



The unfolding purposes of God in the whole Bible

Session 7 The Gospel for the World

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The story so far...

Last time we saw that the gospel writers show us how Jesus fulfils all the promises of the Old Testament. In particular we saw that he is:

- The serpent crusher who will undo the curse of Genesis 3 and defeat Satan (Luke 10:18-20)
- Abraham's descendent who is God's people (Matthew 4:1-11), God's place (John 2:12-25) and brings blessing to all nations (Matthew 11:28-30)
- A King in David's line who will reign forever over God's people (Matthew 21:9)

But we were left not having established how it is that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the means by which these things can be brought about.

Salvation Through Substitution

The key assumption of the Old Testament: Sinners (rebels) deserve to die under God's just judgment (Genesis 3).

There are lots of figures in the Old Testament who show us the reality of the need for someone to die to pay for sin.

Eg

Instances where death is averted through the offering of a substitute – another dies instead.

Eg

Three main substitutes presented to us in the Old Testament:

Substitute 1: The Passover Lamb

Read Exodus 12:1-7 and 12-13.

- On what basis does God distinguish between Egyptians and Israelites?

Read 1 Corinthians 5:7

- How does Paul describe Jesus? What does this mean that Jesus' death on the cross did?

Substitute 2: The Day of Atonement Sacrifices

Read Leviticus 16:5; 15-25.

- What is the significance of **blood** in these passages?
- What does the day of atonement achieve?

The atonement is a ransom payment, which delivers a guilty party from punishment and appeases the offended party. In the case of the Israelites the offended party is God. The offence (the Israelites sin) is dealt with in two ways:

- (a) By the slaughtered goat taking God's judgment (death) and averting God's anger (wrath). "Propitiation".
- (b) By the scapegoat taking away the people's sins into the desert (where the goat will die). "Expiation".

Read Hebrews 9:12, 9:28 and 10:4

- How is Jesus like the day of atonement sacrifices?

Substitute 3: The Servant of the Lord

Read Isaiah 53:2-12

- What does the passage say about what the servant does?
- Look at the following New Testament passages. How does Jesus fulfil the prophecies of the servant?

Mark 10:45

1 Peter 2:22

Taking the gospel out...

Acts 1:8: *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Acts: the history of the fulfilment of this promise that Jesus made to the disciples.

Six sections describe the way that the gospel spreads into new areas. How does the great pattern of God’s people, God’s place and God’s rule/blessing get closer to its final fulfilment in each of these sections...

Section	Verses to read	God’s people?	God’s place?	God’s blessing?
1:1-5:42	2:22; 37-47			
6:1-9:31	7:48; 7:59-8:8			
9:32-12:25	10:934-48			
13:1-15:35	13:4-12; 16			
15:36-19:20	17:22-34			
19:21-28:31	28:16; 30-31			

Rome **represents** the ends of the earth but we know this isn’t the end of the story because:

- i)
- ii)

The Final Fulfilment

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

*"Salvation belongs to our God,
who sits on the throne,
and to the Lamb."*

Revelation 7:9-10

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 22:1-5

Leaders' Notes

Section	Verses to read	God's people?	God's place?	God's blessing?
1:1-5:42	2:22; 37-47	Jews only	The temple?	Fellowship, sharing, praise, favour
6:1-9:31	7:48; 7:59-8:8	Jews and Samaritans	Not the temple	Deliverance from evil, great joy
9:32-12:25	10:9-34-48	Jew AND Gentile	All people throughout the land	As above!
13:1-15:35	13:4-12; 16	Jew AND Gentile	Asia Minor too	As above!
15:36-19:20	17:22-34	Just gentiles here!	Europe	As above!
19:21-28:31	28:16; 30-31	The whole world	Rome – capital of the world	As above!