

## *Jesus Fulfills the Old Testament, - Economy of Salvation*

*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.*

*... he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Most Christians will hear this poem as a summary of what the Church believes about Jesus. Some might therefore be surprised to learn that it was written hundreds of years before the time of Jesus, in the Old Testament book of Isaiah<sup>1</sup>.

**The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraph 236 states;**

**The Fathers of the Church distinguish between theology (theologia) and economy (oikonomia). "Theology" refers to the mystery of God's inmost life within the Blessed Trinity and "economy" to all the works by which God reveals himself and communicates his life. Through the oikonomia the theologia is revealed to us; but conversely, the theologia illuminates the whole oikonomia. God's works reveal who he is in himself; the mystery of his inmost being enlightens our understanding of all his works. So it is, analogously, among human persons. A person discloses himself in his actions, and the better we know a person, the better we understand his actions.**

This session won't focus on theology, the mystery of God's inmost life within the Blessed Trinity, but will focus in on economy, the works by which God reveals himself and communicates his life. More specifically, this will be a treatment of Jesus being a fulfillment of the Old Testament covenants between God and Man.

For clarification, there is a distinction between a contract and a covenant. Marriage is a covenant, where the persons give themselves totally and unreservedly to the other. Prostitution is a contract, a transmittal of goods and services that can be breached if one is unsatisfied with the other. A covenant is giving of one's self. A contract is giving of one's services. Covenants between God and man entail a giving of each other totally. This is most clearly illustrated in the Crucifixion. We must die to ourselves, our wills, selfish desires, narcissism, and give ourselves totally to God's will, as Christ gave himself, to the point of death on a cross, for us.

### Fulfilling the Law and the Prophets

- **The Old Testament cannot be understood without the New Testament.**
- **Jesus Christ lifts the veil from the Old Testament so we can see its full meaning.**
- **The promises of the five Old Testament covenants are perfectly fulfilled in Christ.**

When Jesus said that he had come to "fulfill" the Law and the Prophets<sup>2</sup>, most of his hearers probably thought of the long-anticipated restoration of the Davidic kingdom. Only later did Jesus' disciples understand how the Scriptures they knew had prepared them to understand the real truth about Jesus. He would fulfill all those promises in the Scriptures. But he would fulfill them by suffering and dying as Isaiah had prophesied.

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 53

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 5:17

*And taking the twelve, he said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise." But they understood none of these things; this saying was hid from them, and they did not grasp what was said.<sup>3</sup>*

Although Jesus did what he could to prepare them for what was to come, the disciples really understood it all only in hindsight.

But once they did understand, they could see how perfectly Jesus fulfilled all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament. In fact, when the Apostles preached to Jewish audiences, their theme was always the same: how all the things the Scriptures had taught them to expect were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

*And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee."<sup>4</sup>*

Just as he did for his disciples, Jesus Christ lifts the veil from the Old Testament for us, so that we can understand the full meaning of what we only partly understood before. Moses wore a veil after he came down from Sinai because the people were afraid to look at his glowing face. St Paul tells us that those who read the Old Testament without the New are still blocked from seeing what Moses really meant:

*for to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their minds; but when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed.<sup>5</sup>*

<b>Jesus perfectly fulfills the promises of every one of the five covenants in the Old Testament:</b>
1. With <b>Adam</b> , because Jesus restores our relationship with God that was broken by Adam's sin:
2. With <b>Noah</b> , because the waters no longer destroy but rather redeem us:
3. With <b>Abraham</b> , because through Jesus <sup>6</sup> all people of the world are blessed:
4. With <b>Moses</b> , because the righteousness demanded by the Law is given to us in Jesus Christ:
5. With <b>David</b> , because Jesus, the Son of David, is Lord of all the nations.

### The Church Before Jesus

- **From the beginning, God had a plan to save us.**
- **God told his people about that plan long before Jesus was born.**
- **The early Church Fathers called Abraham, David, and other faithful people "Christians" because they expected the coming of the Christ.**

**The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraph 751 states;**

**The word "Church" (Latin ecclesia, from the Greek ek-kalein, to "call out of") means a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose. Ekklesia is used frequently in the Greek Old Testament for the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people. By calling itself "Church," the first community of Christian believers recognized itself as heir to that assembly. In the Church, God is "calling together" his people from all the ends of the earth. The equivalent Greek term Kyriak, from which the English word Church and the German Kirche are derived, means "what belongs to the Lord."**

<sup>3</sup> Luke 18:31-34

<sup>4</sup> St Paul in Acts 13:32:33

<sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:14-16

<sup>6</sup> Abraham's descendant

In fact, the history of the Church really begins with Creation. In the beginning, when God created us in his image, he meant for us to live happily with him forever. When we disobeyed him, that did not change the plan. But it did mean that we would have to be saved from ourselves.

Because we disobey God, we deserve death. All of us, even the greatest saints, are sinners. But God does not want a single one of us to be lost. Although we deserve death, God was willing to pay any price to bring us back to him. As soon as Eve and Adam sinned, God already had a plan to save us. That plan was to send his only Son to die in our place.

Even in Old Testament times, the people of God knew about God's plan. Most of them did not understand it very well, but the prophets had told them what would happen. All through the Old Testament, the prophets speak of a time when God's Anointed One will come to save his people. One reason Jesus' message spread so quickly was that the whole Jewish world was expecting a Messiah.

In fact, the early Church Fathers insisted that faithful people like Abraham, David, and the prophets could correctly be called Christians, because they expected God's Anointed One, the Christ.

"All these," said the historian Eusebius, "whose righteousness won them commendation, going back from Abraham himself to the first man, might be described as Christians in fact if not in name, without departing far from the truth... Obviously we must regard the religion proclaimed in recent years to all nations through Christ's teaching as none other than the first, most ancient, and most primitive of all religions, discovered by Abraham and his followers, God's beloved."<sup>7</sup>

## 1. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Adam

- **The human family was created in the beginning as an image of the perfect love of the Trinity.**
- **Early Christians pointed out that the Gospel was first told to Adam and Eve.**

*But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.<sup>8</sup>*

<i>Adam</i>	<i>Jesus, the New Adam</i>
Adam was "the son of God" Mt 1:1	Jesus was the only-begotten Son of God
Adam was tempted by the devil, and fell.	Jesus was tempted by the devil, but resisted.
Adam disobeyed God	Jesus was perfectly obedient, even to death.
Adam brought sin and death to all humanity.	Jesus saved all humanity from sin and death.
Adam lost our place in paradise.	Jesus restores our place in paradise.

**The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraph 504 states;**

**The word Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary's womb because he is the New Adam, who inaugurates the new creation: "The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven."<sup>9</sup> From his conception, Christ's humanity is filled with the Holy Spirit, for God "gives him the Spirit without measure."<sup>10</sup> From "his fullness" as the head of redeemed humanity "we have all received, grace upon grace."<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>7</sup> Understanding the Scriptures – Scott Hahn, Page 420

<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

<sup>9</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47

<sup>10</sup> John 3:34

<sup>11</sup> John 1:16; Colossians 1:18

*“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,”* God says in Genesis 1:26. If there is only one God, who is “us”? Some scholars would say that “us” refers to ancient mythology in which God was only the chief of a court of heavenly beings. Others would say that the plural is a “plurality of majesty,” a feature of Hebrew grammar similar to the way the Queen of England refers to herself as “we.”

But many early Christians saw it as an expression of the Trinity. We are created in the image of God, and because God is three Persons, God’s nature is social. *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply...’”*<sup>12</sup>

Not just the individual person is created in the image of God, but from the beginning, God had a plan to save his creatures from sin and death. Christian readers can see that he revealed that plan to Adam and Eve as soon as they confessed their sin. Genesis 3:15 is God’s curse on the serpent:

*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

Elsewhere in Scripture, the word “seed” usually refers to the offspring of a man. The “seed” of a woman could only be one man in history: Jesus Christ, who was born of a woman but was not the seed of a man. The serpent was an apparition of Satan, who will be defeated by Christ (*“bruise your head”* could be more literally translated *“crush your head”*), but only at the price of Christ’s own crucifixion, when his heel would be nailed to the cross.

The early Christians called this verse the “Protoevangelium,” which is Latin for “first Gospel.” The first people to hear the Good News about Christ were Adam and Eve.

#### **The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraph 410 states;**

**After his fall, man was not abandoned by God. On the contrary, God calls him and in a mysterious way heralds the coming victory over evil and his restoration from his fall. This passage in Genesis is called the Protoevangelium (“first gospel”): the first announcement of the Messiah and Redeemer, of a battle between the serpent and the Woman, and of the final victory of a descendant of hers.**

## 2. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Noah

- **Noah’s flood was a new creation.**
- **The Flood was a type of our own new creation in baptism**

The early Christians always kept the connection between baptism and the Flood in mind. In the early days of the Church, new converts were baptized at Easter. The season of Lent was a time for the “catechumens” (as they called converts who were learning their catechism) to do penance and learn about the truths of their new-found faith. And Lent, as you might know, lasts forty days and forty nights – exactly the time it took the Flood to reduce the earth to nothing but water. In other words, the catechumens spent forty days and forty nights destroying their old worlds so they could be newly created in the waters of baptism.

<i>Creation</i>	<i>The Flood</i> <i>(a new creation)</i>	<i>Baptism</i> <i>(our own new creation)</i>
	<b>Forty days and forty nights of rain prepare for a new creation.</b>	<b>Forty days and forty nights of fasting and penance prepare for our new creation.</b>
<b>Creation begins with nothing but water.</b>	<b>The new creation begins with nothing but water.</b>	<b>Our new creation begins with nothing but water.</b>
<b>God’s Spirit moves across the waters.</b>	<b>God’s Spirit moves across the waters.</b>	<b>God’s spirit comes to us with the water.</b>

<sup>12</sup> Genesis 1:27-28

**God tells the first people to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”**

**God tells Noah and his family to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”**

**God tells us to “make disciples of all nations.” In other words, to fill the earth with Christians.**

### 3. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Abraham

- **God promised Abraham that all people would be blessed through him.**
- **The promise of universal blessing was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.**
- **By faith in Christ, we all become heirs of the promise to Abraham.**

*Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves."<sup>13</sup>*

*“All the families of the earth will be blessed”* – that promise of universal blessing was the most incredible promise God made to Abram (soon to be known as Abraham). And it was not fulfilled until the coming of Jesus Christ.

Some of the promise to Abraham is already fulfilled in the Old Testament. Abraham’s descendants did become a great nation. And in some ways, Israel was always a blessing to the rest of the nations. As long as a faithful remnant kept alive the knowledge of the True God, the word of God could continue to the nations.

God’s promises are often fulfilled in an ascending spiral. That universal blessing promised to Abraham went much further than the nation of Israel. Every single family on earth would be blessed through Abraham. Only with the resurrection of Jesus Christ was that promise fulfilled. The death and resurrection of Christ freed all people of all nations from bondage to sin.

### 4. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Moses

“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you,”<sup>14</sup> Moses told his people in the wilderness. Yet the end of Deuteronomy tells us that no prophet like Moses had yet appeared. “And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,” says Deuteronomy 34:10.

Not until Jesus Christ did another prophet like Moses arise. And the Gospel writers constantly remind us just how much like Moses Jesus was:

<i>Moses</i>	<i>Jesus, the New Moses</i>
<b>Born in the reign of a ruthless pharaoh.</b>	<b>Born in the reign of the ruthless Herod.</b>
<b>Escaped when Pharaoh ordered all the male children of the Hebrews killed.</b>	<b>Escaped when Herod ordered all the male children of Bethlehem killed.</b>
<b>Exiled in Midian before his ministry.</b>	<b>Exiled in Egypt before his ministry.</b>
<b>Passed through the waters of the Red Sea.</b>	<b>Passed through the waters of the Jordan in Baptism.</b>
<b>Tested in the wilderness 40 years.</b>	<b>Tested in the wilderness 40 days.</b>
<b>Fasted for 40 days and nights at Sinai.</b>	<b>Fasted for 40 days and nights in the wilderness.</b>

<sup>13</sup> Genesis 12:1-3 Alternate Version from the footnote in the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition - Ignatius Bible

<sup>14</sup> Deuteronomy 18:15

First sign: changed water into blood.	First sign: changed water into wine, later wine into blood.
Brought the Law down from a mountain.	Taught the New Law from a mountain.
Gave Israel manna and water in the wilderness.	Gave all people true heavenly food and spiritual drink.
Led Israel out of bondage in Egypt.	Led all people out of bondage of sin and death.

### The New Exodus

The Passover looked forward as well as backward: backward to the deliverance from bondage in Egypt, forward to the coming deliverance brought by the Messiah.

The Rabbinic tradition held that the Messiah would come on Passover night.

Jesus instituted the Eucharist on Passover night. In the Eucharist, the Messiah comes to us.

**The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraph 1403 states;**

**At the Last Supper the Lord himself directed his disciples' attention toward the fulfillment of the Passover in the kingdom of God: "I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."<sup>15</sup> Whenever the Church celebrates the Eucharist she remembers this promise and turns her gaze "to him who is to come." In her prayer she calls for his coming: "*Marana tha!*" "Come, Lord Jesus!"<sup>16</sup> "May your grace come and this world pass away!"<sup>17</sup>**

### Jesus the Passover Lamb

<i>Passover Lamb</i>	<i>Jesus, the Lamb of God</i>
The lamb must be without blemish (Exodus 12:5)	Jesus was without sin.
The lambs were slaughtered by the priests beginning at the sixth hour on the day of Preparation.	Jesus was handed over to be crucified at "about the sixth hour" on the day of Preparation (John 19:14-16).
No bones of the lamb could be broken (Exodus 12:46).	Jesus' bones were not broken, although soldiers broke the bones of other crucified criminals (John 19:32-33).
A branch of hyssop was used for sprinkling the blood of the lamb (Ex 12:22).	The sponge of vinegar was given to Jesus on a branch of hyssop (John 19:29).
The high priest wore a holy linen tunic when making the sacrifice (Leviticus 16:4).	Jesus, our High Priest, wore a seamless linen tunic before his crucifixion.

### 5. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With David

The Church is the new Kingdom of Israel, and Jesus is its King. Jesus, as head of the Church, is the King of the new Israel, which is no longer a nation or an ethnic group but rather the community of all the faithful every-

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 16:29; Luke 22:18, Mark 14:25

<sup>16</sup> Revelation 1:4, Revelation 22:20, 1 Corinthians 16:22

<sup>17</sup> Didache 10:6, Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: 1942-) 248,180

where. The international aspect of the Davidic covenant – the promise that the Son of David would be Lord of all the nations – is perfectly fulfilled in Jesus.

The Son of David would also build the Temple, as Solomon did. But Jesus spoke of his own body as a temple – a Temple that exists not just in Jerusalem, but everywhere believers gather to celebrate the Eucharist.

Finally, the kingdom of the Son of David was to be everlasting. Only in Jesus, the perfect Son of David, does this promise find its complete fulfillment.

The New Testament gives Jesus four titles that refer specifically to the Davidic covenant:

1. **Son of David.** Jesus was a direct descendant of David “according to the flesh” (that is, through his human ancestors). He inherits all the things promised to the Son of David<sup>18</sup>.
2. **King of Israel.** Although Pilate called Jesus “King of the Jews” ironically, Jesus acknowledged that the title really did belong to him, though not in the way some of the Jews expected<sup>19</sup>. Jesus is King of the New Israel, which is the Church.
3. **Christ or Messiah (“Anointed One”).** The kings of the line of David were anointed with oil to signify that they were God’s chosen leaders on earth. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at his baptism.
4. **Son of God.** When he was anointed, the Davidic king was adopted as “Son of God”<sup>20</sup>. That foreshadowed the coming of Jesus Christ, the true only-begotten Son of God.

The prophecies cited in the New Testament as predicting the death and resurrection of Jesus were originally understood as referring to the restoration of Israel<sup>21</sup>. The resurrection of Jesus in body and our union with that body in Baptism effect the restoration of Israel and the nations.

In Jesus’ time, many Jews expected that the promised restoration would look like the kingdom of Solomon. They did not take into account God’s love for his whole creation. The restored Israel would be more than just a kingdom at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. It would be a glorious new kingdom of righteousness, one that ruled over the whole world. Israel would be restored as the Church of Christ.

<i>Son of David (Old Kings of Israel)</i>	<i>Son of David (Jesus Christ)</i>
<b>Descended from David.</b>	<b>Descended from David</b>
<b>Anointed by Levites.</b>	<b>Baptized by John, a Levite.</b>
<b>Ruler of an international empire.</b>	<b>Lord of all the nations.</b>
<b>Paid homage by foreign princes.</b>	<b>Paid homage by the Magi.</b>
<b>Builds the Temple.</b>	<b>Rebuilds the temple of his body.</b>
<b>Promised an everlasting kingdom.</b>	<b>Receives a truly everlasting kingdom.</b>

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 89:19-37

<sup>19</sup> John 18:33-37

<sup>20</sup> 2 Samuel 7:14

<sup>21</sup> Hosea 6:2

## Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 4, Chapter 26, Section 1

**The Treasure Hid in the Scriptures is Christ; The True Exposition of the Scriptures is to Be Found in the Church Alone.**

If any one, therefore, reads the Scriptures with attention, he will find in them an account of Christ, and a foreshadowing of the new calling (*vocation*). For Christ is the treasure which was hid in the field,<sup>22</sup> that is, in this world (for "the field is the world"<sup>23</sup>); but the treasure hid in the Scriptures is Christ, since He was pointed out by means of types and parables. Hence His human nature could not be understood, prior to the consummation of those things which had been predicted, that is, the advent of Christ. And therefore it was said to Daniel the prophet: "Shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of consummation, until many learn, and knowledge be completed. For at that time, when the dispersion shall be accomplished, they shall know all these things."<sup>24</sup> But Jeremiah also says, "In the last days they shall understand these things."<sup>25</sup> For every prophecy, before its fulfillment, is to men full of enigmas and ambiguities. But when the time has arrived, and the prediction has come to pass, then the prophecies have a clear and certain exposition. And for this reason, indeed, when at this present time the law is read to the Jews, it is like a fable; for they do not possess the explanation of all things pertaining to the advent of the Son of God, which took place in human nature; but when it is read by the Christians, it is a treasure, hid indeed in a field, but brought to light by the cross of Christ, and explained, both enriching the understanding of men, and showing forth the wisdom of God and declaring His dispensations with regard to man, and forming the kingdom of Christ beforehand, and preaching by anticipation the inheritance of the holy Jerusalem, and proclaiming beforehand that the man who loves God shall arrive at such excellency as even to see God, and hear His word, and from the hearing of His discourse be glorified to such an extent, that others cannot behold the glory of his countenance, as was said by Daniel: "Those who do understand, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and many of the righteous as the stars for ever and ever."<sup>26</sup> Thus, then, I have shown it to be, if any one read the Scriptures. For thus it was that the Lord discoursed with, the disciples after His resurrection from the dead, proving to them from the Scriptures themselves "that Christ must suffer, and enter into His glory, and that remission of sins should be preached in His name throughout all the world."<sup>27</sup> And the disciple will be perfected, and rendered like the householder, "who brings forth from his treasure things new and old."<sup>28</sup>

Catholic Encyclopedia - <http://newadvent.org/>

Eternal Sonship of Christ - [http://catholic.com/library/Eternal\\_Sonship\\_of\\_Christ.asp](http://catholic.com/library/Eternal_Sonship_of_Christ.asp)

Divinity of Christ - [http://catholic.com/library/Divinity\\_of\\_Christ.asp](http://catholic.com/library/Divinity_of_Christ.asp)

Writings from a convert, author and producer Steven Ray - <http://catholic-convert.com/Default.aspx?tabid=83>

Writings from a cradle Catholic Dr Marcellino D'Ambrosio - <http://www.crossroadsinitiative.com>

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Catholic Radio - Kansas City - [www.kexs.com](http://www.kexs.com) World Wide - [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com)

<sup>22</sup> Matthew 13:44

<sup>23</sup> Matthew 13:38

<sup>24</sup> Daniel 12:4,7

<sup>25</sup> Jeremiah 23:20

<sup>26</sup> Daniel 12:3

<sup>27</sup> Luke 24:26,47

<sup>28</sup> Matthew 13:52