

## **Lesson 8**

### **Jesus—He Revealed God to Man**

You have come to the most important lesson of the course. In each lesson we have had an opportunity to hear messages and examine the life of a great man in God's service. The words and actions of these men speak for themselves. We have indeed heard from the prophets.

We have heard truths concerning the nature of God, the nature of sin, the need for judgment, the love and concern of God for us, and the plan He provides to save us. We have heard prophets tell people to expect the arrival of a truly great One. They have called Him the MESSIAH.

We have heard. The question is, have we listened with open minds and hearts? Sometimes we hear but have our minds clogged with other matters and do not truly listen. The main purpose of this course has been to help us really listen and understand what the messages from the prophets mean to us personally. We are responsible to think about these lessons and act in accordance with what we have learned.

One writer of sacred literature has said it like this We must pay more careful attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. We must not ignore what we have heard. In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But now, says this writer, God has spoken through One who is the true

revelation of God's love; this One being the Word of God to all mankind.

This true revelation of God, of whom the prophets spoke, is the expected Messiah. When He began to speak for Himself, those who heard Him were amazed. They said, "His message has authority!" In this lesson we will learn more about the mystery of this One whose name was Jesus. We will let Him speak to us through His Words, actions, and revealed truths.

In this lesson you will study . . .

Of Him the Prophets Spoke

His Message Has Authority

He Is the Way and the Truth

This lesson will help you . . . List ways in which Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecies.

Explain some basic teachings of Jesus.

Explain why a sinless sacrifice was required.

Respond to God's loving invitation.

OF HIM THE PROPHETS SPOKE

"This is what the Lord says: *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim salvation . . .*

*Listen, listen to . . . .*

*Give ear and come to Me; Hear Me that your soul may live."*

In many such words as these, sent by God through the lips of the prophet Isaiah, it was promised long ago that mankind would receive GOOD NEWS. This good news would be for the whole world, not limited to a clan or religious group. We have learned that this good news was to begin with the birth of a child. We have noted that the prophets foretold many details concerning the birth, the character, and the work of the One who would bring light out of darkness.

These prophecies were being fulfilled one night in Bethlehem of Judea, when the virgin, Mary, gave birth to a son. Heavenly light filled the sky and an angel announced the birth, saying, "I bring you GOOD NEWS of great joy that will be for all people. A Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah." God revealed to Mary that the child was that IMMANUEL (God Among Us) of whom the prophets spoke, and that His earthly name was to be called Jesus, which means "The Lord's Salvation."

Just as we have allowed the experiences and words of the prophets to speak for themselves, let's now open our minds and hearts to this consideration of Jesus, the Messiah. The first truth we note in such a study is that almost every detail of His life has had some mention in prophecy. No other person was ever the subject of such accurate prophecies concerning His birth, life, characteristics, and ministry.

Examples of Specific Prophecies Concerning Jesus, the Messiah

*His lineage.* Beginning with God's own words to Eve, the lineage of Jesus, the Messiah, was predicted, broadly at first, through Noah, and as we have seen, through Abraham, and David.

*His birth.* He was to be born in Bethlehem, of a virgin. The event of His birth was to be accompanied by supernatural signs.

*His life on earth.* He was to be preceded by a messenger, as the voice of one calling in the desert. He was to be received as a king and a prophet. He was to perform miracles. He was to live without sin. He was to be empowered by the Spirit of God.

*His characteristics.* He was to be the seed of woman. God was to *be* revealed in Him. He was to be a suffering servant, completely given to His mission of love and redemption. He was to be the Redeemer, the Perfect Love Sacrifice who was to fulfill the symbol of animal sacrifices.

*His submission and restored glory.* He was to submit in love to humiliation and be restored to triumph and heavenly glory. He was to be wounded and to suffer in silence. He was to be the Lamb of God, offered up as the Perfect Sacrifice to redeem people from the penalty of sin. As the sacrifice provided by God was to ransom Abraham's son, so was this Perfect Sacrifice, the Messiah, to be provided as a ransom for all humanity. He was to be mercy from God, revealed to mankind. He was to suffer with the wicked, even though the accusation against Him was false, and He was without guilt. He was to be betrayed by a friend.

He was to be victorious over all and resume His eternal place in Heaven.

Prophecies concerning Jesus, the Messiah, were spoken not only through the great prophets whose words we have heard, but also through other servants of God.

For example, the angel said to Joseph, “She will bring forth a son, and you will call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

The angel said to the virgin Mary, “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a son, and will call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest.”

Mary said, “He has helped His servant Jacob (Israel) in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and His seed forever.”

Simeon held the baby Jesus in his arms, when the child was brought to the temple. He spoke as the Lord revealed truth to his heart, saying, “My eyes have seen the salvation which God has prepared before the face of all people.”

How marvelous is the plan of God! He called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and promised through this seed to bless the nations. Surely they were of the elect, for if we follow the teachings of the revelations, we come to see that it is through the seed of Abraham; Isaac, and Jacob that the Messiah comes to redeem mankind from the destruction of sin. In looking at the names of the family line in which Jesus, the Messiah, was born, it is important

to note that Joseph is not called the father of Jesus. We see that Jesus the Messiah was born miraculously of the virgin Mary. This mysterious birth is not of man; it is a miracle of God.

### We Have Heard the Truth From the Prophets

There is sufficient evidence so that scholars, as well as common men who seek truth, are impressed at the fulfillment of prophecy. Actually, the entire prophetic word has as its central focus the person and ministry of Jesus the Messiah. Without Him there would be little meaning in much that the prophets have said. It is obvious that great prophets, such as Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah would speak of things which they knew were most important for us to hear. When a prophet of God says he has good news for us, surely we must not hesitate to receive it!

### **FOR YOU TO DO**

**1** Circle the letter of each TRUE statement.

**a** God Himself foretold of a coming Redeemer.

**b** God inspired David to write psalms which contain references to the person and work of Jesus, the Messiah.

**c** God inspired Isaiah to foretell many details concerning the Suffering Servant who would come to fulfill the plan for redemption.

**d** God revealed to the virgin Mary, Joseph, and Simeon truths concerning Jesus, the Messiah.

## HIS MESSAGE HAS AUTHORITY

There was something mysteriously different about Jesus, the Messiah. He appeared to be much like other persons. That is, He was born as a baby, grew to manhood, lived and worked as other people do. In physical, bodily appearance He did not seem different from the prophets before Him. But His Spirit made Him unique. His Spirit was not like man's spirit, created of God. God was revealed in Him. He was the Word of God, manifested not in the form of a book, as other revelations of **God** were, but in the form of a man who could be seen, touched, and approached by man. Through the teachings, miracles, and humility of this One, God's supreme love was revealed. It was this Spirit within that spoke with divine authority.

As Jesus, the Messiah, grew from childhood He was submissive to those experiences which were common to people so that people could see that He understood their needs and weaknesses. They could recognize in Him the outreach and the love of God.

After He had been confirmed by John at the River Jordan, Jesus, the Messiah, began His work of teaching and proclaiming the truth. He taught people how to live in the way that would please God. He taught them, as the prophets had before Him, that God would punish sin but would provide a way of salvation for those who would accept it. Let's examine briefly some of the teachings of Jesus, the Messiah. We will discover that they fulfill completely what we have heard from the prophets.

## The Importance of God's Word

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus faced one of the same problems that is common to all of us: Satan tried to tempt Him. Of course Jesus, the Messiah, has all power over Satan. As an example to us, He demonstrated the power of the written Word of God. He said, "It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Bread, which satisfies the appetite of the flesh, can represent to us the earthly things we seek. Satan tries to tempt us to stray from God and to get our minds on acquiring the things of this life or chasing after earthly pleasures. Jesus, the Messiah, taught the importance of remaining faithful, by accepting and following the revelations of God. It is most significant that He emphasized this at the beginning of His earthly ministry, in that saying which we should remember always: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Jesus continued to reveal the Scriptures and quote them in all His teachings. He pointed out to His followers Scripture portions which indicate that His life and words were in fulfillment of prophecy. Man was to know that God's will and divine love are revealed through His Word, and this Word is to be our guide from birth to death.

## The Justice and Judgment of God

Jesus taught very clearly about divine righteousness and holy justice. In strong words He

pronounced judgment upon those who allow their lives to be ruled by sin. The righteous and just character of God requires that those who reject Him must stand under His judgment. Those who will not be penitent and receive forgiveness from God will be punished by everlasting fire. Quoting David and Isaiah, Jesus warned people to repent and escape judgment.

### The Love and Concern of God

Jesus taught that God is like a loving father to His people, deeply concerned and interested in the details of their lives. People are His highest creation, and when they live in accordance with His plan for them, they are His great joy. When they reject and disobey Him, He is grieved and longs to see them turn to Him. Jesus said that God actively seeks people. He looks for them, calls them, and offers them salvation. Jesus demonstrated this in His earthly life by the fact that He did not avoid sinners. He sought them. He visited them, talked to them, and showed the love and concern of God among them in many ways.

### The Penalty for Sin and the Reconciliation

Jesus explained through sermons, parables, and illustrations the truth that sin is certain to bring a penalty of eternal suffering and separation from God. Therefore, since all people have sinned, this penalty is required for all. If this penalty were enforced without mercy, everyone would be condemned to eternal death. God designed the symbolic ceremony of animal sacrifice to illustrate

how justice and love can be combined. In this illustration, sin is placed upon the animal. The animal is killed in place of sinful persons, so the price is paid and God's love provides salvation. Jesus completed the teachings on this subject by foretelling His own submission as the Perfect Sacrifice. He would atone for the sins of the world. He would give His life as a ransom for many. He gave His followers enough information about this mystery so they would understand why He suffered, and then they would be able to teach others the message of salvation.

### True Worship of the Heart

We remember that the prophet Isaiah spoke forth for the Lord, saying, "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men."

Jesus, the Messiah, revealed again that worship must come sincerely from the heart. He warned the people against a show of religion which is without true devotion and praise to God. Once He was asked to discuss the importance of certain places of worship. His answer was that the place in itself was not the important question. He said, "God is Spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

### Faith and Obedience Required of Man

The sacrifice of the perfect Lamb of God is sufficient to redeem all mankind. But forgiveness of sin can come only to those who accept in faith

and believe sincerely that the sacrifice is for them. Man fell into sin by making a choice, and it is by making a choice that he can receive salvation. God extends to people an invitation, as we heard from the prophet Isaiah, “Come to me, hear me.” He does not force people. He does not receive and reject them in uncertain ways. Any person can receive the benefits of God’s love and mercy. Faith and obedience are the requirements. Jesus said, “You will have whatever you ask, if you believe.”

We can see by these examples that the teachings of Jesus were a summary, a conclusion, and a fulfillment of all that the prophets had taught. Those who heard Him recognized the authority with which He spoke. The authority of Jesus the Messiah was the authority of God, for He said, “I have come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets.”

### **FOR YOU TO DO**

**2** For each of the teachings of Jesus listed here write one illustration from your study of the prophets. For example, Jesus taught *the Importance of God’s Word*. One illustration from the prophets is: *Moses received writing from the finger of God*. Probably you can think of several illustrations for each of the teachings listed.

**a** The importance of God’s Word

**b** The justice and judgment of God

**C** The love and concern of God

**d** The penalty for sin and the atonement

**e** True worship of the heart

**f** Faith and obedience required of man

## HE IS THE WAY AND THE TRUTH

Some of those who followed Jesus most closely felt from the beginning that He was the promised Messiah, in whom God lived to accomplish His purpose on earth. Others came to realize this truth as their understanding was opened. They saw in every detail of Jesus' life the fulfillment of prophecy. Some of them heard the voice from heaven at the Jordan River and the announcement of John the Baptist. They listened to His marvelous teachings. They saw Him work great miracles. They felt in their hearts the presence and the love that came from God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

But these followers of Jesus were people, very much like us. They had questions. Jesus spoke of His suffering and death for the redemption of people from sin. This was hard to understand. How could God redeem people through Jesus? Why would God permit suffering, humiliation, and death? How could the penalty for sin be paid once and forever, for all mankind?

As He continued preaching, teaching, working miracles, and quoting from the prophets, Jesus gradually revealed to His followers His true nature. He said, "God works and I work." That is, God was living in Him for the purpose of revealing a special work. Because of His sinless life, Jesus fulfilled every aspect of God's law. Pure, obedient, and totally submitted to the will of God, He had no sin of His own to be covered; He fulfilled the requirements for righteous living. As the sinless One, He offered Himself as the Lamb of God, the Perfect Substitute for man's sin. That work was the redemption of mankind, as promised by Isaiah. God was in Jesus, the Messiah, reconciling man to Himself. Jesus explained that He would be put to death and would rise again in order to complete the plan of salvation.

"Trust in Me," He said, "I am the way and the truth and the life."

The events of His life soon brought greater understanding of His words. The chief religious rulers brought false accusations against Jesus the Messiah and arranged to have Him crucified. Their proud and rebellious hearts were not willing to

accept this mystery of Jesus the Messiah for what it was—a revelation of mercy from God. They treated Him as an ordinary man and therefore accused Him of blasphemy for claiming to be the Savior of mankind.

You see, the religious leaders were concerned only about outward, earthly appearance and conditions.

They had no time for what seemed to them like foolish teachings about changing the condition of the soul.

Actually, their minds were shackled by the customs and rituals which they themselves had devised. So they decided to eliminate forever this Messiah who had exposed their hypocrisy.

Of course Jesus could have escaped by miraculous power, but He gave Himself willingly. He did this in order to accomplish His purpose, and every event proceeded according to God's divine plan of redemption. As the prophets had said, He went like a silent lamb being led to sacrifice.

Those who did executions for the government put Jesus the Messiah on a cross, as this was the customary procedure for execution at that time. Two thieves were placed on crosses beside Him, and this fulfilled the prophecy that He would die among the wicked, even though He was without guilt. One of the thieves repented and asked forgiveness. So even as Jesus the Messiah suffered, He spoke peace to the penitent one. Also, He spoke other words of forgiveness and love. His manner of

sacrifice and the supernatural signs which accompanied it fulfilled every prophecy. His body was taken by a wealthy man, was placed in a stone tomb, and the tomb was sealed by the government officials.

On the morning of the third day after Jesus the Messiah had given His life as the Perfect Sacrifice, His body arose from the dead, just as He had foretold. The religious leaders thought they had eliminated Jesus the Messiah, but God foiled their scheme. Jesus the Messiah, though He suffered the experience of being a sacrifice, was raised alive victoriously, to remain triumphant forever. The death of the body indicated the humiliating suffering of God's Spirit as the sacrifice was made in order to redeem mankind, His greatest creation, whom He loved so deeply. Now the act of redemption was complete! The great Perfect Sacrifice had been offered. A miracle had taken place to affect forever the affairs of mankind.

After it was discovered that the tomb was empty, some of the followers of Jesus the Messiah met Him in His resurrected body. He walked with them and talked about the prophets. "Do not be slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," He said, "Jesus the Messiah had to suffer in the way He has, and then enter His glory." Beginning with Moses, He explained what all the prophets had said about Himself.

The men who heard Him felt the truth burning into their hearts. They more clearly understood that the suffering and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah

was indeed God's plan of redemption as foretold by the prophets. They were so excited about what they had learned that they hurried to the city to tell their friends. "It is true," they shouted, "Jesus the Messiah has risen from the dead!"

After that, Jesus the Messiah appeared to several others. He showed them His resurrected body, and said again, "Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Torah, the Prophets, and the Zabur."

Then He opened their minds so that they could understand the Scriptures. He told them to go and proclaim to all people the message of repentance, forgiveness, and redemption from sin—all provided by God, the Redeemer, manifested in Jesus the Messiah. This is the GOOD NEWS, the Injil, the Gospel, that is to be expounded to all the world.

Jesus the Messiah was taken up into heaven—where He remains alive. His followers were filled with confidence and joy. Their questions had been answered. The person and work of Jesus the Messiah were indeed the fulfillment of all prophecy.

### **FOR YOU TO DO**

Complete the sentences.

**3** Jesus the Messiah said, "Trust in Me,

**4** The devout followers of Jesus did not question

that He was the Messiah because

**a****b****c****d**

**5** Some questions arose when Jesus the Messiah spoke of

**6** Often Jesus answered questions by **7** One of the last acts of Jesus the Messiah was to open the minds of His followers so that they could Answer in your heart: Would you like to have your mind opened to better understand the Word of God? Read the Torah, Zabur, and Injil. Pray to God, asking Him to open your mind and your heart.

Acceptance of Truth Is a Personal Act

Your Word, O God, is eternal,  
it stands firm in the heavens.

May my cry come before you, O God.

Give me understanding  
according to your Word.

We can pray, as David did, for better understanding of God's Word, and of His plan for us. But also, we have heard from the prophets in many ways that the understanding of man is never perfect. God's ways are far beyond man's ways. It is not for us to understand with human intellect every aspect of God's plan of redemption through Jesus the Messiah. There still remains a mystery in

the depth of His love and the nature of His sacrifice. Our relationship with God must be based on trust. We must accept Him by faith.

Because we are His creation, and our purpose is to be a joy and honor to Him, He has given us that quality which the prophet Isaiah called *thirst*. You remember that he said, “Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters.” We have a deep need for God. We have feelings of misery and uncertainty when our relationship with Him is not right. The inner *thirst* causes us to reach out to God. Since He has created the thirst in us, and has invited us to come to Him, He will not turn us away. He will help us to understand that which He wishes us to understand. More important, He will help us to believe and trust Him. He will give us faith to accept His own revelation of mercy to all mankind.

Anyone who accepts the mercy of God can say, “He took my sin. He suffered for me. Because of His sacrifice, I can have life. I am required only to accept this truth and live in accordance with it.”

There is another beautiful truth that no earthly words can fully explain. It is this: Jesus the Messiah is more than a substitute sacrifice. He did not suffer in our place simply to free us from humiliation and torture of hell fire. The sinless One also stood as our Advocate, our Mediator, to reverse the separation caused by sin through His effective sacrifice. He gave Himself in order to restore us to our relationship with God. He gave us freedom from guilt, strength to overcome sin and

temptation, and, in addition, the power to live for Him and with Him in harmony and joy forever.

When you believe and accept God's provision for salvation from sin, you are then freed from its judgment, since Jesus the Messiah suffered in your place. You are no longer guilty, because the penalty has been paid. You are a new person, whose relationship with God is restored. There is now communion and fellowship between your spirit and God's Spirit.

If you feel in your heart today an uncertain, restless, reaching do not ignore it. It is that *thirst* for God, of which the prophet spoke. Cry out to Him in the words of David.

Do not be far from me, O God

Have mercy upon me, according to your unfailing love and great compassion.

For I know my transgressions.

Against you, and you only, have I sinned.

Wash away all my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

Pray to God to open your eyes that you might see His Revelation; open your mind that you might perceive His Revelation; and open your heart that you might receive His Revelation.

Ask God to reveal to you personally the truth of the sacrifice and glorious resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. Ask Him to give you faith to accept His perfect salvation. Listen with your heart, and hear

again the words of Jesus the Messiah: “Trust in Me. I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

TODAY JESUS THE MESSIAH IS THE REVELATION OF GOD’S MERCY TO YOUR SOUL

### CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

**7** understand the Scriptures.

**1** All are true.

**6** quoting from the prophets. (Or, referring to the prophets.)

**2** Your answers. Some suggestions are:

**a** Moses taught obeying the Word is more important than ceremony.

**b** Noah was told to prepare for the Flood.

**c** God told David he would not die because he repented.

**d** Moses had the people put the blood of a lamb on their houses.

**e** David said, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart.”

**f** Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.

**5** His suffering and death for redemption from sin.

**3** I am the way, the truth, and the life.

**4** a prophecy was fulfilled.

- b** some of them witnessed His baptism.
- c** they heard His teachings.
- d** they saw the miracles.

You may have different words to express these answers. Another correct answer would be this: They felt the presence of God in their hearts.

### **LESSON TEST E~ ~E**

As you prepare to take the lesson test, please locate the *STUDENT REPORT ANSWER SHEET* in the back of your study guide for Lesson 8. Be sure to record your answers for multiple choice and true-false items in the spaces provided for them.

### **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

If your answer to each of the following questions is

YES, blacken space A.

NO, blacken space B.

- 1** Have you carefully read lesson 8?
- 2** Have you completed all the *For You to Do* sections in this lesson?
- 3** Have you checked the answers you gave in the *For You to Do* sections with those at the end of the lesson?
- 4** Have you reviewed the lesson objectives to see if you are able to do what they suggest?
- 5** Have you reviewed the material before taking this lesson test?

## MULTIPLE CHOICE

**6** At Jesus' birth prophecy was fulfilled

a) as an angel choir sang praises to God above the Judean hills.

b) when an angel announced the Good News of the Savior's birth.

c) in the place of His birth: Nazareth.

**7** In the symbolism of sacrifice, God provided a ransom for Abraham's son. We see that the Messiah was also provided

a) as a ransom for all humanity.

b) to demonstrate the continuing need for sacrifice.

c) as a ransom for the chosen ones of that day.

**8** Innocent, submissive, and sinless; bearing grief, suffering, and humiliation; the Messiah was God's ultimate expression of

a) love, which overlooks failure and sin.

b) sacrifice, which pays the penalty for error.

c) patience, which justifies error.

**9** As the prophets before Him, Jesus taught people that God would punish sin but would provide a way of salvation for

a) all people, regardless of their response to His offer.

b) the chosen ones: those selected on the basis of their good works.

c) those who would accept it.

**10** Jesus taught that man fell into sin by choice; therefore, to be saved he must

a) exercise supreme determination to reject sin.

b) undo the results of that choice through penance.

c) choose to receive the benefits of God's mercy.

#### TRUE OR FALSE

**11** The central message of prophets such as Moses, David, and Isaiah had its focus on the person and ministry of Jesus the Messiah.

**12** In His struggle against the temptations of Satan, Jesus demonstrated that victory over temptation comes to the one who purposes not to sin.

**13** In the symbolic ceremony of animal sacrifice, God illustrated how justice and love can be combined.

**14** While the sacrifice of God's perfect Lamb is sufficient to redeem all mankind, forgiveness can come only to those who accept in faith that this sacrifice is for them.

#### FILL IN

**15** The entire prophetic word has as its focus the person and ministry of

**16** Jesus taught that man can overcome the temptations of Satan by the power of the written

**17** Man falls into sin by making a choice, and he can receive salvation only by

**18** Following His resurrection, Jesus, beginning with Moses, explained to His followers what all the prophets had said concerning

**19** While we may never fully understand the love of God and the nature of His sacrifice, our relationship with Him must be based on trust: we must accept Him by

**20** Not only did Jesus suffer in our place to free us from humiliation and hell fire but also to restore us to our with God.