

0 Introduction

0.1 Key Idea

The story of God promising the Messiah teaches us how Jesus fulfills all the promises of the Old Testament as God's promised Messiah.

0.2 Creedal Verse

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27

0.3 Metanarrative Summary

The eternal God created all things in six days. He made a good and perfect world. He made humans in his image to fill the earth and rule over creation. But humans rebelled against God and ruined God's creation. God set to restore his world through his promise. God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bless all nations through Abraham. God kept his promises across the generations. God provided Abraham with a promised child, Isaac. God gave Isaac a wife and she bore twins, Jacob and Esau. God blessed Jacob and his sons, and the blessing continued to the next generation. God rescued Joseph, one of Jacob's sons, and used him to rescue his family. God caused his people, the Israelites, to multiply in the land of Egypt; eventually, they became slaves. But, God raised up a deliverer, Moses, to deliver his people from their slavery. God sent judgment on the Egyptians with harsh plagues; in the final judgment, he passed over his people who covered their doorposts with the blood of a sacrificed lamb. Then, God delivered the Israelites by bringing them out of Egypt and crossing the Red Sea on dry land. God made a covenant with the Israelites and made them his people. God tested Israel in a series of wilderness wanderings and eventually brought his people into the promised land of Canaan. God raised up deliverers to lead Israel and rescue them from their enemies. God formed Israel into a kingdom. He made a covenant with King David and promised to send a king that would rule his people forever. Many of Israel's kings were evil and the kingdom of Israel divided into two kingdoms. God sent prophets to warn his people of God's judgment and call them to repent. When Israel did not repent, God sent his people into exile. After many years, he brought them back to the land. Throughout the Old Testament, God promised to send his Messiah to deliver his people from their sin.

0.4 Open Bible Story: God Promises the Messiah

21-01

Even when God created the world, he knew that he would send the Messiah at some time far later. He promised Adam and Eve that he would do this. He said that a descendant of Eve would be born who would crush the snake's head. Of course, Satan appeared as a snake in order to deceive Eve. God meant that the Messiah would defeat Satan completely.

21-02

God promised Abraham that through him all people groups of the world would receive a blessing. God would fulfill this promise by sending the Messiah at some later time. The Messiah would save people from their sin out of every people group in the world.

21-03

God promised Moses that in the future he would send another prophet like Moses. This prophet would be the Messiah. In this way, God promised again that he would send the Messiah.

21-04

God promised King David that one of his own descendants would be the Messiah. He would be king and rule over God's people forever.

21-05

God spoke to the prophet Jeremiah and told him that he would make a New Covenant one day. The New Covenant would not be like the old covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. When he would make his New Covenant with people, he would make them to know him personally. Each person would love him and want to obey his laws. God said this would be like writing his law on their hearts. They would be his people, and God would forgive their sins. It is the Messiah who would make the New Covenant with them.

21-06

God's prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a king. A prophet is a person who hears the words of God and then proclaims God's messages to the people. The Messiah that God promised to send would be the perfect prophet. That is, the Messiah would hear God's messages perfectly, he would understand them perfectly, and he would teach them to people perfectly.

21-07

Israelite priests kept on making sacrifices to God for the people. These sacrifices were in place of God punishing the people for their sins. Priests also prayed to God for the people. However, the Messiah would be the perfect high priest who would offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God. That is, he would never sin, and when he would give himself to be the sacrifice, no other sacrifice for sin would ever be necessary.

21-08

Kings and chiefs rule over groups of people, and sometimes they make mistakes. King David ruled over only the Israelites. But the Messiah, a descendant of David's, will rule over the whole world, and he will rule forever. Also, he will always rule justly and make the right decisions.

21-09

God's prophets said many other things about the Messiah. For example, Malachi said that another prophet would come before the Messiah came. That prophet would be very important. Also, the prophet Isaiah wrote that the Messiah would be born of a virgin. And the prophet Micah said that the Messiah would be born in the town of Bethlehem.

21-10

The prophet Isaiah said the Messiah would live in the region of Galilee. The Messiah would comfort people who were very sad. He would also set prisoners free. The Messiah would also heal sick people and those who could not hear, see, speak, or walk.

21-11

The prophet Isaiah also said that people would hate the Messiah and refuse to accept him. Other prophets said that a friend of the Messiah would turn against him. The prophet Zechariah said that this friend would receive 30 silver coins from other people for doing this. Also, some prophets said that people would kill the Messiah, and that they would gamble for his clothes.

21-12

The prophets also told about how the Messiah would die. Isaiah prophesied that people would spit on, mock, and beat the Messiah. They would pierce him, and he would die in great suffering and agony, even though he had not done anything wrong.

21-13

The prophets also said that the Messiah would not sin. He would be perfect. But he would die because God would punish him for other people's sins. When he died, people would be able to have peace with God. This is why, in God's plan, the Messiah had to die.

The prophets also said that God would raise the Messiah from the dead. This shows that Jesus' death and resurrection was all God's plan to make the New Covenant, so he could save people who had sinned against him.

21-14

God revealed to the prophets many things about the Messiah, but the Messiah did not come during the time of any of those prophets. More than 400 years after the last of these prophecies was given, at exactly the right time, God sent the Messiah into the world.

A Bible story from: Genesis 3; 12; Deuteronomy 18:15; 2 Samuel 7; Psalm 16; 22; 35; 69; 41; Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-7; 61; 53; 50:6; 59:16; Jeremiah 31; Daniel 7; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 11:12-13; Malachi 4:5

1 Biblical Interpretation: Observing the Details of the Story

After reading the crafted biblical story, answer the following questions to familiarize yourself with the details of the story.

1.1 Observation Questions

Answer the following observation questions to gain a basic understanding of the story. Read the story as a community and answer these questions as a group.

21-01 When did God first decide to send the Messiah?

He decided this before he created the world.

What did God promise Adam and Eve?

God promised Adam and Eve that he would send the Messiah. He told them a descendant would come from Eve who would crush the snake's head.

What would the Messiah do to Satan?

The Messiah would defeat Satan completely.

21-02 What did God promise Abraham?

God promised Abraham that through him all the people groups of the world would receive a blessing.

Who would God send to fulfill his promise that all people groups will be blessed through Abraham?

He would send the Messiah.

What would the Messiah do?

The Messiah would save people from their sin out of every people group in the world.

21-03 What did God promise Moses?

God promised Moses that in the future he would send another prophet like Moses.

In what way would the Messiah be like Moses?

The Messiah would be a prophet like Moses.

21-04 What did God promise King David?

God promised King David that one of his own descendants would be the Messiah.

What would the Messiah do?

The Messiah would be one of David's descendants and would rule over God's people as king forever.

21-05 What did God promise Jeremiah?

God told Jeremiah that he would one day make a New Covenant with his people.

How would the New Covenant be different from the Old Covenant made at Sinai?

In the New Covenant, people would know God personally, people would love God and obey his laws, God would write his laws on their hearts, they would be God's people, and God would forgive their sins.

Who would bring the New Covenant?

The Messiah would make the New Covenant with God's people.

21-06 What did the prophets say about the Messiah?

The prophets said that the Messiah would be a prophet, priest, and king.

What do prophets do?

Prophets hear the words of God and proclaim God's messages to his people.

How would the Messiah be the perfect prophet?

The Messiah would hear God's messages perfectly, understand them perfectly, and teach them perfectly.

21-07 Why did priests do?

Priests offered sacrifices to God so God's people did not get punished for their sin. Priests prayed to God for the people.

How would the Messiah be the perfect high priest?

The Messiah would offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God on behalf of the people. No other sacrifice would be necessary because the Messiah was perfect, he never sinned.

21-08 What did kings do?

Like King David, kings rule over groups of people.

How would the Messiah be the perfect king?

The Messiah would reign over the whole world forever, rule justly, and make the right decisions.

21-09 Who did the prophets say would come before the Messiah?

The prophet Malachi said that another important prophet would come before the Messiah came.

Who did the prophets say would give birth to the Messiah?

The prophet Isaiah said that the Messiah would be born of a virgin.

Where did the prophets say the Messiah would be born?

The prophet Micah said that the Messiah would be born in the town of Bethlehem.

21-10 Where did the prophets say the Messiah would live?

The prophet Isaiah said the Messiah would live in the region of Galilee.

What would the Messiah be like?

The Messiah would comfort people who were sad, set prisoners free, heal the sick, and heal the deaf, blind, mute, and lame.

21-11 What did the prophets say about how people would treat the Messiah?
The prophet Isaiah people would hate the Messiah and refuse to accept him.

What did the prophets say about the Messiah being betrayed?
The prophet Zechariah said that a friend of the Messiah would get paid 30 pieces of silver to turn against (betray) Jesus.

What would happen when the Messiah died?
The prophets said that people would kill the Messiah, and that they would gamble for his clothes.

21-12 According to the prophets, how would the Messiah die?
The Messiah would be mistreated and pierced, and would die in great suffering.
Did the Messiah do anything wrong to deserve death?
No. The Messiah did not do anything wrong. He died so that he could save his people from their sin.

21-13 In God's plan, why did the Messiah have to die?
The Messiah, being perfect, would die so that God could punish him for the people's sin so they could have peace with God.

21-14 What happened to the Messiah after he died?
The prophets also said that God would raise the Messiah from the dead.
What would God accomplish through the death and resurrection of the Messiah?
God would start the New Covenant and save people who had sinned against him.

21-15 Did the Messiah come during the time of the prophets?
No. The Messiah did not come during the time of the prophets.
How much time passed between the last prophecy about the Messiah and his coming into the world?
More than 400 years had passed.
How right was the time when God sent the Messiah into the world?
God sent the Messiah into the world at exactly the right time.

1.2 Translation Questions

Use the following translation questions to understand specific details of the passage. Discuss how you might translate these specific elements of the story.

21-01 Even when God created the world At the time God created the world, he already had planned to send the Messiah to save his people from their sin. How would you express **Even when God created the world** to emphasize that God planned to send the Messiah to save his people from their sin before he created the world?

crush the snake's head Unless the head of a venomous snake is crushed, the snake can still hurt someone. This descendant of Eve would destroy the head of the snake by stepping on it. How would you express **crush the snake's head** to mean to stomp on the head of the snake to destroy it?

Satan appeared as a snake in order to deceive Eve Satan spoke to Eve in the form of a snake. This does not mean that he is a snake now. The snake lied by making Eve doubt what God had said and tricking her into disobeying God. How would you express **Satan appeared as a snake in order to deceive Eve** to mean the snake who deceived Eve was an appearance of Satan?

21-02 through him The Messiah would come into the world as one of Abraham's descendants. As the Messiah, the descendant would bring blessing to all people groups and save people from their sin. How would you express **through him** to mean the people groups of the world would receive a blessing because of one of Abraham's descendants?

God would fulfill this promise God promised to bless all the people groups of the world. God would bring his promise to completion by sending the Messiah. How would you express **God would fulfill this promise** to mean God would make his promise become a reality?

out of every people group in the world The Messiah would save people from every people group. People groups are defined by people who share a common language and culture. How would you express **out of every people group in the world** to mean God would save humans from every group of people that share a common culture and language?

21-03 another prophet like Moses The Messiah would be similar to Moses in some ways and different than Moses in other ways. To be like Moses, the future prophet would need to have great authority from God to lead and rescue his people. How would you express **another prophet like Moses** to mean the Messiah would be similar to Moses in his authority and power to save God's people?

21-04 one of his own descendants God promised David that the Messiah would be born in his family line. He would be a particular offspring born in David's lineage. How would you express **one of his own descendants** to mean a direct descendant of David himself?

rule over God's people The Messiah would be king. He would govern God's people for all time. How would you express **rule over** God's people to mean to exercise authority to govern a people?

21-05 would not be like The New Covenant would be different than the Old Covenant in some ways. would be truly effective. People really would know God, they would truly live as his people, and He would forgive their sins completely, based on the Messiah's sacrifice of himself one time for all who believe in him. How would you express **would not be like** to mean the New Covenant would be different from the Old Covenant in some ways?

this would be like writing his law on their hearts The heart represents the emotions or the mind. In the New Covenant, Yahweh's law will become a part of God's people, rather than merely being written on stone. God was comparing helping his people to understand his laws and to earnestly desire to obey them with writing on their hearts, since this is in contrast with the

way God had written his law on stone tablets for the Israelites. How would you express **this would be like writing his law on their hearts** to mean Yahweh's law will be part of their thoughts and emotions as if God wrote them on their hearts?

be his people In the New Covenant, God would make his people to be his favored people. How would you express **be his people** to mean to become God's special and favored people?

21-06 the perfect prophet The Messiah was free from any sin or defeat. He would be a prophet who would be perfect in obedience to God, giving every word God would speak to the people. He would present God perfectly to the people, helping them to know and understand God. How would you express **the perfect prophet** to mean a messenger of God who always obeyed God in every way and always spoke truly about God in every way?

21-07 However, the Messiah would be the perfect high priest who would offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God The Israelite priests offered sacrifices to God in place of God punishing his people for their sin. In contrast to the imperfect Israelite priests, the Messiah was the perfect priest. In contrast to the Israelite priests offering sacrifices to God, the Messiah would offer himself as the sacrifice. How would you express **However, the Messiah would be the perfect high priest who would offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God** to mean the Messiah was different from the Israelite priests in that he was perfect and he both the perfect priest and the perfect sacrifice?

the perfect high priest Unlike the other high priests, the Messiah would never sin, and he would permanently take away all the sins of the people. How would you express **the perfect high priest** to mean the main priest who never sinned and can take away the sins of people once for all?

offer himself The Messiah would allow himself to be killed and this would be a sacrifice to God. How would you express **offer himself** to mean to allow himself to be killed as a sacrifice to God?

a perfect sacrifice The Messiah was a sacrifice that has no fault or imperfection. How would you express **a perfect sacrifice** to mean a flawless offering to God which is killed so that God's people are not punished for their sin?

21-08 But the Messiah Many human kings governed groups of people. These kings were not perfect and made mistakes. They did not rule over the whole world. They only ruled for a limited time. In contrast with these kings, the Messiah made no mistakes (he was perfect), he would rule over the whole world, and would rule for all time. How would you express **But the Messiah** to mean the Messiah would rule as king differently than other human kings?

the whole world The Messiah would rule everyone everywhere as king. How would you express **the whole world** to mean all people in all places?

rule justly The Messiah will govern in ways that are fair and right. How would you express **rule justly** to mean to govern as king in a way that is fair and right?

21-09 That prophet would be very important God would send a prophet to come before the Messiah came. God gave this prophet a very significant job to do in preparing people for the coming of the Messiah. How would you express **That prophet would be very important** to mean God gave the prophet who came before the Messiah came a very significant work to do?

the Messiah would be born of a virgin God sent the Messiah into the world. The Messiah came into the world by being born of a woman who was a virgin. A virgin is a woman who has never had sexual intercourse with a man. How would you express **the Messiah would be born of a virgin** to mean a virgin would give birth to the Messiah?

21-10 set prisoners free The Messiah set free those who have unjustly been put into prison. This could also refer to setting people free from the bondage of sin. How would you express **set prisoners free** to mean to liberate those who have been put in prison?

could not hear, see, speak, or walk The Messiah would heal people who could not hear, could not see, could not speak, or could not walk. Said another way, the Messiah would heal the deaf, blind, mute, and lame. How would you express **could not hear, see, speak, or walk** to mean people who are deaf, blind, mute, and lame?

21-11 refuse to accept him People would not recognize the Messiah as truly the Messiah and did not follow him. How would you express **refuse to accept him** to mean to acknowledge the Messiah as the true Messiah and follow him?

30 silver coins At the time, each of these coins was worth the amount of money a person could earn in four days. How would you express **30 silver coins** to mean thirty coins made out of silver?

gamble for his clothes Those who killed the Messiah played a game of betting to win his clothes. How would you express **gamble for his clothes** to mean to play a game of chance to determine who would win his clothes?

21-12 pierce The people who killed the Messiah thrust a sharp weapon into the Messiah. How would you express **pierce** to mean people would stab the Messiah with a sharp weapon?

even though he had not done anything wrong People killed the Messiah. The Messiah was innocent. It is not expected that an innocent, sinless man would be killed so brutally. How would you express **even though he had not done anything wrong** to mean the innocence of the Messiah is contrary to how people treated him when they brutally killed him?

21-13 But he would die The Messiah is perfect and without sin. The Messiah did not deserve to die or be punished. It is not expected that a perfect man would die for other people's sin. Instead, the Messiah died as punishment for other people's sins. How would you express **But he would die** to mean the death of the Messiah as opposite of what would expect to happen to someone who is sinless and perfect?

peace with God Humans sin and disobey God's laws. As a result, humans are in conflict with God. God is just and righteous to punish humans. However, the Messiah died so that God would no longer punish his people in anger. How would you express **peace with God** to mean to no longer have hostility between God and people?

the Messiah had to die God planned for the Messiah to die. How would you express **the Messiah had to die** to mean it was necessary for the Messiah to die to fulfill God's plan and save people from punishment for their sin?

21-14 raise the Messiah from the dead After the Messiah died, God would resurrect the Messiah and bring him back to life. How would you express **raise the Messiah from the dead** to mean to cause the Messiah to be alive again?

to make the New Covenant God planned to establish a new formal, binding agreement with his people. This covenant would be a new way of God relating to his people. How would you express **to make the New Covenant** to mean to put into effect a new binding agreement between two parties?

21-15 God revealed to the prophets God showed the prophets truth about the Messiah. How would you express **God revealed to the prophets** to mean God told the prophets true things about the Messiah that was not always known before?

at exactly the right time God knew the perfect time to send the Messiah into the world. God sent the Messiah into the world at a time of human history that was not too late or too early. How would you express **at exactly the right time** to mean God sent the Messiah to come into the world at a time in human history that would perfectly fulfill God's plan?

into the world God sent the Messiah to the people of the world. The Messiah existed before he lived in the world. He would come **into the world** not only for the Jews, but for all people. How would you express **into the world** to mean to the people who lived in the world?

2 Theological Dialogue: Discussing the Meaning of the Story

Take time to explore the meaning of this story together as a community. Use the following discussions as a way to grasp what truth the story teaches.

2.1 Discourse Questions

Use the following discourse questions to understand the meaning of the story. Pay attention to how the story itself addresses each question or theme.

What did God promise about the Messiah to those living in the Old Covenant? (21-01, 21-02, 21-03, 21-04) Even before God created the world, God planned to send the Messiah. This was a part of God's eternal plan (plan for all time). (21-01)

God promised Adam and Eve that he would later send the Messiah. The Messiah would be born into the world as one of Eve's descendants and complete defeat Satan. (21-01)

God promised Abraham that he would later send the Messiah. The Messiah would be one of Abraham's descendants, he would bring blessing to all people groups in the world, and he would save people from their sin out of every people group. (21-02)

God promised Moses that he would later send the Messiah. The Messiah would be a prophet like Moses who would come with authority from God and bring his people into freedom. (21-03)

God promised David that he would later send the Messiah. The Messiah would be one of David's descendants and would rule over God's people for all time. (21-04)

What did it mean for the Messiah to establish a New Covenant with his people? (21-05) God spoke to Jeremiah and told him that he would make a New Covenant with his people. The Messiah would make this New Covenant possible. (21-05)

In the New Covenant, God would know his people personally. He would establish new way of relating to his people. (21-05)

In the New Covenant, God's people would love him and want to obey his laws. God's people would not see obedience as a burden. (21-05)

In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the hearts of his people so that they would be able to obey God's commands. (21-05)

In the New Covenant, God would make his people his own special and chosen community of faith. (21-05)

In the New Covenant, God would forgive his people of their sin. (21-05)

What does it mean that the Messiah would be prophet, priest, and king? (21-06, 21-07, 21-08) The prophets said that the Messiah would be prophet, priest, and king. (21-06)

As the perfect prophet, the Messiah would perfectly know God's truth, perfectly teach them to people, and perfectly show people who God is. (21-06)

As the perfect priest, the Messiah would be without sin, offer himself as a perfect sacrifice for sin, and make a way for people to be made right with God. (21-07)

As the perfect king, the Messiah would rule over the whole world in perfect justice and righteousness. (21-08)

What did the prophets reveal about the Messiah? (21-09, 21-10, 21-11, 21-12, 21-13, 21-14, 21-15) The prophets told ahead of time that before the Messiah came an important prophet would come. (21-09)

The prophets told ahead of time that the Messiah would be born by a virgin in the town of Bethlehem. (21-09)

The prophets told ahead of time that the Messiah would live in the region of Galilee. (21-10)

The prophets told ahead of time that the Messiah would comfort those who were sad, set prisoners free, and heal the sick. (21-10)

The prophets told ahead of time that people would hate the Messiah and not follow him. (21-11)

The prophets told ahead of time that one of the Messiah's friends would betray him for 30 pieces of silver. (21-11)

The prophets told ahead of time that people would kill the Messiah and gamble for his clothes. (21-11)

The prophets told ahead of time the people would mistreat the Messiah, beat the Messiah, and pierce the Messiah. (21-12)

The prophets told ahead of time that the Messiah would be perfect and without sin. The Messiah died to be punished for the sin that humans should have been punished for. God planned for the Messiah to die so that people could be at peace with God. (21-13)

The prophets told ahead of time that the Messiah would come back to life. (21-14)

God revealed many things about the Messiah. God sent the Messiah just as God said to fulfill his plan and establish the New Covenant with his people. The Messiah came at just the right time to fulfill God's plan. (21-14, 21-15)

2.2 Theological Questions

Answer the following theology questions as a community. Discuss what truths this story teaches.

1. How did God prepare people for the coming of the Messiah? What did God tell various people who lived in the Old Covenant about the Messiah?
2. What is the New Covenant and why is it so important for how God relates to his people? What does this story tell us about the New Covenant?
3. How is the Messiah the perfect prophet, perfect priest, and perfect king? What does this story tell us about what the Messiah is like?
4. How did the Messiah come into the world and what did he do to rescue people? What does this story tell us about all that the Messiah did to save people from sin?

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3 Personal Reflection: Following the Teaching of the Story

Take a moment to allow this story to evaluate your own life and to consider how God would have you respond. After this reflection, use the quality checking questions to check your translation draft among the translation team.

3.1 Journal Reflection

Prayerfully think about the following personal reflection questions. Write/Record your answers and/or discuss them as a group.

1. What are some of the things that the Messiah has done that brings you greatest joy?
2. How have you experienced the blessings of the New Covenant?
3. What new convictions do you have about what the Messiah came to do and why his work is so important to fulfill God's plan?
4. What does it mean to accept Jesus as the Messiah?

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