

Lesson 15

A Messiah is Coming



15 The Gospel Tool

Even as it becomes clear that God's people cannot produce this righteousness in their own strength, Old Testament prophets begin to herald the coming of a Messiah who will crush evil, deliver people from their sins, and fill them with the very Spirit of God. The Messiah will be a Prophet who speaks the true words of God, a Priest who brings healing and makes full atonement for the sins of His people, and a King who ushers in a new, worldwide era of righteousness, joy, and peace.

Definitions

Messiah:

Literally means "the anointed one." Although the term is mentioned only twice in the Old Testament, both in Daniel 9, it became the widely used name for God's Promised Deliverer, spoken of in many Old Testament prophecies. True shalom would only be found in the Messiah.

Reconcile:

This word is also translated "to make peace" or "to bring back." It is a compound, Greek word that describes the coming back together of parties into harmony and favor after fellowship has been destroyed. Reconciliation includes the idea that it is a complete work and may be the result of a change or exchange. (blueletterbible.org)

Bible Study

Begin by praying; ask God to open your mind and heart to understand and respond to His Word.

Biblical Background

God raised up many prophets to deliver messages to His people; those prophets consistently spoke of a coming Messiah.

For this study, we are going to look closely at the prophecies of Isaiah, who wrote during one of the darkest periods in the history of God's people.

Isaiah confronted the people with the message of a Holy God who would punish their rebellion and sin, while also offering hope and comfort with the news that God would sovereignly rescue and redeem His people. God would not only bring His people out of their coming captivity, like a second exodus, but He also would usher them into a new messianic age in which He would bring His Kingdom and righteousness to the earth through His coming Messiah.

Introduction: Unable to Produce Righteousness

Read Isaiah 1:1-20

Observation

Describe the charges that God makes against His people in verses 2-4.

How does God describe Israel's condition in verses 5-9?

Interpretation

According to verses 11-17, why is God angry?

How does verse 18 portray God's response to His people's utter sinfulness?

Application

Compare Israel's ability to live righteously with your own. Are you able to keep all of God's laws? Do you know anyone who is able to?



A Messiah is Promised

In Isaiah 1:18, God promised to cleanse His people of their sins. In Isaiah 9:1-7, God begins to elaborate on how that cleansing will come: the text tells of a coming King who will shatter the yoke that oppresses His people and set up an eternal, worldwide kingdom of righteousness and justice.

Read Isaiah 9:1-7 slowly. In the space provided below, record each of the promises God makes to His people about their future:

9:1

9:2

9:3

9:4

9:5

9:6

9:7

Major Works of the Messiah

As Isaiah 9 is read together with other prophecies of a coming Messiah, three major themes emerge. God's anointed deliverer will: crush evil, deliver His people from their sins, and reconnect humanity with God, filling them with the Holy Spirit. Let's explore each of these Messianic themes.

Crush Evil

Read Isaiah 11:1-5

Observation

According to verses 2-4a, what will be the defining characteristics of the Messiah?

How does verse 4b describe the Messiah's response to the wicked?



Isaiah 24 elaborates on Isaiah 11:4b, describing the Lord's devastation of the earth as He brings judgment against evil and wickedness.

Read Isaiah 24:21-23

Observation

According to Isaiah 24:21, who is being punished by the Lord?

How does verse 22 describe the stages of God's judgment against these evil powers?

Interpretation

Who, or what, is being described by the "powers in the heavens above" and "the kings on the earth below?" (hint: read Ephesians 6:12)

Application

God's Kingdom has already come into the world through Jesus, and yet evil has clearly not been thoroughly crushed. Read Revelation 19:11-21 and 20:7-10 which tell of Jesus' return. Drawing from these verses, describe how God will fulfill Isaiah 24 through Jesus' return.

Even as Isaiah 24 speaks of God's judgment, Isaiah 25 includes prophecies of God's amazing grace. Read Isaiah 25:6-8 and describe what God promises to do for His people.



Deliver from Sin

Slowly Read Isaiah 53 which describes the coming Messiah

Observation

According to verses 4-5, what are six things God would accomplish through the suffering of His Messiah?

How does verse 10 describe the role of the Lord in the Messiah's suffering?

Interpretation

Verse 11 says: "by knowledge of him, my righteous servant will justify many." To justify means to declare or make righteous in the sight of God. Based on this, what happens as a result of knowing the Messiah?

Application

Re-read Isaiah 9:6 which makes clear that the coming Messiah will be God. Consider and describe the impact it has upon you to learn that it was God's will to cause Himself to suffer (v.11) in order to bring you peace (v.5)?



Reconnect Humans to God

Read Isaiah 49:5-9

Observation

What do verses 5-6 describe as the servant's (the Messiah's) primary purpose?

Describe several of the primary functions of the Messiah according to Isaiah 49:8-9 and Isaiah 42:6-7.

Interpretation

A covenant is a solemn agreement between two parties. In verse 8, God says that the Messiah will be a "covenant for the people." Who are the people, and what might God mean as He says the Messiah will be a covenant for them?

Application

On average, how much of your week is spent sharing in God's primary purpose for sending the Messiah, Jesus: reconnecting people back into relationship with God?



Conclusion: The Messiah As Prophet, Priest, & King

Review the definitions of prophet, priest, and king listed below from Lesson 4. Then, drawing on the scripture hints provided, name how the prophecies we have just studied point towards the Messiah fulfilling each of these roles:

Prophet

Isaiah 11:1-5

One who brings messages from the Lord, names God's intentions on earth, and advances His purposes.

Priest

Isaiah 53:4-6

One who ministers to God and on behalf of God.

King

Isaiah 9:6-7

One who has delegated authority to represent God and exert His rule on earth.

Spiritual Discipline: Practicing Gratitude

"When we focus on our gratitude, the tide of disappointment goes out and the tide of love rushes in."

Kristin Armstrong



Exercise:

Review the definition of Messiah at the beginning of the lesson and all the good works of the Messiah in restoring shalom.

Use the space below to make a list of specific things that you are grateful for as you consider all that you have received from Jesus, the Messiah.

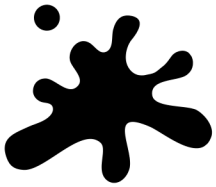
After you have completed your list, close with a prayer of thanks to The Messiah.

"In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Wrapping It Up



Though God's people have consistently lived in rebellion, though they have been completely unable to live into the righteousness for which they were made, and though they are now bruised and broken as a result of their sin, God is not finished.



In His great love, God uses Prophets to pour hope into His people's broken hearts. Prophets tell of a Messiah who will one day come to crush evil, to deliver the people from their sin, and to restore the broken relationship that sin has caused between God and His people.



The promised Messiah would be the perfect Prophet, Priest, and King. He would usher in a new, everlasting Kingdom marked by righteousness, joy, and peace.



Lesson 16



Immanuel: God With Us

16
The Gospel Tool

In the fullness of time, Jesus, the Messiah, began to do all that was prophesied about Him. God the Son became human: Jesus is fully human, and yet, still fully divine. Reversing the pattern of our first parents, Adam and Eve, Jesus lived the life we were created for. He modeled perfect trust, loving submission, and intimate union with God the Father.

Definitions

Incarnation:

The act of grace whereby God became man when Jesus took our human nature and joined it with His divine nature. (biblestudytools.com)

Nature:

The essence of something; the basic characteristics or properties that distinguish something; the “whatness” of something.

Bible Study

Begin by praying; ask God to open your mind and heart to understand and respond to His Word.

Immanuel: God is With Us

In the last lesson, we studied Isaiah’s prophecies of a coming Messiah who would crush evil, deliver from sin, and reconcile humanity with God. Included among Isaiah’s prophecies are these words: “*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel*” (Isaiah 7:14).

Read Matthew 1:18-25

Observation

According to verses 18 and 20, how did Mary conceive?

According to verses 22-23, what is being fulfilled in Jesus’ birth?

What reason does the angel give for his command in verse 21 to name the baby Yeshua-Jesus?



Interpretation

Based on what we have just learned about Jesus' conception (a virgin having the Holy Spirit conceive a child within her) how would you describe Jesus' nature (see definition of nature)?

Read Luke 2:1-21

Observation

In verse 10, what is announced?

According to verse 11, what three titles does the angel give to this baby?

1
2
3

How does verse 20 describe the shepherd's reaction to all they see and hear?

Interpretation

What would you say is the implication or meaning behind each title given to baby Jesus? Feel free to look up the definitions of each title.

Savior:

Messiah:

Lord:

Contrast the grandeur of these titles with the descriptions of Jesus in verses 12 and 16.

Application

Spend some minutes meditating upon the mystery of God becoming human; in response, write a prayer of adoration to God in the space provided.

Incarnation: the Two Natures of Jesus

Background: The mystery of God becoming human is profoundly deep. As the early church sought to understand and correctly teach that Jesus is both human and divine, many voices attempted to explain the relationship between Jesus' two natures by minimizing one of them. An example of this includes the Docetists who claimed that Jesus only seemed to be human, but was in fact God in human form. Church leaders regularly gathered to wrestle with the testimony of Scripture. Finally, in 451 AD at the Council of Chalcedon, and after refuting many heresies, the early church affirmed that Scripture plainly teaches that Jesus is:

"Truly God and truly man...in all things like unto us, without sin...to be acknowledged in two natures...unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably...the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person...the Lord Jesus Christ."

Read 1 John 1:1-3

Observation

As John begins his letter to Christians about Jesus, what evidence do you see in these verses that points to Jesus as both human and divine?

Describe what each of the following passages say about Jesus' humanity:

John 1:14

Colossians 2:9

Luke 2:40

John 19:28

Hebrews 2:14

Describe what each of the following passages say about Jesus' divinity:

Matthew 28:18-20

John 14:16-26

Romans 9:5

Colossians 1:15-17





Application

Read Hebrews 2:17-18. Consider, and then describe: what comfort do you receive from your Lord being fully human, and yet fully divine?

As you consider God becoming human and suffering, how might you respond to someone who claims: “with all the suffering in this world, how can there possibly be a God?”

Jesus Lives a Model Life

Background: What is God doing by becoming human?

The angel announced to Joseph that the child born to Mary would be called Yeshua (Jesus) because “He would save His people from their sins.” The Biblical picture of salvation not only includes the idea of being saved *from* something (sin and death), but also being saved *for* something. Humanity was designed to be perfectly pure and holy, like God, and out of relationship with God, to live lives filled with God-given purpose.

Although sin separated us from God and brought futility, pain, and death, Jesus is the beginning of God’s new creation. Jesus is a 2nd Adam (see Romans 5:12-21) who Himself says, “I am making everything new.” This new creation first begins to unfold as we witness Jesus living a life of perfect purity and abiding relationship with God the Father; this leads to fruitful service to God. Let’s begin to explore Jesus’ life on earth and what it means for us.



Jesus is Filled and in Relationship with the Holy Spirit

Read Luke 2:39-52

Observation

How does Luke describe Jesus’ character, even as a young child?



Interpretation

Read Luke 1:35 and answer: what is the source of Jesus' holiness, wisdom, grace, understanding, and relationship with God?

How is Jesus different from every other human being who has been born into this world?

Jesus' Relationship with His Father

To understand Jesus' and His ministry, we have to look at His relationship with God the Father. To do this, we are going to look at a number of passages from the book of John. If possible, please look up all of them (or at least seven).

Observation

Briefly record how each verse describes Jesus' relationship with God the Father.

John 1:18

John 5:19

John 5:20

John 5:30

John 6:38

John 6:46

John 6:57

John 7:16

John 8:28-29

John 8:54

John 10:25

John 10:38

John 14:9-11



Interpretation

Considering all that you have read in these passages from John, briefly describe, in your own words, the relationship between Jesus (God the Son) and God the Father.

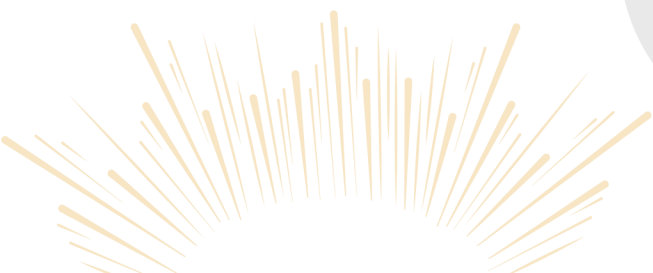
Application

Let's circle back to Jesus as the beginning of a new creation. As the 2nd Adam, Jesus brings a restoration of God's original design for intimate relationship and close communication.

Romans 8:29 says: "it is God's will for each follower of Jesus "to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that [Jesus] might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters!"

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to consider how much your life reflects the relationship that Jesus has with God the Father.

Journal your reflections and your prayers for growth into Jesus' likeness here:



Spiritual Discipline: Celebration

"The Christian should be an alleluia from head to foot!"

Augustine of Hippo

(Foster, Celebration of Discipline)

"David was dancing before the Lord with all his might."
2 Samuel 6:14-15.

Your assignment (or spiritual discipline) is to have a celebration in honor of Jesus, Immanuel, God with Us.

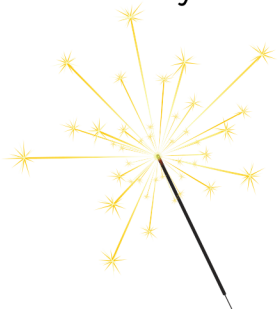
Your celebration can be as simple or elaborate, spontaneous or planned as you choose. Be creative, be festive, and have fun knowing that your celebration will be in keeping with celebrations of God's presence practiced throughout history.

"The joy of the Lord is our strength."

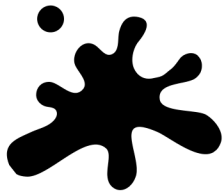
Nehemiah 8:10

Need a few ideas?

- Put on your hiking boots, pack your favorite trail mix, and go on your favorite nature walk with a buddy. Spend time talking about the good news of the gospel and the amazing gift that God is with you wherever your trail may lead.
- Invite guests and bake cupcakes or go buy a special snack or take out food. Set a nice table and dress up, put on your favorite worship music, and as you enjoy your beautiful surroundings, celebrate together in preparation for the wedding feast that is to come when Jesus returns for His bride. At your celebration, read Revelation 21.



Wrapping It Up



God designed humans to bear His image on earth and to live in intimate relationship with Him. Because of sin, humans have been unable to live the lives for which they were created.



And so, Jesus, the prophesied Messiah, was sent into the world to reverse the pattern and effects of sin set by our first parents, Adam and Eve. Jesus is fully human, and yet, still fully divine. He lived the life for which we were created and modeled perfect trust, loving submission, and intimate relationship with God the Father.



This was made possible by Jesus having the Holy Spirit within Him since conception. Jesus models, and later, by the gift of His indwelling Spirit, makes possible the relationship with God and life of purpose that we were designed for.



Discussion Guide

For Lessons 15 & 16

Open the time of equipping with a prayer asking God for learning, retention, and the ability to grow more comfortable in talking about the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Building Upon the Foundation

45 minutes

Review Lesson 15: A Messiah is Coming

Have a volunteer read section 15 from the Gospel Tool, printed below.

15
The Gospel Tool

Even as it becomes clear that God's people cannot produce this righteousness in their own strength, Old Testament prophets begin to herald the coming of a Messiah who will crush evil, deliver people from their sins, and fill them with the very Spirit of God. The Messiah will be a Prophet who speaks the true words of God, a Priest who brings healing and makes full atonement for the sins of His people, and a King who ushers in a new, worldwide era of righteousness, joy, and peace.

The facilitator or group can choose one or more of the following activities:

1. Ice Breaker

- Have 2-3 people describe something you own which regularly needs to be put or brought back together.
- How does it feel when separated things are reconciled or brought back together?



2. Major Works of the Messiah

The coming Messiah would be responsible to do three primary things: crush evil, deliver from sin, and reconnect humans to God. Have three volunteers look up and read the Bible passages below. As a group, share your insights on the work of the Messiah from each passage:

- Read Isaiah 11:1-5
- Read Isaiah 53:4-5
- Read Isaiah 49:5-9

3. Anointing

The Heidelberg Catechism is an historical, discipleship tool. Together, read the Question and Answer from the catechism written to the right which describes Christ the Messiah, the “Anointed One” as Prophet, Priest, and King. Note the activities that are described for each.

How could you practice each of these three offices in your daily life?

Q & A 31

Q. Why is he called “Christ,” meaning “anointed”?

A. Because he has been ordained by God the Father and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit to be our chief prophet and teacher who fully reveals to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our deliverance;

our only high priest who has delivered us by the one sacrifice of his body, and who continually pleads our cause with the Father;

and our eternal king who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who guards us and keeps us in the freedom he has won for us.

4. New Insights

As you think about Jesus-The Promised Messiah, what is one new insight or area of thankfulness? What has being reconciled to God meant to you personally?

Review Lesson 16: Immanuel: God With Us

Have a volunteer read section 16 from the Gospel Tool, printed below.

16 *In the fullness of time, Jesus, the Messiah, began to do all that was prophesied about Him. God the Son became human: Jesus is fully human, and yet, still fully divine. Reversing the pattern of our first parents, Adam and Eve, Jesus lived the life we were created for. He modeled perfect trust, loving submission, and intimate union with God the Father.*

The facilitator or group can choose one or more of the following activities:

1. In Relationship with the Father

These verses are from Lesson 16. Look up and have volunteers read at least five of the following verses from the book of John. After reading a verse, have the reader share what their verse tells about the Father and Son relationship.

John 1:18

John 5:19

John 5:20

John 5:30

John 6:38

John 6:46

John 6:57

John 7:16

John 8:28-29

John 8:54

John 10:25

John 10:38

John 14:9-11



2. Second Adam

In this Lesson, we learned that the Bible refers to Jesus as the 2nd Adam. In your own words, explain what this means and why this title would be used for Jesus.

3. Life Model

Does your life model Jesus' nature and reflect staying in relationship with the Father? Explain ways that it does, as well as opportunities for growth.

Building Bridges

15 minutes

Jesus gave them this answer: "very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

John 5:19

Name

Consider and name aloud how you see or sense God working around you in your church and community.

Pray

Once you have named a few situations, spend time in silent prayer, thanking God for His work that you are noticing, and ask Him for any guidance about ways that He might have you participate with Him. Spend 5 minutes in silence, giving people a chance to listen to the Lord (a scripture, a thought, a picture or words may be some of the various ways you may sense His guidance).

Share

After you have finished listening, share anything you sensed the Lord saying with the group. If you have sensed guidance and there is a confirming witness within the group, pray asking the Lord for His empowerment and timing for joining in His work.

Be sure to share updates in the coming weeks on any acts of obedience. Remember, joining in God's work means being faithful to God's guidance and trusting the Lord with the outcome. Our obedience and willingness to serve pleases the Lord.



Building Essentials

15 minutes

Facilitators: you may opt to break into smaller groups of 2 or 3 or remain in a larger group for this portion, depending on your location and circumstances.

Scripture Memory

Recite Romans 6:23 and John 3:16-17.

Personal Accountability and Encouragement

Take turns sharing your experience of practicing one of the spiritual discipline activities from the last two weeks: [Gratitude](#) or [Celebration](#). As you listen to one another, you may gain ideas to nurture your own walk with the Lord.

Share any personal prayer requests that you may have, so that the group can pray for one another.

Prayer for the Lost and for Effective Witness

Share any updates from your “needs hope” prayer list. Pray for each member of your Discipleship Group to be strengthened in faith and love to share the gospel.



SAMPLE

