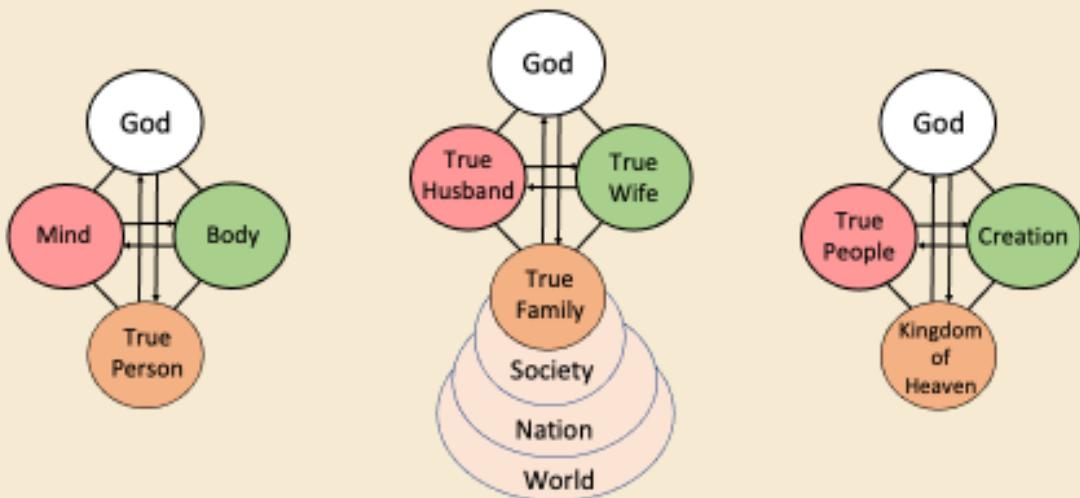


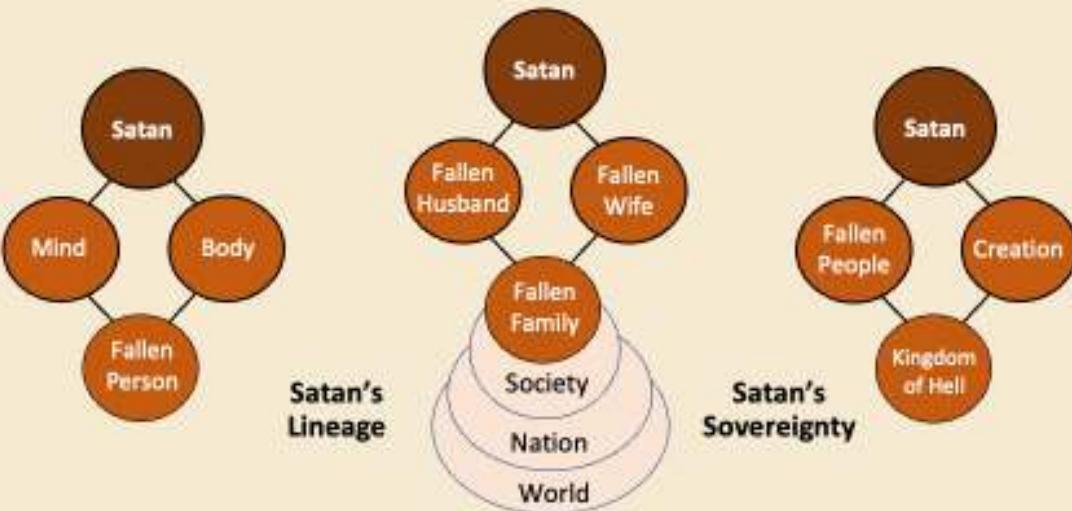
The Mission of the Messiah

God's Ideal of Creation – 3 Blessings



- It is important to remember that **if the first human ancestors, Adam and Eve, had fulfilled their responsibility** and accomplished the **3 Great Blessings**, **sin** would not have come into the world, and there would have been **no need** to be saved by a **savior**.
- Adam and Eve would have each **matured** in both **mind and body** as they grew in **Godly love**. They would have become a **True Man** and a **True Woman**, fulfilling God's **purpose** of Creation.
- God would have given His **blessing of marriage** to Adam and Eve, who would have then established a pure, **Godly lineage**. That True Family would have expanded from the **family level** to the society, nation, and world levels.
- **God-centered families** would have had a **dominion of love** over the entire **creation** – the earth and the whole universe.
- This is the establishment of the **Kingdom of Heaven on earth** – in the **physical universe** God created.
- The Kingdom established first on earth would have **naturally** and **automatically** continued with the entrance of Godly families into the **spiritual world** as they successfully completed their time on earth.

The Results of the Fall



- But due to the **Fall of Man**, Adam, Eve and their descendants became **subservient** to their **false father**, the fallen archangel Lucifer – otherwise known as **Satan**.
- Through the Fall of Man, **Satan became the subject** of the world, taking the **position of God**. Satan established the **False 3 Blessings** centered on himself.
- Instead of **humanity's lineage** being a **pure** reflection of God's nature, we came to pass on a **corrupted, sinful nature** from generation to generation.
- Man fell into a state of **spiritual darkness** and **spiritual death**, with **no ability or authority** to throw off Satan's yoke and escape the suffering of hell on earth and in the eternal spiritual world.

Messiah is the Hebrew word for Anointed One

Messiah → King

Messianic Expectation → Savior (King)

Jesus Christ → Messiah

- In the **Bible**, according to the **Judeo-Christian tradition**, the **Messiah** is the one who comes to save us from sin and evil.
- What does **the word "Messiah"** mean? The word "**Messiah**," or "**Mashiach**" in **Hebrew**, means the "**anointed one**," signifying a **king** or high **priest**.
- The word "**Christ**," which is commonly used by Christians today, comes from the **Greek** word for Messiah, "**Christos**."
- The **chosen people** of Israel believed in the Word of God as **revealed through the prophets**, which **promised** that God would send them a **true king and savior**. Such was their **messianic expectation**.
- God eventually **sent** this Messiah in the person of **Jesus Christ** over 2,000 years ago.
- What does the Messiah come **to do**? He comes to fulfill the purpose of **God's work of salvation**. Then what does that work **entail**?

Jesus is the Second Adam

So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:45

- In the New Testament, **Paul** refers to Christ, the Messiah, as the **second, or "last Adam."**
- *So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. 1 Corinthians 15:45*
- Since **God had already created Adam** as His son thousands of years before in the Garden of Eden, **why was it necessary to send another Adam?**

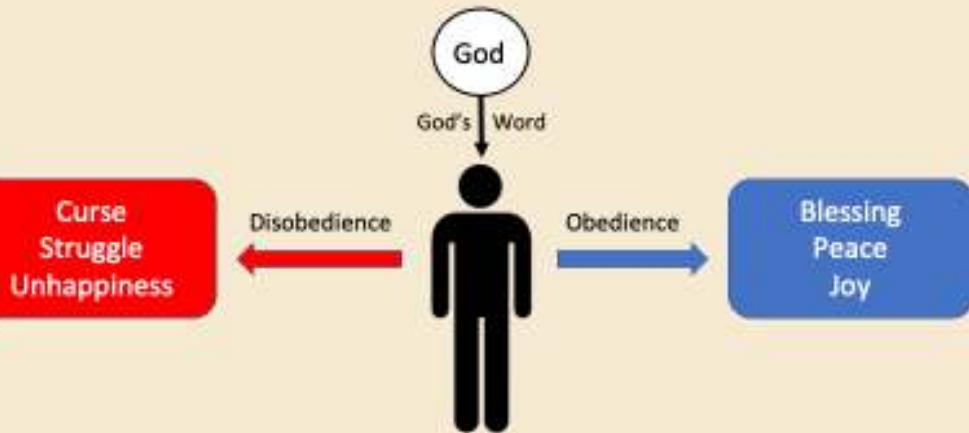
Adam = Original King

- Adam was meant to be King, the first ancestor of God's lineage.
- Together with Eve as his Queen, they would have established God's royal, holy lineage on the earth.

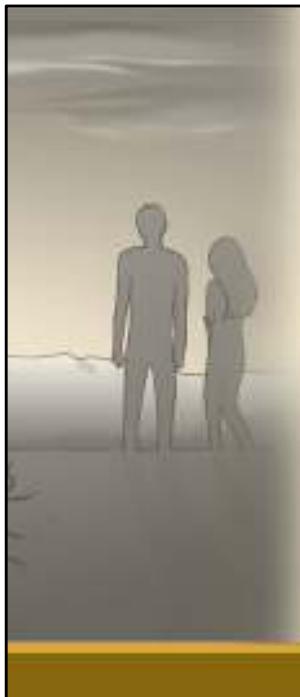


- Since Jesus came as the **Second** Adam, we need to understand God's original **purpose** for His creation, and specifically for creating the **First Adam**, whom He created in His image.
- That means the **First Adam** was created **totally pure - without any trace of sin or evil**.
- The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth should have a **Heavenly King**. Then **whom** would God want to **reign** in the position of **King**?
- Had he not fallen, **Adam**, as God's son, would have stood as the **first King** of the **Kingdom of Heaven** on Earth, with **Eve** as his **Queen**.
- Had they **not fallen**, their **lineage** would have been **without sin**, with no element of satanic nature. There would be **no Satan** – no sin or evil in the world.

God's Blessing and Man's Portion of Responsibility



- As we learned in the **Principle of Creation**, God gave man His **3 Great Blessings**.
- **Along with His Blessings**, God also gave human beings **free will** and a **portion of responsibility**. This was **required** in order for man to become an object of **True Love** to God.
- Although **God** does **almost everything** for us (we say His responsibility is **95%**), **people** also have their **5% portion of responsibility**.
- **God's blessings** can only come to man when he becomes a **perfect object** of God's love by **believing and obeying** the Word of God.
- Man was **designed** by God to **experience joy** and **to grow in love** in accordance with God's **instruction** – His plan of Creation.
- When our **beliefs and actions** are in line with God's Word, we experience **Blessing, Peace, and Joy**.
- However, when we are **disobedient** to His Word, we instead experience **curses, struggle, and unhappiness**.

A photograph showing the silhouettes of Adam and Eve standing together in a garden. The background is a soft-focus landscape with hills and a sky with clouds.

God Lost His Kingdom Due to the Fall

... therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life. Gen 3:23-24

- Due to the Fall, Satan became ruler and false king of this world
- Human beings inherited Satan's fallen lineage
- God is a being of absolute love and truth – He cannot allow it to stand

- Instead of **God** being the **ruler** of this world, the Bible tells us that **Satan became the ruler** over Adam and over Adam's **fallen lineage**.
- As we studied in the Fall of Man, **sinful human beings** came to reflect the evil, corrupt, and sinful **nature of Satan**.
- However, since **God**, the Creator, is a being of **absolute love and truth**, He **cannot allow** Satan's dominion and evil lineage to **continue** forever.
- **God** must find a way – **without deviating** from His own **nature or Principles** – to restore His children.

The First Messianic Prophecy

*And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.*

Genesis 3:15

- In fact, immediately **after the story of the Fall** in the book of Genesis, we read **God's Word** proclaiming the **coming of one** who will crush the head of the serpent Lucifer.
- **Genesis 3:15** is often referred to as the **first messianic prophecy** in the Bible, telling us that in the future, **one of Eve's offspring** would **completely crush Satan** and destroy his dominion over mankind.

God Sent Jesus to Establish His Kingdom

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 4:17

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Matthew 4:23



- So then, **what did Jesus come to do?** He came to **take back** God's children from being under Satan's **false lineage and kingdom** to become part of God's **True Lineage and Kingdom**.
- **Matthew 4:17** says, *From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*
- In order for us fallen people to return to God, the first step is to **recognize our sinful position** and repent.
- In **Matthew 4:23** we read, *Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.*
- Jesus came to **proclaim the "good news of the kingdom"** – that God's kingdom would be established, **replacing the sin-centered nature** of the fallen world with a God-centered world.
- It is important to remember that it was **not the physical earth itself** that was sinful, but rather **fallen humankind** – the inhabitants of the world - who had become **descendants of the devil**.

God Sent Jesus to Establish His Kingdom

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God ...

Mark 1:14

And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

Luke 4:43



- Again in Mark, we read how **Jesus continued preaching** about the coming **Kingdom**, even after **John the Baptist** was put in prison.
- **Mark 1:14 says**, *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God...*
- In fact, in the **book of Luke**, Jesus says that that was **the reason God sent Him** – to preach the **coming of the Kingdom**.
- *And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.* (Luke 4:43)

Jesus Instructed Us to Pray for the Kingdom on Earth

“Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..”

Matthew 6:9-10

- Not only did **Jesus** preach the coming Kingdom, but He **instructed all of us to pray** that God's Kingdom come **on earth**.
- *“Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven..”* **Matthew 6:9-10**
- By asking us to pray for the kingdom to come on earth, it is clear that **God's will** is that His kingdom **is meant to come on earth**.
- If the kingdom comes on earth, **in which nation** would it begin, and **who** would lead the way to establish the kingdom?

The Kingdom Was Meant to Unfold in Israel

And what one nation on the earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people and to make a name for Himself, and to do a great thing for You and awesome things for Your land, before Your people whom You have redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, from nations and their gods? For You have established for Yourself Your people Israel as Your own people forever, and You, O LORD, have become their God.

2 Samuel 7:23-24

- We learn from in the book of **Second Samuel** that **this is the exact purpose** for which **God raised up** the nation of **Israel**.
- God had **prepared the people** of Israel as a God-fearing nation for **2,000 years** for the purpose of **receiving and welcoming** the messiah, and to establish His **kingdom** beginning with that nation.

The Israelites were Waiting For Their King

*See, a king will reign in righteousness and
rulers will rule with justice.*

Isaiah 32:1



- Isaiah prophesied about the coming of the messiah, who would come as their **true king**.
- In **Isaiah 32:1** we read, *See, a king will reign in righteousness and rulers will rule with justice.*
- Israel had **many kings** during those 2,000 years, including those who reigned in the **northern kingdom** of Israel and Judah in the **south**.
- Although **some honored God** and others **rebelled** against Him, **all of them** were from the **fallen, Satanic lineage** of fallen Adam and fallen Eve.
- The Jewish people were **waiting** for their **True, righteous and Godly King** – their **messiah** and savior.
- They were **longing** for the day when the **King of Kings** sent by God would lead their **nation**.

Why did the Kingdom not come at the time of Jesus?

- After the crucifixion, Jesus' disciples were scattered
- Many did not believe in Jesus as the Christ because they did not see the promised kingdom
- Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.



- Eventually, Jesus **did come** to the nation of Israel as their **True King and savior**.
- But did we see the people of Israel **welcoming Jesus as the messiah**? Did they **honor** him as their new King?
- The fact is, most of the people **did not accept** and follow **Jesus**. He was **rejected** by most of the population of Israel, tried as a **criminal**, and **sentenced to death** on the cross.
- Although Jesus had occasionally gathered **large crowds**, only a **handful of disciples** remained with him to the end.
- After His crucifixion, the **disciples were scattered**, hiding in **fear** for their lives.
- The Jewish people believed that a **great savior and king would come** to liberate them from Roman oppression and allow them to **establish God's great kingdom**. But they **saw no such thing** with Jesus and his few seemingly **miserable** disciples.
- Eventually **Jerusalem was destroyed** by the Romans in 70 AD, and over **1 million Jewish people were killed**.
- Rather than **receiving the blessing** of establishing God's **kingdom** centered on Jesus as their Lord and True King, the people of Israel were **left to continue suffering** at the hands of the Roman occupiers.

Pattern of “Blessing” or “Curse” in the Old Testament

- God expected the Israelites to maintain faith in the laws, decrees, and commandments given to them.
- If they did so, God would have made sure that Israel realized a blessed destiny as the central nation of the world.

- **To understand the reason** God’s Kingdom **did not come** during Jesus’ time, let’s look at the **principle behind** how God has worked with **fallen people throughout history**.
- In the **Bible**, we often read of **God bestowing blessings** to His people. But **other times** He **curses** them.
- **What determines** if a people are blessed or if they are cursed?
- In the **case of Israel**, God expected the Israelites to **maintain faith** in the laws, decrees, and commandments given to them.
- **If they did so**, God would have made sure that Israel realized a **blessed destiny** as the **central nation** of His worldwide providence.

Blessings for Obedience

"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God:

"Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.

"Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

"Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

"Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out."

Deuteronomy 28:1-6

- In the book of **Deuteronomy** chapter 28, God explains the **conditions necessary** for Israel to receive His **blessings**.
- All these **blessings promised** by God come on the **condition of obedience** to God's Word.

Curses for Disobedience

However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you:

You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country.

Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed.

The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.

You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out.

Deuteronomy 28:15-19

- Later in the same chapter of Deuteronomy, the **consequences of disobedience** are clearly laid out.

God's Desire Was For Israel to be Blessed Through Obedience

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

Deuteronomy 30:19



- God had given the **commandment** to **Adam and Eve** in the hope that they would be **obedient** and receive His **Blessings** as His **children**.
- In the same way, God gave the **people of Israel** His **commandments** and sent the **Messiah** to them in the hope that they would be **obedient** and receive His **Blessings** as the **chosen nation**.

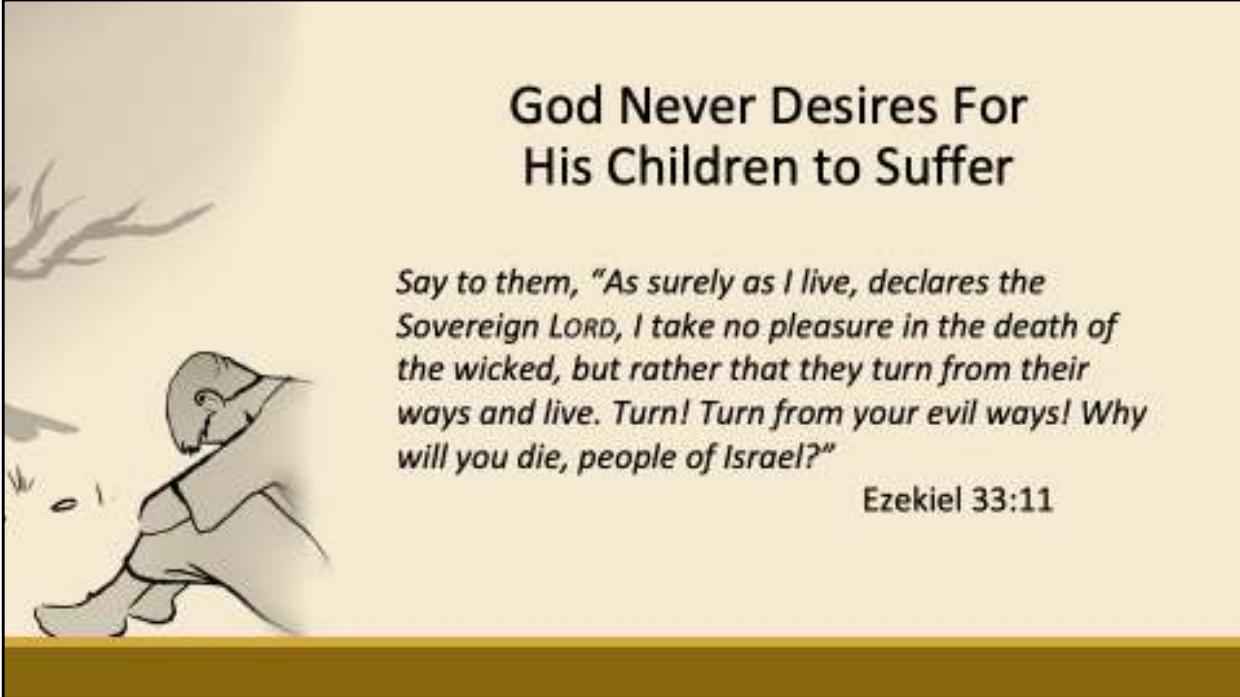
Why God Rebuked Israel

All the nations will ask: "Why has the LORD done this to this land? Why this fierce, burning anger?"

And the answer will be: "It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the covenant he made with them when he brought them out of Egypt."

Deuteronomy 29:24-25

- However, rather than **choosing life** through obedience to God, the people of Israel often chose to **reject** Him, subsequently experiencing **suffering and punishment**.



God Never Desires For His Children to Suffer

Say to them, "As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?"

Ezekiel 33:11

- Does God want His children to **suffer**? Is that why He **created** us?
- **Absolutely not.** God's desire is that He can embrace His people as a **loving Father** embraces His **children**.
- This is why He **always** gave them the **opportunity** to **turn away from evil** and **follow the Truth**.

God Did Not Interfere with Israel's Portion of Responsibility

*Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.
What more could have been done for my vineyard
than I have done for it?
When I looked for good grapes,
why did it yield only bad?*

Isaiah 5:3-4

- Although **God's Heart** is for His children can be **obedient** and **receive blessings** from Him, **God will never interfere** with the human portion of responsibility.
- If He interfered, He would be **violating His own Principle of Creation**, giving Satan **authority** as a creator.
- All throughout the **Bible**, **God gave His Word** to the people of Israel, but it was **up to the people** themselves to **hear, believe and obey**.
- In the book of Isaiah, we read how **God did all He could for them**. Yet, His desired outcome come to fruition without their **obedience**.

Israel Must Choose Between Good and Evil

And though the LORD has sent all his servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention. They said, "Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the LORD gave to you and your ancestors for ever and ever. Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; do not arouse my anger with what your hands have made. Then I will not harm you."

"But you did not listen to me," declares the LORD, "and you have aroused my anger with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves."

Jeremiah 25:4-7



- And in the book of **Jeremiah**, we clearly see how **God's hope and desire** was for His children, especially the **chosen people** of Israel, to **turn from evil** and **obey Him**.
- Whenever the people **disobeyed**, God became **angry** with them. The people **brought pain and suffering to themselves** through their disobedience.

God Endowed His Children with Free Will and Responsibility

- As explained in the Principle of Creation, God desires for His children to fulfill their portion of responsibility so that we can inherit the creative, loving nature of God.
- Without free will and responsibility, human beings would not be able to inherit God's nature by being able to freely give and receive love.
- By participating in our own creation, human beings would stand in a unique position to govern the rest of creation.



- If God were to **interfere** with their 5% portion of responsibility, He would be **violating His own Principle of Creation**, which **requires** free will and responsibility in order for **true love** to exist.

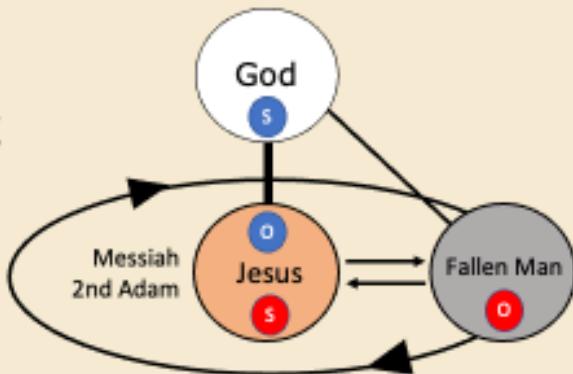
The Fulfillment of God's Will in the Time of Jesus

- To send the Messiah is God's portion of responsibility (95%)
- Belief in and obedience to the Messiah is the human portion of responsibility (5%)

- Did God **change** His **nature** or His **Principles** at the time of the coming of the **Messiah**?
- **Absolutely not!** God is the God of yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is **eternal, absolute and unchanging**.
- Therefore, His **purpose** and His **Principles** are **eternal, absolute, and unchanging**.
- Just as **Adam and Eve** had free will and a portion of responsibility, the **people of Israel also** had free will and their **own** portion of responsibility.
- God **never takes away** free will and human responsibility, regardless of the **consequences**. It is an **essential part** of what makes us His **children**.

God's Plan to Restore Fallen Man through the Messiah

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."
John 6:28-29



- Jesus, as the **Second Adam**, came to **restore** the failure of the **first Adam**, who disobeyed the Word of God, resulting in a **fallen, sinful lineage** under Satan's dominion.
- Jesus came not only to stand in the position of **God's True Son**, but to **substantiate ALL the blessings** God originally gave to **Adam and Eve**.
- When fallen people **recognize Jesus** as the **Second Adam** who is one with God, they can be **forgiven of their sins**.
- **In John 6:28-29**, Jesus made it clear to the people of Israel what **God's Will** was at that time. They were to **believe and follow the Messiah** whom God had sent to save them.
- **Centered on Christ**, fallen people can be **rescued from Satan's dominion** and brought back to **God's dominion**.
- Then by fulfilling their **own portion of responsibility**, they are given the opportunity to **fulfill the original purpose** of life.
- It was **God's portion of responsibility** to send the Messiah, but **man's responsibility** to believe in and obey the Messiah.
- **Had they believed** in him and followed him, would they have killed him? **Absolutely not!**

Dual Prophecies in the Old Testament

To cope with the contingency of human responsibility, God gave two kinds of prophecy concerning the accomplishment of His Will through Jesus.

One kind foretold that Jesus would die due to the disbelief of the people. Another kind foretold that the people would believe in and honor Jesus as the Messiah and help him to accomplish God's Will in glory.

Exposition of the Divine Principle p. 120



- God's desire is **always** that we are **obedient** to Him so that we can enter into a **true parent-child relationship** with Him and **receive all His blessings**.
- Even **beginning with Adam**, God gave His **commandment** to Him, explaining that Adam would be **blessed if he obeyed**, yet **cursed if he disobeyed**.
- Throughout the **Bible**, from **Adam to Jesus**, we see this same **Principle** at work.
- God tells man what He **wants us to do**, and then makes clear the **consequences of disobedience**.
- Since man has **free will**, in any situation, whether we **experience blessing or curse** is up to us – not up to God.
- This is why we see **Dual Prophecies** in the Bible regarding the **coming of Christ**.

Prophecies of Suffering

*Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
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.
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.*

Isaiah 53:4-6

- When we study the **Bible**, there are clearly **two types of prophecies** regarding the coming of **Christ** – Prophecies of **Suffering**, and Prophecies of **Glory**.
- **First**, let's look at some of the prophecies indicating that when Christ comes, He will endure **rejection and suffering** at the hands of the people.

Prophecies of Suffering

Old Testament

Psalm 22, Psalm 118:22,
Isaiah 50:6, Isaiah 53

New Testament

Matthew 16:23, Luke 9:30-31,
Luke 24:25-26, John 19:28-30

- **Other biblical prophecies** also indicate that when Christ comes, He will be the **Lord of Suffering**.

Prophecies of Glory

*Arise, shine;
For your light has come!
And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.
For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,
And deep darkness the people;
But the LORD will arise over you,
And His glory will be seen upon you.
The Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.*

Isaiah 60:1-3

- However, we also find **many prophecies** of the coming of the **Lord of Glory** – one who would be **welcomed in Israel** and shine as a **light unto the nations**.
- In fact, the **overwhelming hope** of the people of Israel was that **God would send them a savior**. They never **imagined** they would **not** be able to **recognize** Him or that they could **reject** Him.
- If you **asked anyone in Israel** at that time, “When God sends the Messiah, will you **follow him** or will you **kill him?**” **Everyone** would answer that they would **follow** him.

Prophecies of Glory

Old Testament

Isaiah 2:4-11, Isaiah 60, Isaiah 61,
Ezekiel 34:11-16, Ezekiel 37:15-28

New Testament

Matthew 4:17, Matthew 6:9-10,
Mark 1:38, Luke 4:43, John 6:29

- Numerous additional **prophecies** of the **Lord of Glory** can be found.

God's Will is the Salvation of His Children and the Establishment of His Kingdom

- God prepares a chosen nation to receive the Messiah.
- God sends the Messiah.
- Man's responsibility is to welcome and follow the Messiah.
- If the people obey, they receive blessing. If they disobey, they are cursed, and God's providence is prolonged.

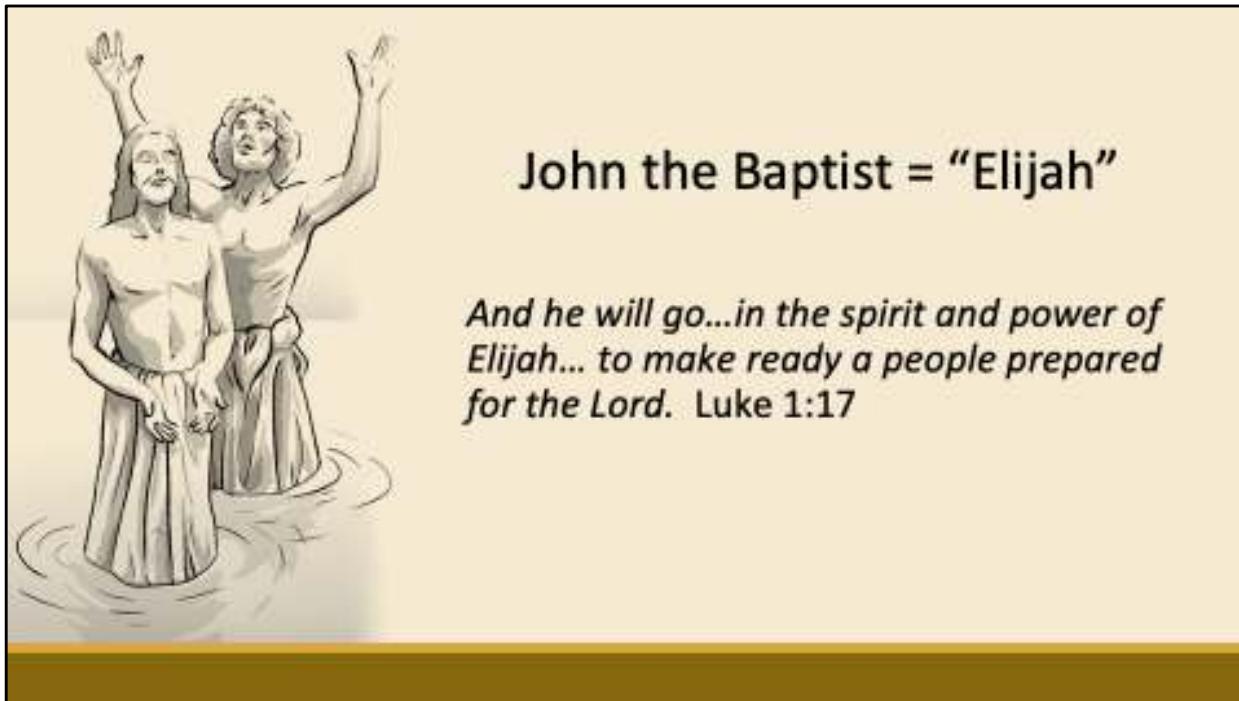
- Just as **God gave Adam** the commandment in the Garden of Eden and knew of the **possibility** that Adam may disobey, **God sent His Son** to the people of **Israel**, knowing that there was the **possibility** they would also disobey.
- Certainly, God **would not give up** on his absolute **goal** of fulfilling His Purpose of Creation **even if** the people of **Israel failed** their responsibility.
- If **Christ** were to be **rejected** by Israel, God would one day have to **send His Son again**.

Elijah Will Return Before the Messiah Appears

I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. Malachi 4:5

... a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire ... and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 2 Kings 2:11

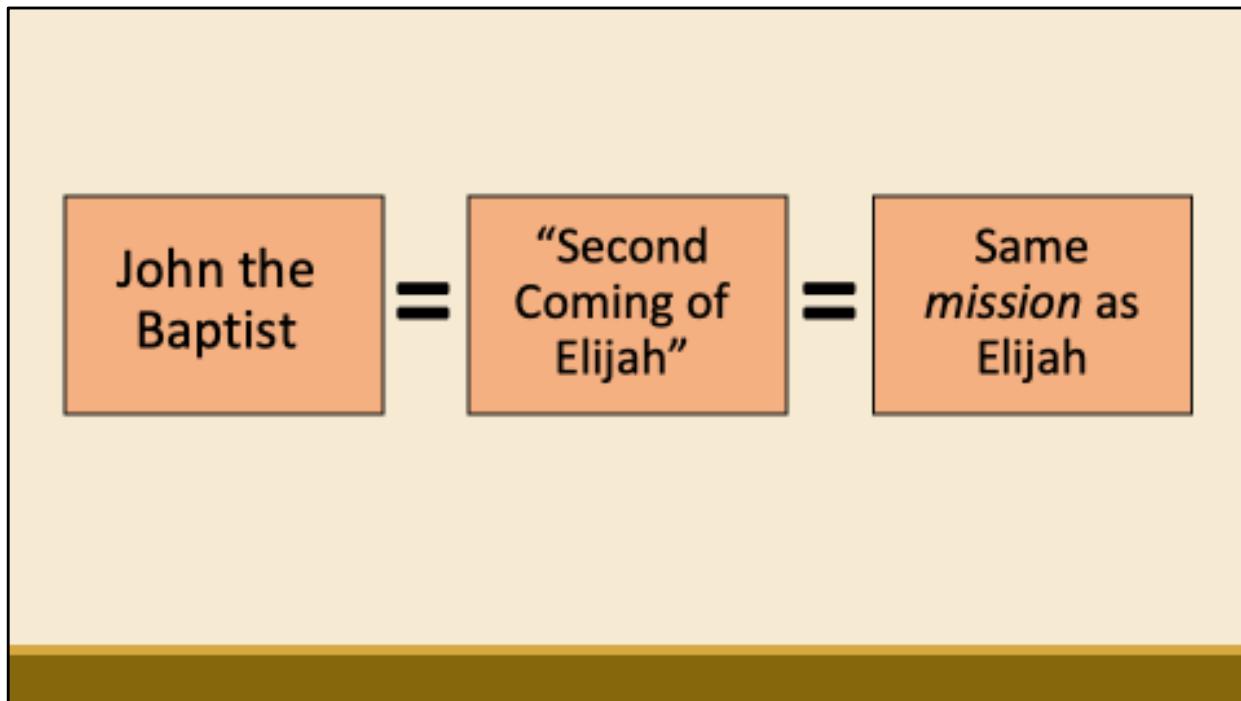
- How were the **people** of Israel supposed to **know when** the messiah would come?
- In **Malachi 4:5**, God says *I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.*
- This means that the **prophet Elijah**, who lived around **500 years before** Malachi, would **return just before** the coming of the Lord as a sign of Christ's **imminent appearance**.
- **What happened to Elijah** at the **end of his earthly life?** **2 Kings 2:11** tells us *... a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire ... and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*
- Elijah **was last seen** heading up to heaven in a fiery chariot. Then **how did Elijah return to prepare the way** for the Lord?



John the Baptist = “Elijah”

And he will go...in the spirit and power of Elijah... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Luke 1:17

- **400 years after Malachi**, Jesus finally came to Israel. But **where was Elijah?**
- The book of Luke tells us that **Zachariah, John the Baptist's father** and a respected **priest**, received a **revelation** about his son John **before John was born**.
- The **angel** says to Zachariah in **Luke 1:17** says: *And he will go...in the spirit and power of Elijah... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*
- Malachi's prophecy of the **return of Elijah did take place** through the person of **John the Baptist**, who came in **Elijah's role** to prepare the people to follow Christ.



- **What did it mean** that John the Baptist was the **return of Elijah**? Wasn't John a **different person** from Elijah?
- Although the **prophecy of Malachi** specifically said, "I will send the prophet Elijah" before the coming of Christ, this "**Second Coming of Elijah**" did not take place in a **literal, physical sense**.
- According to the **Old Testament**, Elijah was taken up into the clouds in a **fiery chariot**.
- It would **logically** make sense that if Elijah had **literally** gone up into the clouds, he should return by coming **down** from the clouds of heaven. However, **that is not how the prophecy was fulfilled**.
- **God did not send the same physical person** of Elijah. Instead, he sent a **different person, born on earth**, who was given a **similar mission** as Elijah – whose mission it was to **prepare** the people of Israel to meet the **Lord**.
- The **prophecy of Malachi** was indeed fulfilled through the earthly **birth and life of John the Baptist**.

John the Baptist: Greatest Religious Leader in Israel

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. Luke 3:15

[King] Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. Mark 6:20

- What does **the Bible** tell us about John? He was **the greatest religious leader** at the time of Christ.
- **Luke 3:15** says, *The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. [King] Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man.*
- Then in **Mark 6:20** we read, *[King] Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man.*
- John was such a **powerful and righteous man**, the people looked up to him with great respect and awe, believing he was **sent to them by God** for a **special mission**.

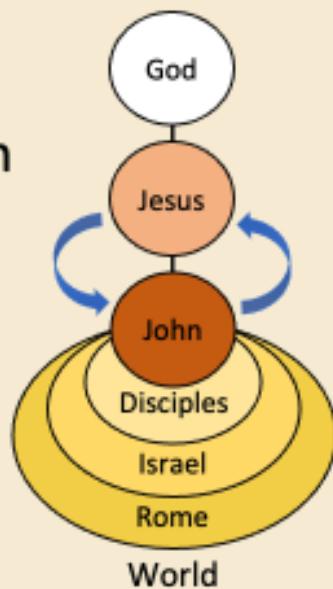
John's Mission was to Bear Witness to Jesus as the Messiah

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him.

John 1:6-7

- Since he was **sent by God to prepare** the people for the coming of their long-awaited **messiah**, what would be the **most critical aspect** of his mission?
- As explained here in the **book of John**, God sent John the Baptist **to witness to the people about Jesus** – “the light” - so that everyone would **believe** that Jesus was the Christ.
- Let’s take a closer look at **what God had planned** for John the Baptist, Jesus, and Israel.

God's Plan for Worldwide Restoration through Jesus



- Since **John himself was waiting** for the coming of the **Messiah**, you might naturally think that when he found out who the Messiah was, he would become **His first and greatest disciple**.
- What greater **honor and blessing** could there have than to **directly attend Christ** at His coming.
- If **John fully united with Jesus** from the position of Jesus' first disciple, all the **people of Israel** who **respected John** would have followed John's example and **themselves become followers of Jesus** - their messiah, savior, and king.
- **God's plan** was for the people of Israel then to **spread Jesus' message** and to establish **God's kingdom** through the **Roman empire** to the entire world.
- God had **prepared everything** for the fulfilment of His Will at the time of Jesus.



How John Was Viewed By His Contemporaries

1. Born to a prominent family
2. Miraculous birth
3. Exemplary life
4. People thought John might be the Messiah
5. Respected by priests and Levites

- **What kind of life did John have**, and how was he viewed by his **contemporaries**?
- **(Note for #1)** – John's father was the **high priest Zechariah**.
- **(Note for #2)** – Zechariah and Elizabeth were **quite old** when they **conceived** John. When an **angel revealed** to Zechariah that they would have a son, Zechariah **couldn't believe it**, and was temporarily **struck dumb**. Due to these miraculous circumstances, the people **expected** John to be a **great man of God** even before he was **born**.
- **(Note for #3)** – John was **not concerned about physical wealth** or a comfortable life. He often fasted, or **ate only locusts and wild honey** in the desert.
- **(Note for #4)** – **Luke 3:15** says, *As the people were in expectation, and all men questioned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he were the Christ.*
- **(Note for #5)** – Although John often **challenged** the established **religious leaders**, he won the **respect** of many of them through his **high standard of faith and dedication**.



How Jesus Was Viewed By His Contemporaries

1. Came from a poor, lowly family
2. Considered Illegitimate
3. Made extraordinary claims
4. Called blasphemous
5. Questionable associates

- Let's **contrast** the people's view of John the Baptist with **how Jesus was viewed** by the people of Israel at that time.
- (*Note re: #1*) – Jesus was **born in Bethlehem in miserable external conditions and laid in a manger** – a feeding trough for animals.
- (*Note re: #2*) – When **Mary** became pregnant, she was **engaged to Joseph**, but Joseph was **not the father**. People naturally **wondered who the father was**, and they were likely the target of scandal and gossip.
- (*Note re: #3*) – He made **extraordinary claims** about **himself** and about **John the Baptist**.
- (*Note re: #4*) – He made Himself out to be **like God**, which was called blasphemy. **For example**, he said in **John 14:9**, "*He who has seen me has seen the Father.*"
- (*Note re: #5*) – Jesus' disciples were **not the highly educated and respected** people of society, but rather included **common laborers, tax collectors**, and people who liked to **drink**.
- Based on all these things, **Jesus did not have nearly the level of respect that John the Baptist did**. In fact, **Jesus was scorned and looked down upon**, especially by the **religious people** of his time.

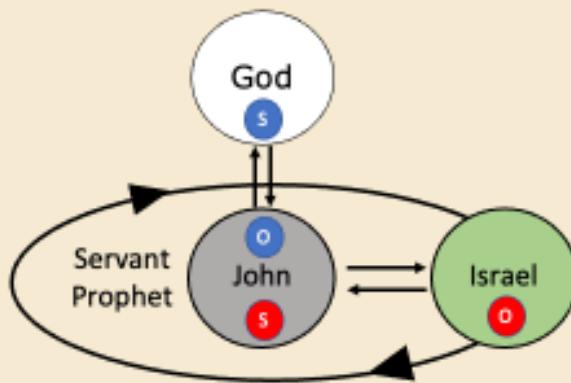
Jesus Proclaimed John to be the Returned Elijah

"And if you are willing to accept it, he [John] is the Elijah who was to come." Matthew 11:14

"Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him..." Then the disciples understood he was talking to them about John the Baptist. Matthew 17:14

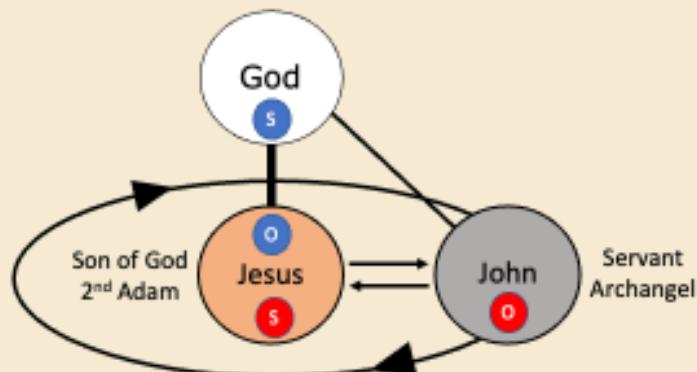
- Then **what did Jesus have to say** about John the Baptist and his mission?
- It was clear from **Jesus' own words** that John the Baptist himself was in fact the **fulfilment of the prophecy** of the Second Coming of **Elijah**.

The Relationship between John and the People of Israel



- Prior to the start of Jesus' public mission, God had chosen **John the Baptist** to occupy the **highest position** as God's **servant** as a **prophet** to the people of Israel.
- This is similar to the position the **Lucifer** was in **before Adam** was created. Lucifer was an **archangel**, a leader of other angels, and was in the **highest position of Creation** **before** God created His **children**.
- John the Baptist came in the **position of Elijah** – **not** so he could receive **praise** or be **glorified** himself, but to **prepare the way** for the Lord, who would come as the **new Adam**.

The Relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist



- How did things **change** after Jesus began his mission?
- Jesus came as the **second Adam**, with the **mission** to fulfill the **3 Blessings** and to **restore** fallen man back to God's **lineage**.
- Once Jesus appeared before John, **John's responsibility** was to **humble himself** to Jesus, **testifying** to Him and living in **attendance** to him, fulfilling the mission of the **returned Elijah**.
- As a person of **fallen lineage**, John naturally experienced **the fallen natures**, inherited from **Satan**, in relationship to Jesus.
- John's **responsibility** was to **overcome** those fallen natures, and to **serve Christ as the new Adam**.
- Did John **fulfill** that critical responsibility?

John Initially Testified to Jesus as the Messiah

Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”

John 1:32-34

- **God clearly revealed to John** who Jesus was – the Chosen One, the **Son of God** for whom the people of Israel had been waiting.
- There should not have been even a **speck of doubt in John’s mind** about the position of Jesus.

John Doubted Jesus

When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come or should we expect someone else?” Matthew 11:2-3



- However, although John had **already** received a clear **revelation** from God about Jesus, he later **questioned** whether Jesus was **the one**.
- **Matthew 11:2-3** says, *When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come or should we expect someone else?”*
- John **knew in his heart** that he should have humbled himself and worked directly **under Jesus**.
- This question he sent his disciples to ask Jesus was **less a question searching for truth** as it was an expression of his own **guilty conscience**.
- He **already knew** the answer to his question.

John Failed to Unite with Jesus

Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside and baptized ... John also was baptizing ... John's disciples ... came to John and said to him, "Rabbi... the one you testified about, ... everyone is going to him." ...

To this John replied, "He must become greater, I must become less." John 3:22-30



- What did **John's disciples** think about their leader's efforts and what **Jesus** was doing?
- It makes sense that **John's disciples wondered** why John himself was **not working** with the very person John had **testified to**.
- Certainly, if **John led his followers** to become disciples of Jesus, they would have **gladly and naturally followed** along.
- Many Christians have **praised John's reply** as an expression of humility, recognizing that **Jesus was meant to take a higher position** than himself.
- However, if John had **supported and worked with Jesus directly**, would he have "**become less**"? Absolutely **not**!
- He would have become known for eternity as **Jesus' greatest follower** – one who **helped Jesus establish God's kingdom** in Israel - rather than merely a **voice crying in the wilderness**.
- If John was truly **humble**, he would have **willingly accepted a supportive role** in relationship to Jesus.

John Denied His Mission as “Elijah”

Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No”. John 1:19-21



- Furthermore, in **John 1:19- 21**, John the Baptist **categorically denied his mission** as the returning Elijah.
- John was **not** meant to only **proclaim** Jesus as the messiah **once** from a **distance**. He was meant to become **Jesus' first disciple**.
- Had **John** actually **followed** Jesus, Jesus could have spoken directly to John and **cleared up any misunderstandings** John may have had.
- John the Baptist's **denial** of his mission not only **contradicted** the revelation that **his father received** prior to his birth, but also the **testimony of Jesus** about John's mission.
- Since the people had a **great respect for John** and were already **wary of the man called Jesus, who** were they more likely to **believe**?
- The fact is that **John's failure to fulfill his mission** made it much more **difficult** for Jesus to be **believed and accepted as the Messiah** the people of Israel were waiting for.

Jesus' Response to John's Doubts and Denials

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

Matthew 11:4-6

- In **Matthew 11:4-6**, Jesus expresses His **frustration with John**.
- John should not have **needed Jesus to send someone** to tell him what Jesus was doing.
- **John should have been with Jesus** from the moment the **Holy Spirit descended** like a dove on Jesus and **testified** to Him as the **Son of God**.

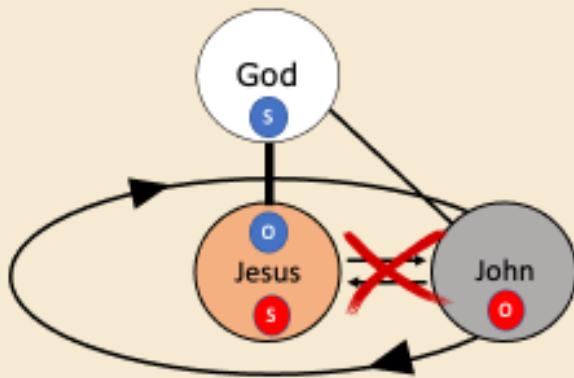
John the Baptist Lost God's Blessing

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Matthew 11:11

- In **Matthew 11:11**, Jesus responded to John's expression of doubt.
- **Jesus' words** indicate that although John was **born to be the greatest person** on earth other than Christ himself, **John's failure** put him in a position **below the least in the kingdom**.
- If the **least** in the Kingdom is greater than John, **where does that put John?** John was now **outside the Kingdom - outside the realm of God's blessing**.

John the Baptist and the Fallen Nature



1. Failure to see from God's viewpoint
2. Leaving one's proper position
3. Reversal of dominion
4. Multiplication of evil

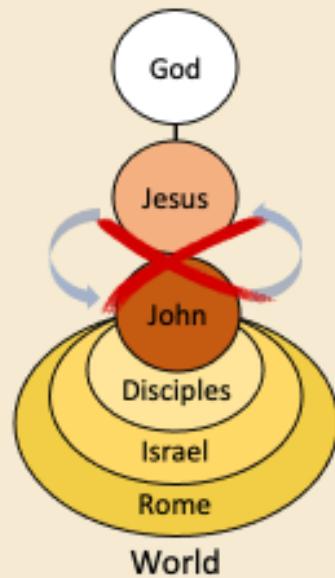
- **John the Baptist** allowed his **fallen nature** to influence his actions, eventually resulting in the **failure of his mission**.
- Although John was a **great prophet** among the people of **Israel**, it cannot be denied that he was **still a fallen person** with sin – one who **struggled with the 4 fallen natures** which we learned about in the chapter on the **Fall of Man**.
- John's responsibility was to **humble himself and unite with Jesus**, overcoming his fallen nature, and thereby **restoring** the failure of the archangel.
- **Not wanting** to give up his **fallen kingdom**, **Satan's desire** was that **John NOT unite** with Jesus.
- Therefore, **Satan** worked through John's **fallen nature** to influence him so that John would **not succeed in his mission**.
- (*NOTE re: #3*) – Even while Jesus was gathering **disciples** from amongst the people, **instead of sending** all his followers to follow Jesus, **John kept his old position** as leader of his **own** disciples.
- (*NOTE re: #4*) – Through **John's lack of belief** and failure to act in support of Jesus, many **others were influenced** in a negative way, following **John's poor example**.

The Impact of John's Failure

- Because of John's failure to unite with Jesus, Jewish leaders were not able to recognize him as the Messiah.
- Without their leaders' acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah they were looking for, it made it much more difficult for the people of Israel to recognize and follow him.

- **Religious people** often look to their **pastors and spiritual leaders** for guidance.
- People tend to **trust their religious leaders'** words and actions more than they trust their **own relationship with God**.
- This is why **John's mission** was so **crucial** to the successful **completion** of Jesus' **mission** as the messiah.

God's Plan to Establish His Kingdom Centering on Jesus Was Blocked



- How could the **all-powerful God** allow such a **consequential failure** to take place?
- **A fundamental principle** we see throughout the Bible is that **God never interferes** with man's free will and **5% portion of responsibility – regardless of the potential consequences** of failure.
- This was true from the time **God gave His commandment to Adam and Eve** and remains true **even now**.
- **God's primary plan** to establish **His Kingdom** centering on **Jesus** 2,000 years ago depended on **John the Baptist** fulfilling his portion of **responsibility**.
- The **tragic historical fact** is that **John the Baptist**, who had **thousands of followers** at the time **Jesus** began his public ministry, **never followed Jesus himself**.
- Due to the **failure** of **John the Baptist**, **Jesus** had to go a **different and much more difficult path** to accomplish the **Will of God**.
- In the **next presentation**, we will examine **the path that God had Jesus walk in** order to bring **God's Will** closer to fulfilment.

Jesus Was Opposed By Israel's Leaders

- Political and religious hierarchy were threatened by him.
- Jesus was only able to gather people of low social status.



- Instead of Jesus being welcomed by the leaders of Israel, He was opposed by them.
- Jesus was able to gather crowds of people, inspiring them through His Words, through His love, and by performing miracles.
- The political and religious leaders felt threatened by his popularity, afraid that they would lose some of their own power and influence.
- The people who followed Jesus were mainly the working-class people of low social status. He was criticized for allowing Himself to be in the company of sinners, drunkards and tax collectors.

The Path of Blessing Was for Israel to Accept Jesus

Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

John 6:28-29



- How could **God's blessing** have come to the nation of **Israel**?
- As we studied in Part 1 of this chapter, when the people are **obedient to God's Word**, they receive **Blessing**. When they are **disobedient**, they receive **judgment**.
- In **John 6:28-29**, Jesus explains what it means to be doing the work of God.
- After **preparing the people of Israel for 2,000 years** to receive their savior, the **original plan** of God was for the people of Israel to **believe in Christ and follow Him**.
- Jesus **never** told them, "The **work of God** is that you **persecute** me and **nail me to the cross**."
- Why would God have **prepared a chosen people** for 2,000 years if their main **purpose** was to **reject** the Messiah and put on the **cross**? Couldn't any **pagan** nation have done that?

Jesus Wanted the Israelites to Believe and Follow Him

"You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

John 5:39-40

- Jesus expressed **frustration and anger** that the people **prepared** by God to **follow** Him were **persecuting** him instead.
- It is important to remember **why the Messiah – the Second Adam - became necessary** for human beings.
- The **First Adam** – the one we read about in the book of **Genesis** – was created in **God's image**, meant to **live according to God's Word**, and together with **Eve**, fulfill the **3 Great Blessings** - the **Kingdom of Heaven** on Earth and in the Spirit World.
- In other words, **had Adam not fallen**, he himself would have been the **substantial True Father of mankind**, and there would have been **no need** for God to send the **Messiah**..
- Instead of human beings becoming **corrupted** by the **fallen lineage of the archangel Lucifer**, all human beings would have inherited **God's pure, sinless lineage**.
- Since **Adam fell** and multiplied a **sinful lineage**, Jesus was sent by God as **the new Adam**. The people needed to **connect directly with Him** as the substantial incarnation of the Heavenly Father – the **body of God**.
- By **engrafting** themselves to Christ as the **true vine**, they were meant to be **forgiven** and then **restored** back to their **original position** in God's own sinless lineage.

Jesus Was Angered by the Jewish Leaders' Rejection

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to."

Matthew 23:13



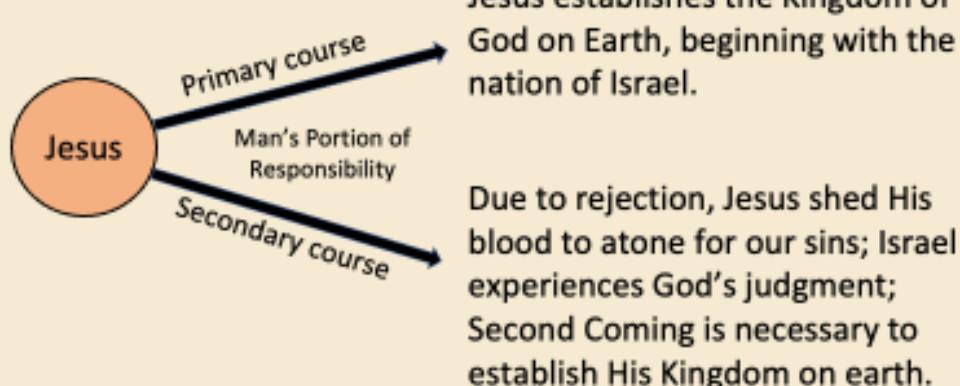
- It was the **religious leaders** in their **arrogance** who could not **humble** themselves to Christ and who **led their own followers away** from Him.
- In **Matthew 23:13**, Jesus expressed His **anger and disapproval** towards them.
- Jesus **did not praise them** for doing the Will of God. He **scolded** them, because it was **God's Will** that they also **believe** in Him and **lead their followers** to complete salvation.

Jesus Was Sorrowful Over Rebellious Jerusalem

As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you." Luke 19:41-44

- In **Luke 19:41-44**, Jesus expresses His **deep heart of love** towards the people of Israel.
- We can see how **strong Jesus' desire was** that the people **follow** Him, and how **painful** it was for Him when **they chose** the way of **disobedience and judgement**.
- **Jesus understood** that because they did not **receive** Him as Christ, the people of Israel would not be able to be **protected by God**, and that **all mankind** would have to endure **tremendous suffering** for generations to come.
- **Seen in this light**, the words of Jesus in the Bible take on a **new and deeper level** of meaning.

Primary and Secondary Courses



- Whether Jesus would be **accepted**, fulfilling **God's primary plan**, or be **rejected** and forced to go the **secondary course**, would be determined by whether the **people** of Israel would **fulfill** their portion of **responsibility** to receive and **follow** Him.
- The **fundamental Principles** through which God created human beings as His children and by which He continues to relate to us never change.
- Just as the **destiny of Adam and Eve** and their **descendants** depended on whether they would fulfill their own **portion of responsibility** in **obedience to God's Word**, the **same** was true for the **destiny of Israel** and the future of **mankind**.

The Blessing of God's People depends on Obedience

And you (Jeremiah) shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord: "If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, to heed the words of My servants the prophets whom I sent to you..., then I will make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth."

But as soon as Jeremiah finished telling all the people everything the LORD had commanded him to say, the priests, the prophets and all the people seized him and said, "You must die! Why do you prophesy in the LORD's name that this house will be like Shiloh and this city will be desolate and deserted?" And all the people crowded around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

Jeremiah 26:4-9

- We can find the **same pattern** in the Old Testament, such as in this passage from the book of **Jeremiah**.
- The people **can be blessed only if** they are obedient to God's **representatives** and to His **Word** which He speaks through them.
- God had **pleaded** through the prophet **Jeremiah** for the people of Israel to **be obedient** and **receive blessing**.
- But He also warned them of the **consequences of disobedience**.

Jesus' Course Shifted from Primary to Secondary

- God's desire was for Jesus to be accepted and His people Israel to be blessed.
- Due to the Israelites' faithlessness, the primary dispensation of God could not be fulfilled.
- Therefore, the secondary dispensation of the cross became necessary.

- Once **John the Baptist failed** his mission and the people of **Israel failed** to follow **Jesus**, Jesus' course **shifted** from God's **Primary** plan to **bless** Israel and **mankind** based on their **unity with Jesus**.
- Instead, **God and Christ** had no choice but to go a much **longer** and more **difficult course**.

Jesus' Course Shifted from Primary to Secondary

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things.

Matthew 16:21

- Due to the **Principle of the human portion of responsibility** as well as the **historical precedence** of the **chosen people of Israel**, Jesus had **understood the possibility** that He would have to go the **secondary course of rejection and crucifixion**.
- **His heart** was to **save God's chosen people** and **all mankind** from having to go that extended, more difficult course. He had **desperately** tried to reach their **hearts** and **convince** them to **follow Him**.
- In fact, in the book of **Matthew**, Jesus preaches about the **Kingdom over 40 times**, but only mentions the **crucifixion a few times** - and only to his **disciples**.
- During the **first two years of His ministry**, he almost **exclusively** taught about the **Kingdom He came to establish**, and **barely mentioned** the idea of going the way of the **cross**.
- Jesus only **begins to speak** about the secondary course as His destiny **after the failure of John the Baptist** and the other religious **leaders** who should have followed Him.
- In **Matthew 16:21** we read, *From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things.*

Jesus' Disciples Were Confused

Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again."

Luke 18:31-34

- **In the beginning**, the disciples correctly **understood** that **Jesus' plan** was to establish **God's kingdom on earth**.
- **After John the Baptist** and other influential leaders failed to support Jesus, the **dispensation changed to the secondary course**.
- **The disciples did not understand** why Jesus now began to talk about His **imminent death**, and they naturally became **confused**.

The Disciples Believed Jesus Would Bring the Kingdom

Jesus' disciples were not clear that the change from primary to secondary dispensation had taken place. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, they asked:

...“Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” Acts 1:6

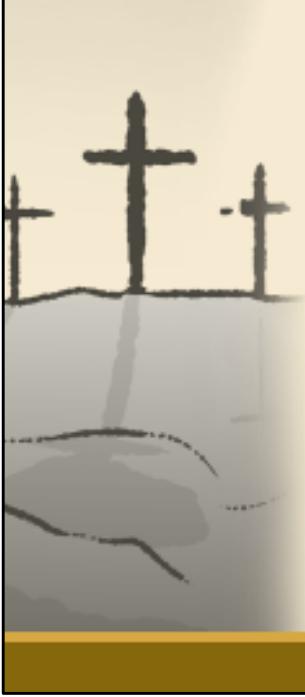
- During the 40 days **after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection**, he **appeared** amongst His disciples.
- The **disciples** had understood **God's primary plan** for the kingdom to come **on earth** beginning in Israel.
- Therefore, when **Jesus was crucified without the kingdom being established**, they could not understand that the **dispensation to restore God's kingdom** would be **prolonged** due to the **failure** of the Jewish people.
- They were **still expecting** the **Kingdom** to come through Jesus during their **lifetime**.

Jesus Announced the Change in Israel's Destiny

Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"'

Luke 23:28-30

- In **Luke 23:28-30**, Jesus announced the **change in Israel's destiny**.
- How **painful** it must have been for **Jesus** to have to **condemn** the very people whom He had hoped and prayed would **accept Him** and **work with Him** to establish God's **Kingdom** on Earth.



The Way of the Cross was Not God's First Choice

Blood atonement became necessary due to the lack of faith of the Jewish people. God does not find pleasure in sacrifice:

For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings.

Hosea 6:6

- Although God had often required **blood sacrifices** prior to the coming of Christ, God's **preference** was for the people to **humble themselves to God** and His Will.

Obedience vs. Sacrifice

The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the LORD your God at Gilgal."

But Samuel replied:

"Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD?

*To obey is better than sacrifice,
and to heed is better than the fat of rams."*

1 Samuel 15:21-22

- We read in **First Samuel chapter 15** that God desires obedience more than sacrifice.
- This is a same **principle** we find **throughout the Bible** – that it is through **obedience** to God's Word that His Will is accomplished..

The Original Plan for John and Jesus

- If John the Baptist had been successful in bringing the people of Israel to Jesus, we all would have shared in the victory of Christ without the shedding of blood.
- However, once the preferred path to the establishment of God's Kingdom was blocked, it became Jesus' destiny to offer Himself on the cross to allow for the spiritual salvation of believers.

- It is clear that **God's original, primary plan** was for John the Baptist to humble himself and follow Jesus.

The Disciples were Angry that Christ was Rejected and Killed

"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered ..."

Acts 7:51-52

- In the book of Acts, **Stephen chastises the Jewish leaders** in the Sanhedrin, accusing them of yet another **betrayal** against God.
- Stephen **did not praise** the death of Jesus as being the original, glorious **plan of God** to bring about **salvation**.
- Instead, he **compared** the killing of Jesus to other occurrences in the **history of Israel** when the Jewish people often **failed to recognize** the prophets God sent to them.
- **God** had finally **sent the Messiah** to the people of Israel after **preparing** them through trials and tribulations for **two thousand years**.
- Yet, **tragically**, the people of Israel **failed to recognize** and follow Him.

Jesus Willingly Gave His Life For Our Sake

*This is how we know what love is:
Jesus Christ laid down his life for us...*

1 John 3:16



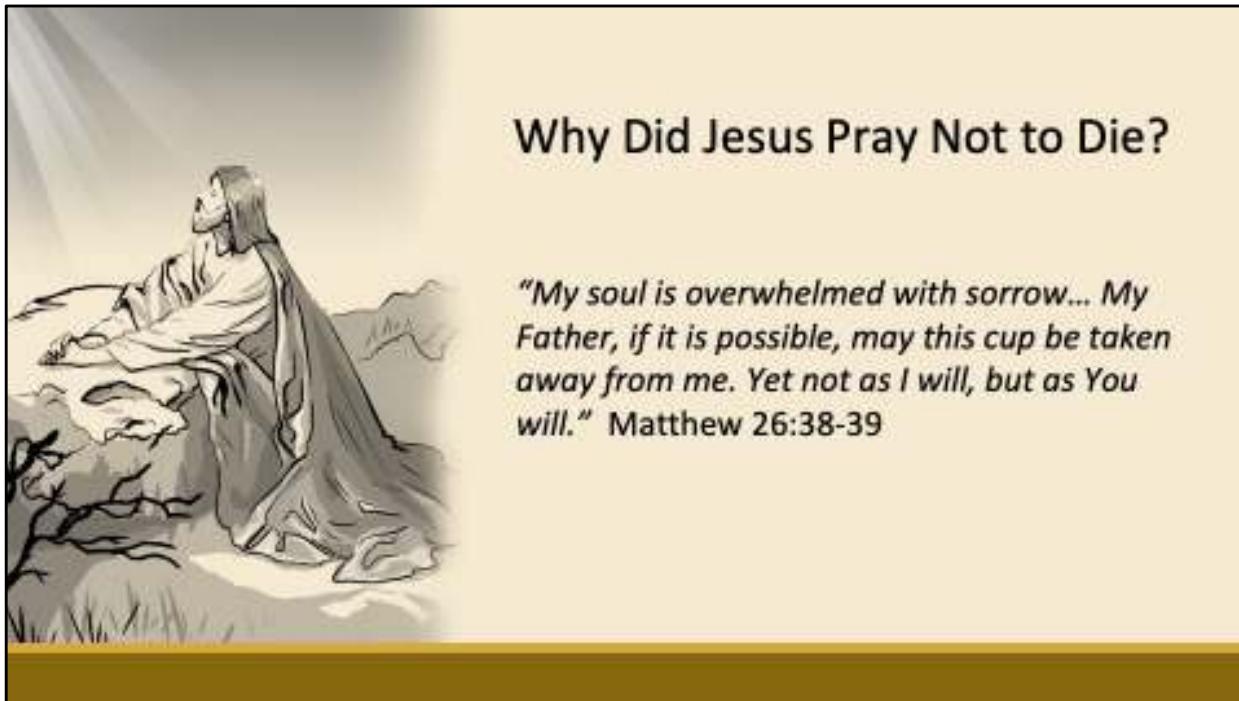
- Once **Jesus** came to the point where the **Secondary course** became **necessary** for the providence to move forward, He **did not hesitate** to **offer His life as a sacrifice**.
- He **did not** try to **run away** from the mission God had given to Him, but rather **allowed Himself** to be taken, beaten, and hung on the **cross**.

He Died for Us, Even Though We Were His Enemies

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Romans 5:6-11

- Even though **we turned against** the Son of God while He was on earth, He was still **willing to die** for us - for our salvation.



Why Did Jesus Pray Not to Die?

"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow... My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken away from me. Yet not as I will, but as You will." Matthew 26:38-39

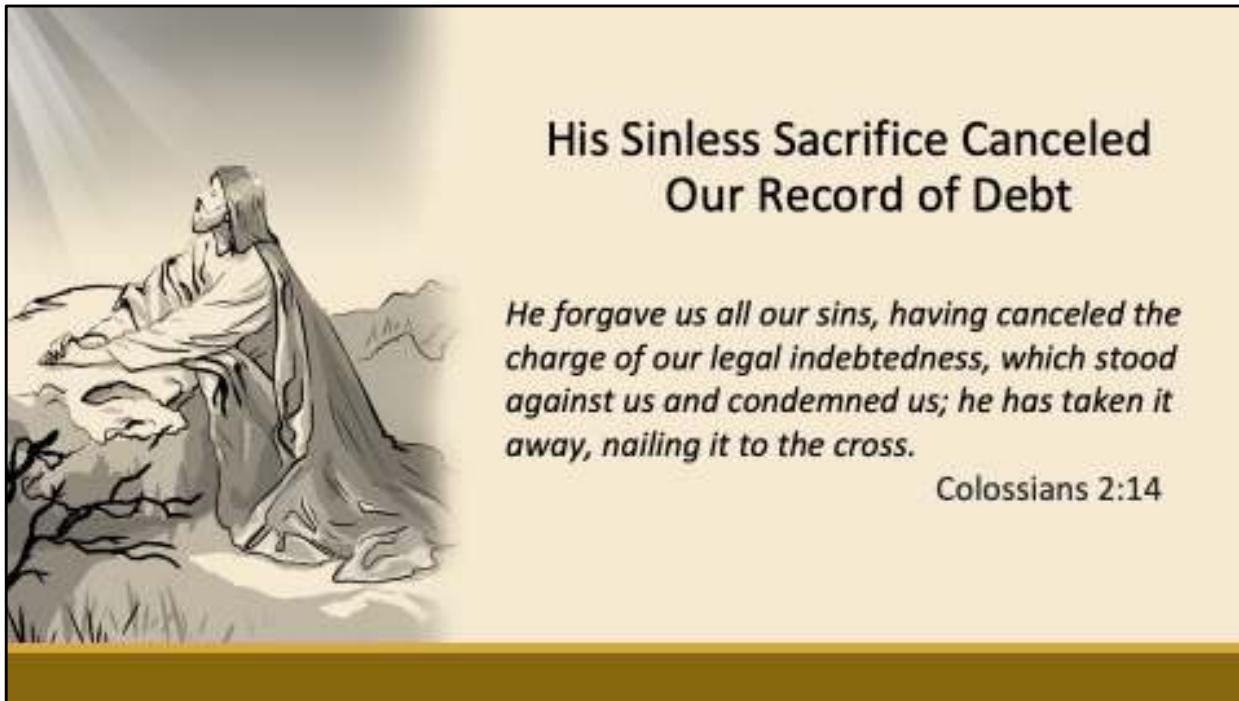
- In the Garden of Gethsemane, **Jesus prayed with tears** - even sweating blood - **not to go the way of the cross**.
- If it was **God's Original Will** that Jesus die on the cross, **why would He ask God to take away the cup of death?**
- Many **people have wondered** about this and have proposed various **explanations**.
- However, **without understanding** the true **mission of the Messiah**, as well as the **Primary and Secondary Courses**, we would not be able to understand the true **heart of Christ** that was behind this heartbreakin prayer.



Reasons for Gethsemane Prayer

- Concern for God
- Concern for his disciples
- Concern for his nation and all humankind

- **Why** did Jesus pray this way in the Garden of Gethsemane?
- Jesus, as the true Son of God, **would not pray a selfish prayer**.
- He would have **gladly offered his life a thousand times over** if it would have accomplished **God's purpose for sending the messiah to Israel**.
- Jesus knew that the **secondary dispensation** would result in **great suffering for God**, for His **disciples**, for **Israel**, and for all of **mankind**.
- Jesus' **desperate prayer** was to **continue His original mission**, if it were still possible.
- However, based on the **failure of the people of Israel** to unite with Jesus, God had **no choice** but to **allow His Son to go the way of sacrifice** on the cross.



His Sinless Sacrifice Canceled Our Record of Debt

He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:14

- The **blood of Christ** was **sinless blood**, having nothing to do with Adam's sin.
- Therefore, **Jesus shedding His blood** for us was the greatest sacrifice that could be made.
- Although he was **blameless**, Christ **died for our sins** so that we might die to sin.

Jesus Was Victorious Over the Devil and the Power of Death

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Hebrews 2:14

- Although the people of **Israel rejected Him**, Jesus was **totally victorious** over the **Devil** and the power of **death**.
- He **opened the way** for fallen human beings to **remove the fear of death**, with the promise of being in **Paradise** with Jesus.
- **Prior to the coming of Christ**, there were many great **prophets** and **servants of God**. Yet all of them were **sinful men**, under the dominion of **Satan**.
- As the **True, sinless Son of God**, Jesus came to this world having **nothing to do with Satan**.
- **Unlike the first Adam**, Jesus **overcame** all of Satan's **temptations** during His lifetime, **never betraying** His Heavenly Father.
- By making the **offering of our faith in Jesus** and **loving Him** as God's son, we can **ask for and receive forgiveness** of our sins.

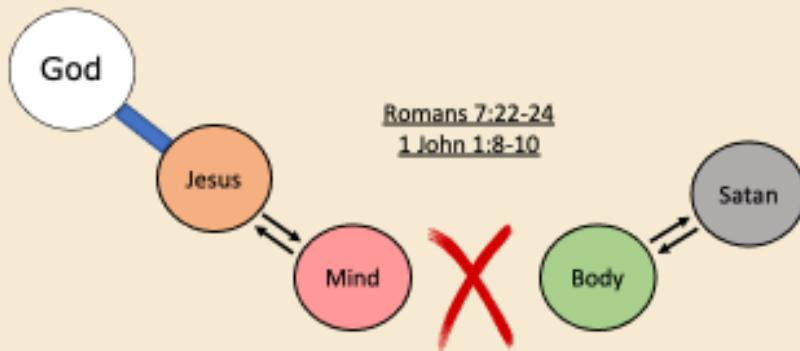
Spiritual Salvation through Jesus

For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Romans 7:22-24

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:8-10

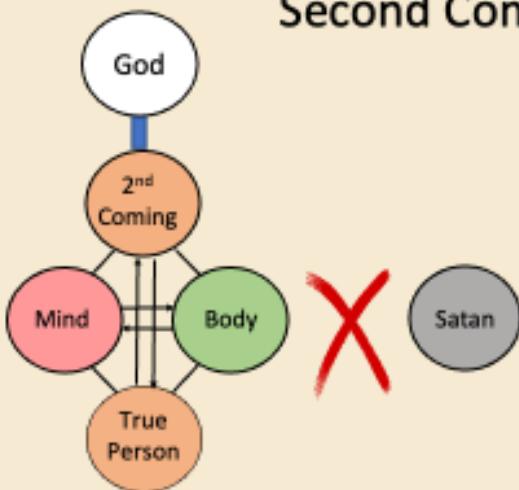
- What, then, is the **nature of the salvation** Christians experience by **receiving Jesus** into their lives?
- Every fallen human being should **recognize** his or her **sinfulness** and the **need for forgiveness** through Christ.
- However, **even the most devout**, clean-living **Christian** still **struggles with sin**, in some way, shape, or form, **throughout** his or her life.
- While devout Christians **receive forgiveness of sins** and **love God** in their inmost self, they **are not fully liberated from the power of sin** in their daily lives.

Spiritual Salvation through Jesus



- Faithful believers** in Christ can experience the **love of God** through His **forgiveness** of sins and the power of the **Holy Spirit**.
- However, just as **Jesus' body** was attacked by **Satan**, Christians are still **attacked in the flesh** – whether by the **temptations** of the body or through **persecution**.
- Herein lies a **key principle** as to why the **Second Coming of Christ** is **necessary**.

Spiritual and Physical Salvation through the Second Coming of Christ



For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

Romans 8:22-23

- God created us on the earth with both a **mind and a body** – a spiritual self and a physical self.
- According to God's **original plan**, our mind and body should have been **united as one** centered on Him.
- Therefore, **complete salvation** would mean that **both the spirit and body** would be completely under God's dominion – that neither would have **anything to do with sin or evil**.
- Here Saint Paul is expressing that **even though** we have the incredible **benefit of spiritual salvation** through the **first** appearance of Christ, we are **yearning** for the time when we can be **fully saved** as God's children in **both spirit and body**.
- Let's **examine** more closely **why** mankind **needs** the **Second Coming** of Christ ...

Fulfilment of God's Purpose of Creation through the Second Coming

| 1 st Coming - Spiritual Salvation | 2 nd Coming - Spiritual and Physical Salvation |
|---|--|
| Faithful people forgiven of sin, but struggle with sin their entire lives | Mind has full dominion over body; experience internal and external peace |
| Original sin remains and is passed on to every generation | Original sin is resolved, no longer passed on to descendants |
| Each generation must repent and receive Christ to be spiritually saved | Future generations, born without sin, no longer need salvation |
| God's original plan cannot be fulfilled in a world without sinless families | God's Kingdom will be established on earth as it is in Heaven |

- Although **Jesus** was completely **victorious over Satan** on the **individual level**, he must return to establish **God's Kingdom on Earth** and in Heaven.
- There is **no true kingdom** without the fulfilment of God's **three great Blessings** "*on earth as it is in Heaven.*"
- As the **victorious Adam, the King of Kings**, he must return to establish **God's royal lineage** on the earth by fulfilling the **Three Blessings**.
- Through the **Second Coming**, we will gain **physical** as well as **spiritual salvation**.
- Even in the **Kingdom of Heaven**, God will **never take away human responsibility**.
- In order for **true love** to **exist and multiply**, **each generation** for eternity will still have **free will** and a portion of **responsibility**.
- However, in **God's Kingdom**, those **born from parents** who are **spiritually and physically saved** will **not** be born with the condition of **original sin**.
- People will be born in the same **sinless state** in which **Adam and Eve's children** would have been born had our first ancestors **not** committed the **Fall**.
- People will be **born into and grow up in the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth**, with **examples** of God-centered **true families** all around them.
- When they **reach maturity** as individuals, they will be **Blessed as true husbands and wives**, becoming **Godly Kings and Queens** within their own families.
- In this manner, **God can reestablish His authority** and **dominion of love** over the

earth.

Christ Will Give the Faithful the Right to Inherit God's Kingdom

*Then the King will say to those on His right hand,
"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the
kingdom prepared for you from the foundation
of the world."*

Matthew 25:34

- In the end, **Christ** will give the **faithful** the right to **inherit** God's Kingdom on Earth as it is in Heaven.
- The time of Christ's return will be the time **God's original plan** for His **Kingdom** – the one He had from the “**foundation of the world**” – **will be fulfilled**.

Jesus Will Return with Power and Authority!

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:
"Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ."*

Revelation 12:10

- **The day of Christ's return** is the day for which **God** and all His **children** have been waiting.
- There is no doubt that our loving Heavenly Father will bring about that **great and glorious day!**