

**GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

**Adult Education**

**THE OLD TESTAMENT IN CHRISTIAN BELIEF**

12 April—17 May 2015

Session 4

To date in our study of the Old Testament in Christian we have considered:

- How was the Old Testament composed, and how did the canon of Scripture take its shape?
- What are the central themes of the Law, and as revealed in the early history of Israel?
- Who were the prophets?
- What is prophecy?
- What are the two dominant themes in all prophecy?
- How does narrative literature fit into revelation?
- What is Wisdom literature, and what are the central teachings of wisdom?

This week we continue our study by drawing connections between what is revealed in the Old Testament and what is fulfilled in the New Testament.

**Salvation History and Christian Typology**

To look at the Old Testament in the broadest context it is necessary to consider two overarching perspectives: (1) Salvation History; and (2) Christian Typology.

The history of the salvation of the human race, beginning with God's promise of a Redeemer (Genesis 3.15) and continuing to the end of the apostolic age, or the death of the apostle St. John. The fullness of salvation is revealed, of course, in the New Testament (*e.g.*, the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus; the coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost; the spread of the Gospel). A review of the Old Testament therefore must include a review of Christian "typology": *How is Jesus foreshadowed in the salvation history set forth in the Old Testament?*

***Life of Christ:*** The Gospels make it clear that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law, and the fulfillment of all that the prophets foretold. Jesus makes His relationship to the Law and the prophets clear at Matthew 5.17, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them."

Jesus also identifies Himself with the God of the Old Testament. At Exodus 3.14, the Lord identifies His Name to Moses as "I AM". This is really a Hebrew verb which denotes continuing action: "I was; I am; I will be." In John, Jesus is quoted eight times as identifying Himself to the disciples with the Greek phrase *ego eimi*. In recording these words the evangelists are rendering in Greek what Jesus said in Hebrew (or Aramaic): I AM. This is why the Pharisees and Temple authorities seek to kill Jesus. For example, at John 8.58 He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." The Pharisees seek to stone Him for what they deem to be blasphemy.

## Salvation History and Christian Typology

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*Salvation History* is the history of the salvation of the human race, beginning with God's promise of a Redeemer (Genesis 3.15) and continuing to the end of the apostolic age, or the death of the apostle St. John. Salvation history in the Old Testament may be traced in parallel with the history of the Jewish people.

### Period in History

**Patriarchal Period:** Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the pioneers of the Israelite nation. The story begins in Ur (in Mesopotamia); Abraham journeys northwest and then west to Canaan. Later, Jacob and his family settle in the Nile Delta in Egypt, to escape famine. The Hebrews live comfortably in Egypt so long as Joseph and his family enjoy the favor of Pharaoh. Later, they are enslaved.

**Moses and Exodus:** The Lord calls Moses to free His people from Egypt. Moses leads them out of captivity, into the wandering in the wilderness. During the wanderings, Moses receives the Decalogue from the Lord on Mt. Sinai, and the Lord ratified His covenant with the Jews. At the point of entering the Promised Land, Moses dies, and is succeeded by Joshua.

**Settlement in Canaan:** Joshua lead the people in the conquest of Canaan. However, Judges makes clear that large areas of Canaan remained unconquered. During the period of fracture described in Judges, the Lord calls forth the prophet Samuel.

### Salvation History

- 1) The Lord promises Noah (Gen. 8.21) that never again will the earth be cursed because of humans. Noah and his posterity are granted blessing and dominion (Gen. 9).
- 2) The Lord calls Abraham, promises him posterity and inheritance, and that by his posterity all people shall be blessed (Gen. 15). An heir is born (Gen. 21).
- 3) Jacob reaffirms the covenant with the Lord (Gen. 28.20).
- 4) Joseph is chosen by the Lord to protect the Hebrews in Egypt (Gen. 39-46).

- 1) God calls forth Moses and reveals the Divine Name (Exod. 3).
- 2) God reaffirms to Moses the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exod. 6.4). Redemption is promised (Exod. 6.6).
- 3) The Passover is instituted (Exod. 12).
- 4) The Hebrews are delivered from the Egyptians (Exod. 14).
- 5) Bread from heaven (Exod. 16); Water from the rock (Exod. 17).
- 6) The people consecrated (Exod. 19); Moses received the Law (Exod. 20).

- 1) Joshua renews the covenant (Josh. 8.32).
- 2) The tribes are gathered, and renew the covenant (Josh. 24).

**Rise of the Monarchy:** Samuel was both prophet and last of the judges. He was responsible for the establishment of a unified monarchy. Following the unsuitable Saul, David becomes king, and unites the northern and southern tribes of Israel by capturing Jerusalem and making it his capital. (Jerusalem was on neutral ground between the north and south.) David makes Jerusalem the religious capital by bringing with him the Ark of the Covenant.

Solomon succeeds his father, having his father's faults and lacking his virtues. Despite his wisdom, Solomon alienates his people through heavy taxes and forced labor. The northern tribes secede and form their own kingdom after his death in 922 B.C.

**Divided Kingdom:** Following generations of northern-southern rivalry, good terms are established between Jeroboam II of Israel and Uzziah of Judah. During this period, wealth becomes more stratified between rich and poor. In the eighth century B.C., the rise of the Assyrian empire leads to the fall of Israel. Judah remains independent until its fall to the Babylonians in the sixth century. The Jews are sent into exile, and the Temple destroyed.

**Return from Exile:** In 539 B.C. Babylonia falls to Cyrus, king of Persia. Cyrus issues an edict which allows the Jews to return to their homeland. The Temple is rebuilt. In the fifth century, returning Jews under Ezra reinforce the observance of the Law.

- 1) Samuel is called (1 Sam. 3).
- 2) David is anointed king (1 Sam. 16).
- 3) David is anointed king of Judah (2 Sam. 2), and of all Israel (2 Sam. 5).
- 4) The Lord promises that the throne over Israel shall be everlasting (2 Sam. 7.12-16).

- 5) The northern tribes secede (1 Kg. 12).
- 6) Elijah and Elisha show the greatness of the Lord (1 Kgs. 17-2 Kgs. 13). The Lord visits His redemption through His prophets on non-Jews: the widow at Zarephath (1 Kgs. 17) and Naaman the Syrian (2 Kgs. 5).

- 1) The Passover is re-instituted (2 Kgs. 23.21).
- 2) The whole long period of the divided kingdom is the period in which the prophets are prominent, prophesying both downfall and salvation.

- 1) Cyrus proclaims liberty for the exiles (2 Chron. 36.22). He is proclaimed "messiah" by Isaiah (45.1).
- 2) Worship is restored at Jerusalem (Ez. 3).
- 3) The Temple is rebuilt, pursuant to the decree of King Darius of Persia (Ez. 6.13-18); the Passover is celebrated (Ez. 6.19-22).

**Alexander the Great and Hellenism:**

Alexander conquers Palestine in 322 B.C., leading to a diffusion of Greek culture and language. Under Alexander's heirs (the Ptolemies and the Seleucids) Hellenism (including pagan worship) is imposed on their subjects. The Hasmonean priestly family (under Judas "the Maccabee" or "hammer") leads a successful rebellion. The Temple is rededicated in 164 B.C., and Judah is independent until conquered by the Romans in 63 B.C.

**Roman Rule:** The Romans maintain a military government in their province of Judea, but allow local rule through the king Herod the Great, and through his sons, the Herodian tetrarchs. One of the tetrarchs (Archelaus) is so corrupt that the Romans banish him to Gaul in A.D. 6, and institute direct rule under a prefect, among whom we find Pontius Pilate (ruled A.D. 26-36).

1) The Temple is rededicated. The story of this period of revolt is found in 1 & 2 Maccabees, in the Apocrypha.

1) *John the Baptizer proclaims repentance and the coming of the Lord. Our Lord is born of the Virgin Mary. He teaches; institutes the sacraments of baptism and eucharist; is killed; rise/is raised; promises salvation; commissions His apostles; and ascends to heaven. The Holy Ghost comes upon the Church.*

**Christian Typology:** Jesus Himself stated that He had come to fulfill the Law (Matt. 5.17), and taught that the scriptures of the Old Testament bear witness to Him (John 5.39). Indeed, the risen Lord taught His disciples that “beginning with Moses and all the prophets” Scripture taught of His identity and mission (Luke 24.27).

Starting even before Abraham, the promises made by God form a series of covenants: (1) The Adamic Covenant; (2) The Noachian Covenant; (3) The Abrahamic Covenant; (4) The Mosaic Covenant; (5) the Davidic Covenant; and (6) The New Covenant (in Christ). In some church traditions, these covenants are referred to as “dispensations,” in which case it is common to refer to only two dispensations (corresponding to the election of Israel in the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants, and the new covenant instituted by Jesus).

When we look at the history of salvation under the “old” covenants<sup>1</sup> it is possible to see the “type” of Jesus Christ in this history. The term “type” (from the Greek *typoi*, “examples” or “figures”) refers to a foreshadowing of the Christian dispensation in the persons and events of the Old Testament. Just as Jesus Himself could refer to Jonah as the symbol of His resurrection (Mt. 12.39-40; 16.4; Lk. 11.32), so St. Paul found in the Israelites crossing the Red Sea the “type” of baptism (1 Cor. 10.1-6), and the author of the Letter to the Hebrews found a type of Christ in Melchizedek (Heb. 7). However, a type is not allegory, for the historical significance of the person or event is not lost sight of.

Typology was extremely popular in the early Church (especially among the Alexandrian Fathers, such as St. Clement), to whom almost everything was capable of interpretation as a type. However, their method was more allegorical than grounded in historical reference, and this tendency to allegory was corrected by St. Augustine of Hippo. A more modern, and perhaps the best known, example is the libretto prepared by Charles Jennens and G. F. Händel for the latter’s oratorio *Messiah*.

The *Psalms* have always been considered a special case. Although tradition ascribes the authorship of many of the psalms to David, the psalms are thought of as David (or other writers) speaking for the Lord. The use of the Psalter in the Daily Office is, therefore, a form of praying daily using the utterances of the Lord Himself, as an example of Jesus sharing in all human conditions and emotions. Many commentaries on the psalms have stressed Christian typology in their interpretation. Salient examples include those of St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Augustine of Hippo, and Bl. John Mason Neale. The psalm which contains the type of Christ *par excellence* is Ps. 22. Indeed, when Jesus utters His last words (Mark 15.34; Matthew 27.46), “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*” (“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”), He is reciting the first line of Psalm 22. A reading of Ps. 22 reveals that these words—while despairing—are the beginning of a prayer which concludes in the assurance that the Lord delivers.

The Old Testament passages which are commonly thought to refer to the coming of the Christ include:

### **The Messiah is Promised**

1. Gen. 22.18: By your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves. (*See also* Gen. 28.14).
2. Gen 49.10: The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs.
3. Ps. 132.11: One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne.

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<sup>1</sup> In Romans 11, St. Paul makes it clear that the “old” covenant between the LORD and the Jews remains in force.

## **The Incarnation is Foretold by the Prophets**

1. Isa. 7.14: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
2. Jer. 23.5: Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.
3. Jer. 31.22: How long will you waver, O faithless daughter? For the Lord has created a new thing on the earth: a woman protects a man.
4. Hag. 2.8: I will shake all nations, so that the *treasures*<sup>2</sup> of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts.

## **Christ a Mighty King**

1. Ps. 2.6: I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.
2. Isa. 41.2: Who stirred up one from the east whom victory meets at every step? He gives up nations before him, so that he tramples kings under foot; he makes them like dust with his sword, like driven stubble with his bow.

## **Christ, the Savior of the World**

1. Isa. 53.4-9: Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.
2. Isa. 62.11: Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
3. Jer. 23.6: In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'
4. Mal. 3.2: But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? "For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.
5. Zech. 9.9: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass.

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<sup>2</sup> The Vulgate tradition invariably translates this word as "desired".

## **Christ as High Priest and Mediator**

1. Ps. 110:4: The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchiz'edek."

## **Jesus' Victory upon the Cross**

1. Hab. 3:4-6: His brightness was like the light, rays flashed from his hand; and there he veiled his power. Before him went pestilence, and plague followed close behind. He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal mountains were scattered, the everlasting hills sank low. His ways were as of old.
2. Isa. 9:6-7: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore.
3. Isa. 53:10-12: Yet it was the will of the Lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

## **Jesus' Redemption of Sinners by His Blood**

1. Isa. 43:25: I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.
2. Isa. 52:3: For thus says the Lord: "You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money."

## **Jesus, Judge of the Living and the Dead**

1. Dan. 7:10: ... the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.
2. Dan 7:13-14: I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
3. Isa. 14:27: For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

*That's just the Old Testament!* What about the history of salvation with the coming of the Christ? First, look back at the outline on page 28, above (Roman Rule). In that outline, the life of Christ is described, but we also need to look at the life of the Church.