

The Backbone of Scripture

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. He created everything in heaven and on earth by His word. He also created man in his image. He created a man and a woman and placed them in paradise. He also gave them a command: do not eat of the fruit of that tree. On the day that you eat of it, you will die.

Satan was one of the angels God created. He fell because in pride he wanted to be like God. After that he came and talked with the woman, Eve. When he tempted her to eat of the fruit, she took it and ate. She gave it to the man, Adam, and he ate. After that they were separated from God. The fell and died spiritually. Spiritual death means being separated from God.

But God really loved them. So, He began to pursue them. He gave them law to bring them closer to Him.

This law took two forms:

1. How we must live toward God.

For example: Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Do not make an image and worship or bow down to it.

2. How we must live toward man.

For example: Honor your father and mother; don't lie; don't steal; don't commit adultery.

But, the people could not keep the law. So God ordered them to offer a sacrifice to cover their sin. This sacrifice could not make them perfect, though. The people kept breaking sinning and kept offering sacrifices. God was not pleased with their sacrifice.

So God sent prophets to them. Those prophets had two messages:

1. Repent of your sins and transgressions.
2. A Messiah is coming who will save you completely from your sins.

Later, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born, just as the prophets said. As the holy angel Gabriel announced, He took flesh from the Holy Virgin Mary. And He lived for 33 years on this earth.

Jesus Christ has power over all creation. One day He was in a boat with His disciples crossing a lake. After that, a storm arose. But Jesus was asleep. The disciples were afraid. They awoke Him from sleep. He stretched out his hand and calmed the storm. But Jesus doesn't just have power over storms. He is a God who can command all creation.

Not only that, but He is a God who can meet our needs. One time He was teaching a large crowd of people. He taught a long time, and it became late. Then the disciples said, "These people are hungry, let's send them away." Then Jesus told them to give them something to eat. "We only have 2 fish and three loaves," they said to Him. He said, "Give them to me." Blessing them, he broke them and gave them to the people. There were 5000 men, not including women and children. They all ate and were satisfied, with 12 baskets left over.

Jesus Christ is a God who frees us from the terrifying power of demons. There was a man who was

possessed by demons. For a long time he dwelt with the dead in the tombs away from people. Jesus came to him. The demon-possessed man said, "Son of the Most High God, have you come to destroy us?" After that Jesus Christ cast out the demon and freed the man.

But He doesn't just have power over demons, He has power over death! A man named Elazar (Lazarus) became sick. Elazar's sisters sent for Jesus. But Jesus didn't come.

Elazar died. After four days, Jesus came. So Elazar was not only dead, but his body had also begun to decay. Jesus came to the tomb. He said, "Elazar, arise." Immediately, Elazar rose and came out of the tomb wrapped in the grave clothes. Therefore Jesus Christ is a God who has power over death.

Let us go to the main reason He came. All the people who committed sin were offering sacrifices. But this sacrifice wasn't complete. Christ, however, came to be a complete sacrifice for our sins. He was crucified at the hands of evil men and died.

He was buried in a tomb. But, on the third day, He rose from the dead. He was seen by many people after He arose. After 40 days He was raised to heaven. He gave us hope that He would return in the same way.

One of the parables that Jesus taught was: There was a rich man. He had two sons. His younger son asked his father to give him his inheritance. His father wanted him to stay with him. But the son didn't listen to his father's advice. When his father gave it to him, he gathered his things together. Then the son took his money and went to a far country. He lived wildly, drinking and partying, and his money quickly ran out. Then he began to be hungry.

He got a job watching pigs. While he was watching the pigs he became so hungry he wanted to eat the pigs' food. But no one gave him anything to eat. So, he decided to return to his father's house and become one of his slaves. He returned to his father's house.

His father received him with joy. The son fell at his father's feet and said, "Father, I have sinned. I don't deserve to be your son, make me one of your slaves." But the father received him and kissed him. He received him not as a slave, but as his son.

This is an example of God's character, because it would be very hard for a human father to forgive like that. It would be hard to receive with joy a son who had lost all your money. But God is love. We are all like this son; we are separated from the Father. God has prepared a road for us to return to Him. Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, but by me." If we return to God through Jesus, He will receive us.

Would you like to return to God?

If your answer is "yes," let's pray the following prayer together:

God, my Father, as this son was lost to his father; I have been lost to you. Now, I am returning to you. Forgive me for my sins and trespasses. Wash me in the blood of the Savior of the World. Receive me as a son, not as a slave. Amen.