

Somebody Special: Part 2 - What Went Wrong?

Introduction

Have you ever wondered what happened to our world? If God created a perfect earth, how did it and the people here (in particular, you) get so messed up?

It's not very hard to understand. When God made us, He didn't make us like puppets – He gave us free will. Free will means that He gave us the right to choose; the right to choose good or bad – the right to make wise or poor decisions – the right to obey God or Satan.

You see, almost as soon as God created the earth, Satan, God's arch enemy, showed up on the scene. He wanted everyone to follow him, instead of God. Guess what happened? Just like many people today, most of the original people on earth, and in every generation since, chose to follow Satan. You can read about that in Genesis. People grew more and more wicked (except for a few people who were faithful to God) until there was almost no hope left.

Did that cause God to stop loving the people He'd created? Never! And finally He did something about it.

Prayer

God, I know there's very little I can do to get myself out of the mess I'm in. Help me to learn about your Son Jesus, the one who's got some answers for me.

Read John 3:16-17.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

1. How does God feel about us (the world)? _____

2. What did He do about it? _____

3. Why? _____

4. What was His Son sent to do? _____

5. What was Jesus not sent to do? _____

I'm sure you're familiar with that word condemn. Today, just as in Jesus' time, judges can sentence people to prison or, if their crime is serious enough, sentence them to death. Even though God knew we were all guilty of all kinds of sin, He still didn't condemn us to death; instead He gave us another chance. He sent His Son to save us. As a matter of fact, Jesus' name means, "The Lord saves".

Jesus came to save the world – that means everyone, because everyone needs saving. That includes all the “nice” and “good” people in the world. You see, most people think that just because a person obeys the laws and doesn't hurt anyone that makes them a good person. We'd never call a person like that a sinner. There's where we and God differ.

Read Romans 3:23.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

6. What does God say about everyone? _____

All – everyone – has sinned. Everyone who has ever lived needs someone to save them from their sins. That includes me. That includes you!

Jesus' birth wasn't an impulsive action on God's part. Sending His Son to die for us has always been part of his plan for mankind.

Long before Jesus was born, holy men had been telling of a new day when God's Son would be born on earth and what He would do. Here is what one prophet said.

Read Isaiah 61:1-3.

¹The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners

² ...to comfort all who mourn,

³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

7. What are some of the things a future savior would do?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Question:

- How many of these things can you relate to?

I can see myself in a lot of the situations described here. I've been poor, broken-hearted, a captive; I've mourned and grieved and been in despair. Isn't it wonderful that God understands this? Isn't it wonderful that He sent His Son here for me? Isn't it wonderful that He sent His Son here for you?

How do we know that Jesus was the one the prophets meant? Well, because He said so at the beginning of His ministry.

Read Luke 4:16-18.

¹⁶He (Jesus) went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day He went into the synagogue, as was His custom. And He stood up to read. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. Unrolling it, He found the place where it is written: ¹⁸'the Spirit of the Lord is on Me because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight of the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'

8. Where was Jesus when this happened? _____

9. What did He read? _____

Read Luke 4:20-21.

²⁰Then He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on Him. ²¹He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'

10. What did Jesus say when He finished reading? _____

Yes, Jesus was the one the prophets were talking about when they described this person who was going to set prisoners free, provide comfort and encouragement – even joy to those in trouble. He was the one who would set sinners free from the terrible hold sin had over their lives.

In another scripture, this is what Paul said about Jesus.

Read Romans 5:8.

God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ (Jesus) died for us.

11. Who died for us? _____

12. When did He do this? _____

While we were still sinners – not after we'd cleaned ourselves up and started living law-abiding lives – but while we were still living sinful lives, when we needed it most.

Personal Questions:

- Have you ever made a sacrifice for anyone?
- How does it compare with God's sacrifice?
- What do you think of a God who would sacrifice His own son for someone else – for you?
- What does this tell you about God's character, about His love for you?

In the next chapter, we'll learn more about who Jesus is and what He did while He lived on earth.

Scriptures to Memorize

¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. John 3:16-17

⁸God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ (Jesus) died for us. Romans 5:8

The Answers

1. He loves us.
2. He sent His only Son to give us eternal life.
3. So that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
4. To save the world.
5. To condemn it.
6. All have sinned.
7.
 - preach good news to the poor,
 - bind up the brokenhearted,
 - proclaim freedom for captives,
 - release from darkness for the prisoners,
 - comfort all who mourn,
 - provide for those who grieve,
 - bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes,
 - oil of joy instead of mourning,
 - a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair
8. Preach good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for captives, release from darkness for the prison
9. A synagogue in Nazareth
10. "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."
11. Christ Jesus
12. While we were still sinners

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