

****Vid bumper**

Hello & welcome back to the 3rd & final week of our Before Christ Series! My name is Chris Fluitt and I serve as Lead Pastor here at Redemption Church. We are a Church that Jesus is building in Plano Tx.

The 1st 2 weeks of this series we talked about the **PLAN**

In the beginning was the Word (John 1:1) The Word in the Greek is LOGOS and it means logic, reason, thought or PLAN.

God formed this plan.. Redemption Church when did He formulate the plan? IN THE BEGINNING.

The center piece of this plan is the **INCARNATION.**

Incarnation is a big word that means a spirit or deity embodied in flesh. As we like to say it.. The incarnation is when God put on a bod.

The incarnation was God's plan from the very beginning. It was not a response to man's fall into sin. But the very God who planned to be born of a virgin, be born a man, and to have a face to face relationship with us ALSO PLANNED TO BE OUR RESCUER IF WE NEEDED IT. And boy do we need His rescue. Thankfully whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved! (Acts 2:23, Romans 10:13)

PLAN

This is the plan from the beginning. It gives a prequel to the Christmas story.

So that's the plan.. now what?

PROMISE

God would reveal the Plan to man. He told us what would happen.

Before the baby was born, wrapped in rags, and laid in a manger, Holy men of old gave predictions, prophecy, & promise to the fact the baby would be born, how he would be born, where he would be born, why he would be born, and other surrounding circumstance.

For those before the incarnation the promise would point to the knowledge of His coming. So when He came they would know. More than just shepherds & wise men had knowledge of His coming.

For us after the coming of Christ into the world, it points us to the reality of the incarnation. It is more than just a fable or made up story. The promises were true! The prophecy was fulfilled in one man! The predictions bring us to say "Maybe there is something to this Jesus Christ. Maybe He is who the Bible claims Him to be."

The promises we see lead us to investigate further, and here we find that Christ is more than just real. We find that He loves us. We don't just believe the story. We make Jesus our Lord, we surrender our lives, and then we become a part of the story.

God has a plan. When God reveals His plan it becomes PROMISE.

After sin entered the Garden of Eden, God handed out judgement to the serpent, Adam, & Eve. But right in the middle of the judgement our God gave PROMISE. This is the first promise mankind would receive from God and it is about the incarnation.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you (the serpent) and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."(NIV)

This is a promise of the coming of Jesus. That Jesus would come from the seed of Eve and would bring victory over the serpent – the devil.

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."(NIV)

The Baby born in the tiny insignificant town of Bethlehem has origins of old ancient times. How is this possible except by the incarnation of the Ancient of Days into the flesh.

The promise was this ruler would be born in what town? Bethlehem? But Mary & Joseph lived about 69 miles away in Nazareth. How could the prediction, prophecy, promise of Micah know that the Roman government would make Joseph take his pregnant wife to his home town for the census?

It isn't hard for God. He holds the plan, and He gives the promise. And Jesus was born in Bethlehem just as it was promised.

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.(NIV)

What a beautiful promise! But also an oddly SPECIFIC prediction. A prediction that no one in their right mind would ever make...

Jehovah, Yahweh, The God of Israel is the one speaking here. The invisible God says... They will look on me, the one they have PIERCED.

It is not normal for a Jewish prophet to predict "We are going to see God", because they knew if they were to see God they

would die! It is even more shocking for the prediction to be that Yahweh would be pierced by us!

How could this promise ever come true without the incarnation of a loving God in flesh?

I just gave you 3 promises about God's plan from the beginning. There are many more. God gives us so many promises. We need to hold on to the promises!

But what about **PROBLEMS**?

Will God's plan work even when problems come? Will His promises stand even when problems arise?

We understand that a large part of our personal prequel story is our family heritage. Let's take a glimpse at the family tree of Jesus.

Matthew 1:1 A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:(NIV)

Matthew 1:2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,(NIV)

Matthew 1:3 Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram,(NIV)

Matthew 1:4 Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon,(NIV)

Matthew 1:5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,(NIV)

Matthew 1:6 and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,(NIV)

We will stop here with plenty to look at...

Jesus is God in a bod. Jesus is the pure sinless Lamb of God. Jesus the Holy one surely he would have a pristine family line... Surely his heritage would be problem free...

Abraham lied on multiple occasions about his wife not being his wife... He placed his wife in harms way in order to save his own skin.

Jacob was a liar.

Judah helped sell his brother into slavery... Then the whole Tamar story happens and it is beyond scandalous. Judah's son Er marries Tamar, but Er dies before they have children. It was mandatory that the next brother tries to impregnate Tamar to give their departed brother an heir.. Onan refused and God slew him. Judah was supposed to have another son lay with Tamar but Judah refused.

Tamar then dresses up as a prostitute and with her appearance hidden, seduces Judah her father in law. Tamar becomes pregnant and that baby becomes the one the seed of the messiah comes through.

In verse 5 it mentions Boaz whose mother was Rahab. She was a prostitute in Jericho. More scandal! Even worse she was a Cannanite and Jews were strictly forbidden to marry a cannanite. Yet there she is..

The Boaz in Matthew 1:5 marries Ruth who was a Moabite. It was against the law to marry a Moabite. Boaz was half Cannanite & half Israelite, married to a 100% Moabite.. so their heir was only ¼ Jewish. Oy Vey!

Then in verse 6 we have David. Notice it refers to the mother as Uriah's wife. More scandal. David sees, Bathsheba, a beautiful maiden and decides he must have her. So he asks about her and is told she is married... That does not deter David. He sends for her, commits adultery, and she gets pregnant. David then has her husband Uriah killed in battle after David's failed attempt to cover up the pregnancy.

We could keep going down this sordid family line... but let's jump to Mary the mother of Jesus. Mary didn't do anything wrong but it appears she did because she is pregnant before she was married to Joseph. So Jesus the messiah was called an illegitimate child by his community and his mother Mary suffered also – even though there was no wrong done they were charged with scandal.

In John 8:41 the Pharisees accuse Jesus of being a bastard child.

We know about the plan. We have heard about the promise. But what about these problems!?

If your backstory helps form who you are then what are we to think about Jesus and his tortured family tree?

How could the King of Kings come from this? None of us choose our family... but God could have chosen! Why choose this shame filled mess?

I want to tell you that this is exactly the point Matthew wants to make. He goes out of His way to mention scandalous women in this genealogy. Other genealogies do not mention women.. Matthew only mentioned women with a sordid scandalous story to further show that **Problems cannot stop the Promised Plan!**

God steps down into our problems.

Sin itself seemed like it would have been big enough to stop God's plan. Death reigned in the earth and sin in the hearts of

men. God wanted to incarnate and have a face to face relationship with Adam & Eve... but they were going to just die and be buried and decay to nothing... That is kind of depressing and we would understand if God would have changed his mind.

But problems do not stop the Promise. The promise works in spite of conditions... not because of perfect conditions.

It seemed like Satan had won. If he hadn't won the war in the Garden of Eden we have to at least feel like he won such a big battle that it would have put God on His heels... But I want to tell you that God does not lose wars. He doesn't lose battles. He doesn't even lose ground.

We know that Jesus is the center of all scripture. (John 5:39)
We know He is the plan of God from the beginning. He is the Logos Word!

Do you know what the center location is in Scripture? What place is the physical center of God's plan? -Jerusalem

Your Bible keeps traveling back to Jerusalem.

We don't know where the Garden of Eden was but many Bible Scholars believe it is Jerusalem.

Abraham is called to a land.. That land is Jerusalem.

Abraham was called to sacrifice his only son in Jerusalem.

The Temple of God would dwell in Jerusalem.

Jesus would be born in Bethlehem a small city outside of Jerusalem.

Jesus would be crucified in Jerusalem.

Jesus would ascend to heaven in Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit would birth the church beginning in Jerusalem.

One day Jesus will return and the place will be Jerusalem. His feet will once again stand on the Mount of Olives.

If that isn't enough the Temple in Heaven will descend to Earth and God will make His dwelling on earth... IN JERUSALEM!

So what is up? Is God nationalistic and loves Israel more than other places on earth. As a Gentile I can testify that is not the case

God keeps coming back to the site of our failure.

Mankind fell in the Garden of Eden.. For the sake of this line of thinking let's say The Garden of Eden is the site of Jerusalem. This would mean that when Jesus sees Jerusalem He sees the site where the enemy defeated humanity.

You and I avoid the sites of our biggest failures. We are ashamed.. We condition ourselves to avoid triggers that will remind us of the site of our failure. But God keeps returning to the site of our failure...

He calls Abraham to the site and gives Him a promise.

He calls Abraham to the very site where Jesus would be crucified and there declares that the sacrifice of sin would be provided by God Himself.

Jesus stands at the place of humanity's failure and declares "God so loved the world that He gave his only son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish!"

God returns to the spot and reminds us of the promised plan. It is not the place of our failure in His eyes.. It is the place of His promise!

There was an enemy standing in the outskirts of Jerusalem. He was a giant and no one wanted to face him. But a child who was anointed to be King walked onto the battle field and

defeated the Giant. That boy was David and that giant was Goliath.

Giants represent the seed of Satan & his fallen angels according to Genesis 6. David represents the seed of Eve who would be crowned king. The seed of Eve kills the seed of Satan... David then cuts off the head of Goliath. He goes into Jerusalem and buries the skull of Goliath. We aren't told exactly where the skull was buried... But there is a place in Jerusalem known as the place of the Skull. Goliath's skull might be why Golgotha is called the place of the Skull.

Genesis 3:15 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."(NIV)

The seed of Satan, Goliath, has his skull buried at Golgatha/Calvary and Jesus the seed of Eve is positioned above that skull. Jesus the Christ has his heel pierced on the cross just as Genesis 3:15 promised. The skull of the serpents seed is crushed by Jesus right there IN JERUSALEM.

Jesus is crucified at Golgotha. The same spot where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac. The place of our greatest failure in the Garden of Eden.

God returns to the site of the problem.. to the site of our failure and it is there he wins the victory.

Where is your place of failure? Where is the place where you have shame and fear? Jesus wants to stand in that spot and bring you victory.

This is the incarnation! Jesus stepped down into our failure. He visited the very spot where we failed. Did He come to the spot to tell us what losers we are? How stupid we were to fail? Does he attack us at this place of problem?

Jesus came to earth not to condemn, but to stand in the spot of our failure and win the victory.

Problems cannot stop the Promised Plan!

You cannot stop the promise of God. His plan still works. He has not lost ground. He stands in the very place of your greatest defeat and wins the victory. If you will let Him have access to your failure and shame – He will bring you His promise.

Before we open this time for prayer let's look at our memory verse...

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.(NIV)

Colossians 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.(NIV)

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.(NIV)