

Reference: VARIOUS

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# **Christ in the Old Testament - Introduction**

Purpose: To lay a foundation for the study - principles of Biblical interpretation and key passages showing we should expect to see Christ in the OT.

## **1. Introduction**

Subject for next 12 weeks is our Savior

We mean to look for Him throughout the OT

These are days when many disparage the OT – dismiss it  
“Why do we need it at all? We have the NT now!”

We will address that question

Also hope to show that if you know how to seek Him,

Jesus is on almost every page of the OT Scriptures

This shouldn't surprise us – Christ said so Himself:

### **1.1. *“These are the Scriptures that testify of Me”***

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me;

John 5:46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.

### **1.2. *“Beginning with Moses and the prophets”***

Luke 24:27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

The study of Christ in Scripture should warm our hearts

But need to lay down some principles to guide us

Otherwise we can get into serious problems

## **2. Biblical Interpretation**

Important to begin here – with our view of Scripture

Can otherwise be fanciful in our interpretations

All aware of instances – will look at examples

Can make the Bible say anything if we mishandle it

The right and responsibility of every true believer is to study and interpret Scripture

Not confined to Ministers – error of the Roman Church

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Deuteronomy 13:1-3 "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God is testing you to find out if you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Here the people were charged to discern truth and error – also in Galatians:

Galatians 1:8-9 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

Scriptures are addressed to believers generally, not simply to church leaders

Does this mean there are as many interpretations as believers?

“It’s all a matter of interpretation”? No!

2 Peter 1:19-21 So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. 20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

There are not multiple interpretations – only one is correct

It is our sin that often prevents us from seeing it.

There may be multiple fulfilments of prophecy – different matter.

Look at cardinal principles to help us find the true interpretation:

### **2.1. *Our understanding is not the touchstone***

Do not aim to find an interpretation subject to our understanding

e.g. JW's – tend only to believe what can be humanly understood

We hold to the Truth – even when we cannot explain it fully

Should reassure us there are difficult areas – this is Divine Truth!

### **2.2. *Interpret a text in its proper context***

*A text out of its context is a pretext*

Consider the immediate context and context of whole Bible

e.g. Hebrews 6

Hebrews 6:4-6 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them

again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

“There it is!” – say some – “a Christian can fall from grace!”

“There is no perserverance of the saints”

But if we read on in the context to verse 9:

Hebrews 6:9 But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

So we must understand that whatever is said in vv 4-6 is not said of true believers – the context governs our interpretation.

### **2.3. Do not interpret Scripture so it contradicts Scripture**

Since Scripture contains no errors

Must never interpret a difficult passage so that it differs from passages that are easier to understand e.g.

1 John 2:1-2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

Did Christ indeed propitiate for the sins of the whole world?

Some say yes – so all are saved!

But that is to fly in the face of other scriptures which make it clear:

That Christ dies for “many”

That He came for His Elect

That there is a Hell where people suffer

So we must come to another understanding of “whole world” that fits the sense of Scripture

Some think it speaks of sufficiency as opposed to efficiency of Christ’s sacrifice

Some think it means that He is the only propitiation there is

Some that as many as are saved, from all languages, tribes and nations the world over (not just the Jews), are saved through His propitiation.

All are certainly true!

All are in harmony with the rest of Scripture

### **2.4. Interpret Scripture with Scripture**

The corollary to the last point

Always use simpler passages to shine light on harder ones  
But must ensure that they speak of the same thing!  
e.g. Colossians and Ephesians, Romans and Galatians  
Contain many parallel passages and can help us

**2.5. Take the simplest, most natural meaning**

Where there are a number of plausible interpretations available  
Generally a good guide to take the simplest  
Complication normally product of human, not Divine, explanation.

**2.6. Do not stop short or go beyond Scripture**

Must give Scripture its full weight and no more  
e.g. “None shall snatch them out of my hand”  
Some, wishing to believe we can lose our salvation, have said,  
“But it doesn’t say they can’t walk out!”. This is not doing justice  
to the passage!

**2.7. Interpret from the Bible outwards**

We do not begin with us and our experiences  
Then seek to read these into Scripture  
Rather, start with the Bible and read out from there  
Judge your experiences by the Word  
e.g. Psalm 23:2 “He makes me lie down in green pastures” has  
been used to justify Toronto blessing! They began with their  
experience and then desperately search Scripture to find support.

**3. Conclusions**

Have laid a foundation for the study  
Will go on to look for Christ in the OT and will make use of these  
principles as we go.

Will find Christ in the following ways:

Prophecy, Theophany, Symbols, Human Types, Ceremony

Will find Him everywhere- these are Scriptures that speak of Him  
Hopefully at the end you will be excited by the OT

You will learn to look for your Saviour there yourself

You will be built up in your faith