

out the wicked occupants of the promised land through Joshua. It will be a terrible day for those who reject Christ - everyone will bow before him (Philippians 2:9-11). The Father has appointed him to be the judge of both the living and the dead (John 5:22; Acts 17:31), so everyone will be raised from the dead to face him (Acts 24:14-15; cf. John 5:28-29). Those who have persisted in rejecting Jesus, will be rejected by him forever. Justice will be done. The Father delays this day of the LORD because he is very patient. He wants to give us more time to turn back to Jesus (2 Peter 3:9-10).

### The New Creation

But for those who have trusted in Jesus, they will be rescued from God's fierce anger on that day (1 Thessalonians 1:10). For on the cross Jesus bore that judgement, and so if we are in him then we are completely safe! Having driven out evil from the world, as with the cleansing-judgement of the Flood, a new creation will come into being. This is the day that even creation itself has been longing for ever since Adam's sin brought it under a curse (Romans 8:19-25). The Spirit will be poured out bringing renewal and the LORD's blessing (Isaiah 32:15-20). Creation will be restored and glorified. As Israel inherited the promised land, so Jesus and those in him will inherit this new creation. Until that time it is as if Christians still live in the desert looking forward to the hope of their promised land (Hebrews 3:7-4:11). Or in terms of the exile, the church is still scattered in physical exile awaiting the return to the land (1 Peter 1:1, 17, 2:11; James 1:1).

In the closing chapters of the Bible, we are given a vision of what that home will be like. It is described as the new Jerusalem, made from precious stones (Revelation 21:9-27) and like the Garden of Eden (Revelation 22:1-3). There are two cities of Jerusalem in the Bible, the earthly and the heavenly (Galatians 4:25-27). The promises of the new Jerusalem were about the heavenly city. Christians are already citizens of that heavenly city (Hebrews 12:22-24) and those who die go there to be with Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:21-24). But this is only a temporary stop over since the new Jerusalem *in heaven* is just a safe waiting place with Jesus (Micah 2:12-13) until he returns, conquers all his enemies and renews creation. Then the heavenly city will come down onto the new earth (Revelation 21:1-2) and Christians from all nations (Revelation 7:9) will dwell there forever with the Father, Son and Spirit. Then all the promises are fulfilled. This is the certain hope Christians have in the LORD Jesus.

#### ***If you wanted to explore further...***

You might like to read through the whole of some books of the Bible. Perhaps start by reading a gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke or John). Other books that might be useful to read would be Exodus, Isaiah, Ephesians and Romans.

## Everything is Fulfilled in Jesus!

### Part 4: Matthew-Revelation

#### Read Mark 1:1-15 and 14:12-25

How does Jesus fulfill the Old Testament?

#### The True King is Here!

The coming of John the Baptist signals that the true return from exile is about to begin. That's why Mark begins his gospel by quoting Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3. John is the messenger who prepares the way for the LORD and Jesus of Nazareth is therefore the LORD. As Malachi 3:1 implies, he is the Messenger (=Angel) of the covenant, the one who had rescued Israel out of Egypt and Israel's true king (Judges 2:1-5). The shock is that it is this one Israel crucifies! But it was all part of the plan: The LORD who had lived in Eden and later in the midst of Israel, had now been born into the human race (John 1:1-3,14) in order to save us. As John baptises Jesus, the Father declares that Jesus is his Son and the Spirit comes on Jesus to empower his ministry to do battle with Satan (Mark 1:9-13). Back at the beginning, Satan had taken control of the world. But now the true king has come to drive out Satan and his forces, and to finally bring in God's kingdom (Mark 1:14-15) and that will take him to his death.

#### The True Exodus and the End of the Exile

The prophets spoke of the return from exile as a new exodus. In the original exodus, the Angel of the LORD came to rescue Israel, and now as the man Jesus, he has come to rescue his people. This is why the gospels are full of allusions to the first exodus:

- The feeding of the 4000/5000 alludes to the provision of manna in the desert.
- The walking on water reminds us of the crossing of the Red Sea.
- The Sermon on the Mount reminds us of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai.
- The selection of the 12 disciples to re-form Israel reminds us of the 12 tribes.
- The miracles Jesus performs recalls the miracles Moses performed in Egypt.
- The journey to Jerusalem with Jesus leading his redeemed people is like the journey through the desert (Isaiah 35; Mark 10:32-34,46-52).

At the Last Supper (Mark 14:12-26), Jesus and his disciples eat what seems to be the Passover meal, but where is the lamb? The answer is that Jesus is the lamb (John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7). As the promised suffering servant, Jesus offers himself as the

sacrifice (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). The first exodus was made possible because of the death of the Passover lamb and so it is the case with the true exodus. The Passover lamb was killed instead of the firstborn son as a substitute and so that son escaped the judgement. Likewise Jesus, the true lamb, dies in our place bearing the punishment we deserve (Mark 10:45). We are not rescued from slavery under Pharaoh, but from slavery to sin under Satan (John 8:31-47). Like Israel, having escaped the judgement of death we are rescued to be part of the church. The Son brings us to the Father (John 14:6), but not with the fear of the Israelites at Mount Sinai, but into a confident relationship. With Jesus as our High Priest we can approach a Holy God (Mark 15:38)!

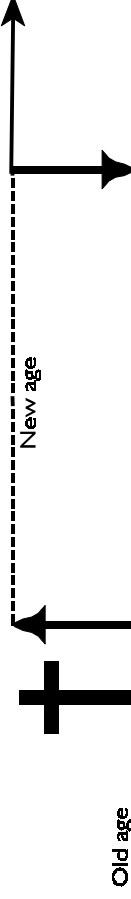
Jesus ends the exile: he is obedient and so he is the true Israel and the true Adam. In his death he bears both the curse of the exile of Israel (Galatians 3:13) and of humanity from Eden (Romans 5:12-21). Since the problem of sin has now been decisively dealt with, all the effects of sin can be undone. Jesus has conquered sin, Satan and death!

### Read Acts 2

What happens as a result of Jesus ascending to heaven?

### The Beginning of the End

As the prophets foretold, after the sufferings of the Christ, he would reign in glory. It is Jesus' resurrection and ascension that brings him into experiencing the blessings and promises made to Abraham and David forever (Acts 13:32-34). In his death he took the curse, so that in his resurrection life he enjoys the blessings. He is the true seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16). And so the Father gives him all the promises (e.g. he inherits the whole creation)! If we believe in Jesus, then the Spirit unites us to him and so we are "in Christ". That means we are also the true seed in him and we inherit all the promises in Jesus (Galatians 3:26-4:7)! But not only that, because Jesus has taken the curse Adam brought on creation, the entire creation can be renewed (Acts 3:21;



Matthew 19:28; Romans 8:18-25). Jesus' body was transformed in his resurrection, and so that is the first installment of the new creation. The renewal of the rest of

creation awaits his return. His resurrection marks the beginning of the new age (John 11:21-27). We now live in an overlap of the old and new ages (the "last days").

### Seated at the Right Hand of the Father

After 40 days, Jesus is taken up into heaven (Acts 1:1-11). Finally after Adam was expelled from God's presence, the true, obedient man has returned. Having entered heaven, Jesus is seated on the throne of the world. A member of the human race now sits next to the Father - Jesus is our man in heaven! In doing so he sits on the throne of David (Acts 2:30; 2 Samuel 7; Hebrews 1:5) and so he is the one in whom all the promises made to David are fulfilled. Solomon was but a shadow of this true son of David. Like Solomon, Jesus builds a temple, but the true temple Jesus builds is his church (1 Peter 2:4-5) made up of people from all nations (fulfilling the promise of Genesis 12:3). The book of Acts tells us how Jesus builds his church from heaven: the Father gives the LORD Jesus full possession of the Holy Spirit, so that all things are under his control (Philippians 3:20-21). Even suffering and opposition that Christians face for proclaiming Jesus are all part of Jesus' sovereign purposes to build his church! Persecution in Acts forces Christians to take the gospel message further afield (Acts 8:1-8) and suffering refines Christians to become more like Jesus (Romans 8:28-29).

### The Gift of the Holy Spirit

Jesus gives the Spirit to every member of his church (Acts 2:33). The Spirit empowers Christians to proclaim the gospel to all nations (Acts 1:8) and gives gifts to build one another up. So the church is the true temple indwelt by the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). The Spirit longs for us to become more like Christ. There is no longer any need for an external law, for the Spirit changes us from the inside out, to love God and each other.

### Read Revelation 21:1-22:5

In what ways is this a reversal of all that went wrong at the fall and in what ways is this even better than the original creation?

### The Day of the LORD Jesus

The LORD Jesus will continue ruling until the Father has put all things under him (1 Corinthians 15:25). Then the Father will send Jesus back: this is the day of the LORD. It will come unexpectedly (1 Thessalonians 5:2). The LORD Jesus will be revealed in his immense glory, returning to finally bring about all that the OT promised for his people. To do that he must first drive out all evil from the earth, just as he had driven