

According to the Scriptures

Today I want to explore these verses of Paul:

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

Last Sunday before Glen's message I had a pretty good idea of what I wanted to talk about for this message. During his message I was inspired with a different topic that sort of builds on what he spoke about.

His message theme centered around "Why Did Jesus Die?"

That is a good question that we should all be able to answer. In fact, we should be striving to have an answer to any type of question we might be asked regarding our faith. As Peter says in:

1 Peter 3:15

but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

I can tell you that a lot of my study has been for this purpose. I want to know so that I can help others know the One True God.

I don't know about you, but I have been asked questions, difficult questions, about my faith and why I believe what I believe. Sometimes these questions I have not been able to answer very well, or I just did not feel equipped to answer them. I always felt that was reflection of my studies.

The more seriously I began to take my faith, the more I wanted to share that faith with others. The more I shared that faith the more questions came my way that I was not able to answer well, and I felt like I was doing a disservice to God. I wanted people to believe in Jesus for salvation, but if I could not articulate my faith and answer questions, how efficacious could I really be in advancing His kingdom.

So, one of the first areas of serious study that I delved into was evolution. I started learning other apologetics as well.

One thing I discovered through my studies is that sometimes you really have to wrestle with God for answers.

How well do you want to know your Lord and Savior?

Are you willing to wrestle with God?

Are you willing to cry out to God and say Lord I have no idea what this means, help me! I want to know you more. Have you asked Him yet for help in understanding His word?

Are you content with where you are at in your faith?

Do you have a fervor to really know Him? Or are you lukewarm?

It wasn't only Glen's message last week that inspired me, but it was our Bible study as well.

Last week in our Sunday morning Bible study we talked about this verse in Matthew that reads:

Matthew 1:23 Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear A Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us."

This verse in Christianity we read universally to be talking about Jesus being born of a virgin miraculously.

I brought up that the context from which this verse is cited by Matthew does not fit exactly with Mary and the virgin birth.

In fact, the immediate context speaks nothing of a miracle, this is a prophecy given to King Ahaz. King Ahaz lived between 735-715 BC and the prophecy given to him by Isaiah speaks of a son born who is to be called Immanuel, God with us. Immanuel is to be born from a young woman. Alma is the Hebrew word there.

Now, that word can carry the meaning of a virgin. The Greek version of Isaiah actually uses the Greek word for virgin. This still doesn't mean that it has to be a miraculous birth. This son born precedes the Assyrian invasion of Israel.

So, if this prophecy is meant for a king that did not do right in the sight of God, how do we apply it to Mary and the virgin birth of Jesus?

Asking questions of the text is so important in our Bible study. Sometimes that may be difficult because it can feel like we might be challenging authority, or maybe you might feel like your faith is weak, or even that asking questions is the same as questioning your faith.

Asking questions is good. It's a very Jewish thing to do. That is how you learn.

Look at the Bereans. Paul and Silas went into the synagogue in Berea and reasoned with them. Traditional Jewish discourse is asking questions, debating, and arguing over the word of God. Iron sharpens iron. That type of discourse is still prevalent today.

Acts 17:11-12 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. Therefore, many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.

I cannot encourage you enough to ask questions.

Paul is reasoning with them, and they are examining the scriptures to see if the things that Paul is saying about the Messiah are true.

The Greek word for examine means to investigate, interrogate, to question, discern, examine, search, to scrutinize.

It is really digging into scripture on many different levels. This is how we should be approaching our studies. We should emulate the Bereans in how we study the word of God.

We should be looking at the history.

We should be looking at the language.

We should be looking at the culture.

We should also be looking to the Jewish people. Even though currently they are largely rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, Paul says that they were entrusted with the oracles of God (Romans 3:2) and to them belong the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service, and the promises (Romans 9:4). He also states they have only received a partial hardening (Romans 11:25) for our sake. So, there is still valid insight to God's word by studying what the Rabbis have to say.

The verse that I quoted at the beginning of the message:

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day **according to the Scriptures**...

"According to the scriptures" is the phrase that I really want to delve into.

But first...

I want to answer that question above regarding the Isaiah prophecy, the one about the virgin birth.

Prophecy can be layered. It can have multiple fulfillments in multiple times. So yes, there would have been a fulfillment of a son being born during that time of King Ahaz just before the Assyrian invasion, but also there would have been a fulfillment by our Savior being born of the virgin Mary.

Matthew employs something called Midrash. Midrash is a type of Jewish scriptural interpretation.

Midrash is easy and difficult to define if you are not familiar with it. I have scholarly books that define it, however I decided to use AI to see how it would define the word Midrash, and it gave such a spot on answer that I am going to quote its definition, because it nailed it.

From Grok:

Midrash is a fascinating term from Jewish tradition—it's like a master key to unlocking deeper meanings in the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh). At its core, Midrash refers to a method of interpretation that digs into the text to fill gaps, explain quirks, or draw out moral, theological, or legal insights. It's not just straight commentary; it's creative storytelling and analysis rolled into one.

The word itself comes from the Hebrew root **darash**, meaning “to seek” or “to inquire,” so it's about probing beneath the surface. Think of it as the rabbis asking, **“What's the Torah **really** saying here?”** Midrash can take a verse—like God resting on the seventh day (Genesis 2:2)—and spin a tale about why, or it can link seemingly unrelated verses to reveal a hidden connection.

It's less about historical “what happened” and more about “what does this mean for us?” So, it's fluid—rabbis might offer multiple takes on one verse, and they're all valid in their way.

Picture it like jazz improv on scripture: the Torah's the melody, and Midrash is the riffing—sometimes literal, sometimes symbolic, always thought-provoking.
(Grok 3)

Usually when I am teaching and using Midrashic examples, I qualify the Midrash with:

Do not ask whether the Midrash is true, but what truth is being conveyed.

Matthew was taking text that is seemingly unrelated and applying it in a different context. The New Testament has a lot of Midrashic ideas. It was a major method of Biblical exegesis, which is a fancy word for interpreting or elucidating the Bible.

Both understandings are true of the text. There was a woman who gave birth in the Isaiah passage that preceded the Assyrian invasion and Mary as a virgin gave birth to Jesus.

I want to give one more example of Midrash before moving on. I can't stress how important it is to understand what Midrash is because it will help you understand the entire Bible much better.

The background to this particular Midrash is found here:

Exodus 17:1-6 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore, the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

There was an issue of no water and the people quarreled with Moses. Moses went to God and told Moses to strike a rock at Mount Horeb and there was water. Enough water to quench the thirst of an entire nation. That is a lot of water.

In Numbers 20:1-2, 40 years later there is another issue of no water. The text reads:

Then the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people stayed at Kadesh. Now Miriam died there and was buried there. There was no water for the congregation, and they assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron.

Between Exodus 17 and Numbers 20 water is not mentioned. So, for 40 years the nation had water and they also had food. God provided.

Well, the Rabbis noticed this and deduced that the rock must have followed them. The Mechilta, which is an ancient Midrashic work that mentions this. It states that the water giving rock miraculously accompanied them throughout their wanderings in the desert.

Isaiah 48:21 confirms this on some level. The text reads:

They did not thirst when He led them through the deserts.
He made the water flow out of the rock for them;
He split the rock and the water gushed forth.

Psalms 105:41

He opened the rock and water flowed out;
It ran in the dry places like a river.

This sounds like such a far-fetched idea. Did a rock really follow them in the desert? That sounds ridiculous. Those silly rabbis. What were they thinking?

But!! Is it really that far-fetched? We readily believe that manna fell every day but Sabbath and we readily believe in other miracles in the Bible, so why not this one?

There is more to the Midrash that I do not have time to get into but turn to 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.

Paul acknowledges this Midrash and gives his take on it.

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the

cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, **for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them;** and the rock was Christ.

So why do I bring that up?

The question that Glen had last week of "Why Did Jesus Die?" is a good question. It's really a question that we should all be able to answer. If I asked you after service, "Hey, why did Jesus have to die?" and you gave a canned answer of "because of our sins" you're not wrong, but there's more to it than that and we should be able to engage in thoughtful discussion around that question.

But an equally important question would be - WHERE

Where in the Bible does it say that Jesus must die? Where did that idea come from? We have these verses that we are very familiar with:

John 5:46-47 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, **for he wrote about Me.** But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Where did Moses write about Jesus?

Luke 24:45-47

Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the **Christ (that is the Messiah) would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.**

Where is that written that the Messiah would suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day?

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day **according to the Scriptures**,

We should be able to continue to work backward in this line of questioning.

This is what we have so far:

Jesus said that Moses wrote about Him. What does that mean? We can assume that He's talking about His life, His deeds, and His words. Essentially what the Messiah would do.

The Messiah suffered according to the scriptures.

The Messiah died according to the scriptures.

He was buried according to the scriptures.

He was raised on the third day according to the scriptures.

Where does the Bible say that Messiah will suffer, die, and rise again on the third day?

Better yet where do we even get the idea that there's even a Messiah? Or even a Messiah who redeems or a Messiah who suffers and dies? And that believing in this Messiah will bring about salvation to the soul of this believer...

What's a Messiah?

How can this Messiah pay for my transgressions?

How does that work?

These are all very straight forward questions that we should be able to answer as we share our faith with people. As we study, we should be considering these types of questions and beyond. As we ask the questions of the text then that should draw us into a deeper relationship with the Lord, because we will better understand who He is and His nature and what His will is for our lives. As you

wrestle with the text you are essentially wrestling with God. Jacob wrestled with God, and he became Israel.

The Torah is the foundation of it all. I cannot stress that enough.

Let's explore the question of

What is a messiah? We can start to answer that question by defining it.

Our English word Messiah comes from the Latin, Messias (mesee-ahs), which came from the Greek Messias (mesee-as), which came from the Aramaic Meshekha, which came from the Hebrew Mashiach.

The root of Mashiach is mashach, which means to cover with oil or to anoint.

The word Christ means anointed as well; the same as messiah. It's the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew mashiach. The Greek word is Christos, which is where we get the word Christ. It means anointed and the root of Christos is chrio, which means to smear or rub with oil. Interestingly, the New Testament uses both Christos and Messias. There are only two instances of Messias in the New Testament.

John 1:41 He *found first his own brother Simon and *said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

John 4:25 The woman *said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us."

Therefore, a mashiach is someone who has been covered with oil or anointed at some point. Being covered with oil is the emphasis of the word. These would be kings, priests or someone who was consecrated for some special purpose. There have been several Messiahs. Usually there was some ritual surrounding the anointing.

Usually, the head is what is anointed as it states in 1 Samuel 10:1

Then Samuel took the flask of oil, poured it on his (Saul's) head, kissed him and said, "Has not the Lord anointed you a ruler over His inheritance?"

The priests were done in the same manner.

Exodus 29:1 "Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them to minister as priests to Me:

Exodus 29:7 Then you shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him.

That definition does not necessarily equate to what we traditionally think of when we think of Jesus. What I mean by that is, I do not know of a specific time where He was specifically anointed with oil and declared a King. But we know He is the Messiah, and we know that He is King and He will be King of the whole world.

So, then there must be more to the meaning of Messiah, right? We know Jesus is the Messiah.

So, is there an example of someone being referred to as a Messiah, but was not anointed with oil?

The answer would be Cyrus.

Isaiah 45:1 Thus says the Lord to Cyrus His anointed, (His Messiah)
Whom I have taken by the right hand,

So, this opens up the idea of a Messiah being specially called by God for some divine purpose.

Then we also have

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
Because the Lord has anointed me
To bring good news to the afflicted;

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to captives
And freedom to prisoners;

There is fulfillment of this prophecy in Luke 4:16-21

And He (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon ME,
Because HE anointed ME to preach the gospel to the poor.
HE has sent ME to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
TO set free those who are oppressed,
TO proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.”

And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

We can then expand the definition of Messiah to not only including having oil poured on them, but alternatively to having the Spirit of God poured out upon them for some divine purpose. Anointing is an act of consecration.

That is a definition of the word Messiah. But what about The Messiah? What does the Bible tell us about The Messiah? This should be pretty easy right? We readily accept Jesus as our Messiah, our Savior, our Redeemer, our King, and our God, right?

Let's start with Moses. Jesus said that Moses wrote about Him.

Moses is the one who wrote the first five books of Moses, which is called the Torah. Did he write about Jesus the Messiah in there at all? Did he even write about the Messiah?

The answer is no. He did not write about Jesus directly. What I mean by directly is, Jesus did, or will do, such and such, or said this and that...

What did Jesus mean by that then?

Ok, maybe Moses did not use the name Jesus, maybe Moses wrote about The Messiah. Did Moses write about The Messiah?

If you are ever talking to someone and they are trying to refute your faith, this is a real possible tactic to attack your faith. Your Savior said that Moses wrote about Him, yet his name is not even mentioned one time. In fact, the word Messiah is only used 4 times in the entire Torah, all of which are in Leviticus, and none of them have anything to do with our typical understanding of what a Messiah is. They are all in context of the priesthood. Every reference in the Torah says the "anointed Priest", that is the messiah priest.

The other 34 uses of Mashiach in the Old Testament **mostly** refer to Saul or David directly.

There's a couple of mentions in Daniel that in the NASB are directly translated as Messiah. Those are the only two times that the word Mashiach is translated as Messiah. The same is true of the New King James version. Only two times is the word Mashiach translated as Messiah. However, there are a handful of times where the New King James will use an upper case "A" in anointed designating a divine Messiah.

How do we answer the question then? Did Moses write about The Messiah?

Overall, we do not really get a whole lot of information directly spelled out to us in the Old Testament about the Messiah.

Encyclopedia Judaica even goes so far as to say:

"The title 'Messiah' as a designation of the eschatological personality does not exist in the Old Testament; it occurs only from the time of the Second Temple after the Old Testament period."

Even from the prophets' perspective we do not get a lot of information directly about the Messiah, because they do not use that word. Oftentimes the prophecies regarding a ruler we apply to the Messiah. Rightfully so.

One example of that would be:

Micah 5:2

But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
Too little to be among the clans of Judah,
From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel.
His goings forth are from long ago,
From the days of eternity."

Or

Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord,
"When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch;
And He will reign as king and act wisely
And do justice and righteousness in the land.

But there emerges a new question, how do we connect this Messiah to a ruler?

Even Isaiah 53, which gives us verses like:

Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.

We easily link that to Jesus, and rightfully so, but...

Isaiah does not mention the Messiah directly. The word Messiah is used so infrequently throughout the entire Old Testament, it is sort of baffling.

God really concealed the Messiah in such a way that people expected Him to come, but since they did not have all the details, He was easily missed by those who professed to know.

The reason there is difficulty is we usually think of Jesus of course as a suffering servant during His first coming, then upon His return to earth we think of Him as a conquering king. That is not so obvious if you're just reading objectively. Two advents are not easily derived from the text. We owe so much to the Apostles for their writings, but they only knew because Jesus told them. They did not understand as it states in Luke 18:34

But the disciples understood none of these things, and the meaning of this statement was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said.

The context was Jesus' impending death:

Luke 18:31-33

Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again."

The disciples had no clue, and they were with him constantly.

Jesus said that Moses wrote about Him.

Yes, from Genesis to Deuteronomy, every page is filled with Messiah through types and shadows. It's through the types and shadows that we can learn more and more about our Savior.

What are types and shadows?

They are pictures. They are hints. They are allusions. They are events. They are people. They are histories. They serve as symbolic foreshadows of greater realities, especially in the life and work of Jesus the Messiah.

Really the best way to learn what they are is through examples. Through those examples we can answer those really difficult questions.

The easiest one for people to see would probably Isaac.
Even a surface reading of Genesis 22 we can see messianic implications.

God told Abraham to take his son, his only son, the one whom he loved, Isaac and sacrifice him in the place that God tells him.

A donkey was saddled and ridden into the place, just before the sacrifice was to take place.

Isaac, who would have been in his mid-thirties carried the wood.

Isaac laid down his life willingly.

Abraham's intentions were to follow through with it, but God stopped him. So, Isaac was received back from the dead.

Isaac goes away for a while and the next time he is seen is when he marries his bride.

This perfectly parallels Jesus.

God gave his only begotten Son.

Jesus rode a donkey in just before he gave His life.

Jesus carried the wood on his shoulders.

Jesus laid down his life willingly.

Death could not hold Him and He was resurrected.

He went away for a while and the next time we see Him there will be a marriage.

This is why knowing and understanding the Old Testament is so important to our faith. Everything points to Jesus, and most of that pointing is through types and shadows.

Next week I'll talk more about this topic. Today we talked mostly about Messiah and how important it is to understand not only the meaning of the word, but where the idea comes from and who He is.

We still need to discuss where does the Bible say that Messiah will suffer, die, and rise again on the third day. I wanted to talk about Christ, that is, Messiah, first so that we understand that the rest of the verses, those parts about the suffering, death, and rising on the third day can really only be understood through types and shadows.

The better we understand that everything in the Bible is focused on Jesus, the better we can walk out our faith. Knowing information about Jesus is good, but what are we doing with the information?

On Wednesdays, this is the topic we discuss every week. Where is Jesus in the books of Moses?

Summary

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 emphasizes that Christ's death, burial, and resurrection were fulfilled according to the Scriptures. Next week we will look at some sources for what Paul might have been referencing. We should be prepared to answer these types of questions about our faith, as urged by Peter when he says: 1 Peter 3:15 always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you. We also need to understand that wrestling with the difficult questions can deepen our understanding of God. There is great importance in asking questions in our Bible study. We need to follow the Bereans' example in Acts 17:11-12. We need to examine, interrogate, and scrutinize the scriptures. There is great value in examining scripture through historical, linguistic, and cultural lenses, and there are great insights to be gained from

Jewish traditions. The better we understand that there can be layered fulfillment of prophecies and the better we can recognize the types and shadows in the Old Testament the better we will know our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ. We can begin to really grasp that the redemptive plan of God has been present from the very beginning.

May grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people. May He establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.