**DIDACHE:**

**Session 4**

**Jesus the Christ: The Christological Mystery**

**Summary of Session 3:**

 **\*Already in the Garden of Eden, at the same time really as God was**

 **proclaiming the consequences of our first parents’ rebellion against**

 **His design and order in His creation, and His benevolent rule over**

 **their lives, He also gave them a promise that He still loved them,**

 **would not abandon them even though they deserved nothing less,**

 **and would provide for them and all their children (the entirety of the**

 **human kingdom to be born) rescue and salvation from Satan the**

 **Deceiver, sin, and death. He did not reveal at the time all of the**

 **details of His plan for salvation, but He did point Adam and Eve**

 **to keep their eyes, minds, and hearts on THE SEED and THE**

 **SACRIFICE.**

 **\*THE SEED referred to is first revealed in Genesis 3:15. God promised to**

 **undo what Satan had accomplished through the birth of a baby boy,**

 **who would *crush the head* of the devil. An actual genealogical line of**

 **ancestry through Adam’s and Eve’s son Seth (Genesis 4:23-26, 5:3-8)**

 **\*THE SACRIFICE referred to is first revealed in Genesis 3:21, when God**

 **took care both of the first couple’s material need (clothing) and**

 **spiritual need (shame from the guilt of their original sin). The**

 **killing of an innocent scapegoat, a sacrificial offering of blood, would**

 **be at the center of the human worship of God. (Genesis 4:4; 8:20-22)**

 **\*The history of humanity is also His-story of THE SEED and THE**

 **SACRIFICE. The Book of Genesis contains the ongoing story of THE**

 **SEED and THE SACRIFICE: in the narrative of the Great Global**

 **Flood, Genesis 6-9; in the narrative of the Tower of Babel, Genesis 11;**

 **and in the story of the dysfunctional family of Terah, father of**

 **the patriarch Abraham, Genesis 12-50. Especially Genesis 22 kept**

 **the eyes, minds, and hearts of God’s people on THE SEED and THE**

 **SACRIFICE.**

 **\*Indeed the history recorded in the other 38 books of the Hebrew Scriptures**

 **(The Old Testament) is the record of THE SEED and THE**

 **SACRIFICE down through the ages: in God’s creation of a chosen**

 **nation, the children of Abraham’s grandson Jacob (Israel), from**

**whom the great promises of THE SEED, the Messiah, and HIS**

**SACRIFICE would come. After centuries of living in a confederacy**

**of 12 tribes, the chosen nation Israel will develop into a monarchy.**

**The greatest king, David, would be the divinely appointed royal**

**ancestor of the Messiah. After a Civil War in Israel, in which the**

**kingdom was divided into north (10 tribes who keep the name Israel)**

**and south (2 tribes who call their nation Judah, in which is the holy**

**city Jerusalem, great apostasy takes place as the leaders of the nation**

**and its religion—prophets, priests, and kings—mostly are corrupted.**

**The population of both nations is unfaithful—guilty of idolatry and**

**immorality. After years and decades of patient mercy, when God**

**sent faithful prophets to call the leaders and people to repentance,**

**His judgment finally fell upon them. The pagan Assyrian Empire**

**crushed and annihilated from history the north in 722 B.C. The**

**pagan Babylonian Empire defeated the south in 587 B.C.**

 **\*In the 400-year period between the Old Testament and New Testament,**

 **one empire after another occupied and kept Israel as a vassal: the**

 **Persian, who allowed Israel to return to their homeland, rebuild**

 **Jerusalem and the Temple; then the Greek Empire; then the Roman**

 **Empire, who conquered Jerusalem in 63 B.C.**

**OUTLINE OF SESSION 4**

**Introduction**

 **Yet another revisit at Genesis 3:15, the great promise of THE SEED. . .**

 **I. Luke 1:26-45**

***Who? Zechariah and Elizabeth/Gabriel/Mary of Nazareth/Joseph of Nazareth***

***Where? Heaven, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Judea village***

***When? Luke 2:1-2— 4-6 B.C.***

***What? The Promise of THE SEED is about to be fulfilled in a unique, miraculous,***

 ***conception and birth, an incarnation of God Himself***

***How/Why? through the Holy Spirit/fulfilling the Genesis 3:15 (and Hebrew***

 ***Scriptural promise) to undo what Satan had done in Eden!***

 **II. Matthew 1:18-25**

 ***Joseph’s dilemma—a crisis pregnancy/Isaiah 7:14 promise fulfilled***

**III. Luke 2:1-7; 8-20; 21; 22-38**

 ***Caesar Augustus involved in the Christmas story? Who’s your real daddy?***

 ***This Child was coming head-on into the world and its culture and history!***

 ***Humility—working class peasant family from insignificant small town in Galilee;***

 ***born in a cave-barn; first witnesses and worshippers outside the “nuclear***

 ***family” are peasant shepherds; submitted to circumcision? THE BLOODY***

 ***SACRIFICE begins at 8 days old!; presentation at the Temple on the 40th***

 ***day and positive ID of THE SEED/Luke 3:23-38 and Matthew 1:1-17 SEED***

**IV. Matthew 2:1-18**

 ***The narrative of the visit of Eastern diplomats/the evil King Herod the Great/public***

 ***news in Jerusalem/promise of Micah 5:2, Hosea 11:1; Jeremiah 31:15***

 ***fulfilled/offerings of sages mostly practical help for Joseph as adoptive***

***father/Herod’s slaughter of the Bethlehem infants and bablies***

 **V. Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39-40 The Return to Nazareth**

 **VI. Luke 2:41-52 The Only Narrative of Jesus’ boyhood, adolescence,**

 **and early adulthood**

**VII. Matthew 3/Mark 1:1-11/Luke 3:1-22/John 1:1-34**

 ***The Public Ministry of John, son of the late Zechariah and Elizabeth,***

 ***relative of Jesus/The Beginning of the Public Ministry of Jesus of***

 ***Nazareth at His Baptism by John/The “LOGOS” of John***

**Conclusion:**

**In this session, we have heard from the Word of God who Jesus of Nazareth was and is—the Son of God, the Second Person of the Triune God, the**

**Incarnate God. He was/is THE SEED of Genesis 3:15, of Seth, of Shem, of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob Israel, the royal heir of David, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, THE SACRIFICE (Lamb of God) in the prophets. At age 30 Jesus began a three-year public ministry, which is the subject and substance of the**

**next Session. We will meet Jesus the Great Teacher and Preacher, who leads people, all people, to God’s plan of rescue and salvation, first for Israel, but also for others. We will also meet Jesus as He performs many genuine signs, wonders, and miracles that heal people and point them to God’s divine love.**

**We will witness Him totally fulfill the promise of THE SACRIFICE, and**

**discuss the who, where, when, how, and why of the divine drama of human**

**salvation.**

**Send your questions and comments to:**

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