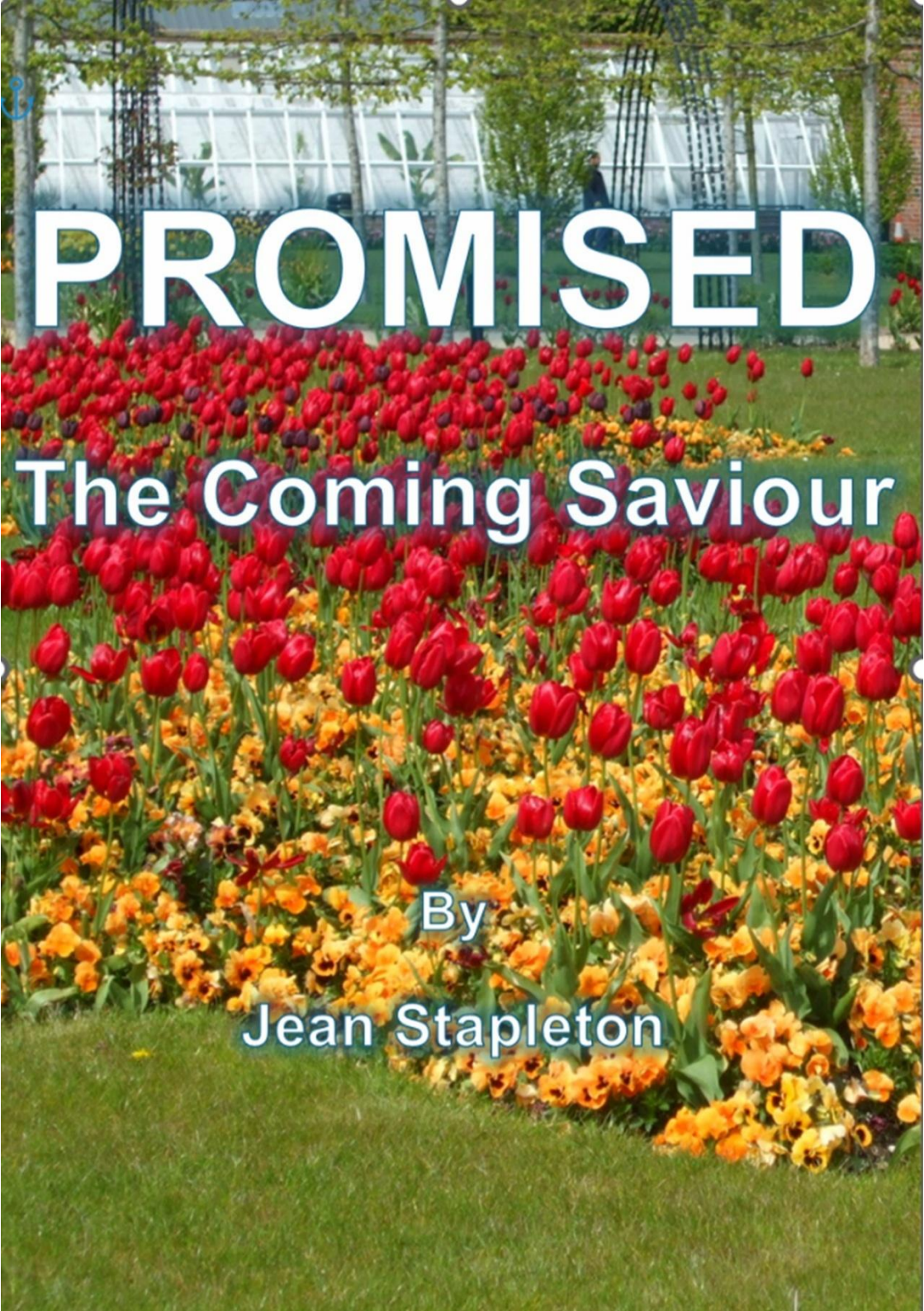




PROMISED

The Coming Saviour

By

Jean Stapleton

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INTRODUCTION

After His resurrection, the Lord Jesus explained to some of His followers 'in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself' (Luke 24: 27). This means that we can read in all parts of the Old Testament, prophecies about the Lord Jesus. In this book we look at a small number of those prophecies, enough to clearly show that Jesus was the Saviour that God had promised to send.

As you read this book, you will need a Bible to look up some of the verses. You may also like to make some notes, so that you have a record of what you discover.

Chapter 1: A Saviour promised

In the Book of Genesis we read that God created a world where everything was good. The day that the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God, was the day that sin entered God's perfect world. God is holy and hates sin but since Adam and Eve sinned, every boy and girl born into the world, except the Lord Jesus, has also sinned. Our sin separates us from God and the punishment for sin is death; God would not allow sinful lives to go on forever, with no hope of change.

God promised to send someone to save us from sin and its punishment. We can trace this promise right through the Old Testament. This promise is first found in Genesis chapter 3 and was given as God spoke to Adam and Eve about what would happen because of their sin.

God chose a man named Abraham to be the one from whose family the promised Saviour would come. God repeated this promise to Abraham's son Isaac and to his grandson Jacob. The families of Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes that made up the nation of Israel.

If we read through the Old Testament we will find that King David, Israel's second king, received God's promise that someone from his family would reign as King forever. The list of names in the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel is a family tree that takes us from Abraham to the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first verse of the chapter calls Him "the Son of David, the son of Abraham" The Book of the Revelation

calls Him the King of Kings and tells us that He will reign for ever (Revelation 11: 15 and 19: 16)

In this book we will not look at every promise of the coming of the Saviour. Instead, we will see some of the Old Testament prophecies of events that happened during the life of the Lord Jesus here on earth.

The prophets were men in Old Testament times who God spoke to, so that they could tell the people what God wanted them to know. Some messages from God to the prophets were about things that were happening at the time. But there were also prophecies of things that would happen in the future. Many of these were fulfilled during the time that the Lord Jesus lived on earth. ("Fulfilled" means that the event that had been prophesied, actually took place.)

Find the Promises:

To Abraham - Genesis 12: 1- 3.

To Isaac - Genesis 26: 3-4.

To Jacob - Genesis 28: 10-15.

To King David - 2 Samuel 7: 16 – 17.

Now read Genesis 3: 15. This verse tells us, in picture language, that Satan will hurt the promised Saviour ("bruise His heel") but the Saviour will bruise ("crush") Satan ("bruise his head"). These words were spoken by God to the serpent who Satan used to tempt Eve to disobey God.

Understanding the Promises:

1. What did God ask Abraham to do? (Genesis 12: 1)
(In Genesis 17: 5 we read that God changed Abram's name to Abraham and that is the name he is usually known by.)
2. What would Abraham's family become? (Genesis chapter 12, first part of verse 2.)
3. Look at the last part of Genesis 12:3. We know that this verse is about the promised Saviour because the Apostle Peter told the people so (Acts 3: 25-26), It means that from Abraham's descendants someone would come who would bring good (blessing) to all the families on earth. Ever since the Lord Jesus went back to heaven, Christians have been taking the good news of forgiveness to people all over the world. This work must continue until the Lord Jesus returns to earth.



Chapter 2: A birth announced

About four hundred years had passed since the last of the Old Testament prophets had brought God's message to the people of Israel. Then the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a young woman named Mary. The angel's message for Mary was that she would have a baby boy who would be the Son of God. Mary asked how this could happen as she was not married. A baby must have a father as well as a mother. The Bible teaches us that a man and a woman should be married before they have children. The angel explained that this baby would be born through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Mary was actually engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. He was troubled when he knew that Mary was going to have a baby. An angel told him in a dream that he should not be troubled about marrying Mary. The angel explained that Mary's baby would be born through the power of the Holy Spirit. We know that this baby, the Son of God, would not have an earthly father: this birth was a miracle, different from every other birth. Both Mary and Joseph were told that the baby would be called Jesus, a name that means "Saviour". Many years before, the prophet Isaiah had said that a virgin, an unmarried woman, would have a child who would be called "Immanuel".

Find the Prophecy:

Read: Isaiah 7: 14 (The name "Immanuel" means "God with us".)

Understanding the Prophecy:

How do we know that this prophecy was fulfilled in the birth of the Lord Jesus?

Read: Matthew 1: 20 - 23.

Chapter 3: The Forerunner

Before the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, he had given a message about the birth of another baby, to a man named Zacharias.

Zacharias was a priest, and the angel appeared to him in the temple. The angel told him that his wife would have a baby boy who was to be called John. When this baby grew up he would have a special job to do. He would be the one God had promised to send, to prepare people for the coming of the Saviour.

Zacharias found it hard to believe the angel's words because he and his wife Elizabeth were older than people usually are when they have a child. Because of his unbelief, the angel told him he would become dumb: unable to speak. In fact he did not speak until after the birth of the baby. It was when the baby was eight days old and about to be given his name, that Zacharias wrote down that he should be called John. As soon as he had done that, he was able to speak again. He thanked God for keeping His promise to send the Saviour. He knew that God had given John a special job to do and that this was also promised in the Old Testament.

Find the Prophecy:

Read: Isaiah 40: 3 – 5.

Understanding the Prophecy:

When John grew up, did he know that God had given him a special job to do, as prophesied in the Old Testament?

Read: John 1: 19-23



Chapter 4: Bethlehem

Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth and that is where they might have expected Mary's very special Baby to be born. However, before the Baby was born, the Roman Emperor said that everyone must travel to the place where their family first came from, to register their names. Mary and Joseph belonged to the family of King David, who had lived in Bethlehem about a thousand years before. This meant they must take a journey of about eighty miles, not easy when there were no planes, trains, buses, or cars. Pictures often show Mary on a donkey, but whether she did ride on a donkey or walked the whole distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem, we do not know.

While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, the baby was born. Mary did not have a cot or crib with lovely soft blankets for the baby. In fact there was nowhere comfortable for Mary and Joseph to stay, so that when the Lord Jesus was born He was laid in a manger: an animal's feeding trough.

The Old Testament prophet Micah had said that the promised Saviour would be born in Bethlehem. The Roman Emperor did not know that in making it necessary for Mary and Joseph to travel there, he was fulfilling what God had said through Micah many years before.

Find the Prophecy:

Read: Micah 5: 2.

Understanding the Prophecy:

1. Before the Lord Jesus came to live on earth, He had always been with God His Father in heaven. He is eternal: He had no beginning and His life will never end. Can you find the words at the end of Micah 5: 2 which tell us this was true of the one who would come from Bethlehem?
2. Was Bethlehem chosen because it was the largest and most important city in the land of Judah?
3. Who knew the place where the promised Saviour would be born Read: Matthew 2: 1-6.



Chapter 5: Weeping

You have read the verses about the wise men who set out to find the Lord Jesus. King Herod was greatly displeased at the news of the birth of “the King of the Jews”. He asked the wise men to tell him where the Child was to be found so that he could worship Him. This was a pretence: he actually wanted to destroy the Child.

It is clear that Herod knew that this was no ordinary birth, as he asked the priests and scribes where Christ, the One promised by God, would be born. He was told that the Christ would come from Bethlehem, as we have already seen.

God warned the wise men that they should not return to King Herod, so they went back to their own land another way. The King became angry when he realised they were not coming back and he planned an act of great cruelty. He ordered that all the little boys up to two years old living in or near Bethlehem, must be put to death. Jeremiah the prophet had said that there would be a time of great sorrow because of the loss of children.

God would not allow His Son to be destroyed. Joseph was warned by an angel to take Mary and the Lord Jesus into the land of Egypt. There they stayed safely until the death of King Herod (Matthew 2: 13-15).

Find the Prophecy:

Read: Jeremiah 31: 15.

Understanding the Prophecy:

1. Who was Rachel? **Read:** Genesis 29: 18-20 and 35: 16-20.
2. How do we know that when Jeremiah wrote about Rachel, he was using her as a picture of mothers in the land of Israel, weeping because their children had been destroyed by King Herod? **Read:** Matthew 2: 16-18.



Chapter 6: In the synagogue

God had told the people of Israel to go to the Temple at Jerusalem on certain special days each year, such as the Feast of the Passover. In this way they remembered God's goodness to them in past days. The Temple was the place where the priests offered sacrifices for the sins of the people. The people could not all travel to Jerusalem often to meet together, so synagogues were built in the towns and cities. On the Sabbath day people met at the synagogue to worship God together and hear readings from the Old Testament. We read that the Lord Jesus went to the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day.

On one occasion He went to the Synagogue at Nazareth where He had grown up. He was given the Book of Isaiah and so read some verses from it. The Lord Jesus then told the people that the words He had read were fulfilled that day: He was the One who Isaiah had written about. He preached the Gospel to the poor people, He spoke kindly to those who were sad, He set people free from the sin that held them captive, He gave sight to the blind.

Find the prophecy:

Read: Isaiah 61: 1.

Understanding the Prophecy:

Read: Luke 4: 16-21.

Which words spoken by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 11: 4-5 fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah?



Chapter 7: Healing

About 700 years before the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem the prophet Isaiah wrote about some of the things the promised Saviour would do. Blind people would be given their sight, deaf people would hear, the lame (people who could not walk) would be healed and the dumb would speak.

We do not know how many people were healed by the Lord Jesus. We read that sometimes when He visited a town, all the ill people were brought to Him and He healed them all. However, we do read of some miracles of healing in more detail. In this chapter we will look at just a few of these.

In Mark 7: 32-35 we read of a man who was deaf and unable to speak clearly. When he was brought to Jesus, Jesus touched his ears and his tongue. Straight away the man was able to hear and speak plainly.

There was a man who was so weak that he was unable to get up and walk. He had been like that for thirty-eight years. When the Lord Jesus told him to get up and walk, he received strength to do so. We read about this in John 5: 1-9.

In John 9: 1-7 we read about a man who had been born blind. Jesus made clay and put it on his eyes and sent him to wash at the Pool of Siloam. He did

as Jesus told him, and came back from the Pool able to see.

Find the Prophecy:

Read:

Isaiah 35 5-6.

Understanding the Prophecy:

Find the words in Isaiah chapter 35 that say that those things would happen. Look at the miracles in Mark chapter 7 and John chapters 5 and 9.



Chapter 8: Hosanna

One day Jesus and His disciples were on the road to Jerusalem. Jesus sent two of His disciples to bring a young donkey to Him from a nearby village. No-one had ever sat on this donkey before, but the disciples put some of their clothes on its back. The Lord Jesus sat on the donkey and they continued on their way.

A great crowd gathered. Some of the people put clothing on the road, others cut branches from the trees and laid these on the road, making a carpet for the Lord Jesus to ride on. The people began to call out “Hosanna to the Son of David!”, using words from the prophet Zechariah. Many people began to ask who this could be who entered Jerusalem in this way.

The Lord Jesus went into the temple. Seeing people there buying and selling, He sent them out of the temple. Jesus said that the temple was to be a house of prayer, but it had been made into a “den of thieves” because people cheated there. Children continued calling out “Hosanna”, but some of the priests and leaders of the people did not like to hear this. They wanted people to listen to them, not to the Lord Jesus.

Find the Prophecies:

Read:

Zechariah 9: 9.

Psalms 118: 25-26.

Isaiah 56: 7.

Jeremiah 7: 11.

Understanding the Prophecies:

1. **Read:** Matthew 21: 1-5.

(“Zion” was part of the city of Jerusalem but is sometimes used as the name of the city.)

Why did Matthew say the Lord Jesus had sent the disciples to bring the donkey to Him? (see verse 4)

2. **Read:** Matthew 21: 9.

Which one of the four prophecies has the words that the people called out? (The word “Hosanna” means “save now”.)

3. **Read:** Matthew 21: 12-13.

What does the Lord Jesus call the temple and which prophecy uses these words?

Chapter 9: The Crucifixion - Introduction

The Lord Jesus is the promised Saviour. He came into the world to take the punishment for the sin of everyone who believes in Him. He lived a perfect life: He never sinned in thought, word, or action. The punishment for sin is death. The Lord Jesus gave His life as a perfect sacrifice in the sinner's place. God the Father accepted the death of His Son and forgives all who trust in Him.

The death and resurrection of the Saviour is the most important subject in the Bible. It is referred to right through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. This is because the Bible tells us about God's plan to deal with our sin so that we can know Him as our Friend and be with Him for ever.

There are many prophecies of things that happened at the time of the crucifixion. We will look at some of these.

Chapter 10: The Crucifixion – Betrayed

The Lord Jesus had chosen twelve men to be His disciples: to be with Him and then to teach others about Him (Mark 3: 14). One of the twelve was Judas Iscariot. For about three years Jesus taught the many people who came to Him. He also healed many who were ill or blind or deaf.

The religious leaders: priest and scribes, Pharisees and Sadducee's, hated the Lord Jesus. They wanted the people to listen to them and they refused to admit that the miracles of healing clearly showed that Jesus was the promised Saviour, the Son of God. Judas made the terrible decision to betray Jesus: to hand Him over to those who wanted to kill Him.

The Lord Jesus knew what Judas would do. As He met with His disciples for their last Passover meal together, He told them that one of them would betray Him. He used some words that had been written one thousand years before (Psalm 41: 9). After the Passover meal, Jesus took His disciples to a garden called Gethsemane. Judas knew this place where the Lord Jesus sometimes spent time praying to His Father in Heaven.

Judas led the armed men that the chief priests sent to arrest Jesus. It would have been dark in the garden, so he had given a sign that the One he kissed was the One they must arrest.

Find the Prophecy:

Read:

Psalms 41: 9

Matthew 26: 14-16, 21-25, 47-50

John 13: 18, 21-30

Understanding the prophecy:

1. In Psalm 41, King David writes from his own experience, but his words are also prophetic. How do we know this? (see John 13: 18).
2. David's words 'lifted up his heel against me' meant someone had betrayed him. In what way did Judas 'lift up his heel' against the Lord Jesus? (Matthew 26: 14-16 and 47-60).

Chapter 11: The Crucifixion – Nailed to a cross

Crucifixion was very painful. The person being crucified had their hands and feet nailed to a wooden cross. It was the Roman method of putting criminals to death. King David wrote Psalm 22 long before the Roman empire existed, and yet he spoke of someone whose hands and feet were pierced.

After He had risen from the dead, the Lord Jesus showed the scars on His hands, to assure the fearful disciples that it was really Him. (He also had a scar where a Roman soldier had pierced his side with a spear.)

Find the Prophecy

Read:

Psalm 22: 16

John 20: 19-20, 24-29

Understanding the Prophecy

King David wrote about hands and feet belong pierced. How did the Lord Jesus convince His fearful disciples that it was really Him? He had risen from the grave.

Chapter 12: The Crucifixion – Mocked

The Lord Jesus had lived a perfect, sinless life. He had healed many sick people. He had raised people from death: three are recorded (Mark 5: 35-43; Luke 7: 11-13; John 11: 40-44). His miracles not only showed His compassion. They also clearly showed that He was the Son of God with power to heal and to give life. Jesus had also spent many hours patiently talking to the people and teaching them.

Crucifixion was a slow, painful death. How terrible to think that as He suffered on the cross, people mocked Him. Although written long before, Psalm 22 described this cruel mockery.

Find the Prophecy

Read:

Psalm 22: 7-8

Matthew 27: 39-44

Luke 23: 35

Understanding the Prophecy:

We read about the mockery that the Lord Jesus endured in both Matthew and Luke's gospels. Who used the words written in Psalm 22: 8? (Matthew 27: 41-43)

Chapter 13: The Crucifixion – With the wicked and with the rich

The religious leaders were determined that Jesus would be put to death. The trial held by the high Priest had no truth or justice in it. The witnesses were false witnesses. The result was decided before the trial was held, but the Jews could not carry out the death penalty. Another trial had to be held by Pilate, the Roman Governor.

Pilate told the Jews that he found no fault in the Lord Jesus, but they were not satisfied. Pilate also sent Jesus to King Herod, who sent Him back again. Pilate then stated that neither he nor Herod found any fault in Jesus, but he gave in to the people's demand for His death.

Quite deliberately the Lord Jesus was treated as if He was a criminal. He was led to Calvary with two criminals who were crucified one on His right and the other on His left. Jesus prayed that His Father would forgive those who treated Him in this way.

The prophet Isaiah had written about 700 years before it happened, that the Lord Jesus would die with wicked men. He also said that in spite of being put to death with criminals, rich people would also be involved. Joseph of Arimathea who was a rich man, asked Pilate to allow him to take the body of Jesus. He was given permission and together with Nicodemus, he removed the body and laid it in a tomb. The tomb was like a cave cut in the rock and a large stone was placed across the entrance.

Joseph of Arimathea was a secret believer in Jesus and Nicodemus was a Pharisee who had also come to believe in Him.

Find the Prophecies:

Read:

Isaiah 53: 9 and 12

Matthew 27: 57-60

John 19: 38-42

Understanding the Prophecies

1. A transgressor (Isaiah 53: 12) is someone who has broken the law. What word in Isaiah 53: 9 is used for the people Jesus was put to death with?
2. Who was the rich man who was involved in the burial of Jesus? (Matthew 27: 57)

Chapter 14: The Crucifixion – All for others

The religious leaders of the Jews were determined that Jesus must be put to death. They tried to find people who would witness against Him, but found no-one who could bring an honest accusation against him. They even found it difficult to persuade anyone to make an untrue accusation. At last they found two men willing to give a completely wrong meaning to something Jesus had said.

Both Pilate and King Herod declared that they found no fault in Him. Even Judas Iscariot who had betrayed the Lord, was full of remorse and said – “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood” (Matthew 27: 4). So we are left with the question why did the sinless Son of God allow Himself to be put to death?

The prophet Isaiah made it clear that the promised Saviour would die for the sins of others. In fact he tells us that God the Father laid on the Lord Jesus all the sins of everyone who would trust in Him. The apostle Peter also explained that to the people, after Jesus had risen from the dead (Acts 2: 23). We know that Jesus, the Son of God, willingly came to die in place of sinful people.

God hates the sins that have brought violence, suffering and death into the world. He will not allow us to live forever in a sinful state. So Adam was warned that disobeying the one command God had given him, would result in death (Genesis 2: 16-17).

The New Testament also teaches this (Romans 6: 23).

The Lord Jesus became a man so that He could die, taking sin's punishment, in place of all who would trust in Him and ask God to forgive their sin. For those who are too proud to admit that they are sinners who need God's forgiveness, God will one day be their Judge and they will have to take the punishment their sin deserves. Forgiven sinners will enjoy being with their wonderful God forever. Unforgiven sinners will go to a place the Bible calls hell, where they are cut off from God and from all goodness and joy.

Find the prophecy:

Read:

Isaiah 53: 5-6 ('transgressions' means sins, 'stripes' means wounds).

Matthew 27: 3-4

Luke 23: 14-15

2 Corinthians 5: 21

1 Peter 2: 24

John 3: 16

Understanding the prophecy:

1. Find three people who confirmed that the Lord Jesus was not put to death for any sins of His own? (Luke 23: 14-15 and Matthew 27: 3-4)

2. Whose sins did the apostle Peter say Jesus died for? (1 Peter 2: 24)
3. Look at the first six words in John 3: 16. Why did God the Father give His beloved Son to die in place of sinful people?



Chapter 15: Resurrection

In the Old Testament we not only find prophecies of the death of the promised Saviour, but also of His Resurrection. Peter used words from the Book of Psalms when he spoke to the people on the Day of Pentecost. He knew that these words were looking forward to the resurrection, although they were written about a thousand years before.

There are other verses in the Psalms that speak of rising from death besides the verses Peter used. Some examples would be Psalm 30:3; Psalm 49:15; Psalm 118: 17. Isaiah 53 is about the death of the Saviour, but towards the end of the chapter it is clear that His death would not be the end, but He would live on to see those who would believe in Him.

The Book of Job is found near the middle of the Old Testament, but Job is thought to have lived a very long time ago, maybe 2000 years before the coming of the Lord Jesus. His words show that he believed in the resurrection.

One event in the Old Testament that the Lord Jesus spoke about was the fact that Jonah was inside the large fish for three days and three nights. Jesus said that in the same way, He would be in “the heart of the earth” – the grave – for three days and three nights. He was pointing to the fact that His body would not remain in the grave.

When the apostle Paul was teaching people at Thessalonica, he used the Old Testament to show that when the One who God had promised to send came into the world, He would die and rise again (Acts 17: 2-3). The Lord Jesus used the Old Testament to explain His death and resurrection. He did this after He had risen, to help some of His followers who could not understand all that had happened (Luke 24: 25-27).

Find the Prophecies:

Read:

Psalms 16: 10

Acts 2: 22-32 (Your Bible may have the words 'sheol' or 'hades'. These both mean 'the grave')

Job 19: 25 – 26

Isaiah 53:10-12

Understanding the Prophecies:

1. How did the apostle Peter explain that King David was not writing about himself in Psalm 16? (see Psalm 16: 9-11: Acts 2: 29-32)
2. What did King David call the promised Saviour? (Psalm 16: 10)
3. Find the words in Isaiah 53: 10 & 11 that show that the Saviour would not remain in the grave. ('Justify' means to find someone 'not guilty'. For God to declare that He finds a sinful person not guilty means that He has

accepted the death of His Son Jesus, in the sinner's place.)

4. The Lord Jesus won the victory over death for His people. Find the words in Job 19: 25-26 that show that Job believed this, even though he lived many years before Jesus died and rose again.

Chapter 16: Ascension

For forty days after His resurrection the Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples. He did not stay with them all the time, but was with them and talked with them enough for them to be sure that this was the One they had been with for three years. They knew that He had died and they were absolutely certain that this same Jesus had really risen again.

When the time came for the Lord Jesus to return to heaven, He met with His disciples at the Mount of Olives, just outside the city of Jerusalem. He told them that they must wait at Jerusalem until God sent the Holy Spirit to them. They would then be “witnesses” for Jesus first at Jerusalem, then through all the land of Israel and then all over the world. A witness is someone who tells what he has seen or heard. The disciples were to tell people about the Lord Jesus, especially about His death and resurrection. They needed the power of the Holy Spirit to help them do this.

After the Lord Jesus had said these things, as the disciples looked at Him, He was taken up into heaven. A cloud covered Him as He went up so that the disciples could no longer see Him. As they stood gazing up to where they had last seen the Lord Jesus, two angels stood beside them. The angels told the disciples that just as they had seen the Lord Jesus go up to heaven, so one day He would return from heaven.

The word “ascend” means to go up and so we call this event “the ascension” – the “going up” into heaven of the Lord Jesus. The ascension was prophesied in the Book of Psalms, many years before the Lord Jesus came into the world. When the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, it was like a victory march, such as Kings used to have when they had defeated their enemies. Ever since sin came into the world, men and women and boys and girls have been held captive by sin, death and the devil. Through His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus defeated these enemies and returned to heaven victorious. Now in heaven He gives gifts to His people.

Find the Prophecy:

Read:

Psalm 68: 18.

Acts 1: 8-11

1 Corinthians 12: 4-7

Ephesians 4: 7-8

Understanding the Prophecy:

1. The Apostle Paul used Psalm 68: 18 when he wrote to the Christians at Ephesus. How many Christians did he say receive a gift from the Lord Jesus? (Ephesians 4: 7)
2. Do all Christians have the same gift? (1 Corinthians 12: 4-6)
3. Who are helped by Christ's gifts to His people? (1 Corinthians 12: 7)



OLD TESTAMENT PICTURES OF THE PROMISED SAVIOUR

Chapter 17: What is wrong with the world?

We live on a beautiful planet, with everything we could possibly need provided for us. Yet nations spend time and money inventing things to kill more and more people, instead of helping each other. Sometimes men and women quarrel and even attack one another. Even little children don't need anyone to teach them to tell lies or have temper tantrums.

God created a perfect world, but when the first man and woman disobeyed Him, sin entered the world. God is holy: perfectly pure and good. He hates sin (the Bible's word for doing wrong).

Read:

Genesis 2: 16-17

Genesis 3: 1-8

Revelation 12: 9

1. Who was the serpent? (Genesis 3: 1 and Revelation 12: 9)
2. How did he convince Eve that God was not being kind to her? (Genesis 3: 4-5)
3. God would have talked with Adam and Eve in the beautiful garden He had given them. What

changed after they disobeyed Him? (Genesis 3: 8)

Chapter 18: How could fellowship (friendship) with God be restored?

God is our loving Creator who knows what is best for us. To disobey God is sinful and sin is like a wall between us and our perfect, holy God. Adam and Eve were not able to do anything to put things right and neither has anyone else born into this world (except the Lord Jesus). Only God could make a way for us to be reconciled to Him: fellowship restored.

Read:

Genesis 3: 15 and 21

In Genesis 3: 15 we have, in picture language, the first promise of a Saviour. One who would crush God's enemy, the devil, but who would Himself suffer in doing this. In Genesis 3: 21 we have God's answer to dealing with our sin. He would accept a Substitute: one who would die in place of the sinner.

What must have happened to provide skins to make clothing for Adam and Eve? (Genesis 3: 21)

This is the first example of an animal being sacrificed instead of the sinner. All through the Old Testament we read about sacrifices being offered for the sins of the people. In the Book of Leviticus we have God's instructions for how this should be done.

These sacrifices were quite different from the offerings people of some nations brought to the idols they worshipped. These offerings were to make the false gods they worshipped pleased with them. The Bible alone teaches us that no-one can make themselves acceptable to the true God. His standard is perfection and He accepts us when we trust in the sacrifice of His perfect, sinless Son as our Substitute: the One who took the punishment our sin deserves.

Read:

Hebrews 10: 4 and 9: 11-14

John 3: 16

1. What could the Old Testament sacrifices never do?
2. Find the words in Hebrews 9: 12 that will tell us how often Christ's life needed to be sacrificed.
3. Why did God send His beloved Son into the world to die in the place of sinful people? (John 3: 16)

God has given us His rules for life, the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20: 1-17). These commandments are good, and they are for all people of all time. However, not one person has ever been able to keep God's law perfectly (except the Lord Jesus).

Read:

Galatians 3: 24

This verse teaches us that God's law is like a school teacher or tutor, showing us that we need a Saviour.

In Old Testament days, sin was forgiven because the people offering sacrifices were trusting in the Saviour that God had promised. Every sacrifice that was offered was like a picture of what the Saviour would do. The Lord Jesus Christ offered His perfect, sinless life as a sacrifice on Calvary's cross. No other sacrifices need to be offered now. God forgives the sin of everyone who trusts in the Lord Jesus as their Substitute: the One who died in their place to take the punishment for all their sin.

Chapter 19: One more promise ...

We know about things that have happened in the past and we know what is happening in the present. Only God knows the past the present and the future. So many prophecies were fulfilled in the life of the Lord Jesus that they could only have been written so many years before they happened by men who were helped by God the Holy Spirit. (See 2 Peter 1: 21.)

These prophecies, given up to 4000 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, make it absolutely certain that He was the promised Saviour. They also help us to be sure that God always does what He says He will do.

There is one very important promise that has not yet been fulfilled. This is a promise that the Lord Jesus made, when He said that He will come to earth again. This promise was repeated by the angels at the time of the Ascension and we also read it in other parts of the New Testament, including the Book of Revelation.

It is nearly two thousand years since the angels said that the Lord Jesus would return to the earth. We have seen how God fulfilled His promises which were given over thousands of years in Old Testament times. We can be sure that the God who promised to send the Saviour will also keep His promise that Jesus will come again.

When He does return, it will not be as a baby but as the great and powerful Son of God. For those who have come to Him for forgiveness for their sin, it will be a wonderful time. For those who do not believe or trust in Him it will be a time of great fear. The Lord Jesus taught us to be ready to meet Him. No-one knows when that wonderful day will be, except God Himself. We can be sure that He will come at exactly the right time.

Find some promises of the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

Read:

John 14: 1-3.

Acts 1: 10-11.

1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17.

Revelation 22: 7, 12 and 20.

Find two parables that teach us to be ready for the time when the Lord Jesus returns

Read: Matthew 25: 1 – 13 and 14-30.

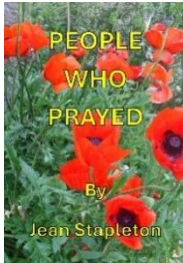
Which one of these parables is about being ready whenever the Lord Jesus returns and which one is about working for Him until He comes? We can only be ready if we have asked Him to forgive our sin and help us to live to please Him.

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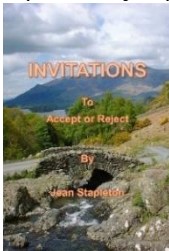
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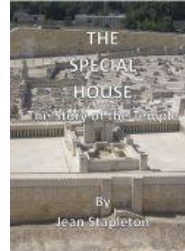
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