

All other world religions demand that men do good deeds to gain merit for themselves. God's word tells us that all has been done for us! There is nothing more that you can do to satisfy God's demands. Jesus Christ did it all for you when He died on the cross. Receive His saving work for you and not try to add any works of our own (John 5:24).

TALK ABOUT 1. How is Christianity different to other world religions? 2. Can you get to heaven by doing good things all your life? 3. What is the difference between the Old Covenant of Law and the New Covenant? 4. What did Jesus mean when He said, "It is finished!"

GOD PREPARED A PLACE FOR YOU

From before the creation of the earth, God had you in His heart. He formed a spirit for you (Zech 12:1), a spirit that would carry all the characteristics of your personality. And a spirit that would live on forever after your body dies.

God prepared a place for you, a warm and cozy place in a mother's womb. From the moment of conception, God placed that spirit in the embryo and watched over it. David writing in the Psalms said, "You created my inmost being (my spirit); You knit me together in my mother's womb (Psa 139:13), I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

God made a place for you in a family. He prepared a father and a mother to bring you into this world and He charged them with your welfare and your education. His command to the people of Israel was, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments...are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up...Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates" (Deut 6:5-9).

God prepared a place for you in heaven. It has your name on it; no one can take it from you. Peter wrote, "He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you..." (1 Peter 1:2-4).

TALK ABOUT 1. How did God prepare a place for you in this world? 2. Did He prepare a place for you in heaven? How do you know? 3. What did Jesus tell His disciples (John 14:2-3)? 4. Do you think they believed Him? 5. God knew all about you before you were born___True___False?

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The Meaning of . . .

A Sovereign God

*Written by
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To the Reader: Keep your Bible beside you. Read the Bible verses as you study. Bible verses are taken from the New International Version. You may have a King James Bible, so the words may not be the same, but the meaning will be the same. Ask God to guide your mind to know His truth. He has promised to do this for you (John 8:32). Ask a friend to join you. You will be blessed as you study together.

GOD'S FREE CHOICE

Read: Romans 9:6-18

God is sovereign. He is majestic in splendor and awesome in power. We, the creatures He created to live on the earth, know very little about Him. In days of old, the prophets wrote down the words as God spoke them. Isaiah wrote this as God spoke: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Everything we see, God created out of nothing. He created it by the word of His mouth. We could never know anything about God, except He revealed it to us. Even then, as Paul wrote, "Now I know in part; then (in heaven) I shall know fully, even as I am fully known (by God); (1 Cor 13:12). With all our knowledge, we really know only a fraction of what there is to be known.

GOD IN ETERNITY

In eternity, before there was any earth or sky or sea, God spoke. The very moment God said, "Let there be light" (Gen 1:3), light flooded onto the scene. Everything God created was perfect and for His own glory. After each day's work God said, "It is good," and He enjoyed His creation. I am sure He still does, because He has promised to renew it with a "new heaven and a new earth" one day (Rev 21:1).

God created a universe that man cannot comprehend or measure. He created creatures so small that you cannot see them without a microscope, and so large that only the ocean can contain them. Have you seen a whale washed up on the beach? Have you ever wondered how such a creature could grow so big when it eats only the smallest of sea life called plankton?

When God made man and woman, they were special. They could reason and plan and have a personal relationship with God. Because He gave them spirit, they could talk with God and understand what God was saying to them. Why do you think God, who is so great and beyond our understanding, would want to talk with the creatures He had created? The answer from the Bible is that God wanted fellowship with a being who had a free will and could make choices. And the choice He wants all of us to make is to "love Him with all of our hearts" (Deut 6:5). God wants us to choose Him.

TALK ABOUT

1. How much do you understand about God? 2. Why did God give man a spirit which would live forever? 3. What does God want us to do (Deut 6:5)?

"Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). He could say this because Christ had died on the cross to make men just in God's sight.

The established church in the days when Martin Luther lived, sold indulgences and prayer papers which it said would buy a person justification and save them from going to hell.

Luther said, "Not so!" He told the people what Paul had written in his letters – that men and women are justified by faith alone. When false teachers came from Jerusalem to the churches in Galatia, they brought a wrong message which Paul said was "no gospel at all." The false teachers told the believers that they must follow Jewish customs and obey the Law or they could not be saved. Paul said this was not right. He said, "We have put our faith in Jesus Christ that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the Law, because by observing the law no one will be justified" (Gal 2:15-16).

TALK ABOUT 1. What happened to the Law God gave to Moses on Mt Sinai? 2. Paul said no one could be saved by keeping the law. How then were men and women saved (Gal 2:15-16)? 3. Why is the gospel called "the good news"?

IT IS FINISHED

Read: Matthew 24:45-56

Jesus Christ spoke His last dying words from the cross. He cried out, "It is finished! Then He bowed His head and gave up the spirit" (John 19:30). He had completed the commission or the work which His Father had sent Him into the world to do. Nothing more needed to be done.

In the Greek language, one word takes the place of the three English words. It is the Greek word "*teleios*." Bankers used the same Greek word. When a debtor made the last and final payment on a debt they owed, the banker stamped the document with the word "Finished" or "Paid in full." Jesus paid the debt of our sin.

The same word was used for the lamb chosen for the Passover sacrifice. When used for the Passover lamb, the word had the meaning of "perfect." The lamb had to be kept and carefully watched for fourteen days. If the lamb was declared "perfect" it was offered as a sacrifice to God for the sins of the family. Jesus Christ was the "perfect Lamb of God" who took away the sins of the world (John 1:29). He had been "tempted in every way, just as we are – yet without sin" (Heb 4:15).

The word has a third meaning for those who use the English language. Its more common meaning refers to Jesus Christ who finished or satisfied the Old Covenant's demands, so that God could put a New Covenant in its place (Heb 8:13).

Christ's death filled up the law's demands. He signed the New Covenant with His own sinless blood (Luke 22:19-22). The New Covenant offers life forever as the free gift of God (Joel 2:32).

Jesus Christ, as the representative of man (also called “the last Adam,” 1 Cor 15:45) met all the righteous demands of the Law and paid the full price for man’s sin. “The wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23), but Christ died in our place. He was our substitute. In this way, God’s justice was satisfied and He was able to offer every person who believes a free pardon.

The gospel is the “good news” that the justice God demanded was provided through the Savior Jesus Christ. God forgave your sin and mine when Jesus carried the sins of the whole world (John 1:29). He did this when He died on the cross.

ISRAEL REBELLED AGAINST GOD

Read: Jeremiah 18:1-17

God told the prophet Jeremiah to go to the Potter’s House where God would teach him a lesson about the House of Israel. At the Potter’ House Jeremiah saw the potter molding a vessel of clay. But the pot he was making was “marred in his hands, so the potter formed it into another pot...(Jer 18:4).

The potter was a picture of God. He was molding the House of Israel (the nation) into a vessel He could use. But the people refused God’s hands. They would not be molded. They were ‘marred’ in God’s hands, so God formed another ‘nation,’ as “seemed best to Him.”

The nation God formed was later called “the Kingdom of God” (Mark 1:15). When He spoke to the prophet, God used both words ‘kingdom’ and ‘nation’ and gave them the same meaning (Jer 18:7,9).

In the text, God spoke to “the House of Israel.” He asked, “Cannot I do with you as the potter does?” The answer is, God can do as He pleases. He is sovereign.

He went on to say, “If I announce that nation or kingdom is to be built up or planted, and if it does evil in My sight and does not obey Me, then I will reconsider the good I intended to do for it” (Jer 18:10).

With such an explanation of His sovereign power, God told Jeremiah what to say to the disobedient people of Judah and Jerusalem, the ‘clay’ that would not yield in His hands. The prophet was to say: “This is what the Lord says, ‘Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you, so turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform...your actions’.” (Jer 18:11-12).

Then God told Jeremiah how they would answer Him. The people of Judah and Jerusalem would say to Jeremiah, “We will continue with our own plans; each of us will follow the stubbornness of his own evil heart” (Jer 18:12).

The prophet was not left to wonder what God would do with such rebellion. God told him, “Like a wind from the east, I will scatter them before their enemies; I will show them My back and not My face in the day of their disaster” (Jer 18:17).

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

Read: Luke 18:9-14; Galatians 3:15-25; Psalm 32:1-5

Justification means to pronounce, accept and treat a person as just. Paul wrote,

HOW MUCH FREEDOM DO WE HAVE?

Read: Romans 10:6-15

This is a very difficult question: “How much freed freedom do we have? We know that God gave Adam and Eve freedom to choose. God provided everything they needed for food – nuts, berries, fruits and grains all grew in the garden in Eden (Gen 1:29).

Two trees stood in the middle of the garden. God gave them the names of The Tree of Life and The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen 2:9).

The Tree of Life was a symbol of God’s everlasting life, “God alone is immortal...who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see” (1 Timothy 6:16). Most amazing to us is that God gave His immortality to human beings. The record tells us that “the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man (the Adam=red earth) became a living being” (Genesis 2:7).

There was something very intimate and powerful about God’s action. God breathed His eternal life into mortal clay, creating an immortal soul that was “like Him” and would live on forever.

As an artist signs a painting, so God stamped His imprint on His own work. God made the man and the woman ‘in His likeness.’ The man and the woman had “**God’s own image...**” put on them (Genesis 1:27).

So the human kind stands apart from the rest of creation:

- a) In his nature and constitution, man is a rational being (Isa 1:18).
- b) In his authority over creation, man is born to rule (Gen 1:28).
- c) In his moral conscience, man was created righteous (Eph 4:24).
- d) In his three-part nature; man is like God (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
- e) Man and woman have immortal spirits which live on forever after their body dies (Matt 25:46).
- f) In his freedom to choose, man is like God (Deut 30:19).

We can think of God’s image on mankind as being like the image of a king’s head on a coin, or the likeness of a face in an artist’s drawing.

Some parts of God’s image we can see and understand, but not others.

GOD’S COMMAND TO ADAM

Read: Genesis 2:15-17

The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil grew side by side in the garden (Genesis 2:9-17). God said to Adam, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” (Gen 32:17).

Adam and Eve were free to choose to eat fruit from any tree in the garden. They were blessed with an endless supply of food and of Life itself... We believe they had immortal life like God, as long as they obeyed His command. And they could have eaten the fruit from the Tree of Life and lived forever (Rev 22:2)

Some believe man is not free to choose what he will do. They say that every event has a controlling force behind it. "The culture I live in or my genes made me do it," they say, or "the devil made me do it."

It is true that forces outside ourselves can effect how we choose. But these forces are spiritual. The devil or Satan is the head of an army of spirit beings. They are evil spirits.

Jesus told people about Satan. He told the Pharisees, "You belong to your father, the devil... he was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him" (John 8:44-45). We meet Satan in the Book of Genesis, right at the beginning of the creation.

We would never know anything about Satan if God had not revealed it to us in His word. The same is true of how He created us and why He put us here on the earth.

TALK ABOUT

1. God created man and woman "in His own I.....? 2. God created man and woman with abilities? What were they? 3. Why would God put a "Tree of Life" in the middle of the garden? 4. Did the Tree of Life bear fruit like the other fruit trees in the garden? 5. What command did God give Adam (Gen 2:17)?

SATAN MEETS EVE

Read: Genesis 3:1-10

All was bliss and happiness until a stranger came into the garden. Satan was created a beautiful angel, but he rebelled against God. There is no sin in heaven, so Satan was thrown out. Other angels joined Satan's rebellion and they were thrown out of heaven with him.

God has allowed Satan to be a free spirit. He comes and goes in the earth and fights against God's people. Satan leads a host of demon spirits. Satan represents everything that is evil. He rules over men and women and he does influence the choices they make.

We don't know why God has given Satan this freedom. God said it is "for a short time," then Satan and his evil spirits will be destroyed forever (Rev 22:11-15).

Jesus said, "There is no truth in Satan. When he lies he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). And it is very easy for people who are not strong Christians to believe Satan's lies.

Perhaps Satan thought, "I could not create other beings to follow me, but I can take care of this puny female! God may well say to her, 'You can have dominion over the works of My hands...' But I will see that she doesn't. God will have to do better than this couple if He's going to oust me."

One day Eve was alone. Perhaps she wanted a little 'quiet.' Or was she an independent spirit who roamed the garden many days alone?

The whole human race is no less responsible because God gave them a conscience to know good and bad (Romans 2:14-15).

Unless the sinner agrees with God and repents, he or she can never be forgiven through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19).

WHO SHOULD I HELP?

My neighbor is sick. How should I help him? Should I take meals? Should I cut his lawn with a mower? What is my responsibility to my neighbor, or my town or to my country? These can be the most puzzling questions we are called to face.

The result or reward is a measure of my free will. My actions are prompted by my conscience which tells me to do good in every situation.

The Bible tells us that some have a conscience that does not work, or is weak (1 Cor 8:7). Conscience must be educated. Faith in God and the study of His word are the best ways to sharpen your conscience.

It is the truth that sets men free (John 8:31-32) – free to be themselves, free to do what God wants them to do, free to serve or give or help wherever needed.

As we study God's work and wait on Him, the Holy Spirit speaks to our spirits and tells us what to do. You won't feel any pressure, as the Holy Spirit works silently and deep within your own spirit. But the course of action you are asking God about will become clear to you. If you are sincere and your spirit is surrendered to God, He will not leave you in doubt.

TALK ABOUT 1. Everyone has a need of one sort or another. How can we know who to help? 2. What story did Jesus tell to show us what to do (Luke 10:25-37)? 3. How do you wait on God and ask Him to guide you?

GOD'S JUSTICE

Read: Luke 16:19-31

Justice is a part of God's holiness. While we cannot see His holiness, we can see His justice at work. In the bible, the word 'righteousness' sometimes takes the place of the word for justice. The Bible word 'righteousness' when used of man refers to right rule or behavior.

When a person gets what is due to him, be it good or bad, we say, "He got his just reward."

God upheld His justice and honor by giving His people righteous laws. The Law that God gave Moses on Mt Sinai showed forth His holiness. All God's acts are righteous (Judges 5:11).

Either God had to punish sinners or make a way for their punishment to be taken by a substitute. He did make "a new and living way" so that He could have fellowship with the men and women He had created. The sinner had no power, nor any means whereby he could satisfy God's demand for righteousness.

Men still violate or do not take into account God's righteousness. The New Testament writer speaks of men who "trample underfoot the blood of Christ" (Heb 10:29).

life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). "Whoever hears My word and believes on Him who sent Me has eternal life" (John 5:24).

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

To be morally responsible a person must know what God expects of them. Under the Old Covenant, God spelled out His commands in the law which He gave to Moses on Mt Sinai (Exodus 20).

Because the people were weak and could not keep the Law, God promised a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Under the New Covenant God, by His Spirit, would write His law on the hearts of all those who believed. They would have no excuse for not keeping God's law because they would have it in their hearts. And God would give them His Spirit to help them overcome temptation.

When Jesus came, He fulfilled the law of Moses. At that time, one of the leaders asked Jesus "Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matt 22:37-38).

TALK ABOUT 1. What is the wisest thing a person can do? 2. Have you chosen Jesus to be your Savior from sin? 3. What did Jesus say was the greatest commandment? 4. God gave the Law to Moses when the Israelites were camped at Mt.....? 5. Who is your neighbor (Luke 15)?

RESPONSIBILITY IN THE BIBLE

Read: Genesis 18:16-33; Romans 2:14-15

A person who is ignorant of the law is either not held responsible or has a reduced responsibility for his or her actions. People often ask, "How can God judge the heathen when they have never heard the gospel?" We can only echo the words of Abram when God told him He would destroy the cities of the plains because of the wickedness of the people living in them. Abram asked God to spare the cities for the sake of any righteous citizens who lived in these cities (Gen 18:17-33). God agreed, but no righteous people could be found, and God destroyed the cities.

Abram was quick to recognize his own insignificance when he said, "I have been bold to speak so to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes" (Gen 18:27).

And of the Sovereign God he said, "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right" (Gen 18:25)?

In mercy, God saved Lot, Abram's nephew, and his family. He brought them out of Sodom before He rained down fire and brimstone on the city.

So God has shown us in His word that:

Every human being is held responsible for the sin of Adam (Rom 5:12).

The law given to Moses created a much greater sense of responsibility in Israel (Rom 7:7).

EVE SPOKE TO THE STRANGER

On this day Eve met a stranger who appeared to her as a serpent. God tells us that "the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made" (Gen 3:1). And Satan used the serpent, who lived in the garden, to speak his lies to Eve. The serpent may have been a beautiful creature.

God had given Adam and Eve dominion over all the garden. They were in charge of all the creatures in the garden, so we know this was not the serpent Eve knew who was speaking to her.

Satan spoke to Eve. She heard his voice quite clearly. Perhaps the words Satan spoke came from her own thoughts and desires. He spoke as if a hard-to-believe rumor had reached his ears: "Did God really say....that you must not eat the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that is in the middle of the garden, and you must touch it, or you will die," he asked Eve.

With these words Satan sowed the seeds of doubt in Eve's mind. She began to doubt God's goodness. Did God really want the best for her? Satan suggested that, if she ate the fruit, she would be "like God." He said to Eve, "God knows that when you eat (the fruit)....your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:5).

Eve should have told Satan, "I am like God, and I know He said not to eat the fruit of that tree." Instead, she listened to the smooth voice coming from the serpent. She wanted to know more about good and evil; God had told her so little. And for the first time she saw that the fruit was "pleasing to the eye, and also for gaining wisdom." And she wanted those things for Adam. So Eve put out her hand and took a fruit from the tree. By this time, the serpent was gone.

The fruit was juicy and sweet, so Eve picked another fruit and gave it to Adam and he ate it (Gen 3:6).

TALK ABOUT 1. How did Satan become the leader of all evil spirits? 2. How did Satan deceive Eve (Gen 3:4)? 3. Satan was so bold as to tempt Jesus (Luke 4). 4. Was Eve free to say 'No' to Satan?

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Eve listened, she saw, she took and she ate. She was deceived by Satan's lies (1 Tim 2:14). She saw that the fruit was good to eat, so she put out her hand and took some and ate it. She had a free will to do this. Free will is guided by conscience. I believe every person is born with a conscience. It is "the true light that lighteth every man that comes into the world" (John 1:9). Every man's will is guided by his conscience.

Conscience can be 'sharp' and a good guide, or it can be clouded and dull and not a good guide for our will.

When Eve gave some of the fruit to Adam he also had to choose. He should have said, "No! Remember God's command!" But it was too late! Adam saw that Eve was still alive, so he also made the wrong choice and ate some of the e fruit.

After he had sinned against God, fallen man still has freedom to choose. "If anyone chooses to do God's will..." Jesus told the Pharisees (John 7:17; Rom 7:18).

ALL HAVE SINNED

Read: James 1:12-15

Because of Adam's sin, all men and women are born sinners. They have Adam's sin nature. It is not wrong to be tempted by Satan, but when you obey his voice, it is sin. Adam and Eve sinned against God and gave Satan control of their lives. They became slaves of sin and they were cut off from the life of God.

When God came to the garden to walk and talk with them, they were hiding. God called, "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9-10).

Adam answered, "I heard You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

God could have destroyed the whole creation and started again with a new one. But He is gracious and kind. He knew what had happened and where Adam was hiding, but He wanted Adam to confess his sin. He wanted to rescue Adam from Satan's control.

"Because I was naked, I hid," Adam confessed. We don't know what 'naked' means. Perhaps Adam saw himself for the first time. His "eyes were opened" and he was aware of his body. It was perfect, just as God had created it. But now Adam was more aware of his humanity and, for the first time, he felt shame.

God asked Adam, "Who told you that you were naked?" God knew, but He wanted Adam to confess his sin and tell the truth. Adam blamed Eve for what had happened and Eve blamed the serpent. But God was not interested. He passed judgment on the serpent and on the man and his wife. They were sent out of God's presence and out of the garden forever.

Amidst the judgments, God promised a redeemer, a person who would defeat Satan and redeem mankind from sin (Gen 3:15). This was the promise of Jesus Christ, the Savior.

TALK ABOUT 1. How was Eve tempted to eat the fruit God told them not to eat? 2. Why did Eve give Adam the fruit to eat? 3. Have you chosen to obey God's commands? 4. What temptations does Satan put in your way? 5. What did God promise the world because of man's sin (Gen 3:15)?

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

God did not look at Eve and say, "It was Satan's fault," or "Too bad! Satan tricked you." He put all the blame on Adam and Eve and told them exactly what the consequences would be. Satan never does that. He tempts you to do wrong things, but he never tells you what the consequences will be.

Yes, there are consequences to every choice we make. Nowhere is this more clearly stated than in Paul's words to the Christians at Galatia. Paul wrote, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit (of God) will reap eternal life" (Gal 6:7-8).

Our young people need to take heed to these words. Sex before marriage has consequences. You cannot escape them. Drugs will kill you, if you don't break

the habit. Any bad thing that you are addicted to has you in bondage. Ask God to help you break free.

It does not matter how big a mess your life is in, you cannot blame someone else for it. You cannot blame your parents, or your neighborhood or your friends. You must take the responsibility. You must admit, "It is my fault. I was free to choose to do what is right. I knew what was right, but I did not do it. I chose the wrong way."

God did not make robots that would automatically worship Him. He gave man the freedom to choose to love Him. God does not put any pressure on you. With Satan, it is different. He brings all kinds of pressures on us to make us go his way and he never ever hints at what the consequences will be. We find that out when its too late!

Jesus Christ brought us the good news of God's love. Oh, long before Jesus was born, God had witnesses in the world – prophet, priest and king served Him and their fellow man. But Jesus brought us the final word from the Father and revealed more about God than anyone else had done (Heb 1:1-3). He came to open the door to God's Kingdom even wider than it had ever been open before and to show us God's great heart of love. He said, "For God so loved the world (you and me) that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Was there ever a greater opportunity made to fallen man? "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved -" (Acts 16:31).

TALK ABOUT 1. When Adam disobeyed God's command, who did he blame (Gen 3:12)? Who did Eve blame? 2. Can you blame others for the mistakes you make in life? 3. Does Satan tell us what the consequences of our actions will be? Why not? 4. Who brought God's last words to us (Heb 1:1-3)? 5. How is it possible for God to forgive us for our sins?

BE WISE – CHOOSE JESUS

John wrote, "He (Jesus) came to that which was His own (the Jews), but His own did not receive Him" (John 1:11). For centuries, the prophets had told the Jewish people to expect a Messiah, sent from God. When Jesus Christ came, they were free to choose Him. They could have proclaimed Him to the world as their Lord and Savior, but they did not.

Jesus brought the good news to His own people, but they rejected Him. He was not the kind of Messiah they were expecting. They look for a political leader who would free them from their roman overlords. Jesus came preaching the good news: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," He named their beautiful city, "How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing," He said (Matt 23:37). "The time has come," He said. The Kingdom of god is near. Repent and believe the good news" (Mark 1:15).

Jesus made it quite plain that men and women must repent of their sin and choose the truth. "I tell you the truth," He said, "I am the way and the truth and the