

## MEET JESUS – part 1 - Meet Jesus The Jew

How did this man Jesus who lived poor and died young—who did not write a book, raise an army, or sit on a throne—became the most life-transforming, earthshaking, history-making human of all time?

To answer this question we need to begin with Jewish History.

We're so used to Christianity that we forget how deeply Jewish Jesus is. ...When Jesus walked onto the stage, it wasn't act one. It was the first scene after the intermission.

—Rebecca McLaughlin, *Confronting Jesus*

### To understand Jesus when we meet him, we need to understand his Jewish Roots.

- To do this we need a tour of the major events of Jewish History as described in Jewish scriptures (our Old Testament).
- You will notice that our outline today describes 5 scenes. Each of these 5 scenes have recorded words from God himself to key individuals in Jewish history.
  - **Scene 1 is with Adam and Eve** in the Garden of Eden (at the beginning)
  - **Scene 2 is with Abraham** (around 2,000 B.C)
  - **Scene 3 is with Abraham Moses** (around 1400 B.C.)
  - **Scene 4 is with King David** (around 1,000 B.C.)
  - **Scene 5 is with John the Baptist** (AD 26)

These scenes are not about irrelevant stuff about ancient history—these matter for us today. **Here's why: God has a way of saying things that related to the hearer then, but still relates to the hearer now.**

**So, let's begin, and let God speak to us, and prepare us to Meet Jesus.**

### Scene 1: The Genesis of human FAILURE and FINDING hope

- History all begins with Harmony in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve enjoying an every day relationship with God, walking with him, talking to him, in a very real, and close relationship with God.
- But Genesis 3 tells about a catastrophic fall due to temptation and sin: a cosmic rebellion.
- God only gave one law—they were not to eat from one particular tree in the garden, with fruit of the knowledge of good and evil.
- But a talking “serpent” cleverly tempted them by contradicting God, his commandment, and his motives.
- Adam and Eve listened and believed the serpent's word rather than God's word on the matter, and were tempted by what they saw, and heard, and their desires.

- Their sense of shame, guilt, and estrangement from God was immediate! They hid.

By opening that door, THEY BROKE God’s good and perfect design for humans and all of creation...was corrupted.

**THE BAD NEWS:** Instead of being rulers, they were now in bondage to sin and evil, and subject to death.

**THE GOOD NEWS:** A strange and promising prophecy (GRACE) while stating God’s judgment (TRUTH) to the serpent – about a particular person, called “*the seed of the woman.*”

*Genesis 3:15 (NIV) — And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring [seed] and hers; he [that is, the seed of the woman—that particular offspring, he] will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*

This prophecy was directed as a judgment to the deceitful serpent, and it foreshadows the enduring struggle between the serpent’s “offspring” / “seed”--metaphorically understood as children of the devil—and the woman's seed. This passage establishes a recurring theme throughout the Bible. A theme planted here like a seed that grows.

God will bring into the world the promised "seed of the woman" who will crush the serpent’s head. **The “offspring” / “seed” of the woman, is a very unusual phrase for the Jewish mindset,** which traces lineage and genealogies through the “seed of the man”. God was already here hinting at the virgin birth of the coming of God’s Son, but for that interpretation we must keep reading for quite a bit before that can come into focus.

## Scene 2: Embrace God’s promises even when they seem **BEYOND REACH**

Around 2,000 B.C., God chose to give monumental promises to an unlikely candidate, Abram—who would later be known as Abraham.

*Genesis 12:1–3 (NIV) — 1 The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. 2 “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”*

**Despite Abraham’s obvious failures,** God revealed himself to Abraham repeatedly, and gradually Abraham's trust in God grows.

*Genesis 15:6 (NIV) — Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.*

**WE LEARN from GOD [through Abraham] that believing God’s WORD—what he says—is the way we get right with God.**

Abraham had a few conversations... We have a whole library of God’s words recorded in context, and these are called “SCRIPTURES” / God’s Word / the Bible.

*Genesis 26:4 (NIV) — I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed,*

Here God again uses the term “offspring” or “seed”, linking this scene back to Genesis' promise of a figure who would defeat evil.

Despite Abraham's flaws and the improbability of his situation, old couple that they are, and barren all these years, God’s promise is unwavering.

### Scene 3: Extreme **CHALLENGES** do not **NEGATE** God’s promises

- **God’s faithfulness is evident from Abraham to Isaac, to Jacob- to their children... but as time goes by... and**
- **we turn from Genesis to Exodus, where we encounter the grim realities that seem to overshadow the promises of God.**
- **Egyptian bondage to slavery... for 400 years**
- Imagine the immense challenge to keep faith in God's promises during such times.
- Under the weight of Egyptian chains and hardship, the dream of becoming a mighty nation that would bless the world seemed like an impossible dream .

BUT Life’s extreme CHALLENGES do not NEGATE God’s Promises

- God did not abandon His promises.
- God chose Moses to be His Prophet, and deliverer for the Israelites.

D.L. Moody said that “*Moses spent forty years thinking he was somebody, forty years learning he was nobody, and forty years discovering what God can do with a nobody.*”

*Exodus 3:6* Then he said, “*I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.*”

- **Father, Son, and Grandson**, respectively, are the “patriarchs” who all received God’s promises about becoming a nation.
- **Jacob’s name was changed by God to Israel**, after one of these interchanges.
- **Jacob had twelve sons**, the twelve sons of Israel—who became the fathers of the **12 tribes of Israel**.
- –all enslaved in Egypt–ABOUT 2 MILLION of them!

*Exodus 3:8 (NIV)* So I have come down to rescue them ...

*Exodus 3:10 (NIV)* So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

- **Moses served as God’s Prophet**, confronting Pharaoh (and his **many “gods”**) bringing judgment on all the “gods of Egypt”.
- **Predicting a total of 10 plagues, one at a time**, each time Pharaoh refused to relent and let God’s people go.

**The 10th plague was the Passover**—where the angel of death passed over houses marked by the blood of the lamb, sparing the Israelites' firstborn. This was a profound demonstration of power and a test of faith and obedience, to the instructions clearly given to the Israelites for the precise day. Precisely on the night specified, there was a death in all the houses unmarked by *“the blood of the lamb.”*

#### **Scene 4: Kings, Catastrophes, and the promised MESSIAH**

God made a significant promise to King David about that “Offspring” / “Seed”. [ do the study on the PTO]

#### **Scene 5: Enter Jesus, the KING and the Lamb**

UNDER ROMAN DOMINATION, The Jews eagerly anticipate the arrival of the Messiah King to liberate them!

As the curtains of the New Testament opens, First John the Baptist takes the stage (about AD 26)

*"Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."*, from that point on, Jesus takes center stage.

**[SPOILER ALERT] Passover is a foreshadowing of JESUS the ultimate “Lamb of God”** who is:

- the “seed of the woman”,
- the “seed of Abraham”
- the better than Moses “Prophet”... with a better Covenant
- the “seed of David” who is the better King the Forever Messiah

His voluntary death allows judgment to fall on him, and “PASSOVER” those of us who believe and apply “his blood” to our lives by believing in the power of his sacrifice for us.

- **By all means, MEET JESUS, and get to know him, grow to believe him, and trust him, and don’t just add him to your life, let him take the CENTER STAGE of your LIFE! He’s the main character of HIS STORY and YOURS.**

Thank you for coming today. I hope you have been encouraged.

1. **Connect Card (INFORMATION CENTER, gift bag for you)**
2. **Prayer Cards (in GIVING box)**
3. **Or Prayer TEAM**

**Let’s pray**

## Talk It Over

### SMALL TALK

1. Share a time when you experienced a promise being kept after a long wait. How did it feel, and how did the fulfillment of the promise impact you?

### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ 2 Samuel 7:12-13.** What specific promise does God make to David regarding his lineage and the establishment of his kingdom? How is this promise significant?
3. **READ Psalm 89:1-4; 14-29.** What does it say about the enduring nature of God's promises? Where do these promises point beyond David, but to Jesus who in the line of David fulfills these promises?

### GETTING PERSONAL

4. How do the promises God made to David encourage you in your faith journey? Are there areas of your life where you find it difficult to trust God's promises, and how can these scriptures help you build trust?

### MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

5. Choose one area in your life where you would like to see God's promises at work. This could be related to relationships, career, or personal growth. Commit to a specific action that demonstrates your trust in God's promises, and share your commitment with the group for support and encouragement.