The Apostolic Preaching of Christ from the Old Testament
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
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Now, for this morning, you all who have been here know that we are beginning a series on finding the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament…finding the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. I read from 2 Corinthians chapter 3 a little bit earlier because there is so much richness there. But in particular, to call to your attention verses 14 to 16 where it says, “Their minds—referring to people in the Old Testament—their minds were hardened for until this very day at the reading of the Old Covenant, the same veil remains un-lifted because it is removed in Christ. What Paul was saying there is, you can’t understand the meaning of the Old Testament apart from Christ because all though He had not come, so much of the Old Testament predicts and prophesies and presents Him that it is incomprehensible apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. To this day, says verse 15, whenever Moses is read, Moses meaning the Old Testament, a veil lies over their heart. But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

The only people who can understand the Old Testament are the people who know and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, the veil is taken away. And when the veil from the Old Testament is removed, we immediately find out that the theme of the entire Old Testament is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The Pharisees and scribes and people of Israel who studied fastidiously the Old Testament couldn’t understand it. They thought they did. Couldn’t comprehend it. Couldn’t grasp its meaning and its significance because they rejected Christ. Only in Christ does the Old Testament make sense. Therefore, the key to the Old Testament is the New Testament. And that’s what we have discovered in spending 40-plus years going through the New Testament. We know Christ.

As I’ve been telling you, we have come to know Him historically in the gospels. Theologically in the epistles. And eschatologically in the book of Revelation. We have this glorious New Testament picture of Christ. The veil is off and now we can go back into the Old Testament and find Him every place that He appears. And we’re going to be doing that. In fact, once we actually do it, we’re going to begin in that most notable of all Old Testament passages that present Christ, Isaiah 53, the suffering servant. But before we get to the Old Testament, we’re trying to build a bit of a bridge from the New to the Old and understand some of these things that I’m talking to you about now.

The Bible is the only religious book that comes in two sections, separated by centuries. The Bible is the only religious book that comes in two sections, separated by centuries. The Bible is the only divine revelation. All other religious books are forgeries by demons and men. Only the Bible is truly

from God. The Bible is true and it is the only divine revelation. But it is also unique and its veracity and its truthfulness is demonstrated because it is written in two parts with centuries in the middle.

First it contains an ancient book called The Old Testament. And in that book you have prophecies of Christianity, prophecies of Christ and Christianity. In the New Testament, the second book, you have the fulfillment of all those prophecies and the full presentation of Christianity. The veracity of the Bible can be demonstrated in the fact that the history in the New Testament is a precise fulfillment of the prophecies in the Old Testament. And no one, no human and no demon can know specifically the future, only God can know it. And so you have a book of prophecy and a book of fulfillment. And the evidence for the genuineness and the authenticity and the singular truthfulness of Christianity is that everything in the ancient book that was said to come to pass, we have seen beginning to come to pass. There is yet more at the end of the age, but clearly Christ and the establishment of Christianity in the New Testament is a precise fulfillment of prophecy from the Old.

We have two volumes to our holy book, two volumes. Each separate and yet one. One is predictive, the other is historical. One is foundational, the other is consummate. The first one cannot be understood without the second one. And the second one is incomplete without the first one. The Lord Jesus Christ of New Testament history is none other than the promised Messiah of Old Testament prophecy. In fact, I think the strongest proof of Jesus Christ and Christianity is in the fulfilled prophecies in the New Testament. Book one, the prophecies. Book two, the fulfillment. In book one you have redemption promised and outlined. In book two you have redemption realized and fulfilled.

Now we have spent a long time, many, many years in book two. And that's the way it should go. That's the order, because until the veil is removed in Christ in book two and the mystery is unfolded, we can't see the meaning of the Old. So after all these years of learning Christ, we know Him so well that we will recognize Him everywhere He appears in the Old Testament. The Lord Jesus Christ is the theme of the whole of Scripture. In fact, someone said to me, "Where does Christ first appear in Scripture?" And I said, "In the first verse of the first chapter of the first book, Genesis 1. "In the beginning God created," and John 1 says, "That's the Word and without Him was not anything made that was made." And in Colossians 1 it says, "He was the Creator of everything that exists."

So the Bible has as its theme, the Lord Jesus Christ. But apart from the New Testament and belief in the Christ of the New Testament, the Old Testament cannot be understood. The veil is still there. But we know Christ and we love Christ and we recognize Christ and so we're in a wonderful position to go now after all these years in the second back, back to the first book and see all the glorious prophecies that were fulfilled of Him. And we're doing just that.

Now, I want to build a bridge, as I've been saying, a little analogy. I want to build a bridge back to the Old Testament. So I'm taking a few weeks to lay some…some sort of groundwork here. I don't want to belabor this, but I want to be thorough, if you'll allow me that. Today may be a little bit more like a

lecture than a sermon, although I'm not sure I know the difference. For some of you it may sound like I'm reading the phone book, this may not be one that you're going to rush out to buy the tape because it's going to challenge your mind to kind of pay some attention to what I'm saying. But I think it's really very important for us to have this foundation laid so that we understand what we're dealing with. You know, we spend a lot of time in small details, little verses, words, phrases. I want to give you a much bigger picture here so that we understand that this transition from the New back to the Old is the right thing to do. It's the necessary way to go. You can't go the other way. This is the way to go. And I want you to be confident in that and enthusiastic and excited about the importance of what we're going to discover.

Now to get this bridge built from the New back to the Old, for us, I've established four pillars, four pillar ideas or pillar truths, that help us to erect this form of transportation back to the Old Testament.

Number one, the Lord Jesus Christ declared that the Old Testament revealed Him. In other words, we're giving justification for doing this. Somebody might say, "Well that's ancient history. That's past. That's the letter that kills as you read. That's the dead Law by which you can't be justified, etc., etc. Why would we even bother with it?" But the Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared that the Old Testament revealed Him. And we looked at that in detail, in careful detail.

The second point that we're making is the disciples and Apostles didn't fully believe in Him and His work, His death and resurrection, until they understood the Old Testament.

Point number three, the Apostles and prophets who were the first generation of preachers of the gospel to fulfill the Great Commission based their preaching of Christ on the Old Testament.

And fourthly, the writers of the New Testament, the Apostles and their associates who wrote the New Testament grounded their writing in the Old Testament. This shouldn't surprise you because the Old Testament presents Christ. And it was the only Bible Jesus had, it was the only Bible the disciples and Apostles had, it was the Scripture, the Word of God. And the Apostles, even when they wrote their books, were writing with reference to and familiarity with the Old Testament. So that's the flow we're going to follow, Christ to the Apostles and their faith, to the Apostles and prophets and their preaching, and then to the writers of the New Testament, they all grounded what they said and did in the Old Testament.

Now let's go back and just to review about point number one, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared that the Old Testament revealed Him…the Old Testament revealed Him. We saw that in a number of passages, John 5; Luke 4; Luke 16; Luke 24, and we could have gone to many, many others where the Lord establishes His own identity by using the Old Testament. Most notably was that Luke 24 road to Emmaus, remember? Where our Lord begins at Moses and the prophets and all the holy writings. Those are the three sections of the Jewish Old Testament, and speaks to them concerning

Himself. In particular, on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection, He speaks to them about His suffering and His rising and He does it from the Old Testament. Later that same day that He rose from the dead in the evening, He shows up with the eleven in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, and He takes them also back to the Old Testament and shows the truth about His dying and rising from the Old Testament. The end of that day, their faith was solid and the book of Luke closes with them full of joy and praise and worship.

So the Lord Jesus Himself declared that the Old Testament was speaking about Him, revealed Him. One illustration of it that I didn't give you, but it would be good to look at is in Matthew 22…Matthew 22, and I'm going to give you a lot of Scripture, so get your Bible handy and just kind of follow along here. And the reason I turned to this one is because this is His last public sermon. This is the last public sermon Jesus gave to non-believers. And in verse 41, it's the Pharisees who were gathered together during that final week of His life, this is the last day of His public ministry before the next day when He's going to be arrested and crucified and they're going back and forth. They ask Him questions, He asks them questions. And He's endeavoring all the while during this week to bring them to the true knowledge of Himself. He asks them a question, according to verse 41, and here's the question. "What do you think about the Messiah, the Christ? Whose Son is He? What is your view of the Messiah as to His human genealogy? Whose Son will He be?"

And they said to Him, "David…David." Every Jew knew that the Messiah was going to be out of the family of David. That goes back to 2 Samuel 7, that God would give to David a greater son who would establish the Kingdom that would last forever. And they all knew that. In fact, Messiah was called "Son of David," when He entered into Jerusalem on the Monday of that very week, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Everybody knew Messiah was to be a Son of David. That was reiterated again and again in the Old Testament. Psalm 89, Amos 9, Micah 5, Ezekiel 37, this was known to everyone. All during the ministry of Jesus, people came up to Him and called Him Son of David, blind people, people who wanted healing, a Canaanite woman. They called Him the Son of David. That was His human lineage.

And, of course, the New Testament establishes that in a genealogy of Joseph who was in the line of David, and a genealogy of Mary who was in the line of David. So humanly speaking, He came from the line of David.

But the answer is insufficient because that's only a human identification. And our Lord is going to point that out. Verse 43, Matthew 22, "He said to them then, 'How does David in the spirit…in the spirit call Him Lord?'" If He's the Son of David, what is David doing calling Him Lord? If He's the Son of David, He wouldn't even exist in David's time. But He does exist, and He's called Lord and if He existed in David's time, then He's not just human. And He's not just eternal, but He's also divine because He calls Him Lord. The Lord supports this comment with a rendering of the 110th Psalm, "The Lord said to My Lord, The Lord God said to My Lord," meaning the Messiah, "Sit at My right

hand until I put your enemies beneath Your feet." If David then calls Him Lord, how is He his Son? How can He be David's son and David's Lord? He must then be man and He must also be God.

So in the final sermon Jesus ever preached, He takes the text from Psalm 110, His final effort to demonstrate who He is, is based on Psalm 110 verse 1. The Jews universally accept that as messianic Psalm, although they didn't look at it very carefully. But they affirmed it as a Messianic Psalm. It is the most often quoted by New Testament writers more than any other Psalm. All three gospels attribute this to David and all three gospel record it as the designation of Jesus our Lord, interprets it in three gospels as referring to Him. So they've got a problem. They know it's a Messianic Psalm, they affirm it's a Messianic Psalm, and yet it is the Lord God who is calling the Lord the Messiah Lord. And how can He be David's Son and David's Lord?

This Psalm was so much used by the early church, historically. The early church parked on this Psalm and used it so extensively that in the same period of time, the first hundred years of the preaching of the gospel, the Jews began to change their interpretation of this Psalm. And they began to say it refers to Abraham, Melchizedek, they even said it referred to Judas Maccabees, who was an intertestamental character in Jewish history.

I only point this out to show you that when Jesus wanted to establish His deity, He went to the Old Testament…He went to the Old Testament. His deity is further established in the fact that God set Him at His right hand, that's the position of honor and power, preeminence where all authority is inherent and put all enemies under His feet, all enemies of the deity. David's Son is David's Lord, based on Psalm 110. That was Jesus' final exposition to unbelievers. His final exposition to believers was Luke 24 where He explained to them things concerning Himself throughout the Old Testament.

All right, so point one, Jesus declared repeatedly that the Old Testament revealed Him. Point two, and we covered this, the disciples and Apostles believed in Him because they understood the Old Testament. It wasn't until the Road to Emmaus, it wasn't until they gathered together on that same night of His resurrection and He explained to them His death and resurrection, from Old Testament passages that they got it, believed in it, affirmed it, declared it and praised and worshiped Him as the true Messiah.

Now let's go to the final two points, okay? Number three, and you're going to have to bear with me on this one, number three, the Apostles and Prophets who preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus based their preaching on the Old Testament. You could say it another way, the Apostles that went out into the world to preach the gospel, Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, from the day of Pentecost on, preached Old Testament expositions. The New Testament wasn't written yet. It didn't begin to be written until years after the Lord had gone back to heaven, and it wasn't completed until the end of the century when they were all dead, except for John. So they began preaching, and they had to preach Scripture. And they didn't have the New Testament and they needed to do more than give a

personal testimony about what He said, or what they saw. Peter said, “We were with Him in the mountain when He was transfigured, but we have a more sure word.” What word is more sure than your personal experience, Peter?” You were there, you saw Him, you heard Him. You were on the Mount of The Transfiguration, what’s more sure than that? Scripture because the Spirit of God moved men to write the Scripture, Peter says, and that’s a more sure word. So even the early preachers didn’t preach their own experience, they didn’t preach their own walking with Jesus, talking with Jesus, as if that were authoritative in itself. They had that experience. John says, “We saw, we touched, we handled the Word of Life.” But they preached Jesus from the Old Testament. And that’s why we say we can go back and find Him there. Old Testament expositors is what they were.

Now I want to show you this, don’t give up on me, turn to Acts 2…turn to Acts 2. I want you to get the sense of the overwhelming reality of this point. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit comes, it’s the Day of Pentecost, the church is born and now the preaching begins. But even the event itself of the Holy Spirit coming and empowering believers to speak the wonderful works of God in all kinds of different languages, so that the people who were there could hear the truth concerning God in their own language and realize that there was something miraculous going on, even that is a fulfillment of Joel 2. And you find that Peter stands up in verse 14 and says, “You’ve just had an amazing experience. The Spirit comes down in a form like fire. Everybody starts hearing the wonderful works of God in their own language. Somebody says, “Oh, these people are drunk,” which is a pretty lame thing to explain this kind of phenomenon in which people are not speaking something that’s unintelligible like drunk people do, but speaking languages that are known and understood by the people who hear them, but aren’t know and understood by the people who are speaking. This is a miracle. This is what was being spoken of as part of the last days in the prophet Joel.

Verse 16, he goes on to quote that. Now all of Joel’s prophecy from Joel 2 won’t be fulfilled until the Millennial era, until the future. But this is like a preview of it. “In the last days I will pour forth my Spirit.” Verse 18, “I will in those days pour forth My Spirit.” And there are more things to come, wonders in the sky and all of that. That’s in the future, but here is the beginning of the pouring forth of the Spirit of God.

So Peter launches the first message on the first day of the church as the gospel goes out at its initial point with a text from the prophet Joel, chapter 2, just to say this is the beginning of what the Old Testament prophet said would come.

Then he goes into his sermon in verse 22. “Men of Israel, listen to these words, Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know.” That’s experience, you know Him, you saw His miracles, you heard His words. “This man delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men, you put Him to death but God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it’s impossible for Him to be held by its power.”

So Peter is telling them what they know. You killed Him, but God raised Him. And then He says, “This establishes who He is because of Psalm 16,” and He takes the text of Psalm 16 and He goes back to Psalm 16 which was penned by David, “I saw the Lord always in my presence; He is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted, moreover my flesh also will live in hope because you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You have made known to me the path of life. You will make Me full of gladness with Your presence.” What you have there in Psalm 16 is the promise that the Holy One, the Messiah, though He would die, would never have His soul abandoned in Hades. He would never undergo corruption but He would be shown the path of life. That’s resurrection. The resurrection was presented in the sixteenth Psalm.

And it couldn’t have referred…somebody said, “Well maybe it referred to David.” No, verse 29, “I confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that He both died and was buried and His tomb is with us to this day.” This isn’t David, but rather He was a prophet, verse 30, and knew that God had sworn to Him with an oath to seat one of His descendants on His throne.” And that’s a quote from 2 Samuel 7. And a quote from Psalm 132:11, and from Psalm 89:3. So he bases the resurrection on Psalm 16, and he basis the subsequent to the resurrection, the seating of His Son on His throne in the other Psalms…Psalm 89, Psalm 132.

Then down in verse 34, he goes to Psalm 110, the same one our Lord preached on in Matthew 22. It wasn’t David who ascended to heaven. He now grounds the ascension of Jesus into heaven in Psalm 110, “The Lord said to My Lord, sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” Based on Joel 2, based on Psalm 16, based on 2 Samuel 7, based on Psalm 110, verse 36, “Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified.” That’s the first gospel sermon preached by an Apostle after the beginning of the church and it’s based on Old Testament texts. That’s how they preached from then on.

If you look, for a moment, at chapter 3, chapter 3, we can pick it up at verse 17, Peter’s second sermon. “And now, brethren,” verse 17, “I know that you acted in ignorance as your rulers did also, but the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.” And this is a cryptic summary of what Peter said. I’m sure he threw in the passages that talked about the suffering of Christ. There were plenty of Old Testament passages that talked about the suffering of Christ, of course. There was Isaiah 53, there was Zechariah chapter 12, there’s Psalm 22 in a detailed description of His crucifixion. And they’re all those passages that refer to the sacrificial system and the offering that God provided in Genesis 22, where God provided an animal to save the life of Isaac. We don’t know what he used, but he definitely said God announced beforehand these things from the mouth of all the prophets that His Christ would suffer and He has thus fulfilled it, therefore repent and return.” You need to repent and return based on the authority of the Old Testament Scripture so that the time of refreshing may come

from the presence of the Lord," that's the Kingdom, also called the time of restoration, verse 21.

"God," he says at the end of verse 21, "spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time about all these things." So, I'm saying that all these preachers go out on the day of Pentecost and the first two sermons you hear are grounded in Old Testament portions of Scripture. And then in verse 22, Peter quotes from Deuteronomy 18:15 where Moses wrote, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren, to him you shall give heed to everything he says to you." The prophet that shall come, famous Messianic text in Deuteronomy chapter 18. And it will be, verse 23, that every soul that doesn't heed that prophet, that prophet that will come, Messiah Christ, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel who is called a prophet in 1 Samuel 3:20, and all subsequent prophets onward also announced these days.

How can you reject when you are the sons of the prophets and the covenants. And to you, to Abraham, your father, came the promise in Genesis 22:18, in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. By the way, in Galatians, Paul takes that word "seed" and says it's not seeds, it's seed, and that seed refers to Jesus Christ Himself.

That's how they preached from the Old Testament. In chapter 4, after being dragged in before the authorities, the church is exploding, five thousand more believe, according to verse 4, and the rulers are greatly concerned. They bring them in, Peter filled with the Holy Spirit in verse 8, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people. If we're on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this name, this man stands here bef0ore you in good health. This Jesus, verse 11, comes right out of Psalm 118:22, He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief cornerstone. And there is salvation in no other name under heaven.

Again he affirms that Jesus is the one who being rejected became the head of the corner. They ought to know that. They know they rejected Him, they also know that thousands and thousands of people have come to believe in Him and the church has been established, the cornerstone being set. They did their apologetical preaching, their gospel preaching based on the Old Testament.

Going over to the seventh chapter, if you want to have an interesting exercise, go through the seventh chapter, the sermon of Stephen, count how many references there are to the Old Testament. Don't do it now. You'll be here after we're gone. There are dozens and dozens and dozens of them. He is so saturated with the Old Testament that it's staggering and amazing. Sometimes he quotes it specifically, sometimes he infers it. But it's just packed, Genesis, Exodus, the writings of Moses are here, references to the prophets, to Joshua as well. The prophets, First Chronicles, the history books, 2 Samuel he quotes, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings. This sermon is loaded with Old Testament quotes, all the

way down to verse 53 when he brings his sermon to the end in chapter 7 and they then stone him to death. He has proven from the Old Testament the person of Christ and the gospel of Christ and their response is to kill the messenger with stones. And one of the ones who was there affirming it was none other than Saul who later was converted on the Damascus Road and became the Apostle Paul. Stephen preached the Old Testament.

I can't resist this. Look at the eighth chapter of the book of Acts, let's follow them a little further. This is Philip and the eunuch, remember the story of Philip, and the eunuch? Philip was a member of the early church and Philip was sent by the Lord to join this chariot. There was an Ethiopian eunuch who was a court official, verse 27 says of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was a financial guy in charge of all of her treasure, and he come to Jerusalem to worship. This is a Gentile Ethiopian who has become a proselyte to Judaism and he comes to worship the true God. He's returning, sitting in his chariot reading the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit says Philip, "Go up and join the chariot. Philip ran up, heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, 'Do you understand what you're reading?' How could I unless someone guide me." And that's the veil, right. The veil is over his eyes. He's reading Isaiah 53, he doesn't know who it refers to.

If you ask a Jew today, you can ask an Orthodox Rabbi, you can take your pick of any of them, and they'll give you every interpretation of Isaiah 53, except Jesus Christ. And there are as many as you can think of. How can I? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. The passage of Scripture which he was reading was he was led as a sheep to slaughter, as a lamb before its shearers is silent, so he doesn't open his mouth. In humiliation his judgment was taken away. Who will relate his generation for his life is removed from the earth. The Jews sort of typically would refer to that to Israel. Israel was the suffering servant. But it doesn't quite work because it says he didn't open his mouth and Israel complained endlessly and widely about their troubles. And it couldn't refer to them because their life was never removed from the earth either, so he doesn't know who this refers to. But he had certainly heard the conventional wisdom which would have been some rabbinical interpretation that didn't make sense.

The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Tell me, of whom does the Prophet say this, of Himself or someone else?" Who's he talking about? "Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this scripture he preached Jesus to him." Don't you love that? That's what they did. They started with the Old Testament and they preached Jesus. And, you know, the message was effective and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing because he gave his heart to Jesus and he was baptized on the spot.

If you look at the tenth chapter again, you get more of this early apostolic preaching. This again is Peter, at the end of the tenth chapter, you remember, the situation in Caesarea, Cornelius and the other Gentiles who were there, Peter launches into the story of Jesus in verse 38, and Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, how he went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed by the devil for God was with him. We are all witnesses of these

things he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a cross. God raised him up on the third day and granted that he become visible not to all the people but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is to us, who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead. And he ordered us to preach to the people and solemnly to testify that this is the one who has been appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead…and here it comes…of him all the prophets bear witness.

And what do they testify? “That through His name, everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.” Is there that in the Old Testament? Is the message of forgiveness of sins by believing in Jesus in the Old Testament? Yes, Isaiah 53, Jeremiah 31, Zechariah 13:1, yes the forgiveness of sins will come through faith in the Messiah.

If you follow along a little further into the thirteenth chapter, we leave Peter behind, the great preacher of the opening section of Acts. And we come to Paul, and Paul and his companions leave Pathos, come to Perga and Pamphilia, southern part of Asia Minor. “John left them, returned to Jerusalem. But going on from Perga, arrived at the city in Antioch and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After reading the law and the prophets, the synagogue officials sent to them saying, ‘Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.’” So they’ve just read that the reading…whatever the set reading for that Sabbath was, Paul stands up as a visiting rabbi, motions with his hand and says, “Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt.”

“With an uplifted arm, he led them out from it.” He goes back to the exodus. For a period of about 40 years, he put up with them in the wilderness and then he destroyed…and when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he distributed their land as an inheritance, all of which took about 450 years, these things followed that, he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet, they asked for a king and on and on he goes, describing all of the history of the nation Israel.

Verse 22, “After he had removed them, he raised up David to be a king, their king, concerning whom he also testified and said, ‘I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart who will do all my will.’”

Then verse 23, “From the descendants of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior Jesus.” A Savior, Jesus.

So Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise to David. Again it goes back to 2 Samuel 7, that verse actually looks at a text in 1 Samuel 9 and 10, a couple of references there. Again they’re preaching Jesus the fulfillment of the Old Testament. If you knew your Old Testament, you would know Jesus is its fulfillment.

Let’s go to Acts 18, there are more, as you would expect. But I Acts 18:24, a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, there was a large colony of Jews in Alexandria, Egypt. An eloquent man came to Ephesus and he was mighty in the scriptures.” This is a Jew who has mastered the Old Testament. A powerful Old Testament preacher, this man had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in spirit, he was a passionate preacher, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John. He had a knowledge of Jesus, he had the knowledge of the baptism of John meaning when John baptized Jesus and said, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,” everything he knew about Jesus, he was preaching. And he was connecting it to the Old Testament.

He began to speak out boldly in the synagogue about Jesus. But then Priscilla and Aquila heard him, a Christian couple who had come to full knowledge of Jesus, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more extensively, really. They gave him the rest of the story because he didn’t know it all yet. He hadn’t had the full story. And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. And when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace.”

How did he help the people who had already believed? “For he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Old Testament Scripture that Jesus was the Christ. The power of His ministry was in connecting Jesus as the fulfillment to the Old Testament prophecies. That’s what they did. That’s what Apollos did, this mighty, powerful. Old Testament preacher.

Acts 26, quickly. Acts 26, Paul before Agrippa…now we’re moving along in the book of Acts. We’re moving along in the history of Paul. And he’s before Agrippa. He’s going to be sent to Rome as a prisoner. New Testament books, by this time, have been written. But he talks to King Agrippa who’s had extensive exposure to Jewish religion and the Jewish Scripture. He said, “I didn’t prove to be disobedient to the heavenly vision,” the Damascus Road experience, “but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem, and then throughout all the region of Judea, even to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance, and for this reason some Jews ceased me in the temple and tried to put me to death. So having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both small and great, stating nothing—and this is the nature of my preaching—I have been stating nothing but what the prophets and Moses said was going to take place that the Christ was to suffer and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead, He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people, and to the Gentiles.”

And by the way, light to the Gentiles through Messiah is the theme of the opening section of some of Isaiah 42 and the opening section of Isaiah 49. So he is saying, “I’ve said nothing but what is in the Old Testament.” And they want me dead.

Down in verse 27, “King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do.” And he’s stuck. In a short time, he’ll persuade me to become a Christian. What was the persuasion? The connection of Jesus to the Old Testament. He is clearly the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises. In the last chapter of the book of Acts, nothing changes. The final recorded event in the book of Acts is Paul and he’s lodged in Rome and lots of people are coming to him, verse 23, and he’s explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the Kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening. Isn’t that amazing? It’s amazing. Jews and Gentiles, and some were being persuaded because it’s pretty powerful to say, “Here’s an ancient book, written centuries ago and here is a man who specifically fulfills all that that ancient book said about the Messiah, whether you’re a Jew or not, that’s convincing.” That’s powerful.

And some were being persuaded and others wouldn’t believe. And when they didn’t agree with one another, they began leaving. And so Paul gave them a parting word, and guess where his parting word came from? Isaiah 6 verses 9 and 10, “Go to this people and say you will keep on hearing and will not understand, you will keep on seeing but will not perceive. The heart of this people has become dull, with their ears they scarcely hear. They have closed their eyes otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand what their hearts in return and I would heal them.” He pronounces doom on them, judgment on them because with a full understanding of Christ, from the Old Testament, as the fulfillment of all that the prophets said, they turn their back on that powerful incontrovertible evidence. They walk away and he pronounces final judgment on them. Verse 28, “Let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles. They will also listen. And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching from the Old Testament concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness unhindered.”

That’s what they did. That leads us to a final point, and we only have a few minutes, but that’s okay. The final point is this, first point—the Lord Jesus Christ said the Old Testament revealed Him. The disciples and the Apostles of Jesus Christ didn’t fully understand Christ in His death and resurrection, until they understood the Old Testament. The early Apostles and preachers of the gospel based their preaching on the Old Testament. The fourth point, the writers of the New Testament based their revelation on the Old Testament. And there’s so much of this…if I even began to do this, we would be here for days and days. There are literally hundreds of references by the writers of the New Testament to the Old Testament. Including all the New Testament writers, there are 312 different Old Testament passages quoted, referenced specifically…specifically. Some have suggested there’s as many as two thousand New Testament texts that allude to an Old Testament passage. There are 50 Old Testament references in Romans alone. The writers of the New Testament were saying that the whole of Christianity, all that’s contained in the Christian gospel, in all its fullness and all its richness is bedded and rooted and grounded in the Old Testament, which is the greatest single defense of the Christian faith because you have all that was prophesied in an ancient time fulfilled with centuries in

between. That's divine work.

For example, just a couple of simple examples, Paul begins the great book of Romans. "Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called as an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures." I preach a gospel bedded in the Holy Scriptures. When Paul wants to characterize the sinfulness of man, in chapter 3 starting in verse 10 through verse 18, that most familiar of all definitions of human sinfulness, none righteous, no not one, none who understands, none who seeks for God. All of it is from the Old Testament. Every statement he makes is found in the Old Testament and borrowed from the Old Testament. And there are 50, as I said, Old Testament references in the book of Romans alone. When Paul preaches to the Corinthians, the gospel chapter 15, 1 Corinthians, I make know to you, brethren, the gospel which I preach to you which also you received in which you stand, by which you are saved." Then he says, "I delivered you as a first importance what I received that Christ died for our sins according to the Old Testament Scriptures, that He was buried, He was raised on the third day according to the Old Testament Scriptures." All through his ministry that's what he did. And when they wrote it down, they wrote based on the Old Testament. The great overwhelming evidence for Christ as the Messiah, Redeemer and Savior is that He is the one who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies in broad scope and in tiny minute detail. And those are just a couple of references.

And you'll find them in the books, all the books of the New Testament record. It's not much wonder then that this was the theme. Christ and the Old Testament of all apostolic life and ministry. So, when we go back now into the Old Testament, we're going to find Christ. And since we already know all this revealed about Him in the New, He will become even more wonderfully known to us in the beautiful anticipatory prophecies that were given about Him.

One final word. Turn to Revelation 19—Revelation 19. An angelic visitor comes in a vision to John and says to him in verse 9, write, "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb," and he said to me, these are the true words of God." And then in verse 10, "Then I fell at His feet to worship Him." Well it's a nice gesture, John, but it's out of line. The angel says, "Do not do that, I'm a fellow servant of yours and your brethren, who hold the testimony of Jesus." Don't worship me.

Do you remember Hebrews 1:14 says, "Angels are sent to minister to the saints?" I'm your servant, you don't worship me. I'm sent from God as a fellow servant of yours and your brethren, other believers who hold the testimony of Jesus, the story of Jesus, the account of Jesus, the truth of Jesus, the revelation of Jesus, then this, he says, "Worship God, worship God." And then this closing statement. "Don't worship an angel; worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." If you want to know the heart of prophecy, the soul of prophecy, the center of prophecy, the theme of all preaching, and by prophecy we don't just mean predictive, although we don't exclude that. All Old Testament prophecy, all New Testament prophecy, all predictive prophecy, all proclamatory

prophecy, there's a sense in which prophecy biblically is predicting the future when God does it. There's a sense in which prophecy is proclaiming and preaching what is already been revealed. When I do it, that's a form of *prophemi*, speaking before, declaring, proclaiming, whether you're talking about biblical prophecy, biblical revelation or apostolic preaching, or the preaching of anybody, the Spirit, the heart, the life, the *ruach*, the *pneuma*, the breath, the soul, the loving aspect of all preaching, whether it's biblical revelation or whether it's proclamation of what is in the Bible, the heart of it all is the testimony of Jesus. He's the theme of all of it. That's why Paul says, "I'm determined to know nothing among you except Christ, and Him crucified."

I feel like Paul in Ephesians 3:8 who said, "To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the nations the unfathomable…unfathomable riches of Christ."

So, we're going to the Old Testament, folks, but nothing's going to change. We're going to preach Christ.

Father, we thank You for opening up to us so much of the glory of our Redeemer, our Savior, our Lord, on the pages of Holy Scripture, both New Testament and Old Testament. Fill our hearts with joy in anticipation of what it is that we're going to experience in coming to know Him and seeing Him in ways and from vantage points and angles and avenues and perspectives that perhaps we have never really fully understood, that will be revealed to us as we look at Him in the Old Testament in all His glory. Help us to be reminded again that You are the author of this book for no one can know the end from the beginning, no one knows the future but You. No one can write history before it happens but You. And the very evidence of Christ in the New Testament, being unmistakable the one promised in the Old Testament is proof that this is a divine book, this is Your book, and that means that all it says comes from You and You are true and in You there is no lie and every Word of this is true. We live by this book. We love this book. We long to obey this book and to proclaim its truths. And mostly, the soul of it, the life of it, the breadth of it, the *ruach* of it, the blast of it is Christ and the testimony concerning Him. May it be on our lips, on our hearts at all times, we pray in His name.

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