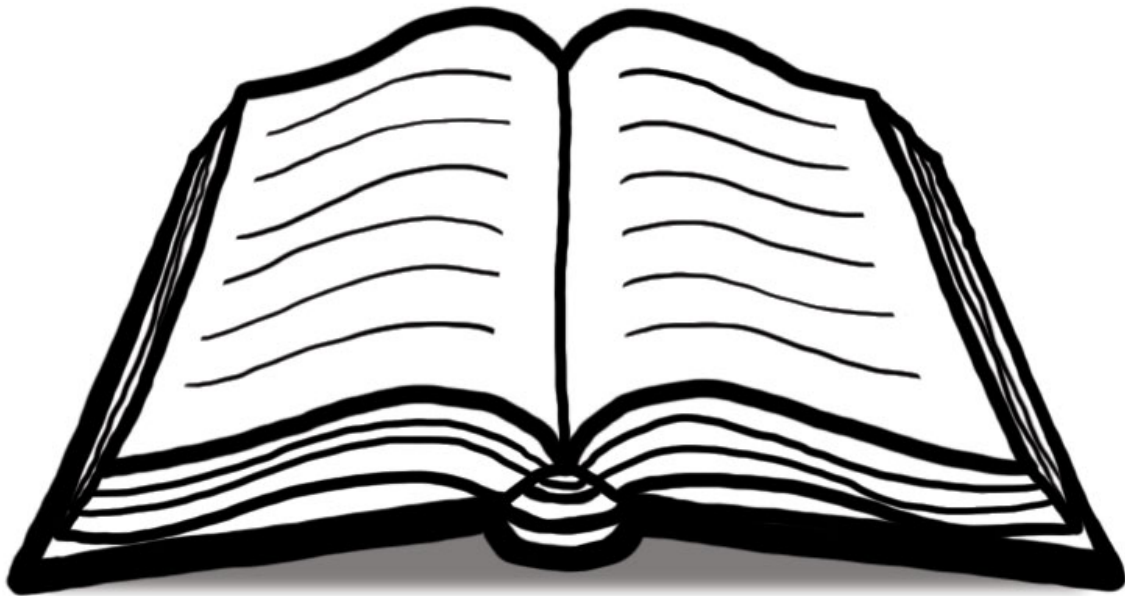


# Christ In The Old Testament



*"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him"*

**Deuteronomy 18:15**

**A series of nine lessons detailing various  
Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah**

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# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 1: Introduction

Genesis 3:15, John 5:39-47, Luke 24:25-27

The goal of this series of Bible lessons is to show that Jesus Christ, the Messiah, can be seen throughout the scriptures. His arrival in the first-century was not a coincidence, an accident, or something that God improvised because of the failures of the Israelites. Rather, it was predicted many ages before the birth of Jesus – the plan of salvation is the completion of the Old Law, and it is the fulfillment of numerous promises given in the Bible. What we want to see very clearly is that our Savior is the main character in the Bible. He is at the center of its story, the protagonist, the beginning, middle, and end to every bit of law, history, and poetry found in God's Holy book. As our Lord Himself states, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega... who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty"* (**Revelation 1:8**).

Today's lesson is going to focus on establishing the idea that Christ is the central figure of the Bible, even if not by name. He is there from the very beginning, after all, according to **John 1:1**. His presence is felt in the creation, and His promise of redemption from sin comes only moments after Adam and Eve first fell in the Garden. We begin by examining **Genesis 3:15** and its context and application. Then we will consider what Jesus Himself said about the witness of the scriptures. He emphasizes, in at least two passages that we will look at, that the written word of God shows repeatedly that He was exactly who He claimed to be.

### Genesis 3:15

*"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel."* From the very first book in the Bible we find a prophecy about the triumph of Jesus Christ over Satan. In the end, can any enemy stand before the Almighty? Consider **Romans 8:31** and **Philippians 2:9-11**. The immediate application of this verse is the enmity between Eve's children and the serpent's children, and the curse placed upon the snake for Satan's wickedness. *"Enmity"* means a great hatred between two things. In fact, **Vine's Dictionary** even notes the relationship

between the word “enmity” and its cousin “enemy.” *“It is the opposite of agape love”* (***Vine’s Dictionary***, Vol. II, 32). However, it is clear from other verses that there is a much deeper application. The verse is a prophecy about how the devil will inflict a damaging blow on the ankle of Jesus – His death on the cross, as well as other humiliating derisions. Christ conquered death, though (**Romans 14:9**), so Satan’s apparent victory can only be compared in significance to a minor injury to the ankle. Jesus, however, completely defeated the devil by inflicting a terrible death-blow to his head, crushing him. *“And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet”* (**Romans 16:20**). Other verses that point out Christ’s victory over Satan include **Luke 10:18-19**, **Revelation 12:17**, and **Revelation 20:10**.

When considering this text, we should note that Satan still has some power (**Revelation 20:3**), and that the blow to the head does not cause an immediate death. We should be wary of Satan and his influence over us (**1 Peter 5:8-9**), but we can also take great confidence in Christ’s power to save. With His help, we can defeat even our most powerful foes. While Satan has been able to tempt every single person in the history of the world to sin, there is One who never gave in. There is One man who had no sin, and conquered Satan completely. That is Jesus Christ (**Hebrews 4:15, 9:14**). Only Christ can beat sin, so if we ever want to have a chance ourselves, we must submit to Him and accept His help.

As another note worth remembering, remember that Christ is a key player even at the very beginning of the Bible story. He is not an afterthought, as some claim, but it was predicted from the very day that sin entered the world that Jesus would come and allow Himself to be injured by Satan, but would defeat the wily serpent in the process.

Beyond simply noting the enmity between Christ and Satan, also see the immediate effects of sin entering the world. As we continue reading in the text, we see that painful childbirth, suffering, weeds, difficulty in vegetable cultivation, pestilence, and the necessity of hard work are all directly related to sin (**Genesis 3:16-19**). Death and shame entered the world because of Satan’s craftiness and man’s selfishness, so we should always be careful not to blame God when life gets rough.

**Discussion Question:** What does this very early text teach us about the role that Christ plays in the Bible story?

### John 5:39-47

<sup>39</sup>"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; <sup>40</sup>and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. <sup>41</sup>"I do not receive glory from men; <sup>42</sup>but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. <sup>43</sup>"I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. <sup>44</sup>"How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God? <sup>45</sup>"Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. <sup>46</sup>"For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. <sup>47</sup>"But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Our Lord is trying to impress His listeners with the fact that the Old Testament is a witness to His ministry – being a witness, it proves Him, answers Him, and verifies Him. His listeners, however, did not want to see Jesus in the scriptures. *"They searched the scriptures, but they did not know the truth about the Christ because they searched with a closed heart (**Matthew 13:13-15, 2 Timothy 3:7-8**). Others who had open hearts found sufficient testimony"* (**John: The Gospel of Belief**, Harkrider, 39). Christ is not trying to teach us that searching the scriptures is a bad thing. In fact, some have tried to use this verse to argue that reading the Bible is a mistake, and Jesus is attempting to downplay the significance of the written Word. This is not consistent with other verses, however, that teach the absolute importance of study (**1 Timothy 4:13-16, Acts 17:11**). If we continue reading the passage in **John 5**, we will very clearly see that Christ does implore them to read, and even uses the written word to prove His validity. He exhorts them to *"believe the writings of Moses"* because those words predicted His arrival.

**Discussion Question:** What were some of the problematic attitudes that Jesus encountered among His First Century audience? What did they think about the scriptures, and how did this thinking prevent them from seeing the truth about Jesus?

*"Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father..."* Jesus does not mean that He will not judge these people, but is trying to make the point that he *does not*

have to accuse them because the scriptures already do that sufficiently. “... *The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.*” This same Moses who was seen as the greatest leader and prophet in all Israelite history predicted Christ, and at the same time condemned the Jews for their hard hearts. If Moses could believe in the future Messiah, then why could the Jews not believe, since they had Christ standing right in front of them?

### **Luke 24:25-27**

<sup>25</sup> “*And He said to them, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!*” <sup>26</sup>“*Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?”* <sup>27</sup>*Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.*” In the verses just previous to this (**Luke 24:17-24**), some of Christ’s disciples are found walking along the road, discussing the events of the Lord’s crucifixion. Appearing to these disciples in a way that made Him unrecognizable to them, Jesus inquires about the subject of their conversation. Being quite surprised that He has not heard about the crucifixion, they explain to Jesus how they were disappointed by the fact that He had not yet proven to them that He was risen. It is for this lack of faith that Christ chides them and makes His statements in **Luke 24:25-26**, and goes on to explain the prophecies concerning Himself.

Once again, this text illustrates that Christ is the main character throughout the scriptures. He does not simply say that some of the prophets spoke about him, or that Moses occasionally referred to the coming of the Messiah. Rather, He asserts that He is present in “*all that the prophets have spoken.*” Not only that but “*Moses and all the prophets*” are mentioned in **24:27** as explaining Christ. The Old Testament is not just a fun book of history, with exciting stories and useful life lessons for us. It is, more significantly, the story of Jesus Christ throughout all the ages of man. Every single writer in the first half of the Bible foretold Christ in some way, or looked forward to His coming with great eagerness. This point is made clear from **1 Peter 1:10-12** and **Acts 3:19-26**.

“*Now He said to them, ‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled’*” (**Luke 24:44**). Added to His previous statements, we now see that the Psalms are also included in the catalogue of prophetic literature. There are a great number of poems, in fact, that teach us

about Christ and served the purpose of preparing the readers of ancient Israel for the advent of Christ. Several of these psalms will be examined in later lessons, with application made to their New Testament references.

Have we become like the two disciples in this story? How much proof do we need to believe in Christ, and see the Old Testament scriptures for what they truly are? It is sometimes tempting to ignore the Old Testament because of its long descriptions of historical events, its numerous judgments against a nation that no longer means anything in the eyes of God, and its supposed lack of usefulness in the lives of today's believers. We must make it very clear from these verses, and the future lessons, that the Old Law is our guide to Christ. It acts as a tutor (**Galatians 3:24**), and as a powerful book filled with multiple prophecies about Christ – all meant to legitimize Him and prove the truths that He taught.

***Discussion Question:*** What attitudes or misconceptions have you had about the Old Testament that have sometimes kept you from studying it as you should?



# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 2

### Deuteronomy 18:15-22, Acts 3:22-26

This lesson will examine two texts dealing with Jesus Christ, as predicted in the Old Testament through the prophets. Primarily, the voice through which this prophecy is given is Moses, who begins the text by saying, *“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him”* (**Deuteronomy 18:15**). Notice a few points about this verse, beginning with the fact that it is the Lord who raises up one prophet or another. *“For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God”* (**2 Peter 1:21**). When a man or woman was called to pronounce God’s judgments, it was not because of the independent will of those prophets, but the divine wisdom of God – that is, they did not choose to prophecy what they did. They did choose the judgments, or the proclamations, but were moved by God to say those things that were necessary for others to hear. This point should be emphasize, because understanding the divine origin of the scriptures is essential to understanding God Himself! One can never become a strong Christian without respecting the voice of God in every word of the Bible (**John 12:44-50**). Second, this prophet would be *“like me”* – like Moses.

**Discussion Question:** In what way would the future prophet be like Moses?

Jesus Christ is just like His predecessor in the sense that he is a living man, from humble beginnings, with a human voice, with the capacity to suffer, and with compassion for His flock (both Moses and Jesus pleaded for their *“sheep”* numerous occasions). In a much more practical sense, Jesus and Moses are the same kind of prophet in that they both are intercessors. Moses begged for mercy for the Israelites, just as Jesus pleads on behalf of all people who heed His voice (**1 John 2:1-2**). *“From among you, from your countrymen...”* This portion of the prophecy reveals that the future prophet would be a member of the Israelite nation. *“You shall listen to Him.”* While many Israelites never listened to the call



of Christ in this life, it is certainly true that *all* people, for *all* time, will hear the voice of Jesus on the judgment day.

*“This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die’ (Deuteronomy 18:16).* This verse may be making reference back to **Exodus 20:18-19** when the people of Israel heard the voice of God, and saw that thunder, and became afraid. In that scripture, Moses pleads with them not to fear God, but to approach Him with reverence and holiness. Instead of truly coming close to the Lord, however, the people *“trembled and stood at a distance,”* begging Moses to talk to God on their behalf. While God is not a presence to be afraid of, He is mighty and can induce great fear in those who are weak spiritually. What God may be saying in our text, therefore, is that the Messiah is being sent to the world to balance out the weakness of mankind. While men tremble and fear the presence of God, Christ approaches the throne of judgment with confidence and makes intercession for us directly into the ears of the Almighty (**1 John 2:1ff**)!

*“I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you...” (18:18).* Once again, the Lord is affirming that this great prophet will be of the line of Israel. An important lesson that to learn is that God makes Himself approachable in the form of Christ. While the Father is clothed in glory and power, and sits upon His throne in the halls of His heavenly kingdom, Jesus Christ lived as a man and understands our weaknesses in a most personal way. It is so amazing that God would choose to bring forth a *“prophet from among”* us because it shows that He wants to be approachable – He wants us to know that His son knows how we feel because He was one of us. The ministry of Jesus Christ had far more impact on the world because He lived as a human! This is a primary argument made in **Hebrews 2:5-18**. *“And I will put My words into his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him” (18:18).* While the prophecy is dealing with Jesus, these statements have a broader application as well. All of God’s prophets spoke by inspiration. Every word written in the Bible was given by God through these men and women of old. What this means, therefore, is that we cannot dismiss the Bible as something that is just a book penned by uninspired people.

*“And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him” (18:19).* Judgment comes to those who do not heed the call of Christ – or the call of *any* prophet for that

matter. God's word is serious business. Our obedience is not something that can be taken lightly. Everything from church attendance, to respecting our parents, to being baptized in the appropriate way is important. To further prove the point in this verse, consider **John 12:47-48**, *"If anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day."*

*"But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die" (18:20).* The death in this verse is most likely spiritual death, for there have been many prophets throughout the ages who have lived long, full, rich lives. However, examples of false prophets being judged by God are not uncommon in the Bible (**Isaiah 47:12-15**, **Jeremiah 23:16-22**).

*"And you may say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has spoken?'" (18:21).* This is the voice of fear and faithlessness. How sad it would be if we reach the point of questioning what is and what is not the Word of God! Rather than throwing our hands into the air and giving up out of frustration, we ought to seek the Word diligently and look closely for the telltale signs of validity. *"When a prophet speaks in the name of the, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him" (18:22).* Rather than always doubting, we ought to simply trust that God will always provide an answer as to what is His word. If there are words of a prophet that do not legitimately come true, then it is a falsehood. But if all those things do come true then he is inspired. Are there any prophecies in the Bible that never were fulfilled? Now consider other works of prophecy; do call-in psychics always get everything right? Did Joseph Smith hit the head of the nail on all of his prophecies? Supposedly, the popes of the Catholic church have the power of foresight, but have they been able to use that ability for the improvement of the world? Indeed, if there is a prophet speaking falsely, it will be apparent, and we ought to never allow ourselves to be swept away in his lies!

### **Acts 3:22-26**

**Acts 3:22-26** is the explanation of how **Deuteronomy 18:15-22** was fulfilled in both Jesus Christ and in the prophets of the Old Testament. *"Moses said..."* First of all, we see very clearly that the apostle Peter believed that Moses actually said

these things. The Old Testament was not just a collection of fairytales, or fantastically unbelievable myths – it is historical fact. Moses really lived, and he really spoke all of these things. Peter goes on to quote part of our previous text, showing the listeners in the city of Jerusalem that Jesus Christ is the final culmination of this prophecy. He is the great prophet who came from amongst the Israelites to pronounce all righteousness and give a message that meant either life or death depending on the response of the listener.

*“And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:23).* Take special note of the word “every” in this verse. Who is amenable to the Law of Christ? Who needs to repent? Who needs to be baptized? Which souls need to become Christian to be saved? Truly, it is every single person in this world who needs Christ. Nobody is exempt from the call to obey, and not a single person who is unrighteous will have an excuse on the day of judgment. *“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).*

*“And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days” (3:24).* Yet another excellent point can be clearly seen, that is, that the events of Christ’s life (from his birth, to his death, and everything in between, and even the establishment of the church) were expected by the prophets of old. Nothing happened as a surprise or contingency plan. The death on the cross was not an accident, nor was the establishment of the Lord’s church an afterthought. While some believe that Christ came to establish a worldly kingdom, but failed and therefore had to settle for the church as a temporary solution, this verse seems to indicate that things all happened according to a great plan!

**Discussion Question:** What was the attitude of the prophets of old toward the coming of the Messiah? How does that attitude compare to those of us now who have the benefit of hindsight?

*“It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the*

*earth shall be blessed” (3:25).* In the literal sense, the people of Jerusalem were the actual descendents of Abraham, the prophets, and the fathers of Israel. However, the application can be much more broad, because it was predicted that in Abraham *“all the families of the earth”* would find salvation. Salvation is not just for the Jew, but also for the Gentile. For all people, regardless of gender or race or social status (**Galatians 3:28**), can be saved in Jesus Christ.

*“For you first, God raised up His servant, and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways” (3:26).* Again, in the limited sense, this verse is saying that Jesus Christ came to the Jews first, allowing them the privilege of hearing the message before the Gentiles. However, it is now clear that the Jews are no longer a specially favored nation in the eyes of God – all people can be favored now. There is a requirement, though, for those who wish to see salvation: repentance. Every single one of us needs to turn from our wicked ways if we ever want to see the bright side of eternity.



# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 3

### 2 Samuel 7:12-16, Zechariah 6:12-13

**2 Samuel 7:12-16** is a great text to study because it introduces us to prophecies with more than one application. This is a concept that will be encountered throughout the Bible, so it is beneficial for us to learn that some scriptures, especially the prophetic texts, can have greater meaning the deeper we dig in to them.

*“When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers...” (7:12).* The message is given specifically to King David, by the prophet Nathan (7:17). Undoubtedly, it refers to a time after David’s death, but the specifics of that epoch are not explained by the speaker. *“The Davidic covenant was a very important affirmation of God’s intention to complete that which He had promised to Abraham (Genesis 12). This covenant consisted of three essential elements: (1) a posterity, (2) a throne (Luke 1:32), and (3) a kingdom (Luke 1:33). The nature and scope of this covenant are such that their fulfillment could not have been realized in the days of Solomon, but will find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ through the establishment of His kingdom...” (The Birth Of A Kingdom, John J. Davis, 136).* *“...I will raise up your descendent after you...”* Referring back to the previous quotation from J.J. Davis’s commentary, we see that this the first portion of the covenant. Through the line of David, future kings would come to rule over Judah. While the kings of Israel, after the division of the kingdom, became progressively more evil and worldly, the line of Judean kings tended to be more faithful (though not always). As for the Messianic aspect of this prophecy, God is promising David that the Great King, Jesus Christ, will come from His line. According to the genealogy of **Matthew 1:6**, Jesus is born as a direct descendent of David. *“... And I will establish His kingdom.”* Notice that it is not a man establishing the future kingdom, but it is God! A very valuable point that can be made is that any religious body that exists today that claims to be the true kingdom of God must have Jesus Christ as its founder and ruler. History will tell us that every denomination had a founder, and that many of them have a human head as their leader!

*“He shall build a house for My name...”* This is in response to David’s request in **2 Samuel 7:2-3**, in which he asks to build a temple for God. While the Lord informs David that he is not allowed to build a temple, He does note that David’s son shall perform the task. In the literal sense, Solomon builds a grand temple in the city of Jerusalem. But there is a much more significant spiritual application that must be considered. The *“house”* that will be built by the future descendent of David is the church established by Christ. Read **Ephesians 2:19-22** and **1 Corinthians 3:10-17** to see that Christians are all parts of the grand household of God – a temple not built with hands, but established by God, built upon the cornerstone of Jesus Christ. *“...And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”* It seems from the context of the previous statements that the throne of the kingdom would be Christ’s, for the physical throne of David ceases to be in power after the invasion of the Babylonians. After the conquest, no more legitimate descendents of David sit on the Judean throne, replaced for generations with figureheads and even part-Gentile kings such as the line of the Herods during our Lord’s time. Therefore, we should believe that the eternal throne is Christ’s, and that it is established by the power of God.

**Discussion Question:** Do you ever find it hard to reconcile the words of this prophecy (and others, as well) with the literal, historical outcome of Jewish history? Did God fail to keep any of His promises to them, or to David’s line of descendants specifically? What New Testament passage helps us here?

*“I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me...”* (**7:14**). In the most literal sense, Christ is the Son of God (**Matthew 3:17**, **Matthew 16:16**, **John 11:27**, **Romans 1:4**, **Hebrews 1:5**). The second part of the prophecy does not apply to Jesus; *“...when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men.”* Christ was sinless in this life (**2 Corinthians 5:21**, **Hebrews 7:26**), so it is unnecessary for God to punish Him for nonexistent iniquities. The son in this context, therefore, is the physical king of Judah, who would be considered a son by God. When the kings of Judah did commit iniquity,

they were all punished by God – not directly in most cases, but through the power of heathen nations. These Gentile kingdoms would be given opportunity by God to rise in glory for the purpose of teaching humility to the disobedient sons of Judah. Consider some of the examples of this concept throughout the history of the Israelite and Judean kings, such as Ahaz in **2 Kings 16** and **2 Chronicles 28**. Because of his arrogance, God raised up enemies from Damascus and Assyria to afflict the nation of Judah.

*“But My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you” (7:15).* This portion of the prophecy can apply to either Christ or the kings of Judah. In the one sense, the lovingkindness of God never left Jesus Christ, even as He was hanging on the cross. In the other sense, the lovingkindness of God was manifested to the kings of Judah by allowing them to exist much longer than their Israelite counterparts.

*“And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever” (7:16).*

**Discussion Question:** Consider the word “forever” in the above context. What does it teach or illustrate about Christ’s rule, practically speaking?

### **Zechariah 6:12-13**

This section of scripture includes a prophecy about Jesus Christ that is similar to the one discussed above. It deals primarily with the establishment of Christ as the centerpiece of God’s true religion, and His role in the construction of a spiritual house of the Lord. *“Then say to him, ‘Thus say the Lord of hosts, ‘Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the Lord. Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the Lord, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices’”” (Zechariah 6:12-13).* The application of this prophecy is obviously to Christ, who is called the branch of the Lord in other texts (**Isaiah 4:2**, **11:1-10**, **Jeremiah 23:5**, **33:15**). This branch is also the promised seed of David, who would come many years after his death to fulfill the promise of an eternal kingdom. A primary lesson is that Christ’s kingdom has been planned for many years. It was not an accident that He came



when He did, and He died, and was crowned with glory on high. Many false doctrines exist in the world today that try to teach us that Christ is not on His throne right now, or that the church is some kind of accidental kingdom. However, there is no room for error in these prophecies, and if Christ did not mean to set up the church as His true kingdom, then what an inept God it is who we worship!

The image of the Branch is significant because it symbolizes the connection of one thing to another. In this prophecy there are actually two beneficial ways to interpret the “branch” of Christ. First, He is the branch that connects God to man. Because Jesus is God, but lived as a man in this physical world (**Philippians 2**), He is perfectly suited to understand both perspectives. He has the will and understanding of God, but also has the unique ability to sympathize with us in our afflictions and weaknesses (**Hebrews 4:15**). Christ is, therefore, the most perfect advocate for us before the Father (**1 John 2:1-2**). Second, Christ is the branch that connects the priesthood to the throne of royalty. Until the establishment of the church, no Jewish king had ever held the offices of priest and king jointly. In our Lord, however, we see both roles fulfilled to perfection (**Hebrews 7:14-17**). *“This action was symbolical of the coronation of the Messiah who would serve both as priest and king... ‘the branch’ fulfilled the qualifications to serve both capacities”* (**The Minor Prophets**, Harkrider, 111).

*“He will build the temple...”* *“Obviously, this has a future spiritual application because Zerubbabel was already overseeing the building of the material temple in Jerusalem. The church is the spiritual temple built by the Lord (**Ephesians 2:21-22, 1 Peter 2:5**)”* (Harkrider, 111). Some, however, try to argue that Christ is not reigning as king yet because an earthly kingdom has not been established for Him. Premillennialists will say that Christ is going to return someday to reign in this world, from a throne in Jerusalem, for 1,000 years, but that forces them to deny this prophecy. It is undeniable that Christ is now our high priest, because even proponents of this false doctrine do not believe that a Levitical high priesthood exists today (**Hebrews 5:1-10, 7:1-3, 25**). But if Christ is our high priest, then He must also be our king, because this prophecy in Zechariah clearly states that He will rule as both, simultaneously, and establish peace between the two offices.

*“The counsel of peace shall be between them both...”* (**6:13**). *“As priest and king He shall be able to provide the perfect peace for His people (**Isaiah 9:6-7, Ephesians 2:14-17**). As priest He provides forgiveness with the perfect sacrifice,*

*and as king He gives counsel with the perfect law”* (Harkrider, 112). It is because of these qualifications that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the most perfect means of salvation. Without Him, we would have no Advocate, no king, no priest, no Savior, and no Lord.

**Discussion Question:** What facts are established in the above prophecies about the reign of Christ in His kingdom? Why is it valuable to have a proper understanding of the way Christ fills two offices (priest and king)?



# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 4

### Psalm 2

**Psalm 2** describes a typical theme that can be seen throughout the Bible. Essentially, it is the contrast between good and evil, and the inherent battle that consumes their correspondence. In the end, righteousness is the victor, just as we read in **Psalm 1:6**, *“For the Lord shows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”* The application of **Psalm 2** certainly can be seen as Davidic, but its deepest meaning, as well as a few aspects of the psalm which definitely do not apply to King David, refers to the Messiah. As we study this passage of scripture, it is essential to notice the way it describes Christ as our king – an indestructible one at that, and one that shall clearly and decisively conquer all enemies

*“Why are the nations in an uproar, and the people devising a vain thing?” (Psalm 2:1)* What about Jesus Christ would send the nations into an uproar? Indeed, the message of our Lord is so powerful that it upsets entire nations of people, such as the Romans of the first century. Jesus was put to death because of the “uproar” of the Jews in Jerusalem. Beyond that, as a direct result of the popularity of Christianity in the decades following the establishment of the church, Roman emperors worked hard at persecuting and embittering the Lord’s people. *“The vision shows the psalmist Jew and Gentile banded together against the gospel of Christ. Its scope is not exhausted by the exposition of Acts 4:26, but extends to the whole struggle between Christianity on the one hand, and Judaism and paganism on the other. ‘The peoples’ still to this day ‘imagine a vain thing’ – imagine that Christianity will succumb to the assaults made upon it – will fade, die away, and disappear” (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. VIII, 10).* The vain thing in this verse is really any attempt to enact a plan that is in opposition to the will of God. No matter what powerful kings or rulers may do, they are always in subjection to God. Even though false teachers may try to devise ways of defeating the truth, they will fail. This is a primary lesson: God is in control, and all the “uproaring” and “devising” in the world will not prevent Him from fulfilling every word of His message.

**Discussion Question:** How is the “uproar of the nations” manifested today?

*“The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed: ‘Let us tear their fetters apart, and cast away their cords from us!’” (2:2-3).* It is interesting to note the kind of perspective from which these kings and rulers see God. Instead of standing with God and His Anointed, the kings of the earth would rather fight the Lord. They would much rather choose freedom from God than freedom from sin. Indeed, this is a great misconception that these people have about God. Is choosing to reject the Almighty really “freedom?” They seem to think that obedience to God is a “fetter” – that is, a chain – or a cord, which is another word for a rope. It is amazing that people today feel the same way! Unbelievers do not want to become Christians because they see religion as some kind of binding force which prevents them from doing what they really want to do. In truth, though, it is sin that is the fetter! Until we become Christians and accept release from the bonds of sin, we are in slavery to those vile passions which so easily encumber us (**Galatians 5:13, 4:8-9, Romans 6:19-23**).

*“He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them” (Psalm 2:4).* We should not take this verse to mean that God enjoys the sins of people in this world. He does not get pleasure out of our foolish ignorance, nor does He savor and relish those times that He gets to rub it in our faces that we are wrong. Rather, God laughs at the arrogance of those worldly kings who think that they have the power to rebel against the judgment of the Almighty. It is ironic that physical beings, with only a very limited amount of days in this world, who rule over kingdoms that will pass away in only a few generations, think that they can reject God and lead themselves to victory. *“Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury...” (2:5)* There are those who say that God is not an angry being – that He is all love, rainbows, and warm fuzzy feelings. But this verse clearly describes God being angry, and with good reason. It angers the Lord when we allow our arrogance to send us into a spiritual tailspin. *“‘But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain’” (2:6).* It is clear that this is talking about Jesus Christ, the triumphal king over all the creation. *“... Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name which is named... And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church...” (Ephesians 1:20-22, Colossians 1:16-18).*

*“I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord...” (2:7).* Prophetically, this verse is being spoken from the perspective of Jesus, and it perfectly describes the mission on which our Lord was sent. Christ came into this world to declare righteousness to the world, and to make clear the decrees of God in the Kingdom. *“He said to Me, ‘Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee...”* This same verse is quoted in **Acts 13:33** as being fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Later, the same is stated in **Hebrews 1:5** and **5:5**. In these verses, the writer asks whether or not God spoke this phrase to any other being but Jesus alone. The answer, of course, is no, for not even angels are considered sons of God in the same exalted way as Christ, the Lord. There are a number of valuable lessons in this verse, beginning with the fact that God Himself placed His stamp of approval on Jesus. It would be much more difficult to believe in Jesus if the Almighty had not personally vouched for His validity. So when we confess our belief in Him, it is not just a shot in the dark, but a sure and true testimony. We can take great confidence in Jesus – after all, what other person in this world today has God personally recommended to us? Second, it is very beneficial to see how this verse was fulfilled. Essentially, the same statement is made by the voice of God at Christ’s baptism in **Matthew 3:17**.

*“Ask of Me, and I will give the nations as Thine inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Thy possession” (2:8).* This verse may seem confusing to some, since we are taught that Jesus was not sent into this world to establish an earthly kingdom. But let us remember that this offer is used by Satan in **Matthew 4** in order to try and tempt Jesus into worshiping him. The fact is that God would have given all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus, had He asked for it. However, both Jesus and the Father knew that this was not the purpose of our Lord’s coming. Jesus was not tempted by the kingdoms of the world because He had His divine mind set on a more grand accomplishment: salvation for the world!

**Discussion Question:** Why was Jesus able to resist the temptation by Satan in the wilderness?

*“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt shatter them like earthenware” (2:9).* That is, Jesus was given the authority to judge the nations of the world by His power. If it seems fitting to the Lord to break one nation, then He has the ability to do it. The strength of the kingdoms of this world seem like

nothing compared to the strength of Christ's arm, and no king can stand against Him. Therefore, when we take confidence in Christ, it is not in vain! He will defend us, and secure us, and lead us to victory against all the foes that may set themselves against the church!

*"Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth..." (2:10).* I.e., pay attention! There are many people in the world who believe that a government should not stand on religious principles, but this verse clearly teaches otherwise. The kings of the earth need to pay attention to God, and the judges need to be warned about Him. *"Worship the Lord with reverence, and rejoice with trembling" (2:11).* We ought to always worship God in the same way, treating Him as holy. Unfortunately, some "Christians" view worship much more flippantly than they ought to – worship becomes a game, or a source of entertainment, rather than something observed with reverence and trembling. The *"trembling"* here is not necessarily out of fear, but more likely from awe. When we see something more grand than our imagination could have conceived, we tremble at it. Consider the very first time you walked into a baseball stadium, or watched a major fireworks display, or took a tour of the United States Capitol. In the same way, we also tremble when we are in the presence of greatness – would you tremble just before meeting your favorite athlete, musician, or politician? Now put things into perspective and consider how much more we ought to be trembling from awe when we go to God in worship! *"Do homage to the Son, lest He become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!" (2:12)* While we still have time, we ought to pay our respect to Jesus. For a day will come when all people will confess Jesus (**Romans 14:11**), but some will do it out of compulsion and it will be too late (**Matthew 7:21**). Also, this verse is very good for refuting the idea that Jesus Christ is all about love, peace, rainbows, and butterflies. While His mercy is available for all, those who reject His helping hand will only feel His wrath on that great and terrible day of judgment. Truly, truly, how blessed are those who take refuge in Him. How much better will it be for those who are on Christ's side than those who are opposed to Him!

**Discussion Question:** How do we answer when somebody brings up **John 12:47**? Is there a discrepancy between "I did not come to judge the world, but to save" it and the prophecy discussed in this lesson?

# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 5

### Psalm 22

**Psalm 22** begins with the words, *“My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.”* The same phrase is spoken by our Lord Jesus while on the cross (**Matthew 27:46**), so this the first indication that the psalm must be a Messianic prophecy. It is the nature of this prophecy, however, that has confused many Christians, and led them to a misunderstanding of the point of the text. The very first lesson that must be considered is that not all of the psalm is necessarily Messianic prophecy. Some of the language of the piece is just not congruent with what we understand about Christ – His nature, His attitude, His actual being. The same would be true of many prophetic texts! While Christ is truly the underlying character throughout all the scriptures, not every prophecy has specific application to Him. For example, in **Psalm 22:2**, the writer says, *“O my God, I cry by day, but Thou dost not answer; and by night, but I have no rest.”* While this certainly may seem like it is true for us (for we do not have direct verbal communication from God to comfort us, and it sometimes *seems* like He is not listening), the scriptures clearly teach that Christ was, in fact, comforted and answered by the Lord when He prayed to Him in the garden in **Luke 22:43**. Also notice **22:19-21**, in which the speaker pleads with God to deliver him from death, and to save his *“only life.”* Does this sound like the prayer of Jesus, though? While Jesus asked God to *“let this cup pass,”* He did not continue to plead with Him when the decision was made. Not only that, from the very beginning of time, Jesus knew that He had to die on the cross in order for salvation to come to the world (**Luke 9:22**). *“...My only life from the power of the dog...”* Why would Christ be praying that His only life be saved, if He knew full well that He would be resurrected after His death? Truly, Jesus had no need for such a prayer. The point is that not all of **Psalm 22** applies to Jesus, so we must consider very closely the passages before us, and make application only when it is appropriate.

As for the Messianic prophecies within **Psalm 22**, we should carefully seek to understand what **22:1** means, as there are many who have misunderstood what



Jesus meant to say on the cross. Does Jesus mean that God actually has forsaken Him? Does He mean that God abandoned Him on the cross and somehow betrayed Him or tricked Him into dying in such a manner? First, Jesus knew He would die, and He was completely prepared for it beforehand (**Luke 9:22**). So to say that Christ felt tricked into the cross is incorrect. Second, Jesus never sinned in His entire life (**Hebrews 4:15**), so to say that He became angry with God on the cross is also an illogical statement. For a better explanation of **22:1**, consider this: Rather than saying this phrase for the purpose of blaming God, Christ may have said it to force the spectators around Him to think about the act they were doing. Perhaps Jesus says those words to refer everybody back to this psalm, to let the world know that He is the Messiah that the prophets wrote about hundreds of years earlier. By quoting those words, Christ is essentially saying, “Hey, do you remember **Psalm 22**? Well, go read it right now and you will see that the psalm is actually about Me. You have fulfilled every prophecy that was meant to happen.” Besides, we need to ask ourselves why He would be asking this question. Why *did* God forsake Him and let Him die on the cross? My God, my God, you forsook Christ so that I could be freed from the bondage of sin! My God, my God, Christ suffered all those terrible things for me, because I am a sinner! My God, my God, why did you forsake Christ? For me. Christ may have made that statement for the purpose of making all of us stop and think about His sacrifice.

**Discussion Question:** If it was so apparent, based on this psalm, that the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees were fulfilling a prophecy, why did they not recognize it at the time? What factors could have contributed to their blind hatred of Jesus?

*“But I am a worm, and not a man, a reproach of men, and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; they separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, ‘Commit yourself to the Lord; let Him deliver him; let Him rescue him, because he delights in him’” (22:6-8).* What makes this section of verses so very interesting is to see how accurately the prophesy came true. Take note of a few details in **Luke 23:32-39** and **Mark 15:27-32**. Just as it was predicted in **Psalm 22**, the people of Christ’s day mocked Him and hurled many insults at Him. From their perspective,

He was less than a man – considered a worm by the rulers of the Jews and the Roman heathens.

**22:9-10** – As a side note, it might be helpful to note these two verses. One of the most prominent issues of our time is abortion, and many people do not have a good understanding of how God feels about the practice. Quite clearly, babies in the womb are loved by God and considered living souls because the verse states, *“Upon Thee I was cast from birth; Thou hast been my God from my mother’s womb.”* Even in his mother’s womb, the writer is saying that God loved him and cared for him. If even the Almighty considers unborn babies alive, then we should also.

**22:11-18** – These verses make up the greatest portion of prophetic writing in the entire psalm, and noting the various fulfilled predictions will be very beneficial. We must all work hard at grasping the sacrifice of Jesus, and this text serves as a marvelous example of how He felt hanging on the cross! *“Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is one to help”* (**22:11**). In our Lord’s moment of need, who was there to support Him? Did not all of His disciples flee when He was arrested (**Matthew 26:56**)? When He needed His friends most of all, He found them sleeping in the Garden, unable to stay awake to pray with Jesus. Truly, our Lord had been abandoned by everybody but the Father. *“Many bulls have surrounded...”* The bull would have been considered an animal of power and uncontrollable ruthlessness – and image that seems to fit the madness surrounding Christ’s “trial” and His crucifixion. *“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within me”* (**22:14**). Again, take note of the fulfilled prophecies: it was water and blood that poured from His body while on the cross; it would have been conceivable for many of His bones to be out of joint, for crucifixion was an excruciatingly long way of dying (it was not uncommon for the wrists, elbows, and shoulders to be completely pulled out of their joints as a result of the crucifixion). *“My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws...”* (**22:15**). A potsherd is a piece of a broken clay pot, and would conjure up images of a complete lack of water. Also, the account of Christ’s experience on the cross indicates that He was quite thirsty during the process, which is not surprising since He would have conceivably gone many hours without any liquid. *“They pierced my hands and my feet”* (**22:16**). While it may have been common to tie criminals up to their crosses, for some reason it was decided to nail Jesus to His (although, it may have actually been both nails and rope). It is interesting that none of the Gospel accounts actually

record His hands and feet being nailed, but we can assume that such was the case because Thomas, in **John 20:25** asks to see the imprint of the nails in the hands of the resurrected Jesus. *“I can count all my bones...”* (**22:17**). This is a detail that could easily be passed over, so take special note of it. Along with other prophecies, this verse makes it clear that Jesus would be able to count all of his bones, i.e., none of His bones would be broken, and He would be able to count each and every one of them as intact. This prophecy is fulfilled in **John 19:32-36**, when one of the Roman soldiers decides not to break the legs of Jesus on the cross but pierces Him instead. *“They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots”* (**22:18**). Be amazed at how specific these prophecies are, and how precisely they are accomplished in Jesus. In the Gospels we read that the Roman soldiers did indeed cast lots for the clothes of Jesus (**John 19:23-24**).

**22:22** – *“I will tell of Thy name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise Thee.”* This is directly quoted in **Hebrews 2:12**, and is clearly fulfilled in Jesus. The Hebrew writer uses the verse as proof of Jesus’ close relationship to His followers. He considers us “brethren” and is not ashamed of having a relationship with us. To be sure, Jesus praised the name of God in the midst of great assemblies during His earthly ministry. He spoke in front of massive crowds, sometimes very receptive and sometimes not. During the last week, when Jerusalem’s population would have swelled to six figures or more because of the Passover celebration, it would not be unrealistic to imagine crowds in the thousands listening to Jesus speak. Consider **John 12:9-19** and **12:28-29**. There is, however, another way we can take the “assembly” reference. It could be that the assembly is made up of His believers in a spiritual sense, not just literal assemblies of people. He is, to this day, standing in the midst of His people praising the Father along with us (**Colossians 3:14-17**).

*“From Thee comes my praise in the great assembly; I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him. The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever!”* (**22:25-26**)

**Discussion Question:** Verse 30 mentions that *“it will be told of the Lord to the coming generation.”* What do you think this is referring to? What is the “coming generation”?

# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 6

### Psalm 69

**Psalm 69** is similar to the text of our previous lesson in that it is written from the perspective of a man who suffers greatly at the hands of wicked individuals. It is not only because of his own sin that he suffers (**69:5**), but also because of the injustice of others who view his attempted righteousness with contempt (**69:4**). Through all of the trials, however, the speaker always turns to God for his help and guidance. He is not afraid to proclaim his loyalty to the Lord boldly, and does what he can to stand tall for the name of God (**69:7-9**). Also like **Psalm 22**, certain aspects of this piece are obviously Messianic, although we must use caution when applying this fact to the psalm. Not all of the psalm is supposed to be prophetic – obviously, **69:5** is not referring to Jesus because our Lord had no sins, and would not need to pray such things to God; **69:18** is also not Messianic because it is not Christ who needs the ransoming, for *He* is *our* ransom! What we would like to study in this lesson are the various points found within the psalm that are directly Messianic. It becomes quite clear, from prophecies given and prophecies answered, that **Psalm 69** can be applied to Christ, and that numerous lessons of spiritual import can be found within its words.

*“Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would destroy me are powerful, what I did not steal, I then have to restore”* (**69:4**). By the end of Jesus’ mortal life, His enemies far outnumbered His followers. What is even worse is that they hated Him so harshly without a single good cause – in fact, this verse is quoted by our Lord Himself in **John 15:25** as being fulfilled by the Jews. There was no crime committed by Jesus, nor was there any fault in His life, yet they hated Him all the more and executed Him like a common criminal. In a very true sense, those who hate Jesus today are even more numerous than those who hated Him in His lifetime. The enemies of Christ are all over the world – some are teaching false doctrines, others are adulterating the church with sins, many more are just stubborn and refuse to obey. In any case, this verse includes a prophecy that will always be true; that is, a great host of people will hate Christ without a cause. *“What I did not steal, I then have to*

*restore.”* This is another excellent phrase, indicative of the selflessness of Jesus. While He Himself was without sin (**Hebrews 4:15**), He still had to pay the ultimate price for our sins. In that sense, He was guilty of no crimes, but suffered the penalty for all of ours! Also see **Isaiah 53:6**, *“All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”*

**Discussion Question:** What other New Testament passages help us understand the way Jesus bore our sins or paid the price for our redemption?

*“I have become estranged from my brothers, and an alien to my mother’s sons”* (**69:8**). For David, this statement was all too true, for his own brothers had acted jealous toward him several times. First, when he came to the battle field to survey the Philistine warrior Goliath, and then later, after being appointed king by Samuel. In **1 Samuel 16:6-13** and **1 Samuel 17:28** we see some examples of this hostility. As for Christ, this sentence also became a reality to an extent. While it is certain that one of Jesus’ brothers by the name of James became a strong leader in the church, and it seems that some of our Lord’s brothers eventually became believers (**Acts 1:14**), there was a time when his own brothers did not accept Him for who He claimed to be. *“For not even His brothers were believing in Him”* (**John 7:5**).

*“For zeal for Thy house has consumed me...”* (**69:9**). David wrote this passage in truth, for he certainly had a zeal for the house of the Lord throughout his days as king. He was instrumental in setting up the tabernacle in **2 Samuel 6:12-19**. David was eager to build a temple for God in **2 Samuel 7:2**, and also displayed his zeal – even after being told that he was not allowed to build the temple – by properly gathering materials for its construction by Solomon (**1 Chronicles 28:11-18**). Christ fulfilled this prophecy by clearing out all of the moneychangers and swindlers from the temple square (**John 2:17**). Many curious Bible readers have had questions about this act in the life of Christ, so some time should be spent studying the texts of **Matthew 21:12-13**, **Mark 11:15-18**, and **Luke 19:45-48**.

**Discussion Question:** In the story, was Jesus justified in His anger with the moneychangers?

What is the difference between righteous anger and unrighteous anger? Indeed, the difference is motive; good anger is motivated by selflessness, such as a desire to preserve the purity of worshipping God or indignation over an injustice done to another person; bad anger is motivated by selfishness, such as when somebody hurts you and you want to get even. Jesus was not “getting even” with the moneychangers, nor was He doing this act for His own glory. Rather, He saw the temple as a sacred place, meant only for solemn worship and not for earning money. Let us always share the same kind of “*zeal for our Father’s house*” – the kind of zeal that leads us to keep worship pure and unadulterated by falsehood, apostasy, or materialism.

*“Reproach has broken my heart, and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none” (69:20).* Is this not the sad picture of our Lord in the Garden, praying by Himself, with none to comfort Him? Turn to **Matthew 26:36-56** and consider how Jesus’ friends treated Him in His moment of greatest need. They slept during His fervent prayers, ignored His warnings against temptation, and then fled from Him when the guards came to take Him away.

**Discussion Question:** The “broken hearted” theme is echoed in **Isaiah 53:3**, where the writer notes how the Messiah would be a “man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.” What were some of the things that contributed most to Jesus’ heartache?

*“They also gave me gall for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar” (22:21).* This prophecy is fulfilled completely in the account of Christ’s death on the cross. *“Gall was actually mingled with the drink which was given to Christ just before He was crucified, and which He tasted, but would not swallow (Matthew 27:34)” (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. VIII, 54).* Upon the cross, Christ uttered the phrase, “I thirst” and was given a sponge soaked in vinegar, or sour wine (**John 19:29-30**).



# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 7

### Psalm 110

*“The Lord said to my Lord...” (110:1)* is a phrase that is quoted in **Matthew 22:44**. In this scripture, Christ is using the prophecy to prove a point about His own deity. *“‘What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The son of David.’ He said to them, ‘Then how does David in the Spirit call Him, ‘Lord,’ saying...”* Jesus argues that because David refers to the Christ as “my Lord,” then He cannot possibly be inferior to King David. The lesson is that Christ is king over all – there is no earthly king, even David, that rules with as much authority, power, might, and grace as Jesus. One point to note is that Jesus believes David’s writings were inspired by the Spirit, so even the Psalms are authoritative documents from God.

The verse is quoted again in **Acts 2:34-35**, by the apostle Peter. Once again, the point that is being made is that Jesus is a king like no other, and that even the great David paid his respects to the Lord. *“For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says...”* Although David was great in the eyes of God, and achieved power from a worldly perspective, he did not do any of the wonderful things that Jesus did. David was unable to ascend and descend to and from heaven at his own will.

*“Sit at My right hand until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.”* The footstool is a piece of furniture that is placed at the bottom of a throne for the purpose of keeping the occupant’s feet elevated. In this prophecy, the Lord is promising that He would humble all of the enemies of Christ so low that they would be His footstool. They are not worthy to enjoy the benefits of kinship with Christ, and must therefore be subjected to the lowest possible point. In the sense that Jesus conquered all His enemies, this prophecy has come true – although it will not completely come to fruition until Christ allows all of us to join Him in conquering death, the final enemy (**1 Corinthians 15:26-28**). This is an excellent verse to show anybody who believes in premillennialism – that is, that Jesus is not reigning on His throne, but is awaiting the completion of an earthly kingdom and



throne. What the prophecy makes quite clear is that Christ is reigning now, for until all things are finished, He sits at the right hand of God in glory (**Acts 3:19-21**).

*“The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, ‘Rule in the midst of Thine enemies’”* (**110:2**). Truly, Jesus does rule in the midst of His enemies. Even as He was living in this world, He was the Son of God, although the Pharisees and other powerful forces rejected Him (**Acts 2:36**). Jesus also stated that His kingdom was not of this world (**John 18:36**).

**Discussion Question:** How does Jesus reign over His enemies today ?

*“Thy people will volunteer freely in the day of power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Thy youth are to Thee as dew”* (**110:3**). I love the point made here that the army of Christ is entirely voluntary! We will never be forced to choose salvation, but can easily make up our minds to reject the Truth. When we hear the call to obey, God cannot choose for us whether or not we will follow it!

*“The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind...”* (**110:4**). This is one of the many statements in the Bible describing the absolutely unchangeable nature of God. He is unwavering in His strength and sure about His decisions. While this may seem to contradict certain verses about God “relenting,” “repenting,” or changing His mind (**Joel 2:14, Jeremiah 18:8**), we must understand that the context is referring to God’s decision to send Jesus Christ as the ultimate king, prophet, and priest after the order of Melchizedek. This is a decision that will not be altered or amended, but has been set forth since the moment sin entered the world. While there are things about which God changes His mind – He relents when we repent of our sins, He punishes when we fall from grace, He saves who He wills and condemns who He wills based on obedience – this is one point that will never be changed by God!

*“Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”* (**Psalms 110:4**). This is directly quoted in several places in the book of Hebrews. Notice **Hebrews 7:1-10**, in particular. In this NT passage, it is essential to the writer’s argument that he first prove the beneficence of the priesthood of a man named Melchizedek, unique in the Bible for a number of reasons. To understand the premise of our text, we must read the story found in **Genesis 14:14-24**. There are

several characteristics that we can first learn from Melchizedek from this scripture, the first one being that he was a king unlike his contemporaries. While the king of Sodom sought the profit from Abram's raid, viewing his relationship with the great patriarch as more of a business deal than a friendship, the king of Salem, Melchizedek, refused at first to accept any of the spoils, seeking only the safe return of his people. Notice how generous and kind he was toward Abram and his men (**14:18**) and also how grateful he was in his blessing (**14:19-20**). He was humble and reverent toward God – he obviously worshiped and served the same Almighty God as Abram – and gave Him the credit for the defeat of the evil kings. Few kings of that day, few people at all, still honored God in the way that Melchizedek does in these verses. His name, then, is entirely appropriate to his lifestyle. Melchizedek means literally “the king of righteousness” and the city of Salem means “peace.”

Examine more closely **Hebrews 7:1-3**. Realize first of all that the writer of Hebrews refers to Melchizedek as a real, historical figure, and not just a myth or fable. He also recounts the events in Genesis with extraordinary accuracy. This is one of the astounding things about the Bible; after thousands of years, and translated into Greek, the account of Melchizedek, mentioned only twice in the entire Old Testament, is remembered and valued in this letter to Christians. Even very minor or supposedly insignificant characters in the scriptures should carry tremendous meaning to us.

*“Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God he abides a priest perpetually.”* Does this passage, then, teach that Melchizedek was some kind of angel or even Jesus Christ himself? Certainly it does not. To say that Melchizedek was anything more than a very special man with an awesome faith in God is to completely miss the point of his story. The verse simply admits that he came from a family without great or memorable heritage. He became a priest without having the genealogy to “certify” him – that is, he did not come from the Levites, who were intensely concerned with keeping track of genealogies. As for his perpetual priesthood, we can only speculate as to whether or not Melchizedek experienced death. Perhaps this verse teaches that he was taken up to heaven without bodily death, similar to the transformation of great men like Enoch or Elijah. Most likely, this interpretation is a stretch, and the verse simply means that his type, or class, of priesthood reigns on in the form of Christ, who never experienced a final death and rules at the right hand of God to this day.

The main point behind all of this is that Melchizedek is unique. He is unique from the evil kings of his age. He is unique in the sense that he lived as both a priest and a king at the same time. He is unique in that he had no descendants who carried on his class of high priesthood after him. He is unique from all other priests before or after him, save Christ himself, and he is unique in that he seems to appear on the spot in the story of the Bible and disappears almost as quickly. We only get a brief glimpse of the magnificent faith, hope, and righteousness of this high priest.

Christ's high priesthood is similar to Melchizedek's, which is why the two of them are so closely linked in the scriptures. Melchizedek is a type of Christ, or a foreshadow of the kind of priest-king that our Lord would be. His priesthood, however, is not limited by the problems of the physical body, specifically in death. Though the physical high priests all died from those causes which so easily infirm the human frame, Christ conquered death by not only experiencing it, but escaping from it. He died once for all, but was raised from the grave, establishing Himself as the supreme high priest for all time. This is described most eloquently in **Hebrews 7:23-25**. Notice a few key phrases in this passage. *"Because He abides forever, He holds His priesthood permanently"* (**7:24**). There is a very practical application that we can make to this verse – it has already been shown that at the extinction of a high priesthood, there must of necessity be the change of a law (**7:12**). Since Christ's priesthood will *never* become extinct, that means His law will always abide as the one and only standard of judgment (**John 12:48**). Any other Gospel, then, would simply be profanity in the eyes of our high priest.

**Discussion Question:** What are the practical applications of having a high priest who abides perpetually ?

Like the great King Melchizedek, Jesus is a priest and a king at the same time, ruling over us in a way that is unique among all the high priests who ever lived under the Old Law. Let us never get so caught up in the affairs of this life and this world that we forget how much we need Christ. And let us never become so arrogant that we assume we have ever done enough to pay Him back for all that

He has freely given. He demands humble obedience from all of us (**Hebrews 5:8-10**).

### **Closing Thoughts**

*“The Lord is at Thy right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country” (Psalm 110:5-6).* We must not be too surprised by this portion of the prophecy, although many people are. According to today’s thought, Jesus is all about love and peace. It is incongruent with modern philosophy to consider Him in terms of violence and wrath, as per this philosophy. But we must remember that even Jesus Himself considered this very psalm as authoritatively given by God (**Matthew 22:43**). Rather than be disappointed by what we read in this part of the psalm, let us rejoice that such a terrible fate does not have to befall us, if we choose to obey Christ and love Him with all our hearts. It is only the evil people of the world who will be shattered, broken, and left for dead. It is only the wicked and arrogant who will find themselves alone on the day of Judgement, with only the expectation of Hell to keep them company. We can be saved by Jesus, not destroyed by Him!



# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 8

### Isaiah 2:2-4, 7:14

*“Now it will come about that in the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it” (Isaiah 2:2).* This prophecy begins by indicating the time that all of these things would take place. While *“in the last days”* seems ambiguous enough to apply it to a number of supposed religious epochs, we must consider how the phrase is used both contextually and in other passages. Consider that the *“last days”* are also described by Peter in **Acts 2:17** as being the time surrounding the Day of Pentecost. The writer of Hebrews also notes that he was living in the *“last days”* (**Hebrews 1:2**). It would seem that the *“last days”* refers to the time after Christ – as an age, we are living in the last stage of religious development. From Christ onward, every day could be the last day of this world.

**Discussion Question :** What other evidence do you see in the Bible that gives you an indication of what the last days are? What are the implications if the last days are a future era, yet to be experienced?

*“The Mountain...”* A mountain serves as an excellent analogy when describing Christ. Like a glorious peak that towers above everything else on the horizon, so Christ is the *“way, the truth, and the life...”* (**John 14:6**). He is the glory of the Father, and the crowned king of the world (**Philippians 2:9-11**). Like a mountain, Christ is mighty, powerful, unshakeable, immovable, and time tested. From one generation to the next, mountains always seem to be there, unchanging. *“Established as the chief of the mountains...”* Being the Mountain of the house of the Lord, Christ is exalted above all other things. There is no other name but

Christ's that can save us (**Acts 4:12**). There is no ruler or throne that stands above our Lord's (**Ephesians 1:21**). *"Raised above the hills..."* Christ and His kingdom will be like no other religion in the world. He leads His people to victory through wisdom, honor, and strength – indeed, no other church but the Christ's has the Son of God as its head! Compared to Christ, all other leaders and supposed "gods" are like little hills dwarfed by the mighty peak behind them. *"And all the nations will stream to it."* This is an interesting picture that we are given by the prophet. In nature, streams do not flow toward a mountain but away from it – no amount of water can overcome the fundamental law of gravity. Christ, however, maintains a power that is greater than gravity. Even that awesome natural force cannot persuade the streams of the world to flow uphill to the glory of Jesus!

**Discussion Question:** How does Christ "draw" the nations to Him? What drew the Ethiopian to Christ in **Acts 8**, or the Philippian jailor of **Acts 16**?

First, it is beneficial to note that in a limited sense, all the known nations of the world streamed to Jesus in the first century. Practically the entire Roman Empire (what would have been called the "known world" at the time) eventually had heard the Gospel message by the close of the 100 AD. In another sense, the nations still stream to Christ today because the message of salvation is available to all, and anybody from any place in the world can obey Jesus and go to heaven (**Revelations 5:9**).

*"Many nations will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths.' For the Law will go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (2:3).* The "many nations" in this prophecy are all of the people who join the Lord's church and proclaim their belief in Him. They go about harkening others to join them in their spiritual journey. Like watchmen who warn their city about impending doom (**Ezekiel 3:17-19**), so the righteous people of all the nations go to their countries and spread the Gospel. What a striking phrase they say – *"Come, let us go to the mountain!"* It is a phrase that beckons, that longs, that inspires curiosity. Who would not want to investigate at such a

peculiar invitation? But why go? What is the motivation? *“That he may teach us concerning His ways...”* Notice here that these believers are not coming to Jesus to be entertained or rewarded. They do not seek the mountain of the Lord for any earthly gain or prize, but to be rewarded with the opportunity to learn. Do we approach worship in the same way? It is sad to see the state of religion today: so many churches now cater to the desires and requests of their potential converts just to win them over. They advertise Christ as if He were a vending machine, able and willing to do whatever we want! Not only that, but there is now a great lack of learning amongst those who claim to be Christians. Where has the intense desire for education gone? Why do people not come to Christ simply to learn from Him?

**Discussion Question:** How do we renew ourselves and find the same passion that these people have for godly education in Isaiah 2:3?

*“For the Law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (2:3).* This is a prophecy that comes true after the death of our Lord, as the apostles begin the Christian ministry in Jerusalem. *“Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead... and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46-47).* Also note that after the ascension of Christ, the apostles spoke from Jerusalem (Acts 1:12) until the dispersion of the brethren in Acts 8:1 at the hands of Saul.

**Discussion Question:** What reasons did God have for asking the apostles to preach in Jerusalem first? Why is Jerusalem a good starting place for the spread of Christianity?

*“And He will judge between the nations...”* Thus signifying that the message of Christ is for all people, not just certain races or societies. The same thoughts are



discussed by Paul in **Galatians 3:28** and by John in **Revelation 5:9-10**. *“And will render decisions for many peoples...”* The wisdom of Christ is the standard by which all things must be measured. We cannot truly know anything until we have first become familiar with Him! Therefore, every nation on earth should look to the ways of the Bible for true inspiration and peace. With Christ at the helm, no group of people can be dismayed or dismantled. *“And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war” (2:4)*. This is not to say that no wars would ever happen again after the coming of Christ, for our Lord even warns of *“wars and rumors of wars”* in **Matthew 24:6**. What He means is that Christians will not be participating in physical Holy War. Unlike the nation of Israel, God’s chosen people for a time who had to fight carnal wars to defend their promised land, Christians do not fight with swords and clubs and spears, but with the Word. We use weapons that are not of this world, and are divinely powerful for the destruction of spiritual enemies (**2 Corinthians 10:3-7**). Not only that, but in the church there is supposed to be no division of class or race. We should never even have the desire to lift our hand against a brother in Christ. When we become Christians, we can get along with any other Christian in the world, knowing that all of the physical differences between us mean absolutely nothing in the eyes of God!

*“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14)*. Consider some of the difficulties of this prophecy and it becomes quite clear that Jesus could not have been a hoax. First, it is physically impossible for a virgin to have a child, so all other supposed Messiahs would have to have this peculiar mark of authenticity. Second, the specifics of the prophecy make it impossible for any other historical figure to fit the mold of the Messiah but Jesus Christ. He was a boy, born by a virgin, named Immanuel. *“Immanuel”* literally means “God with us,” which is truly Jesus Christ – Jesus is God, who came in the flesh to be with us in the world (**Philippians 2:6-8**).

# Christ In The Old Testament

## Lesson 9

### Isaiah 40:1-3, Isaiah 42:1-9

To put **Isaiah 40** in to context, we must realize that the prophet had successfully presented a picture of great darkness in **Isaiah 39** and the preceding chapters. He had informed the people that Babylon would come and conquer the land, enslaving some people and killing many others. *“**Chapters 40ff. serve to answer the dark picture that the thirty-ninth chapter had created. They see the people of God in human bondage, yet they go far deeper and look to the people as being in bondage spiritually, subject to the taskmaster of sin. From this bondage there is to be a deliverer, the Servant of the Lord. As they face the future the people are assured that God will be with them in the vicissitudes of their existence**”* (**The Book of Isaiah**, Vol. III, Young, 17). With this in mind, let us remember that we too may find ourselves sinking deep in dark times. Life is not perpetually happy, and many people suffer from depression, sadness, anger, loss, bereavement, and poverty. The question that we must all ask ourselves, however, is what we will do in response to the suffering. When faced with trials, will we look to the future with gladness and hope, knowing that something far better awaits at the close of this life? Or will we look on and lose faith? There is no greater lesson that can be learned from this section of scripture, and students of all ages should come to an understanding of the hope and glory that we have in Jesus Christ!

*“**Comfort, O comfort My people,’ says your God” (40:1).*** It seems that this is a direct command to the prophets of that day to comfort the people of Judah with the words about to be unfolded in Isaiah’s book. After reading such prophecies of doom, it would be necessary for the messengers of God to go to those Jews who still remain righteous and offer hope to them.

**Discussion Question:** What does this chapter teach us about “good people” who still face times of suffering and trial?

In the case of this chapter, Isaiah is being told to comfort the blameless Jews because they have just been informed that they will be led into captivity right along with their more disreputable brothers and sisters. Are there times when good people in a nation suffer because of the vast majority of evil people there? Are there any examples in the Bible of this? Think about Daniel and his three friends, nicknamed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. They were good men, but were led into Babylonian captivity in spite of their righteousness.

One of the primary lessons for us from **40:1** is that we have an obligation to comfort the people around us. When we see someone crying, it is our duty as Christians and representatives of God to investigate, or to be a shoulder to cry on when necessary.

*“Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her, that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed, that she has received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins” (40:2).* Isaiah is now given the specific message of blessing that is to be presented to the people of Jerusalem. It is, first, to be spoken, which is simply indicative of how important proclaiming the message of God is. There are so many things in the Bible that must be spoken, and we cannot just leave them to the reader to discover – after all, it was the Ethiopian eunuch who proclaimed, *“How can I understand unless someone teaches me?” (Acts 8:31)* We cannot just hand somebody a Bible and expect it to do all the work of evangelism for us. Rather, we must “speak” the message. We must “call out to” those who need to hear the Gospel, just as Isaiah had to do these things with his message. *“Her warfare has ended”* is a phrase that means Jerusalem’s call to war is over. That is, there would come a time when there would no longer be a need to draft soldiers into a physical army. One thing that we must understand about this text is that it is written in the present-tense, but surely looks to the future for its fulfillment. Otherwise, the whole of the prophecy would be a lie – Jerusalem was besieged and went to war numerous times after this point in Jewish history, so the text must be intimating a future cessation of physical warfare. If this is true, then it is clear the Kingdom of Christians is what is meant (**2 Corinthians 10:3-6**). *“Her iniquity has been removed.”* Again, these things must be referring to a point in the future, because no sins were removed from the world until Christ died (**Hebrews 10:11-18**). What is the one thing that removes our iniquity? Is there any source but God from which the blessings of forgiveness flow? Consider **Acts 4:12**. *“That she has received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”* This verse actually has two interpretations, and both are valuable. First, the text could mean that

Jerusalem has received an adequate amount of punishment for her sins – that is, adequate enough to satisfy God’s righteous ends. Truly, there is no punishment that can make up for our sins, but one writer puts it well when he writes, *“If the word refers to suffering or punishment, it indicates that in God’s sight Jerusalem has suffered sufficiently because of her sins. Although she has not been punished as much as she deserved, nevertheless her punishment has been sufficient to accomplish its purpose”* (Young, 24). On the other hand, the word double could refer to a double blessing offered to Jerusalem after her many travails and punishments. Having suffered so much, God may be promising that a time will come when the gift of His Servant would be so far beyond what they truly deserve that it can only be described as “double.”

*“A voice is calling, ‘Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God’”* (**40:3**). This verse is quoted in **Mark 1:3** as being fulfilled by John the baptist.

**Discussion Question:** In what way was John the baptist Christ’s forerunner? How is he like Elijah (**Malachi 4:5-6**) and how did he help turn the hearts of the Jews back to God?

### **“He Will Bring Forth Justice To The Nation”**

Next, we want to consider a passage of scripture found in **Isaiah 42:1-9**, which is also quoted in **Matthew 12:18-21**. *“Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations”* (**42:1**). Clearly, this is a Messianic prophecy, for there is no other servant of God who so fulfills the requirements of the verse. Here are some fulfilled prophecies to consider – *“He will not cry out or raise His voice”* refers primarily to the silence of Jesus before His accusers; *“He will not be disheartened or crushed”* is obviously making the point that Jesus was never discouraged by His lot, but looked forward to His death with courage; *“The coastlands will wait expectantly for His law”* may refer to the fact that much of

the Gospel was spread by Jesus around the coastal villages of the Sea of Galilee, His primary area of ministry (although, in the broader sense, it means that even people faraway will receive the Gospel at some point as a result of traveling Christians); *"I will also hold you by the hand and watch over you"* means that God will never abandon Jesus; *"To open blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from the prison"* is a prophecy about the release of the Gentiles from the bondage of sin. Since God first made His covenant with Abraham, there was a dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles (even though Gentiles could be saved by converting to Judaism, there was always an ethnic barrier between the two groups of people). At the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, though, the opportunity for salvation was opened to all people, Jew or Gentile. God would no longer have a chosen people of physical heritage, but would form His Kingdom out of all people who would choose to come to Him (**Romans 10:11-13, Galatians 3:28**).

Many truths are revealed in **Isaiah 42:1-9**, beginning with the resiliency of Jesus Christ. According to **42:2-4**, the mission of Jesus would not be halted, no matter what obstacle He encountered. Jesus was powerful enough to defeat all of His foes, yet sensitive enough that He would do no harm to even a reed or the faint burning at the end of a wick. He had the ability to speak with such softness that His breath would not extinguish such a small flame! Even in the face of death and despair, *"He will not be disheartened or crushed."* There are many who claim that Jesus had several moments of weakness, first in the Garden as He was praying, and second on the cross when He proclaimed, *"My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"* (**Matthew 27:46**) On that contrary, these were not moments of weakness, for the prophecy in Isaiah makes it clear that not a moment of that would be found in His life.

*"I will appoint you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations"* (**42:6**). *"The covenant between God and His people being in Christ, it is quite consistent with Hebrew usage to transfer the term to Christ Himself, in whom the covenant was, as it were, embodied. So Christ is called 'our Salvation' and 'our Peace,' and again, 'our Redemption' and 'our Life.' This is the ordinary tone of Hebrew poetry, which rejoices in personification and embodiment. A prose writer would have said that the Servant of the Lord would be given as the Mediator of a covenant between Jehovah and His people"* (**Pulpit Commentary**, Vol. X, 117). As a poetic statement, Jesus is the New Covenant. In literal terms, though, He is the Mediator (**Hebrews 12:24, 9:15, 8:6, 1 Timothy 2:5**), or the agent, of a the covenant. For

those who are unfamiliar with the term, a covenant is a promise, or more closely linked to a will.

**Discussion Question:** How is Christ our covenant? What makes Him so uniquely qualified to be the “go-between” for God and mankind? Consider **Hebrews 4:14-16**.

*“I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images” (42:8).* This is an excellent verse to help contradict the claims of false prophets and modern-day-Messiahs. Without any doubt, Christ was the ultimate fulfillment of all things in the Old Testament. After Christ, no other prophet would come with His same power. No other Messiah would come (i.e., Muhammad, who claimed to be superior to Jesus Christ). No other human being would have Christ’s glory bestowed on Him.

*“Behold, the former things have come to pass, now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim them to you” (42:9).* What former things have passed today? Why would they need to pass away? For an answer, see **Hebrews 8:1-7, 13**. The “former things” are the edicts of the Old Law, given by Moses to the people of Israel. While those things were perfect in nature, they were impossible to keep by the Jews. It was necessary, therefore, to do away with those Old Laws and replace them with the more excellent Law of Faith, which is found in obedience to Jesus Christ.