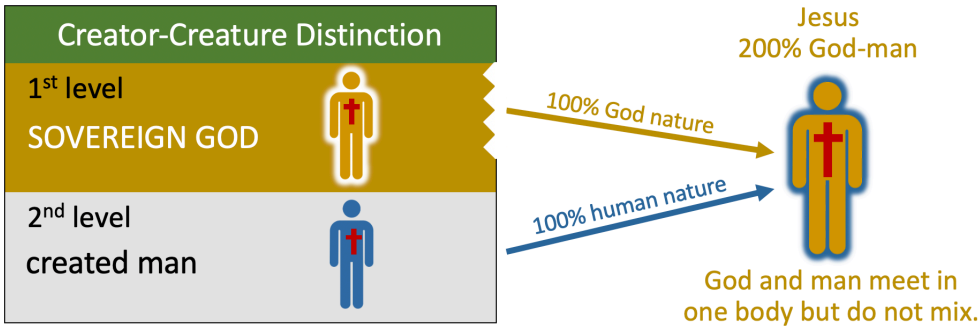


# 16. God’s Rescue Plan – Part 2

## Previously...

After the Fall, Yahweh had promised back in the garden of Eden that He would send a rescuer for mankind. Even though many years had passed since He made that promise, God kept His word by sending Jesus to be the Saviour.

Jesus was not an ordinary person. Jesus is God Himself. He is fully man and fully God at the same time. He is the God-man.



To help people identify and recognise His chosen Saviour, Yahweh gave the prophets many prophecies regarding Jesus to record.

And Jesus did many signs and miracles that only God can do to show people who He was. In this lesson, we will look at some of the miracles that Jesus did.

**Timeline of Biblical Events from Creation to Final Judgment**

|          |       |         |          |         |        |        |             |                |
|----------|-------|---------|----------|---------|--------|--------|-------------|----------------|
| Creation | Flood | Abraham | The Law  | Kingdom | Return | Cross  | Our present | Final Judgment |
| Fall     | Babel | Exodus  | Conquest | Exile   | Jesus  | Church |             |                |

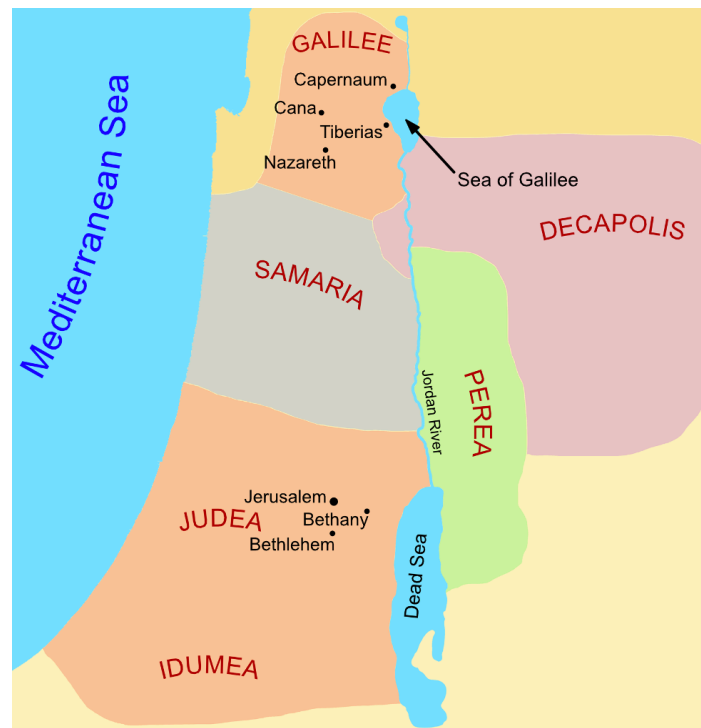
  

|                             |                                  |                              |                            |                       |                     |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 How the world came to be  | 2 Why there is evil in the world | 5 God revealed His standards | 6 God taught about Himself | 9 The Saviour’s work  | 10 The present age  |
| 3 God judged the evil world | 4 God’s plan to reach the world  | 7 How God’s people failed    | 8 God’s rescue plan        | 11 How the world ends | 12 God’s invitation |

## JESUS PROVES HE IS GOD WITH SIGNS AND MIRACLES

Jesus started His public ministry around the age of 30. He chose 12 men and they became His disciples. These men would witness for themselves who Jesus really was.

And how did Jesus prove to the people that He was God? He performed many miracles in Galilee (where Nazareth was) and in Judea (where Jerusalem was).














We will look at six miracles that were recorded by one of Jesus' closest disciples, John (this was another John, not John the Baptist).

John testified of what he had seen and experienced as Jesus' disciple. He recorded these things down in the New Testament book of John (often referred to as the Gospel of John. The word "gospel" means "good news").

### 1. Jesus creates wine at the wedding at Cana

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, Yahweh recorded how He had created the world in six days. The world that He created was a fully grown, mature world, full of plants and animals. Even the first man and woman He created were adults and not babies.

### Yahweh Creates the World: Six-Day Pattern

| First 3 Days: Domains   |  | Second 3 days: Occupants   |   |
|---|--|--|---|
|  |  Domain of light and darkness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sun for day</li> <li>Moon and stars for night</li> </ul>              |   |
|  |  Domain of sea and atmosphere | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish for sea</li> <li>Birds for atmosphere</li> </ul>                 |   |
|  | Domain of land   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animals for land</li> <li>Man to rule fish, birds, animals</li> </ul> |   |

Jesus' first miracle was also one where He created. He made vintage wine out of water.



**Let's turn to our Bibles and read John 2:1–11.**

(The leader reads aloud. For reference, the verses are also here.)

#### John 2:1–11

<sup>1</sup> The next day there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, <sup>2</sup> and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. <sup>3</sup> The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine."

<sup>4</sup> "Dear woman, that's not our problem," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

<sup>5</sup> But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

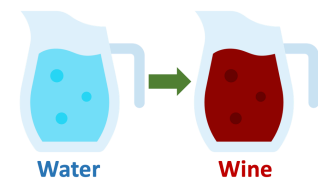
<sup>6</sup> Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. <sup>7</sup> Jesus told the servants, "Fill the jars with water." When the jars had been filled, <sup>8</sup> he said, "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." So the servants followed his instructions.

<sup>9</sup> When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over.

<sup>10</sup> "A host always serves the best wine first," he said. "Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!"

<sup>11</sup> This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

In this first miracle that Jesus did, He was showing that He was God. Just as Yahweh had supernaturally created everything in the world, so now, in an instant, Jesus also supernaturally created expensive vintage wine that tasted like it had been aged for many years. This was something that only God could do.













## 2. Jesus heals an official's son from a distance

In the Bible, we learnt that Yahweh is all-powerful. We saw how He created and gave life to Adam and Eve. Yahweh literally made Adam from the dust on the ground and then breathed life into him.



In the 10 plagues that struck Egypt, we also saw how Yahweh was in full control of the world, nature and even health and sickness. Specifically, Yahweh had authority over life and death (plague 5 and 10) and sickness (plague 6).

Now, we see that Jesus is all-powerful and has authority over sickness, life and death. Jesus was able to heal a dying young boy from a long distance away.

| The 10 Plagues  |                          |   |                            |
|---|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|
|  | 1. Water turned to blood |  | 6. Boils                   |
|  | 2. Frogs                 |  | 7. Hail                    |
|  | 3. Lice (gnats)          |  | 8. Locusts                 |
|  | 4. Flies                 |  | 9. Darkness                |
|  | 5. Death of livestock    |  | 10. Death of the firstborn |



**Let's turn to our Bibles and read John 4:46–54.**

(The leader reads aloud. For reference, the verses are also here.)

### John 4:46–54

<sup>46</sup> As he traveled through Galilee, he came to Cana, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a government official in nearby Capernaum whose son was very sick.

<sup>47</sup> When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged Jesus to come to Capernaum to heal his son, who was about to die.

<sup>48</sup> Jesus asked, “Will you never believe in me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?”

<sup>49</sup> The official pleaded, “Lord, please come now before my little boy dies.”

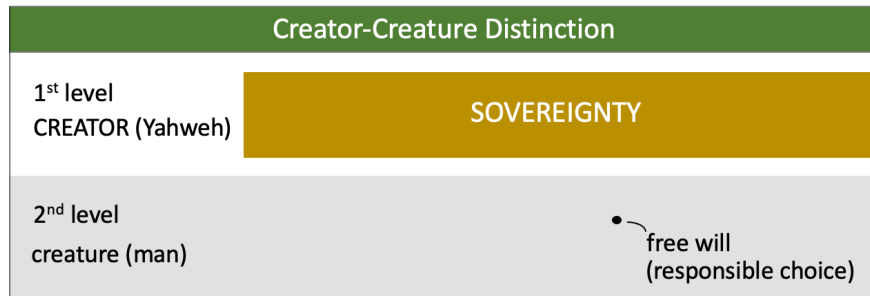
<sup>50</sup> Then Jesus told him, “Go back home. Your son will live!” And the man believed what Jesus said and started home.

<sup>51</sup> While the man was on his way, some of his servants met him with the news that his son was alive and well. <sup>52</sup> He asked them when the boy had begun to get better, and they replied, “Yesterday afternoon at one o'clock his fever suddenly disappeared!” <sup>53</sup> Then the father realized that that was the very time Jesus had told him, “Your son will live.” And he and his entire household believed in Jesus. <sup>54</sup> This was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee after coming from Judea.

How was Jesus able to do such a thing? The Bible makes it clear that Jesus is Yahweh. He is the God of all life. He created life at Creation, He sustains life, and He can also heal the sick. He has authority over sickness and death. Only the Creator-God of the universe can do such things.

### 3. Jesus heals a man who had been an invalid for 38 years

Even though Yahweh is God of the universe and can do anything He wishes, He gives mankind free will or responsible choice in relating to Him.



For example, we saw that when He approached Abraham, Abraham could choose to trust Him or treat Him with distrust. Abraham personally decided to trust God.



Likewise, when Jesus met a man who had been an invalid for 38 years, Jesus first asked him if he wanted to get well.



**Let's turn to our Bibles and read John 5:1–9a.**

(The leader reads aloud. For reference, the verses are also here.)

#### John 5:1–9a

<sup>1</sup> Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. <sup>2</sup> Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. <sup>3</sup> Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. <sup>5</sup> One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?”

<sup>7</sup> “I can’t, sir,” the sick man said, “for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.”

<sup>8</sup> Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!”

<sup>9</sup> Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking!

Jesus first spoke to the invalid man and asked him if he wanted to get well. Why did He do this? Jesus wanted to give the man the opportunity to communicate his desire.

Once the man said that he wanted to be healed, Jesus instructed the man to get up and the man stood up and walked. This was no “simple” miracle. The man’s atrophied muscles were totally restored. Muscles that had not been in use for decades took on strength immediately and he was able to bear his own weight and stand up. The man did not require months of rehabilitation or physical therapy to get his body to work again. He picked up his mat and walked. He was immediately, genuinely and completely healed.

This healing was done openly in the sight of all who were present. This was not a private miracle. This was not an “invisible healing” that could not be observed like removing stomach or back pain. This was not a gradual, “natural” healing process. This healing was supernatural and instantaneous and could only be accomplished by God.

## 4. Jesus feeds more than five thousand with a little food

Once, Jesus was teaching crowds of people in a very remote, rural place. And Jesus had compassion on them because they had not had food. Jesus' disciples, Philip and Andrew, were with Him. They knew it would be humanly impossible to get food for everyone. But then, Jesus used this event to teach the people about Himself.



**Let's turn to our Bibles and read John 6:1–14.**

(The leader reads aloud. For reference, the verses are also here.)

### John 6:1–14

<sup>1</sup> After this, Jesus crossed over to the far side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. <sup>2</sup> A huge crowd kept following him wherever he went, because they saw his miraculous signs as he healed the sick. <sup>3</sup> Then Jesus climbed a hill and sat down with his disciples around him. <sup>4</sup> (It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration.)

<sup>5</sup> Jesus soon saw a huge crowd of people coming to look for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, “Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?” <sup>6</sup> He was testing Philip, for he already knew what he was going to do.

<sup>7</sup> Philip replied, “Even if we worked for months, we wouldn't have enough money to feed them!”

<sup>8</sup> Then Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. <sup>9</sup> “There's a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that with this huge crowd?”

<sup>10</sup> “Tell everyone to sit down,” Jesus said. So they all sat down on the grassy slopes. (The men alone numbered about 5,000.) <sup>11</sup> Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup> After everyone was full, Jesus told his disciples, “Now gather the leftovers, so that nothing is wasted.” <sup>13</sup> So they picked up the pieces and filled twelve baskets with scraps left by the people who had eaten from the five barley loaves.

<sup>14</sup> When the people saw him do this miraculous sign, they exclaimed, “Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!”

Jesus received five loaves of barley bread and two fish. And there were more than 5,000 people to feed. He took the food, thanked God for it and started distributing the food to all the people. Jesus continued distributing both the bread and the fish till everyone was full. Everyone had as much as they wanted and there were 12 baskets of leftovers. This was a miracle of tremendous proportion. No human being could do such a thing.



Again, this was not a private, secret miracle. Neither was it an illusion. This supernatural act involved thousands of people actually eating real food and getting full and feeling satisfied.

In fact, the people were so amazed that they exclaimed that Jesus must be the Prophet they had been expecting. What were they saying?

In the Old Testament, after God used Moses to lead the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, God supernaturally fed the people during their time in the desert. There were about 2.5 million of them. But Moses also told the people that there would one day come another man who would be like him.

### **Deuteronomy 18:15**

Moses continued, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him."

Jesus supernaturally feeding such a large crowd of people would have reminded them of Moses and what he had said. Moses had indeed been talking about Jesus. The people were right to believe that Jesus was the one they had been waiting for.

## **5. Jesus shows He has power over nature**

After Jesus fed the 5,000 people, Jesus went to the hills by Himself.

### **John 6:16–21**

<sup>16</sup> That evening Jesus' disciples went down to the shore to wait for him. <sup>17</sup> But as darkness fell and Jesus still hadn't come back, they got into the boat and headed across the lake toward Capernaum. <sup>18</sup> Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. <sup>19</sup> They had rowed three or four miles when suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified, <sup>20</sup> but he called out to them, "Don't be afraid. I am here!" <sup>21</sup> Then they were eager to let him in the boat, and immediately they arrived at their destination!

The disciples had taken about nine hours to row about four miles in rough seas. They had left much earlier than Jesus, but here He now was, approaching them. And more startlingly, Jesus was walking on the surface of the water towards them. This wasn't something they had ever seen before. Another disciple of Jesus, Matthew, wrote that they thought they were seeing a ghost.

Jesus did not do this to trick them or to scare them. Jesus was making it clear to them that as God, He had total power and control over nature. After all, He had created nature. It was not at all shocking then, that He would have control over it.

On another occasion, the disciples were in their boat in very rough weather and they all feared that they would drown. They woke Jesus who was asleep and He commanded the wind and the waves to stop and they immediately calmed down. It was not a gradual calming of the storm. It was immediate.



## 6. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

Ever since the Fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, mankind would have to suffer death. Yahweh had warned Adam and Eve that if they ate the fruit from the one tree He warned them not to eat from, they would die. God had never meant for mankind to go through death. Mankind was created to live joyfully with God and live forever.



But Yahweh wanted to show that He had power even over death. Mankind need not fear death and eternal separation from Him. This was what Jesus did to demonstrate His power over death.



**Let's turn to our Bibles and read John 11:1–45.**

(The leader reads aloud. For reference, the verses are also here.)

### John 11:1–45

<sup>1</sup> A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha.

<sup>2</sup> This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. <sup>3</sup> So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."

<sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this." <sup>5</sup> So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, <sup>6</sup> he stayed where he was for the next two days. <sup>7</sup> Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

<sup>8</sup> But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?"

<sup>9</sup> Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." <sup>11</sup> Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

<sup>12</sup> The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" <sup>13</sup> They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

<sup>14</sup> So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. <sup>15</sup> And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him."

<sup>16</sup> Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too—and die with Jesus."

<sup>17</sup> When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. <sup>18</sup> Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. <sup>20</sup> When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house.

<sup>21</sup> Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.

<sup>22</sup> But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

<sup>23</sup> Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."



<sup>24</sup> “Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. <sup>26</sup> Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”

<sup>27</sup> “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.” <sup>28</sup> Then she returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.”

<sup>29</sup> So Mary immediately went to him.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met him. <sup>31</sup> When the people who were at the house consoling Mary saw her leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus’s grave to weep. So they followed her there. <sup>32</sup> When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

<sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. <sup>34</sup> “Where have you put him?” he asked them.

They told him, “Lord, come and see.” <sup>35</sup> Then Jesus wept. <sup>36</sup> The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” <sup>37</sup> But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?”

<sup>38</sup> Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. <sup>39</sup> “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them.

But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.”

<sup>40</sup> Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” <sup>41</sup> So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. <sup>42</sup> You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” <sup>43</sup> Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” <sup>44</sup> And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!”

<sup>45</sup> Many of the people who were with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw this happen.

Jesus allowed Lazarus to die physically because He wanted an opportunity to show the people that He had authority over life and death. He wanted to show mankind that with Him, they would never need to fear death.

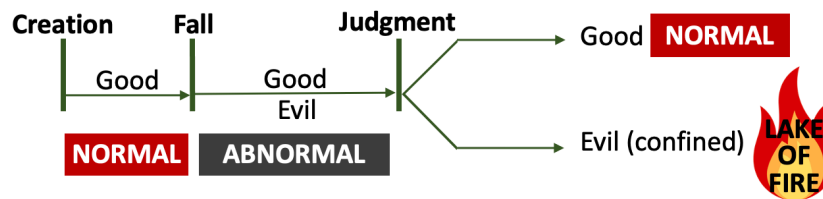
When Jesus saw the people crying in distress over Lazarus’ death, He became angry, but not with the people. Rather, as he viewed the misery that death inflicted on people and the loved ones of those who die, He thought of the cause of death—sin.



Jesus was indignant that sin had caused great pain, suffering and loss to mankind. Jesus had never intended mankind to experience death, pain and separation from loved ones. The state of mankind made Him very angry. And He was right to be angry.

Then Jesus brought Lazarus, a man who had been dead and buried for four days, out of his burial place. Jesus brought a dead man back to life.

While Jesus brought Lazarus back to physical life, He also told Martha that anyone who believed in Him would never ever die. What was Jesus talking about? When Yahweh finally separates good and evil forever, and brings things back to normal, those who believe in Him will have eternal life.



Why did Jesus bother performing so many miracles during His life on earth? Jesus' disciple, John explained why.

### John 20:30–31

<sup>30</sup> The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.

The signs and miracles were to show that Jesus was God and He was the promised Saviour. Jesus was the solution to mankind's sin problem. Those who would trust in Him would have eternal life.

How does Jesus solve mankind's sin problem? We will learn more about this in the next lesson.

## Jesus has power over Satan and the demons

Even though Jesus, who is God Himself, came to earth, He continued to have power and authority over Satan and the demons.



### Luke 4:31–37

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus went to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and taught there in the synagogue every Sabbath day. <sup>32</sup> There, too, the people were amazed at his teaching, for he spoke with authority.

<sup>33</sup> Once when he was in the synagogue, a man possessed by a demon—an evil spirit—cried out, shouting, <sup>34</sup> “Go away! Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

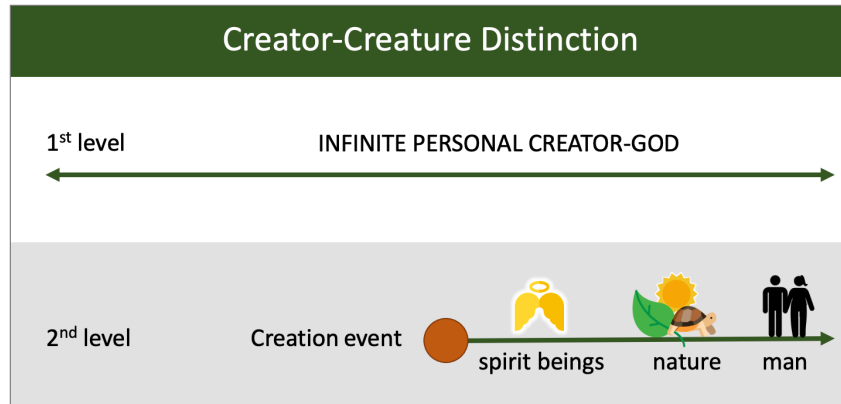
<sup>35</sup> But Jesus reprimanded him. “Be quiet! Come out of the man,” he ordered. At that, the demon threw the man to the floor as the crowd watched; then it came out of him without hurting him further.

<sup>36</sup> Amazed, the people exclaimed, “What authority and power this man’s words possess! Even evil spirits obey him, and they flee at his command!” <sup>37</sup> The news about Jesus spread through every village in the entire region.

The demons recognised Jesus as God. They even knew that one day, Jesus would destroy them. So when they met Jesus, they wondered if He had come to destroy them then.

But Jesus told them to keep quiet. Why? It was because just like Satan, the demons were liars and Jesus did not want people to listen to the demons and hope to get truth from them. Just like Satan did in the garden of Eden, the demons loved to mix truth with lies to deceive people. So Jesus told them to keep quiet. He did not allow them to speak about Him.

How could Jesus have power over the demons? It was because Jesus was God. The demons were not gods or goddesses. They were created beings. All spirit beings, whether good or evil, are creatures, at the “creation level”. They are merely what God created and are on a totally different level from the Creator-God.



## HOW THE JEWS RESPONDED TO JESUS

Some of the Jews did believe in Jesus. Hearing Him speak and teach about God and seeing His miracles, they came to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Saviour, that Yahweh had promised.

However, shockingly, most of them rejected Him. This was what John wrote.

### **John 1:10–11**

<sup>10</sup> He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him.

<sup>11</sup> He came to his own people, and even they rejected him.



In fact, it was the Jewish religious leaders who most violently objected to Jesus. The way that Jesus taught, with such authority, shocked the Jews and made the religious teachers and leaders very angry.

So they started plotting to get rid of Him.

## What happened next?

Jesus proved that He was the promised Saviour that God had sent to rescue mankind. But exactly what did Jesus come to earth to do? And how was He supposed to rescue mankind from Satan and death? We will learn more in the next lesson.



### **Bible reading for review**

John 1–11 (Full chapters. Note: All four eyewitness accounts of Jesus' time on earth [the four gospels] cover the same time period but from the perspectives of different witnesses. There are many overlapping details and also unique details in each account.)

## How do we decide what is the truth?

In life, what a person believes determines how one behaves. Whether a person consciously and actively seeks the truth or whether one simply goes about their life, what they believe about the world leads them to think, act and speak in the way that they do. So the question is where or how do people find the truth? Here are various sources of truth and the resulting beliefs of those who rely on these different sources.

### Sources of Truth



#### 1. Reason

**Human Reason:** Man's mind is intellectually able to discover absolute truth without any external help.



#### 2. Experience

**Human Experience:** What man experiences through the human senses is the absolute source of truth.



#### 3. Feelings

**Human Feelings:** Man's emotions, intuition and gut feeling are the source of absolute truth.



#### 4. Yahweh

**God's Revelation in the Bible:** God communicates absolute truth to mankind in a language that man can understand.

### 1. Human Reason



Some people believe that the human mind or human reasoning is intellectually able to discover objective, absolute truth without any external help.

However, human reason has to start with some assumptions.

For example, to answer the question: "What is truth?", people will have to first ask themselves the starting question: "What is reality?"

1. What is reality?



2. What is truth?

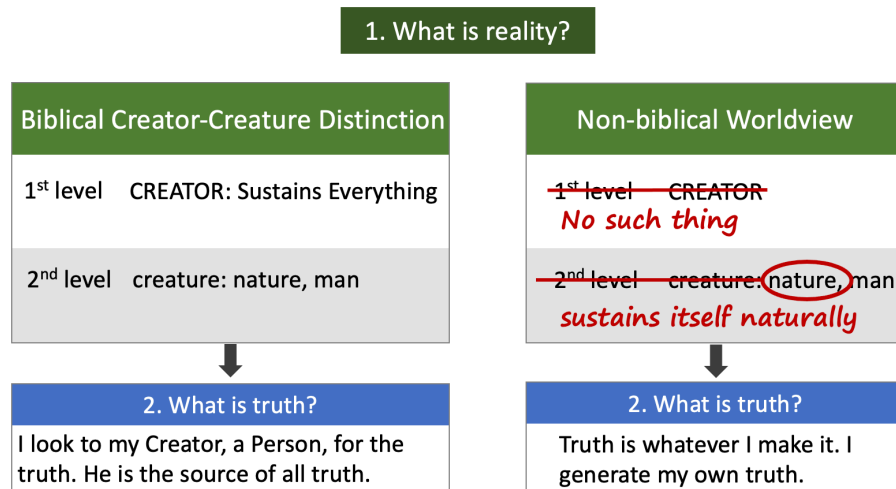
This first question needs to have an answer before the second question "What is truth?" can be explored.

If all that people had to rely on was human reason, then they would need to make some assumptions about what they believe is reality.

So how would someone answer the question of "What is reality?"

Let's look at the examples of two different people.

Person 1 believes in the reality of the “Creator-creature distinction” taught in the Bible. He believes that at one level, there is the Creator-God, and at the second level is what God created. Because he believes that the Creator-God is the ultimate authority, he relies on the Creator for truth. So because he believes that reality is created and defined by the Creator-God, he accepts that the Creator-God provides truth.



Person 2 believes there is no such thing as a Creator-God but that nature sustains itself on its own. This is his foundational assumption. So, in his view, reality came about without a creator. And without a creator, then there is no ultimate meaning or truth. So he will answer the question of “What is truth?” very differently since he believes there is no God.

These two examples demonstrate that all human reasoning has to start with assumptions about reality.

These assumptions require faith. They are beliefs that one accepts before human reasoning can begin. All human reasoning is based on a set of assumptions.

For example, let's follow up the case of Person 2 who assumes there is no Creator-God. He chooses to believe there is no external ultimate authority. And it is by faith that he believes he is right about that. Person 2's ultimate authority is himself.

Similarly, there are those who believe in certain gods or follow particular religions. They too take on those beliefs as their foundational assumptions about reality. And then, building on those foundations, they go on to answer questions like “What is truth?”, “How should I live?”, and “How do I make choices in life?”

So, while man's mind is intellectually able to discover some level of truth, it ultimately rests on a set of foundational assumptions which are taken by faith.

## 2. Human Experience

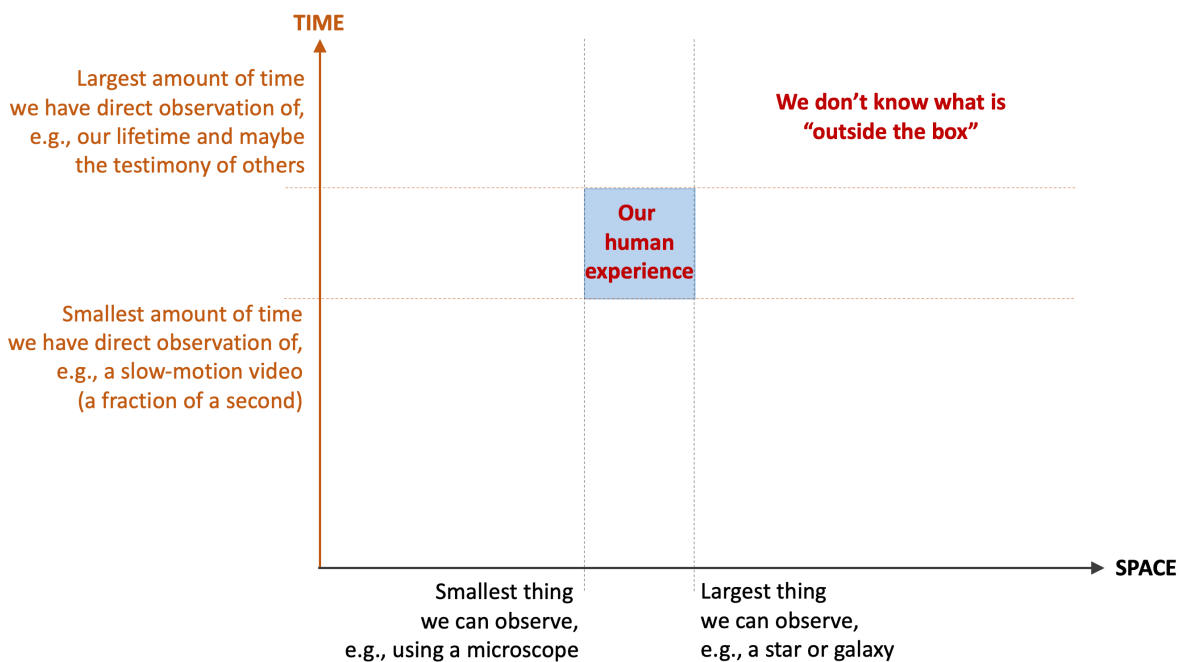


There are people who believe that human experience is the source of absolute truth. They believe that whatever mankind experiences with their senses of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, internal sensing, etc., can determine the truth.

The challenge with this is that each person's personal experience is limited. We will take for example, a man who lived in Thailand from 1900–1985, passing away at the age of 85. This man would have gained good information about the time when he was alive, at the place where he lived.

But he did not live earlier than 1900 nor after 1985. And he lived only in Thailand. His scope of personal experience is limited. In one sense, we can say that he lived “within a box”, with only a limited experience of all of time (history) and all of space (the universe).

This would be true of all people. Because mankind is finite and experiences death, every person's field of experience is limited.



Even if people use the testimony of others to expand or gain “experience”, that too, is limited.

People will have trouble knowing what lies “outside the box” of their personal experience. Oftentimes, sincere scientists will say that based on all the information or data they have at any given moment, they can make certain conclusions. However, they also recognise that the next piece of information or data that they observe or gather might make all their previous conclusions invalid and they would then have to change their conclusions or draw new ones.

For example, at one point in history, people thought a grain of sand was the smallest particle in the universe. Later, scientists were certain the proton was the smallest particle, until other scientists discovered that quarks were even smaller. Now sincere scientists dare not even make absolute claims. They know that as technology and tools enable them to look at smaller and smaller things that are totally invisible to the naked eye, they might discover things they never knew before.

People who rely on human experience as their source of truth are essentially saying that they are the ultimate authority on truth. Based just on their personal experience, they get to decide the absolute truths about the universe.

### 3. Human Feelings



There are people who believe that mankind's emotions, intuition and gut feeling are the basis of truth. Whatever they personally feel is the truth, becomes the truth. They do not rely on reason or experience.

However, anyone who has ever engaged in emotional arguments can testify that oftentimes, feelings can obscure the facts of the issue.

People who base their thinking on just their human feelings may make statements like:

- You have your truth, and I have mine.
- Different people can define truth in conflicting ways but we can all still be correct.
- Everything is relative.
- There is no such thing as absolute truth.

(Note: The fourth statement says that nothing is absolute, but the statement itself is making an absolute claim... which is a self-defeating contradiction.)

Those who rely on emotions, intuition or gut feeling would end up with their own version of the "truth". And everyone can have their own version of truth. This makes truth very subjective. And it is almost impossible to arrive at the "absolute truth" based on different people's emotions.

### 4. Yahweh



If the first three ways are limited in their ability to arrive at the truth, is there no way to know the truth?

The Bible has something to say about truth and the source of truth.

Yahweh is the Creator of the universe. He is its Originator and Designer and therefore knows how everything works. And because He is an all-righteous God, He sets the standard of right and wrong. In other words, He created reality and truth.

And He doesn't keep all this truth to Himself. He took the initiative to inform mankind. How did He tell mankind? He used language.



Words and language are very important to the God of the Bible. Yahweh chose to create the world by speaking. He created language and spoke to Adam and Eve in a language that they could understand. He is a communicative God who speaks to mankind whom He created. He is not a silent, uncommunicative God.



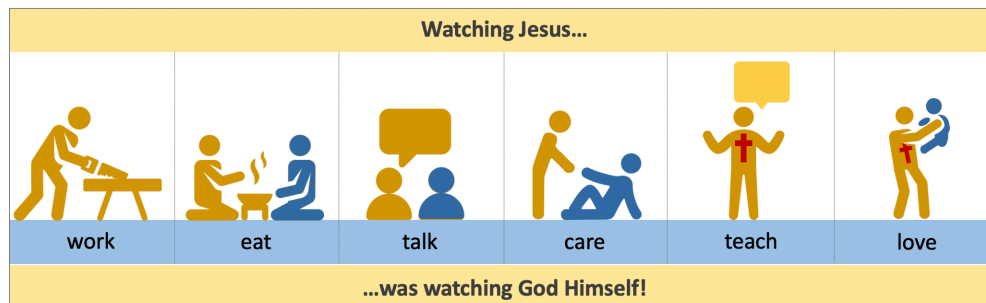
In the Bible, we have seen how He shared His thoughts with people like Abraham and Moses. And He also told the people of Israel to record His words so people throughout all generations would know who He is, what He is like, as well as who they are, where they had come from, and where history is headed.



Then, God chose to communicate more intimately. He physically came to earth and lived among people. Jesus is the clearest revelation of the Creator-God that mankind has ever seen. There is no better way for mankind to know and understand who Yahweh is than to see Jesus. There is no better way to learn truth than directly from God Himself.

Watching Jesus was watching God Himself.

- Watching Him live, eat, work, and talk with others was the same as watching the Creator-God do all these things.
- Seeing how Jesus loved, cared for others, taught and lived by God's Law was watching a live example of how God intended all mankind to be.



One day, Philip, Jesus' disciple, asked to see God. This was what Jesus said in response.

#### **John 14:7–11**

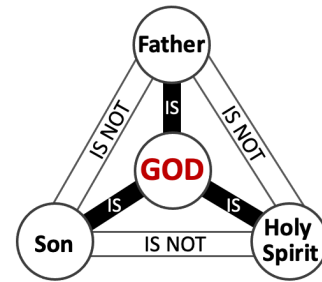
<sup>7</sup> If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup> Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered: “Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup> Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. <sup>11</sup> Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

Again, it is not easy to understand that Yahweh, the God of all creation and the God of the Bible is one God but three Persons. Jesus explained that He, God the Son, is united to God the Father. And in fact, He is also united with God the Spirit.

It was God the Son, Jesus, who came down to reveal Himself to mankind directly. He demonstrated He was Yahweh by performing signs and miracles that only the Creator-God could. He also fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about the promised Saviour.



Jesus is the Creator of the world, and He tells us in His recorded word where mankind came from and what happened in history. Because God is sovereign, all-powerful and in control of everything, He can also tell us about the future and how history will end. Because of this, believers in Yahweh acknowledge that He is the source of absolute truth.

### Jesus reveals what is “outside the box”

In the Bible, a man called Agur wrote that he understood his limitations as a man. He contrasted finite, earthly human knowledge and understanding with the heavenly knowledge of the infinite, all-powerful, Creator-God.

#### Proverbs 30:3–4

<sup>3</sup> I have not mastered human wisdom,  
nor do I know the Holy One.

<sup>4</sup> Who but God goes up to heaven and comes back down?  
Who holds the wind in his fists?

Who wraps up the oceans in his cloak?  
Who has created the whole wide world?

What is his name—and his son’s name?  
Tell me if you know!

When Jesus, God the Son, came to earth, He also contrasted human knowledge of the world (earthly things) with God’s knowledge (heavenly things). This was what He said of Himself when speaking to a religious leader.

#### John 3:12–13

<sup>12</sup> But if you don’t believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven.

Jesus said that no human can get knowledge beyond the boundaries of “their box of knowledge”, that is, their experience. But Jesus claimed that He came from “outside the box” of human knowledge. He came down from heaven to reveal things to mankind that mankind cannot know without God’s revelation. These heavenly things are truths that only God knows.

Jesus entered the realm of human space and time and showed Himself publicly to thousands of people. He performed various miracles and signs that only the Creator-God can, to prove to people that He is Yahweh.

At the same time, He spoke about both earthly and heavenly things. In other words, Jesus revealed truth to people.

What God has revealed answers the questions of "What is reality?" and "What is truth?" God knows that mankind is finite, with limits to what they can discover on their own. So He has stepped in to provide the information that people lack.