

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

CLASS TWO – OT PROPHECY

I. Genesis 3

[movie clip of Jesus crushing Satan] Turn to Gen 3. Today we will look at OT prophecy about Jesus. The first prophecy ever made about Jesus comes from Gen 3. Read :14-15. God tells the serpent, Satan, the offspring of Eve will one day crush his head. Sin has entered the world, but there is hope of a future victory. As Mel Gibson's opening scene from *The Passion of the Christ* so graphically depicted, Jesus' decision to die on the cross was a crushing blow to Satan. Several passages in the NT teach that the cross dealt a severe blow to Satan. I John 3:8 says Jesus appeared to destroy the devil's work. In John 12:30-31, Jesus said the prince of this world would be driven out when he was lifted up on the cross. Heb 2:14 says Jesus by his death destroyed the devil by freeing us from the fear of death. Col 2:15 calls the cross a triumph over the powers and authorities of this world. We usually think of the cross in terms of our own sin and the conviction we feel, but the cross is also a tremendous victory that smashed the dominion of Satan over our lives. We can rejoice in that triumph. The victory of the Messiah over his enemies is a theme repeated over and over in OT prophecy.

II. King + Priest

Psalm 110. Jesus quoted this Psalm about himself. Let's see what it teaches us. I need a volunteer to read the entire Psalm. Very loudly! In verse 1, the first "LORD" is in all capital letters. Does anyone know what that means? It means the word in Hebrew is *YHWH* – Yaweh (Jehovah) - the personal name of God. Out of reverence for God and a desire never to take His Name in vain, Jews never pronounce this word, but always simply say the LORD. The second "Lord" has only the first L capitalized. What does that mean? The Hebrew word is *adonai* – the ordinary word for "Lord" that could be used of God, but also could be used by a subject to his king or a servant to his master. David, who wrote the Psalm, prophesies about the Messiah. He calls the Messiah "my Lord." Jesus pointed out that David would not normally do that for one of his own descendants. If David called the Messiah "Lord" that means the Messiah was somehow greater than David. How could that be? What does David tell us about the Messiah? [COMMENTS]. Sits at God's right hand. God will put his enemies under his feet (echoes Gen 3). He will rule with a mighty scepter – his is a king. He will also be a priest in the order of Melchizedek. God will crush his enemies (another echo of Gen 3). In the OT, were the king and the priest ever the same person? No. From what tribe did the line of priests come from? Levi. From what tribe did David and the line of kings belong? Judah. Completely different. But God here says the Messiah will be both king and priest. Richard covered this in his sermon Memorial Day weekend.

Turn to Zechariah. The Book of Zechariah contains many Messianic prophecies. I believe only Psalms and Isaiah are quoted more often in the NT. What did the priests do in the OT? They offered sacrifices for sin. The Messiah will be a king who offers

sacrifices for sin. OT kings couldn't do this. Samuel rebuked Saul once for trying. Zech 3:1-9 and 6:9-15 also contain prophesy that the Messiah will be both priest and king. We won't read them now, but check it out. The current high priest Joshua is used as a symbol to prophesy about the future Messiah. Joshua of course is the same name in Hebrew as Jesus in Greek. Let's read Zech 3:9. By the Branch (the Messiah), God will "take away the sin of the land in a single day." That's an amazing promise that wasn't possible under the OT system; How would the King/Priest Messiah do that?

III. Suffering for our sin

Turn to both Psa 22 and Isa 53 and keep a marker at both places. These two scriptures are amazing prophecies about the cross. Scholars who don't believe in prophesy can't deny the connection and resort to claiming that the NT writers deliberately wrote their accounts to sound like the OT prophecies. We have heard them applied to Jesus so much that I think we forget just how amazing they are. Psa 22 was written approximately 950 years before Jesus and Isa 53 was written approximately 700 years before Jesus. In the 1st Century, disciples used these passages and others to prove Jesus was the Messiah. Imagine being a 1st Century Jew and someone is trying to persuade you these verses refer to Jesus death on a cross. I will read them both and let's look for things that point to the cross. As I read, **raise you hand** if you see a prophesy about how Jesus died. Psa 22:1-9. 1 (Jesus quoted) 7-8 (direct quotes of the mockery of Jesus at the cross) 14 (very descriptive of crucifixion) 15 (Jesus was thirsty) 16 (exactly what happened) 17 (no bones were broken) 18 (the soldiers did this very thing). Now let's read Isa 53:1-12. 4-5 (pierced; human not animal suffering punishment for sins of others) 7 (silent before his accusers) 9 (died with criminals; buried in wealthy man's tomb; innocent) 10 (human not animal guilt offering; resurrection?) 11 (resurrection again) 12 (will become great; bore sins of many). This is incredible stuff. The OT teaching us how the Messiah takes away sins! It was there all along. A couple of times in the NT, after the resurrection, it says Jesus opened their eyes to see how the OT applied to him. It was there all along.

III. Mighty God; Clouds of Heaven

Turn to Isa 9. Here is another OT prophesy quoted in the NT to refer to Jesus. Let's see what we can learn about him. Can someone please read :1-7? Again, be loud. What specific prophecies do we see fulfilled in Jesus? [COMMENTS] Galilee – where Jesus started his ministry – where the light first dawned. He shattered the oppression of sin and Satan (echo of Gen 3 again). Born as a child – didn't come straight from heaven. Wonderful Counselor (good teacher; rabbi; amazed at his teaching). Mighty God; Everlasting Father (I and the Father are one; If you have seen me, you have seen the Father; The Word was with God and the Word was God). Prince of Peace (the peace of victory and reconciliation with God). Descendant of David. Eternal Kingdom of justice and righteousness. Some scholars used to think the notion of Jesus being divine, the Son of God, was a new concept unique to Christianity and not present in Judaism. But we saw a hint in Psalm 110 and it is even more clear here in Isaiah 9. Then, in 1948, they discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls, written by Jews during the 100 years or so before Jesus.

One of them (I have seen it) calls the Messiah the Son of God. The Jews could read the OT; they knew what it meant. In Mark 14:61, no later Christian scribe put words in the high priest Caiaphas mouth when he asked Jesus at his trial “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Living God?”

Turn to Dan 7 and we will close. Jesus favorite phrase referring to himself was the Son of Man. In Hebrew/Aramaic “a son of man” merely means a human being. Some scholars suggest Jesus was emphasizing his humanity and these scholars doubt if Jesus claimed to be divine. However, Jesus didn’t call himself “a son of man” but rather “**the** Son of Man.” He was no doubt referring to his humanity, but also to something more. He was referring to Dan 7. :9-14. I mentioned Caiaphas question of Jesus at his trial. In Mark 14:62, what did Jesus answer? “I am and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Jesus claimed the Dan 9 prophesy for himself. He claimed God would give him authority, glory and sovereign power over all people and nations. An everlasting dominion that will never be destroyed.

We have all heard before how many 1st Century Jews were looking for a Messiah who would be a political deliverer. Someone who would crush Rome under his feet and make the Jews a free nation again. Isa 9 talks about breaking the rod of oppression and burning warriors boots and garments; Psa 110 talked about people fighting for him. As Christians, we know that Jesus brought a spiritual kingdom – not a physical one. Sometimes I think we see the spiritual kingdom as a kinder gentler kingdom – almost a wimpier version of what the Jews thought. The kingdom is within you – how sweet – we all have a little spark of the divine inside us. I think we have it backwards. Jesus ushered in a kingdom much more powerful than the political one envisioned by the Jews. His kingdom is bigger, stronger, longer-lasting and of far greater significance than any political kingdom in history. He destroyed Satan’s kingdom - an oppressor far mightier than Rome (and he ultimately did away with Rome too). He was more than a king; he was also priest who took away our sins; he was more than a priest; he was divine. His kingdom is eternal. It continues powerfully influencing peoples’ lives even today. I think we have forgotten how powerful the kingdom of God really is.

We use the word “kingdom” as synonymous with “church” and usually mean simply the body of disciples in all our shortcomings and weaknesses. The Messiah’s kingdom is much more than that. Rom 16:20. God will crush Satan under our feet too! The Prince of Peace gives us the peace of victory. Like Winston Church’s V for Victory peace sign. The Messiah defeats Satan in our lives. Freed us from the dominion of sin and darkness. Gave us eternal life. It is the Spirit of God living inside us, bearing fruit and changing our characters to be more like Jesus. It has the power to transform our lives more and more and transform the lives of others around us. I think we have forgotten. The kingdom of Jesus the Messiah is something greater, more uplifting, more inspiring, more genuine, more truly powerful and transformational that just going to church. We will look more into this later in a class on Jesus teaching about the kingdom of God. I hope this will help us capture a new vision of what the kingdom of God is truly all about. Amen.