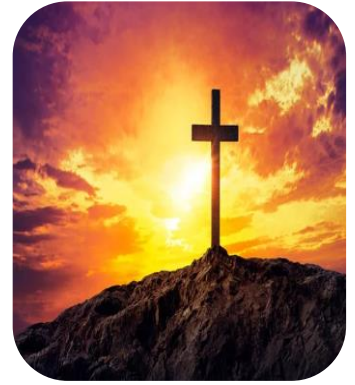




# THE ROAD TO CALVARY



## WEEK ONE: IT WAS GOD'S APPOINTED TIME

This was not a sudden inspiration of God but had been planned since the beginning of time. Reference to the coming of Jesus is made throughout the Old Testament as we saw in the Advent study.

### **Read Genesis 3:1-15**

The following is taken from Wikipedia and whilst at first it may seem a complex piece of writing, it demonstrates God's plan for redemption.

*In Christianity, Genesis 3:15 ("And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."), is known as the **protevangelium**. This is a compound of two Greek words, *protos* meaning "first" and *evangelion* meaning "good news" or "[gospel](#)". Thus, the verse is commonly referred to as the first mention in the Bible of the "good news" of salvation. Old Testament scholar [Derek Kidner](#) describes the Protoevangelium as "the first glimmer of the gospel", and [Victor P. Hamilton](#) emphasises the importance of the redemptive promise included in the curse.*

*The reference to the "seed of the woman" is believed by Christians to be a prophecy of the [virgin birth](#) of [Jesus](#). Elsewhere in the Bible, a child is referred to as the "seed" of his father, exclusively. For example, Jesus is called the "seed of David" in [Romans](#) 1:3, and the whole nation of Israel is referred to as the "seed of Jacob" in [Jeremiah](#) 33:26. For Jesus to be called the "seed of the woman", therefore, is interpreted to mean that he will have no earthly father. The phrase "seed of the woman" is sometimes counted as one of the [titles of Jesus in the Bible](#).*

*Identification of the "seed of the woman" with Jesus goes back at least as far as [Irenaeus](#) (180 AD), who along with several other [Church Fathers](#) regarded this verse as "the first messianic prophecy in the Old Testament". Wikipedia*

In relation to God and time, it is always the present, so unlike us, he is never caught out by events. **GOD IS: he is never: WILL BE or HAS BEEN.**

You will recall the story of Abraham([Genesis 22](#)), being asked of God to take his son, his only son Isaac to one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. This mountain later

became known as *Mount Zion*, the location of the temple in Jerusalem. They took everything with them to enable them to offer a sacrifice but only Abraham knew that they did not need to take an animal for the sacrifice. So, we have Isaac asking his father ([verse 7](#)), “Father?” “Yes, my son?” Abraham replied. “The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” Abraham answered ([verse 8](#)), “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.”

- Can you imagine what it must have cost Abraham to make that journey?
- He could never have envisaged the outcome that God had arranged. Do we ever feel that God has asked too much of us?
- Are there dreams that we have had to give up because we knew it was not God’s plan?

Of course, God’s plan was that we would love and serve him just as he provides his love and care for us. However, we have shown, generation by generation, despite our covenant with God and the Law given by God through Moses (what we know as the ten commandments), that we cannot keep up our side of the agreement. The Old Testament of the Bible recounts this, and we know it for ourselves too.

So, what does all that mean then? That brings us to the Road to Calvary.

This *Road to Calvary* would require God to give up his son, his only son as a sacrifice.

### [Read Luke 2:22-38](#)

In Luke chapter 1 we read of the how Mary was told she was to bear a child, conceived by the Holy Spirit. It is hard to imagine how she must have felt on hearing this news, but she willingly agreed ([verse 38](#)). After eight days, Jesus was circumcised and given his name. According to the law, forty days after birth, all male children had to be presented in temple for the purification offering and if a woman’s first child was a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord.

- What were the spiritual characteristics of Simeon?
- His prophetic word was amazing. How did he describe Jesus?
- Likewise, Anna, a prophet, who served God day and night with fasting, and prayer made another remarkable statement about this child, Jesus. What did she foretell?

The rest of chapter 2 is all we know of the childhood of Jesus; telling of the way he amazed the scholars of the day with his understanding. Verse 48 portrays an experience most parents go through at some point, when they find their ‘lost’ child.

- What did Jesus say to them?

### [Read Luke 3:1-22](#)

When we studied Isaiah 40, we read the prophecy of “*one crying in the wilderness*”. Here in Luke, we see the fulfilment of those words. John the Baptist whose birth was also a miracle ([Luke 1:5-25](#)), was that voice and it came across, loud and clear.

Inevitably, people wondered whether John was indeed the promised Messiah, but he plainly told them: “*I baptise with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am – so much greater that I am not even worthy to be his slave. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*”

Here we have a straight-talking man absolutely confident of God’s calling on his life. There was no attempt to bring glory to his own name but a certainty that he was part of the plan that God was unfolding.

- John wanted no ambiguity as to his role, but he wanted to make clear that the Good News of the promised Messiah would have repercussions for those not following God’s ways – verses 17-19.

### ***Read John 1:1-34***

- In our present time, lots of people want to ‘get in’ on the celebrity scene thinking it will ‘enhance their profile’ but not John as these verses clearly proclaim that Jesus is the promised Messiah.
- What convinced John of this?

Following his baptism in the Jordan by John, Jesus began his earthly ministry and by definition, his journey to the cross.

I believe we should all aspire to be like John the Baptist; people who turn the attention away from themselves and onto Jesus.



*“This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”*

### **Prayer:**

**Father God help us to be true followers of Jesus so that one day you will be able to say of us that we are your beloved child in whom you are well pleased.**