

Jesus Is the Better Messiah - Hebrews 5:5-6, Psalm 110
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

Christmas is upon us. This week we will celebrate the birth of our Savior, the promised Messiah born in Bethlehem. He is the One whom angels sang on the night of His birth, declaring, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11) And while our focus this week is on the cuddly story about a pregnant teenage virgin, a kind fiancé, shepherds, angels, and a manger, we always need to remember that the reason this story is so beautiful is because of the identity of the baby who was wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in that manger as his first crib.

When we look through the story into all the clues embedded there, we will see that the texts in Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2 remind us of a couple things. First, we can see that this birth is not the beginning of this person's story. As Matthew states, Jesus is God with us, the One True and Living God who stepped into humanity to identify Himself with us. Second, the texts show us that the whole story of the Old Testament is filled with markers, images, prophecies, and, well "Easter eggs" pointing forward to the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of this baby.

One of the clearest sign posts lies in the key leaders God gave to the Hebrew people in the Old Testament. God chose and saved a people for Himself in the Old Testament story. He did this to demonstrate His glory and character as He formed a relationship with these people. They were descendants of Abraham, and also the people God rescued from slavery in Egypt by His mighty right arm. He then miraculously gave them a place, the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey as their home. Israel exists as both a nation and a religious people. God is faithful, they are not. Yet, God never gives up on them, continually pursuing them. Even though they are sinful, God provides key human leaders, each of whom has a role that does several things for the people. First, they serve the people in a key role needed for them to know their God and live as a people. Second, each of these leaders communicate God's presence in some clear way. In other words, it is through the ministry and work of these leaders that God brings Himself near to His people and loves them deeply. Yet, there is a sense in which this is never fulfilled because the human leaders are sinful, deeply flawed, and often outright rebellious. Third, and most important, each type of leader is strategic in the redemption story because they all point to Jesus and show us aspects of what it means for Jesus to be our Savior, our Messiah.

Priests were the go-between, the mediators between God and humanity. Sinful people have no business in the presence of a holy God, so we need someone to bridge the gap. The priests did this in a couple clear ways. First, they went to God on behalf of the people by offering sacrifices in the Temple on behalf of the people. These sacrifices in some way atoned for the sin of the people and allowed them to come before God. Yet, it was clear that the blood of an animal was not really sufficient to cover the sin of the people. The priests also went to the people on behalf of God by interpreting and teaching the Torah. We need a priest, and we have a true and better priest in Jesus.

Judges served as God's rescuers, deliverers. The Old Testament story is the continuous story of God's people rebelling with the result being that God gives them to their enemies. From their oppression and slavery they would cry out to God, and God would then raise up a rescuer who would defeat their enemies and bring them back to their homes and land. We need a judge, a redeemer, a rescuer who will deliver us from slavery and bring us home.

Kings ruled on behalf of God. In Judah all of the kings were descendants of King David, and they had only one job. Their job was to remember the identity of the True King. Yahweh was the True King and the One who made them a Kingdom. Very few kings in the Old Testament story understood, or at least obeyed this commission. Most of them exalted

themselves, thumping their own chest. Furthermore, the kings of Israel never controlled the future or the outcome. We make lousy kings, but oh, we try to rule our own lives. We need a better King, one who will govern our lives and who also governs the nations and universe.

Prophets spoke for God, bringing His very word. They spoke truth to power, and also challenged the people to repent of their idols and run to the True and Living God. We live in a busy world with so many competing voices, the loudest being the voice in our own head. We need a prophet who can speak on behalf of God.

Maybe you've figured it out. While all the human leaders were flawed, and the roles themselves fell short, they all pointed to a moment when the rivers of these leadership roles would come together in one person who truly mediated God's presence for us. When we speak of Jesus as Savior and Messiah we are saying Jesus is the True and Better Priest who offered Himself as the once for all sacrifice for our sins. He is the True and Better Judge who rescues us from all enemies and brings us home. He is the True and Better King who ushers in the Kingdom of God, ruling our lives and the universe. And He is the True and Better Prophet, who not only brings the Word of God, rather He is the Word of God, the full revelation of who God is. What a Messiah! What a Savior! What a baby!

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Isaiah 4	Isaiah 5	Isaiah 6	Isaiah 7	Isaiah 8	Isaiah 9	Isaiah 10

Reading from this past week: Hebrews 5:5-6, Psalm 110

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Timothy 4:7-8

Family Worship

Song - *The First Noel*

<https://youtu.be/MwYVriFqMZo?si=tdEZNRO8qvF1wJUv>

Gospel Project

Unit: God Delivers His People

Story: Moses Parted the Red Sea

Big Picture Question: Why does sin separate us from God?

Answer: Because God is holy, sin has broken our relationship with God.

Scripture: Exodus 13-15

New City Catechism

Question 52: What hope does everlasting life hold for us?

Answer: That we will live with and enjoy God forever in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will be forever freed from all sin in a renewed, restored creation.

Verse: Revelation 21:1-4

Psalm 110, Hebrews 5:5-6

- Psalm 110 speaks of a future Savior who is both a king and priest? How does this verse point us to Jesus?
- What are the four leadership roles God gave His people in the Old Testament? How does each role bring God's presence to His people?
- How do each of these roles point us to Jesus as our Messiah?

Prayer

*In the fourth week of Advent, light your advent candle and give thanks that Jesus is our Prince of Peace..

*Pray for our Christmas Eve service and move to the new building.

*Pray that you would find Jesus to be your great Savior this Christmas.