

LESSON FIVE

IT IS FINISHED





INTRODUCTION



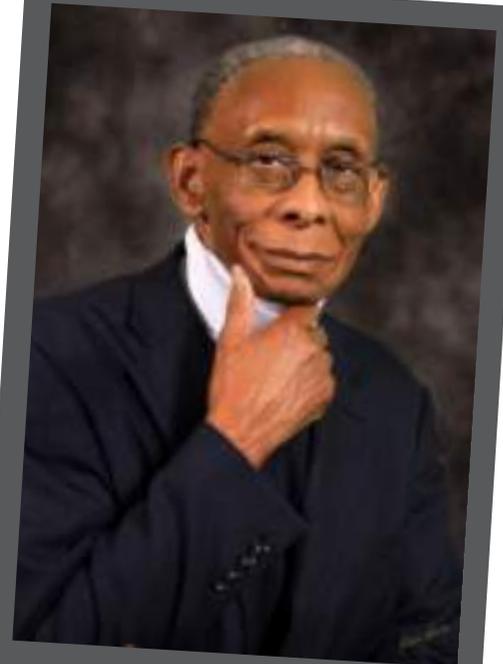
Bishop Johnny James and the Muslim



The famous Pentecostal Bishop, Dr. Johnny James (aka, “*the walking Bible*”) shared an experience he had at an airport with a Muslim man at the “*Because of the Times Conference*”. Together, the Bishop and the Muslim used the Bible and the Quran to compare their credibility on some of the most important questions related to religion and life after death.

Before the end of their time together, the Muslim man is reported to have repented of his sins and accepted water baptism in Jesus' name. It was also reported that the Muslim man eventually led over one hundred other Muslims into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

In their conversation, the Bishop demonstrated (through referencing the Bible and history) that Jesus Christ is the Son of God that was prophesied about by the prophets in the Old Testament. He also showed with verifiable evidence from the Scriptures how Jesus is the only person to have risen from the dead without experiencing death again. Perhaps this was the same attitude we observe in the case of Luke who wrote to advise Theophilus about the identity and ministry of Jesus (**Luke 1-1:4**). With this being stated, the bishop was clear to point out in his conversation with the Muslim that Jesus Christ is the only way through which an individual can have access to God (**John 14:6**).



BISHOP, DR. JOHNNY JAMES
“THE WALKING BIBLE”

Gaining a deeper understanding of the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is essential to Christian living. The reason for this should be clear, and that is because Jesus is our salvation story. It is in Him that each of us believers "**live and move and have our being**" (**Acts 17:28**). Through His sacrificial death on the cross, and His willingness to submit His own personal will to the will of the father instead, Jesus provides an example for us; through the life that He lived, the doctrines He proclaimed about **salvation, relationships, personal character, prayer and fasting**, and a host of other examples.

The ultimate price for our salvation has been successfully paid by Jesus. It is finished!

DISCUSSION OBJECTIVES:

Amongst all of the major events to have taken place throughout the course of human history, the death of Jesus Christ continues to remain the most important event that has ever happened to positively impact the destiny of humanity. The objective of this lesson is to explore and explain the life of Jesus Christ by discussing:

- 1 Who Jesus Christ is, and how He is portrayed in the four Gospels.**
- 2 The Godhead, and understanding the oneness of God.**
- 3 The death of Jesus Christ and its role in interrupting Satan's plan for humanity's future.**

1

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Jesus of Nazareth is the “**only begotten Son**” of the father who is “**full of grace and truth.**” His name comes from the Greek word Christos, which means the “**Anointed One.**”

In the following passage, John introduces Jesus, the Christ to the entire world by stating certain truths about His existence.



JOHN 1:1-14

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. **4** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5** And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. **6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. **8** He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. **9** That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. **11** He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. **12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: **13** who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. **14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”.

Whether you are a **believer** or **unbeliever** it is undeniable that Jesus Christ is the most fascinating person ever to enter the human race! Even though centuries have passed since His death and resurrection, His teachings, miracles, and presence are still being experienced by millions of people today.

Jesus' life was so impactful during the early New Testament era that four men accepted the call of God to write a detailed biography explaining who He is, what He did, and the reason why He came to the earth in the first place.

LUKE 1:1-4

“Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, **2** just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, **3** it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, **4** that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.”

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each offer readers their own perspective of who the great wonder - Jesus Christ really is. Through their writings, we can see that Jesus piqued the interest of many then and continues to do so today.

FOUR GOSPELS, ONE STORY

There is a host of literary texts that demonstrate thorough in-depth and investigative research the historical accuracy of the Gospels. Skeptics and non-believers often argue that the four Gospels cannot be trusted because of **human authorship, science, geography, and archeological findings** and other so-called inconsistencies in numbers and in the spelling of people's names. However, a close examination and a correct understanding of the Bible show that those four factors work together to prove that the Gospels are one true story about the true **“Son of God”**, told from different perspectives under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.



Using their unique writing styles, each writer communicates specific truths about Jesus to specific groups of people that represent different cultures and societies.

- **Matthew's** primary purpose for writing his gospel was to show the Jewish people that Jesus Christ was the **Messiah**, who was predicted to come to earth as the **King of the Jews**. (**Matthew 21:1-11 & Zachariah 9:9**).
- **Mark's** gospel was written to a **Roman audience** to convey the fact that, although Jesus is King, through His interaction with others, He demonstrated the perfect example of a servant. (**Mark 10:35-45**).
- **Luke**, a physician and historian, wrote his gospel in detail to illustrate the full account of the life and ministry of Jesus. He wrote to inform the **Greeks** of the **human nature** of Jesus Christ. Although Jesus is very much God, Luke shows how He is also very much **man**. (**Luke 2:21-23**).
- **John's** gospel contrasts the synoptic nature of the first three. His main goal is to communicate to the **entire world** how **God manifested Himself in the flesh as Jesus Christ**, the Son of God, and how through Him, all of mankind can now experience salvation. (**John 1:1-5 & 14**).

THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD

One day, Jesus asked his disciples what people throughout the communities were reasoning regarding His identity. Based on the response of the disciples we can see that a robust discussion had emerged amongst the people about who Jesus was.

In response, Jesus was told by the disciples that the people of the community had begun saying Jesus was:

- **John the Baptist** (See Matthew 14:1-12)
- **Elijah** (See Malachi 4:5-6 & Matthew 11:14)
- **Jeremiah** (See Jeremiah 1:4-16)
- **Another Old Testament Prophet**



MATTHEW 16:13-14

“When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”

14 So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

To reveal more about His identity, Jesus posed a more direct question to the disciples by asking them who they thought He was. Frankly, this is the same question that every faithful follower of Christ must answer at some point in their Christian experience.



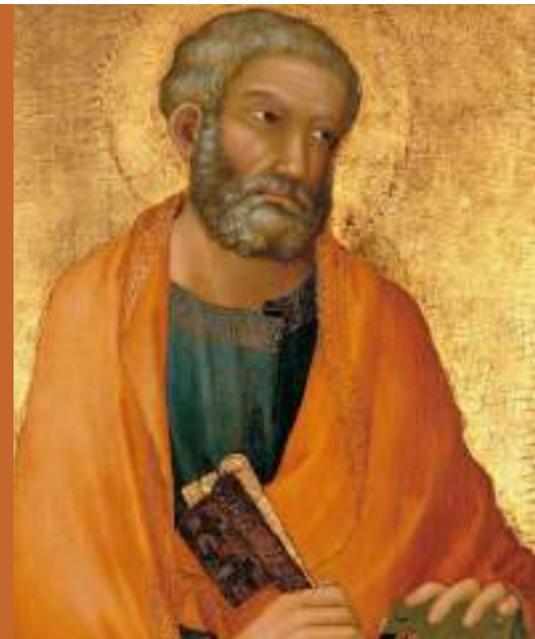
WHO DO YOU UNDERSTAND JESUS CHRIST TO BE, AND WHY?

MATTHEW 16:15

“He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

PETER’S CONFESSION OF JESUS’ DIVINITY

Throughout religious history, and particularly within the Catholic Church, the apostle Peter has become a prominent personality. Perhaps the reason for this is somehow due to the fact that Jesus had told Peter that **“upon this rock, I will build my church”**, and Peter’s name (**Petros**) is translated **“rock”**, meaning small stone. However, Jesus’ name in Greek is (**Petra**) meaning large stone.



Interestingly, Peter's prominence within the Church may also be due to the fact that Jesus gave him the **"keys of the kingdom"** after he revealed who He is. However, whatever the real reason for his prominence, it was Peter who spoke up and gave the following outstanding revelation about the true and unique identity of Jesus Christ.

MATTHEW 16:16-19

"Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. **18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. **19** And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven..."

Based on Peter's statement regarding Jesus' identity, it is reasonable for believers to conclude that Jesus was not just an ordinary person like you and I. Rather, Peter's confession reveals that He is the **"Son of God"**, which literally means that Jesus possesses divinity. This point is further illustrated in the biblical references below.

JOHN 1:1-3

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."

JOHN 1:14

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

In verse 14 John explains that “**...the Word became flesh, and lived among us...**” In other words, John is informing us that God took on human flesh and appeared on the earth in the body of Jesus Christ - “**The Son of the living God**” for the very first time in human history. Why did God, who was only Spirit, have to take on human form? The answer to this important question is simple. **God took on human flesh in order to make it possible for Him to lay down His life on the cross (see Hebrews 2:14-15).** If God had remained in Spirit form only, there would be no ability to shed “**precious blood**”, which was needed in order to provide salvation for human beings.

HEBREW 9:16-22

“For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. **17** For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. **18** Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. **19** For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, **20** saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.” **21** Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. **22** And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission”.

DISCUSSION QUESTION



Since the early first century, the Gospels have come under attack by critics and skeptics who argue that contradictions are found in the stories they record. What specific historical, geographical, and archaeological proofs do Christians have that verify the claims of the four Gospel writers as it relates to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?



BUT WHAT SHOULD A CHRISTIAN BELIEVE ABOUT WHO JESUS IS?

Since the earliest moments of time, individuals have been seeking to understand in full, the true identity of God. Interestingly though, because of our inability to agree with the other's worldview, a smorgasbord of ideas exist today about the Godhead.



WORD DEFINITION: GODHEAD

The term Godhead generally refers to the divinity or substance (totality) of the Christian God.

Acts 17:29

Romans 1:20

Colossians 2:9

According to “**Oxford Languages Dictionary**”, a **viewpoint** is “**a particular philosophy of life or conception of the world**” that a person forms in their mind as a belief system. For our study, we will briefly discuss three dominant religious viewpoints on the identity of the Godhead:

Trinitarianism, Dual Deity (held by Jehovah’s Witnesses) and Oneness (held by the apostles). With great tenacity and conviction, and with a predilection to holding to certain biblical interpretations, each of these groups offer their varying understandings of the Scriptures as it relates to Jesus Christ, and God’s identity.

The intention behind explaining the difference in beliefs among these faith-based groups is not an attempt to bash or undermine anyone’s faith; but to educate individuals on the identity of God based on what God’s Word says about Himself. It is also important that individuals are able to understand the distinction between the ideologies of these religious groups and stand confident in what the Bible teaches about who Jesus Christ is.

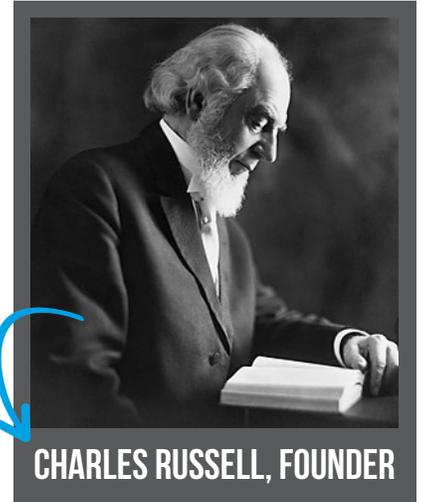
THREE MAJOR WORLD VIEWS REGARDING THE IDENTITY OF GOD:

1 THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' PERSPECTIVE

The Jehovah Witnesses' movement began under the influence of a former congregationalist, Charles Russell approximately in the late 19th century. The new religion argues for the existence of **two gods (deities)**, who is acknowledged in terms of the **“Almighty God”**, and **“the mighty god.”**

The JW's understanding of the identity of God is as follows:

- The **Almighty God** = Jehovah
- The **Mighty God** = Jesus



CHARLES RUSSELL, FOUNDER

According to the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* published by the Jehovah's Witnesses in 1950, **John 1:1** states for example, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was “a god””**. This scripture illustrates the distinction they use to understand the God-head.

As it relates to the **Holy Spirit** - the JW's generally suggests that He is a **non-intelligent force being**.



2 THE TRINITARIAN PERSPECTIVE

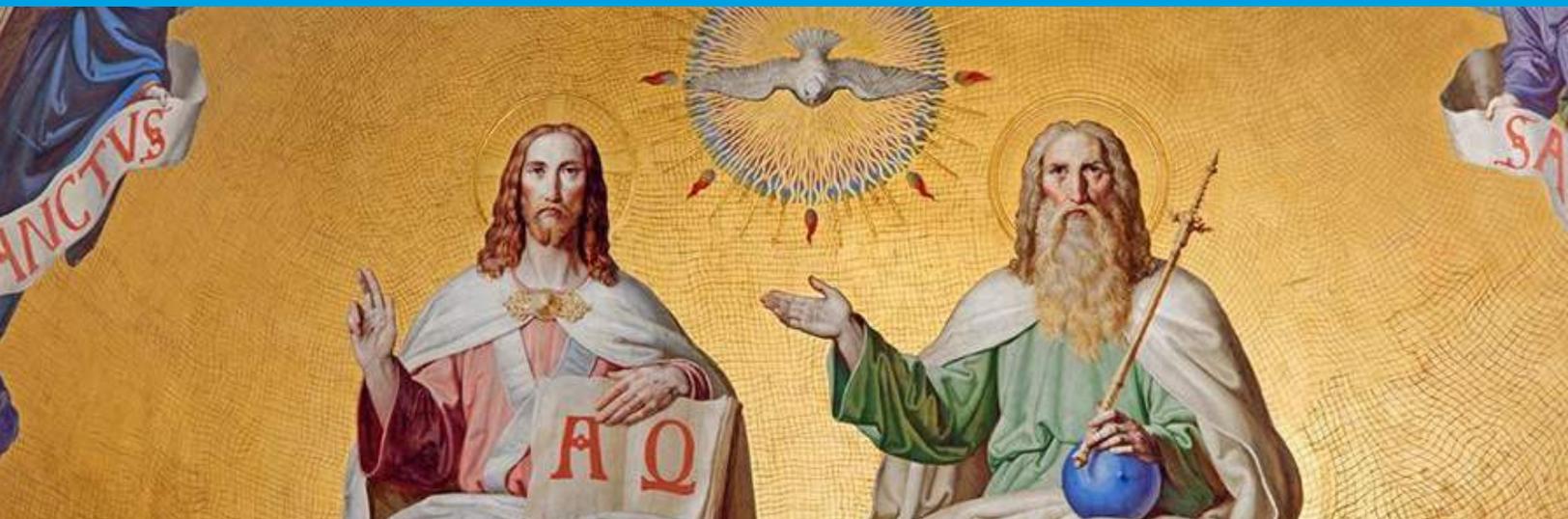
The Trinitarian Perspective was accepted as a major belief about God's identity in 325 AD during the era of the *Roman Emperor Constantine the Great (who ruled Rome from 306-337)*. Since the beginning of the 3rd century, the view of the doctrine of the Trinity has been explained to mean that **“the one God exists in three Persons”...** (**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**).

→ CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

3 THE ONENESS PERSPECTIVE

The **Oneness (monotheistic view of God)**, was first revealed by God to Moses and consequently was commanded to be taught to everyone as is alluded to in (**Deuteronomy 6:4-9**). A careful observation of the Word of God will show that the view of monotheism was also the perspective of the prophets, apostles and those in the early church era as well.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

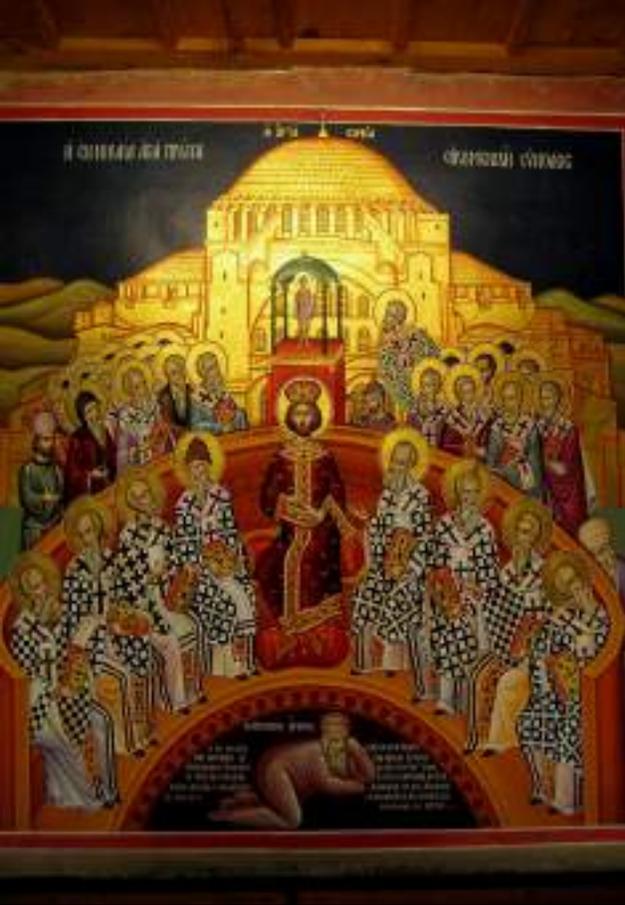


To explain the identity of God, some individuals have suggested that three different ‘persons’ make up the Godhead. Although it is true that the Bible speaks about the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit (**as it does in Matthew 28:19-20**); a clear and diligent effort should be made when seeking to discover the meaning of this controversial biblical passage.

MATTHEW 28:19-20

“Go, therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen”.

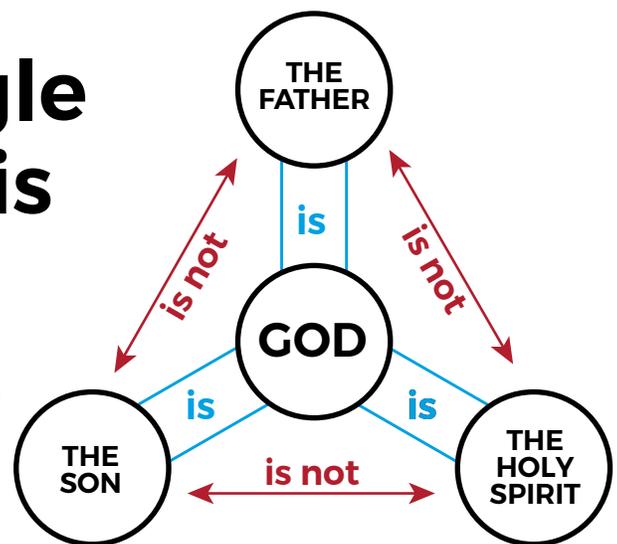
Upon reading this passage, and only taking into consideration this singular account of the “**Great Commission**”, some religious groups have concluded that the Father is one person separate from the Son who is another person, and the Spirit, the same. However, this is not what the writers of the scriptures intended to illustrate by the usage of titles of *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*.



The doctrine of the trinity was first taught in **325 A.D.**, where approximately one hundred bishops met together at a meeting to discuss the identity of God. **Is He one, or is He three? These two questions occupied their debate!**

At the end of their long and reportedly violent discussion, the idea of a trinity was introduced and became a popular teaching amongst the Catholic church from that point until now. It is interesting to take note that it was 325 years after the original church was first inaugurated by the Holy Spirit (**on the Day of Pentecost**), that people began to suggest and to teach that God existed in three-persons; and that all three persons are considered **co-equal** and **co-eternal**.

The following triangle is the diagram that is generally used to explain the concept of the trinity.



When it was asked that this theory be further explained, the group of men who held to the Trinitarian viewpoint stated that it was a mystery and that men were not truly able to fully comprehend or fully explain it, because no one can fully comprehend God. However, upon close observation about what the Bible teaches about the Godhead, we read that it is not a mystery.

In the following passage, Paul teaches that the visible attributes in creation demonstrate God's eternal power and Godhead. In his own words, God's identity **"the fullness of the Godhead"** can be **"clearly seen."**

ROMANS 1:18-20

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **19** because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. **20** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”

It is important for you to understand that the trinity is not an accurate biblical concept, but rather is a misguided teaching about God's identity that has evolved over the centuries. As alluded to before, the early Church never knew or taught that God is a **'three-person being'**, which is at the heart of the Trinitarian belief. In addition to this point, the Apostles (**the 12 men Jesus chose to speak on His behalf in the earth through writings**), and the prophets (those Holy man of God in the Old Testament whom God directly communicated with), all affirm the oneness of God; and they demonstrate in their writings how Jesus was God manifested in the flesh.

Ephesians 2:20 also supports the consistency between the apostles' and prophets' beliefs.

EPHESIANS 2:20

“Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

1 TIMOTHY 3:16

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory”.

Reference the above passage with Acts 1:9-11

Some may struggle to understand the oneness of God. This is why it is crucial that every believer have a personal experience with Jesus, like the disciples who walked alongside Him; and also become students of His Word so that they are able to **“rightly divide the Word of truth.”**

THE DUAL NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST



The oneness of God can be clearly understood through a correct understanding of the term **dual nature of Jesus Christ**. When using this term in a monotheistic setting, one should understand that humanity and divinity equally dwell in the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, **thus making Jesus the God-Man**. For example, while God existed in heaven overseeing the affairs of man (**as divinity**), He also existed in the body of Jesus, (**humanity**) thus making Him susceptible to the natural behaviour of sleeping at the bottom of a ship during a raging storm.

In the following biblical passage, readers can observe a clear example of the dual nature that Jesus Christ embodied.

MARK 4:36-39

“Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. **37** And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. **38** But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” **39** Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm”

The chart below shows agreeing scriptures that affirms the dual nature of Jesus Christ from both Old and New Testament writers. It is in this way that the apostles and prophets provide us with an understanding of the true identity of Jesus Christ, that He is in fact, both God and man.

OLD TESTAMENT STATEMENTS REGARDING THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Isaiah 7:14

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

(see Isaiah 9:6)

Isaiah 35:4-6

“Say to those who are fearful-hearted, ‘Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you.’ 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.”

Isaiah 44:6

“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.’”

Isaiah 45:21-23

“...And there is no other God besides Me, ‘A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me. 22 ‘Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.’”

NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENTS REGARDING THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Matthew 1:21-23

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

Matthew 11:2-6

“And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples 3 and said to Him, ‘Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?’ 4 Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.’”

(compare Luke 4:16-21)

Revelation 22:13

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

Philippians 2:6-11

“...Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Sometimes people have trouble grappling with the fact that the man Christ Jesus was **born of a virgin (causing Him to be fully human)**, while **“...in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily”**, (Colossians 2:9). In this passage, we can see how Jesus – although He existed in human nature – also embodied the divine nature. Therefore, it can be easily seen that **Jesus is both God and man, divine and human (1 Timothy 3:16)**.

An honest consideration of **Matthew 1:18** demonstrates that Jesus’ humanity (**sonship**) began with the virgin birth and provided a tabernacle (**the flesh**) for the Father (**divinity**) to dwell in while He was on the earth. **Thus, God took on flesh to reconcile Himself to humanity.**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-19(A)

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, **19** that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself“ ...

Indeed, *as a man*, Jesus hungered (**Matthew 4:2**), wept (**John 11:35**), slept (**Matthew 8:24**), and so on. All of these actions demonstrated his humanity. However *as Jesus*, He miraculously fed the multitudes of 5000 people with five loaves and two fish (**Matthew 14:13-21**), raised the dead (**John 11:38-44**), and calmed the raging storm (**Luke 8:22-25**). The latter of these actions all affirm Jesus’ divinity.

FIRST, LET’S TAKE A LOOK AT LEMONADE

The following illustration is borrowed from the “Pentecostal Bible Study” published by the Pentecostal Publishing House in Missouri.



Lemons and water are the two primary ingredients of a perfect pitcher of lemonade, but can also serve as an analogy to illustrate the dual nature of Jesus Christ. **The acidic pH level of lemons accounts for it being a very harsh product; this symbolizes the Father, (the consuming fire before the incarnation, Hebrews 12:29). Water, on the other hand, is a more basic compound that balances out the harshness of the lemons; this represents the humanity of Jesus Christ (the consuming fire becoming the mediator, 1 Timothy 2:5).**

Although both ingredients (**lemons and water**) have different properties, once stirred together they become inseparable and form a single unit. It is in this very way that God manifesting in the flesh causes Jesus the Son of God to be the **God-Man!**

1 JOHN 2:20-23

“But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. **21** I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. **22** Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. **23** Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”

THINK ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF DUAL NATURE IN THIS WAY!



Two ingredients in one drink.

1. The lemon is in the water, and water is in the lemon.
2. But the lemon is not the water, and the water is not the lemon.
3. The lemon is greater than the water (John 14:18).
4. Still the lemon and the water are one drink.
5. But he who has seen the water has seen the lemon.
6. But the water is a mediator between us and the lemon.
7. The lemon gave this drink its name - Lemonade.
8. What is the name of this lemon and water? Lemonade!
9. Who is a liar, but he who denies lemonade is this drink (lemonade and water).
10. He who refuses the lemon and the water is without this drink.
11. Whoever refuses the water, the same does not have a lemon, but he who accepts the water accepts the lemon also.

NOW, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT A TREE



REVELATION 22:16

“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

Literally speaking, trees cannot survive healthily without a root system for stability and nutrients. **Roots operate as an anchor for a tree.** Figuratively speaking, roots can symbolize the source of a lineage and a family tree. That being said, **Jesus Christ's divinity can be understood as the root that is invisible to the human eye.** Jesus Christ's humanity can be seen on the other hand as the **branch of a tree.** The branch is the offspring of a tree and **speaks to the fact that Jesus was fully human.** For example, you can visibly see your family members but you cannot visibly see the intangible roots that bind you altogether from time past. It is in this way, that **Jesus is both the Root and Offspring, He is both God and Man.**

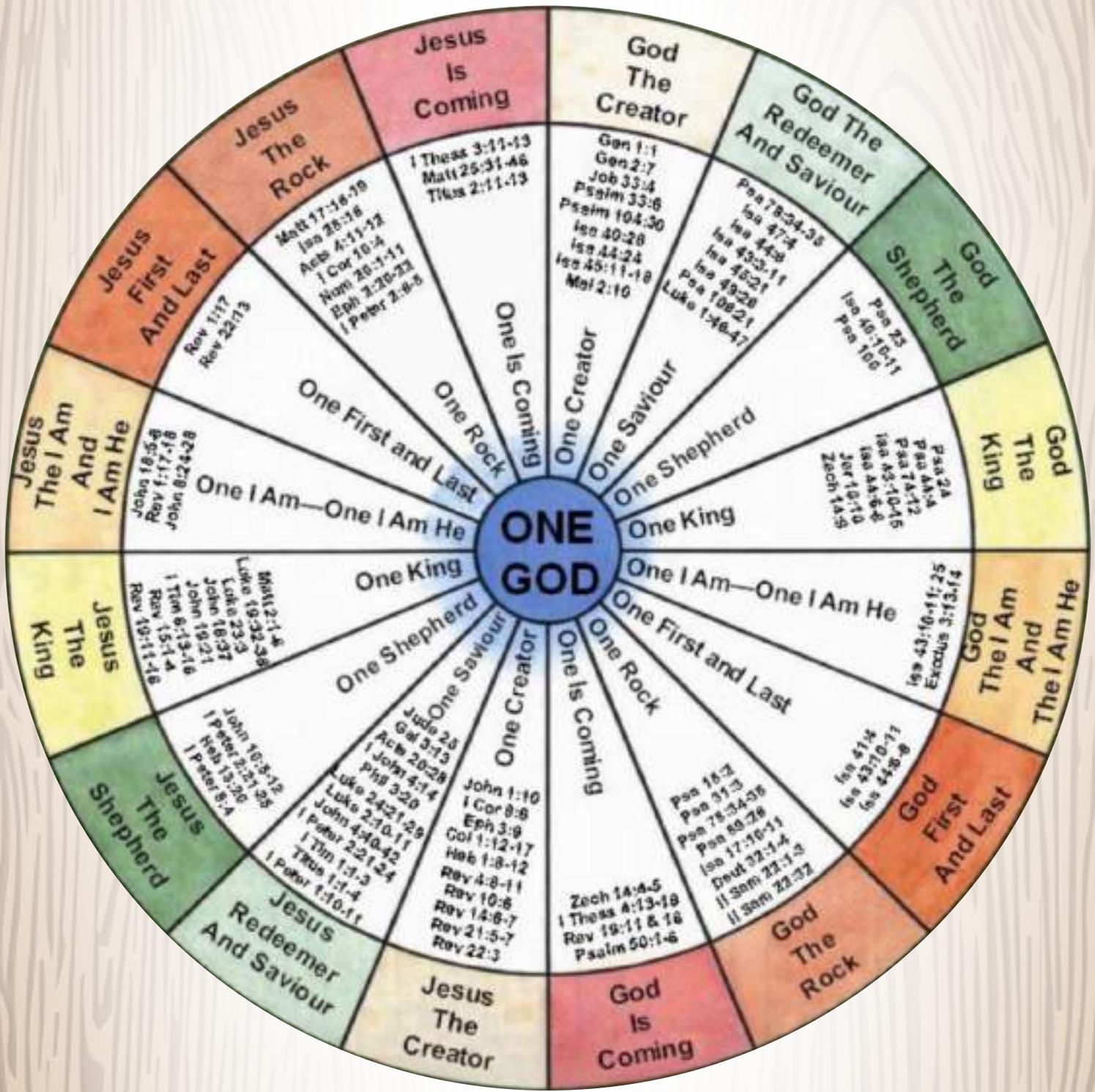
DISCUSSION QUESTION



Using the analogy of H₂O where water can be manifested as liquid, steam and solid, explain how the manifestations of God as Father, Son and Holy Ghost work together to demonstrate the oneness of God.



UNDERSTANDING



THE *Mighty* GOD IN CHRIST

3

THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST



Understanding the death of Jesus Christ, is essential for understanding the purpose of Christianity. During the Old Testament era, God gave clear and precise instructions on how the earthly tabernacle should be built and the order that should be maintained within it (**Exodus 25:1-40**). The primary purpose of the veil within the tabernacle, that shielded the ark of the covenant, was to separate the holy place from the **“holy of holies”**. The only person permitted to go beyond the veil was the ~~high priest~~, who offered sacrifices once a year ~~during Yom Kippur~~. **Yom Kippur is also known as the Day of Atonement in Judaism**; through prayer and fasting, Jews observe this holy day of repentance before God. **The veil then represented the physical barrier that stood between the holy presence of God and the community who remained outside as a result of sin.**

It is in this way that the purpose of Jesus’ death was to **bridge the gap between God and man** and serve as the ultimate atonement for the world’s sin. Therefore, when Jesus declared that **“It is finished”** on the cross, He signified the fulfilment of His mission on earth.

The death of Jesus, who is our High Priest, allowed Him to tear through the veil that prevented mankind from developing a more personal and intimate relationship with God. Moreover, Jesus tore down the barriers of the previous religious system that brought division in society by welcoming the Samaritans and Gentiles, Greeks and Barbarians, male and female into the promise of salvation (**see Acts 8 & 10 and Galatians 3:28**). It is through the death of Jesus Christ that all receive eternal life (**John 3:16**).

These words, “It is finished”, are found only in John’s gospel. “It is finished,” also means that the debt owed by man to his Creator on account of Adam’s sin is finally and forever dealt with through the death of Jesus.



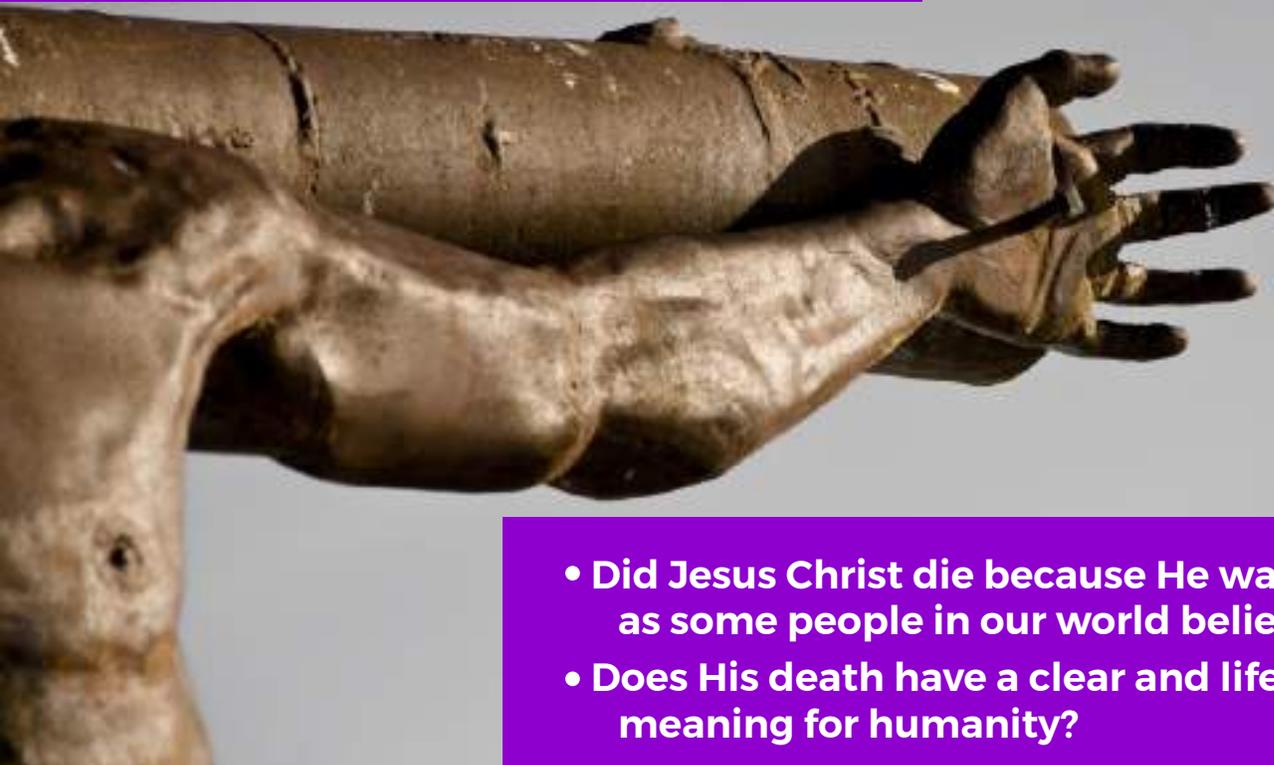
JOHN 19:28-30

“After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” **29** Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. **30** So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit”.

MATHEW 27:44-53

“Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing. **45** Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. **46** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” **47** Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!” **48** Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. **49** The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.” **50** And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. **51** Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, **52** and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; **53** and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.”

WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE THE WAY IN WHICH HE DID?



- Did Jesus Christ die because He was a madman as some people in our world believe?
- Does His death have a clear and life-changing meaning for humanity?

God created the Earth and everything in it. He created mankind hoping to enjoy endless fellowship with them, only for them to be tricked and taken captive by Satan through his act of deception. Satan's trickery interrupted the enjoyable and everlasting life that God had intended them to experience in the Garden.

God had to do something drastic, something that would daze and confuse the dark world and make a way of escape for His children whom He loved so much. In the fullness of time, God executed His plan of action. God's plan to rescue and recover mankind from Satan's kingdom would entail the laying down of the life of His only Son on the cross (**Galatians 4:4-5**). To deal with sin from God's perspective, an enormous price had to be paid.

GALATIANS 4:4-5

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons”.

Since the fall of man, a debt we could never repay was incurred upon humanity. God is absolutely just, so arbitrarily 'erasing' our sin or simply ignoring our debt, was not an option. As **Hebrews 9:22** says, “...**without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness [neither release from sin and its guilt, nor cancellation of the merited punishment.]**” (**Amplified Bible**). God's love for us was so great that He decided to send Himself as the ultimate sacrifice. (**See the prototype to this sacrificial act also displayed in Genesis 22:1-14**). In the case of Jesus, the shedding of His blood atoned for our iniquities and fulfilled the prophecies of and types and shadows of the Old Testament.

Consider of the following biblical passage for example:

JOHN 3:14-17

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, **15** that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”.

From this biblical passage, and several others we can see that the main reason for Jesus' death, and also that the way in which He offered up His life was simply to freely offer salvation to mankind. By understanding this, those who are recipients of salvation can be thankful to Jesus Christ for being willing to demonstrate His love for us in the most unique way. We are now able to see clearly how the death of our loving Lord had a specific purpose; because from the onset, His mission was to ensure that Satan's grip on humanity would be loosed, and He did just that when He died on the cross the afternoon of His crucifixion, and rose again from the dead three days later. Jesus **"destroyed the works of the devil"** and set the captives Satan had held bound free through His shed blood.

1 JOHN 3:8(B)

...**"For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil"**.

44



**SATAN'S PLAN
WAS INTERRUPTED!**

Have you ever begun doing something you thought was very important only to be interrupted by someone? That can be quite frustrating at times, especially if you have a demanding schedule that requires you to prioritize time-sensitive work regularly.

Satan, believe it or not, was devising a horrible plan to negatively affect the destiny of every single individual by having them remain in a perpetual state of spiritual blindness. Essentially, he was planning to have all of us join him in his eternal home, which is the lake of fire. This is the selfsame reason for which Satan continues to work hard each day and night hoping to confuse the hearts and the minds of people and to blind their eyes to the truths about God, sin, hell, himself, and other essential realities.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-4



“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, **4** whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them”.

It was right in the middle of this evil plan that the death of Jesus Christ surprised him drastically, so much to the point that all of Satan’s evil plans for the world were interrupted. This can explain the perfect hatred that Satan has for God and us. But the good news is that he and his plans were exposed. All this has left Satan in an uncomfortable situation. He and his demons are not happy as can be imagined. So, to get back at God, they have organized themselves all over the world literally in every nation, region, city, government etc, actively becoming involved in the distraction of human life and destinies. For example, we can see this being demonstrated through many of the antichrist laws that are being legislated secular societies.

The satanic agents are furious, hoping to deceive mankind again, particularly those who are believers. He also endeavours to place builders over the minds of unbelievers so that they never accept the message about salvation.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ conquered Satan, so today you can boldly say the words, Satan, you are defeated by the death and blood of Jesus Christ. Certainly, gaining an understanding of this truth should cause you to love Jesus today even more than you did yesterday and forevermore!

PAID IN FULL



Even though God previously allowed the Israelites to offer the lives of an animal as a sacrifice to spare their lives and to make atonement for their sins; that practice was temporary because it was not God's ultimate plan to ultimately restore fellowship with human beings.

(Please review Leviticus chapters 1 to 5 to become familiar with the different offerings and requirements which involved in the process of the children of Israel seeking to appease God for their forgiveness of sins). In addition to these, the following scripture provides more information about the previous dispensation in which God's priests were required by God's law to offer up animal sacrifices for the congregation's sins.

LEVITICUS 4:13-14

“Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally, and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done something against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which should not be done, and are guilty; **14** when the sin which they have committed becomes known, then the assembly shall offer a young bull for the sin, and bring it before the tabernacle of meeting”.

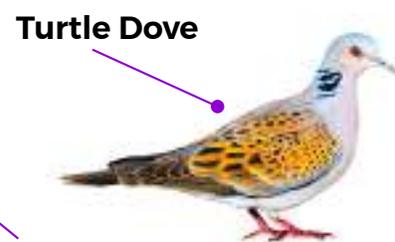
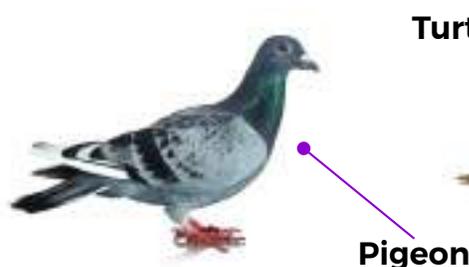
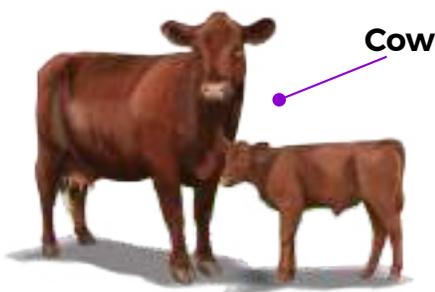
In the biblical passage below, Paul provides a brief commentary on the Old Testament practises of offering animal sacrifices to delay God’s judgment against sin. Instead of relying on the efforts of the earthly priest’s to offer up sacrifices for individuals misdeeds once every year, Paul shows his readers how, through the offering of the life of Jesus Christ, that one single act of sacrifice is superior to all other old testament substitutes for dealing with man’s dilemma of sin. Through the efficacious blood of Jesus Christ, God has once and for all provided the covering for the sinful state of man’s reality.

HEBREWS 9:12-15

“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, **14** how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? **15** And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance”.

By choosing to become obedient to the death of the cross, Jesus has become the mediator that we have long needed to make peace with God on our behalf. The Bible tells us that the blood of goats, cows, birds, and other creatures would only cover the sins of man for one year before they needed to be offered again and again, (**see Hebrews 9:7**). People living during the Old Testament era sometimes faced difficulties securing an animal for their sacrifice because the sacrifice they offered would have to match their socio-economic status.

For example, if you were able to afford a cow, you could never offer a turtle dove or a pigeon.



HEBREWS 7:24-28

“But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. **25** Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. **26** For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; **27** who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. **28** For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever”.

