



In-Depth Studies Canada



– Home Bible Studies –

The Unfolding Revelation of Christ in the Bible

Week 1 “Introduction: Jesus our Interpreter”

What Does Jesus Think of the Old Testament?

“Jesus drives us back to the Old Testament to examine it through Christian eyes, teaching that it leads us back to him. In doing biblical theology as Christians, we do not start at Genesis 1 and work our way forward until we discover where it is heading. Rather we first come to Christ, and he directs us to study the Old Testament in the light of the gospel. The gospel will interpret the Old Testament by showing us its goal and meaning.”

Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, p. 55

Jesus’ Teaching on the Old Testament

Jesus says the OT is the trustworthy word of God.

Jesus says the OT is historically reliable.

Most importantly, Jesus says the OT points to him.

“The evidence that the Bible is the written Word of God is anchored in the authority of Jesus Christ.”

Norman L. Geisler, *Christian Apologetics*, p. 353.

Why Should We Study the Bible? Our greatest need is to know and know about Jesus Christ. The Bible is the only true portrait of him.

Why Do We Trust the Bible? We trust the Bible because we trust what Jesus teaches about it.

Why Study the OT?

OT: About 75 percent of the Bible

Some say we shouldn’t (Example: Marcion’s heretical *Antithesis* denied any connection between the God of the OT and the God of the NT)

Matt. 5:17: *Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*

We study the OT because Jesus and the NT writers say we should.

Goldsworthy's summary:

Unifying theme: The Kingdom of God (God's people in God's place under God's rule)

1. The pattern of the kingdom established in the Garden of Eden.
2. This pattern broken when sin enters in.
3. The pattern reestablished in salvation history in Israel but never fully realized.
4. The same pattern shapes the prophetic view of the future kingdom.
5. The kingdom pattern perfectly established in Jesus in a representative way.
6. The pattern of the kingdom begins to be formed in the people of God through the gospel.
7. The pattern of the kingdom is consummated at Christ's return.

How Do We Interpret the Bible?

Jesus' teaching preserved in the teaching of the NT writers (This was Jesus' own plan: John 16:12; John 14:25, 26; John 15:26, 27; 16:12-15).

"[W]e have no Christ except the one whom the apostles have given to us. Jesus Himself left no treatises on doctrine. He left no written dialogues. We are dependent on the apostles for our whole knowledge of Him, and of what He taught. The portraiture of Jesus which has glorified the world's literature as well as blessed all ages and races with the revelation of a God-man come down from heaven to save the world, is limned by his followers' pencils alone. The record of that teaching which fell from His lips as living water, which if a man drink of it he shall never thirst again, is a record by His followers' pens alone. They have painted for us, of course, the Jesus that they knew, and as they knew Him. They have recorded for us the teachings that they heard, and as they heard them. Whatever untrustworthiness attaches to them as deliverers of doctrine must in some measure shake also our confidence in their report of what their Master was and taught." B.B. Warfield

1. Jesus says the OT is the trustworthy word of God.

Jesus believes that scripture is as trustworthy and free of error as its author, God himself. No one models obedience to God's Word more faithfully than Jesus.

Jesus submits to God's Word in:

- Matt. 4: Meeting Satan by citing Deut. 6 and 8.
- Matt. 26: Jesus, expecting betrayal, quotes Zech. 13:7
- Luke 24:25: The resurrected Christ shows obedience to Scripture

2. Jesus teaches that the OT is a historically accurate record.

References to: Abel (Luke 11:51), Noah (Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26,27), Abraham (John 8:56), the institution of circumcision (John 7:22; cf. Gen. 17:10-12; Lev. 12:3), Sodom and Gomorrah (Matt. 10:15, 11:23,24; Luke 10:12), Lot (Luke 17:28-32), Isaac and Jacob (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28), Moses (Matt. 22:24-32, Mark 7:10-13; 12:19-27), manna in the desert (John 6:31,49, 58), David as an author of the Psalms (Matt 22:43; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42), Solomon (Matt. 6:29, 12:42; Luke 11:31, 12:27), Elijah (Luke 4:25,26,32), Elisha (Luke 4:27), Jonah (Matt. 12:39-41; Luke 11:29,30,32), and Zechariah (Luke 11:51).

What Does This Mean for Us? 1 Cor. 10:11: The OT is the record of a real God who acts in history, and who made a record of events for us.

3. Jesus says the OT points to him.

John 5:39, 40: *You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.* See also Luke 4:16-21, Luke 24:25-27, and Matt. 5:17, 18.

"It is, in other words, that all the law and all the prophets point to Him and will be fulfilled in Him down to the smallest detail. Everything that is in the law and the prophets culminates in Christ, and He is the fulfillment of them. It is the most stupendous claim that He ever made." D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, on Matt. 5:17, 18

We understand the Bible Christologically because that is the teaching of Jesus himself.

