

“Christ in the Old Testament”

Lesson 10

Joseph, a Type of Christ

December 17, 1996

Intro: One of the richest studies in the Old Testament is the study of types. The word type is brought over into the English language from the Greek word τύπος. When the Greek word is pronounced, you can hear how similar it is to our English word, type.

The word has several different meanings and usages even in Scripture, but the one that is most important for us is that *a type pictures and prefigures a future person or event*. So this means that, for our studies, we will be looking for types of our Lord Jesus Christ which are found in the Old Testament.

Some students of the Scriptures feel that we should not consider anything as a type unless it is designated as a type in the Scriptures themselves. I believe that we should show real caution in saying that anything or anybody is a type of Christ, but I do not think that a type necessarily has to be identified as a type. In at least one occasion we have a man mentioned as a type of Christ whom we probably would never consider in that capacity. I am referring to Adam, and the verse that I have in mind is Rom. 5:14. This is the way it reads in the KJV:

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is **the figure** of him that was to come.

In the NASB it reads like this:

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is **a type** of Him who was to come.

The word that Paul used there is τύπος. All of us, I am sure, would be inclined to put our Lord and Adam in opposite camps, but Paul evidently called Adam a type of Christ because “each of the two...exercised a pre-eminent influence upon the human race” (Thayer, p. 632)--even though those influences were in opposite directions. And the rest of chapter 5 in Romans shows the way in which Adam was a type of Christ in the influence that he had upon the whole human race. However, this is an unusual case. In most instances a type shows the similarities that it has with what it pictures, not contrast. Let me read Romans 5:15-21 to show the contrast between Adam and Christ. (Read.)

We can add 1 Cor. 15:21-22 to what Paul wrote in his epistle to the Romans:

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

We have already seen some types in our studies in the book of Genesis. For example, when God clothed Adam and Eve before He put them out of the Garden of Eden, the animal which was killed to provide the skins the Lord used, was a type of Christ. In the same way, when Abraham went to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to the Lord, Isaac was a type of Christ. But as far as the book of Genesis is concerned, there is no greater type of our Lord Jesus Christ than Joseph was. And yet, Joseph is never referred to in Scripture as a type of Christ. But I think that once we look at some of the details in his life, you will be convinced that he not only is a type of Christ, but that he is outstanding as a type of Christ when you see the similarities.

His story covers a large section in Genesis--from Genesis 37 to Genesis 50--with the exception of Genesis 38 which tells us of the sins of Judah, the first part of Genesis 46 which gives us the family of Jacob (of which Joseph was a part), and Genesis 49 which tells us of Jacob's prophecies of his sons. And so we have over ten chapters devoted to the life of Joseph. By chapters that is 20% of the book of Genesis. This ought to tell us how important Joseph was in the divine record, and especially when we see him as a type of Christ, how important he was in being a part of the revelation of the plan of God to accomplish our salvation through the

Lord Jesus Christ.

- Some people are bothered by the fact that the book of Genesis does not go from Jacob to Judah in its account since our Lord came through the tribe of Judah, not Joseph. I don't know that I have the correct answer to that question, but it seems to me that we have Joseph instead of Judah because Joseph is such an outstanding type of our Lord Jesus Christ. Judah, on the other hand, was not. So I want to take some time showing you how Joseph pre-figures our Lord Jesus Christ. I am not going to teach the life of Joseph because that would take too much of our time, as profitable as I am sure that would be, but we would be greatly delayed in getting to other types, prophecies, and appearances of our Lord in the OT. But we can't pass over Joseph. He is too important as a type of Christ. However, I am going to depend upon the hope I have that you all are well enough acquainted with the story of Joseph to be able to fit in the details as we look at the ways in which he portrays our Lord. Perhaps a brief sketch of his life will be good for all of us.

Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob. The record of his birth is given in Gen. 30:22-24. His mother's name was Rachel, who was Jacob's favorite wife. Rachel died after giving birth to Jacob's twelfth son, Benjamin, who was Joseph's only full brother.

The story of Joseph begins, as I have said, in Gen. 37. His older brothers hated him, and when they had the opportunity, they sold him to some traders who were going down into Egypt. There he was bought by an Egyptian military captain whose name was Potiphar. Things went well with Joseph until Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, but he refused to give in to her. When she had the opportunity she said that Joseph was trying to seduce her, and Potiphar had Joseph thrown into prison. But there again the faithfulness of Joseph is seen, and the jailor turned all of the prisoners over to Joseph. Joseph interpreted the dreams of two men who had been servants of Pharaoh, one a butler and the other a baker. The butler was restored to his place, and Joseph asked him to put in a good word with Pharaoh for him. But the butler forgot about Joseph for two full years until Pharaoh had two dreams, and then the butler told Pharaoh that Joseph could interpret his dreams for him. Joseph was brought before Pharaoh, interpreted his dreams, and was placed second in command under Pharaoh to gather food during seven years of prosperity in preparation for the famine which was to follow.

During the famine Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to get food, and this led ultimately to a restoration between Joseph and his brothers, and finally Jacob and his sons came down into Egypt to live. It was there that Jacob died, and later Joseph died also.

I have left out a lot of the details, but I hope that, if you are not as familiar with Joseph's life as you ought to be, you will take the time to read these important chapter so that you will be able to appreciate more fully that Joseph is a type of Christ.

Let me mention as we begin that Joseph was not a type of Christ in every detail of his life, but there are outstanding features about Joseph's life which definitely find their parallel in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those are the features that we want to consider in our study of “Christ in the Old Testament.”

How was Joseph a type of Christ? I want to mention ten ways in which we see Christ typified in the life of Joseph. We see the first similarities in the first chapter which is given over to the story of his life.

I. HE WAS THE BELOVED SON OF HIS FATHER.

We read this about Joseph in Gen. 37:3,

Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and

he made him a coat of many colours.

Jacob must have loved Joseph also because Rachel was his mother. But the parallel between Joseph and our Lord at this point is very obvious. God does not have many sons like Jacob did, but there is no doubt about the love that existed eternally between God the Father and God the Son. When our Lord was baptized, the Father spoke from heaven, and said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). And again when Peter, James, and John were with the Lord in the Mount of Transfiguration, the Father spoke from heaven and said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5). Even in Isaiah's prophecy, 42:1, we have a statement of the love that the Father had for His Son as the Servant of the Lord,

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

This verse is referred to in Matt. 12:18, and referred to our Lord Jesus Christ. In Eph. 1:6 our Lord is called "the Beloved." And in Col. 1:13 the Apostle Paul said that God has delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. Human languages fail to describe the love that the Father has for the Son, and the Son for the Father. But just as Jacob found his chief delight in Joseph, so God finds all of His delight in His Son.

II. HE WAS HATED, PERSECUTED, REJECTED, AND SOLD BY HIS BRETHREN.

Gen. 37: tell us that Joseph's brethren "hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him." They made life just as miserable for their brother Joseph as they possibly could. All through our Lord's life on earth it was his brethren, the Jews, who showed such contempt for Him. And never was it more intense than at those times when our Lord claimed that God was His Father, thus making Himself equal with God, as we see, for example, in John 5:18.

And yet there was no reason why Joseph's brothers should hate him. He did them no wrong. In fact, he was on a mission to find out how they were doing when they sold him into Egypt. Gen. 37:11 tells us that "his brethren envied Him." And then we read these words concerning our Lord in John 15:20:

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

And then our Lord followed those words with these:

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause (John 15:22-25).

The Apostle John also had this to say about the coming of our Lord into the world: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). Isaiah had said years before about the Messiah when He would come,

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not (Isa. 53:3).

And then he added in verse 7 of the same chapter,

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

And just as Joseph's brothers thought that they had delivered him to death, and said so twice in Joseph's presence, the enemies of our Lord were not satisfied until they had seen Him crucified on the Cross. The

rejection of Joseph by his brothers was complete, final. And the same can be said about the Jews in their rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is hard to describe the hatred that was directed toward Joseph by his brothers, and the same is infinitely more the case in the Jews opposition of our Lord. And yet in neither case had those who were hated done anything to receive the treatment that they received. In both cases we see how tragic was the treatment handed out to Joseph and to our Lord.

III. HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY WERE ORDAINED OF GOD.

We have seen in Jacob's life at Bethel how God spoke to him in a dream. The same happened to Joseph, and during Joseph's life in Egypt it happened to the butler and the baker as well as to Pharaoh himself. Not every dream was a message from God, but there were many times when it was. And those dreams were just as much the Word of God as everything else that is written in our Bibles. And this is why the magicians and wise men could not interpret the dreams. "The nature man receiveth not..." (1 Cor. 2:14).

Well, you will remember that when Joseph was only 17 years old, the Lord gave him two dreams. In the first dream (recorded for us in Gen. 37) Joseph and his brothers were in a field harvesting wheat, and his sheaf stood upright, and their sheaves bowed down before his. And then he dreamed a second dream in which Joseph told his brothers that "the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance" to him. If any mistake was made by Joseph it was in telling his father and his brothers the dream that he had. It made the problem worse with Joseph's brothers because they got the meaning. Whether or not they believed it was a message from God, we do not know.

But the point is that this was God's revelation to Joseph of what was going to happen to him. At the time he dreamed these dreams, he had not prospect that he would ever reign as a king, but this enables us to see that the life-story of Joseph is a story of the sovereignty of God. All through his life God was working, preparing him for the day when he would reign as a king. So God enable him to see, in this case, the end from the beginning.

The same was true of our Lord. He was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. See Rev. 13:8. He had been sent to do the will of the Father, and this was His passion throughout His life here on earth. And so the life of our Lord here on earth is also an account of the sovereignty of God. There was nothing left to chance. When our Lord died on the Cross, He said, "It is finished." He had finished the work that the Father had given Him to do.

IV. HE WAS OUTSTANDING FOR HIS PERSONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

I said a moment ago that if there were any fault which Joseph made during his life, as far as the Scriptures are concerned, it was in telling his dreams to his brothers. We can be sure that Joseph did sin because he was a sinner. But the Spirit of God has not seen fit to include those sins that Joseph might appear in Scripture as one who could represent Him Who was without sin. Although Joseph was tempted by Potiphar's wife day after day, he never did yield to the temptation. In his comment to her he expressed that all sin is primarily against God, and he could not think of offending his God in any way. Here is what he said. His words are recorded in Gen. 39:9:

There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

The Apostle John, writing his first epistle, spoke of our Lord as "Jesus Christ, the righteous." He was never guilty of sin in thought, word, or deed. No one could convict Him of sin. There was no sin in Him to come out. He was not a son of Adam like we are. Our Lord far surpassed Joseph on this point, but the fact that we

have no sins mentioned in connection with Joseph makes him a truly outstanding type of our Lord Jesus Christ.

V. HE WAS FAITHFUL IN HIS WORK THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE.

Have you noticed in reading the life of Joseph that wherever he was, he was faithful. He was faithful to his father when he was living at home. He was faithful to Potiphar even though he was a foreigner in a foreign land. And when he was cast into prison, he was so faithful there that the jailor turned his responsibilities over to Jacob. If any prisoner had escaped when Joseph was in charge, the jailor would have died as the penalty. But he knew Joseph was faithful, and he literally trusted his life to him. And faithfulness in the lowly places where Joseph had worked, prepared him for the task that was his in working for Pharaoh. He was faithful in those duties as well.

Think of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was faithful to His Father. He came to do the Father's will, and He did it. He came to finish the work that the Father had given Him to do, and He finished it. He was faithful to His own. He loved them unto the end.

VI. HIS LIFE WAS ONE OF THE DEEPEST AND CONSTANT HUMILIATION.

Looking at Joseph first, we know that it was humiliating to him to have been hated by his brothers. Younger members in any family usually look up to the older ones, want to be accepted by them, and often choose them as models for their own lives. Joseph never had that blessing in his younger years.

Then, after Joseph received the dreams which the Lord gave to him, it seems that everything that happened to him moved him farther and farther away from the goal that the Lord had announced for him. He was humiliated when his brothers cast him into a pit, and then further humiliated when they sold him as a slave to the traders who were going down into Egypt. The price that they received, "twenty pieces of silver" (Gen. 37:28), is mentioned in Scripture, as is the price that Judas received for betraying the Lord Jesus into the hands of His enemies (see Matt. 26:15; 27:3-5). Then Joseph became a household slave in the home of Potiphar. It surely was most humbling to Joseph when Potiphar's wife lied about him, and, as a result, he was cast into prison. Then even after Joseph interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker, the baker promptly forgot Joseph for "two full years" (cf. Gen. 40:23-41:1).

So it was that Joseph's life up to that point was one, not only of constant humiliation, but of an ever-deepening humiliation.

The same was true to a far greater degree in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Cf. Phil. 2:5-7. Who can possibly understand how humbling it was for the Lord to become a Man so that multitudes never saw Him more than a human being. And what about the opposition, the hatred that He experienced at the hands of the Jews? He was charged more than once with having a demon. And then our Lord was betrayed by one of His own disciples, and later forsaken by the other disciples. This led to His humiliating trial in which He was falsely accused, and the culmination of it all was His death on the Cross. So, from the time that the Lord Jesus left glory, up to and including His death, He experienced one humiliating experience after another. And how can I or you or anyone else possible describe how the Lord suffered through all of this Who had been the object of the adoration and praise of the angels in heaven?

But then we have this illuminating statement in the book of Hebrews concerning our Lord, and the same, of course, would have applied to Joseph in all of the humiliating experiences which he suffered,

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb. 5:8).

This teaches us that even in the case of Joseph, all of his humiliation he experience was not wasted on him, nor did those things happen by accident. God was working to prepare His servant for the exalted place that he was to have, and there is nothing better for any of us than that our proud hearts should be humbled by God and before God. And we need to remember that we are exhorted to have the mind of Christ. Joseph's attitude to his trials is a great testimony to the glory of God, of how God was bringing Joseph to a place of great usefulness.

VII. HE WAS ULTIMATELY EXALTED AND BECAME A KING.

Now we are ready for the remainder of that passage in Philippians, Phil. 2:9-11. (Read.) And who would ever have expected that Joseph would have been moved from an Egyptian jail to the Egyptian throne? But that is exactly what happened. And yet it was far greater for our Lord Jesus Christ that He was exalted from Joseph of Arimathaea's tomb, back to life, and then to ascend back to heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father -- the most exalted place of all! But that is not the end of our Lord's exaltation. He is yet to be acclaimed as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." We have this statement by Paul in his first letter to Timothy which tells us of the place that our Lord is to have:

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen (1 Tim. 6:13-16).

We have prophecies of our Lord's exaltation in the OT. One is in Psalm 2, verse 6, where we read, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." This was spoken prophetically of the Messiah. And then when we turn to Isa. 52:13 we read this at the head of that amazing passage which spoke prophetically of the sufferings of our Lord: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." There are many other passages to which we could refer, but this is sufficient to show that our Lord went through the depths of humiliation to the glory which was His in resurrection, and which is yet to be greater when He comes to reign upon the earth.

Closely connected with our Lord's reign is my eighth point:

VIII. HE WAS RESTORED WITH HIS BRETHREN.

The account of how this happened with Joseph occupies much of Joseph's story in the book of Genesis, and it all had to do with the famine in Canaan and Egypt and the surrounding countries. It was because of the coming famine that Joseph was made a ruler in Egypt, and it was because of the famine that Jacob's sons made trips to Egypt to buy food. Joseph knew his brothers from their first visit, but they did not know him. According to what they told Joseph, they thought that he was dead. But on their first visit, not knowing who Joseph was, they bowed before him in fulfillment of the dream that the Lord had given Joseph more than twenty years before. Finally, after Benjamin had come down to Egypt with his older brothers, Joseph told his brothers who he was. The account is given in Gen. 45:3-5:

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

There is a prophecy in the book of Zechariah which closely parallels the event when Joseph revealed who he was to His brothers. It is found in Zech. 12:9-10:

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Even though Joseph's brothers seemed always to have feared that Joseph would take revenge on them for what they had done, he actually had forgiven them before they ever came into Egypt. And he could do this because he had seen the hand of God in all of the trials through which he had passed as God was moving him closer and closer to the throne, while in his experience it must have seemed to Joseph that he was being moved farther and farther away.

On the note of forgiveness, we must not forget the words of our Lord from the Cross as He looked out over the jeering crowd before Him: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

IX. HE WAS GIVEN A GENTILE BRIDE.

Apparently to give further honor to Joseph, and possibly because it was necessary for a sovereign in Egypt to have a wife, Pharaoh gave Joseph the daughter of an Egyptian priest to be his wife. Her name was Asenath, and she was a Gentile. Many have seen in this an indication that our Lord was to include in His bride, the Church, multitudes from the Gentile nations of the earth in every generation. We read of this, for example, in Eph. 3:6. Let me read that verse to you, but I will begin with verse 1:

1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

And so we have in this another parallel between our Lord and Joseph. Now for my last point:

X. THE PURPOSES OF GOD WERE COMPLETELY FULFILLED IN HIM.

The life of Joseph and the life on earth of our Lord Jesus Christ, testify to the sovereignty of God in fulfilling

His purposes. I read to you Gen. 45:5 a moment ago, when Joseph expressed to his brothers his conviction that God's hand was to be seen in all that had taken place. Let me read that verse to you again:

Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

And then Joseph added this in Gen. 45:7-8:

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers were again fearful that Joseph would take revenge on them for what they had done. But this was Joseph's response:

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them (Gen. 50:19-21).

In the same way let me read to you what Peter said to the Jews in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost as he preached the Gospel to them:

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it (Acts 2:22-24).

And, as evidence of the grace of God, that very day three thousand people were added to the church through salvation. We have not yet seen the greatest fulfillment of God's promises to Israel, but that is just as certain to be fulfilled as that which has already been fulfilled, when our Lord comes again to reign on earth as Israel's Messiah, King, and Lord.

Concl: Let me close with a statement made by W. H. Griffith Thomas in his commentary on Genesis with respect to Joseph as a type of Christ. This is what he had to say:

There does not seem to be a single reference in the New Testament to the typical nature of Joseph's life, and yet it is impossible to avoid seeing the close, prolonged, and striking resemblances between Joseph and Christ. It is not mere ingenuity that endeavors to see in the story of the one some of the outstanding events in the life of the Other. While we are careful not to proceed to fanciful extremes, it is not only legitimate, but in every way spiritually profitable to ponder the life of Joseph in the light of the history of our blessed Lord (p. 500).

How thankful we should be for this further testimony both of the unity of Scripture, OT with the NT, but also that Christ is pre-eminent in the one as much as in the other.

“Christ in the Old Testament”

Lesson 11

Christ, Our Passover

January 7, 1997

Intro: Charles Bridges, whose dates are 1794-1869, was a leader of the Evangelical party in the Church of England. He wrote several books of which probably his best known is a book still in print, entitled, *The Christian Ministry*. He also wrote a book on *Psalms 119*, and another on *Ecclesiastes*. But I want to give you a quotation today from his book on *Proverbs* because it applies so well to the subject we are considering, “Christ in the Old Testament.” Perhaps I should save this quotation until we get to the book of Proverbs, but it applies so well to all of the OT that I decided to give it to you today.

This is what he wrote as he expressed his desire to be completely accurate in his commentary on the book of Proverbs:

But with all care to preserve a soundly-disciplined interpretation, we must not forget, that the Book of Proverbs is a part of the volume entitled--“The word of Christ” (Col. iii. 16). And so accurately does the title describe the Book [of Proverbs], that the study of it brings the whole substance of the volume before us. It furnishes indeed the stimulating motive to search the Old Testament Scripture (John, v.39)--the true key that opens the Divine Treasure-house; so that, as Mrs. Cecil observes--“*If we do not see the golden thread through all the Bible, marking out Christ, we read the Scriptures without the Key*” (italics mine). This remark however does not undervalue its large mass of historical and practical instruction. *But unquestionable Christ is the Sun of the whole Scripture system* (italics mine); “and in his light we see the light” (Ps. xxxvi. 9), that reflects upon every point of practical obligation, and quickens life and energy throughout the whole Christian path. There is therefore, as Professor Franke reminds us--“much joy, comfort, and delight to be found in the writing of the Old Testament (especially in reading those places, which before were wearisome and almost irksome) when we perceive Christ is so sweetly pictured there (*A Commentary on Proverbs, Preface*, p. ix).

And then Mr. Bridges referred to a lady who said ““that she was delighted in the course of her study of the Book of Proverbs to have Christ so much and so frequently before her mind”--a recollection--her biographer ventured to observe--of ‘great moment for the spiritual discernment of divine wisdom treasured up in this storehouse of practical instruction’” (*Ibid.*).

In a footnote Mr. Bridges gave a quotation from Augustine who once said, “The Old Testament has no true relish if Christ be not understood in it.”

This is what many expositors of the Scriptures have long recognized, and it has been the delight of uncounted numbers of the Lord’s people who have discovered to their delight that the OT, as well as the NT, speaks over and over again of Christ! Christ is the Key to all of Scripture, and it is in seeing Christ that our souls are fed, and we find ourselves coming back again and again to this precious book, the Bible, to learn all that we can about Christ.

Since we began our studies of “Christ in the Old Testament” we have spent most of our time in the book of Genesis. Today I want to move on to the book of Exodus. We have seen Christ at the burning bush in Exodus 3 where He appeared to Moses as “the angel of the Lord.” But today we are going to consider Christ as the passover lamb of Exodus 12. And we have NT authorization for saying that Christ is pictured in the passover lamb. Or to state it another way, the passover lamb is a type of Christ. What is said about the passover lamb and what was done to the passover lamb, was prophetic of what would eventually be true of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our authorization for this study is found in 1 Cor. 5:7:

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

Paul was rebuking the Corinthian church because they had been tolerating immorality to go unjudged in the church, and he was telling them to remove the leaven before it affected the whole church. And so he continued, still referring to the Passover, by saying,

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:8).

I have said before that we need to be careful not to make everything in the OT a type, but when we have such clear teaching in the NT regarding an OT subject, we can be sure that we are on good ground when we say that the passover lamb of Exodus 12 is definitely a type of Christ.

Now, so we will all have this account fresh in our minds, let me read the first twenty verses of Exodus 12. (Read Ex. 12:1-20.)

Please turn now to the next book of the Bible, the book of Leviticus, chapter 23, verses 4-8. This is the chapter where Moses reviewed the feast days which the children of Israel were to observe annually when they got into the promised land. But I want you to see the close relationship, as we have also seen it, between the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Read Lev. 23:4-8.)

Let me give you a brief background for the Passover as it appeared in the book of Exodus.

I. THE BACKGROUND OF THE PASSOVER.

The people of Israel were slaves in the land of Egypt. The time had come when God was going to move them out of the land of Egypt and take them to their own land in Canaan. God had brought Moses back from Midian where he had been for forty years, and had appointed him to be the deliverer of the people of Israel. Time and time again Moses had gone to Pharaoh telling him that the Lord had sent him to tell Pharaoh to let His people go. And Pharaoh had steadfastly refused. When we come to the eleventh chapter of Exodus, the judgment of the Lord had fallen upon Egypt nine times, and there was to be one last plague. It was to be the most devastating of all. The Lord was going to destroy all of the firstborn in the land. This is how Moses stated what the judgment would be:

4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

6 And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more (Ex. 11:4-6).

This was to touch every family in Egypt from Pharaoh on down to the lowest slave.

But there was one way, and only one way in which people could escape this final, terrible judgment. And that had to do with the passover lamb. Why was it called the "passover"? Exodus 12:13 gives us our answer. Let me read that verse for you again. (Read.)

So you can see that the word *passover* meant two things:

1) That the Lord would pass over those families who had made preparation for the judgment so that their firstborn would not die, and

2) That the Lord would protect the firstborn in those homes so that the destroyer would not kill them.

Thus it meant two things: God would pass over them so that they would not be judged, and He would remain

over them to preserve them from the destroyer.

I think we can all see the application as far as the Gospel is concerned. All mankind is under divine judgment. We are under the sentence of death, eternal death. God has provided one way of escape, and only one. It is through Christ Whom John the Baptist called "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Any person who does not take refuge under the blood of Christ, is doomed forever. And so we will see that Exodus chapter 12 gives us, not the first revelation of the Gospel that we have in the Bible, but surely the most complete picture of the Gospel up to this point.

Now we are ready to look at the details. Let us look first at:

II. "THE BEGINNING OF MONTHS" (Ex. 12:1, 2).

During the time that the descendants of Jacob had been in Egypt, they had grown from being just a family to being a nation of people. Estimates of their number run from a million and a half to two million people. The Lord had told Abraham that this would happen. We have His words to Abraham in Gen. 15:13-14:

13 And he [the Lord] said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

That time had come, and at that point in their history the Lord told them that "this month" (when they would be delivered), was to be for them "the beginning of months." That is, their life as a nation was to be dated from that point, telling us (when we apply this to salvation) that our spiritual history begins with our redemption. At that time the month was called *Abib*. See Ex. 13:4. Keil and Delitzsch tell us in their commentary that after Babylonian captivity it was called *Nisan*. And they added, "This corresponds very nearly to our April" (Vol. II, p. 10).

So time actually began for Israel as a nation when they were delivered, redeemed, from Egyptian bondage. And we can make the same application to ourselves when we were delivered from the penalty of our sins. We had a new beginning.

Now let us consider the preparations that the people had to make, and we will begin with:

III. THE PASSOVER LAMB (Ex. 12:3-6a).

We will consider first what was required of the lamb, and afterwards what they were to do with the lamb. Notice the instructions, and let us make the application to Christ.

A lamb was to be selected which would be adequate for every person. If a family were so small that the lamb would be too much for them to each, they were allowed to go together with another family.

But notice the first requirement for the lamb as it is stated in verse 5. The lamb had to be "without blemish." It could not be sick, or deformed in any way--not blind nor crippled. It had to be a perfectly healthy lamb--"without blemish."

The Apostle Peter helped us with the meaning of this expression when he wrote the words we find in 1 Peter 1:18-19:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from

your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

For the Lord Jesus to be "without blemish and without spot, meant that He was "without sin." There was no sin in Him. He was morally perfect. He was not under the judgment of God except to become our Substitute. He could die for our sins because He had no sin. So the physical perfection of the passover lamb was a picture of the sinlessness, the holiness, of our dear Lord.

Going back to Exodus 12, the second thing that is mentioned about the passover lamb was that it was to be "a male of the first year." Our Lord was a Man, not a woman. And He died when He was in the prime of His life-- in His early thirties.

The third thing that is said about the passover lamb was that it was to be separated from all of the other sheep, and all of the other goats. Does this not find its application in the life of our Lord? He was, as the writer of Hebrews wrote,

26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself (Heb. 7:26-27).

There were other sheep in Egypt, millions more, but none that were as important as the Passover Lambs. Our Lord was, as Dr. Mitchell used to say, "a Man among men," but He was beyond compare. No man ever spoke like He did. No man ever performed the miracles which He did. And no one died the death that He did. He was unique in every way, set apart from men.

The fourth and last thing that is said about the passover lamb was that he was to be kept until the fourteenth day of the month--chosen on the tenth, kept until the fourteenth. Why? It seems to me that there are two main reasons. First, to make sure the lamb was perfect. Second, for the people to focus their attention upon the lamb.

Why did the Lord live approximately three years, or a little over, in the public eye? Was it not that they might focus their attention on Him, and so they could see that there was absolutely no reason in Him as to why He should die? Read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and you will become convinced that He was totally and always "without blemish." This was very crucial in the life of our Lord. If He were ever guilty of sin, He would be disqualified to be our Savior because He would then need a Savior Himself.

So the Lord did not suddenly appear before men, and then die, but He lived and walked and spoke before men, and yet never could anyone justly charge Him with any sin. He was the spotless Lamb of God.

But, speaking of reading the four Gospels, it will not only convince us of His absolute perfection, but reading the Gospels will help us to know the Lord better, but to love Him more, to desire to do His will, and to become more like He is. And all of this, in turn, will cause us to look forward with greater anticipation and joy to the coming of our blessed Lord.

Now, after seeing all of the qualifications the lamb had to meet, as did our Lord, we are ready to see what was to be done with the lamb.

IV. THE DESTINY OF THE LAMB (Ex. 12:6b-11).

The dictionary describes "destiny" as the predetermined course of events which a person experiences in his or her life. For us as Christians, it is a recognition of the sovereignty of God, and of the providence of God, in the

life of our Lord.

The ultimate purpose for all that had been done up to this point was that the lamb would *die*! The perfection of the lamb was an absolute requirement, but it was not the living lamb that would deliver the firstborn, but the slain lamb. In addition, it had to be “roast with fire” (Ex. 12:8)--a picture of judgment. This section of Exodus 12 elaborates on all of this. We are told in verse 9 that they were not to eat of it “raw.” That is, it was not just the death of our Lord that has saved us, but the death of our Lord under the judgment of God. He was “made sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21). It was necessary for Him to “taste death” for us (Heb. 2:9). His soul was made an offering for our sins. See Isa. 53:10.

The fact that the lamb was not to be “sodden,” or *boiled*, seems to indicate that it was not to be offered like the heathen so often offered their heathen sacrifices (although later there were times when they did boil their sacrifices). But every bit of the lamb was to be “roast with fire.”

But this is not all. The blood of the lamb was to be applied to the two side posts and the upper door post of their homes. For them to do this was an evidence of their faith. And then the lamb was to be eaten--speaking of the personal way in which the merits of the lamb and its death were appropriated by the people. We can imagine how the firstborn would be careful to follow every detail of the instructions that God had given them because, in this case, it was his life which was in the balance. But we can also envision how the father in each family, and also the mother, would be careful to see that all of the children did exactly as they were told to do if the firstborn were not to die. How wonderful it would be if parents and people generally today would pay such close attention to the Gospel message! This certainly was not a time when the people were free to do what they thought was best; they had to abide by the Word of God in every detail that Moses, by the Spirit, had given to them.

Along with the lamb, the people were to eat “unleavened bread...with bitter herbs.” Leaven is always a picture, or type, of sin in Scripture. It pictures the invasive character of sin. Keil and Delitzsch say that “the bitter herbs were to call to mind the bitterness of life experienced by Israel in Egypt (i. 14), and this bitterness was to be overpowered by the sweet flesh of the lamb” (II, 16).

Finally, all of this was to be done in preparation for leaving Egypt.

Egypt in so many instances in Scripture is a type of the world. Redemption always means a break with the world. We are to “come out from among them, and be...separate (2 Cor. 6:17). Cf. also Rom. 12:1, 2 and 1 John 2:15-17. Isaiah sounded this warning which had great significance for the children of Israel then, as it does for us today:

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD (Isa. 31:1)!

So the lamb was to be killed. Its flesh was to be roasted. It was to be eaten by the people along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. And all of this was to be done in preparation for their *exodus* from the land of Egypt. Every detail illustrates the death of Christ and the consequences of our salvation. But this is not all that we need to understand. Let us now look at:

V. THE FINAL OUTCOME (Ex. 12:13-14).

After every preparation had been made, the outcome was in the hands of the Lord. God was the One upon

Whom the judgment in each family rested. If God *saw the blood* applied after all of His conditions had been carefully observed, the firstborn son was spared. If not, he died! It was not a case where the people were required to understand all that God had asked them to do, but it was that the Lord wanted to see the blood on the doorposts of their homes. This was the only way for any family in Israel or in Egypt to escape the judgment of God. And there is no other way for us today to escape the judgment of God against sin but to take shelter under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lamb was an innocent victim. And so was our Lord. But we see in the sacrifice of the passover lamb a tremendous picture of the death that our Lord Jesus Christ died. Let those words of the Lord, "when I see the blood," be impressed by the Holy Spirit upon all of our hearts. It is not our goodness--because we have none. Sincerity is good, but we must be careful that we are not sincerely wrong.

Christ our Redeemer died on the cross,
Died for the sinner, paid all his due;
Sprinkle your soul with the blood of the Lamb,
And I will pass, will pass over you.

O great compassion! O boundless love!
O loving kindness, faithful and true!
Find peace and shelter under the blood,
And I will pass, will pass over you.

When I see the blood,
When I see the blood,
When I see the blood,
I will pass, I will pass over you.

Concl: Let me give two final words.

First, note in Ex. 12:14 that this feast of the Passover was to be observed every year. The people were not to forget their redemption from Egypt, nor the price of their redemption. The Lord's Supper has the same significance for us. It was at that last Passover that our Lord instituted what we call *the Lord's Supper*.

Second, notice that the Passover was followed immediately for seven days by *the Feast of Unleavened Bread*. The Unleavened Bread was also a type of Christ. And the picture we have in this is that salvation is followed by our continuing to feed upon Christ, the Sinless One. How do we do this? By looking for Him as we read the Word, or hear it taught. It is by meditating upon Him and upon His redeeming work. In this way our understanding of the truth will increase and our fellowship with the Lord will be the delight of our lives.

So let us make sure that our hope of salvation rests solely upon the death of our Lord Jesus Christ for sinners, and that we are living each day in fellowship with our risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ, our Unleavened Bread.

“Christ in the Old Testament”

Lesson 12

Christ, the Bread of Life

January 14, 1997

Intro: In the Gospel of John we learn that Christ claimed a number of titles all of which were introduced with that Name of Deity which God gave to Moses: “I AM THAT I AM.” And from that Name comes the very familiar OT Name, Jehovah. The Names that we have in the Gospel of John are:

- 1) “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).
- 2) “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46).
- 3) “I am the door of the sheep” (John 10:7, 9).
- 4) “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14).
- 5) “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25, 26).
- 6) “I am the way the truth and the life” (John 14:6).
- 7) “I am the true vine” (John 15:1, 5).

These figures of speech indicate, not just what the Lord became after His incarnation, but they represent what He always has been, and always will be. Therefore, as in the story given to us in the book of Exodus of our Lord’s deliverance of the children of Israel we have a type of our redemption (as we saw last week in the Passover), so, as we go on to Exodus 16 where God began to give His people manna in the morning, we have a type of Christ as the Bread of life. This is the subject which our Lord enlarged upon while He was here on earth, and we have that message recorded for us in John 6.

The verse that declares this truth is John 6:35:

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Again, in John 6:48 we have our Lord’s statement, “I am the bread of life.” But then the Lord added this:

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world (John 6:49-51).

So, although the Lord drew a contrast between the manna that the children of Israel ate in the desert, yet He did establish a relationship between Himself and the manna.

He related Himself to the manna again later in John 6:57-58:

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

There are always limitations to types. They of necessity do not fully equal that which they represent. But there is enough similarity for us to see that when God gave the types in the NT, He had that in mind which was to come later, and which they represented.

So I want to consider with you in this lesson, Christ, the Bread of Life, as typified in the manna which God gave His people in the wilderness.

The OT passage which we will be considering, therefore, is Exodus 16. In it you will see that the Lord gave the children of Israel manna every morning, and quail every night. Both are typical of Christ, but I want to place special emphasis on the manna.

I want to take the time to read the entire 16th chapter of Exodus. Then we will all be able to have the details of the chapter before us as we apply this chapter to our Lord. (Read.)

The Lord called this daily provision which He made for His people, "bread from heaven" (Ex. 16:4). It was the people who called it "Manna" (Ex. 16:31). In verse 14 of this chapter it is described as "a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground." This was really their breakfast every morning. The Lord provided it, but the people had to gather it. They gathered as much as they could eat, so there was no reason that anyone should go hungry. This went on for all of the years that they were traveling in the wilderness, or desert.

At night the Lord provided them with quail. And so they had manna in the morning, and quail at night.

There are many things about the journey that the children of Israel made from Egypt to Canaan that apply to our lives as Christians, and it is very significant that this comes at the beginning of their journey. Both the bread of heaven and the quail were for eating. That is obvious. And it is important for every Christian to learn from the beginning of his or her life as a child of God, that we as Christians have food to eat, heavenly food, which the Lord has provided for us to sustain us on our journey through life as we walk in fellowship with the Lord. Sometimes this is spoken of in one way, and sometimes in other ways. Let me show you what I mean.

Take Jeremiah, for example. In Jer. 15:16 we find these words spoken by Jeremiah, that great prophet of the OT:

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

He spoke of eating the Word of God. Now this did not mean that he ate the scroll on which the word of God was written, but it means that he read the Word and meditated on the Word until his soul was nourished and he experienced "the joy and rejoicing" which he spoke about in the verse.

Or let me remind you of the first two verses of Psalm 1. Eating is not spoken of there, but meditation is. Note what the Psalmist said:

1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

What Jeremiah described as eating, the Psalmist described as meditating.

And then we have those two familiar verses in 1 Pet. 2:2-3 where Peter described the Word of God as milk:

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Paul, in writing his first letter to the Corinthian church, spoke of his ministry to them in terms of eating. This is what he said:

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able (1 Cor. 3:1-2).

Let me give you one more verse because it applies to our study in this lesson: Col. 3:16:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

"The word of Christ" is a title which Paul gave to the Word of God. It would be very accurate if instead of

having "Holy Bible" printed on the outside of our Bibles, we had "the Word of Christ." It would perhaps be a good reminder of what we had in our first lesson--*that all of Scripture speaks of Christ!* It is from Christ, and it is about Christ. And this is an important point for us to keep in mind when think today about the children of Israel eating manna in the OT.

I do not mean to indicate that the children of Israel understood all that we can see in Exodus 16 today, but the truth is there for us to profit from as we look back upon how the Lord provided for His people in those days as they went from Egypt to Canaan. I believe that the picture we have in Exodus 16, while it tells us how the children ate the bread which God provided for them day by day, also gives us a great study in how important it is for each one of us to be feeding upon the Word of God each day--and feeding upon it especially as it speaks to us of our Lord Jesus Christ Who is "the Bread of Life."

The first thing to note about the manna is found in those words in Ex. 16:4, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you." There are several things of importance that we need to recognize in that statement.

I. THE MANNA WAS "BREAD FROM HEAVEN" PROVIDED BY GOD (Ex. 16:4).

What a description this is of our Bibles! It is not an ordinary book. It is not man-made. Man had a part in writing it, but it is not a human production. It is *a heavenly book*, a book which we rightly call *the Word of God*. And we would have it if God had not given it to us.

But let me go a step beyond that. I hope that it is the practice of every one of you to be reading the Word of God every day. And as you read it, if you haven't considered it this way before, I hope from today on you will recognize that God has provided what you read just as surely as He provided manna for the children of Israel in those days. He is far more concerned about feeding us than we are about being fed. Notice how cranky and unhappy the children of Israel were when they thought that they were going to starve to death in the desert. And you can usually tell a Christian who hasn't been *feeding his soul on the Word of God* because he will get cranky and complaining about everything too. If the Lord hadn't wanted His people to eat every day, He wouldn't have provided for them every day. But that is what He did, and the lesson ought to be very clear to all of us. Whenever you lead a person to Christ, or are in contact with a young Christian, always see to it that they understand that they need to feed on the Word every day.

But let me add another word about this expression as it applies to us and our Bibles. The Bible is a heavenly book because it tells us about a heavenly Person: our Lord Jesus Christ. As I have been saying, He is the Key to Scripture. The Bible is a book about Christ. And the joy of Bible reading for all of us will be that we are seeing Him as He is revealed in the Word.

Now I have already hit upon the second point, but let me make it anyway so you and I won't forget it:

II. THE MANNA HAD TO BE GATHERED (Ex. 16:4).

It was like frost all over the ground. It was in very small pieces. And the people had to go out and gather enough for everyone to eat.

Isn't this the way it is with our Bible reading? We get a little here, and a little there. Sometimes it seems like we are not getting very much, but as we go on reading we get a little more here, and a little more there, and we find that our souls are being fed on the Word, and we are satisfied. The important thing is for us to continue reading, maybe reading what we have read, until we know that we have been blessed with the Word.

But notice something else here that is very important. God told them to go out to gather "a certain rate every day, **that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.**" Their obedience in gathering manna was a test as to whether or not they would obey all of the Word that had been given to them. I think that you will find that there is a direct relationship between our gathering the manna of the Word and our obedience to the Lord. Neglect the Word, and it will be easy for you to get careless about obeying the Lord. The Word not only tells us what we need to know, and what we must believe, but it also tells us how we should live. And we need that emphasis every day--not just on Sunday when we go to church, or when we attend a Bible Class on Tuesday morning, but we need it every day. What an important point this is! Regularly gathering the Word is really an indication of where we are spiritually. Not everyone gathered the same amount, but they all gathered manna and they all ate.

A third point that the Lord made with Moses had to do with:

III. THE TIME WHEN THE MANNA HAD TO BE GATHERED (Ex. 16:21).

It had to be gathered early because when the sun rose (and it gets hot early in the desert), the manna melted and was gone.

Have you noticed how important the early morning hours are for reading the Word and prayer? After breakfast the phone begins to ring, and there are things to do, and there are more likely to be interruptions. Sometimes mothers have to wait until the children get off to school before they can take time for the Word and prayer, and that is all right. My mother, as we got older, used to take time after breakfast. We knew what she was doing, and we left her alone. She wasn't long, but she was faithful with the Lord and with the Word. But most of the time the first hours of the day are the best for meeting with the Lord.

Notice that a special provision was made by the Lord for:

IV. THE SIXTH DAY (Ex. 16:5).

This was the day before their Sabbath, which was the seventh day of the week--Saturday, not Sunday. It was a day in which no work was to be done. We are not under the Law of Moses today. There is no indication in the Bible that the Sabbath was ever changed to Sunday. But nevertheless there is a lesson for us to learn even though our situation today is different from the children of Israel in those days.

There are times when we need extra time in the Word. It is good to break our routine every once in a while. It is good for our souls. There was no manna on the ground on the Sabbath day, but the Lord gave them twice as much manna on the sixth day because they had to eat every day. They were not supposed to work on the Sabbath, but they did eat! On other days they could not keep manna over night. See Ex. 16:19-20. As a general rule, what the Lord gives us today is for today, and tomorrow we need to gather fresh manna from the Word. You can apply verse 20 to your own life because I am sure that all of us have been guilty of going more than one day on what we have received.

Years ago when I was attending Central Bible before I became a member of the church staff, a man said to me after the morning service when Dr. Mitchell had brought us a good message--he said, "Well, do you think that we got enough to last us for the week?" I am sure that Dr. Mitchell would have been the first one to say that no message is that good. *We all need the Word of God every day.* You wouldn't think of going for two or three days on the breakfast you had this morning, and we shouldn't think of going all week on what we hear on Sunday--and yet I am afraid that there are many church people who do just that.

Before we go any farther, let me say just a word about:

V. THE QUAIL (Ex. 16:13).

Quail, of course, is meat. Paul spoke of feeding people with milk and meat. Meat, he indicated in 1 Corinthians 3, was for those who were more mature in the Lord. Perhaps this indicates that there are times when we need to look more deeply into the Word of God than we do when we are simply reading the Word. "The Spirit searcheth all things," said Paul in 1 Cor. 2:10, "yea, the deep things of God." And how wonderful it is to delve deeply into the Scriptures, always looking for the Lord and seeking to learn more of Him.

Now let me point out from this chapter some of the benefits we will experience as we faithfully read the Word with a special emphasis upon seeing the Lord Jesus in the Word. You and I cannot do this day after day without reaping some special blessings that God will give to us. And the blessings we can expect are always an incentive for us to continue faithfully in spending time with the Lord and the Word.

VI. SOME BENEFITS THAT COME TO US THROUGH FAITHFULLY SPENDING TIME IN THE WORD OF GOD.

There are three that I would like to mention.

A. The first is in Ex. 16:6b.

I will read verse 5 with verse 6. The blessing is mentioned in the latter part of verse 6: "Then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out of the land of Egypt."

To the Israelites this meant that when they saw how the Lord provided for them day after day, that was their assurance that the Lord had brought them out of Egypt, and that it had not been just Moses and Aaron's idea as was suggested by what the people were saying in verse 3. If they had gone hungry, then they would have had every reason to doubt that this was the Lord's will.

When we apply this to us, what does it mean? It means that when we experience the Lord's blessing in coming to the Word, and we begin to see how wonderful the truths of Scripture are, and how blessed we are when we see the Lord Jesus, the Bread of Life, as He is revealed all through Scripture, this gives us assurance that the Lord has really done a work of salvation in our hearts. Non-Christians don't enjoy the Word. They are not interested in Christ. But when we see how the Lord brings us back day after day to the Word of God, this gives us greater and greater assurance of our salvation.

B. The second is in Ex. 16:7.

I am referring to the words, "then ye shall see the glory of the Lord." To the Israelites this meant that as they saw the manna day after day, it expressed to them the glory of the Lord. How their God could make such an abundant provision for such a large group of people would be inclined to make them see how great God is. This is a part of His glory. For us it means that as we read the Word day after day, and see their the revelation that is given of God and of Christ, we see their glory! And since in our lessons we are thinking particularly of how Christ is revealed in the Old Testament, it means that there is nothing that gives us greater blessing than when we see the Lord as He is revealed in His Word.

C. The third is in verse Ex. 16:12.

And here I am referring to the words, "and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God." (Read the whole verse.)

For Israel this meant that such provision could not only mean that the Lord had brought them out, that He had redeemed them, but that He was indeed the Lord their God! And it is through the Word that the Holy Spirit bears testimony with our spirits that we are the children of God. See Rom. 8:16. How wonderful it is when we can say from our hearts what Thomas did when He saw the Lord after His resurrection. He said, "My Lord, and my God" (John 20:28).

This must have been what George Robinson felt in his heart when in the last century he wrote that wonderful hymn which we are all blessed with when we sing it,

Loved with everlasting love, Led by grace that love to know;
Spirit, breathing from above, Thou hast taught me it is so!
Oh, this full and perfect peace! Oh, this transport all divine!
In a love which cannot cease, I am His, and He is mine.

His forever, only His; Who the Lord and me shall part?
Ah, with what a rest of bliss Christ can fill the loving heart!
Heav'n and earth may fade and flee, Firstborn light in gloom decline;
But while God and I shall be, I am His, and He is mine.

There is nothing that will make the Lord Jesus more precious to us than spending time in the Word, letting Him speak to us, and then spending time in prayer, when we speak to Him.

I will say one more thing, and then I am finished. It has to do with:

VII. THE FELLOWSHIP THEY HAD WITH THE MANNA (Ex. 16:16-18).

In a nation of from a million and a half to two million people, you can imagine that every day there were those who were either a little late so that they did not gather as much manna as they needed, or that there were those who were so late that they did not get to gather the manna at all. The sun was up, and the manna was gone. But it seems that what they did was to bring together all of the manna and share it together. Then those who gathered more than they needed were able to share with those who did not have enough. Maybe some are like that here today. Something happened this morning so you didn't have your usual time in the Word. Perhaps the class has helped to meet your need today. I sincerely hope so. But let us all be aware that we need to share what the Lord has given us with even those in our own family to fill up the lack that they may feel because their time with the Lord was interrupted, and so they need you to share with them the manna of the Word which the Lord has given you.

Concl: I am always blessed with this chapter. I loved to teach it to the students at Multnomah--which I did for about ten years. But I have seen things in the chapter this time that I had not seen before. It always encourages me to be faithful in the Word day after day, and especially faithful in looking for the Lord Jesus because He is to be found everywhere in this book--in the OT as well as in the NT. I hope it has the same effect upon you--and it will if you remember that our purpose in reading is not just to cover a certain amount of chapters, but to be a people who are continually looking to see the Lord as He is revealed on the pages of this precious book. Christ is truly the Bread of Life, and those who have tasted of Him, and who feed upon Him daily, will never go elsewhere for the complete satisfaction of their souls.

“Christ in the Old Testament”

Lesson 13

Christ in the Tabernacle

January 21, 1997

Intro: There is a verse in the Gospel of John, John 1:14, which gives us support for saying that it was the purpose of God that His Son be revealed in the Tabernacle which the children of Israel built while they were at Mt. Sinai on their way from Egypt to Canaan. This is the verse:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

The word in this verse that I want to call your attention to is the word, “dwelt.” The word is Greek is ἐσκήνωσεν. The root of this word is σκηνή, and this is the word that is translated many times in the book of Hebrews, *tabernacle*. So we could very accurately translate the word “dwelt” by saying that “the Word was made flesh, and *tabernacled* among us.” It means that He *pitched his tent* among us. And, of course, this speaks of His incarnation, when the Lord Jesus Christ became a man. His tent was His human body. He assumed an appearance which He had not had before, and it was all for the purpose of redeeming sinners. And included in our redemption was His purpose to bring us into fellowship with God. And it was Christ in the flesh Who revealed the glory of God, even though we know that His glory was veiled in part to those who believed on Him, and veiled completely to those who did not believe. The verb “dwelt” in the Greek is in the aorist active which grammarians tell us that it describes His “entrance into that state or condition” (Dana and Mantey, p. 196). This is how they defined what Robertson called *an ingressive aorist* (V, p. 13). The Lord Jesus, by His birth, came to make his abode with us, and this is foreshadowed in the OT by the plan which God gave to Moses for the Tabernacle. It is no wonder that several times Moses was told to make the Tabernacle exactly as the Lord told him to make it. This is what we have in Ex. 25:9:

According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

After describing how the ark of the covenant should be made, and then the table of showbread, and then the lampstands, the Lord again said this: “And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount” (Ex. 25:40).

So it is not by chance that we can see Christ revealed in types in the Tabernacle, but it is according to the eternal plan and purpose of God. Any deviation from the plan God gave to Moses would have affected the whole picture which the Tabernacle gives us of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let me give you the arrangement of the Tabernacle, and then we will look at the individual pieces which made up the Tabernacle:

- 1) The Tabernacle had an outer court which was 50 cubits wide and 100 cubits long. The 50 cubits formed the east and west sides, and the 100 cubits formed the north and south sides. The tabernacle always faced east, and so the gate was on the east side. It had a gate 20 cubits wide with 15 cubits on each side of the gate.
- 2) Set inside the Outer Court was the Tabernacle set back toward the west part of the Outer Court.
- 3) Just inside the gate was the Altar of Burnt Offering where the priest offered the sacrifices.
- 4) Between the Altar of Burnt Offering and the Tabernacle was the Laver.
- 5) The Tabernacle itself was 30 cubits long, sitting east and west, and 10 cubits wide. Inside the Tabernacle there were two rooms, separated by a Veil. The first was 20 cubits long, 10 wide, and 10 high. The second was 10 by 10 by 10 cubits. The first was called the Holy Place, and the second was called the Holy of Holies, so-called because it was the most sacred part of the Tabernacle.
- 6) In the Holy Place which was the first room to be entered from the east end, there were three sacred pieces: the Table of Showbread on the north side, a Lampstand on the south, and directly in front of the Veil was the Altar of Incense.

- 7) Behind the Veil was the Ark of the Covenant which originally contained the tables of stone containing the Ten Commandments, a pot filled with manna, and Aaron's rod which budded. The sacredness of this room was indicated by the fact that the High Priest alone could go into it, and only on one day out of the year--the annual Day of Atonement.

It is not my purpose to teach all that we have about the Tabernacle, nor about the sacrifices, that we have in the book of Exodus, but simple to take the major features of it which show how the Tabernacle was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. The description of the Tabernacle begins in Exodus 25, continues through chapter 27, is interrupted by the description of the garments and consecration of the priests in chapters 28 and 29, then Moses got back to the Tabernacle and completed the description in chapter 30. We get back to a second description of the Tabernacle and the priesthood in Exodus 35 which takes us to the end of Exodus, chapter 40. The reason for the two sections in which we are told about the Tabernacle and the priesthood is because in the first, Moses was telling the people what to do and how to build the Tabernacle; in the second part. The expression that is mentioned over and over in the first part is "thou shalt make"; in the second part, "and they made."

Let me give some further words of explanation so we can have the right understanding of what the purpose of the Tabernacle was, and therefore its importance as a type of Christ.

As I sought to bring out when we were considering the Passover a couple of lessons back, the Passover is the great picture in the OT of redemption. We can only be saved once. And so when we come to the Tabernacle the emphasis is not upon our introduction into salvation, but upon the maintenance of our fellowship with the Lord. And that was true for the children of Israel as well. Christ as our Passover was only sacrifices for us once. But the sacrifice by which we were saved, is the same sacrifice which is necessary and sufficient for the cleansing of our sins after we are saved. And it is only through Christ and His sacrifice that we can continue to walk with God, and can come to offer our thanksgiving to God. So I want you to understand this about the Tabernacle. *It sets before us the means of our fellowship with God as His redeemed people.*

But let me give this further word of explanation.

The Tabernacle, as glorious as it was, and as marvelous as a type of Christ as we can now see it to be, represented *a very limited access to God*. Most of you will remember that God's presence with His people was seen by the cloudy pillar in the day time, and by the pillar of fire at night. After the people built the Tabernacle, God's presence descended upon the Holy of Holies. When it was time for the people to move, God's presence was lifted from the Holy of Holies, and went before them. When the cloud stopped, the Tabernacle was set up, and the cloudy pillar, or pillar of fire, depending upon whether it was day or night, descended upon the Holy of Holies. The priests were occupied continually with the Outer Court and the Holy Place, but the High Priest was the only one who could go into the Holy of Holies, and even for him it was just one day out of the year: the Day of atonement. The people never went into the Tabernacle, nor even into the Outer Court. But do you remember what happened in the Temple when the Lord Jesus died? *The Veil in the Temple was torn from top to bottom, and the way into the Holy of Holies, the Holiest of all, was opened so that now we have immediate access, not just one day out of the year, but every day into the very presence of our God. God has made us a kingdom of priests, and we have the unspeakable, the indescribable privilege of entering into the very presence of God. We do have a Priest Who intercedes for us, but He is not a descendant of Aaron or Levi, but of Judah. And, as you all know, He is our Lord Jesus Christ, a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.*

There were five main offerings which the children of Israel brought to the Lord: the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. So the sacrifices that the people of God

brought were not just for the forgiveness of their sins, but also to express their devotion to the Lord, as with the burnt offering, or to express their thanksgiving to the Lord, as with the peace offering, as well as the offerings they brought for sins which they had committed. This is not a complete statement of the purpose of the offerings, but I give this brief explanation to give you a more complete idea of what is involved in maintaining our fellowship with the Lord.

Now let us take our place at the gate of the Outer Court, and examine the significance of the place that Christ has in our daily fellowship with the Lord as His people. We see Christ in the Altar of Burnt Offering, in the Laver, in the Lampstand, in the Show bread, in the Incense, and most gloriously at the Ark of the Covenant.

Let us start with:

I. THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING (Ex. 27:1-8; 38:1-7).

I am starting here to illustrate the progressive picture that we have regarding fellowship in the sacred pieces which were in the Tabernacle. But the Lord started in His description with the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25:10-22), then went to the Table of Showbread (Ex. 25:23-30), and next to the Lampstand (Ex. 25:31-40). The description of the Brazen Altar, or Altar of Burnt Offering, comes in Ex. 27:1-8. Then not until we get to Ex. 30 do we have the description of the Altar of Incense (Ex. 30:1-10), followed by the Laver in Ex. 30:17-21. I am not sure why the Lord gave the instructions in the order that He did except for the fact that He began with the Ark of the Covenant. That was where God's presence was manifested, and so that was obviously the most important part of the Tabernacle.

The Altar of Burnt Offering was the place where the sacrifices were made. The details for each sacrifice are given in the first chapters of the book of Exodus. But we must not fail to see that following the Passover, all of the animal sacrifices were types of the coming sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. As I have said, there was only one Passover because we can only be saved once. *But the significant thing about the Altar of Burnt Offerings is that the same sacrifice by which we were saved, is the sacrifice also by which our fellowship with the Lord is maintained. Our only right to approach God in daily fellowship is through Christ, and Him crucified.*

One of the main reasons we need to approach God daily is for the forgiveness of our sins as believers. It is sin which hinders our fellowship with the Lord. And the Apostle John brought this out in the opening verses of

1 John. **Let me read to you 1 John 1:3-2:2:**

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

CHAPTER 2

1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an

advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Verses 7 and 9 of chapter 1 are important as we think about the Altar of Burnt Offering, but so are the first two verses of chapter 2. And we need to remember, as I have pointed out, that the Altar of Burnt Offering was for more than sin offerings. It gets its name from the offering of dedication to the Lord. But nevertheless we probably are all very careless about the confession of our sins. They need to be confessed as soon as we sin, and it is the same blood of Christ by which we have been saved, that continually cleanses us from sins that we commit as the people of God. How we need a greater sensitiveness to sin, and it is only the Word of God which can give us that.

But let us move on to:

II. THE LAVER (Ex. 30:17-21; 38:8).

The laver was the place where the priests washed their hands and their feet. And so this piece speaks also of the need we have for cleansing from the defilement of sin. What a blessing it would be to us if each morning before we approach God in prayer, we would seek Paul called, “the washing of water by the Word” (Eph. 5:26). Do you remember that the Lord said to His disciples after He had been ministering to them, “Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). And so although the water represents the Word of God, it is Christ ministering the Word to us that brings about our cleansing. The Psalmist asked and answered a very important question in Psa. 119:9 when he wrote,

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word.

Our hands need to be cleansed because they speak of rendering service to God; our feet need cleansing because our walk, our lives, become defiled by the world, our own fleshly nature, and the Devil. Here again we need the cleansing power of the Word. But since we are thinking about “Christ in the Old Testament,” let us remember that Christ is the Key to Scripture, and He is the One Who speaks to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is through the cleansing power of the Word that we are prepared for fellowship with the Lord, and it is through the Word that we are prepared to serve the Lord. The priests would never think of passing by the Altar of Burnt Offering, nor the Laver. They were in the pathway which led to the presence of the Lord.

From the Laver, the priests would enter the Holy Place and they would come to:

III. THE TABLE OF SHOWBREAD (Ex. 25:23-30; 37:10-16).

Both times the Table of Showbread and the Lampstand are mentioned, the Table is mentioned first, and so I will deal with the Table first. As the priest entered the Holy Place, the Table was on his right, and the Lampstand was on his left. Verse 30 of chapter 25 tells us that the priests were to keep the showbread on the Table before the Lord always. It was to be replenished every Sabbath. It was made of unleavened fine flour. And the type points to Christ Who is the Bread of Life, unleavened and without sin. The Unleavened Bread was to be eaten by the priests, which speaks of our feeding upon the Lord Jesus as the Bread of Life. And this is without question one of the major ways in which we follow the path that leads to fellowship with God. Feeding on the Word as it reveals Christ is where we get the spiritual strength that we need to do the will of God, and to become what God wants us to be. In John 6 we have the Lord’s own teaching about Himself as the Bread of Life. Believing Jews would be quick to see the application to our Lord in the Temple ceremonies.

IV. THE LAMPSTAND (Ex. 25:31-40; 37:17-24).

Here again we can easily see how this applies to Christ Who by His own declaration was "the Light of the world." See John 8:12.

This was the only light in the Holy Place. Without the Lampstand, the Holy Place would have been in total darkness. It was the responsibility of the priests to keep the Lampstand burning continually. There were actually seven lamps. The number seven has long been recognized as the number in Scripture which represents completeness, and even perfection. Such is the light that we have in Christ, and in the Word. It is complete. We need no other light. And it is in the light that we see more light, but never any light apart from Christ, nor apart from the Word where Christ is revealed.

It is interesting to me that in both the Bread and the Light we are pointed to Christ and to the Word. Apart from the light that we receive from the Word and from Christ, the world is in total darkness, total ignorance of God and His ways, and without any guidance as to how and where we can find fellowship with God. The oil which was used to provide the light must be typical of the Holy Spirit Who is our Teacher of the Word, and He is the One Who takes the things of Christ and gives us light. The Psalmist said, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple" (Psa. 119:130).

V. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE (Ex. 30:1-10; 37:25-28).

Moving from the Lampstand, the priest would go to the Altar of Incense which stood before the Veil. Heb. 9:2-3 seems to indicate that it was in the Holy of Holies, but that is probably because of the close relationship between the Altar of Incense and the Ark of the Covenant, not because they were both in the Holy of Holies.

The fragrance which was given off by the incense is a type of what Samuel Rutherford called, "The Loveliness of Christ"--and he wrote a delightful little book with that subject. But perhaps the greatest significance in the incense has to do with the attitude that the Father has toward His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Twice while our Lord was here on earth, the Father spoke from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son." This was done after His baptism, and again on the Mount of Transfiguration. After His baptism, the Father added the words, "In whom I am well pleased," or, as it has also been translated, *in Whom I find all My delight*. Think of it! The Father finds not only His greatest delight, but all of His delight, in His Son. The Father saw nothing but absolute perfection in His Son. If the Father found no fault in His Son, then we can be sure that no fault was to be found.

There was special incense provided for the altar of incense. The Altar was to be replenished with incense morning and evening when the priests trimmed the Lampstand. The fragrance was to continue day and night. No greater testimony can be given to our Lord than that which the incense represents.

Years ago I learned that wonderful hymn which speaks of the joy that we can find in the Lord because it follows that if the Father finds His delight in Christ, we need to do that too. The words of the hymn go like this:

Oh, Christ in Thee my soul hath found, and found in Thee alone;
The peace, the joy I sought so long, the bliss 'til now unknown.

Now none but Christ can satisfy, none other name for me;
There's love and life and lasting joy, Lord Jesus, found in Thee.

When we read in Scripture of how the Father delighted in the Son, we need to realize that the Lord Jesus can

bring the same kind of joy to our needy hearts. Man is continually looking for that which will bring him lasting joy, but all of the things in this world which seem to promise so much, finally make us realize that they can never satisfy. Money, pleasure, success, friends--anything or anyone that people may seek, can never satisfy. Only Christ can satisfy. Let us ask our heavenly Father to show us more and more of the loveliness of Christ. When we see Him as He is revealed in the Word, we would want nothing more, nor anything less, nor anything or anyone else.

Finally, we come to:

V. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT (Ex. 25:10-22; 37:1-9).

This was where God started in His description of the whole Tabernacle. This was the part that suggested the whole purpose of the Tabernacle. Listen to these words from Ex. 25:8: **“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”** This was why the Lord wanted the Tabernacle built. Already in their journey from Egypt the people had rebelled against the Lord, and complained about almost everything, and yet the Lord wanted a place, not where He could visit them occasionally, but where He could “dwell” with them, make His home on earth with them.

And then notice what the Lord said in verse 22 of Ex. 25:

And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

These words were spoken to Moses, but they applied to the whole nation. In spite of their rebellion and unbelief, God had not changed His purpose for them. He had not given up on them. And he wanted them to realize that their safety, their joy, their provisions, were all in His hands, and that He would lead them, protect them, and meet their every need. If they only would realize their need of Him, their lives would be completely different.

One of the verses that we are learning this week from our book on *The Attributes of God*, is Heb. 13:5, “Let your conversation be without covetousness...” How wonderful it would be if we could only learn how great our God is, how He loves us, and simply wants us to trust Him every day for every need.

Concl: We have just touched on the wonderful truths that point to Christ in the Tabernacle. May the Lord bring all of us again and again to this part of the Word of God so that our thoughts can be focused again upon our Lord, and so we can find how God delights in us, but so we can find that our sufficiency really is in Him.

“Christ in the Old Testament”
Lesson 14
Three Aspects of Christ’s Work on the Cross
as Seen in OT Types
January 28, 1997

Intro: It is impossible to limit the Old Testament revelations of Christ’s work on the Cross, but today I want to take up three OT types which give us three different lessons, aspects, or views of the work that our Lord would accomplish when He died on the Cross. The more we study the work of Christ, the more we realize that it is really impossible to exhaust the meaning of Christ’s death. But the more we learn of what He did accomplish, the more we will find ourselves “lost in wonder, love, and praise.” That the Lord should do what He did for us, is the most amazing fact in all of human history.

The three types which we will consider together in this lesson are:

- 1) The Smitten Rock--which will take us to two passages of Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7; Num. 20:1-13.
- 2) The Sacrifice of the Two Goats on the Day of Atonement: Leviticus 16:1-2, 5-10, 15-22.
- 3) The Brazen Serpent (Num. 21:4-9).

First, let us consider:

I. THE SMITTEN ROCK (Ex. 17:1-7; Num. 20:1-13).

We probably all are acquainted with these two stories, both of which point to Christ, but they are especially full of meaning when we consider them together. Let me read the Exodus passage first, and then we will consider what we can learn from it, and then go onto the verses in Numbers 20.

A. Exodus 17:1-7. (Read.)

We need to remember as we think of the journey that the children of Israel took from Egypt to Canaan, that they were traveling through desert country. The KJV uses the word “wilderness” (as you can see in Ex. 17:1), but actually it was desert. The Hebrew word can be translated either way, but *desert* is the correct translation here. Therefore, because they were traveling through desert country, the need for water was one of the greatest needs that the people had. Think of how much water it would take to meet the needs of a million and a half up to two million people.

At this point in their journey (when we come to Exodus 17), the Lord had already provided for them in two different ways. And we read about both of them in Ex. 15:23-27. In the first instance the Lord purified water for them which had not been fit to drink, and in the second He brought them to Elim where we read in Ex. 15:27 that there were “twelve wells of water.” Sometime the Lord provided in the same way, as He did with the manna and quail each day, but at other times, as in their need for water, He provided in different ways. God often varies the method He uses so we will not be inclined to look at the method, but will keep our eyes upon Him as the One Who provides for us.

As they went on in their journey they came to Rephidim, and we are told that “there was no water for the people to drink.” And so the people began to “chide with Moses.” They complain and criticized him for their lack of water. And the tension became so great between Moses and the people that they were ready to stone him. So you can see that this was a very dangerous situation for Moses to be in. And so Moses did the only thing that he could do, and he would do it again and again throughout their journey: he “cried unto the Lord.” See verse 4. He was desperate!

Then it was that the Lord said a very strange thing to Moses. He told him to take the rod which had been used to open the Red Sea, and he was to strike the rock, with the promise that water would come out of the rock.

I think that we must understand that the Lord was not speaking about a bolder on the ground, but that He was speaking about a rocky cliff where there was no evidence of water at all.

We all should know that *a rock* is commonly used in the OT as a title, or even as a Name of God. Let me read some verses which speak of the Lord as a Rock.

In the song which **Moses** taught the children of Israel to sing, several times he spoke of the Lord as their Rock. One such verse is Deut. 32:4:

He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

This seems to have been a favorite title for God which **David** used. This is what he said in Psa. 18:31: "For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?" And then at the beginning of Psalm 28, David said this:

Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit (Psa. 28:1).

Even in those familiar words found in Isa. 26:3-4 **Isaiah** used the word *rock*, but there it is translated "strength"

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.

And then in Isa. 48:21 we even find this word about what happened in the passage that we are speaking about:

And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

But the confirmation that the Rock was a type of Christ is in 1 Cor 10:1-4. See esp. v. 4.
So God, Who was making a Name for Himself in those days, is still to us today a Rock--our Defender, our Strength, and the One Who in most unusual ways meets our needs.

But it is important to notice, too, that when Isaiah spoke of our Lord as One Who was *smitten*, He used the very word which God used with Moses when He told him to "smite" the rock. Listen to these words which speak prophetically of our Lord:

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting (Isa. 50:6).

And then we all remember Isa. 53:4-5:

4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

So there are many verses which tie our passage in Exodus 17 to our Lord Jesus Christ.

But let us not overlook the water. This we can link with John 4:10 where we read these words about water. Our Lord was speaking to the Samaritan woman about water. He had asked her for a drink. She was surprised that He, a Jew, would ask her, a Samaritan woman, for a drink. But then the Lord said this:

Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

He was speaking, of course, of salvation. And how was that salvation to be provided, that living water? It was through the smiting which our Lord received as He died on the Cross. And then the Lord went on to explain to

the woman of Samaria when she wanted to know where He would get that living water. This is what He said:
 13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:
 14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:13-14).

So in that wonderful provision of water which the Lord made for the children of Israel, we have a picture of the Cross and how through the death, the smiting, of our Lord Jesus Christ, you and I have been made to drink of that living water.

But now let us go on to the second passage where the Lord provided water out of a rock:

B. Numbers 20:1-13. (Again, read.)

In this passage the children of Israel were farther along in their journey. They had come to Kadesh Barnea. And again they were in need of water. And again they murmured against Moses and Aaron. And again Moses and Aaron prayed, falling on their faces before God. And again the Lord told Moses to take the rod, but instead of striking the rock, he was only to "speak" to the rock in the presence of all of the people.

However, Moses was very angry with the people. And so instead of *speaking* to the rock, he struck it as he had before, not once, but twice. Water came for the people, but the Lord was very displeased with Moses for what he had done. The Lord charged him with unbelief and refusing to glorify Him before the people. Moses' penalty was that he would not be allowed to lead the children of Israel into the promised land.

Now to us that seems like a very severe penalty, but it teaches us two things:

- 1) It teaches us how seriously the Lord considers disobedience in any of us, but that is especially true of one who is a leader.
- But secondly, and equally important,
- 2) Moses was penalized as severely as he was because he broke the type that this incident was to provide for all time to come. The smiting of the rock pictured the death of our Lord on Calvary by which the Father has provided living water for His people. But He only had to die *once!* *And we can only be saved once. After we are saved, we come to Him in prayer. We speak to Him, and it is through answering our prayers that the Lord continued to provide for us that wonderful, living water.* So Moses marred the picture that the Lord wanted us to have, and so the penalty that he suffered was severe.

The Gospel is very precious to God, and He has always been careful in the way He has illustrated the message of salvation as well as the truth about our relationship with Him after we are saved. So let us remember the lessons. The Lord needed only to be smitten in death *once!* And that death was sufficient for us for all eternity. But when we come to Him after we are saved to drink of that living water, we only need to pray, and the supply will be made.

But now let us go on to a second picture of what our Lord accomplished by His death on the Cross. And now we go to Leviticus 16 and what the Lord told Moses about:

II. THE SACRIFICE OF THE TWO GOATS ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (Lev. 16:1-2, 5-10, 15-22).

This chapter has to do with how the children of Israel were to observe the Day of Atonement which came only once every year on the tenth day of the seventh month. This was the one day in the year that the high priest

could enter into the Holy of Holies, or, as it is called in this chapter, "the holy place." The high priest could not go in without offering sacrifices for Himself, a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering--both of which were types of Christ (as were all of the animal sacrifices). But the part that I want to emphasize with you today has to do with the two goats which the high priest offered for the people.

We read in Lev. 16, beginning with verse 5, that the children of Israel were to bring two goats. Lots were to be cast, and one goat was for the Lord, and the other was called a scapegoat. The Hebrew word brought over into English is *Azazel*. Its etymology has been discussed and discussed by grammarians without any consensus as to what the word means. So it is really this chapter which gives it its meaning as far as Scripture is concerned. The dictionary defines a *scapegoat* as one who takes the blame for what someone else has done--and that is an excellent picture of what our Lord did when He died on the Cross. Isaiah 53:5-6 say,

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

But the question we must face in this passage is, Why two goats?

It is true that we have two goats, but be sure to notice that only one was sacrificed--so the picture of Calvary is preserved. But we must still ask, Why two?

The picture would have been most perfect if it had been possible to raise the first goat back to life again. But since that was not possible, two goats were used, one to represent Christ in His death; the other to represent Christ in His resurrection. And since the high priest was to confess the sins of the people as he placed his hands on the head of the live goat, he was in that act transferring the sins of the people to the goat, and the goat then carried the sins away--the thought being that they would no longer be charged against the people.

The book of Hebrews is really a commentary on this aspect of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins, yet they pictured the fact that some day an offering would be made that would forever settle the question of the guilt and penalty of sin. Hebrews 9:26b tells us that "now once in the end of the age hath he (Christ) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Even David anticipated this when he wrote in Psa. 103:12, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." And the writer of Hebrews said in chapter 10, verse 17, citing Jer. 31:34, "And their sins and iniquities by the sacrifice of Himself. Cf. also Rom 4:23-25."

So the two goats which were offered on the Day of Atonement every year, which could not take away sin in and of themselves, pictured the coming Redeemer Who would die in our place, be raised from the dead, and picture for us that as our Scapegoat our penalty would fall upon Him, and He would carry them away where we will never see them again. What a wonderful Savior, and what a wonderful salvation--and He was ^{the} innocent victim Who died and rose again for our redemption.

Now we come finally to:

III. THE BRAZEN SERPENT (Num. 21:4-9). (Again, let us read.)

Again we have the children of Israel complaining. In Numbers 13 and 14 we learn how the children of Israel had refused to go into the land from Kadesh Barnea, and so the Lord said that that whole generation would not enter the land. Here in chapter 21 they are "much discouraged because of the way." They were tired of the

desert, and tired of the manna that the Lord had so faithfully continued to give to them. In fact, they said, "Our soul loatheth this light bread." They were not only rebelling against Moses, but against God as well. And so the Lord judged them with "fiery serpents." They were called fiery for two reasons: 1) they were poisonous; and 2) their bite gave the people a burning sensation before they died. And many of them were dying. Cf. 1 Cor. 10:9.

Because of the severity of the judgment, and because the people could not see how they could survive such a judgment, they came to Moses confessing their sins and asking him to pray that the Lord would take away the serpents.

Moses prayed, but the Lord did not take away the serpents. Instead, he instructed Moses to make "a fiery serpent, set it upon a pole, and then tell the people that when they are bitten, all they have to do is to look at the serpent on the pole, made of brass to represent the fiery character of the serpents, and whoever would look would be healed and not die.

On the authority of the Lord Jesus Himself we know that the Brazen Serpent represented Him. I am sure that you will remember that the Lord said to Nicodemus. His words are recorded for us in John 3:14-15, and this leads into verses 16 and 17 and 18:

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Our Lord defined the looking which the children of Israel did as *believing*! It was a look of faith. The people were healed as they believed what Moses told them, and then did what he told them to do. And all who looked were saved.

This ought to remind us of that verse in Isa. 45:22 where the Lord said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." The Gospel is so simple. Just by looking in faith to Christ we are saved. And when the Lord said, "For I am God, and there is none else," He was emphasizing that there are not many ways of salvation. There are not even two ways of salvation. And that is pictured in the type we have in the brazen serpent. There was only one way that they could escape death, and that was by looking at the serpent which was lifted up on a pole.

But there is one other thing I must mention about the serpent. I can understand how a lamb or a goat or even a bullock could be made to represent our Lord. But a serpent? The serpent has been identified with Satan from chapter 3 of Genesis on. How could a serpent be a fitting representative of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ?

The Apostle Paul has given us our answer in Gal. 3:13:

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Do you think it was easy for our Lord to become a curse for us, to be our Scapegoat, to be our Smitten Rock? Was it easy for the sinless, holy, eternal Son of God to become a Man, to be charged not only by men but also by God, with sins which He did not commit? Was it easy for Him to be made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him? What about Isaiah's word that God made the soul of His

Son “an offering for sin.” God laid upon His beloved Son the sins of all who will ever be saved. And He so completely paid the penalty which we deserved, and fully satisfied His righteous Father, that there is nothing left for us to pay even if such a thing were possible.

All of these Scriptures which tell us what our Lord had to do in order to save us from our sins, are illustrated by the brazen serpent which Moses made, and erected on that pole, just as our Lord died as a curse for us when He died on that Cross on Calvary.

Concl: How full of praise and humility our hearts should be as we look at these three pictures of what our Lord accomplished when He died on the Cross! He has given us living water--and we will never need to look elsewhere for one to meet our need before God. Drinking the living water we will never thirst again. And the Lord is our Scapegoat Who not only died for our sins, but He has taken them away. We will never see them again. They will never be brought up even when we stand before the Lord. And He is our Brazen Serpent. I hesitate to use the word *serpent* to describe our Lord. And I wouldn't use it if it were not in Scripture. But, oh, what love would cause the Father to send His Son, and what love would make His Son willing to come, that He might bear the full curse of the law and the penalty we should have borne for our sins. Whatever else we thank the Lord for each day we live, we need to thank Him “without ceasing” for our precious Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Christ in the Old Testament"
Lesson 15
Prophecies of Christ in the Pentateuch
February 11, 1997

Intro: In our studies thus far we have seen something of Christ's appearances in the OT as Creator, as a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, as the Angel of the Lord, and in other Theophanies. We have also seen the Lord as He was revealed in certain types--as in Joseph, the Passover, the Manna and the Quail, in the Tabernacle, and in the three types we had last week: the Rock, the Scapegoat, and the Brazen Serpent. I hope that we will never read of these great themes of the OT without remembering how they speak to us of Christ.

We could look more deeply into other types, but today I want to get into one of the greatest of all OT subjects which have to do with Christ, and that is *Prophecies of Christ*. We have already touched upon this pre-eminently important truth when we considered our Lord Jesus Christ as *the seed of the woman* in Gen. 3:15. And then you will remember, I hope, that we had one lesson on the Genealogy of our Lord. In that we saw that the Old Testament is a history of the family of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. Beginning with Adam, continuing through Seth, and then on down to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and from Jacob through Judah. So we can't get very far into a study of Christ in the OT before we find ourselves involved with *prophecies of Christ*. However, today I want us to get more involved in this prophecies, and to get a good foundation, we will begin with the books of the Pentateuch, and later get into more prophecies in the other books of the OT.

And so, to begin, we will confine ourselves to the first five books of the OT, and I want to begin with:

I. THE PROPHECY OF NOAH (Gen. 9:18-27).

First, it will be good for us to be clear on the meaning of the word *prophecy*. We have covered this subject in our Tuesday Class before, but a review should be good for all of us.

A prophet was both a forthteller and a foreteller. As a forthteller he was one who proclaimed the message of God, one who *told forth* the Word. In other words, a preacher. But he was also a foreteller, one who as an instrument in the hand of God was able to predict future events. I like what J. L. Dagg, an nineteenth century Baptist theologian, said in describing a prophet. He said that a prophet was one who made declarations which required superhuman knowledge. He wrote this in his *Manual of Theology and Church Order*, p. 209. Now no man could do this apart from a revelation from God. They did not speak on their own. They received their message from God, and proclaimed it, and sometimes wrote it. In the Bible we have prophets who only proclaimed the message of God, like Elijah and Elisha. Others preached and wrote, like Isaiah. But they were all prophets.

We do not have prophets today such as I have just described. We have men who proclaim the Word, but our message is limited to the written Word of God. Anyone who goes beyond what is written in the Bible, and yet claims that it is from God, is a false prophet. Those who claim to predict the future, or to tell people their personal fortunes for the future, as also false prophets. There are always impostors around, and so it is very important that we understand what we are talking about, and what the Scriptures are talking about, when they speak of a prophet, or of prophecy.

When we come to Noah we know from the NT that he was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5). None of his messages is recorded for us. He is never called a prophet in the OT, but at least on one occasion he was used by God to give us a prophecy which definitely had to do with our Lord Jesus Christ. And we find his

prediction in Gen. 9:18-27. Please turn to that passage, and I will read it to you. (Read.)

The events described in this passage took place after the flood. Before the flood Noah had spent many years building the ark, but after the flood he planted a vineyard, raised grapes, and made wine. One day he drank so much wine that he became drunk, and was apparently unconscious in his tent. Let me say in his defense that the beginning of rain and changes which took place in the atmosphere as a result of rain (which was unknown before the flood) evidently caused problems resulting from fermentation which had not existed before. Anyway, he was uncovered in his tent, and Ham "saw the nakedness of his father." We do not know exactly what took place, but what Ham did must have been very serious for Noah to pronounce such a severe judgment upon his son. There is no indication that the Spirit of God suddenly came upon Noah, directing him to say what he said, but that is what happened. He predicted that Canaan whom you can see from Gen. 10:6 was a son of Ham, would be "a servant of servants"—that is, the lowest of all servants. On the other hand, according to Gen. 9:26, *special blessing was placed upon Shem!* Canaan would be his servant. And even Japheth, although he had not been involved in Ham's sin, would "dwell in the tents of Shem." This meant that the order of the prominence of the three sons was, Shem first, Japheth second, and Ham third and last.

Noah could not have possibly known how the future would go if God in this instance had not enabled him to speak *prophetically*. As Dr. Dagg said in the quotation I gave you a few moments ago, Noah made a declaration which required superhuman knowledge." It was the Lord Who enabled Noah to predict what would happen.

How much Noah understood about what he said, we do not know. But what he was doing was to predict from what branch of his family Christ would come. Abraham was a descendant of Noah through Shem. And Moses, in writing the book of Genesis, made that clear in what in our Bibles is chapters 10 and 11 of Genesis.

So this was a prophecy which very much involved the coming of the Messiah, God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now let us go on to:

II. THE LORD'S PROPHECY TO ABRAHAM CONCERNING OUR LORD (Gen. 12:1-3).

In this case God did not use a human prophet; He spoke as a Prophet Himself. When we first read this we might think of it just as it applied to Abraham's natural descendants, the nation of Israel. But as we go on in the Scriptures we find that in these three verses there is a statement which was to be of paramount importance concerning our Lord Jesus and the salvation He came to provide for us.

God called Abram (as he was known then) to leave his home in Ur of the Chaldees to go to a land that the Lord would show him later and give to him and to his descendants. God would make of him a mighty nation, and in him, not only his descendants, but all of the families of the earth were to be blessed. In Abraham we come to one who was to occupy one of the most important places of anyone in all of Scripture—with the one exception of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the part that we need to understand here is, what did the Lord mean when He said, "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"?

The answer becomes apparent as we continue reading in the Bible, but, lest we miss it, the Holy Spirit had the Apostle Paul explain it when he wrote to the churches of Galatia. Let me read to you Gal. 3:8, and you can turn to it if you like.

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed (Gal. 3:8).

The Lord told Abraham in making this promise that He was, through His Son, making provision for the salvation of sinners for all of the nations of the earth. And to prove that the Lord had His Son in mind when He made this promise, the Apostle Paul added in the sixteenth verse of this same chapter, the following words:

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ (Gal. 3:16).

So it is very clear that the Lord God was speaking to Abraham about Christ. And it seems that Abraham understood what the Lord was saying because in Gen. 15:6 when Abraham was particularly discouraged because the Lord had not yet given him a son, the Lord confirmed his promise that Abraham would have a son. And then He took Abraham out in the night and asked him if he could count the stars. Of course, that was impossible for Abraham to do. And then the Lord said, "So shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15:5b). And immediately following we have these words:

And he [Abraham] believed God; and He [God] counted it to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6).

This is a key statement for the whole doctrine of salvation as it is taught in the NT. Abraham was not saved just because God was going to make from him a great nation. He believed that his spiritual seed would be as numerous as the stars. And because he believed the Gospel, it was counted to him for righteousness.

So you can see that Abraham's life and his hope were based upon God's promise to him that a Redeemer would come from his descendants.

The context always determines the meaning of the term, "seed." Sometimes it refers to Abraham's natural descendants, the nation Israel. Sometimes it refers to Abraham's spiritual seed, the believers of all ages, taken from Israel as well as the Gentiles. And sometimes, as in Gal. 3:16, it refers to Christ. And this latter was the case in Gen. 22:18 when the Lord said to him, "And in thy seed [Christ] shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Now let me take you to a third important prophecy, still in the book of Genesis, which has to do with our Lord Jesus Christ.

III. THE PROPHECY OF JACOB (Gen. 49:8-10).

This prophecy concerned Judah. He was the fourth son of Leah. See Gen. 29:35. And his name meant *praise*. It seems providential that Leah would give him such a name. But her heart was full of praise to the Lord because the Lord had given her four sons, and she took that as clear evidence of the Lord's blessing upon her, as it was.

Notice in Genesis 49:1 what Jacob said to his sons as he gathered them together just before he died (see the last verse of the chapter). He was speaking as a prophet--not in his own wisdom, but by revelation from God. And when we get down to verse 8 we see what he said to Judah.

Clearly, according to verse 8, the blessing, the chief blessing, was to be upon Judah. His brothers would not only praise him, but bow down before him. As was often the case prophecies were made concerning a man's descendants but spoken as though they applied to him alone. The same superiority would be his over his enemies. Our Lord would be the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Hengstenberg brought out in his book entitled, *Christology of the Old Testament*, that the form of the verb used in the first part of verse 8 is most always used for *praise to Deity*. That being the case, we have reason to believe

what I have just mentioned, that Jacob was speaking to Judah, but he had in mind Judah's greatest Son, our Lord, for Whom and to Whom his brothers and their descendants would praise.

Verse 9 in Gen. 49 is very interesting in the light of what we have in Rev. 5:5-6:

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Here for the first time our Lord is likened to a lion--a lion who has gotten his prey, Who has grown from a Whelp to an "old lion," Whom no one can disturb. The picture here is of conquest which ultimately results in peace. The Lord conquered the Devil by His death on the Cross. He conquered sin by the shedding of His blood. His is the complete and ultimate Victor, and, as a result of His work, peace shall reign.

The picture of victory is continued in verse 10. Here our Lord is presented as a King--which He most certainly will be! Not only Israel, but the whole world awaits the coming of the One Who is to reign. And that hope will not die. It remains today even though it seems farther than ever from ever being realized. Shiloh is a title of Messiah. Its meaning in Hebrew is uncertain, but the Greek translation of the Old Testament (LXX) translates it as *until that which is His shall come*. "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." This word gathering suggests submission and obedience to the King. But the word suggests that it will not be a fearful or enforced obedience, but one that is prompted by holiness and godliness.

The last two verses in the prophecy concerning Judah and ultimately our Lord, show the great prosperity which will ultimately follow the reign of the Messiah, and the blessing which will follow throughout eternity. It is expressed in terms of earthly prosperity, but it only symbolizes the total blessing and peace which will result from the victory that our Lord will establish in every way. We know that ultimately there will be a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness alone will dwell. What a glorious day that will be!

So, through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, Jacob was able to look beyond even where we are today to see the ultimate blessing that will come through the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we come to:

IV. THE PROPHECY OF BALAAM (Num. 24:17-19).

The story of Balaam is one of the strange stories of Scripture. As the children of Israel were approaching the promised land, Balak, the king of Moab, and his people became very worried about what was going to happen to them. And so they sent for Balaam to come to curse the people of God. When Balaam initially asked God if he should go with the messengers from Balak, the Lord said in so many words, "No." The messengers returned disappointed. But it was such a dangerous situation that Balak sent princes the second time, more in number than the messengers who had gone the first time, and, of course, they would have exercised greater influence because they were princes. This time God said that he could go, but Balaam would only be allowed to do what the Lord wanted him to do.

When Balak took Balaam where he could overlook the camp of Israel and see how many of them, three times Balak asked him to curse the people of God, but three times Balak blessed them. Balak, of course, was not only disappointed, but he became very angry with Balaam. Balaam, however, told Balak the words we find in Numbers chapter 24, verses 10 and 11. (Read.) Balaam responded by telling Balak what he had told him before. See verses

12-14. Just before Moses death, he had this to say about Balaam and the Moabites::

3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:

4 Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

5 Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.

6 Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever (Deut. 23:3-6).

In Num. 31:7-8 we read about the death of Balaam, and then in the sixteenth verse of that same chapter we read about the reason for Balaam's death. And yet, as amazing as it seems to us, God used this "heathen diviner," as Unger called him in his dictionary, to give us one of the great prophecies of the Messiah which we find in the OT. We find it beginning with Num. 24:15 and going down through verse 19, which was just after Balaam had blessed the children of Israel for the third time. And by the way, the fact that God used Balaam to speak prophetically about the Messiah, shows us that being a prophet does not prove that he was a true man of God. In the case of Balaam, he was not a man of God, but a heathen who never knew God even though God and Balaam communicated with each other. (Read Num. 24:15-19.)

The prophecy would certainly indicate that Balak was doing the wrong thing by trying to destroy Israel. As is common in Messianic prophecies (and other prophecies in general), the Lord did not indicate to Balaam any time when this prophecy would be fulfilled--just that it would be. The star which led the wise men to Bethlehem may be indicated in a secondary way by the reference to a "Star" in Num. 24:17, but the primary meaning is that this is a Messianic title. Henstenberg pointed out in one of his writings, quoted by Keil and Delitzsch (*Pentateuch*, Vol. III, p. 192) that a star has long been recognized by many nations as "an image and symbol of imperial greatness and splendour," and it is very likely that Balak understood that this was the meaning.

The word "Sceptre" which is also here a Messianic title, would serve to emphasize the fact that Balaam was speaking of a king. And the royal character of this Person is further emphasized in verse 19. He shall come "out of Jacob," not just the Israel, but a descendant of the man, Jacob, and "he...shall have dominion." The emphasis is upon the nations near Israel which have been enemies of Israel, but the greater application is to all of the nations of the earth.

In our study of the appearance of a strange Priest and King, Melchizedek, we learned that our Lord would be "a priest after the order of Melchizedek; here, in the prophecy of Balaam, we learn that our Lord, the Messiah, would also be a king. And this would tend to confirm what we learned about Melchizedek because he was, as I have mentioned, a King.

Now we are ready to go on to a fifth and last prophecy in the Pentateuch concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. And this one is:

V. THE PROPHECY OF MOSES (Deut. 18:15-19).

Let me read these verses to you. (Read.)

This prophecy tells us that the Messiah will be a Prophet. And so, before we leave the Pentateuch, we will have learned that the Messiah will occupy three roles: that of a Prophet, that of a Priest, and that of a King. It has been suggested by many that when the Lord came the first time He exercised His ministry as a Prophet. In His praying while He was here on earth, and especially in His death, He was a Priest. But at the present time He continues to

exercise His priestly ministry at the Father's right hand where He now lives to intercede for us. But the day is still future when He will come as King. There is no question but that our Lord rules now, and always has ruled, as the Sovereign of the universe. But the prophecies having to do with His future role on the earth requires that He will actually assume the role of a King and rule over the nations of the earth as the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords. Then He will put down all lesser authorities, and He will be the Supreme Ruler of the earth, on the earth. But we are interested at the moment in Moses' prophecy when he predicted that the Lord, the Messiah, would be a Prophet.

Moses said twice in his prophecy that the Lord God would raise up a prophet from among them (that is, He would be a Jew), and that He would be like Moses. So we can see from this that Moses was a type of Christ, especially in his prophetic ministry. Some expositors have related this prophecy to Joshua, but Joshua never attained the position that Moses had as a prophet of God. From the standpoint of space occupied in Scripture by the writings of Moses, no other prophet surpassed him. Primarily the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy give us the record of Moses' prophetic ministry. And, as the writer of Hebrews tells us, Moses was faithful in the ministry which the Lord gave to him. Cf. Heb. 3:1-6. But as great as Moses was, the Lord Jesus Christ was greater!

It is certain that our Lord was speaking of this passage in Deut. 18 (as well as of others things which Moses wrote) when He spoke the words which we find in John 5:46: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."

Think of these words of our Lord Jesus Christ in connection with His prophetic ministry:

14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him (John 7:14-18).

The Lord Jesus was speaking here as a Prophet.

See also John 8:26:

I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

These are the words of One Who considered Himself to be a Prophet of God.

But notice what else Moses in his prophecy had to say about the Lord. Moses indicated that it would be extremely important to hear this Prophet Who was to come. According to Deut. 18:19, failure to obey the Prophet to come would result in the worst possible consequences.

All of the words which the Lord spoke while He was here on earth, He spoke as that Prophet which Moses spoke about in Deut. 18:15, 18. The prophetic ministry testifies to the fact that God has spoken. That is true all through the OT. But there never has been a greater Prophet than our Lord. To reject Him and His words is to reject God and His words, because our Lord spoke the words of God.

Concl: So in all of these prophecies in the Pentateuch we have prophecies that the Messiah would come from the family of Shem, He would come to bring salvation by faith to all of the nations of the earth, that He would be of the tribe of Judah, that He would be not only a Priest, as we have seen, but would also be a King and a

Prophet. What a great foundation this gives us for the study of "Christ in the Old Testament." It is very clear that among all of the sons of men there never has been, and there never will be, one who is greater than our Lord Jesus Christ. And the most foolish thing that anyone can possibly do is to ignore His words. But the wisest thing that anyone can do is to listen to what our Lord had to say, to believe His words, and to trust Him Who is the only Savior. He came not only to give us life, but to give us abundant life.

“Christ in the Old Testament”

Lesson 16

Joshua and Christ

February 18, 1997

Intro: In pursuing our studies of “Christ in the Old Testament” we have spent 15 weeks in the books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. We have seen personal appearances of God which, as I pointed out in the beginning, in the light of John 1:18, have to be Christ. Let me read that verse for you again -- John 1:18:

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

Without any question Christ is the One Who revealed God in the NT, and He is also the One Who revealed God in the OT. “Declared” means just that--He has made the Father known. The Greek word which is translated “declared,” is the word from which we get our English words *exegete* and *exegesis*. An *exegete* is one who expounds, or explains, the Scriptures. He is an interpreter of the Word of God. So to say that the Lord Jesus “declared” God, means that He interprets, reveals, explains to us Who God is and what He is like. And our Lord’s interpretation of the Father is so accurate that for Him to come is just exactly what it would mean if God the Father Himself had come. And this is just what the Apostle John had said a few verses before John 1:18 when in John 1:14 he said this:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

God’s glory is God. And so John said that in seeing the glory of Christ, they saw the glory of the Father, the glory of God Himself.

It is important to keep all of this in mind as we read the Scriptures--both the OT as well as the NT. To be sure, we do not have the full revelation of either Christ or God. But we have enough in the Word, as it tells us of Christ, to know the nature of God’s glory and His greatness.

Today I want to move on to the book of Joshua. And the first thing to mention has to do with:

I. JOSHUA’S NAME. CF. NUM. 11:28-29; 13:8,16.

In all, it seems that there are *five men* mentioned in Scripture who had the name *Joshua*. They are, according to Unger’s Bible Dictionary,

- 1) The Joshua we will be considering in this lesson, the one who assisted Moses in his work, and then who succeeded Moses as the leader of the children of Israel during the conquest of Canaan.
- 2) It was into property owned by Joshua, a Bethshemite, that the cattle came with the cart on which the Philistines had placed the ark of the covenant to return it to Israel. Cf. 1 Sam. 6:14, 18.
- 3) Then at the time that King Josiah made all the reforms that he did during his reign, there was a man by the name of Joshua who was then the governor of Jerusalem--probably amounting to what we would call the mayor. See 2 Kings 23:8.
- 4) All who have read the prophecy of Zechariah are familiar with Joshua the high priest. We read about him in Haggai :1:1, 12, 14 and Zech. 3:1-10.
- 5) The last Joshua is not mentioned in the OT, but he is mentioned in Luke 3:29, but his name in the KJV is spelled as Jose. But the NASB and the NIV both render his name as *Joshua*.

It helps to know all of these so as not to get these men confused with each other. Undoubtedly there were many, many more throughout the OT period because Joshua was a very common name. But the part that is important for us in our study is to know that Joshua in Hebrew is the equivalent of Jesus in Greek. So Joshua, Moses’ successor, bore the very name that the Lord Jesus was given even before His birth. And we are told why our

Lord was given that Name when the angel announced to Joseph that Mary's child was not illegitimate, but had been conceived in her by the Holy Spirit. This is what the angel said:

20 ...Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:20b-21).

And then Matthew went on to explain the naming of our Lord with these words:

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Matt. 1:22-23).

So by this explanation we see that the idea of Deity is in the Name, Jesus.

Mary was told a very similar thing when the angel announced to her that she was to have a child:

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS (Luke 1:30-31).

When Mary wanted to know how she could have a child when she didn't have a husband, this is the answer that the angel gave to her:

The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

So, although the name *Jesus* was not used, clearly her Son was to be Deity--"the Son of God."

But what does *Joshua* mean? It means, *Jehovah is salvation*, or simply, *Jehovah saves*.

What does *Jesus* mean? It means the same thing: *Jehovah is salvation*, or, *Jehovah saves*. This was our Lord's personal Name, and it means more than that Jehovah saves, it means that Jehovah is Himself the Savior, and the naming of our Lord by this Name indicates very clearly that which can be proven from the OT, that our Lord has a right to the Name of Jehovah.

We don't know what caused Joshua's parents to give him this name, but it is very likely that it was an expression of their own faith that God was going to provide salvation for His people, Israel. Obviously Joshua was born in Egypt, and so his parents who were strangers in a foreign country probably were among those who anticipated the coming of the Messiah, the Redeemer.

Now, from what we learn about Joshua in the book which bears his name, we can most certainly say that:

II. JOSHUA IS A TYPE OF CHRIST.

You remember, I am sure, that because Moses struck the rock when the Lord told him just to speak to the rock, that God judged him by telling him that he would not lead the children of Israel into the land. But Joshua was to take his place. We see in this a suggestion of the statement which the Apostle John made in chapter 1 of his Gospel: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

Another verse which would apply here is Heb. 7:19,

For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

There are many Bible teachers who liken the children of Israel's entrance into Canaan as being typical of our

going to heaven. But there was warfare in Canaan, and there was sin in Canaan, and there were unbelievers in Canaan. And so it does not seem that it is right to call Canaan even a type of heaven. Instead it seems more likely to say that it is typical of our entering into the fulness of God's blessings in salvation following the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Moses, although in many respects typified our Lord, yet his name is inseparably linked to the Law. The Law was given to Moses, but "the law made nothing perfect." The Law was not sufficient for our salvation. If it had been, then salvation would have been by works. The Law had its purpose, but it was not to save. It showed the need for a Savior, but did not provide salvation. It was through the "better hope" that we have in Jesus Christ. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." This does not mean that there was no grace in the OT. Grace was manifested by God from the Garden of Eden on down to Christ. But Jesus Christ was the personification of grace. We do not deserve His coming. We did not ask for His coming. The reason God provided for our salvation is not to be found in us. It is to be found in God, and in Christ. It is because of God's grace manifested in Christ, and because as the "truth" Christ came in fulfillment of all of the types and prophecies which, as William Hendriksen said, "Christ...furnished." Not just "grace," and not just "truth," but "grace and truth." We have both in Christ.

It was surely providential that Moses' assistant was named *Joshua*, and that he became Moses' successors. The Law never saved one sinner from his sin. It is only through Christ that our sins are removed, and it is only through Christ that we have all of the blessings of salvation. Our Canaan today is a place of struggle and conflict, sometimes of defeat, but with Christ as our Savior our ultimate victory is guaranteed. Even Canaan was an imperfect picture of the blessings we enjoy today in our Lord Jesus Christ. Our present blessings were remembered in the praise with which the Apostle Paul began the book of Ephesians. Listen to Eph. 1:3:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Now I want to take you to one passage in the book of Joshua in which we see Christ in another way--with Joshua as the "captain of the host of the Lord." So we are seeing Christ in the book of Joshua in two ways: 1) in Joshua Himself, and the place he had in leading Israel into the promised land, and 2) when our Lord appeared to Joshua as a Man, the "captain of the host of the Lord." So we can add this appearance of our Lord to all of the others that we have seen in the books of Moses. And so let me call this point:

III. THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST TO JOSHUA AS THE "CAPTAIN OF THE HOST OF THE LORD" (Joshua 5-6).

When we get to chapter 5 in Joshua, the children of Israel have passed over the Jordan and are in the land of Canaan. They have yet to conquer their first city. There were many struggles and trials and even failures ahead of them. But this moment was a time of great encouragement and blessing. Even before the Israelites had gotten into the land, the report of what God had done for them had preceded them. And Rahab expressed to the spies who had come to her how the people of the land felt. You see her words in Joshua 2:8-13. (Read.)

When we come to chapter 5 the first thing we learn is the reaction of the Canaanites to the crossing of the Jordan by the children of Israel. (Read 5:1.) However, it is very doubtful if the Israelites knew very much, if anything, about this. What is important is to see what the children of Israel did immediately after they got into the land. They did two things which were expressions of their faith, and their desire, at this point at least, to be obedient to the Lord. There was a circumcision of all of the men because they had not been circumcised on their way to Canaan. Remember that this was a different group of people from those who had come out of the land. We read about this in Joshua 5:2-9. This was an expression of their faith in the covenant which God had

made with Abraham.

The second thing they did was to observe the Passover. It was the right time, as we read in Joshua 5:10, so their journey started with the Passover, and ended the same way--a feast which we have seen pictured the future sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Who is our Passover. The next day the manna ceased, and the people ate “the old corn of the land.” So it is refreshing to see how the people expressed their faith by being obedient to what they knew the Lord wanted them to do.

However, there must have been a great deal of apprehension in the hearts of the people even though they continued to see the hand of the Lord working in their behalf. F. B. Meyer, in his book, *Joshua*, expressed what possibly were the thought of Joshua. This is what he had to say:

It must have been for Joshua, at least, a time of anxious suspense. He could not forget how forty years before the former generation had cried out for bondage in Egypt, or graves in the desert, rather than face the terrors of fortified cities and giant champions. And what might not their children do! It had been comparatively easy to cope with Amalek, and Og, and Sihon, because they had met Israel in open war upon the field of battle; but that was a very different matter to attacking a city which was able to hold its own in a long siege. It was impossible to leave it in the rear, unsubdued; but it was also suicidal to sit down before it to starve it to surrender. As the weary months dragged on, the energy of the people would evaporate, and the armies of their foes would gather. Eagerly must the lonely chieftain have longed for one moment with Moses, or, better still, with that Angel of the Presence of God, who had been promised when the camp was still pitched beneath the cliffs of Sinai.

Thinking much and deeply, Joshua wandered forth alone; and suddenly, “as he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand” (p. 65).

We are not told what thoughts passed through Joshua’s mind, but from what he said we know that he did not recognize the man, and wondered if he were a friend or an enemy. “Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?” (Joshua 5:13b). He did not have to wait long to get his answer. Read Joshua 5:14.

He called himself “the captain of the host of the Lord.” This meant that He was the Chief One in command. It would be the equivalent of our word, General, or even Commander-in-Chief. But what did He mean by “the host of the Lord”?

It is probably true that our immediate impression taken from this expression, “the captain of the host of the Lord,” meant that He had come to take Joshua’s place, and that He would be in command. But a little investigation indicates that a much greater thought is here. Only a very few times is the word “host” used of people. Both of these are in Exodus--7:4 and 12:41. In the first verse “hosts” is not used, but it is indicated by the word “armies.” The word “hosts” does appear in 12:41. However, by far the emphasis in the use of the word “hosts” in the OT is of *heavenly hosts*! It has reference to angels! Thus, this is the Lord Jesus Who has come, not to take Joshua’s place, but to add to the military forces of Israel, the power and might of the angels of heaven.

A proof of this is what our Lord said to Peter when Peter took out his sword, and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. You will remember that He said this:

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? (Matt. 26:53).

A legion was made up of different numbers at different times, but in the time of Augustus Caesar it seems that it was about 7,000 men with almost 1,000 of them on horses. On one occasion in Scripture you will remember that a single angel killed 185,000 men. See 2 Kings 19:35. Seven thousand times that would be almost thirteen billion! Whatever the number may have been, it clearly must have been an overwhelming encouragement to

Joshua to know that the Lord had brought such an overwhelming host to join with the Israelites in their conquest of the land. This surely was an act of God's grace. Joshua had not sought such an ally, but as with our salvation, the Lord gives the blessing even when we do not ask for it.

Joshua knew that the “captain” could be none other than the Lord Himself. There is none greater than He. And what have many of us just learned about this in one of our memory verses which had to do with the power of God? Listen to Daniel 4:34-35:

34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

And so what did Joshua do? He “fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto Him, What saith my Lord unto His servant?” I have capitalized some words which are not capitalized in the KJV because I believe that Joshua knew that he was in the presence of the Lord of glory. And by his action, Joshua was recognizing that he [Joshua] was not the commander-in-chief, but the Lord was! And the Deity of the Captain was confirmed because He did not refuse the worship which Joshua offered to Him.

Let me give you another quotation from F. B. Meyer about our Lord as the Commander:

The title here adopted by our Lord clings to Him throughout the Bible. Isaiah says that He is given to be the Leader and Commander of His people. Peter describes Him as the Prince or Captain of Life. The Epistle to the Hebrews refers to Him as the Captain of our Salvation, Who was made perfect through suffering. And at the close of the Book we see a majestic procession come forth from the opened heaven, led by a Captain, Who is clothed in vesture dipped in blood, and Whose Name is the Word of God (p. 66).

If there had been any doubt in Joshua's mind as to Who that Man was, it was erased when the Lord said to him, “Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.”

Where have we read words similar to those? These were words which the Lord spoke to Moses out of the burning bush. The ground was not holy because it was Canaan; the ground was holy because the Lord was there. And the message that was being given to Joshua was that, as the campaign to take Canaan was beginning, Joshua needed to realize that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord had an army of angelic beings which would far exceed what Joshua would need to face any enemy. And, in addition, Joshua needed to carry with himself a sense of the holiness of God, that there was none other like God in all of His attributes, the most significant of all being His holiness. Remember the basic idea in holiness is that of *being set apart*. This is what Peter had in mind when he wrote 1 Pet. 3:15,

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

This the idea that we have in the references in Isaiah to the truth that there is no one like the Lord. Cf. Isa. 45:5-6:

5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

The possibility from a human standpoint that Joshua and the children of Israel could conquer the Canaanites

was not there. But with God, the holy God, the only God, all things are possible.

There was a situation similar to this in the days of Elisha when the Syrians were at war with Israel. Elisha's servant was fearful because of the great numbers in the army of Syria. But then it was that we read this:

15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha (2 Kings 6:15-17).

So, if anyone should ask how the children of Israel could take the walls of Jericho down with such a ridiculous campaign of marching around the city, the answer is that they didn't pull the wall down; the mighty, unseen host of the Lord did. And the city was delivered into the hands of Joshua and his men.

Concl: And we can conclude from this that in all of the victories that the children of Israel had in conquering the Canaanites, the victories were theirs because the Lord and His angelic hosts were with them, fighting for them, and with them. This all put new meaning to the Lord's words to Joshua in Joshua 1, that Joshua was to be strong and of a good courage because the Lord promised to be “with” him.

And yet we must not forget that the means of securing the blessing of God was meditation upon the Word, followed by daily obedience to the Word. The action of the people of God in the first part of Joshua 5 emphasizes that when, before they were engaged with the enemy, the men were circumcised, and the whole nation observed the Passover. And so does what the Lord said to Joshua in Joshua 1:8. God has promised to be with us and to help us, but we have a responsibility in it all to faithful to the Lord by being obedient to the His Word. The wall of Jericho was demolished by Captain Jesus and the mighty angelic forces which were under His command.

As we close, I want to read Psalm 91 for our encouragement. The God of Joshua is our God, too.

“Christ in the Old Testament”
Lesson 17
Christ in Prophecy -- David and Christ
February 25, 1997

Intro: In our past lessons we have concentrated mainly on appearances of Christ and types of Christ, but we have not focused a great deal on prophecies of Christ in the OT. We did see in one of our earlier lessons that Christ was to come as the seed of the woman, and we looked briefly at genealogies having to do with Christ. And there is a sense in which the types which we have looked at were prophetic: they looked forward to the One Who was portrayed in the type, for example, the Passover Lamb. But I want to begin to consider with you specific prophecies which were given concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. And I am going to begin with the promise which God gave to David in 2 Samuel, chapter 7.

We know that the Lord had Christ in mind when He had Samuel anoint David as King. This, in turn, led to the clear indication in Scripture that the Messiah, the Anointed One, would be a King. That surely was set forth when Melchizedek came to Abraham in Genesis 14, as was the truth that the Messiah would be a Priest. And to make the picture complete, we saw in what Moses predicted in Deut. 18 that the Messiah would also be a Prophet. But it is in David that the emphasis upon Christ as a King began to become strong. David was a prophet, and we see his prophetic office exercised in the Psalms where we have what we call *Messianic Psalms*. These are Psalms which speak prophetically of Christ. So while David himself was a prophet and a king, he was not a priest. But David is one of the most important persons in the OT when it comes to finding passages which speak of “Christ in the Old Testament.”

We have one advantage that the people of God in OT times did not have: we have the NT which helps us to understand the OT. And I want to begin this study by going to certain NT passages which relate King David of the OT with our Lord Jesus Christ.

I. DAVID AND CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The relationship is stressed beginning with the Gospel of Matthew. It is generally agreed that although the genealogy in Matthew 1 has to do with Joseph, who was not the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, he became Mary's husband, it was through Joseph that our Lord claimed the legal right to the throne of Israel. It was important to establish that fact at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel which was written for Jewish people. The first verse of Matthew 1 says this: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” And then at the close of the genealogy, Matthew gave this division:

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations Matt. 1:17).

It is also generally agreed that the genealogy in Luke 3 is the genealogy of Mary, the mother of our Lord. And so we read this in Luke 1:26-27:

26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,
27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

In Luke 3 we have what is generally accepted to be the genealogy of Mary. Unger's Bible Dictionary (originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (C) 1988.) makes this comment about that genealogy:

Mary was the daughter of Eli or Heli, of the tribe of Judah and of the lineage of David, hence in the royal line <Luke 3:23>.

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her that she was to be the mother of the Messiah, this is what he said,

- 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David (Luke 1:30-32).

There seems to have been no doubt in the minds of the Jewish people of our Lord's day but that the Messiah would be a son of David. The Pharisees believed this, but at the same time they denied the Deity of our Lord. So we read of a very interesting conversation between our Lord and the Pharisees in Matt. 22:41-46:

- 41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,
 42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David.
 43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,
 44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?
 45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?
 46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

On the occasion of what has been called our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, what did the people cry out as He rode into the city? Matthew records these words:

- And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David:
 Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest (Matt. 21:9).

The margin of your Bible will tell you that that expression was taken from Psa. 118:26.

The Apostle John tells us that on one occasion when the people were arguing about Who Christ was, some were saying that He was only a prophet; others said that He was the Messiah. And those who thought He was the Messiah said,

- Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? (John 7:42).

And, of course, this is what Micah had predicted according to Micah 5:2:

- But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

The Apostle Peter got into this great subject when he was preaching in Jerusalem on the first Day of Pentecost following the ascension of our Lord. Please turn to Acts 2, and follow in your Bibles as I read to you verses 22 through 36. In this passage the Apostle Peter quoted from Psa. 16:8-11, and then in verses 34 and 35 from Psa. 110:1. (Read.)

So the Apostle Peter not only believed that those OT passages spoke of Christ, but he believed that David believed that he was speaking of Christ as well.

When Paul began his famous epistle to the church at Rome, he had this to say concerning the Gospel:

- 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;
 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:3-4).

In the passage we are going to consider in detail, 2 Samuel 7, the Lord made a statement to David through the

prophet Nathan which said, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." In reading that in 2 Samuel, we might think the that Lord was speaking about Solomon, David's son who would succeed him as king.. But when that statement is quoted in Heb. 15, the writer of Hebrews, directed by the Holy Spirit, made it clear that the Lord was speaking to David about our Lord, God's own Son.

There are other passages we could look at, but this will be sufficient to show us that the NT definitely links the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Son of David, who is also our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are seeing that the references to Christ run through the OT like a golden thread. It is all a testimony to the sovereignty of God, to the wisdom of God, and to the mercy and love of God. In the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, we are told in chapter 13, verse 8, that our Lord was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." This means that His death was ordained by the Father before the world was. And the true history of the world is the record of how God in His sovereignty ordered the affairs of all of the nations around the family from whom our Lord would be born. The types pictured Him. He Himself appeared from time to time in different ways. The prophets gave specific predictions about Him, how He would be born, where He would be born, what His nature would be, the work that He would do for our salvation, and even many things which are yet to be fulfilled climaxing in our Lord exercising His power over all of the earth, reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Bible is a divine masterpiece of literature, written by the finger of God, and focusing attention from beginning to end upon our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God. He is the Messiah. He is the Sovereign of Israel and of the whole earth. How wonderful it is to be able to turn from all of the violence and corruption that fills our world today to remember our Lord, and to know that everything is "on schedule" according to His divine plan, and that He is the One Who is really in charge.

There was an interesting word spoken by that strange prophet, Balaam, when he had been called by Balak, the king of the Syrians, to curse the people of God, but because of the control that God exercised upon him, all he could do was to bless them. And the blessing he gave is one which we must recognize as predictive of the very truth we are considering today. Let me read it to you. It is found in Num.23:18-21:

18 And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:

19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

20 Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.

21 He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.

What can that last statement mean if it is not in itself a prediction that Israel would have a King. And we know now that that shout came from our Lord Jesus. Also cf. Num. 24:15-19.

The real origin of this great truth that our Lord would be born as a son of King David, and so as an Heir to his throne, was, as I have said, in eternity past, but it was first announced to David in 2 Samuel 7. And we usually speak of this as the Davidic Covenant. It was the covenant which God established with David when David had it in his heart to build a house for God. But let us get the message from the Scriptures themselves.

II. GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID (2 Samuel 7).

This first thing that we read about is:

A. David's desire to build a house for God (2 Sam. 7:1-3).

The Lord had blessed David in a most amazing way, but the cost had been high in trials which had come to David through it all. But at last the Lord had given David "rest." And so now he planned to do a work which had evidently been on his heart for a long time. It bothered David that he had a royal palace, but that the ark of the covenant, where God dwelt, was still in a tent! Nathan the prophet, knowing what David wanted to do, gave him his full blessing, thinking that the Lord was moving David to do this. But that was not the case.

B. The Lord's message for David which was given to Nathan (2 Sam. 7:4-17).

How gracious and tender the Lord is! Years later when Solomon had finished building the temple of the Lord, and was speaking at the dedication, he told the people what the Lord had said to David when David wanted to build a temple for the Lord. His words are found in 1 Kings, chapter 8, verses 14 through 26. It is full of the tenderness of God, and a testimony to the faithfulness of God. (**Read.**) I think that it is impossible for us to realize how moved Solomon must have been in his own heart as he reviewed what God had done.

But returning to 2 Samuel 7, notice that Nathan was to go to David to deliver the message that the Lord had for him. Look at the first half of verse 5. (**Read.**)

Then the Lord had two questions for David to answer. See verses 5b-7, and **READ**.

In verse 8 we have the same words that we noticed at the beginning of verse 5. (**Read.**)

He told David what He had done for him. We see this in verses 8 and 9. (**Read.**) And the Lord followed this by telling David what He would do for him in the future, and the main point is the last statement of verse 11 which ought to be printed all in capital letters: "ALSO THE LORD TELLETH THEE THAT HE WILL MAKE THEE AN HOUSE."

This took David completely by surprise, and we have an example here of two uses of the same word, the word *HOUSE*. David was speaking of a building; God was speaking of a dynasty, a royal family. The throne had changed families once, from Saul to David, and from a human standpoint it could easily have been changed again. An attempt was made when Israel broke away from Judah. But the Lord preserved the blood line from David down to and including our Lord Jesus Christ. And so the Lord was speaking to David about the Messiah, about our Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice what the Lord said. We need to realize how very important it was for Nathan to give David the very words which the Lord had given to him. He was not to change a word. He was not to say a word more, or a word less. Part of the words had to do with both Christ and Solomon. Part of the words had to do with Solomon. But the ultimate fulfillment of these words had to do with Christ, the coming King and Messiah. (Explain verses 12 through 17).

It is true that Solomon would build a house for the Lord, but of far greater importance was what our Lord would do for the Father, and what the Father would do for our Lord.

Just in case anyone needs proof that our Lord was involved in this covenant which God was making with David, let me remind you of a point that I made earlier when I was pointing out various NT passages which relate David with our Lord, our Lord being David's greatest Son. It is the statement that the Lord made at the beginning of 2 Sam. 7:14, "I will be his father, and he shall be my son." In Hebrews 1:5b the writer of Hebrews quoted that statement, saying that *God said this to His Son!* So we have a very interesting combination which is not uncommon to prophetic writings in the way in which God's word to Solomon is woven

together with His word about our Lord. We are yet to see the complete fulfillment of these promises, but we know that they will be fulfilled because they are *the word of the living God*.

The rest of 2 Samuel 7 gives us:

C. David's response to the words of the Lord (2 Sam. 7:18-29).

The response is a prayer, and there are two parts to David's prayer. The first is all worship and praise in verses 18 through 24; the latter part is his prayer request, or requests--verses 25 through 29.

There is a lesson in this for us, too. It seems that it is often the case that we rejoice with one another over the promises of God, and after seeing His blessing in some special way, but it often takes us a long time, and sometimes we neglect it altogether, before we go to the Lord to thank *Him*.

In the first part, notice David's amazement coupled with his humility. He grappled for words to express what was in his heart. The message was too good to be true if it had not been the promise of the Lord. It made David marvel at the greatness of the Lord, and at His grace!

In the second part notice how David turned the promises of God into prayer. This is an illustration of the two verses I spoke on last Sunday morning: 1 John 5:14-15. David was praying according to the will of God because he was telling the Lord to do what He had promised David that He would do. He was expressing his faith that God would do what He had said that He would do, and past blessings would have assured David that, as unexpected as the promise was, and as unlikely that it could all come to pass, yet there was no doubt in David's heart but that God *could do* and *would do* exactly as He had promised.

Concl: This promise was given to David approximately 1,000 years before Christ was born, and that makes it approximately 3,000 year ago from now. And there are parts of this promise which are yet to be fulfilled. We know that the Lord is sovereign over all things, men, nations, angels, and demons. But this is the promise of a kingdom and a throne which would be established forever involving "the seed of David," which is the very expression that the Apostle used in describing our Lord in Rom. 1:3.

Do see what the fulfillment of this promise involved? It meant that God must control His people, especially the sons of David who would reign between Solomon and Christ. It means that God must continually exercise His sovereign power in preserving the godly line leading down to Christ. It is a marvelous testimony to the power of God, the grace of God, the wisdom of God, the patience of God, the faithfulness of God--actually a testimony to all of His glorious attributes, that God could do and will do all that is necessary to see that His Son rules and reigns forever!

Let us be sure to make the application to our own lives. We, His people, are more precious to Him than we can possibly realize. He loves us. David's Son, our Lord Jesus, would have to face the Cross before He could sit on His throne. How many times would the Lord have been justified in forgetting all about us, but He never gives up on us. And He is great enough to control all of the circumstances and all of the people that are involved in our lives, as well as all of our own failures and sins, so that His promise regarding our salvation will be fulfilled just as He planned before the foundation of the earth. As unbelievable as it seems now, the day is coming when we *will be* like our Lord Jesus Christ. Doubt it not. But if we really believe that, we are going to seek to be as faithful to the Lord as we can possibly be--by the grace of God!

“Christ in the Old Testament”
Lesson 18
The Messianic Psalms -- Part 1 -- Psalm 2
March 4, 1997

Intro: We have been learning that one of the unique things about the Bible is that both the OT and the NT have as their focal point of interest and emphasis, our Lord Jesus Christ. Nobody else in all of the Bible occupies the place that our Lord has. This is apparent from some of the verses we looked at when we started our study of “Christ in the Old Testament.” For example, John 5:39 and Luke 24:26-27, 44.

This is also seen in the quotations from the OT which are used by the writers of the NT. Arthur Clarke, in his book on the Psalms, says that out of approximately 283 direct quotations from the OT in the NT, 116 are from the Psalms, and practically all of these have to do with Christ. In fact, the quotations of the OT in the NT give us one of the best aids to understanding the Word of God. Dr. Norman Geisler, who used to teach at Dallas Seminary, wrote a book to which he gave the title, *To Understand the Bible Look for Jesus*. That title really points us in the right direction.

Today I want to begin looking at one of the richest sources of truth about our Lord that we have in the OT, and that has to do with what we call *the Messianic Psalms*, that is, Psalms which speak in a special way of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But how do we determine what is a Messianic Psalm? I came across these points several years ago, but failed to note where I got three of these four points, or I would give credit where credit is due. They could have come from many different writers because I think there is general agreement that these are the basic qualifications.

- 1) The best way is when it is quoted in the NT and referred to Christ.
- 2) Another is when the statements of the Psalm clearly go beyond the experience of the Psalmist, or of the one about who the Psalmist is writing. We saw an example of that in Peter’s sermon which he delivered in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost following our Lord’s ascension, and he referred to the fact that when David spoke of God not allowing His holy One to see corruption, he pointed out that it referred to the Messiah and not to David because David’s tomb was with them and his body did see corruption.
- 3) When the NT gives us the basis for using the expressions of a Psalm *as a type* which refers to Christ, then we can be sure that such a Psalm is Messianic. For example, Psalm 118:22: “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” Of course, with that verse we also have the advantage of knowing that it is quoted four times in the NT.
- 4) Basil Atkinson, in his book, *The Christian’s use of the Old Testament*, p. 93 speaks of fourteen Psalms which are written in the first person as the words of Christ Himself.

These categories do not mean that a Psalm will have only one of these characteristics; they may have more than one, and possibly in some instances, all of them.

Even with these guidelines that we follow as the result of study, there is a difference among Bible teachers as to how many Messianic Psalms there are. Derek Kidner said that there are sixteen which speak of the Messianic hope. Alfred Edersheim in his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* mentioned twenty-eight Psalms which the Jews considered Messianic. It all depends upon how you would define a Messianic Psalm. If we include all of the Psalms that speak of *the character of the Messiah*, in contrast with His position as Messiah (Prophet, Priest, and King), then our list will be much longer. It is really hard to go astray when you are looking for Christ in the Psalms. One factor that can extend the list is the use of the name, *Jehovah*. There are many times in the OT where it is used as a Name for Christ. And so if we include these possibilities in the Psalms, our list will be much longer. I don’t plan to deal with any of the Psalms exhaustively, or we would never finish, but I hope to at least touch upon those which I consider to be Messianic. And I want to start with Psalm 2. So please turn in

your Bibles to that Psalm, and I will read it for us as we begin to examine what it has to teach us about our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us read this Psalm as though we knew nothing about what the OT teaches about Christ, as though we were reading these twelve verses for the first time.

(Read Psalm 2.)

I. PSALM 2.

There is absolutely no question at all but that this is Messianic. It clearly speaks of Christ. Let me give you the evidence. And before we look at the Psalm itself, let me point out that this Psalm is quoted four times in the NT. Verses 1 and 2 are quoted in Acts 4:25-26. Let us take the time to read the quotations along with their context. (Read Acts 4:23-30 where Psa. 2:1-2 are quoted in a prayer that the people in the church at Jerusalem prayed after Peter and John had been released.)

So Peter and John and the other believers felt that they were seeing, at least, a partial fulfillment of the first two verses of Psa. 2--which they recognized to be Messianic.

The other verse that is quoted three times in the NT is verse 7. And it is quoted in Acts 13:33; and twice in Hebrews: 1:5 and 5:5. Let us read these passages as well.

- 1) In Acts 13 we need to read verses 26 through 33. (Read.) Now this verse speaks of the resurrection of Christ, and is cited by Paul for that purpose.
- 2) In Hebrews 1:5 we have this verse quoted again. (Read.) Not to any angel, nor to any man, only to our Lord Jesus Christ, was this statement made.
- 3) And then in Hebrews 5:5 we have the third and final quotation. (Read Heb. 5:1-6.) So here the Holy Spirit has tied together Psalm 2 and Psalm 110, and related both of them to Christ.

Now let us look at the evidence within the Psalm that this speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 1) The “anointed” is mentioned in verse 2. “Anointed” in Hebrew is *Messiah*.
- 2) Verses 4-6 describe God’s reaction to what the kings and rulers of the earth have said, and He responds by saying, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (v. 6). So we have the evidence that the Messiah is to be a King.
- 3) The third piece of evidence within the Psalm itself is in the last verse, where we read, “Kiss the Son.” Quite obviously this “Son” would have to be the same “Son” Who was mentioned in verse 7.

So, when we put all of these together, we see that the Anointed One of the Father, is His Son, and that He is destined to rule as King from Mount Zion, which is in Jerusalem. However, all of this has to do with our Lord’s second coming. And yet there is one part that has to do with His first coming, and that is in verse 7 which we have seen speaks of the resurrection of our Lord.

Now this is what made many passages of the OT difficult for the people of Israel to understand. Taken by itself we can see why the Jews in our Lord’s day expected Him to establish His throne and to reign as king over the nations of the earth. And they believed this so strongly that they could not understand why He spoke of His death and His resurrection. As an illustration of this, in Mark’s account of the transfiguration of our Lord, as they came down from the mount, we read what the Lord said to them, and what their response was:

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean (Mark 9:9-10).

I think the only satisfactory explanation that we can give as to why the Lord put both His first coming and His second coming together in the OT, and often mentioned the second before the first, is to emphasize with us how much we need the Holy Spirit as our Teacher.

Now let us look at the Psalm a little more in detail.

This is the outline:

- 1) The raging of the kings and rulers of the earth against the Lord and His Christ (vv. 1-3).
- 2) The Lord's response to the kings and rulers (vv. 4-6).
- 3) The Messiah speaks, telling what the Lord has said to Him (vv. 7-9).
- 4) The warning issued by the Psalmist (vv. 10-12). This Psalm has no superscription giving us the name of the writer, but Acts 4:25 tells us that the writer was David, and it is even referred to as the “second Psalm” in Acts 13:33. Some MSS refer to it in Acts 13:33 as the “first Psalm” which has given rise to the idea that originally Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 may have been a single Psalm. It is interesting to look at the two Psalms and consider how this may very well have been the case. Arthur Clarke pointed out in his commentary how the two Psalms show the two great sins of the nations of the earth: 1) disobedience to God's Word in Psalm 1, and 2) the disownment of God's Son in Psalm 2.

Let us briefly consider each of these points.

1) The raging of the kings and rulers of the earth against the Lord and His Christ (vv. 1-3).

To “rage” is descriptive of what we call *mob violence*. It speaks of the nations *out of control* in their hatred of God and of Christ. And it well describes the action of the multitude of people who surrounded the Cross. But this goes far beyond that. This speaks of “heathen,” or *nations*, who have risen up in opposition to the God and to Christ. The Psalmist foreseeing this speaks of his amazement that the nations would dare to rise up against God and His Christ.

The word “imagine” speaks of a well-laid out plot, a plan of opposition that has been carefully planned. But the Psalmist called it “vain” because it could only come to nothing against God. The kings and rulers and judges obviously are forgetting that God is God. They need the truth which Nebuchadnezzar expressed so clearly much later on. We find his words in Dan. 4:35:

And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Psalm 46:6 is another verse to remember in this connection: “The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.”

Verse 2 elaborates on verse 1. For the kings of the earth to “set themselves” means that they have started on a course which they refuse to change. They are determined to see their objective carried through to its ultimate and final success. And it is specifically aimed at “the Lord, and...His Christ.” And what is their objective? We see that in verse 3. They do not want God telling them what to do. They refuse to be submissive to His will. They want to do “their own thing.” They do not realize how foolish and devastating upon themselves their actions can be when they despise God and His will.

This is a very serious picture. It does not speak of a world that has been won to Christ, as the postmillennialists would have us believe. Instead, it speaks of a godless, wicked, violent world that has taken its stand against God, and refuses to consider any possibility of a change.

2) The Lord's response to the kings and the rulers (vv. 4-6).

Listen to the words that we find in Psa. 37:12-15:

12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.

15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

Think also of the words we have in Psa. 53:4-5:

4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

5 There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.

For God to sit in the heavens means that His throne is there, and that He rules over the heavens and the earth. He shall have the kings and their associates "in derision." He shall mock them and ridicule them for their extreme foolishness in thinking that they could overthrow God. Satan tried to do it in the beginning, and if he could not succeed, then no man, nor nations of men, can possibly succeed in overthrowing a sovereign God. In His wrath He shall speak to them. Have you just leamed Jer. 10:10?

But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

For God to "vex" the kings of the earth means that He will alarm them with the terrible plight in which they have placed themselves. They will be terrified with the consequences of their rebellion against God. And this will all show them God's "sore displeasure." This word is always used of God's anger. It describes a red hot anger. It is no wonder that the writer of Hebrews said that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). God is infinitely patient, and He puts up with the wickedness of men far longer than men would put up with each other. But woe to the man, or the nation, who provokes God to anger!

Verse 6 tells us that in spite of all that the nations of the earth might do to do away with Christ, to destroy the Word of God and to stand against the purposes of God, God speaks here to them that He has already set the Lord upon the "holy hill of Zion." God's purposes are so sure that He often speaks of that which has not yet taken place as having been already done. And that is the case here!

If men would only learn this, how different their lives could be. But they are so blinded by their own pride and self-will and all of their other sins, that they bring upon themselves "swift destruction," as we read in 2 Pet. 2:1.

But let us move on to the third point.

3) The Messiah speaks, telling what the Lord has said to Him (vv. 7-9).

The "decree" mentioned here is probably a reference to the promise which God made to David in 2 Samuel 7 which we considered in our last lesson. That was a divine statement of God's unchangeable purpose concerning the Lord Jesus Christ--a purpose which has stood throughout all time, and will stand until it is finally fulfilled in our Lord's rule upon the earth. For the Son to declare it shows His complete trust in what the Father intends to do, and He knows that there is nothing that the great men of the earth can do to frustrate the purpose of God.

As I have stated before, the NT quotations of this verse of this verse show that it is a prediction of the resurrection of our Lord, in line with what we read in Rom. 1:4, that our Lord was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." And, according to Heb. 1:5, there is none other concerning whom this declaration, this "decree," has ever, or will ever, be made. This is the declared confidence that the Son has in the Father, and what the Father intends to do with Him. God's decree is God's unalterable will which was established in eternity past.

Verse 8 is often taken as a missionary verse given to the church. But it is obvious that it is a promise given by the Father to the Son. In the NT, especially in the Gospel of John, those who are saved are described as having been *given* by the Father to His Son. And so this is a promise that, although the leaders of the nations are in rebellion and rejection of Christ, yet from all of the nations God will give the elect to His Son. This, too, is a part of the way that the Lord will deal in judgment with the leaders of the nations. And this is consistent with what we read in Rev. 5:9-10:

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

We have the same truth in Rev. 14:6-7:

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

But notice in Psa. 2:8 that God has given His Son a promise, not only of *people*, but of *the earth*. And so not only will people be saved out of every nation, but the earth will come under the dominion of its rightful Owner. In Psa. 24:1-2 we read,

1 The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

And it ought to be of special interest to us that the Father told the Son to "ask." From this we can understand why it was that the Son spent whole nights in prayer to God, but also why prayer should have such a major place in our lives. If the Lord Jesus needed to pray about the salvation of the elect, how much more do we need to pray!

Kidner points out in his commentary that this verse (Psa. 2:9) is quoted three times in the book of the Revelation: in 2:27 in our Lord's letter to the church at Thyatira; and in 12:5 and 19:15. Let us take the time to read these verses. First, Rev. 2:26-28:

26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

28 And I will give him the morning star.

In Rev. 12:3-5 we have these words:

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was

caught up unto God, and to his throne.

And then in Rev. 19:11-16 we have this great passage:

- 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.
- 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.
- 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.
- 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.
- 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
- 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

The Lord will exercise total authority over the nations, and bring their power to nothing. And so we see that while many will be saved, there will be many others who will not be saved, but will be overthrown by Him Who is destined to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

And now we come to the last stanza in the Psalm:

4) The warning issued by the Psalmist (vv. 10-12).

Verses 1-3 express the folly of the leaders of the earth. How foolish they are ever to think that they can stand against God, and win! Here, as the Psalm comes to a close, we see evidence of the grace of God. The fact that some kings rebel against God, does not mean that all kings must rebel against Him. “Not many mighty are called,” *but some are!* Therefore, we need to learn that to the worst of rebels and the greatest of sinners, the Gospel must be preached. There is nothing wiser that anyone can do than to hear the Gospel, believe it, and be saved. Man by nature, even the greatest men on earth, are foolish and ignorant in matters concerning their souls. And so the Psalmist here calls upon them to listen to the Word that they might be wise and that they might come to know the truth.

In verse 11 we see how the kings, rulers, and judges of the earth with all of their God-given authority, should submit themselves to God. And then in verse 12 we see how they should submit themselves to the Lord’s Christ.

The leaders of the nations were to submit themselves to God as His bondservants, and to fear lest they should be guilty of any disobedience. And yet it was to be a service characterized by joy, although the reverence involved in fearing the Lord was to continue “with trembling.”

Some MSS differ on the translation of verse 12. But it seems apparent that it is “the Son” Whom the Psalmist had in mind here. There is no way that the Lord (the Father) can be served except through the Son. The Gospel of John makes this very clear. We can’t honor the Father unless we honor the Son, and there is no way to the Father except through the Son.

Ron Rhodes, in his book, *Christ Before the Manger*, made this comment about *kissing the Son*:

The word *kiss* in this context is used in accordance with Oriental usages, for it was by a kiss that respect was indicated for one of superior rank. A kiss was “the ancient mode of doing homage or allegiance to a king” (quoting Albert Barnes). The “kiss” in this verse indicates *believing* the Son, *obeying* the Son,

loving the Son, and being loyal to the Son (p. 141).

And then Rhodes quoted Matthew Henry who said,

Kiss the Son, not with a betraying kiss, as Judas kissed Him, but with a believing kiss. With a kiss of affection and sincere love: “Kiss the Son; enter into a covenant of friendship with Him, and let him be very dear and precious to you; love Him above all, love Him in sincerity, love Him much, as she did to whom much was forgiven, and, in token of it, kissed His feet,” Luke 7:38. With a kiss of allegiance and loyalty, submit to His government, take His yoke upon you (*Ibid.*).

Failure to turn in loving submission and obedience will have the most disastrous effects that a person can possibly experience. The wrath of the Son brings eternal death. “When His wrath is kindled but a little” can mean, *for quickly may His anger blaze*.

But for those who *kiss the Son*, it can be said, “Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.” Prov. 29:25 says, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”

Kidner concluded his comments on Psalm 2 with these words:

The final beatitude...leaves no doubt of the grace that inspires the call of verses 10ff. What fear and pride interpret as bondage (3) is in fact security and bliss. And there is no *refuge* from Him: only in Him.

If it is true that Psalms 1 and 2 were originally one Psalm, then a beatitude began the Psalm, and another beatitude concluded the Psalm.

Concl: What a glorious revelation we have in this Psalm of the sovereignty, the wrath, and yet of the compassion and love of the Members of the Godhead! And by way of contrast, we have here revealed, the blindness, the hardness, and the folly of man. If we have been made to kiss the Son, let us remember that it is all because of God’s grace in us and to us. If it were not for His grace, we, too, would side with the great men of the earth in their opposition toward God.

And in these days when it seems that evil is triumphing on every hand, let us take encouragement from this Psalm that the Lord will ultimately triumph over all evil, and will bring all men to recognize that He is God, and men cannot stand against Him.