

Chapter 23

# Jesus Fulfills The Old Testament



*"And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus;... 'Thou art my son, today I have begotten thee.'"*

*Paul's Sermon at Antioch - Acts 13: 32-33*

## Chapter 23

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### Read

#### Acts

7:1 - 60

13:16 - 43

#### 2 Corinthians

3:7 - 18

But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
he was bruised for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that made us whole,  
and with his stripes we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned every one to his own way;  
and the LORD has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb,  
so he opened not his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away;  
and as for his generation, who considered  
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people?  
And they made his grave with the wicked,  
and with a rich man in his death,  
although he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

...he poured out his soul to death  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
yet he bore the sin of many,  
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Most Christians will hear this poem as a summary of what the Church believes about Jesus. Some might therefore be surprised to learn that it was written hundreds of years before the time of Jesus, in the Old Testament book of Isaiah (chapter 53).

## Fulfilling The Law And The Prophets

- **The Old Testament cannot be understood without the New Testament.**
- **Jesus Christ lifts the veil from the Old Testament so we can see its full meaning.**
- **The promises of the five Old Testament covenants are perfectly fulfilled in Christ.**

When Jesus said that he had come to “fulfill” the Law and the Prophets (see Mt 5:17), most of his hearers probably thought of the long-anticipated restoration of the Davidic kingdom. Only later did Jesus’ disciples understand how the Scriptures they knew had prepared them to understand the real truth about Jesus. He would fulfill all those promises in the Scriptures, but he would fulfill them by suffering and dying, as Isaiah had prophesied.

And taking the twelve, he said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise.” But they understood none of these things; this saying was hid from them, and they did not grasp what was said. (Lk 18: 31-34)



Although Jesus did what he could to prepare them for what was to come, the disciples really understood it all only in hindsight. But once they did understand, they could see how perfectly Jesus fulfilled all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament. In fact, when the Apostles preached to Jewish audiences, their theme was always the same: how all the things the Scriptures had taught them to expect were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children in raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm,

“Thou art my Son,  
today I have begotten thee.”

(St. Paul in Acts 13: 32-33)

Just as he did for his disciples, Jesus Christ lifts the veil from the Old Testament for us, so that we can understand the full meaning of what we only partly understood before. Moses wore a veil after he came down from Sinai because the people were afraid to look at his glowing face. St. Paul tells us that those who read the Old Testament without the New are still blocked from

seeing what Moses really meant: “for to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only in Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day, whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their minds; but when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed.”<sup>1</sup>

Jesus perfectly fulfills the promises of every one of the five covenants in the Old Testament:

1. With **Adam**, because Jesus restores our relationship with God that was broken by Adam's sin;
2. With **Noah**, because the waters no longer destroy but rather redeem us;
3. With **Abraham**, because through Jesus (Abraham's descendant) all people of the world are blessed;
4. With **Moses**, because the righteousness demanded by the Law is given to us in Jesus Christ;
5. With **David**, because Jesus, the Son of David, is Lord of all the nations.

## The Church Before Jesus

- **From the beginning, God had a plan to save us.**
- **God told his people about that plan long before Jesus was born.**
- **The early Church Fathers called Abraham, David, and other faithful people "Christians" because they expected the coming of the Christ.**

The word "Church" (Latin *ecclesia*, from the Greek *ek-ka-lein*, to "call out of") means a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose (cf. Acts 19:39). *Ekklesia* is used frequently in the Greek Old Testament for the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people (cf. Ex 19). By calling itself "Church," the first community of Christian believers recognized itself as heir to that assembly. In the Church, God is "calling together" his people from all the ends of the earth. The equivalent Greek term *Kyriake*, from which the English word *Church* and the German *Kirche* are derived, means "what belongs to the Lord." (CCC 751)

In fact, the history of the Church really begins with Creation. In the beginning, when God created us in his image, he meant for us to live happily with him forever. When we disobeyed him, that did not change the plan. But it did mean that we would have to be saved from ourselves.

Because we disobey God, we deserve death. All of us, even the greatest saints, are sinners. But God does not want a single one of us to be lost. Although we deserve death, God was willing to pay any price to bring us back to him. As soon as Eve and Adam sinned, God already had a plan to save us. That plan was to send his only Son to die in our place.

Even in Old Testament times, the people of God knew about God's plan. Most of them did not understand it very well, but the prophets had told them what would happen. All through the Old Testament, the prophets speak of a time when God's Anointed One will come to save his people. One reason Jesus' message spread so quickly was that the whole Jewish world was expecting a Messiah.

In fact, the early Church Fathers insisted that faithful people like Abraham, David, and the prophets could correctly be called Christians, because they expected God's Anointed One, the Christ.

"All these," said the historian Eusebius, "whose righteousness won them commendation, going back from Abraham himself to the first man, might be described as Christians in fact if not in name, without departing far from the truth.... Obviously we must regard the religion proclaimed in recent years to all nations through Christ's teaching as none other than the first, most ancient, and most primitive of all religions, discovered by Abraham and his followers, God's beloved."

# 1. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Adam

- **The human family was created in the beginning as an image of the perfect love of the Trinity.**
- **Early Christians pointed out that the Gospel was first told to Adam and Eve.**

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Cor 15: 20-22)

Adam	Jesus, the New Adam
Adam was “the son of God.” (Mt 1: 1)	Jesus was the only-begotten Son of God.
Adam was tempted by the devil, and fell.	Jesus was tempted by the devil, but resisted.
Adam disobeyed God.	Jesus was perfectly obedient, even to death.
Adam brought sin and death to all humanity.	Jesus saved all humanity from sin and death.
Adam lost our place in paradise.	Jesus restores our place in paradise.

Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary’s womb because he is the New Adam, who inaugurates the new creation: “The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven” (1 Cor 15: 45, 47). From his conception, Christ’s humanity is filled with the Holy Spirit, for God “gives him the Spirit without measure” (Jn 3: 34). From “his fullness” as the head of redeemed humanity “we have all received, grace upon grace” (Jn 1: 16; cf. Col 1: 18). (CCC 504)

“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,” God says in Genesis 1: 26. If there is only one God, who is “us”?

Some scholars would say that “us” refers to ancient mythology in which God was only the chief of a court of heavenly beings. Others would say that the plural is a “plural of majesty,” a feature of Hebrew grammar similar to the way the Queen of England refers to herself as “we.”

But many early Christians saw it as an expression of the Trinity. We are created in the image of God, and because God is three Persons, God’s nature is social. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply...’”<sup>2</sup>

Not just the individual person is created in the image of God. “Male and female he created them.” The human family—father, mother, children—is the image of God’s perfect love—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As we know, however, sin corrupted that perfect image of God. But from the beginning, God had a plan to save his creatures from sin and death. Christian readers can see that he revealed that plan to Adam and Eve as soon as they confessed their sin. Genesis 3: 15 is God’s curse on the serpent:

I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
and between your seed and her seed;  
he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel.

Elsewhere in Scripture, the word “seed” usually refers to the offspring of a man. The “seed” of a woman could be only one man in history: Jesus Christ, who was born of a woman but was not the seed of a man. The serpent was an apparition of Satan, who will be defeated by Christ (“bruise your head” could be more literally translated “crush your head”), but only at the price of Christ’s own crucifixion, when his heel would be nailed to the cross.

The early Christians called this verse the “Protoevangelium,” which is Latin for “first Gospel.” The first people to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ were Adam and Eve.

After his fall, man was not abandoned by God. On the contrary, God calls him and in a mysterious way heralds the coming victory over evil and his restoration from his fall (cf. Gn 3:9,15). This passage in Genesis is called the *Protoevangelium* (“first gospel”): the first announcement of the Messiah and Redeemer, of a battle between the serpent and the Woman, and of the final victory of a descendant of hers. (CCC 410)

## 2. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Noah

- Noah’s flood was a new creation.
- The Flood was a type of our own new creation in baptism.

The early Christians always kept the connection between baptism and the Flood in mind. In the early days of the Church, new converts were baptized at Easter. The season of Lent was a time for the “catechumens” (as they called converts who were learning their catechism) to do penance and learn about the truths of their newfound faith. And Lent, as you know, lasts forty days and forty nights—exactly the time it took the Flood to reduce the earth to nothing but water. In other words, the catechumens spent forty days and forty nights destroying their old worlds so they could be newly created in the waters of baptism.

Creation	The Flood (a new creation)	Baptism (our own new creation)
	Forty days and forty nights of rain prepare for a new creation.	Forty days and forty nights of fasting and penance prepare for our new creation.
Creation begins with nothing but water.	The new creation begins with nothing but water.	Our new creation begins with nothing but water.
God’s Spirit moves across the waters.	God’s Spirit moves across the waters.	God’s Spirit comes to us with the water.
God tells the first people to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”	God tells Noah and his family to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”	God tells us to “make disciples of all nations.” In other words, to fill the earth with Christians.

### 3. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Abraham

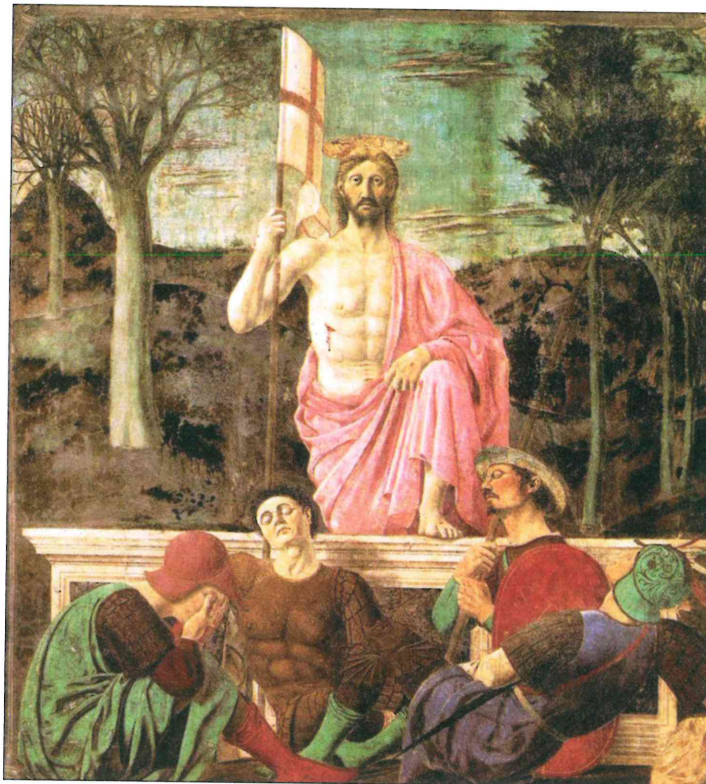
- God promised Abraham that all people would be blessed through him.
- The promise of universal blessing was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
- By faith in Christ, we all become heirs of the promise to Abraham.

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”<sup>3</sup> (Gn 12:1-3)

“All the families of the earth will be blessed”—that promise of universal blessing was the most incredible promise God made to Abram (soon to be known as Abraham). And it was not fulfilled until the coming of Jesus Christ.

Some of the promise to Abraham is already fulfilled in the Old Testament. Abraham’s descendants did become a great nation. And in some ways, Israel was always a blessing to the rest of the nations. As long as a faithful remnant kept alive the knowledge of the True God, the word of God could come to the nations.

God’s promises are often fulfilled in an ascending spiral. That universal blessing promised to Abraham went much further than the nation of Israel. Every single family on earth would be blessed through Abraham. Only with the resurrection of Jesus Christ was that promise fulfilled. The death and resurrection of Christ freed all people of all nations from bondage to sin.



## 4. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With Moses

**T**he LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you,"<sup>4</sup> Moses told his people in the wilderness. Yet the end of Deuteronomy tells us that no prophet like Moses had yet appeared. "And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face," says Deuteronomy 34: 10.

Not until Jesus Christ did another prophet like Moses arise. And the Gospel writers constantly remind us just how much like Moses Jesus was:

Moses	Jesus, the New Moses
Born in the reign of a ruthless pharaoh.	Born in the reign of the ruthless Herod.
Escaped when Pharaoh ordered all the male children of the Hebrews killed.	Escaped when Herod ordered all the male children of Bethlehem killed.
Exiled in Midian before his ministry.	Exiled in Egypt before his ministry.
Passed through the waters of the Red Sea.	Passed through the waters of the Jordan in baptism.
Tested in the wilderness 40 years.	Tested in the wilderness 40 days.
Fasted for 40 days and nights at Sinai.	Fasted for 40 days and nights in the wilderness.
First sign: changed water into blood.	First sign: changed water into wine, later wine into blood.
Brought the Law down from a mountain.	Taught the New Law from a mountain.
Gave Israel manna and water in the wilderness.	Gave all people true heavenly food and spiritual drink.
Led Israel out of bondage in Egypt.	Led all people out of bondage of sin and death.

### The New Exodus

The Passover looked *forward* as well as backward: backward to the deliverance from bondage in Egypt, forward to the coming deliverance brought by the Messiah.

The Rabbinic tradition held that the Messiah would come on Passover night.

Jesus instituted the Eucharist on Passover night. In the Eucharist, the Messiah comes to us.

*At the Last Supper the Lord himself directed his disciples' attention toward the fulfillment of the Passover in the kingdom of God: "I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mt 16: 29; cf. Lk 22: 18; Mk 14: 25). Whenever the Church celebrates the Eucharist she remembers this*



promise and turns her gaze “to him who is to come.” In her prayer she calls for his coming: “*Marana tha!*” “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rv 1: 4; 22: 20; 1 Cor 16: 22). “May your grace come and this world pass away!” (*Didache* 10: 6; SCh 248, 180). (CCC 1403)

## Jesus the Passover Lamb

Passover Lamb	Jesus, the Lamb of God
The lamb must be without blemish (Ex 12: 5).	Jesus was without sin.
The lambs were slaughtered by the priests beginning at the sixth hour on the day of Preparation.	Jesus was handed over to be crucified at “about the sixth hour” on the day of Preparation (Jn 19: 14-16).
No bones of the lamb could be broken (Ex 12: 46).	Jesus’ bones were not broken, although soldiers broke the bones of other crucified criminals (Jn 19: 32-33).
A branch of hyssop was used for sprinkling the blood of the lamb (Ex 12: 22).	The sponge of vinegar was given to Jesus on a branch of hyssop (Jn 19: 29).
The high priest wore a holy linen tunic when making the sacrifice (Lv 16: 4).	Jesus, our High Priest, wore a seamless linen tunic before his crucifixion.

## 5. Jesus Fulfills The Covenant With David

The Church is the new Kingdom of Israel, and Jesus is its King. The relationship of the Church to David’s kingdom is so important that it will have a chapter of its own later in this book. Jesus, as head of the Church, is the King of the new Israel, which is no longer a nation or an ethnic group but rather the community of all the faithful everywhere. The *international* aspect of the Davidic covenant—the promise that the Son of David would be Lord of all the nations—is perfectly fulfilled in Jesus.

The Son of David would also build the Temple, as Solomon did. But Jesus spoke of his own body as a temple—a Temple that exists not just in Jerusalem, but everywhere believers gather to celebrate the Eucharist.

Finally, the kingdom of the Son of David was to be everlasting. Only in Jesus, the perfect Son of David, does this promise find its complete fulfillment.

The New Testament gives Jesus four titles that refer specifically to the Davidic covenant:

**Son of David.** Jesus was a direct descendant of David “according to the flesh” (that is, through his human ancestors). He inherits all the things promised to the Son of David (see Ps 89: 19-37).

**King of Israel.** Although Pilate called Jesus “King of the Jews” ironically, Jesus acknowledged that the title really did belong to him, though not in the way some of the Jews expected (see Jn 18: 33-37). Jesus is King of the New Israel, which is the Church.

**Christ or Messiah (“Anointed One”).** The kings of the line of David were anointed with oil to signify that they were God’s chosen leaders on earth. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at his baptism.

**Son of God.** When he was anointed, the Davidic king was adopted as “Son of God” (see 2 Sm 7:14). That foreshadowed the coming of Jesus Christ, the true only-begotten Son of God.

The prophecies cited in the New Testament as predicting the death and resurrection of Jesus were originally understood as referring to the restoration of Israel (see Hos 6:2). The resurrection of Jesus in body and our union with that body in Baptism effect the restoration of Israel and the nations.

In Jesus’ time, many Jews expected that the promised restoration would look like the kingdom of Solomon. They did not take into account God’s love for his whole creation. The restored Israel would be more than just a kingdom at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. It would be a glorious new kingdom of righteousness, one that ruled over the whole world. Israel would be restored as the Church of Christ.

Son of David (Old Kings of Israel)	Son of David (Jesus Christ)
Descended from David.	Descended from David.
Anointed by Levites.	Baptized by John, a Levite.
Ruler of an international empire.	Lord of all the nations.
Paid homage by foreign princes.	Paid homage by the Magi.
Builds the Temple.	Rebuilds the temple of his body.
Promised an everlasting kingdom.	Receives a truly everlasting kingdom.



SUPPLEMENTARY READING

***Irenaeus, Against Heresies, 4: 26: 1***

If anyone, therefore, reads the Scriptures with attention, he will find in them an account of Christ, and a foreshadowing of the new calling. For Christ is the treasure which was hid in the field (cf. Mt 13: 44), that is, in this world (for "the field is the world" [Mt 13: 38]); but the treasure hid in the Scriptures is Christ, since He was pointed out by means of types and parables. Hence His human nature could not be understood, prior to the consummation of those things which had been predicted, that is, the advent of Christ. And therefore it was said to Daniel the prophet: "Shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of consummation, until many learn, and knowledge be completed. For at that time, when the dispersion shall be accomplished, they shall know all these things" (Dn 12: 4, 7). But Jeremiah also says, "In the last days they shall understand these things" (Jer 23: 20). For every prophecy, before its fulfillment, is to men full of enigmas and ambiguities. But when the time has arrived, and the prediction has come to pass, then the prophecies have a clear and certain exposition. And for this reason, indeed, when at this present time the law is read to the Jews, it is like a fable; for they do not possess the explanation of all things pertaining to the advent of the Son of God, which took place in human nature; but when it

is read by the Christians, it is a treasure, hid indeed in a field, but brought to light by the cross of Christ, and explained, both enriching the understanding of men, and showing forth the wisdom of God, and declaring His dispensations with regard to man, and forming the kingdom of Christ beforehand, and preaching by anticipation the inheritance of the holy Jerusalem, and proclaiming beforehand that the man who loves God shall arrive at such excellency as even to see God, and hear His word, and from the hearing of His discourse be glorified to such an extent, that others cannot behold the glory of his countenance, as was said by Daniel: "Those who do understand, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and many of the righteous as the stars for ever and ever" (Dn 12: 3). Thus, then, I have shown it to be, if any one read the Scriptures. For thus it was that the Lord discoursed with the disciples after His resurrection from the dead, proving to them from the Scriptures themselves "that Christ must suffer, and enter into His glory, and that remission of sins should be preached in His name throughout all the world" (Lk 24: 26, 47). And the disciple will be perfected, and rendered like the householder, "who brings forth from his treasure things new and old" (Mt 13: 52).



## VOCABULARY

### CATECHUMEN

One who is learning in preparation for baptism to gain entry to the Church.

### CHRISTIAN

One who believes Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One of God. The Church Fathers sometimes spoke of Abraham, David, and other faithful people of the Old Testament as Christians because they believed in the future coming of the Christ.

### CONVERT

One who has changed to a new religion.

### LAW AND THE PROPHETS

The Old Testament Scriptures. Jesus said that he had come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets.

### RABBINIC

Having to do with the Rabbis, the leaders of Judaism.

### TRINITY

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Trinity refers to three persons but one God.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What did Jesus mean when he said he came to “fulfill the law” and the prophets?
2. What was always the theme of the apostles’ sermons to Jewish audiences?
3. How does Jesus fulfill the covenants God made in the Old Testament?
4. According to CCC 751, what does the Greek term *Kyriake* mean?
5. When does the history of the Church begin?
6. Why did Jesus’ message spread so quickly?
7. How was the human family created in the beginning?
8. List four ways in which Jesus made up for Adam’s fault?
9. Why did the early Church Fathers insist that faithful people like Abraham, David, and the prophets be called Christians?
10. What does *Protoevangelium* mean?
11. Who were the first to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ?
12. In the early Church, at what festival were new converts usually baptized?
13. How long did the converts spend preparing for their baptism?
14. How does Jesus fulfill the covenant with Abraham?
15. Name ways in which Jesus represented the “new Moses.”
16. What does “Maranatha” mean?
17. Name three ways in which Jesus, as the Lamb of God, represents the Passover lamb.
18. Name four titles given to Jesus that refer specifically to the Davidic covenant.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

1. The Bible uses the word 'veiled' to indicate things which can be perceived only incompletely. What have you learned in this course which lifted the "veil" for you? Have you found out you were mistaken about some things you thought were true?
2. Some of the greatest saints were once great sinners. What can be learned from their change of heart? What do you think was the primary cause of their change?
3. It is easy to look at idolatry in the Old Testament and laugh at those who worshiped animals. Is idolatry a problem today? Make a list of things which people tend to put before God in their lives. Can giving so much importance to these things be considered idolatry?

## FROM THE CATECHISM

**359** "In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear" (GS 22 § 1).

St. Paul tells us that the human race takes its origin from two men: Adam and Christ... The first man, Adam, he says, became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. The first Adam was made by the last Adam, from whom he also received his soul, to give him life... The second Adam stamped his image on the first Adam when he created him. That is why he took on himself the role and the name of the first Adam, in order that he might not lose what he had made in his own image. The first Adam, the last Adam: the first had a beginning, the last knows no end. The last Adam is indeed the first; as he himself says: "I am the first and the last" (St. Peter Chrysologus, *Sermo* 117; PL 52, 520-521).

**388** With the progress of Revelation, the reality of sin is also illuminated. Although to some extent the People of God in the Old Testament had tried to understand the pathos of the human condition in the light of the history of the fall narrated in Genesis, they

could not grasp this story's ultimate meaning, which is revealed only in the light of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 5:12-21). We must know Christ as the source of grace in order to know Adam as the source of sin. The Spirit-Paraclete, sent by the risen Christ, came to "convict the world concerning sin" (Jn 16:8), by revealing him who is its Redeemer.

**539** The evangelists indicate the salvific meaning of this mysterious event: Jesus is the new Adam who remained faithful just where the first Adam had given in to temptation. Jesus fulfills Israel's vocation perfectly: in contrast to those who had once provoked God during forty years in the desert, Christ reveals himself as God's Servant, totally obedient to the divine will. In this, Jesus is the devil's conqueror: he "binds the strong man" to take back his plunder (cf. Ps 95:10; Mk 3:27). Jesus' victory over the tempter in the desert anticipates victory at the Passion, the supreme act of obedience of his filial love for the Father.

**601** The Scriptures had foretold this divine plan of salvation through the putting to death of "the righteous one, my Servant" as a mystery of universal redemption, that is,

FROM THE CATECHISM *continued*

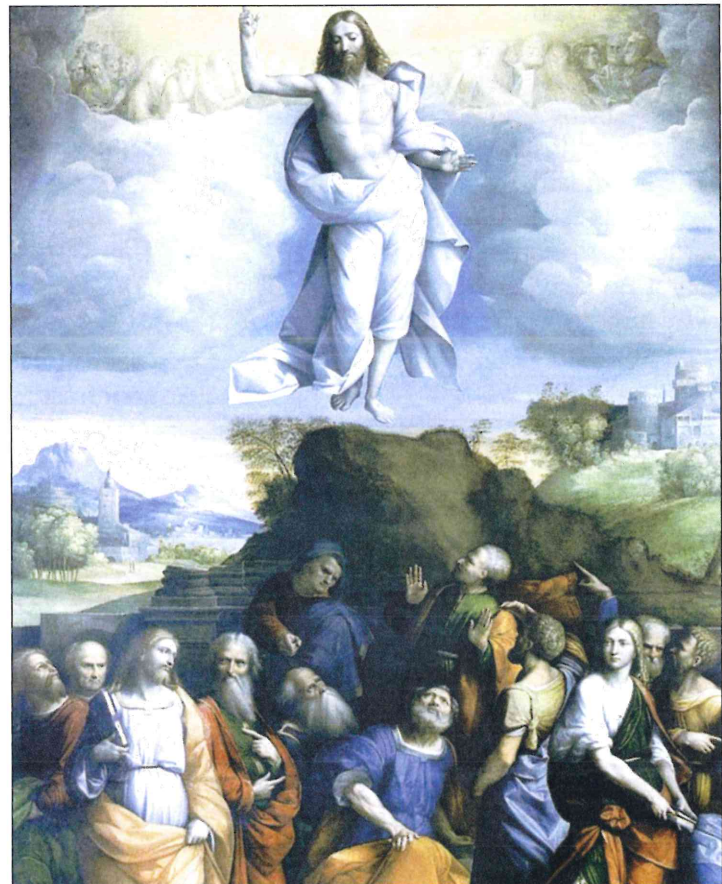
as the ransom that would free men from the slavery of sin (Is 53: 11; cf. 53: 12; Jn 8: 34-36; Acts 3: 14). Citing a confession of faith that he himself had “received,” St. Paul professes that “Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures” (1 Cor 15: 3; cf. also Acts 3: 18; 7: 52; 13: 29; 26: 22-23). In particular Jesus’ redemptive death fulfills Isaiah’s prophecy of the suffering Servant (cf. Is 53: 7-8 and Acts 8: 32-35). Indeed Jesus himself explained the meaning of his life and death in the light of God’s suffering Servant (cf. Mt 20: 28). After his Resurrection he gave this interpretation of the Scriptures to the disciples at Emmaus, and then to the apostles (cf. Lk 24: 25-27, 44-45).

**608** After agreeing to baptize him along with the sinners, John the Baptist looked at Jesus and pointed him out as the “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1: 29; cf.

Lk 3: 21; Mt 3: 14-15; Jn 1: 36). By doing so, he reveals that Jesus is at the same time the suffering Servant who silently allows himself to be led to the slaughter and who bears the sin of the multitudes, and also the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel’s redemption at the first Passover (Is 53: 7, 12; cf. Jer 11: 19; Ex 12: 3-14; Jn 19: 36; 1 Cor 5: 7). Christ’s whole life expresses his mission: “to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mk 10: 45).

**652** Christ’s Resurrection is the fulfillment of the promises both of the Old Testament and of Jesus himself during his earthly life (cf. Mt 28: 6; Mk 16: 7; Lk 24: 6-7, 26-27, 44-48). The phrase “in accordance with the Scriptures” (cf. 1 Cor 15: 3-4; cf. the Nicene Creed) indicates that Christ’s Resurrection fulfilled these predictions.

*“Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.”  
(Lk 24: 50-51)*



**Endnotes**

1. 2 Cor 3: 14-16.
2. Gn 1: 27-28.
3. We used the alternate reading given in a footnote in the Revised Standard Version.
4. Dt 18: 15.