



## The Promise of a Savior

ministry plan to the church where my Uncle attends and were staying with him on his beautiful farm with a great fishing stream running right through it. I went out early to do some fishing and had only been out long enough for 5-6 casts of my fishing rod when I heard the a crack, kind of like a gunshot. Looking around me from down in the depression of the riverbank, I saw nothing, but now I was in danger. My head was only slightly above the surrounding dirt of the field so I could see all around me, but I doubted anyone could see me. I moved a few meters downstream when I heard a second crack that confirmed this was indeed a gunshot. The bullet had hit me in the leg. As it turns out, the neighbor took aim in the fog of the morning from over 200 meters away with a .22 rifle at what he thought was a nuisance bird – a black crow. What he thought was the body of a crow was actually my black hat. The movement he thought was the outstretched wing of the bird was actually my arm in a black jacket as I cast out the fishing line. Thankfully, when he shot, he didn't consider just how far the bullet would drop over such a distance. Rather than hitting the location he aimed for the bullet had dropped about 1 meter hitting me in the leg causing it to have a slight break. It was enough that I couldn't run, I couldn't walk. I also couldn't reach anyone by phone so I called out for help. "Help me! I've been shot!" Well the neighbor came running down to where I was and discovered the situation. After apologizing, he looked me right in the eyes and made a **short, but powerful promise**, "Wait right here! I'm going to get help. I'm going to get you out of here and to the hospital." Then he ran off to my Uncle's house. I had not been saved yet, but I had been reassured by the promise of a Savior. Within 3 minutes I hear Mandy calling out my name as she ran to stop the bleeding and check vital signs as I was going in to shock. Then the neighbor came back saying an ambulance was on its way. Then my aunt came down with utility vehicle. The neighbor lifted me out of the wet soil covered in blood and put me in the utility vehicle. Within 10 minutes I was in an ambulance. Within 20 minutes I was at the hospital. **I had been saved!!! But it all started when someone recognized my danger and my pain and made a promise to rescue me.**

Well, the Bible offers a much greater story of salvation and it is just as real as the story I told you. Every book of the Bible offers details that contribute to the story. The main character of the story is Jesus Christ, the hero. The villain of the story is a traitor named Lucifer (aka Satan) who uses deception to place all of mankind in danger. Our problem is not a gunshot, which can only bring about physical death. No, it is much worse than that, **it is sin** which causes both physical and spiritual death. The storyline is the conflict between good and evil that must be resolved if we are to be spared from the power of sin and consequence of sin that we willfully choose to participate in when we believe Satan's lies rather than God's truth. With the damage done by sin, the only resolution to the conflict, the only cure for the injury, the only way we can be saved is for the Savior to take our place as our substitute. He laid down his life and experienced death (physical and spiritual) on our behalf so we can experience an abundant life now and for all eternity (both spiritual and physical). It is at that point that Satan was defeated, but like all defeated villains he now strikes out to inflict as much pain as possible on those who have taken the side of the hero and continues to deceive as many unbelievers as possible so that they unintentionally and unknowingly work for him against the hero – Jesus Christ and his followers, the church. That is what we experience today as Christians. That is the storyline of this Book – The Bible! It is a true story and an interactive one, because what Christ did in the past has ongoing effects for those of us today who trust in Him as our Savior! We then enter into the story in support roles as we look forward to the conclusion of this great story – the resolution of the conflict when Satan is finally removed from the conflict altogether. Which is what we see in the last book of the Bible – Revelation.

With that storyline in mind, and as we approach the celebration of Jesus' birth, this morning we will scratch the surface of the Old Testament teaching about Jesus by looking at just a few

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of the passages where we see the promise of the Savior. We are going to start in Genesis and move along from there. Please open your Bibles to Genesis 3. As you turn there, let me point out that these passages are OT prophecies about the Savior who would come. There are at least 353 OT prophecies about the Promised Savior that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Despite being so ancient, these Old Testament prophecies have in no way lost their clarity or effect. They help the believing person to understand their faith more deeply and fully. To the unbelieving person, they serve as proof of the existence of God and His participation in human life. Just the fact that the prophets could prophesy the occurrences of the future, with such accuracy and with such detail, hundreds and thousands of years in advance, gives witness that God spoke through them.

So, let's begin with.

### 1. The Promise Introduced – Genesis 3:14-15

- This is the first announcement of the Gospel.
- It is general. There are a lot of details yet to be shared, but here is the first promise that God would send a Savior
- What details can we get from this passage:
  - He would come in the form of a human. (Seed of the woman) vs. 14
  - He would be the one to fatally defeat Satan, but not without causing injury to himself. v.14
- By Christ's suffering and physical death salvation would come to us and by his resurrection Satan's head would be crushed in defeat.
  - ☞ From this point forward the promise will be repeated, clarified, and details specified all throughout the Old Testament.
  - ☞ Illustration: Family Vacation after pre-field & Master's Degree

### 2. The Promise Expounded – Genesis 12:1-3

God is about to add more details to this already existing promise

- The Savior would come through the family line of Abraham (v. 2)
- The Savior would be a blessing all the families of the earth – salvation was meant for all mankind. (v. 3)

### 3. The Promise Specified - Isaiah 7, 9, Isaiah 52-53

Before we read any of these passages, let me just tell you that Isaiah presents two very different but equally true portrayals of Jesus. He would be both the King of Kings and the Suffering Servant.

- A. He would have a miraculous birth from a virgin – Isaiah 7:14
- B. He would be the King of the Jews who would one day rule the world. Isaiah 9:6-7
  - He would be born as a baby boy v. 6
  - He would be born to fulfill the responsibility of ruling God's kingdom. Truly, weight & responsibility of the government would on his shoulders. One day he will rule all the nations of this world. V.6
  - His Kingdom characterized by peace would never stop increasing v.6&7
  - He would come from the Royal Family of David v. 7
  - His name reflects his character. In verse 6 we are given 4 titles that are appropriate for Jesus.
    - **Wonderful counselor** – One who is able to make wise plans (supernatural power)
    - **Almighty God** – A title for the Lord alone, indicating his ability to conquer enemies.
    - **Everlasting Father** – A kind protector, which is the task of the ideal King. As the King from David's throne he will compassionately care for and discipline his people.

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- **Prince of Peace** – He will bring peace as the nations rely on his just decisions in their disputes.
  - He would rule with justice and righteousness for all of eternity v.7  
(As Individuals and as a society, don't our hearts cry out for a leader who can do all these things?) The day is coming when Jesus will return to do just that.
- C. He would be a suffering servant** – Isaiah 52:13-53:10 (You will see this passage quoted when you study John 12)
  - High and lifted up – on the cross 52:13
  - His appearance would be marred beyond human recognition 52:14
  - He was despised and rejected by men 53:3
  - Bore our griefs and carried our sorrows 53:4
  - Pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, was chastised to bring us peace 53:5-6
  - Buried the wicked 53:9
- 4. The Promise's Effects Explained** – Jeremiah 31:31-34 (cf Luke 22:20, 2 Cor. 3:6, Heb 8:8-12)
  - There will be a new covenant v 31 (first with Israel and then all gentile believers in the world)
  - The law will not be written on stone, but placed in the heart v 33
  - Personal relationship – I will be their God, they will be my people v 33
  - I will forgive their sin and not remember it (This is where the phrase forgive and forget comes from and he is the only one that can truly pull this off.) v 33
- 5. The Promise Reminded** – Micah 5:2-4
  - The Messiah that had been expected since ancient days would be born in Bethlehem v. 2
  - The nation of Israel would be ruled by others for a period of time, but the Messiah would unite Israel again v. 3
  - The Messiah would be the "Good Shepherd" with the authority and power of God, just as we saw in John 10. He will provide security because he will rule over all the nations v. 4
- 6. The Promise Arrived** - Matthew 1:18-23, 1 Peter 1:20-21, Galatians 4:4-5
  - Jesus was born as a Jewish boy, from David's royal lineage, in Bethlehem, of a virgin just as the prophecies said he would – Matthew 1:18-23
  - Jesus was foreknown as the Messiah before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest at a specific time in history so that our faith and hope would be in God – 1 Peter 1:20-21
  - God was not late in keeping his promise. He sent Jesus in the fullness of time to redeem mankind from being under the law so they could experience something so much greater – adoption into God's family. Galatians 4:4-5

This morning we have looked at just a few of the many passages in the Old Testament that clearly give us sinners the promise of a Savior. As I said before, Jesus is the main character in the story of the Bible. We don't have time to look at them all, but as I close, let me share how each book of the Old Testament points to Jesus.

¥ In Genesis Christ is the **Seed of woman** who would one day crush Satan.

¥ In Exodus Christ is the sacrificial **Passover Lamb** given for us.

¥ In Leviticus Christ has become our **High Priest**, making the perfect sacrifice to atone for our sins.

¥ In Numbers Jesus is the **Cloud and the Fire** leading God's people.

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- ¥ In Deuteronomy Moses foretold of a prophet who would come that would be greater than Himself. Jesus is that **Great Prophet**.
  - ¥ In the book of Joshua, Joshua met the **Captain of the Lord's host**. That man is Jesus Christ.
  - ¥ In Judges, the leaders were rescuers, Saviors for God's people, each of them reflecting and pointing people to the Lord Jesus.
  - ¥ In Ruth, Boaz, the **kinsman redeemer** of Ruth's inheritance, is a picture of Christ.
  - ¥ In 1 & 2 Samuel Jesus is the **Prophet of the Lord**.
  - ¥ In 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles Jesus is the Reigning **King of Kings**.
  - ¥ In Ezra, Jesus is the **Faithful scribe**
  - ¥ In Nehemiah Jesus is the **rebuilder** of the walls
  - ¥ Esther offers a picture of Christ interceding for His people.
  - ¥ Job says clearly that the Redeemer is coming!
  - ¥ Christ appears time after time in the Psalms, including when David describes Him as **"the Shepherd."**
  - ¥ In Proverbs & Ecclesiastes , Jesus is **the wisdom of God**.
  - ¥ Song of Solomon presents Jesus as the **Lover and Bridegroom**
  - ¥ Isaiah details His glorious birth and presents Jesus as the **suffering servant**.
  - ¥ Jeremiah and Lamentations reveal that He will be **acquainted with sorrows**.
  - ¥ In Ezekiel Jesus is entitled the **Son of Man**
  - ¥ Daniel presents Jesus as the **Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven**.
  - ¥ Hosea presents Jesus as the **patient and faithful groom** of an unfaithful bride.
  - ¥ Joel describes Him as the **Hope of His people** and baptizer with the Holy Spirit
  - ¥ Amos tells us that Jesus is the **judge of all nations** and would be the burden bearer.
  - ¥ Obadiah warns of the coming eternal kingdom and presents Jesus as **the Mighty Savior**.
  - ¥ Jonah offers a picture of Jesus being dead for three days, then coming back to life to preach repentance. **He is the forgiving God**.
  - ¥ Micah presents Jesus as the **messenger bringing the Gospel**
  - ¥ Nahum presents Jesus as **the avenger of God's elect people**.
  - ¥ Habakkuk presents Jesus as the **Great Evangelist** crying for revival
  - ¥ Zephaniah says that He will be the **king over Israel** who restores the remnant of the faithful
  - ¥ In Haggai Jesus is **the cleansing fountain**
  - ¥ Zachariah is the prophet who speaks of Jesus riding on a colt and being **the pierced Son**.
  - ¥ Malachi is the one who calls Him the **Son of Righteousness**.
- Can you see it? The entire Old Testament points toward Jesus as Savior, and if you miss that, you've missed the entire point of the Scriptures. Jesus is the Messiah and the fulfillment of prophecy.

Taken from "A Portrait Of Christ" by Love Worth Finding Ministries (used by permission).

### Conclusion:

In 18 days we will celebrate the birth of Christ, an event that happened more than 2000 years ago. For a long time people anticipated this fulfillment of the promise that a Savior would come. Today we look back to the day the promise was fulfilled, not only his birth, but his life, death, and resurrection. The payment for our sin has been made. The effects of the promises we read today were not only for the Jewish people of the past for all people in all places at all times who will put their faith in the Savior.

I think we can agree that God has written the most amazing story. And the best part is that it is a true story. Now God wants to write you into the story. Will you trust Jesus, the promised Savior to rescue you from your past sins, from the power of the sin in your everyday life in the present, and from the consequences of sin in the future?

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That is what Christmas is all about. This story of God reconciling man to Himself was started long ago, but is not over yet. He desires that each person come to him in repentance and faith. That is his desire, but he won't force it on you. The offer is there, but the choice is yours. Some of you have made your choice and have experienced the joy of being saved from a very real danger. Some of you have not. If you are part of that second group, will you allow Him to rescue you from your sin so you can celebrate the full meaning of Christmas this year? I hope so. And you can do that today! If you want to talk about any of these things after the service please come and see me, Mandy, Phil or Lori so we can help you further.