

Scripture's Testimony to Jesus
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John 5:37-40
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Please turn with me in your Bibles to John 5. The title of the message could be 'Evidence That Demands a Verdict – Part 2' but I think I've titled it 'Scripture's Testimony to Jesus'. That's what we're going to look at this morning. We're going to have as our sermon text just four verses, John 5:37-40. Let's read those verses together:

John 5:37-40 ~ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. 38 You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. 39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; 40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

Let's pray together:

Our Father, we ask that Your Spirit might help us now to think Your thoughts after You. That the meditations of our heart and the words of my mouth might be acceptable in Thy sight. Oh, Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. Amen.

This couple was traveling through Europe. Both were well educated. Both having PhDs, they were learned people who were enjoying touring the various sights of Europe, and taking in all of the culture and the history. They were Jews who were not practicing, atheists really. They were Jewish by birth, but atheists in their hearts. Someone in Switzerland said, "You guys need to go to L'Abri. It's a place where you can stay for virtually, almost no money. It's a great place. It's beautiful. It's a place where you'll meet a lot of interesting people. But be warned, it is a Christian Retreat Center." L'Abri of course, the place that Francis Schaeffer had started, the great Christian theologian, Francis Schaeffer. He passed away 30 years ago, I guess now.

So this man and his wife decided, "We'll go to L'Abri. We know enough about Christianity to ward off any of that foolishness. Though we're Jewish, we've heard the Christian message. We know about it. So let's go and we'll enjoy that." They were there for a number of days and had different conversations with a number of different people. All kinds of different people would gravitate to L'Abri. One day,

one of the people there they had been talking with over the few days before says, “I want to read you a passage of scripture.” He read to this nominal, Jewish couple from Isaiah 53, which we read earlier.

Isaiah 53:5 ~ But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

He read the entire passage and Richard, the man, said, “I’ve heard all that before. I’ve heard all that you guys have to say about Jesus, and I don’t buy it.” The man turned his Bible around to face him and Richard Ganz saw that he was reading, not from the New Testament, but from the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah. He was instantly converted. The Spirit of God caused him to be born again. This man who was a PhD in psychology, working in a state psychiatric hospital in New York, he was a psychiatrist, began telling his patients about Jesus Christ. He got fired pretty quickly. Not before he saw one person who was absolutely catatonic, in a state where he was drawn up in the fetal position all day. He hadn’t spoken a word in over a year. Richard Ganz preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to him, and he said, “He and I left the hospital on the same day.”

The power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the New Testament is not a new message, it’s the flowering of something that’s been growing from the very beginning of God’s revelation. That’s what Jesus is saying here in this passage. The irony is He’s speaking to those who are immersed in the Old Testament scriptures but somehow have missed the point. What I want us to do this morning is really gather out thoughts around two main points. The first is going to be hit fairly briefly, and the second we’re going to camp out there for a while.

1) The Astonishing Ignorance of Unbelief:

Now here we have an example of it in really the Jewish people. They did not believe Jesus, but that’s just typical of all humanity. Had you and I been Jews back then, we would have been just as blind as they were. If you don’t believe that, read Romans 1:18-32 and see how blind we are as Gentiles. We make them look really nice. But there’s something about sin that is so dark in the mind that has alienated the affections, that has bound the will, that the unbelieving heart will not believe in the face of incontrovertible evidence. In this statement of Jesus: *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.* You can hear the broken-heartedness of the Messiah, the Savior, saying that as He

says it. “Do you not see? You want life and you search the scriptures hoping that you might find life, but the scriptures are pointing to Me. The only way to have life is to come to Me.” He indicts their ignorance, clearly and forcefully, because He’s trying to wake them out of the stupor, to wipe the glaze from their eyes, and to help them see clearly so that they might be saved. Now I wonder how many later in that crowd came to faith because of what Christ did in this message.

The astonishing ignorance of unbelief is illustrated in a three-fold indictment in Verses 37 and 38.

John 5:37-38 ~ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. 38 You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

This is a three-fold indictment. You have not heard His voice, you have not at any time seen His form, and you do not now have His Word abiding in you. Now this was a powerful confrontation that would have taken the Jew who prided himself, they prided themselves in the fact that they were the one group of people on the face of the Earth who had heard God’s voice at Mount Sinai. In Exodus 19, they heard the voice of God. They had the voice of God contained in the law, the Torah, the prophets, the writings. He says, “You have never heard His voice. That’s the problem. Though you have the scriptures, though you’ve read them, though you search them, you’re missing the point. You’ve never heard the voice of God in the scriptures. You’ve never seen His form. The form of God is visible in the Old Testament in a spiritual sense. It’s visible in the Old Testament and you have not seen His form. And you who claim to be scribes, people, students of the Word, you don’t have His Word abiding in you.”

I think in one sense, there are echoes of three things they would have seen, the thoughtful Jew, who even in unbelief would have seen these repudiations of things they thought about themselves. They thought they had heard God’s voice, they were like Moses who had God speak to him face to face. He’s saying, “Though you’ve claimed to follow Moses, you are nothing like Moses.” To have seen His form, who was it who sees His form? Actually, ironically, in the Old Testament you have a number of times where people see the form of God. Now not the face of God, not His glory unbridled, but you have Gideon, you have Samson and his wife, you have Daniel. One of the first ones that are pronounced, maybe the most emphatic is Jacob, who wrestles with an angel, who wrestles with the one that he knows to be God because he names the place that he was wrestling all night, Peniel, face of God. “I’ve seen God’s face and I’ve lived.” Jacob felt the form, saw

the form. “You claim to be descendants of Jacob of Israel and you have never at any time seen God’s form. You’re not like Moses. You’re not like Jacob, and you claim to have the scriptures abiding in you.” Here you have echoes throughout the Word. Joshua is one who was told to have the scripture abiding in him, but I think perhaps the Jew would have thought most emphatically about David in the Psalms. Think about Psalm 1, Psalm 19, and Psalm 119.

Psalm 119:11 ~ Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

Psalm 1:1-2 ~ How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

“You pride yourself of being followers of Moses, Jacob, and David, but you are not like them in the least.” We need to ask ourselves, especially when you realize that the focus of this message was the theological conservatives of the day. They had liberals in 1st Century Israel, the Sadducees. They had the ‘in name only’ Jewish atheists. But here the message is aimed at those who are in the scriptures, studying the scriptures, but have not found God. It is a sobering reminder to you and me because we are in the conservative camp. That it’s not enough just to know the facts of the Word, you don’t just know about God, you must know Jesus Christ personally because there will be many on that day who say, “Lord! Lord! Did we not prophesy in Your name? Did we not cast out demons in Your name?” Those are the theological conservatives. He will say what? “Depart from me, you who work lawlessness, I never knew you.”

This passage calls us to examine ourselves. “Have I really met Christ? Am I really loving God, or am I loving truth, and loving theology?” You can’t love God without loving truth and loving theology, but those are not the end, they are the means to the end. The end is Jesus Christ. Knowing, and loving, and walking before God. It’s clear from the beginning. What did God want Abraham to do? He said, “Walk before My face. Be mindful of My presence.” The Word should cultivate a heart of loving reverence where we want to walk in His presence. We’re thinking about Him in a personal way. It’s not that we’re following rules, or we’re trying to think the right doctrine just so that we can dot our I’s and cross our T’s. No, we are in the doctrine because we want to love our Savior. Jesus is saying, “This is the irony. It’s amazing, it’s astonishing that you would be ignorant, though surrounded and immersed, your minds filled with scriptures, yet your hearts

empty.” Beware! Ask God every time you read the Word, not to be learning facts about Him but to be coming to know Him. “I don’t just want to be a theological conservative and have all my doctrine in line, I want to be a passionate lover of Christ. When I see you Lord Jesus, I want to see in Your eyes your recognition of me and for me to recognize You. That’s the One I’ve longed for.” You see that throughout the scriptures. It’s a relationship. Yes, it involves theological precision, it involves defending the truth. Absolutely, you can’t have one without the other, but you’ve got to have both. Now, that’s the first point, the astonishing ignorance.

2) Abundant Evidence:

The second point is in light of abundant evidence. He says, *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me*;... ‘The Scriptures’ is referring to the Old Testament canon. What we now have is 39 books of the Old Testament. The Jews of the 1st Century had the same 39 books that you and I have. They did not have the Roman Catholic Apocrypha. 1st Century Jews regarded that as all non-biblical. So when Jesus said, “The scriptures testify to Me,” He wasn’t talking about those books. He was talking about these books, these 39. How does the scripture testify to Jesus? I want to talk about two ways it testifies. The abundant evidence, two sub-points. First of all, the abundant evidence given in typology. And second, the abundant evidence given in direct argument.

A) Abundant Evidence Given in Typology:

Typology, first of all. The Old Testament is replete with types of Christs. We have this concept clearly enunciated in Hebrews 11:19 when we’re told that Abraham, when he offered Isaac. He offers up Isaac and the author of Hebrews tells us that he knew that God had said, “Through Isaac your descendants will be named.” He believed the promise that through Isaac, the great nation and the Great Redeemer will come. “If you really tell me to kill him and I kill him, then You Lord, must be going to raise him from the dead, because you cannot deny Yourself. You’re faithful.” Abraham understood that. Isn’t that astonishing? So when God says, “Do not harm the lad, your son, your only son whom you love, Isaac, do not harm him.”

Hebrews 11:19 ~ He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

Hebrews 11:19 says that he received him back as a type, a ‘tupos’. It is a mark that is clearly recognizable. What he’s saying is that Abraham in that moment knew

something of what I shared a little bit about last week, “That it’s not my son, whom I love, my only son that’s to be offered. He’s a type of Your Son Whom You love. He is the One.” Do you remember that he named that place Yahweh Yira Jehovah Jireh? ‘The Lord will provide’. It was said unto that day in the mountain of the Lord, it will be provided. The author of Genesis, Moses, tells us it’d been said since that day. In the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.

2,000 years after Abraham offered Isaac and saw that type, that type came to fulfillment—the anti-type, the shadow gave way to substance when God offered his Son. Scholars believe the mountain upon which Abraham offered Isaac was in Jerusalem. There was no Jerusalem at that point, but that it was in the location of Jerusalem, 2,000 years before the city has become the city that it was. Abraham offers his son and the Lord says, “No, this is where, but it’s not your son, it’s My Son.”

But the idea of type, there are all kinds of types in the Old Testament. We’re not going to go through many because actually that’s one of the things that have been going on in our morning Bible study. I mentioned the ‘Messiah in the Old Testament’ being taught by Todd Guthrie, our Chairman of the Deacons. One of the things he’s working through is the fact that in the Old Testament you have these streams of Messiah. A three-fold stream—Prophet, priest, and king coming together in the concept of Messiah. Three anointed offices. Messiah comes from ‘moshiach’ which means ‘to anoint’. Christ is basically the same word, just in Greek. The anointed One. We need a prophet, we need a priest, and we need a king. God is to anoint one. He will empower a prophet to speak the Word of God, a priest to bring man back to God, and a king to reign over us. In the Old Testament, these three streams converge into one like the Ohio River and the Arkansas River coming into the Mississippi River so that they all flow into the gulf. The fulfillment is Christ. We could spend hours, and they’ve been doing that on Sunday mornings. Months, in fact. Todd was a little disappointed not to have more time. We gave him an extra month but that wasn’t enough, and am I one to cast a stone at that?

There are so many types like that that God had built into the very fabric of the entire Old Testament. They were pointers, anticipations, shadows of Christ. All of these things converging on the Man born in Bethlehem, raised in Nazareth, the God Man. Think about just the calendar. We could do so many different things, but let’s just take the calendar. There are three major feasts that the Jews were to celebrate. The Passover, which celebrated the fact that God delivered His people from Egypt. The Passover in which a spotless Lamb is killed and the blood is

rubbed across the doorpost of a home, and everyone inside the home where the doorpost has the blood upon it, the Death Angel, the avenger, the wrath of God passes over. Everyone who does not experiences the wrath of God, coming in horror and terror, as the firstborn of all Egypt dies. When the Israelites left Egypt, they left with the mournful cries of the Egyptians ringing in their ears. The Egyptians, in utter devastation bring out their gold and silver saying, “Take this with you. Please go!” A number of Egyptians went with them too because they had seen that all the gods of Egypt are not the true God. We have to come to know the true God and His name is Yahweh. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7, “Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been offered.” The Passover Lamb was a picture of Jesus. He must be offered and the blood must be spread across the doorpost of your life if God is to pass over you. When you have Christ, there remains no more wrath for you.

Romans 8:1 ~ Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

All the wrath, Jesus says, “It is finished!” on the cross. He had swallowed up the whole cup of God’s wrath so that if you’re in Christ, no matter what sins you’ve committed, there remains not one inkling of negative thought from God toward you. In fact, not only that, you’re not just neutral, we know that you are clothed in righteousness. God doesn’t look at you with any negativity. He doesn’t look at you winking. No, He looks at you in light of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and He says, “Come here, dear child. Well done, good and faithful servant.”

The Passover fulfilled in Christ, the Pentecost, the Feast of First Fruits. This is where they went into the land and sowed crops. The Lord said, “When you sow your crops, bring in the first sheaves of the produce. Do not eat them, bring them before Me.” This Feast of Pentecost is the Feast of First Fruits. They would sacrifice a lamb on that Day of First Fruits. They were to count a certain amount time, seven Sabbaths, and then the feast came to its consummation. It was all about celebrating, tied together with Passover, actually the Lamb of Passover and 50 days afterwards, First Fruits. The Passover Lamb dies, you count seven Sabbaths past that, 50 days, Pentecost, and then you bring in the first fruits.

Jesus died during Passover. He died on the day the Passover lambs were to be killed. Paul says, “Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed.” He spent 40 days with His disciples and then He ascended to glory. Ten days later, remember the disciples go and wait in Jerusalem? Why are they waiting on Him? ***Wait til the Spirit comes upon you.*** What day did it come upon? This happened to be the Day

of Pentecost, the Day of First Fruits, the day when you celebrate God's harvest. The harvest happens because the Passover lamb died. Now the harvest is brought in. What's the harvest? The Spirit coming upon all believers so that we now have the harvest of God's power and His Spirit inside of us. We are His harvest.

The Feast of Tabernacles, a third feast throughout the year where they would celebrate the time of wilderness wandering. They would make for themselves booths or little tents, kind of lean-to shelters. They would live in these during the Feast of Tabernacles to commemorate the time when they were in the wilderness. What was that all about? Well, in the wilderness, they were in the wilderness in their tabernacles, and who else was in the wilderness with them? God. That's at the time when God chose to live among His people. He never made Himself visible, His presence visible in glory until they were in the wilderness. The Lord gives the tabernacle. Remember the tabernacle was a big tent. It was a big glorious tent. The Lord came and pitched His tent among all those other tents. The people are in the wilderness. How do you get into the promise land? How do you get into God's land? Well, God is going to come pitch His tent among you. Just like your tent, He's going to pitch a tent, and He's going to lead you into Canaan. Remember the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud? Well, how did God lead His people into His land?

John 1:14 ~ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14 says, ***And the Word became flesh,...*** and pitched His tent among us. We beheld His glory, ***...glory as of only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*** To lead us, what's our body called? It's a tent, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5, when we lay aside this tent we will have a dwelling from God. Our body is a tent. Jesus came and He took a tent, flesh. Since the children share in flesh and blood, He also partook of the same.

So the yearly calendar had those three feasts that were constantly anticipating Christ, and He fulfills. Then the weekly calendar, what was this Sabbath? In fact, you see this, if you want to look this up later, Colossians 2:16-17. The apostle Paul says there, "Hey guys, some of you are getting too hung up on the keeping of these feasts and the Sabbath, and you're acting like it's still a part of our justification. That's not right." These were shadows. The substance is Christ. The feasts were all shadows of Christ and the Sabbath, he says, was a shadow of Christ.

God ordained from the very beginning of creation, when He created the world, He'd create it in six days. Why? He wanted a seven day week. He just got done early, huh? "I thought it was going to take seven days, but it only took six." Of course not. He took six days, because He wanted to take six days, and He wanted the seventh day which was going to be the Sabbath where the Lord rested from all His works. Isn't it amazing? Why would God need rest? In fact, He says throughout the Scripture, "The Lord's not like you. I neither slumber nor sleep." Isaiah 40 says, "I do not grow weary. Do you think I get tired?" He didn't need rest. What's that about? For Him, it was celebrating His work. He's speaking in a way we can understand. He's baby talking with us so that we can understand. We know what it's like to finish a job, and to sit down and rest, and to celebrate what we did (when that works out well). Some of you have more success with that than I do. But when it happens, you want to celebrate that, and that's what God is doing. He's celebrating His work of creation. He does that, and then He says to the Jews, when He takes them as a people in the exodus, "Six days you will labor, and the seventh day you shall rest. And on the seventh day, I want you to join in My Sabbath. You devote yourself to thinking about the great things that I've done in creation." When you read Exodus 20 and you see the command there, He talks about how in six days, the Lord created the world. It's about reflecting on the work of God in creation.

Then in Deuteronomy He starts reflecting upon the work of God in redemption. He says, "Six days you will labor, and the seventh day you shall rest, and think about the fact that the Lord delivered you from Egypt." What He's saying is that the Sabbath day is the day where we stop working and we enter into God's rest. Jesus Christ is our Sabbath. That's why the Lord did it in six days, and had a Sabbath day. I think we're better off resting a day, but that wasn't the main reason. The main reason was so that we could understand what the author of Hebrews says. "There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God." What Paul is trying to explain in Romans 4:5, where he talks about how to get saved, *...the one who ceases from his own work and believes in Him who justifies the ungodly...* that is salvation. You cease from your own work and you believe in Christ. And that's why Jesus' words are so often filled with rest imagery. "***Come unto Me, you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.***" All of the Sabbath, every week, that was to be a pointer. We need rest. We need God to bring us into rest. Our rest is not in glorying in what we've done, but it's in glorying in what He's done. That was a pointer continually in all the Scripture, unfolding that throughout the Old Testament. Those are types, and we could go on with that, but let's stop there and now go to the second sub-point under our second point.

B) The Argument of the Old Testament:

The abundant evidence is seen first of all in the typology of the Old Testament, and secondly in the argument of the Old Testament. Jesus says the Scriptures, “Testify about Me.” We’ve seen that John uses that word ‘testify’ and ‘testimony’. It’s a very important word. It occurs more in the Gospel of John than any other book in the New Testament. He’s basically building a case throughout his Gospel. What Jesus is saying here is, “The Father has been building a case about Me from the beginning of the Scripture. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. It is these that testify about Me.” Genesis all the way through Malachi testify about Jesus Christ. It makes the case for the need of a Savior.

This week in our Wednesday night study, we have testimony time, which is a great blessing. Testimony: we use that word differently, don’t we? Testimony means to tell you what happened in my life lately, but it does mean to testify to God’s goodness, doesn’t it? But what we’ve been doing when we’ve been teaching on Wednesday nights, is we’ve been working through the Old Testament. We haven’t really titled the study, but something like “Through the Bible at 30,000 Feet”. We take usually two weeks for a book, which is really hard for me, just flying through Genesis, flying through Exodus, and I think “Through the Bible at 30,000 Feet” is a good title for that. You actually first mentioned that to me, Barry. But it’s so helpful to get the basic argument of the book, and what you see as you step back from Genesis, as you step back from Exodus, as you step back from each book, is you see it’s building the case that we need a Savior.

In fact, let me just work through that with you. I want to take us through the Bible quickly...

In Genesis 1-11, you have God create the world, it’s good, and man falls. How far has man fallen? How bad is it? Man is dead Spiritually, and Genesis 4-11 is making that point. The first thing that happens after they fall, is they start killing each other. Cain kills Abel. Then later in Genesis 4, there’s even more murder going on. In Genesis 6-8, it gets so bad that the Lord has to wipe the world clean and wash it all with a flood, because wickedness is so great. After He cleans it, surely now it’s going to be okay. No, in Genesis 11, you have the tower of Babel, where man seeks to turn apart from God, and make a name for himself, and to exalt himself. There’s no hope of man coming back to God. That’s what happens at the end of Genesis 11. The Lord says, “Look at that. Look at man. Look at his sin.”

How will God bring man to Himself? How can man come to God? Man can't. God's going to have to do it.

In Genesis 12-50, you have the unfolding of God's plan, really the trajectory set there, and the key concept of covenant. God is going to bring man back to Himself by establishing a covenant, which is a relationship, a bond in blood. It's going to be sovereignly administered. God's going to dictate the terms. Genesis 12, Genesis 15, and Genesis 17 look at the covenant with Abraham. The Lord is going to do it. It's going to be a very costly thing, but the Lord is going to do it, and He gives the promises of the covenant, the land of Canaan. Why is the land of Canaan so big in the Bible? Why does it talk about it so much? A land flowing with milk and honey. I think it was a pretty great land. I wonder if it was quite that great. I mean, I haven't been to Israel, but I haven't heard about it still flowing with milk and honey. I don't think it was so much the physical. I think it was always a type. There was beauty. It's the beautiful land, not because of the land, but because God's chosen to dwell there. It's the place of His presence. Jerusalem is not such a great city in and of itself, but it is the place God placed His presence, and therefore, it is the most splendid of all, far surpassing every other place. So Canaan is a type of coming back into God's presence. So the Lord says, "If you're going to come into My land, that means coming into My presence, and it's going to happen through My seed, the descendants, but really the one seed."

Now, in a covenant relationship, we need to come back into the land. So then we need to get back into God's land and we're a mess. Genesis says we're a mess, but God's going to do something about it. He's going to do it. In fact, you have in Genesis 15, another quick typology in the covenant ceremony, remember, where Abraham is supposed to walk through the pieces. Remember they cut the animals in half, and this is how they made covenants back then? You cut animals in half. A cow would be cut down the middle. There was blood and guts. There it is separated. A lamb cut down the middle. Birds cut and killed. You laid it out, and the parties walked through them, and they uttered the promises of the covenant. "I promise to be faithful to you." "I promise to be faithful to you. If I'm not faithful, let me be as these animals." That was so that this covenant could be sealed.

Abraham falls into a deep sleep, and what happens is he misses out. He doesn't get to walk through the pieces. A flaming torch passes through the pieces back and forth. What is God saying? "If I keep not My covenant, let Me be these pieces." That's unthinkable. God will keep His covenant. "If you do not keep this covenant, Abraham, let the curse of the covenant fall upon Me, your God." It's picturing Christ. He became a curse for us, for it's written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs

on a tree.” He was cursed. God said, “I will take the curse in the Person of my Son, so that you can come back to Me.” How can we come to dwell in God’s land?

The message of Exodus is essentially that the people are slaves in Egypt, they’re slaves in the kingdom of darkness, and they must be rescued from the kingdom of darkness by God’s mighty hand. If you and I are going to come to dwell in God’s land, Exodus says that you must be rescued and God must do it. You can’t climb out of the kingdom of darkness. You can’t make your way out. You can’t cooperate and put together a ladder or some kind of building. God must reach His hand down and pluck you from the kingdom of darkness. That’s what Colossians 1:13 says:

Colossians 1:13 ~ For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,...

In Leviticus: “How can we dwell in God’s presence? How can we who are sinful dwell in God’s presence?” There is the tabernacle dwelling among them. Immediately God says, “Look, you’re going to need to have a sacrificial system, and so they would kill daily, scores, and hundreds, and sometimes thousands of animals. The blood would flow around the tabernacle, saturate the ground, and they’d be walking in mud, walking around the tabernacle in blood and dirt. The smell of all that death, the stench of it, how offensive. How utterly disgusting. God says, “This is what your sin is like. The only way you can come into My presence is for something awful, something revolting to happen, and the supremacy, the fulfillment of that is when God’s own Son, the most righteous and spotless, the most worthy, was treated with absolute contempt by all evil. That’s the most unjust, wicked thing that ever happened in one sense. It was the greatest outpouring of evil, and Satan poured forth his fury with all that he could, and all the people were there at the cross, yelling, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” and mocking Him. It was evil, and yet God was willing it all. As Peter says in Acts 2, “Pontius Pilate and the Jewish leaders gathered together against God’s Son to do that which You had foreordained would happen. They did God’s perfect will.” Satan is on a string, and the Lord leads him where He will. But Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers tell us that. “How can we dwell in God’s land?” The people are outside the land. They’re to cross over, but they don’t. Why? They don’t have faith. You need to believe.

There you have a type of Jesus with the bronze serpent. When they’re bitten by snakes in their unbelief, God says, “Moses, make a serpent out of bronze, and place it on a pole, and let everybody look at that serpent. When they look at that

serpent, they'll be saved." That's a picture of Jesus Christ. It's so odd that a serpent would be a picture of Christ. It is, until you realize that Jesus Christ must be bitten on the heel by the serpent, and on the cross become sin for us. Then it makes sense.

In Deuteronomy: "What does God want from us? We need to get in His land. We need to be rescued by His mighty hand. We need to have sacrifices. We need to walk by faith. We need to have a relationship." Deuteronomy is all about relationship. He talks about loving the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind (Deuteronomy 6:5). 18 times in that book, He speaks of our need to have a love relationship with God, and He also tells us that something radical is going to have to happen to make that happen. He first introduces the concept of circumcising our hearts. It's not the cutting away of foreskin. It's the cutting away of the evil in our hearts (Deuteronomy 10:16 and Deuteronomy 30:6).

In Joshua: Moses dies and now what does God continue to add to this in the book of Joshua? "How can we enter God's land? How can we take possession of God's land and dwell in His holiness?" It's going to come through extraordinary acts of violence. It's going to come through great bloodshed and ugliness. Remember they have to kill all the people in the land? Great things have to happen. "How do we come to dwell in God's land?" We have to die to ourselves. Our sin nature must be killed. We have to die with Christ. It's a great transaction of bloodshed that happens.

In Judges: We looked at that in the last two weeks. How can God's people dwell in God's land? The message of Judges is, "Look how bad it is. Man, we're a mess, We need a king."

In Samuel: The book of Samuel comes along and says, "We do need a king. What kind of king do we need? A king like Saul? No, we need a king like David, a king that is a man after God's own heart." But you see at the end of the book of 2 Samuel, that David's not so great after all, is he? "We need one greater than David."

In Kings: It opens up with David's son Solomon building the temple, the glory of Israel reaching its zenith. What's the question there? "We need a king who will help us to worship God in righteousness. We need a king who will lead us to worship God in righteousness." There you have Saul praying such an amazing prayer at the dedication of the temple, such righteousness flooding Israel, and yet how quickly it departs. Saul himself turns away from the Lord, and wrestles and struggles for years. The kingdom is torn asunder, so that now the Northern

kingdom and the Southern kingdom continue on for hundreds of years. The Northern kingdom is constantly falling into idolatry, the sins of Jeroboam, worshiping somewhere other than Jerusalem, and the Southern kingdom even at its best moments, even with people like Hezekiah or Asa, what do you have? You have this refrain. Asa turned his heart to the Lord. He did great things for God, and yet he did not tear down the high places. “The king that leads us in righteousness, we have not found Him yet. Even the best kings of Israel are not there. We need a king who will be a king after God’s own heart and follow God with all of his heart, and lead us in righteousness.”

I’m following the order of the Old Testament in Hebrew, so bear with me. I’m going to skip Chronicles right now, because the Old Testament in Hebrew does that. I’m going through it as they read it and looked at the argument. They would go to Isaiah next.

In Isaiah: There’s so much in Isaiah. Let me just remind you of what we read earlier. The servant of the Lord will be pierced through for our transgressions. “The one who will come and be God’s servant, and will bring God’s rule, and bring the holy one of Israel and His people into his presence, He will be pierced through for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquity.”

In Jeremiah: “He promises that one will come who will bring a new covenant, and in this new covenant, He will write His law on our hearts so that we will do His word, we will obey Him. He’s going to do something radical. We need a new covenant. The old covenant is not going to work.” That’s why Jesus said, “This is the new covenant in My blood.”

In Ezekiel: Ezekiel is called so many times ‘son of man’. God calls him that. And look at Ezekiel and see that he is just a shadow of Christ. When God calls him to the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37, He says, “Son of man, can these bones live? Son of man, prophecy.” Do you not see Jesus Christ coming into the valley of dry bones that is this world, spiritual death everywhere? The true Son of man is prophesying, and the valley of dry bones becomes alive with Spiritual life, because He’s going to be the one who can take out the heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh.

In Hosea: “We need a man of righteousness who passionately pursues his unfaithful bride.”

In Joel: “We need one who can come and erase the devastation caused by the locusts that have devoured everything good in this world, who will in that day, pour out His Spirit on all mankind so that our sons and daughters will prophesy.” That was fulfilled at Pentecost. Pentecost, the day of celebration in the harvest that Jesus has brought.

In Amos: The farmer writes about the one who will come once and for all to end the famine in the land. Amos says there’s a famine in the land, a famine for the word of God, and for 400 years of silence, there was a famine in the land, no one speaking the word of God until fairer lips than we have ever heard with our own ears, began to speak. The Word had become flesh, and the Word was speaking, and they heard His voice, and they said, “Never did anyone speak like that Man.”

In Obadiah: He is one who will come with the fire of God and set ablaze the sons of Esau and all the opponents of God.

In Jonah: Jesus is the prophet who, though He comes in judgment upon some of the wicked, He will turn the hearts of even those whom we regard as most wicked: the Ninevites, the Assyrians. He will come and turn their hearts back to God, bringing them back to repentance, but first He must be buried in the belly of the earth for three days and three nights, like Jonah was buried in the belly of a fish.

In Micah: Micah anticipates Him saying, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, from you will go forth a ruler whose goings forth are from the days of eternity.”

In Nahum: He rides the whirlwind in the storm. The mountains quake and the hills dissolve at His coming as He brings and pours out His fierce wrath on the wicked.

In Habakkuk: Habakkuk comes to know Him in the swirling storms of judgment that surround Israel during the Babylonian invasion. Habakkuk comes to know Christ as the Lord God my strength, who makes my feet like hinds feet, and enables me to stand on the high places.

In Zephaniah: He is the Lord God who’s in your midst, a victorious warrior who will exalt over you with joy.

In Haggai: At the rebuilding of the temple, Solomon’s temple had been so resplendent, so magnificent. When the foundation was laid, those who had seen Solomon’s temple, wept and mourned. The young people didn’t know any better and were celebrating. You couldn’t tell the difference between those who were

crying and those who were rejoicing. God put these words in Haggai's mouth, and he said, "I tell you the glory of this latter house shall exceed the glory of the former." Jesus is that glory.

In Zechariah: Behold, your king is coming to you gentle and mounted on a donkey.

In Malachi: He is the God who will suddenly come to His temple, who will come as a refiner's fire and like a fuller's soap. And when He comes, who can endure the day of His coming?

And then we go to the writings in the Hebrew Bible.

In Psalms: Half of the Psalms are written by David, a king after God's heart who is our worship leader. That's what Psalms are. They're worship songs. He's calling us to worship. Jesus is the King who comes and He makes true worshipers of us all.

In Job: He's the man of righteousness who is afflicted by Satan to such an extraordinary degree, and who comes forth purified. Jesus is like Job, the one who was supremely afflicted by Satan, and who comes forth perfect in righteousness.

In Proverbs: He's the man of wisdom. Jesus is the supreme Man of wisdom, who comes and shows us the way of righteousness.

In Ruth: There in the writings, what do we need to be saved? Ruth the Moabitess comes under the shelter of God's wings through a kinsmen redeemer. We need a near-kinsman to redeem us from slavery. Jesus is our near-kinsman. He shares in our flesh and blood.

In Song of Songs: "We need a lover of our souls. We need a husband who will long for us as the most perfect husband." Jesus is that faithful Husband.

In Ecclesiastes: "We need a king who is also a preacher." That's what you see in Ecclesiastes. Apparently Solomon, at the end of his life, after his failures, comes back to God, and he's the king who is a preacher, and he says, "Everything is vanity, but this: to fear God." Jesus Christ is the King who never departed from the Lord, but who preaches that message: Fear God.

In Lamentations: What you have there is Jeremiah, the weeping prophet mourning over Jerusalem, and how that's just a shadow of Jesus who, when He looked back at the streets of Jerusalem, said, "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem! How I've longed to bring you to Myself. You who killed the prophets, I've longed to bring you to Myself as a hen would bring her chicks under her wing, but you were not willing."

In Esther: There's not one mention of the Name of God in all the book. That's one of the astonishing things in the Canon. But the whole book is about the attempted destruction of the seed of Israel. It's about annihilating, exterminating the people of God, which would have put an end to the plan of salvation, and would have stopped redemption, and yet the message of that is hope in God. Against all obstacles, He will vindicate His promises and bring His salvation.

In Daniel: There Jesus is the Son of man who rides on the clouds of glory, to whom will be given all power and authority.

In Chronicles: This is the last book of the Hebrew Old Testament. After the exile, the message of Chronicles is: "We need a king like David, bringing these things back together. We need a priest, a godly priesthood, and we need the temple." The focus is basically keep your eye on the Davidic line, keep your eye for a godly priest, and keep your eye on the temple. I think Simeon and Anna did that. They kept their eye on the temple, and one day that newborn king came in, and that old man Simeon had been praying that he might see. He says, "I know now that I've seen the salvation of God."

The whole Bible points to Jesus Christ. Every page of it shows us His glory. Every page of it calls and awakens for us a hunger. It says that the Lord is whetting our appetites. He was whetting the appetites of the Jewish people from Genesis 1 all the way through the Old Testament, saying, "You need what only I can bring." Then He's saying essentially, "Open wide your mouth, that I may fill it," and then Jesus comes and He walks in, and every stream finds its fulfillment in the delta, the full exposure of the ocean that is Jesus Christ. How could they have missed it? And yet you and I are in danger of the same thing if we read the passage of Scripture and we don't see Christ. So let us read our Bibles with an urgency to see our Savior, and let us glory in our Savior.

It's amazing how the Lord could put together a book written by more than forty people, over more than 1,500 years, in three different languages, on three different continents, by all kinds of different people, with different educational backgrounds, yet one message: Jesus Christ. Why would we be unbelieving? Why would we

ever doubt? May God help us to be people who walk in faith, and who evermore can have the echo of the cry that the Old Testament should have ended with, which is the echo of the cry that the New Testament ends with: *Even so, come Lord Jesus.*

Let's pray together...

Our Father, we praise You for the beauty and the glory of Your Word, the way that You have revealed Yourself and disclosed Your heart to sinful people who were willfully blind, stiffening our necks, and yet You showed us such beauty and glory, and then, Father, You gave us new hearts, and You opened our eyes, and You unstopped our ears, so that we could see Your form, hear Your voice, and You gave us new hearts that we could have Your Word written on our hearts. Thank You, Lord, for Jesus Christ. Father, help all of us in this room to evaluate if we've truly come to know and love You, and those here who know they haven't, Lord, let them run to Christ today. So worthy a Savior, so glorious a Master... Father, be glorified in our hearts. We pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.

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