption to the world (Isaiah 49) but they hoarded the truth and in time became self-righteous in their own eyes. So Jesus initially came to bring them back into the fold so they could carry His message of redemption to the world. But they rejected Him and His flock of sheep became a pack of wolves and crucified Him.

Now, let's look at a few examples of scripture in both the Old and New Testaments that point to Jesus as a Shepherd:

- Matthew 2:6 - ***'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'***

- When King Herod asked his scribes where the Messiah would be born they quoted the prophecy in Micah 5:2, ***“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”***
- Matthew 25:32 - ***“All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.”***
 - This speaks to the end-times judgment when our Mighty Shepherd will separate the flock between those who accepted Him and those who rejected Him.
- Mark 6:34 – ***“And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.”***
 - When Jesus fed the five thousand He had compassion on them as a Shepherd would His lost flock.
- John 10:2-4 – ***“2. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.”***
 - Here Jesus uses two of His titles. The Shepherd and the Door.
- John 10:7 - ***“Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.”***
- John 10:11 - ***“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”***
- John 10:14 - ***“I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.”***
- Hebrews 13:20 - ***“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”***
 - The writer of Hebrews also points to Jesus as the Shepherd.
- 1 Peter 5:4 - As does Peter, ***“...and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”***

- Revelation 7:17 – And Revelation ties together the titles of Lamb and Shepherd, ***“...for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”***
- Psalm 23:1-3 - ***“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name’s sake.”***
- Isaiah 40: 10-11 - ***“10. Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him. 11. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.”***

Clearly, our Lord is our Shepherd. He loves us, guides us, protects us and defends us. There are few things more comforting than to realize we are the sheep and Jesus is our Shepherd.

Addendum

A Study on the Seven “I AM” Statements of Jesus in the Book of John

By Heidi Spargur

The Seven I AM Statements of Jesus

In the Gospel of John, Jesus delivers seven statements that begin with “I Am”. These statements declare Who or What He is using imagery the Jewish people would have understood. In addition, by using the term “I Am” Jesus is directly linking Himself and His ministry with the name and attributes of God in the Old Testament. At the burning bush, God tells Moses His name is “I Am that I Am.” The meaning behind this name is God is eternal, everlasting, has no beginning or end, and is the self-existent One. By phrasing His statements in an “I Am the....” manner, Jesus is claiming divinity and emphasizing that like God the Father, He and what He is offering are also eternal and without end. So let's look at each statement individually and in the order Jesus gave them.

1. I Am the Bread of Life: “And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.” (John 6:35 NKJV). This first statement comes during Jesus’ teaching after the feeding of the 5,000. Most of the people in the crowd were at the feeding and the reason they were following Jesus was they wanted to be fed again. However, Jesus knows what they really need is not another physical meal but the eternal Bread of Life that He offers. The people struggle to understand His message, but it should not have been that way. Jesus’ statement of being the Bread of Life links back to the Old Testament miracle of the manna in the wilderness. God provided the miraculous bread for the people every day (except the Sabbath) and this sustained them during their wandering in the wilderness. A popular Rabbinical teaching at the time was the Messiah would come and duplicate the miracle of the manna in the wilderness. Just the day before, Jesus had multiplied the bread and the fish for over 5,000 people but apparently, they were not convinced. What they were missing was the miracle of the manna pointed forward to

Christ and the fact the salvation He brings as the Bread of Life is what they truly needed. Jesus explains this further on in the chapter: **“I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” (John 6:48-51 NKJV)**. In these verses, Jesus contrasts Himself with the manna given in the wilderness. He tells the people their ancestors ate the manna and still died, but He had come down from heaven and was offering a Bread that would permit them to live forever. He actually tells them He will give his own body and life for the salvation of the entire world. Unfortunately, due to several issues, the people reject Him. The first was a hardness of heart based on the fact they thought their self-righteousness and law-keeping would earn them salvation. The idea of just accepting Jesus and what He was offering went contrary to everything they believed. The second was they couldn't recognize Jesus for Who He was - their promised Messiah. They wanted a warrior like David who would free them from Rome. They couldn't wrap their minds around the fact the Messiah had come to them as a poor, homeless Carpenter from Nazareth. The third was their religious leaders had strayed so far from the true teachings of God, found in the Torah, that they were no longer teaching the people truth. However, Jesus made it clear each person was responsible for knowing the truth. **“It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. (John 6:45 NKJV)**. In this statement, Jesus tells the crowd those who are taught by God will understand what He is teaching and will come to Him. And how were they taught by God? The same way we are today. Through careful, prayerful, systematic study of God's Word. These people listening to Jesus and their leaders had neglected this study, had added to God's word, had created a messiah in their own image, and believed their own righteousness was good enough to get them to heaven. As a result, they completely missed their Messiah when He stood right in front of them. They rejected the Bread of Life and most likely, many died physically and spiritually separated from Christ. May we not make the same horrible mistakes today.

2. I am the Light of the World: “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” (John 8:12 NKJV). Light in the Bible is portrayed as giving guidance and opening the eyes of the people involved. The first thing created by God in Genesis is light (Genesis 1:3). The pillar of fire lit the way and guided the people of Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21). The Shekinah glory of God descended on the Temple (2 Chronicles 7:1) but it also left the Temple after the people’s habitual disobedience (Ezekiel 10:18). Saul was blinded by a light from heaven at his conversion (Acts 9:3). Jesus’ “I Am the Light of the world” statement here follows a well-known story in the Bible - that of the woman caught in adultery. Jesus has been teaching in the Temple and the religious leaders drag a woman to Him who was caught in the act of adultery. According to the Law, she was to be stoned for her sin. But Jesus saw into the hearts of the people and knew they were attempting to trap Him. Their concern was not for the well-being or moral character of the woman or any of the people watching. They wanted to know what Jesus would do. And His response isn’t what anyone expects. He kneels and writes something in the dirt. The Bible does not record what He writes but when He is finished, he stands up, looks the people in the eye, and says, “**He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.**” (John 8:7 NKJV). He returns to His writing and one by one, each person, convicted by their consciences, drop their stones and walk away. Whatever He wrote in the dirt that day was enough to remind each accuser they too were sinners and had no right to self-righteously judge this woman as if they were sinless. So Jesus, the only One who was sinless and the only One who could cast a stone at the woman asks her where her accusers are. When she says they are gone, Jesus tells her, “**Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.**” (John 8:11 NKJV). It appears from the text that not every person has left the Temple, just the woman’s accusers, because it is here Jesus makes His next “I Am” statement. “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” (John 8:12 NKJV). So He is still talking to a group in the Temple and some of these people are Pharisees because they react to His statement: “**The Pharisees therefore said to Him, “You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.**” (John 8:13). In His statement, Jesus is claiming to be a Light for a dark and lost world, but as before, the religious leaders refuse to accept this. The fact Jesus’ statement followed the incident

with the adulterous woman is important. She was caught in a sin that normally demanded a death penalty, But Jesus forgave her and commanded her not to sin again (a fact often left out when people look at this story). In this way, He provided a light of truth in her dark and sinful world and this light would allow her to live. The Pharisees did not understand they, just like the accusers Jesus had convicted, were in dire need of the same Light and forgiveness. In fact, in verse 13 they flat-out reject Him. They tell Him just because He made a claim, which didn't make it true. The conversation continues, **"Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. 15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. 17 It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me." 19 Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also." (John 8:14-19 NKJV).**

This terse interchange between Jesus and the religious leaders showed how hard their hearts were and how little they truly understood about their Messiah. Jesus has come and is offering a way out of the darkness of sin in which they all found themselves. But as people are so often apt to do, the religious leaders focused on the sins of those they perceived as worse than themselves and relied on their own self-righteousness. In reality, they were stumbling around, lost in the dark and sin because they refused to humble themselves and open their eyes to the Light in front of them. One thing that is interesting to note is at the end of Jesus' earthly life, when the Light of the world was dying, the physical light of the world also disappeared for a time. **"Now from the sixth hour [noon] until the ninth hour [3:00 pm] there was darkness over all the land." (Matthew 27:45 NKJV).** No astronomical event, no eclipse, nothing can account for three hours of darkness in the middle of the day like that. Jesus is God and as such brings the light of truth to a sinful creation. At that moment, the Light of the world was literally leaving this world and creation was plunged into darkness, a very small foreshadowing of what eternity separated from the True Light will be like.

3. I Am the Door: Then Jesus said to them again, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. (John 10:7 NKJV)**. In this passage, Jesus is once again in a discussion with the Pharisees. This statement would have been an easy one for most of Jesus' listeners to understand but as it has to do with shepherding and caring for sheep in a 1st century setting, a little background is needed for a modern audience. While we think of shepherding as a laid-back, easy-going job, watching over a few bouncing sheep, nothing could be further from the truth. The flocks could number in the hundreds. Sheep by their nature are stubborn, not too bright, need constant care, and are vulnerable to attacks by wild animals. Being a shepherd was a dirty and dangerous job. And because sheep were a vital part of Temple sacrifices, there were thousands upon thousands of them in Israel. Even people who didn't actively keep sheep knew how shepherding worked. Sometimes the sheepfolds (holding pens) were outside the town and groups of shepherds worked together to watch the huge flocks. They couldn't be left alone for long and the shepherds often rotated shifts through the day or night. Sometimes the sheepfolds were in town and the sheep would be brought back at nightfall to be kept in the safety of the fold. Wherever they were held, one thing was usually the same - there was only one door into the fold. This eliminated the chances of sheep escaping or of robbers or animals breaking in since at least one shepherd would be on guard at all times at the door to the fold. In this “I Am’ statement Jesus is symbolically calling Himself the door of the sheep, indicating that He alone is the one way in and out of the safety of the pen. How do we know He has safety in mind? Let's read the next few verses: “**All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**” (John 10:8-10 NKJV). Jesus tells His listeners those who came before Him, meaning those who appeared to offer salvation or protection, were liars. He and He alone is the door to salvation and for those who walk through the door, they will be safe and protected. Jesus is using the analogy of the sheep for the people of Israel because, like real sheep, they were vulnerable and needed to be led, guided, and protected. Who was supposed to do that? The religious leaders. Had they done that? Absolutely not. They were the thieves and robbers who come to steal, kill, and destroy. Jesus contrasts Himself as the door of protection for the

sheep that keeps out those who would harm them. Through Him, they will find safety, salvation, and pasture (provision). Those who do not enter by the door are blocked from all of the blessings found in the sheepfold. This is not the only time doors are used as an analogy for salvation. In Genesis 6, God commands Noah to build the ark to save his family from the impending flood. But how many doors were on this ark? Only one. That was the only way anyone or anything could get on or off the ark. Once it's completed, God gives Noah a very specific instruction: **"Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation...4 For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." 5 And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him." (Genesis 7:1, 4 NKJV).** The key to this passage is in verse four. God commands Noah to enter the ark and take his family with him. But the rain won't start for seven more days. Why not? Why leave the door open? It was so anyone outside the ark could repent, board the ark, and be saved. The door of the ark was their only hope for salvation from the flood. One way and one way only. All they had to do was accept and walk through the door. However, we know that not a single person entered the ark aside from Noah and his family. The door closed and everyone outside the ark was wiped from the face of the earth. Another place where we see the single door leading to salvation is in the Tabernacle and the Temple. The Tabernacle was the portable house of worship used by the people during the wilderness wanderings. It was later set up more permanently at Shiloh, and it was moved to Jerusalem by King David. David's son Solomon was chosen by God to build the first permanent Temple on the top of Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. The setup of both the Tabernacle and the Temple was the same. A large wall with a single gate allowed access to the open outer courtyard where the sacrifices took place. Another gate, made of elaborately decorated curtains, led into the Holy Place, where the lampstands, table of shewbread, and the altar of incense were kept. Again, there was only one way into this area. The final area, the Holy of Holies, was separated from the Holy Place by another set of embroidered curtains that went from the ceiling to the floor and according to tradition, was a handsbreadth (4 inches) thick. Behind this veil was the Ark of the Covenant. Only one person, the High Priest, could enter the Holy of Holies one time a year, on the Day of Atonement. After making atonement for himself, he would enter and sprinkle the blood on the Ark of the

Covenant to atone for the sins of the nation of Israel for one year. In each situation, there was one way and one single veil (door) to walk through to enter the presence of God. When Jesus died, the veil in the temple was rent in two from top to bottom. This was the veil in front of the Holy of Holies. Prior to Jesus' death, mankind could not approach God directly. Now that the final atonement had taken place, the veil was no longer needed, it was torn in two, and man had direct access to God for the first time since the Garden of Eden. However, just like the door on the ark, or the veil in the temple, or the door in the sheepfold, there is only one way to salvation - through Christ and His redemptive work on the cross.

4. I Am the Good Shepherd: “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. (John 10:11 NKJV). This statement is in the same conversation as the “I am the door” statement so Jesus is still talking to the same group of people. It is here where we see the first indication He will eventually die for those who will believe in Him. Jesus says a good shepherd will die to save the flock and He will eventually die to save His flock of believers. Jesus continues and makes this sacrifice even clearer. **“But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. 15 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. 17 “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.” (John 10:12-17 NKJV).** There is a lot of truth packed into these verses. Verse 12 contrasts the Good Shepherd who will die for the flock with the hireling (hired person) who will not. This is because the hired person has no vested interest in keeping the sheep alive. He runs to save himself and animals come in to destroy the flock. This relates to the part in the “I Am the Door” statement where Jesus tells them the thieves and robbers will come in to steal, kill, and destroy the flock. However, Jesus is the Good Shepherd and He declares He knows His sheep

and the sheep know Him. Often in ancient shepherding practice, several shepherds would combine their flocks and watch them together. The sheep learned the voice of their shepherd and when morning came and it was time to leave the sheepfold, the shepherd would stand at the door and call to his flock. Those that belonged to him would follow him out of the fold. In this passage, Jesus is saying those who are truly of His flock will follow Him. Then He tells His listeners He knows the Father and the Father knows Him and He must die for the sheep. This statement is important because He is telling the people the Father sent Him specifically to lay His life down for the sheep - for the people. Verse 16 is interesting because He says sheep who are not part of this flock will be brought in, and one flock will be made with one Shepherd. What does that mean? Up until now, Jesus has been speaking of sheep in reference to Israel, but now He brings in another flock, not part of the one He has been addressing. There is only one group this could be - the Gentiles. They will combine with believing Jews to create one flock under one Shepherd. Jesus is speaking of the coming Church. Remember, the Church did not exist until Pentecost so the idea of Jews and Gentiles sharing anything would have been a shock to anyone listening - provided they even understood what Jesus was talking about. Then Jesus makes another shocking statement. His life will not be taken from Him. He will die, yes, but He will lay down His life willingly because this is what God the Father has commanded Him to do. This is a truth so often missed in Jesus' death. No one killed Jesus. Not the Jews, even though they condemned Him. Not the Romans, even though they carried out the execution. Not even Christians, because we accepted the salvation for which He died. Jesus gave up His life for His flock and chose to die for us. Matthew records this moment in his Gospel: **“And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.” (Matthew 27:50 NKJV).** So we see while Jesus' physical body did die, He willingly gave up His life and His spirit to save the flock He loves so dearly. Jesus' teaching here causes no small amount of contention between the people listening. **“Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. 20 And many of them said, “He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?” 21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?” (John 10:19-21 NKJV).** Some people think He's demon-possessed and out of His mind. Others seem to understand and argue He couldn't teach what He did or do the works they had witnessed if it was the power of a demon. This confusion and

dissension among the people would continue and increase all the way until His death, burial, and resurrection, and even today, many prefer to believe the Good Shepherd was just a good teacher who may have lost His mind at the end.

5. I Am the Resurrection and the Life: Jesus said to her, **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.” (John 11:25).** This next “I Am” statement is part of one of the most well-known accounts in the Bible - the Resurrection of Lazarus. Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha, were close friends of Jesus. They lived in Bethany, a town at the base of Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. Two days earlier, Jesus had received word from Mary and Martha that Lazarus was very sick and was near dying. His response upon hearing this news seems odd at first: **“This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to *the* disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” (John 11:4 NKJV).** So, Jesus loves Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but decided to stay where He was for two days rather than go see His sick and dying friend. We aren’t told the exact reason why, but it was not safe for Jesus in the area if Judea where Bethany was located (John 11:8). What we do know is that Jesus decided to head to Bethany *after* Lazarus was dead. **“Then Jesus said to them [the disciples] plainly, “Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.” (John 11:14-15 NKJV).** Just being real here, there had to be times when what Jesus was doing made no sense to the disciples. Jesus tells them Lazarus is dead, and He is glad for their sakes that He wasn’t there? There had to be some conversations swirling on the way to Bethany. When Jesus and the disciples reach the town, they are met by Martha, who tells Jesus Lazarus wouldn’t have died if He had been there earlier. Jesus assured her Lazarus will live again and Martha agrees, but she was thinking of the resurrection of the last day - the time when the saints would be raised from their graves and enter Paradise. Jesus answers her, **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26 NKJV).** Jesus tells Martha He is the resurrection mankind has been waiting for and anyone who believes in Him will never truly die. Then

He hits her with “Do you believe?” Martha’s faithful response cannot be overstated: **“She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” (John 11:27 NKJV).** She declares her faith in Jesus as the Son of God, but did she understand yet that Jesus intended to raise Lazarus that day? The text indicates she didn’t. After they have all reached the tomb, Jesus instructs them to remove the stone covering the tomb. Martha’s response is honest and pragmatic. **“Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.” (John 11:39 NKJV).** She had a good reason to warn Him. Even after being embalmed, a body decays rapidly, especially in high-heat environments like southern Israel. After four days, rigor has faded and decomposition has begun. Nevertheless, Jesus continues and tells Martha, **“Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” (John 11:40 NKJV).** I wonder what exactly was going through Martha’s mind at that moment as the stone was rolled away from the tomb entrance and Jesus began to pray. **“And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” (John 11: 41-43 NKJV).** Something important to remember is up to this point Jesus had performed many miracles, but this is His first resurrection. Earlier in the chapter, those at the house of Mary and Martha wondered why Jesus didn’t come to heal Lazarus since He had healed so many others. But this miracle was meant to be different. Jesus told His disciples it was for their sakes He was glad he wasn’t with Lazarus when He died so they might believe. Might believe what? It sounds like Jesus let Lazarus die so He could show His power over death itself. And I think that’s exactly what He was doing. Lazarus had died and been in the grave long enough for his body to start decaying. Yet Jesus orders him out of the grave and out he walks, complete and whole. This miracle got the entire countryside talking. Healing illness or multiplying bread was one thing. Raising the dead was something else entirely, in their minds at least. Jesus raised a man from the dead who should never have walked the earth again. Yet He did. Death entered the world as a result of Adam and Eve’s sin in the Garden of Eden. This was the great enemy that must be defeated because the penalty for sin is death, both spiritually and physically. In the same way, Jesus Himself would be raised after His own brutal and excruciating death. In Lazarus’ resurrection,

Jesus showed His power over the death of another person. In His own resurrection, He showed His power over death once and for all for those who believe in Him. While we will all physically die, unless we are alive at the Rapture, we will be resurrected when Jesus returns for His Church. In this way, Jesus' words will come to pass for all believers: **"And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."** (John 11:26 NKJV)

6. I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: Jesus said to him, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."** (John 14:6 NKJV). This "I Am" statement comes during Jesus' last supper with His disciples. He has spoken of his coming death, identified Judas as the betrayer, and told Peter he would deny Him. All in all, a heavy evening so it makes sense the disciples were somewhat downhearted. Jesus addresses this. **"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."** (John 14:1-4 NKJV). As is often true, there is so much truth to be gleaned from what Jesus has just said. The first thing He does is calm the disciples. He tells them not to be troubled and encourages them. They believe in God so they should believe in Him as well. They are sorrowful Jesus will be leaving (although they probably don't understand how yet) and Jesus promises He is going to prepare a place for them and will return to get them. Side note here: this is proof that Jesus will return for His church and take us to Heaven to be with Him. Those who hold to Amillennialism and deny the Rapture and/or a physical Second Coming of Jesus have no adequate way of explaining this verse. Jesus clearly tells His disciples He will return for them and take them to be with Him. He also tells them they know where He is going and how to get there. At this point, Thomas speaks up, **"Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"** (John 14:5 NKJV). Apparently, the disciples are still a little clueless, so Jesus tells him, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."** (John 14:6-7 NKJV). This statement echoes many of the other "I Am" statements and

Jesus' teachings up to this point. Jesus is the one Way, He is the only Truth, and he is the Giver of life. Just as He was the only Door to the sheepfold, He is the sole way to salvation and thus the only way to gain access and fellowship with God the Father. If we believe in Him, we have seen and known the Father. But for some reason, the disciples were still struggling with this concept as evidenced by the conversation between Jesus and Phillip: **"Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. (John 14:8-11 NKJV).**

Apparently, the disciples are still having a hard time understanding Jesus is God in human form. They wanted to see God the Father, but they had seen Him, in the form of Jesus. Again, we see a place where the expectations of the people differed from what God had said or promised. God dwelt among mankind in the incarnate form of Jesus, but the disciples, although they called Jesus the Son of God, were struggling with the idea He was the visible God. Jesus points out He and the Father are one and this is where His power and ability to do the amazing works and miracles came from. What Jesus was continually calling them to was an understanding that He alone was the way to God the Father. It was through Him and the truth He brought that all mankind would have the opportunity for repentance and the ability to one day stand before God, whole and blameless. Jesus would go on in this same teaching to explain that after He left, another would come to lead and guide the disciples - the Holy Spirit. While Jesus no longer dwells physically with mankind, the Holy Spirit still acts as our guide and beckons us to faith in God and repentance through the saving work of Christ and faith that He alone is the only Way, Truth, and Life for all who would believe.

7. I Am the True Vine: **"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."** (John 15:1 NKJV). This final of the seven "I Am" statements is from the same teaching as "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Jesus is still talking to His disciples after the Last Supper but before they head out to the Garden of Gethsemane. Vines and vinedressers were commonplace in ancient Israel and other nations since their daily diets usually

included both grapes and wine. A vinedresser was responsible for the health of the grapes in the vineyard. Only the healthy, productive vines were kept. Vines that leeched nutrients and didn't produce fruit were cut away to provide more nutrients and growing space for the healthy fruits. In this analogy, Jesus calls Himself the vine and the Father is the vinedresser. So if Jesus is the vine, what are the branches and the fruit? The branches are Christians, those who have placed their faith and trust in Him. The fruits are the evidences of salvation in their lives. But not all those who claim to follow Christ actually do so and not everyone produces true fruit. Jesus is clear about what will happen to these people. **“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” (John 15:2-4 NKJV).** For those who do not produce fruit, those who do not truly believe, the Father will cut them away to make room for those who are true believers and who are growing in Christ. Jesus tells His disciples no person can bear fruit in and of themselves - only those who are part of the Vine, those who are abiding in Christ, will bear fruit. This is important because not every person who calls themselves a Christian actually is. There are many who believe their actions and work for God makes them a Christian, but Jesus dealt with that issue earlier in His ministry. Matthew records this teaching for us. **“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” (Matthew 7:15-20 NKJV).** In this passage, Jesus tells us not all who claim to be prophets or teachers are who they seem to be. Some of them are dangerous and teach false Gospels. Jesus explains the true test of these teachers is by the fruits they produce. Is it good, is it holy, is it in line with what Jesus taught? If it isn't, those teachers and their fruit will be cut away and destroyed. Jesus continues the teaching with a sobering message. **“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me**

in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

(Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV). Jesus explains just because someone appeared to serve Him or did great works in His name does not mean they were ever truly a believer in Him. They are practicing lawlessness - in other words, the works they did were for themselves and not for God or Jesus. Just like the trees that bear bad fruit in the previous passage or the branches that do not produce good fruit in John, they will be cut away and destroyed. **“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.” (John 15:5-8 NKJV).** In both passages from Matthew and John, Jesus uses the imagery of the unproductive branches being cut away and burned. This is an image of final and eternal judgment for those who do not repent and truly turn to Christ and accept salvation through His sacrifice, rather than trying to earn their way through their own works. At the same time, as Jesus explains in the passage from John, those who do abide in him as His disciples, those who do learn from Him and grow in their faith, will produce much fruit and this will glorify God the Father. But this is impossible to do if we are not truly part of the vine - Jesus. If people are attempting to appear Christian or believe their works somehow merit favor with God, they will be cut away by the Father to make room for the true believers.