

Why Jesus Came Down from Heaven to Save Us by Linda K. Small - Sadler 2007

There are reasons why Jesus left Heaven to come to earth. It is important we know these reasons because we were under the penalty of sin. Jesus suffered that penalty on our behalf to give humankind an opportunity to become saved by His shed blood and to have all of their sins forgiven. Jesus came because without the shedding of His Innocent Blood (a lamb without spot or blemish) there is no forgiveness. (Hebrew 9 v 22) Jesus came because He wanted all of His lost children found and saved. All humankind needs a Savior because we all sin and fall short of God's Glory. (Small - Sadler 2007) For all have sinned, and fall short of the Glory of God. (Romans 3:23) Every person who can tell right from wrong commits sin. (1 John 1: 6-10)

God could have come down Himself but God cannot live with sin and we are sinners. We know that God's eyes are too pure to look on evil (Habbakuk 1 v 13) and because of our sins we could not stand His Holy presence. The Lord prepared His Son who would be born of Flesh as Son of man and Son of God. His name will be called Jesus. He would be born of a Virgin.

Jesus was obedient to His Father and wanted to live as flesh to experience sin repeatedly. To see from a human view the thoughts, feelings, and doubts; Jesus came down as flesh to experience what flesh feels. To feel why we are so impatient, greedy, untrusting and ungrateful. To feel the disobedience to sound doctrine and uncommitted to living according to God's Commandments. (Small - Sadler 2007)

Jesus came to bridge the separation from God that humankind created by their disobedience. Although Jesus was tempted, He did not give in to temptation but remained faithful to God even until death. Jesus taught us and led us by example. Jesus came on a mission that was to live among us and teach us how to be faithful, loving, grateful and obedient. Then at the exact hour, to die for our sins and be raised by God from the dead. (Small - Sadler 2007)

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect (David J Stewart; 1Peter 1 NIV 18-19).

In the Old Testament people's sins were only atoned for.

Leviticus 17:11:

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life. (Stewart; NIV)

This Scripture speaks of the blood of animals that was sacrificed to temporarily cover

the sins of the people in the Old Testament, until the Messiah would come and offer the perfect Sacrifice. Jesus came to save us from our sinful ways. Without His death and Resurrection we could not be saved. The Son of God gave Himself for our transgressions and to show the excellence of the Divine law, and the evil of sin. On some level we understand about the precious blood of Jesus and how the the blood washes away sin. In some realm we feel that He is a wonderful Savior. Why are we at times, somewhat grateful when we are in the mood to be grateful. When we were taught that Jesus paid a debt He did not owe, because we owed a debt we could not pay but we don't grasp the full meaning of such a brutal, painful death and what that death should really mean to us. (Small - Sadler 2007). We read in Hebrews 9:12 concerning Jesus, Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained Eternal redemption.

Now understand me clearly - it is *not* because God failed us, it is because we failed God. We failed God who gave commandments and we break them repeatedly and go back and forth being obedient and worshiping God alone and then disobedient by worshiping man made idols viewed as gods. It is because men were so corrupt and sinful that all the sacrificing of innocent animals did not save them, that The Lord decided at the appointed time to send His Son Jesus down and allow Him to be born to a Virgin. Through the Father and our God's doing, Jesus came and was born as part flesh and part God to become the Sacrificial Lamb of God to cleanse us for all for our sins. Only Jesus and His sanctifying Spirit can restore us to spiritual health. (Small - Sadler 2007) God's Great Love for us and Him knowing before He created us that we would never remain obedient to Him alone, He would send His Son. When God sent His Son down for the propitiation for our sins, no matter what type of sin we commit, through the Blood of Jesus we would be saved. Once saved *always* saved.

What is sin?

Some of you may ask, what is sin? Sin is defined as missing the mark. (Romans 3:23) Sin is a transgression of the Law of God. (1 John 3:4) Sin is also viewed as an immoral act considered to violate divine law. John adds all unrighteousness is sin. (1 John 5:17). Paul says that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) and sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1,2).

Jesus came to the earth to bring us back to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20,21; Ephesians 2:16) Jesus then became the Ultimate Mediator above all others. (Small - Sadler 2007) Jesus sacrificed His life through His shed blood because unlike the animal sacrifice for sin, the blood of Jesus will never loose Power.

Paul puts this in perspective in Romans 3:20, when he says:

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in His sight
by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Let us remember that because Jesus was raised from the dead by The Father and was given all power in Heaven and Earth in His Hands, we too have power, Great power!!!

The First Sin

From where did sin come? The answer is given to us in the first book of the Bible. First let me mention that Satan hates us, all races, creeds and colors and wants all of us dead. Satan will lead the Black to hate the Whites and vice versa and the Mexicans to hate the Asians and vice versa and all the combined races together hate the other race. When Satan gets all of the other races to kill the other races and all that is left is that one race then it is Satan and that race. If we listen to Satan and he succeeds he has narrowed it down to one race and that race will not be able to stand against Satan alone. (Small - Sadler 2007)

Satan wants us dead because of many reasons. God created the angels before He created humankind and Satan was created as an angel. He was the model angel at first, but soon he decided that he wanted to be like God and have the other angels worship him. (Ezekiel 28:14-15 NIV) God ordained Satan as a guardian cherub. He was on the holy mount of God and walked among the fiery stones. Blameless in his ways from the day he created until wickedness was found in him. God does not play games, there is only one God and He will not share His Glory with anyone. I am the Lord; that is My Name I will not give my Glory to another or my praise to idols. (Isaiah 42:8 NIV) God judged Satan and as His Holy nature demands punishment. This is where it becomes very interesting; God did not begin the punishment right away, but instead commanded that it would happen later on.

By way of Superiority, Christ is the Mediator, the divine intercessor through whom sinners may be reconciled to an offended God. (1 Timothy 2) After God created Adam and Eve, He put them in the Garden of Eden and gave them everything they needed. He also gave them commands to obey. (Genesis 2:15-17) With complete clarity God told Adam and Eve what to do. They were not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. At this point I believe God was making a point to Satan and the other angels that followed. God created humankind and gave us free will to choose high-quality guidance from God or low quality evil guidance from Satan. (Small - Sadler 2007) Satan knew this and tempted Adam and Eve by telling them that it was okay to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because then they would become intelligent and all knowing and have power like the Almighty God. Adam and Eve listened to Satan's evil counsel and sinned. God made an authoritative statement of punishment on them just like Satan knew He would. Satan thought he had won, he had tricked God's creation to become rebellious and as a result they were sentenced to death. (Ezekiel 18:4 NIV) The Lord said, For every living soul belongs to Me, the Father as well as the Son . . . both alike belong to Me. The soul who sins is the one who will die. But God also did something in addition that drove Satan crazy. He PROVIDED A WAY FOR US TO BE FORGIVEN of our sins. God never gave Satan a chance at forgiveness. God showed clearly and intentionally His mercy, and His Love to His children. When Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God, death passed to all men (Romans 5:12) That's why it is appointed to man to die once, and after this the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27) So through Adam and Eve sin entered into the world. (Romans 5:12) But God already

had planned to send Jesus to the earth to save man from his sins. Now that's Good News. (Small - Sadler, 2007)

There is only one type of sin that God will not forgive and that is the sin of blasphemy of The Holy Spirit.

Matthew 12 v 31-32:

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost SHALL NOT be forgiven unto men (ref forgiven Mark 3:28, Luke 12:10, 1st John 5:16; Holy Mark 3:29, Acts 7:51, Heb 6:4, 10:26 NIV).

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come (Ref . . . forgiven 1st Timothy 1:13 . . . world).

It is important to understand that if we had not been able to be saved through our confession of Faith in Jesus, Life, death and Resurrection there would be no one left alive. The Lord would not have His creation to care for, keep, love and advise and there would be no one to worship Him as He deserves to be worshiped. (Linda Small - Sadler 2007) Throughout the Bible we read about abominable sins, but in the day of Noah only Noah pleased God. After God destroyed the earth by water and only Noah and his family survived, it was not long before sin reared it's ugly head. The children of Noah began to fill the earth again and the people disobeyed God and worshiped idols. They built the tower of Babel out of their pride so God confused their languages to divide them, and scattered them over all the earth. God gave them over to their worship of idols.

Exodus 20:3:

The Lord God said, This is the first commandment. You shall have no other gods before Me. The Lord alone must be our God. He will not share His Glory with another.

Throughout the Bible we read of stiff necked people and their abominable sin. God would punish His children and they would repent and the circle of sin and repentance repeated itself into somewhat of a vicious cycle. A cycle that God would not continue to tolerate. (Linda Small - Sadler 2007) 1st Timothy 2:5 reports that, For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Mediators That Came Before Jesus

Before Jesus came down from Heaven, God sent Mediators for us. He sent several prophets to warn us of the sins we were committing and to strongly suggested that we repent and turn back to Him. Many of God's people were obedient and many were not obedient. After all of the prophets, mediators, and kings died and people continued to sin and do

detestable things. Jesus, the King of King's would come. But before Jesus came, the Lord used Moses to be a mediator for the Israelites. According to the King James Dictionary a mediator is defined as one that intervenes between parties for the purpose of reconciling them. When the Lord decided to make The Covenant with Moses and the Israelites, He chose Moses as mediator. When the Lord spoke the Ten Commandments amidst all the physical signs of His majesty and holiness, the people were afraid and trembling. Apparently gripped with panic, they ran away from the mountain and stood at a distance. When they were able to speak they said to Moses: You speak to us and we will listen - this was the reason for the Lord's appearance so that the people would listen to Moses and believe him and that his mission had been accomplished. (Small - Sadler 2007) The people went on to say, but do not let God speak to us or we die. They did not believe they could stand being in the Lord's presence and hear Him speak. It was too much for their stiff necks, sinful nature and they feared they would die. (Small - Sadler 2007) Moses assured them that the whole dreadful experience was not the Lord's purpose to put them to death. Moses told them not to be afraid in the way they were now afraid - not afraid with pure terror in the presence of a God whom they did not know. The Lord who appears is the Lord who had redeemed them, led them, and carried them to Mount Sinai that He might make a Covenant of blessing with them. The Lord had appeared to test their loyalty and submission to Him, and He had appeared in order to teach them to fear Him in the right way - have reverence for Him, to trust in Him, to submit to Him and not to rebel or sin against Him. The Lord taught them covenant trust and covenant obedience.

Yet, though the Lord did not appear in order to destroy them, the Israelites recognized their need for a mediator, someone to stand between them and God, someone to represent them before God and to be the messenger who would tell them first hand what God said. So the people continued to keep their distance while their mediator, Moses went into the darkness on the mountain where God was. Moses had already been serving as a mediator, but now his role was firmly established. God will appear to Him and he will on behalf of the people appear before God. The Lord and His people will have an agreement or an arrangement through Moses the mediator.

The Lord Gave Moses The Ten Commandments The Ten Commandments are found in Exodus 20:1-17 King James Version (KJV):

- 1 And God spake all these words, saying,
- 2 I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
- 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;
- 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
- 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his

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- name in vain.
- 8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
- 10 But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God:
in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy
daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy
cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
- 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea,
and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore
the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.
- God said,
- 12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long
upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- 13 Thou shalt not kill.
- 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- 15 Thou shalt not steal.
- 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not
covet thy neighbors's wife, nor his manservant, nor his
maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbors's.

I am speechless when I think about God giving us only Ten Commandments and His creation would break each one of them at one point or another. We as God's people do a better job of keeping human laws than we do of keeping God's laws. Man has created thousands and thousands of laws on do, don't, can'ts and won'ts. (Small - Sadler 2007) Laws created by man and the consequences thereof are more frightening to us than the consequences of disobeying the Lord's Comammndments. Interesting isn't it and so so sad for us because man has no control of our final destination and has no power to decide who will go to Heaven or Hell. That decision is God's alone!

God also used Prophets to speak to His people. God used all of these prophets so that through these Prophets they would Speak in the Name of God. The Prophets listed in the Old Testament were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

The phenomenon of prophecy is a distinctive feature of biblical religion. In its fully developed character, it sets biblical religion apart from other religions of the ancient Near East. As in other related matters, such as worship, sacrifice, ethical principles, and practices, Israel shared much with its neighbors. But often, and specifically in matters of religion, the people of the Bible formed and forged something distinctive and different from all that came before or continued side by side. And this is particularly true of biblical prophecy.

Prophets of the Bible were used by God and were both fore tellers and based their claims upon their personal access to the God of Israel, who is the ruler of the days of old, yesterday, now and in the future. (Small - Sadler 2007).

While God generally speaks to prophets through visions, auditions, and even dreams, with Moses he spoke face to face (Deuteronomy 34) or mouth to mouth (Exodus 33). And whereas other prophets often only sense the presence of deity, Moses saw His actual form

and person. (Numbers 12; cf. Exodus 33- 34)

From the biblical records of the prophets and their experiences, one can piece together a picture of prophets and their calling. We have adequate data for people like Moses, Samuel, Elisha (but not Elijah), and the great literary prophets such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel to fill out a composite picture. Typically, the call is initiated by God and is often accompanied by one or more visions, along with some unusual or miraculous occurrence (e.g., the burning bush). It is the combination of circumstances that persuades the prophet (or prophetess) that he (or she) is not hallucinating but is having contact with the Living God. The basic rules for the prophet were, Wherever I send you, you shall go, and what I tell you, you shall say. (Jeremiah 1:7) So in essence, the prophet is the ambassador or messenger of God, and his or her one and only duty is to deliver the message as given. So while and in between the people listening to the prophets' God used, they lived and prospered. At times they were threatened or beaten, and taken into captivity for their obedience to God. Because of their obedience The Lord always provided a way out.

It is heartbreaking to read some of the history in The Bible because it tells of repeated disobedience against God and His Commandments. God Commandments should not be burdensome but the Israelites as well as all of the other tribes at points in time sinned greatly against The Lord because they worshiped idols and committed detestable acts of ungodliness. (Small - Sadler 2007) From tribe to tribe and from generation to generation, God children did things against God's commandments that were detestable. (Small - Sadler, 2007) From Genesis straight through all of the Old Testament era, God's people sinned and were punished by God. Then under suffering and bondage, they repented and turned back to God and away from God, Back and Forth in and out of sin. (Small - Sadler 2007) Detestable is a strong word. An intolerant word that does not belong in the mouths of well-informed people. Or does it? In Old Testament era detestable sins were committed such as a group of women sitting there, weeping for the god Tammuz. Detestable sins were committed by the people of Israel when they did sinful things to drive God from His Temple. (Ezekiel 8 6b) Ezekiel 8 v16 talks about some of the detestable sin where there were twenty-five men with their backs to the sanctuary of the Lord. They were facing east, bowing low to the ground, worshiping the sun!?! Can you imagine? Worshiping the sun that God made instead of the maker of the sun. Common sense should tell them that since God made the sun, they should worship God because The Lord has all of the power not the sun. Worshiping fake gods is settling for second best when only God is Best, the Maker and Ruler of all creation. (Small - Sadler 2007)

Jeremiah 19 v 3 - 6:

Hear the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah and people of Jerusalem.
4 For they have forsaken me and made this a place of foreign gods;
they have burned sacrifices in it to gods that neither they nor their
fathers nor the kings of Judah ever knew, and they have filled this
place with the blood of the innocent. 5 They have built the high
places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as offerings to Baal
—something I did not command or mention, nor did it enter my mind.
6 So beware, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when people will no

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longer call this place Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter.

Even after taking over their Promised Land, the Israelites had problems with idols. The local god, named Baal, was commonly worshiped by the Israelites-- the god of rains and fertility. Instead of trusting in God, who was in control of everything, the farmers turned towards the false god that had not been fully removed from the land. When rains did not come, sacrifices would be made and not just of animals and plants, as God had ordained. (Leviticus 1-7) There were human sacrifices, usually of children, burnt alive. (2 Kings 16:3) They also worshiped Asherah, goddess of fertility and Baal's mother, with other sinful acts (ritual prostitution, among others) associated with her. (Nathan Mates 1999)

In one of the more sarcastic passages of the Bible, in Isaiah 44:9-20, God comments on the idiocy of someone who cuts down a tree, and with one half of the wood, makes an idol to worship, and with the other half, keeps himself warm by burning it. What was different between one half of that tree, making it worthy of worship, and the other half, worthy of only destruction? Nothing at all and staying warm usually involves fewer sins.

The base materials of this world are not spiritual in and of themselves. Wood, stone, etc are not capable of receiving worship and has no power to do anything for the worshiper. (Nathan Mates 1999) But such worship is definitely a sign to Satan that there are people who are not following God and can be used for all types of evil.

God hates sin and worship of fake gods and idols instead of worshiping Him, the only True and Living God. Haggai addressed the people as they were suffering before rebuilding God's temple. Now this is what the Lord Almighty says? Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it. This is what the Lord Almighty says: Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored, says the Lord. God saw the people putting their own welfare in front of His, and this they suffered greatly.

Since we know that God is against idols, how does that apply in our lives today? Like the Israelites, who were supposed to conquer and take control of the Promised Land and rid it of ungodly influences, we usually fail to fully control our sinful characters. When worshiping anything, one begins to take on its nature. Worship an angry god of destruction, and one tends to become angry and destructive, such as the Baal worshipers were. Worship sex, and it takes over one's life. Worship possessions, and greed enters in. You are no better (and quite possibly much worse) than whatever you serve. (Nathan Mates 1999) What does your idol look like? Is your idol your job, children, your house, your husband or wife, possessions or food, drugs, alcohol, porn? (Linda Small - Sadler 2007)

While we sin and fall short of God's Glory, worshiping God leads to taking on some of His Holiness, His righteousness, His purity, His love and His sacrifice. But such worship is not to be compartmentalized into two hours on Sunday morning. Worship is to be continual,

all day, seven days a week. If we constantly thank God for what He gives all of us by acknowledging God's unconditional love, grace and mercy to us, we will be more merciful and gracious to His children. Spend personal time with The Lord, read God's Word, keep His Commandments and always show your loyalty and acknowledge Him as Lord and Saviour all day through out the day. (Linda Small - Sadler 2007)

For three hundred years In Judges, judges such as Deborah, Gideon and Samson led the Israelites. When nearby nations attacked the Israelites, they would cry to God for help. Then God would raise up a judge to lead them. God would help them defeat their enemies. After a while, they would forget what God had done and go back to worshiping idols. Then God would raise up another nation to attack them until they turned back to God for help. This cycle repeated for thirteen judges.

The southern tribe of Judah had some good kings who led the Jews to worship God. But they had many bad kings who led them to worship idols. As I mentioned earlier, God sent many prophets to warn them to turn away from idols but the people did not listen or at least not for long. Finally, God sent the Babylonians to conquer the land and take most of the people to Babylon. They cried out their Lamentations.

Lamentations 1 v 8:

Jerusalem has sinned greatly and so has become unclean.
All who honored her despised her, for they have seen her
nakedness; she herself groans and turns away.

Jeremiah testified of Judah:

They have set their abominations in the house which is called
My name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet,
which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and
their daughters in the fire. (Jer.7: 30-31, NKJ)

Ezekiel was a prophet during and after the Babylonian Exile, 586 BCE and as God's spokesman, the prophet Ezekiel complained as he declared the depravity into which Judah had fallen:

You took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and
these you sacrificed to them [the idols] to be devoured.
Were your acts of harlotry a small matter, that you have slain
my children and offered them up to them by causing them
to pass through the fire? (Ezek.16: 20-21, NKJ)

Also, as mentioned by Jeremiah, the Jerusalem temple was once again
desecrated with such worship: Then declared to them their abominations.
For they committed adultery and blood is on their hands. They have
committed adultery with their idols. Moreover they have done this to Me:
They have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and profaned My Sabbaths.
For after they had slain their children for their idols, on the same day
they came into My sanctuary to defile it; and indeed thus have they done

in the midst of My house (Ezek.23: 36-39, NKJ).

Thus, elements of Baal worship became incorporated into the worship of Yahweh (Norman McIlwain).

Of Judah's kings, Ahaz and Manasseh receive special mention. Ahaz as did Manasseh encouraged idolatry and Baal worship, sowing seeds of apostasy in the minds of the people, but Manasseh sank to a new low. It is written of him: Manasseh led them astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the Lord had destroyed before the Israelites. He has done more evil than the Amorites who preceded him and has led Judah into sin with his idols. (2 Kings 21:9-11) The damage had been done. Even the all of the Godly reforms of king Josiah were not enough to stem the tide of the Canaanite religion beyond the duration of his own reign. Twenty-three years later, Jerusalem fell to the armies of Babylon, just as God's prophets foretold.

Manasseh burned his son as an offering, and practiced soothsaying and augury, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him to anger. (2 Kings. 21:6, 2 Chronicles 33:6)

In 2nd Kings, Chapter 21, it tells of those building the high places again which Hezekiah had destroyed; and altars built for Baal and Grove and they worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them. They built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord said, In Jerusalem will I put My Name. Once again they pass their son through the fire, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.

Many tribes sacrificed their children before the fire gods. Before Molech.. They bowed down to the stars, the stars the Only True and Living God made. (Linda Small - Sadler 2007)

Isaiah described a practice of setting up Tophets (where the Canaanites sacrificed children to the god Moloch by burning them alive) in the valleys and ravines: *You burn with lust among the oaks and under every spreading tree; you sacrifice your children in the ravines and under the overhanging crags.* (Isaiah 57:5) This brings to mind the archaeological discoveries at the Phoenician Tophet at Salambo, Carthage, Tunisia, where in 1921 over 6,000 burial urns were found containing the remains of cremated children. The Tophet occupies a large depression, close to the sea, and was used for sacrifice in the worship of Baal Hammon and the goddess Tanit for hundreds of years. There should be no doubt about the veracity of the Bible in its description of this form of worship practice in Israel. (N McIlwain)

We read reports of Leaders and Prophets rebuked because of their sins in Micah 3:1-3:

1 Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel.
Should you not know justice, 2 you who hate good and love evil;
who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones;
3 who eat my people's flesh, strip off their skin and break their
bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?

God's children sinned greatly, which cause The Lord to act out in anger and killed many of them, some became slaves and were taken into exile, back and forth, in and out of sin, killed and exiled. The Lord knew that it was time for Him to send His Secret Weapon. That Secret Weapon was His Son, Jesus Christ, who would be born as Flesh and as God. Son of God, Son of Man and as Jesus the Lamb of God. (Small - Sadler 2007) At this time no more animal sacrifices would be necessary because Jesus came down to become the Lamb of God and as our last hope. (Small - Sadler 2007)

It is this author's opinion that The Lord sent Jesus to be born as flesh so that He could understand why we sinned, repented and sinned again. God watched us lie, cheat, steal, kill, eat children and worship things and people that God made. How could anyone be that stupid and ungrateful for such a long time? God could not come down fully as God because God is Almighty and we could not have bared His presence because we were and are still full of sin. Remember when The Lord came down to talk to the Israelites and they couldn't bare The Lord presence and the Israelites asked Moses to let God talk to him and Moses could tell the Israelites what The Lord said and they would obey? (Small - Sadler, 2007)

Jesus wanted to understand from a human perspective why The Lord's people continue in sin. So many sinned and God punished them or allowed them to go in to slavery or exile. Then He would deliver them from slavery and bondage and they would be obedient for a season and sin again, back and forth, back and forth, in and out of sin and in and out of bondage. (Small - Sadler, 2007) Jesus came to experience what His creation felt that drove them to sin and such detestable acts of disobedience. Yes Jesus was tempted by Satan, but in 1 John 4 verse 4, KJV:

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them:
because greater is He that is in you, than he that is
in the world. So although Jesus was tempted, God was in
Jesus and He resisted the devil and the devil fled.

We are children of The Lord Jesus so if we resist the devil, he will flee as well. (Small - Sadler, 2007)

Why could God's children not just worship and serve God alone? Wasn't He more than enough? The Lord provided everything that they needed. The idol gods had no life to give them. They carried their idols around and they carved them from stone, clay or something that would eventually crack or decay. But Jesus carries us forever, Isn't that good news? (Small - Sadler, 2007)

How could they serve something that they made themselves? It was obvious that Satan had taken control of their minds and made them see false things as real, just like he did with Adam and Eve and many of God's children after the first man and woman of creation. (Small - Sadler, 2007)

Jesus is the Lamb of God. Jesus came down with the mission of taking the place of the lambs as well as all of the other animals that were slain, over and over for sin offerings.

Throughout creation, The Lord has allowed His children to be taken into a land they did not know and become slaves and brought death and destruction, but never completely destroyed all humankind because He promised that after the flood He would never destroy all humankind again. (Genesis 9 vs 8-16, Small - Sadler, 2007)

In Jeremiah 23 vs 1-8 The Lord talks about, The Righteous Branch, He said in verse 5:

The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.

Jesus was born for a specific purpose and He was driven to fulfill that purpose and this was without any thoughts of giving up that purpose. His life, His teachings, His ministry, His death, Resurrection, and Ascension did not just happen. Everything about Jesus was focused on one thing and it all centers on the coming Kingdom of God. Jesus' ultimate purpose, the cause for which He was born, the reason He came into being, is to rule over the coming Kingdom of God. This little known truth, this often missed key promise is foundational in Luke's account of the birth of Jesus. Remember the words of the angel to Mary in 1:30-33:

. . . do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with Child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the Throne of His father David, and He will Reign over the house of Jacob forever; His Kingdom will never end. As declared to Mary, Jesus was the only one born to sit on the throne of His ancestor, King David, and to rule over the kingdom promised to Israel (Jacob) from ancient times.

What many people are unaware of or have no knowledge of, or don't give much impression to care about is that Jesus gave us the most wonderful gift that surpasses all gifts given to us by parents, husbands, wives or children. This wonderful gift was given, willingly to all without payment and this gift is the opportunity to spend Eternity with Jesus and God the Father if we only believe and trust in Him.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23).

God sent His Son to take on our sin, be crucified and die and then be raised again, proving His victory over sin and death. So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). If we accept this free gift of Eternal Life, God has now become attainable to all humankind. (Small - Sadler 2007)

God could have employed His Divine Will by some means other than being born in human flesh. He didn't have to become one of us, live among us, and walk the sinful streets of life with us in order to teach us about God's love, Grace and Mercy. He surely did not have to leave His comfort zone to show us the actual measurement of Divine Love by coming down from Heaven and dying on the cross for our sins. Jesus left His comfort zone for us. God

could have just reached across the great separation that our sins have produced and simply made things right without Him having to die for our sins. (Small - Sadler 2007) God being God, could have wiped out our sin and made us into perfect, obedient children from day one and placed us all in Heaven and cleaned us up and washed us white as snow up there. What do you think? Yes, God could have done that because He has all power in Heaven and earth in His Hands and if He'd chosen to save us through some methods other than the sacrifice of His Son, He could have done it. (Small - Sadler 2007) God didn't have to come as Jesus of Nazareth to die in our place. *Or did he?*

While it is true that God could have achieved our redemption in any way He preferred, the simple fact remains that God, being true to His Word and His nature, saved us through a perfect, eternal sacrifice. No more sacrificing the calf or the lamb. He saved us in the only way that His Word would allow: God, Himself, came to save us: Jesus would become the Sacrificial Lamb and though His shed blood, alone, would wash away our sins forever. (Small - Sadler, 2007) It was not by messenger or by angel, but by His presence, that God saved His children and in His love and in His pity He Redeemed them.

God could have sent an angel to bring us the message of His love. God could have erased our sin from a distance, without having to send his Son to be with us and to die for our sins. God could have spoken a Godly Statement and said let it be so, you are all now saved! But He did not. God's Word and God's Will required that God's very presence be absolutely necessary in our Salvation, and our faith in God be cheerfully given in response to God's gift of Salvation. Ordering an angel to give us a message of how to live, while erasing all of our sins without any answer or reply, on our part, would have invalidated God's Word and God's Will. God said Jesus would come. God talks about that in Isaiah.

Throughout scripture, and particularly revealed in God's willingness to constantly devote effort and energy with the Israelites, despite their idolatry and disobedience, it is clear that God has a strong longing for children who will love and trust Him. (Small - Sadler, 2007) Like any father, far more than involuntary obedience or His children doing this out of fear of hell and other consequences, God wants His children to trust Him, believe and choose The Righteous King of kings and Lord of Lords for themselves. (Small - Sadler 2007) Adam and Eve failed to trust God in the Garden of Eden where they listened to and accepted the word of the serpent rather than God's Word. Jesus was born to give us the opportunity and ability to love and trust God again. Understand this: God made us in His own Image and we have feelings and since we want to be trusted, believed in and loved, God wants that from us also. In fact, God deserves it more than we ever will. (Small - Sadler, 2007)

Hebrews 2 vs 10 through 13 (NIV):

10 In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. 12 He says I will declare your name to

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my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises. 13 And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again He says Here am I, and the children God has given me. By faith in Him we should come not merely to Mount Sinai but to heaven itself into the actual presence of God, not with fear but with complete confidence. But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, and the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who have become a member in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a New Covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

In order to understand what is going on here, we have to understand that a Covenant is an agreement between two or more persons that starts them in the right direction. It is not between equals. There is always a superior and an inferior. And the superior imposes the covenant on the inferior. In this case, God is Superior, Almighty, Omnipotent and the inferior (humankind) are God's children with limited power given to us by God. (Small - Sadler, 2007) God is Omnipotent which means Almighty; possessing unlimited power; all-powerful. The One that created the world is Omnipotent. The Lord had already done wonderful things for Israel. They had seen how He intervened on their behalf in Egypt. He had redeemed Israel from slavery by inflicting plagues of judgment on the Egyptians and by destroying the Egyptian army by drowning it in the Red Sea. The Lord has done no less, indeed much more, for us. We have been redeemed from slavery to sin and Satan and death by the mighty miracles of judgment God inflicted on these cruel taskmasters in the work of His Son, Jesus Christ.

In our Lord and Saviour preparation for His ministry things were necessary before He began: He needed to be born, do works to show His Power and His Love, then be baptized and to be tempted. We are in covenant with God that we may be worshipers and witnesses. Jesus told Zacchaeus, For the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). The other reason Jesus came to earth was to purchase His church. The following passages show the church was planned before God created the world:

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28)

With us knowing that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold, from our aimless behavior received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20)

It is in His church that we are able to be saved from our sins. (Ephesians 5:23)

Conclusion:

Adam and Eve committed the first sin. When Moses went up onto Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19:20), (and) he left the Israelites for forty days and forty nights (Exodus 24:18), the Israelites feared that he would not return, and asked Aaron to make gods for them (Exodus 32:1). The Bible does not note Aaron's opinion of this request, merely that he complied, and gathered up the Israelites golden earrings. He melted them down, made a golden calf, and built an altar before the calf. The next day, the Israelites made offerings and celebrated.

The Lord told Moses that His people had corrupted themselves, and that he planned to eliminate them, but Moses argued and pleaded that they should be spared (Exodus 32:11); the Lord changed His mind. Moses went down from the mountain, but upon seeing the calf, he too became angry. He threw down the tablets that God had written the law upon, and broke them. Moses then burnt the golden calf in the fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on water, and forced the Israelites to drink it. Right out of bondage the Israelites watched The Lord divide The Red Sea and every one of God's children crossed over safely and they still doubted God's Power.

For centuries and centuries God gave commandments, punished His children for their sins and disobedience. The Lord killed many of them, allowed them to be taken as slaves into exile in foreign lands. Then The Lord heard the cries of His creation and showed them mercy over and over again just to watch them do horrible things to their wives and or husbands and to their children even the innocent animal were violated in ways that God never intended. Being an Almighty God and without sin or ignorance, The Lord could not understand why His children could not love Him and serve Him as God alone. What was the attraction to the lifeless, man made idols? How could they eat their children or offer them up as a sacrifice to the false gods. Why would they allow their children to burn in the fire to worship Molech? Why? Why? Why? After centuries and centuries of animal sacrifices for forgiveness of sin, as atonement for the sin of all of His creation, Jesus came down and made the ultimate sacrifice so we could live, even though we sin repeatedly, so through His shed blood we are forgiven and are Saved. (Small - Sadler 2007) Praise God for giving us Jesus as the Sacrificial Lamb. (Small - Sadler 2007)

God is holy and we are sinful, God is great and we are not so great. Human beings know instinctively that they cannot deal with such a God directly. A mediator is required. But a Mediator greater than Moses is required for us to ever have peace and live in the presence of God. That Mediator is Jesus Christ.

For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus who gave Himself as a ransom for all . . . Jesus unites God and man in His Person, for He is one Person who is at the same time God and man. Jesus unites us to God in His work, for in His life He provided the righteousness which God required of man and in His death He suffered the penalty for sin that man owes a Holy God.

You might ask, why didn't God just come down Himself? That is a reasonable question. God is perfect and if He had come down, because our thoughts, minds and hearts are so unclean we not have been able to receive His Holy Presence. As Paul said our best is filthy rags and we would have died on contact of His Holy Presence. However, because Jesus was born as part flesh He had the Father God in Him, that is what made it possible for Jesus to stand before us, His humanity of flesh and God combined made this possible. Jesus was born as son of man and Son of God.

The Blood of Jesus Christ took the place of animal sacrifice for sin. Jesus came because without the shedding of His Innocent Blood there is no forgiveness.

Hebrew 9 v 19-22:

19 When Moses had proclaimed every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people. 20 He said, This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep. 21 In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. 22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Animal sacrifices offered altars illustrated this: that man, a guilty sinner, must have his sins paid for by the shedding of blood of an innocent. Jesus is the Lamb of God. He died for sinners just like you and me, securing salvation for us as a gift. Jesus became part man and part God for us because we would have never been able to hear God's Voice without frightening us and/or hurting our ears. Jesus came into the world to die for our sins and to establish His church. Let us obey His gospel so that we can be added to His church and be saved from our sins (Acts 2:36-47). God could have come down Himself because Our Heavenly Father is the creator of everything and everybody. He is perfect and has All power in Heaven and in Earth in His Hands. The Father would not have come down as God, The Creator because we could not stand before Him and live because we were and still are very sinful and even at our best we are but filthy rags. (Small - Sadler 2007)

Isaiah 64:6 KJV:

6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

God in all of His Holiness could have come down to earth to save us, but because God is Perfect and Holy and we are so filled with sin and wrapped in iniquity, we would not have been able to stand in His presence without dying on the spot. (Linda Small - Sadler 2007) We needed an intermediary. (Small - Sadler 2007) Remember that Satan hates us and will do anything to separate us from God. Knowing that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold, from our aimless conduct received by tradition from our fathers,

but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you (and me). (1 Peter 1:18-20) It was never in God's plan to have hundreds of different denominations. His plan was always to have just one church, and all believers were to be part of that one church. The Bible teaches unity, not division. (1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 4:3-6) Christ is the only head of the one church He promised to build. It is in His church that we are able to be saved from our sins. (Ephesians 5:23) Jesus came into the world to die for our sins and to establish His church. Let us obey His gospel so that we can be added to His church and be saved from our sins. (Acts 2:36-47)

Christ is a mediator by nature, as partaking of both natures divine and human; and mediator by office, as transacting matters between God and man. So instead of God coming down Himself, God sent His only begotten Son. God implanted Jesus in a virgin named Mary. When Jesus was born of the virgin named Mary, He was part man (flesh) and part God. He liked being called the Son of man. None of us, no matter how much good we may do, deserve salvation. There is nothing we can do that will make us worthy of salvation. Keeping the Ten Commandments cannot save us, for the Scriptures clearly shows that we have not kept them.

Romans 3:19-20:

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

It can be readily seen in God's Word that no one deserves saving and no one can save himself. Salvation must be by Grace or no one would be able to receive it. In fact, it takes blood to pay for sin, for Scripture says: that all people everywhere should repent (Acts 17:30), and again, Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. (Luke 13:3, 5) This was the preaching of John the Baptist, of Jesus, of Peter and of Paul, that men should repent. To repent literally means to have a change of mind toward God and toward sin. It means agreeing with God regarding the truth of your own sinfulness. If you had been charged of committed a crime and were arrested, the first thing you would do is hire an attorney, someone you had confidence and trust with the your defense, correct? Well, according to the Bible, before accepting Christ as our Lord and Savior, we were criminals in God's sight. We were ungrateful, stiff-necked, and guilty of countless sin and abominations and because of all the sins and disobedience we caused His wrath to be great towards us and through all of our shortcomings we were destined for hell. Praise God and His Son Jesus that God provided an Advocate to defend all of us. Jesus is that Advocate for all sinners,: *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.*

1 John 2:1-2:

And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ

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the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

Because all humankind are sinners, John 9 vs 39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind".

By death on the cross, Jesus took away the believers penalty of sin that God held against them. When we repent from our sins and believe in Jesus, we become God's children and are accepted as His family members forever. Our faith brings us into His family. Our faith is like our membership card. All of our sins that kept us from Him are thoroughly dealt with. There will be many sins that we don't know of that are well cared for. The worse sins in the world are taken away. Psalm 103: 12-13 says, *as far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. Because of The Lord, Jesus, Life, death and Resurrection we do not have to worry about conquering sins.*

Romans 6 v 14:

For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under Grace.

Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. Jesus' sacrifice of His life through His shed blood washes our sin away, by night and by day and unlike the animal sacrifice for sin, the blood of Jesus will never lose its Power.

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