

Jesus in the Old Testament

by Joelee Chamberlain

Today let's talk some more about Jesus, all right?

Now, I know that you have heard many of the stories about Jesus. In fact, I've told you some of those stories from the New Testament before this, haven't I? These stories were from the New Testament Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, weren't they?

You remember, don't you, that the Bible is divided into 2 big parts? What are those 2 big parts? Yes, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament was written hundreds and hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth. But the New Testament was written after Jesus came to earth.

Yes, the New Testament tells us how Jesus, the Son of God, was born and put in a manger and how he grew up and taught people many things about God and then He died on the cross for our sins. But then the New Testament goes on to tell us that the Lord Jesus didn't stay dead, did He? After 3 days he became alive again and then after a while He went back to heaven, and He's still alive in heaven now, isn't He? And the New Testament also tells us that someday the Lord Jesus will come back to earth and make everything all good and beautiful and He will be King of everything. And if we trust the Lord Jesus to save us from our sins, we will be with Him forever and ever. Those are wonderful things to hear, and they are true, and we read about them in the New Testament, don't we? These books in the New Testament tell us a lot about the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I thought that today we would do something a little different. I thought it would be fun to look at how the Old Testament tells about Jesus. Did you know that we can read about Jesus in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament? Yes, we can! Why, in the books of Genesis and Exodus and II Samuel and the Psalms and Isaiah and Daniel and in many other books in the Old Testament it tells about the Saviour, the One Who will save us from our sins. And the Old Testament tells about when the Lord Jesus will come back, too. In fact, the reason for the whole Bible is to tell us about the only real God and to tell us about the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, Who would save us from our sins and then someday come back and be King of everything forever. Right?

But how can the Old Testament tell about Jesus before He came to earth? Well, you see, God knows everything that will ever happen, doesn't He? (We don't, do we? But God does; and only God does!) And God planned to send the Saviour into the world. And the Lord God told His prophets some of these things, and the prophets wrote them down in the Old Testament hundreds and hundreds of years before they actually happened, hundreds and hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth as a baby and was put in a manger. Would you like to hear some of these things about Jesus that we can read in the Old Testament? All right! These are called "prophesies", and I think you will find this very interesting.

Now, I'm not going to tell you all of the prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament, of course! Just some of them. But when you're older, you can read even more of them in the Bible for yourself.

Well, to start with, the Old Testament doesn't call Jesus by His name, "Jesus". It just talks about a Saviour and the Messiah, but we know that's talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, don't we? (Those words "Christ" and "Messiah" mean the same thing. Remember? They are just words in two different languages, and they mean the Anointed One of God, the special Person that God has chosen to save us from our sins, to be our Saviour.)

Okay, to talk about Jesus in the Old Testament, first the Old Testament tells us who the Messiah (that's Jesus, remember), who the Messiah will be descended from, who would be the Saviour's great-great-great-great-grandfather.

So let's start with Abraham. The Lord told Abraham that the whole world would be blessed because of Abraham. And Jesus blesses the whole world by giving all of us a way to be saved from our sins, doesn't He? So Jesus would be descended from Abraham. Then Abraham had a son named Isaac, and the Lord also told Isaac that the whole world would be blessed through him. Again, this was talking about Jesus, the Messiah, that He would be descended from Isaac. And Isaac had a son named Jacob, and the Lord told Jacob that He would give Jacob all of the promises that He had given to Abraham and Isaac. So, again, it meant that the Messiah, that is, Jesus, would be descended from Jacob. Now you remember that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the beginning of all of the Jews, weren't they? And Jesus was a Jew when He came to earth, so, of course, Jesus was descended from Abraham and from Isaac and from Jacob.

Well, you remember that Jacob had 12 sons, don't you? There were Judah and Levi and Joseph and Benjamin and others, weren't there? And Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and sold him as a slave into Egypt, remember? But Joseph became very important there in Egypt. And the famine came, and Joseph's father and brothers went down into Egypt, and Joseph took care of them there. Well, when Jacob, the father, was going to die, Jacob made prophecies about each of his 12 sons. And Jacob said to his son Judah, "You will have kings descended from you, and there will be one that people will turn to." Jacob was talking about all of the kings of the kingdom of Judah (like David and Solomon and Josiah), but Jacob was also talking about Jesus, the "one", because many, many people have turned to Jesus to be saved from their sins, and someday the Lord Jesus will be king of the whole world. And Jesus was descended from Judah, the son of Jacob.

So we are given those prophecies about Jesus being descended from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah clear back in the very first book of the Bible, the book of Genesis, the book of beginnings, aren't we?

But then later in the Old Testament it talks about David. David was descended from Judah, too, wasn't he? David who killed the giant Goliath and later became the great king of the Jews, David was a great-great-great-great-grandson of Judah. And the Lord promised David that someday one of David's descendants would sit on his throne forever. Now Who was this special King that this prophecy is talking about? Of course, that is talking about Jesus when the Lord

Jesus comes back to earth and is king of everyone and everything forever.

But how was Jesus a descendant of King David? Why, Jesus' mother, Mary, was the great-great-great-great-granddaughter of one of David's sons! So God kept His promise to David, didn't He? Of course, God always keeps His promises, doesn't He?

Now, I'm going to be mentioning the names of some of the Lord's prophets as we go along. I'm telling their names so that you will become familiar with them. So listen carefully and see how many of the names of these prophets of the Lord you already know, and then see if you can remember the names you don't know. These prophets all wrote prophesies that are in the Bible, and many of those prophesies were about Jesus.

Well, to start with, do you remember the other times when I talked to you about when the Jews were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar as captives to Babylon, and that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple? And do you remember that Daniel (who was later saved in the lions' den by the angel of the Lord), that Daniel was one of those captives?

Well, Daniel was a prophet, and one prophesy that the Lord gave to Daniel was about when would be the time that the Messiah, the Saviour, would come. In the book of Daniel it tells us that 483 years after the order would be given to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, that the Messiah would come. Well, a Persian king named Cyrus gave orders that the Jews could go back and rebuild the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. So what do you think happened 483 years after Cyrus gave that order? Why that was the time that Jesus came!! (God's prophesies always come true, don't they?!)

So do you think that people were looking for the Messiah at the time of Jesus? Yes, of course! They knew a Saviour was coming, and they knew pretty much when He was coming, and they were looking for Him.

But what else did people way back then know about this Messiah?

Well, for one thing, about 700 years before Jesus was born, a prophet of the Lord named Isaiah had prophesied that a virgin would have a baby. A virgin is a woman who has never been with a man like a husband, and virgins don't have babies. But Mary, the mother of Jesus was a virgin when Jesus was born! This was a miracle. So that prophesy was fulfilled, too, wasn't it?

Then again over 700 years before Jesus was born, another of God's prophets, named Micah, had written a book of the Bible in the Old Testament. And in this book Micah said that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, in the land of Judah. Now, where was Jesus born? Yes, in Bethlehem in the land of Judah! Remember the Christmas song, "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem...?" That is talking about the town of Bethlehem where Jesus was born -- just as Micah had prophesied so many years before! So the people at the time of Jesus knew that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, didn't they?

Well! We've talked about a lot of prophesies about Jesus, haven't we?! Let's see, now, very quickly, what were they? Well, that Jesus would be descended from Abraham and Isaac and

Jacob, and that Jesus would be descended from Judah, and that Jesus would be descended from David. And then it was prophesied that the Messiah (that's Jesus, of course) would come 483 years after the order to rebuild the temple. Then there were the prophecies that Jesus would be born of a virgin and that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. And those prophecies were easy to understand, weren't they?

Yes, God had a plan! And He told His prophets some of those plans. And all of those prophecies about God's plan happened, were fulfilled, weren't they? Of course, whatever God says will happen always does happen! We can always trust the Lord God to keep His promises, can't we?!

But there are many more prophecies about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, in the Old Testament. Not just ones about when He'd be born. Let's look at some of those now, all right?

Well, after Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth and was born, He grew up into a man. He was still God, though, wasn't He? Jesus is both God and man, isn't He? Well, finally it was time for Jesus to start telling people about the kingdom of God and what they should be doing. And, again, we have what Jesus preached written in the New Testament in the 4 Gospels, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Now, do you remember the story of when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey? This was just a few days before Jesus died on the cross, wasn't it? Remember, that Jesus had told his disciples to go into the city and they would find a mother donkey and her colt tied up, and they were to untie them, and the people would let them take them, and they were to bring them to Jesus. And the disciples did that, and then they put Jesus on the young donkey, the donkey colt, and led the donkey into the city of Jerusalem, and lots of people shouted and cheered and waved palm branches and shouted out, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!! Blessed is the King of Israel!" They were actually calling Jesus a king! (This was on what we call Palm Sunday or the Triumphal Entry.) Now was Jesus all proud about this? No. The Bible tells us that Jesus was very humble.

Well, did you know that almost 500 years before Jesus came to earth that there was a prophet in the Old Testament named Zechariah who prophesied about all of that?! Yes, there was! We can read it in the Old Testament in the Bible. Zechariah wrote, "Be very happy, people of Jerusalem! Shout! Look! Your king is coming to you. He is righteous and saves us; he is humble, and he's riding on a donkey, the colt of a donkey." That was all prophesied 500 years before it all happened!! Of course, whatever a prophet of God says will happen, always does happen, doesn't it?! God works out His plans!

But what was the real reason that Jesus, who is God, became a man and came to earth? It was to make a way for us to go to heaven and be with Him forever, wasn't it? Well, now that time was coming. But do you think people should have known that Jesus was going to die? Yes, they should have, though they didn't realize it at the time. You see, the Old Testament has many prophecies about when Jesus would die for our sins. In fact, we are told in the Bible, that it was planned for Jesus to die for our sins from the very time that God made the whole world!

You see, God loves us so much that He wanted to make a way for us to be with Him, even though we all do sins. And this is the only way that this could be done, that we could be with God forever. Because we should be punished for our sins, shouldn't we? And that punishment would be that we couldn't be with God when we die. But Jesus never did any sins at all, did He? So Jesus didn't deserve any punishment at all, did He? So instead, Jesus took our punishment for us, and if we just trust Him to take our punishment, He will, and He will be our Lord. And then we can be with Him forever and ever when we die. So let's look at some of the prophecies about when Jesus would die for our sins. All right?

Okay, you remember, don't you, that Judas betrayed Jesus? And the soldiers came and arrested Jesus and took Him for trial. When Jesus was being tried, Jesus didn't defend Himself, did He? He was quiet. And did you know that even that was prophesied, that Jesus would be quiet when the bad men were accusing Him? Yes, in the Old Testament about 700 years before Jesus came to earth, the prophet Isaiah (we've talked about Isaiah before, haven't we?), Isaiah said, "He didn't open His mouth...like a sheep he was quiet..." Also, the bad people were mean to Jesus and hit Him, and Isaiah told about that, too. And Isaiah also said that all of this was done because of our sins. So the bad things that happened to Jesus and the fact that this was because of our own sins, these were all prophesied many, many years, hundreds of years, before they happened, weren't they? And, of course, they all came true.

Then God's prophet Isaiah wrote about when Jesus died, too. And also in a Psalm that King David wrote 1000 years before Jesus came to earth, David described how Jesus would die on the cross and how people would make fun of Him there and how He would be thirsty. And those things all happened, didn't they? And do you remember that the soldiers took Jesus' clothes and each took a share of them but how they didn't want to tear one of His pieces of clothes because it was all in one piece so they cast lots to decide which one of them would have it? Do you remember that? Well, David in his Psalm even tells about that. 1000 years before Jesus came to earth David wrote, "They shared my clothes among them and cast lots for my robe." Imagine, even those little details were all told and known hundreds of years before they happened! Of course, God knows everything that will happen. And only God knows everything that will happen, and He told some of those things to His prophets. We can read those prophecies of God in the Bible, can't we?

Now I'm going to tell you some more prophecies that might be sort of hard to understand. But if you listen carefully to what I'll be saying and think about them, I know you can understand them. And it will help you understand better about our dear Lord Jesus Who loved us so much that He died for our sins. And I think you will enjoy what I'm going to say, too. It's very interesting, I think!

You see, there are some things we might call "picture-prophecies." Like a picture would do, they show us more about Jesus, but they use things that happened instead of a drawing. One of these "picture-prophecies" is clear back in the book of Numbers, and it showed how Jesus would die and that He would save people. What was this "picture?" Well, I'll tell you. Do you remember after the children of Israel left Egypt that Moses was leading them in the wilderness? Well, one time they were really complaining, and we shouldn't complain, should we? God knows what is best for us. But they were complaining and complaining, and the Lord sent

poisonous snakes in among them. The snakes bit people, and the people would get sick and even die. When Moses prayed to the Lord about this, the Lord told Moses to make a shiny metal statue of a snake and put it up on a high pole, and if the people who had been bitten by a poisonous real snake would only look at that snake statue on a pole, then they would be healed. So Moses did that. He made the shiny metal statue of the snake, and he put it way up high on the pole so people could see it. And those who did what Moses had told them, looked at the snake and they were all well. That's all they had to do to get well. Just look.

Well, that was about 1,500 years before Jesus came to earth. But when Jesus was here on earth, Jesus told his disciples that just like the snake statue was lifted up on a pole and people would live if they looked at it, in the same way Jesus would be lifted up (on the cross) and people would live forever if they trusted Jesus. (Of course, we don't look at Jesus on the cross, but we can believe in Him, can't we? And the believing is what saves us.) So the snake on the pole was like a picture of Jesus on the cross, wasn't it? And in both cases, people had to believe what God said, didn't they? Believing in Jesus, trusting Him, is what saves us.

Another picture-prophecy that Jesus told His disciples about was about Jonah. You remember Jonah who was swallowed by the big fish, don't you? That had happened about 850 years before Jesus came to earth. Well, one day Jesus, when He was here on earth, said to some people, "This is a sign for you. Just like Jonah was inside the big fish for 3 days and 3 nights, in the same way I will be inside the ground for 3 days and 3 nights." And you remember that after 3 days inside the big fish, how then the big fish vomited up Jonah? But how was this a picture of Jesus? Well, when Jesus died and was buried, then after 3 days in the grave, then Jesus was out of the grave and alive again. So Jonah's being vomited up by the big fish, that he was out of the fish after 3 days was like a picture that Jesus would be alive and be out of the grave again after being dead and in the grave for 3 days.

Now, have you ever noticed that sometimes in the Bible it speaks of Jesus as the Lamb of God. And have you ever wondered why Jesus was spoken of as a lamb? Well, lambs are another "picture" of Jesus. So let's talk about lambs now, all right?

Now, as we've been saying, the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, didn't He? He's our Saviour. And Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. But did the Jews know their Saviour, their Messiah was going to die? Well, there were the prophecies that we just talked about, of course, and, also as we've just talked about, there were many things that were like pictures of what would happen to the Messiah, to Jesus, as well, weren't there? These were picture-prophecies about when Jesus would die for our sins. Like a picture, they showed us more about Jesus. But the "pictures" that we're going to talk about now have to do with lambs.

Now, there were Jewish priests before Jesus died for us, and God had these priests make a special offering, a sacrifice, two times every day. One lamb was to be sacrificed in the morning and another lamb was to be sacrificed in the evening. Sacrificing these lambs each day showed how bad sins are. Sins are terrible. So all of those lambs were pictures of how people are sinners and that we need a Saviour; and the lambs were pictures of how Jesus would die for us, for our sins. And let me tell you something else about those 2 lambs, the ones sacrificed in the morning and in the evening. Jesus was put on the cross at the time of the morning sacrifice of a

lamb, and Jesus died at the time of the evening sacrifice of a lamb. So those lambs were really pictures of Jesus, weren't they?! And the sacrifices showed God's mercy, God's plan to forgive people's sins if they trusted the Messiah, Jesus.

But let's talk some more about lambs as a picture of Jesus, all right?

We're going to talk this time about Passover lambs. You see, another big way that God prophesied about when Jesus would die for our sins was in Passover. You remember about Passover, don't you? Remember, the first Passover was in Egypt just before the last plague when Moses would be able to take the children of Israel, the Jews, out of Egypt and away from their slavery there. This last plague was going to be that the firstborn in every house in Egypt would be killed -- unless they killed a lamb and put the blood from this lamb around their doorway and then went inside and stayed there that night. God warned people about this, and everyone who believed God killed a lamb and put the blood around their doorway and then went inside, ate dinner, and waited. And that night the angel of the Lord went around Egypt. And every house where they had believed what the Lord had said so that they had the blood of a lamb around the doorway, the angel of the Lord passed over that house and didn't bother anyone inside of it. So that night was called "Passover." The Lord had passed over that house and been merciful to them. You remember all of that, don't you?

Well, we are told in the Bible that the lamb at Passover time was a picture of Jesus. And at that first Passover the lamb had to die to save their lives (like Jesus died to save us from our sins) and the lamb's blood was used (Jesus' blood went out when he died). And they weren't to break any bones of that Passover lamb (when Jesus died on the cross, they didn't break His legs).

And the Lord told the Jews that every year they were to celebrate Passover. In fact, the Jews today still celebrate Passover. They have a big meal and they read about when they had lived in Egypt and the angel had passed over their homes because of the lamb's blood and then the Lord took them out of Egypt. And Passover is a prophecy of Jesus when He would die for our sins. And do you know just when it was that Jesus died for our sins? It was many years after the very first Passover, of course, but there is a day called Passover every year, and Jesus actually died on Passover Day!! In fact, the New Testament calls Jesus our Passover Lamb! Jesus died for our sins on Passover day! So, many things about Passover are like a picture of Jesus when He died for our sins.

But just as the people in Egypt had to believe what the Lord had said and put the blood around their doorway and go inside and stay there, in the same way people now have to believe in the Lord Jesus as the Bible tells us. And then the Lord will pass over our sins, and we will be saved. The Bible says that whoever believes on the Lord Jesus will be saved. God promises that. And God always keeps His promises, doesn't He?

So that is why Jesus is called the Lamb of God. He died for us as a sacrifice for our sins. And all of those lambs, the ones sacrificed each morning and each evening and the Passover lambs, they were all pictures of how Jesus, the Lamb of God, would die for our sins.

But let's talk about other prophecies about Jesus now, all right?

Many of the other prophets of God told how the Messiah would suffer. In fact, the prophet Isaiah (whom we talked about earlier, remember?), Isaiah and also the Psalms that King David wrote hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth, both tell that the Messiah would die. King David prophesied that the Messiah would die with wicked people (remember the two thieves who were put on crosses next to Jesus?). David also prophesied that there would be nails put in the Messiah's hands and feet, just like what happened hundreds of years later to Jesus on the cross. And David prophesied that people would laugh at the Messiah and say mocking things to Him, just like when Jesus was on the cross people made fun of Him. And in the same Psalm, David prophesied that the Messiah would be thirsty and what would be given to Him to drink (remember how Jesus while on the cross said He was thirsty and they gave him something to drink?). As I said earlier, David prophesied that they would cast lots for His clothes, just like the soldiers by the cross did. And the prophet we talked about whose name was Zechariah also prophesied that the Messiah would be stabbed in the side with a spear, just like what happened to Jesus on the cross. And the prophet Isaiah prophesied that all of this would happen to the Messiah because of our sins, just like Jesus, the Messiah, died for our sins. Isaiah also prophesied that the Messiah would be buried with the rich (remember that the rich man buried Jesus in his own grave?). Even some of the words that Jesus said on the cross were prophesied by King David in the Psalms.

But it was also prophesied hundreds of years before Jesus, by both David and Isaiah, that the Messiah would live again after He had died!! Just like the Lord Jesus was alive again 3 days after He died on the Cross! We can learn lots of things about Jesus, the Messiah, from the prophecies in the Old Testament, can't we? And all of these prophecies were made hundreds and hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth. Of course, only God knows everything that's going to happen, doesn't He? And He told His prophets these things so that the people who lived then could know beforehand and trust Him, but also so that we who live now can see that whatever God says is going to happen, will really happen. We can always trust the Lord God to do what He promises, can't we?

Remember, all through the whole Old Testament in the Bible we can find prophecies that God gave His prophets about Jesus, whom we know to be the Messiah. People knew that He was coming, and if they read carefully and remembered what the Old Testament said, then they knew when He was coming and what would happen to Him. And they would know that the Messiah would save them from their sins if they just trusted Him.

But do you know something else about the Messiah that has lots of prophecies about it? All throughout not only the Old Testament in the Bible, but also in the New Testament? Why, there are lots and lots of prophecies that tell about when someday the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, will come back to earth! Yes, Jesus Christ is coming back someday, and He will make everything all new and beautiful and good! And the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, will then be the King of everything and everyone forever and ever! And if we have trusted the Lord Jesus to forgive our sins and take away the punishment for our sins, we will be with Him forever and ever! And when King Jesus comes back, He will make our bodies all new again! So not only will our spirits be with the Lord Jesus forever then, but our spirits will be in our fresh, new bodies

and will be with the Lord Jesus Christ forever! We will never get sick again nor hurt again. And the Bible says that God will wipe away all of our tears, and that means that we will never be unhappy again. Won't that be wonderful?! And we can read about that in the Bible

And do you remember that in the Old Testament the Lord God promised King David that he would have a descendant on his throne forever? And do you know who that is going to be? Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ! When Jesus comes back, He will have a throne and will be King forever over the whole earth and over everything on the earth. So that prophecy will be fulfilled, too, won't it? Of course, all of God's prophecies are always fulfilled, aren't they?!

Now, the prophecies about Jesus when He would come the first time, that is, be born in Bethlehem, be a descendant of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Judah and King David, die for our sins, be raised from the dead, all of those prophecies came true, didn't they? So do you think the prophecies about when Jesus comes the second time and makes everything all wonderful and is King of everything forever, do you think those things will come true, too? Of course they will!! Whatever God says will happen, always does happen, doesn't it?! So we can trust God to fulfill His prophecies about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ someday, can't we?

We don't have time here to talk about all of these prophecies about when Jesus comes back. Today we mostly just talked about the first time that Jesus came, the time when He came to die for our sins and make a way for us to be with Him. But when you get older, you can read in the Bible in the Old Testament the prophecies about someday when the Lord Jesus will come back and be King forever. Prophecies written by those great prophets of the Lord that we've talked about today: King David and the prophets Isaiah, Daniel, Micah, and Zechariah, and also many others we haven't talked about today who tell about someday when the Lord Jesus will come back again.

But there are even prophets in the New Testament who talk about when the Lord Jesus will come back. Did you know that? Yes, the apostles Paul and Peter and John and others were prophets and tell about, give prophecies of, when the Lord Jesus Christ will come back again. Even Jesus Himself when He was here on earth talked about, gave prophecies of, when He would come back. But, as I just said, we don't have time to talk about that. But we do know that we can trust the Lord to fulfill all of those prophecies, don't we? They are true and will all happen, won't they?

But there are many, many prophecies that tell about that wonderful time after King Jesus comes back again. I think it is so kind and loving of God to tell us about these things, don't you?

Yes, God loves us very much. And God planned a way to save us so that we could be with Him forever. Now, what was this plan? Yes, God sent His only Son, Jesus, who is God, too, into the world to die for us, and if we believe in the Lord Jesus, then He will be our Lord and Saviour forever, and we will be with Him someday forever.

Now, I know I'm a sinner (we all do sins, don't we?), and I'm sorry about my sins, and I have believed what God has said in the Bible and have trusted Jesus to save me from my sins. And now I try to follow what Jesus says, because He's my King. King Jesus! And someday I

know I will be with Him forever. Will you? I hope so.