

Jesus, the Bible and You in 7 Steps - Israel

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[0 : 00] From me. We're going to work hard this morning. You'll need your Bibles. You'll need your fingers.

You'll need your eyes. You'll need your ears. And you will need your minds. Is that right? But you don't have to worry about your big toe or your legs. You can just stay as you are. We're taking seven steps to walk through the Bible.

We've looked at God. Who is everywhere. We've looked at creation. How things started. Last week we looked at how things fell. The fall.

And this week. We're going through the whole of the Old Testament. And we're doing Israel. I want you, if you would be willing to. To draw with me. I don't know if you've ever done any air drawing. Have you ever done any air drawing? We start here. Would you just put your finger about there? We start there. Okay. That's where we start. And that's. This is all around us.

[1 : 01] Is the world that God made. This is God. But at this point here. Things started. This is creation. All right. But things didn't go very well. Did they? They fell. Everything went down.

Down to the bottom. Badly. Badly. Badly. Badly. They fell. Everything messed up. The creation was messed up. People were messed up. Even the devil got in on the game.

But God made a promise at that bottom point. Which we'll see in a moment. And come up with me. Come up with me. Come up with me. He said he was going to rescue the world. That's all through the Old Testament.

And at the top of your tick. At the top of your tick. There is a cross. Because Jesus is the rescuer. It looks something like this.

I think. That's your tick. There was creation. There was the fall. Here's the rescue plan. And we go up to the Lord Jesus. To his cross. And resurrection.

[2 : 00] You see. The Bible begins at the very first sentence. With a fantastic world. Personally created by God. But then everything goes wrong. As we go down. The humans he put in charge of it.

Start to mess up. Everything is affected. Relationships break down. People start hating each other. They even kill each other. And God promises at the bottom point. Judgment.

There is a curse. That God puts on the human race. Yes. God promised. Judgment. Let's just think about those promises of God.

You see. In the midst of the fall. In Genesis chapter 3. God had made. A most remarkable observation. He was judging Satan.

And he said to Satan. An offspring of woman. Is going to come. Who's going to crush your head. Whilst in the process.

[2 : 59] His heel. Would be struck. Just look with me then. At that promise. I will put enmity. Between you.

And the woman. And between your offspring. And hers. He will crush your head. The offspring of woman. And you. Will strike his heel.

Evil. Evil will continue in this world. But at some point. The serpent. Will get his head. Crushed. And from then on.

We start asking the question. Who is the serpent crusher? Who is the offspring of woman. Who is going to overcome evil? And understanding this promise. In the midst of all the curses.

Upon mankind. And upon this earth. Understanding this promise. Is crucial. To understanding all of history. I suggest. It's the basis for true hope.

[3 : 54] For it takes the reality. Of a perfectly created world. Now badly broken and twisted. And shows how it can be repaired. And it all starts with God.

And this promise. Now although God promises. To reverse sin. Human beings continue. To misbehave. We humans do stupid things.

We ignore him. On one major occasion. In Genesis 11. Humans thought they were so great. They would build a huge tower. A tower that would get them up to God.

Up to heaven. And in the rather amusing language. Of Genesis 11. God peers down. As it were. From heaven. Looks at their stupidity.

Blows them all away. And scatters them around the world. With all their languages. And then in Genesis chapter 12. A man appears. Almost from nowhere.

[4 : 50] Abraham. Abraham. To start with. And a further promise is made. A promise that. Through Abraham. A great nation.

Is going to be built. Abe himself. Would be greatly blessed. And God would continue. To bless all his people on earth. Through him. And his family. This is what we read. Earlier.

I will make you. Into a great nation. And I will bless you. And I will make your name great. And you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you.

And whoever curses you. I will curse. And all peoples on earth. Not just Jewish people. All peoples on earth. Will be blessed. Through you. So we have two promises.

We have a promise in Genesis 3. The sin crusher is coming. And we have another promise now. That God is going to build a great nation. And bless all peoples. Is God going to keep those promises?

[5 : 51] Would a sin crusher show up? Will God bless all peoples on earth? Or just the racy picks? And that's the hope we look forward to.

As we read through our Old Testament. Indeed I want to suggest to you. That the whole Bible story. Is built on hope. Hope that God would come true.

On the promises he has made. Maybe we could push this a bit further. Isn't all of life. Reliant on hope. With no hope.

We give up. I read last month. A comment about 2026. This is the year. Where there is a dearth of hope.

Isn't that a terrible observation? This is the year. Where there is a dearth. Of hope. We are the most privileged of people. Because in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[6 : 51] We have hope. We have an eternal hope in fact. Not just an earthly hope. An eternal hope. Built on those two promises. That we've just commented on. Let me tell you a bit more about Abraham.

Abraham had no child. To fulfill the promise. He and his wife got older and older. So Abraham did something extremely stupid. Very, very stupid.

He fathered a child. Through another woman. And that's caused trouble ever since. Eventually, after much agony and much time. God gave Abraham and Sarah.

His wife. Little baby Isaac. And through Isaac. The family expanded. There was a famine where they lived. In Canaan.

And so they went down to Egypt. Led by Isaac's son, Jacob. Jacob was renamed. He was renamed Israel. And he in turn had 12 sons.

[7 : 50] Which became the 12 tribes of Israel. And at first when they went down to Egypt. Pharaoh welcomed them. They were given the best land. In Goshen. Where they greatly prospered. They multiplied over the generations.

But when a new Pharaoh arose. A new king. He treated these Israelites very, very badly. Harshly. They were slaves. And they had to work under a whip.

With very little materials to work on. Making bricks out of mud. But God raised up the stuttering Moses. To be the leader. And he reiterated his promise to Abraham.

God said he would bring his people out of Egypt. Pharaoh refused to let them go. So God acted decisively. He said plague after plague after plague.

To the Egyptians. But still Pharaoh refused. Then one last plague. One big judgment to fall.

[8 : 49] All the firstborns in every household. Would die that night. As the angel of death passed over. But God told the Jewish people.

Something very specific. He said become painters. Kill a lamb. Take the blood. And paint it around your doorway.

On the doorposts. And across the lintel. Mark your houses with blood. Have your shoes. And your swords ready. Prepare bread.

But don't let it rise. And that night. The angel of death. Struck Egypt. Only in the marked houses. Where the blood was seen. Was their safety. In every other house. The firstborn died. And the Egyptians wailed and wailed. They wailed at death.

[9 : 44] The Jewish people ran for it. The Egyptians chased after them. The Egyptians had chariots. The Jewish people got as far as the Red Sea.

There were mountains on either side. And there were the chariots behind them. What were they to do? In a most amazing miracle. God parted the waters of the Red Sea.

And the Israelites walked across. On dry land. The Egyptian army tried to follow. But as the sea closed. Their chariots got bogged down in the mud. And they eventually all drowned.

Israel was safe. They were across the Red Sea. This was the biggest rescue ever. Mentioned time and time and time again. Through all the songs in the Old Testament.

And the Jewish people looked back to their miraculous escape. And rejoiced greatly that God rescued them. From slaves in Egypt. It was successful. Because of God's work.

[10 : 44] God's dramatic action. And because of their obedience. Their obedience to put blood on the doorways. The lamb and the blood. Was the substitute for death.

So the key word we've got so far. In our story. Is promise. Promise. The rescue is all based on what God said would happen. Through their spokesperson.

Moses. Moses becomes a prophet. Because after their rescue. They have to learn how to be the people of God. And God gave Moses ten rules for living.

Jesus paired them down to two. You love God. With all your heart, mind and soul. And you love your neighbour. Just as much as you love yourself. So God acted in rescue. And through Moses.

Speaking. He gave them the law. Now notice this. God always acts first. He rescues them first. And then he calls them to trust and obey.

[11 : 46] We're not led by law. We're not legalists. But by promise and rescue. Tim Keller once said. That first God delivered his people. And then he gave them the law.

Thus we're not saved by the law. But we are saved for the law. Moses becomes the prophet. He speaks on God's behalf. And he says a greater prophet is going to arise.

Who's going to become a mediator between God and the people. Look at this reference in Deuteronomy 18. I will raise up for them a prophet. Like you.

From among their fellow Israelites. And I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. But unfortunately.

Being just typical human beings. Very, very sadly. Being as stupid as everybody else.

[12 : 43] Guess what happens? They grumble. And they moan. At Moses. They don't like living out in the desert. Miraculously.

God provides bread for them. Fresh bread. Each day. And quail for meat. And God wanted a relationship with them. A friendship. He always has done. So he instructed them.

To build a temporary meeting place. The tent of meeting. Which later became the tabernacle. The place of worship. The key truth is this. The people must listen to what God says.

Through the prophet. And do what he says. But because people messed up. God set to work. With the office of a priest.

These were people who could. Carry out justice. They could intercede on people's behalf. With God. They would carry out the sacrifices. So that atonement could be made.

[13 : 43] For people's sins. And they taught people God's law. Aaron is Moses' brother. And in Numbers 3.

God says. Appoint Aaron and his sons. To serve as priests. Anyone else who approaches the sanctuary. Is to be put to death. So they were the intermediaries. Moses' brother.

Aaron is the first priest. And then Aaron's brothers are appointed. And as they cross the desert. They take the tabernacle with them. God led them. Carefully.

There was a. Pillar of fire. Through the night. And during the day. There was a pillar of cloud. That they followed. God's presence with them.

Was absolutely crucial. Because Yahweh. God. Is the God. Who accompanies. His people. He guides them. To the land. That he has promised.

[14:38] He ensures. That they are protected. By. From sin. By the sacrifices. Which they offer. Via the priests. Eventually. They settle in the land. That was promised. Which funny enough.

Is the land. Abraham originally came from. Which is Canaan. And there they settled. As 12 tribes. Well most of them. A couple were across the river. But there was always. Opposition. From foreign powers. So they set up. A system of judges. Who would rule. Over them. Judges like Gideon. And Samson. But they looked around. At the other nations. And they saw. That the other nations. Had a king. And they didn't. They wanted. A king. So they got Saul. Saul.

Big Saul. Good at first. And then a total disaster. And God had to remove him. Along comes shepherd boy David. Who uses a catapult.

[15:34] To strike a giant Goliath. Right between the eyes. And he's appointed the next king. He is remarkable. He unites the nation.

He makes Israel great. And powerful. In fact the greatest. And most powerful nation on earth. At the time. Look what he says to David.

Into Samuel 7. He says. When your days are over. And you rest with your ancestors. I will raise up your offspring. To succeed you. Your own flesh and blood.

And I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house. For my name. And I will establish the throne. Of his kingdom. Forever. A son from David.

Is going to come. And rule. Well David's. Natural son. Solomon. Follows him as the second. Next king. He too. Builds now. A permanent tabernacle.

[16:32] The great temple in Jerusalem. Is Solomon's temple. Here. Here God met with his people. Here. Sacrifices were enacted. Here. The priests operated.

And here. The law was taught. And non-Jews. Could come and pray. But after the great days. Of David and Solomon.

More trouble. People argued. They disobeyed God. The nation split in two. So God sent further prophets. But the people didn't listen properly.

They didn't obey. So the great Jewish nation was overtaken by the Assyrians. There was a rump. That was exiled. Into Babylon.

And when Babylon changed hands to the Persians. King Cyrus. Allowed some people to go back to Jerusalem. And rebuild the temple. And the walls. But the temple was a shadow.

[17:27] Of its former glory. So you see the three offices we've looked at. In the Old Testament. They're the prophet. Who speaks out God's word. They're the priests.

Who teach the law. And intercede. And there's a king to rule. All those offices are built. On the fact. That God speaks. And makes his mind.

Known to the people. And now we come. To Jesus. You see in Jesus. The three great offices. In the Old Testament.

Prophet. Priest. And king. You may have caught that. In one of the songs. John Newton put it together. In that song. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds. Prophet. Priest. And king. They come together in Jesus.

Remarkably. You see Jesus is the prophet. Par excellence. Now Hebrews starts. In these last days.

[18:20] God has spoken. Through his son. So Hebrews begins. To the Jewish people. God has spoken. Yes. But he's spoken through his son. Jesus is also the priest.

And the sacrifice rolled into one. In fact on one occasion. He called himself a ransom for many. Extraordinary phrase. He is going to pay. The ransom price.

To connect people with God. When he died on the cross. He was as John put it. The lamb of God. Taking away the sins of the world. Jesus is the priest of the sacrifice.

Jesus is also the king. In fact I think I've got these references here for you to read. Let's go over them again. Hebrews 1. In these last days. God has spoken through his son.

There he is as the priest. The lamb of God. Taking away the sin of the world. Here he is as the king. Look at what it said at his birth. He will be great. And we will be called the son of the most high.

[19:22] The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. And he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever. His kingdom will never end. He's a king. Eternal king. In fact I've often been thinking about Jesus as king.

Just think how he called people to follow him. To be his disciples. You may not think it's odd. I think it's extremely strange. If you're Jewish. You choose your own synagogue.

Even today. You go where they get the best deal. A friend of mine said he went to one. Where a tailor. Famous tailors. They would give a discount there. He went to another one. He said if you bought certain cars. They would give you a discount off those cars. So you chose your synagogue by yourself. Where you wanted to worship. You did that in the first century. If you chose a rabbi. Who you were going to follow. So when Jesus says follow me.

Follow me. Follow me. And they do. You're absolutely stunned. People don't do that. Rabbis don't choose who they want to follow. We choose. No.

[20 : 20] Jesus chooses. Jesus is king. Follow me. They follow him. Follow me. They follow him. Extraordinary isn't it? He's building a new kingdom.

In a spiritual realm. And today he rules in glory on his throne. And there he intercedes for us. And there he speaks prophetically to us through the scriptures.

Jesus fulfills all that was promised as prophet, priest and king. And since Israel failed to be a light to all the nations.

Jesus is the man who shines out with love and truth from God. Able to do for others what none of us can do. To save us from ourselves and to save us from judgment.

Jesus is the sin crusher. Who was badly bruised for our sakes. He is the prophet. Who speaks God's eternal truth to the world.

[21 : 22] And he is the rightful kingly ruler over broken people. You see, understanding the history of Israel. Adds color.

To the story of King Jesus. Well, you're a puzzle to me. With all respect to what used to be called the Gideons. They would give out New Testaments. But my Bible's got another two-thirds in the front of it.

Called the Old Testament. If you want to add color to the New Testament. You've got to read the Old. The color here is in all the types.

In all the pictures. That are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The sin crusher. The prophet. The priest. The king. You see, as prophet.

Jesus. Is the speaking God. He's the word. Spoken out. Other gods. All other gods. As far as I can see. Who are idols. And non-speaking. We need to hear what God has to say.

[22 : 22] So we read our Bibles. Where God's word is inscripturated. He's our priest. He links us with God. Yes, he teaches us the law. But he himself is the priest and the sacrifice.

He connects us to the Godhead. If you want to travel on a... Sorry. Better to go back. If a few years ago you wanted to travel on a train. You needed a ticket.

I think you still need a ticket. But you don't have to get it this way. In the past you had to go to the ticket office. Meet the ticket man. And buy a ticket. It was usually a man. Jesus is both the ticket.

And the ticket issuer. Without him you cannot get on board. We're only connected to God. Through Jesus. This was a revelation to me.

I'm Jewish. We had the law. We lived by a moral code. We were kind to people and so on. I never saw the need for Jesus.

[23 : 23] I thought, do it yourself, couldn't you? You used to be a good person, can't you? Easy. No, no, no, no, no, no. I'm only connected to God through Jesus Christ. He's my sacrifice. He's my priest.

He's my prophet. He's my king. And as king, Jesus rules. And that's why today we come here to bow down and worship King Jesus.

Because there's no one to beat him. No one who can be prophet, priest and king. All wrapped into one. We love him. We fall at his feet.

We call him Lord. And I say to myself, as I say to you today, do I? Is that what I do? Fall at his feet and call him Lord.

Let's pray together. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you came from Jewish stock. Thank you that you love all peoples.

[24 : 17] Thank you that you long to be friends. You long for us to be friends with you and your father. You are our champion, our hero. You have spoken. You've atoned for sin. And now even today you act on our behalf.

And since you've conquered sin and reversed death, you provide an eternal friendship with God our Father. Please help us to embrace that friendship, that relationship.

We do find it so hard to live properly. We're so selfish. So thank you for putting your own Holy Spirit into our hearts and minds and walking with us each day. Please humble us and show us our sin, we ask.

Help us to repent and follow you into a safe future, we ask. Amen.