

The Promised Savior

God's Great Plan

When Adam and Eve surrendered to the lie told by Satan, and sin became a part of their lives, God made a promise, indicating that all was not lost. Genesis 3:15 is the first hint that The Son of God would come to Earth to save sinners. To both Satan and Eve, God said, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."* The seed of the woman, God's Son, would receive an injury, but Satan would not survive the blow that the woman's descendent would give. The reality that one individual could be the Son of Man through the woman, and the Son of God through the Spirit, was not fulfilled for thousands of years.

The unfolding of God's Great Plan, revealing bits and pieces of the plan, is often referred to as prophesy or prophesying. In reality, the first time scripture uses this word occurs as a confirmation that Saul has been chosen as Israel's first King and recorded in 1 Samuel 10. In previous days, God talked to people, making promises and demands in an almost conversational tone through dreams and visions. At other times God sent an angel to deliver a specific promise or command. To Eve, God made a statement of promise. To save a posterity for Eve's descendants, God guided Noah in building an Ark. However, beginning with Abraham, God's plan started to take on an increasingly more complete view of the need to prepare the world for the one that would crush the power of Satan.

God called Abraham away from the evil influence of the cities into the wilderness. God told him, *"I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed"* (Genesis 12:3). All promises that God made to Abraham (Genesis 26:3-4) were unconditional, unlike the law where God's blessings are conditional upon obedience. Romans chapter 4 makes it clear that God made these promises, knowing Abraham's faithful obedience. Because of that faith, Abraham and his son Isaac became living types of the promised Savior. The miraculous birth of Isaac (Genesis 21:5), the willingness to sacrifice his son, and Isaac's willingness to be offered (Genesis 22:2-12) were previews of God and His Son (John 3:16).

One big difference between Isaac and the promised Savior would be how the miracle of birth would start. Isaac was a pro-created child with a physical father and mother. But the Savior would not have a physical father. *"Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14). God's son would be born of a young girl who had never been with a man. For over 700 years, this was a mystery. Then an angel explained to Joseph, Mary's fiance, how she kept her purity while carrying the child (Matthew 1:20-23).

When the time came to give a special nation a codified set of laws, Moses said that God told him, *'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him'* (Deuteronomy 18:18-19). This was another hint concerning the seed of woman that would crush Satan. With this revelation, the people began to look for a powerful prophet.

Many years after Moses, Solomon referred to the promise God made to his father, David. God said that one of his descendants would be a King on David's throne forever. *"I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, just as I promised to your father David, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel'"* (1 Kings 9:4-5). Some of the people understood that the promise concerned eternity. Most people, however, longed for an earthly king who would give them a perfect law in justice and righteousness. And finally, during the building of the second temple, after Judah returned from captivity, God sent a vision of a crowned priest sitting on the throne. *"Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices"* (Zechariah 6:13).

As the predictions about the Savior came to an end in Zechariah's time, the people were in wonder, considering a promised prophet, a king, and a priest. Were there to be one, two, or three promised men? And the question of a priest on a throne was not reasonable when the throne belonged to Judah, and the priest was from Levi. But God's plan would make those obstacles disappear and invite the Non-Hebrew Gentile world into the fold of God as His children (Joel 2:28-32). God's great plan contains many things about the gentiles and God's love for people of all nations. Do you know about Rahab, Ruth, and Melchizedek?