

Jesus Christ, God's Gift to the World

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There is no book that has ever been written that compares to the Holy Bible. It is a living word that is timeless for it not only gives Commandments for righteous living, but has the power to free a person from sin so he can obey them. It is an amazing gift from God for He promises never to leave us or to forsake us, to protect us and to provide for us and to receive us after this life is over and reward us with eternal life. What a Savior Jesus is! Today I want to take you through some of the passages of Scripture that paves the way for the coming Messiah. Take note that man often tries to thwart the words of God, but he is incapable of changing what God has said will come to pass.

The first promise of a redeemer for fallen man is found in Genesis 3:15. KJV reads like this: "I will put enmity between thee (*serpent*) and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; He (*Messiah*) shall bruise thy head (*serpent*) and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Eve believed that her son, Cain, was the promised child. How mistaken she was for he murdered his righteous brother, Abel, and God put a curse on him for he was the first person to be homeless and a wanderer. He lost his livelihood.

In Genesis 12, God separated a man that he had chosen to be the father of the lineage of the coming Messiah. Abraham was called of God to leave his homeland, his father's house and he was to go to a land that God would show him. He was promised many blessings. God told him that those who bless his children would be blessed and those who cursed his children would be cursed and through his seed, all the families of the earth will be blessed. Because of the many years that went by without having a child, Sarah convinced Abraham to have a child by their servant girl. This was not God's plan and it proved to have long range consequences that affect our world to this day and will until Jesus comes to judge the world. Men's ways are not God's ways and our thoughts are not his thoughts. We must wait for Him to bring about his purpose and his will, not step ahead and try to fulfill his promises to us in our own time and ways. God's timing is perfect and we must move with Him. Abraham and his wife Sarah were told that they would have a child of promise and they were to name the baby boy "Isaac" as God commanded them. God fulfilled that promise to them after they were beyond child-bearing years. (*It came to pass*) is a phrase that you will notice throughout the Scriptures because when God speaks it happens when He speaks and not before. It is a grave error to move outside of God's time. Genesis 17:19. God made an everlasting covenant with Isaac and all the generations in his family lineage following him. In Genesis 24:60 Abraham sent his eldest servant that ruled over all of his house on a mission to find a suitable wife for Isaac. (*Take note that the servant prayed earnestly for God to lead him to the right maiden for Isaac*). The beautiful story is told that he asked God to bless his search and he went to the well where maidens came to draw water for their families. He planned to ask for a drink of water and the one who then

offered to water his camels also would be the one that God had chosen for Isaac. Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel, came and was happy to give the servant water, and also offered to water the camels. The servant thanked God for answering his prayer. Rebekah willingly left her father's house and travelled back with the servant and became Isaac's wife. However, Rebekah, even though Jacob was God's choice over Esau, used deception to cause Isaac to give Jacob the blessing that he intended to give Esau. Her way brought bitterness and disharmony within the family. Deception followed Jacob for years.

In Genesis 28, Isaac blessed Jacob and commissioned him not to take a wife from the Canaanites and Rebekah sent him to his Uncle Laban's house and there he worked for Laban for 14 years so he could marry Laban's daughters. On the way, God gave him a dream and promised him that he would bless his family and through his blood line, all the families of the earth would be blessed. He dreamed of a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached heaven and behold the angels of God ascended and descended upon it. God protected Jacob from his brother, Esau's wrath and also from Laban's dishonesty. Esau had not appreciated the heritage that would have been his for he sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew. Jacob had a heart for God and he desired also to be given the spiritual blessing from his father.

In Genesis 49:10, Jacob was old and the time came to give blessings to his sons before he died. In verse 10, he announced that the scepter shall not depart from Judah, or a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. The CEV version reads like this: "Judah, you will be praised by your brothers; they will bow down to you, as you defeat your enemies. My son, you are a lion ready to eat your victims! You are terribly fierce; no one will bother you. You will have power and rule until nations obey you and come bringing gifts."

In 2 Samuel 7-17, King David was told by the prophet, Nathan that after the king had died God would set up his kingdom with David's son, Solomon, and God would establish the throne of his kingdom forever. David had desired to build a temple for the Lord, but God wouldn't allow him to do it. He was told that Solomon would be the one to build the temple, and David could gather materials. God sets the boundaries around each generation so as one dies, the new generation picks up the torch and continues the work that others before them have started. The Lord promised to be Solomon's father and he would be his son. If he committed iniquity, God would use men to chasten him but God's mercy would not depart from him and David's house and his kingdom would be established forever. Because Solomon, with all his wisdom and blessings, followed after idolatrous women, his sons didn't rule after him. Jesus is the coming King of Kings who will sit on the throne and rule the nations.

In Psalms 2:2 it speaks of the kings of the earth banding together against the LORD and his Anointed with the purpose of breaking the bonds from God. God in heaven will show

wrath towards those who rebel against him for He has set His King on his holy hill of Zion. Verse 7 says "I will declare the decree; the LORD has said to Me, You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance and the ends of the earth for Your possession; You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. Verse 12 says "Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him."

Psalms 16:10 says this: "You will not leave my soul in Sheol (*the grave*), nor will You allow your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures evermore."

Psalms 22 describes the suffering that Jesus went through when He was crucified. The Psalm starts with "My God, My God why have you forsaken Me?" It speaks of the reproach and hatred that people had against Christ. Those who see him ridicule him, they shake their heads and say "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him. They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted with me. The congregations of the wicked have surrounded me. They pierced my hands and my feet. They divide my garments among them and for my clothing they cast lots." In verse 22 it says "I will declare your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel." In verse 27 it promises that all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD and all the families of the nations shall worship before Him. For the kingdom is the LORD's and He rules over the nations. All those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him.

People need to know that God is the one who is in charge of the universe. He created it, He watches over it and He is a supreme being who rules with mercy, righteousness, justice and He will not give his glory to another. When pride gets in the way of sound reasoning, there is a reckoning day from our Heavenly Father. Pharaoh learned the hard way that God is in control. When Moses approached him and told him that God was commanding him to let his people go, Pharaoh asked, "Who is God that I should obey him? I don't know him and I will not let the people go." (Exodus 5:2) After utter destruction of Egypt and plagues that Pharaoh had no control over took place and the loss of the first born of every Egyptian household, Pharaoh was forced to let the people go. Then he changed his mind, chased after the former slaves and his chariots and people were drowned in the Red Sea because Pharaoh would not recognize his limitation of "power".

King Saul started out as a humble king, but pride took hold of his heart and he began to take control where he had no rights. His disobedience caused him to be stripped of his kingdom and he was low to the point of visiting a witch of Endor for advice because God had forsaken him.

The Old Testament is filled with stories of people who walked in humility and obeyed God and their lives were blessed. Those who rebelled and tried to take charge over their own circumstances and rule over others on their own terms paid the price for God punished them. The prophets that God placed in the midst of his people to protect them and to guide them in right living before God, were stoned, killed, persecuted and their messages were scorned and ignored. The God of the universe is patient and full of mercy and his purpose will be fulfilled. Satan has a limited amount of power from God, and pride drives him to destroy God's plan for humanity and this world. He is full of darkness and just as he thinks that he has completely shut out the light, God says "Let there be light".

In Isaiah 7, God spoke to Isaiah and told him to go see King Ahaz. He would find him on the road near the cloth maker's shops at the end of the canal that brings water from the upper pool. Isaiah found him just as the Lord had spoken and he gave him the message from the Lord that he should stop worrying about the two kings Rezin and Pekah. They had threatened to overthrow Israel and put a new king in his place. God said it would never happen. However in less than 65 years Israel would be destroyed and if King Ahaz and his officials had no trust in God, they would be defeated. Isaiah spoke again to King Ahaz and this time he was told to ask God for proof that his promise would come true. Isaiah told him to ask for something to happen deep in the world of the dead or high in the heavens above. Ahaz was uninterested so he simply said, "I won't test the Lord." He simply had no faith. Isaiah said, "Listen every one of you in the royal family of David. You have already tried my patience and now you are trying God's patience by refusing to ask for proof. Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel (*God with us*). Even before he is old enough to know how to choose between right and wrong, he will eat yogurt and honey and the countries of the two kings you fear will be destroyed."

In Isaiah 9:6 we have a promise of a Savior. "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." His power will never end and peace will last forever. He will rule David's kingdom and make it grow strong. He will always rule with honesty and Justice. The LORD All-Powerful will make certain that all of this is done. Men's refusal to believe and trust in God, doesn't change the outcome. Their doubts and unbelief will not hinder God's plan from being executed. The people who reject Jesus Christ will miss the blessing of eternal life. There have been many testimonies over the years of people who have procrastinated concerning accepting Christ as their Savior, held to their views that God doesn't exist and on their death beds realize that their future is full of darkness. They refused to believe; they refused to accept Jesus Christ and follow his plan for their lives and during the last hours of their lives they face the grim truth. God's word is TRUTH! Go and make disciples!