

Jesus in the Old Testament

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"Before Abraham was, I am." "Abraham rejoiced to see my day."
"Moses wrote of me." "David called me Lord." These are a few of the outrageous claims that Jesus made. Outrageous only if they were not true. But how could Moses and David have written about Jesus who was born hundreds of years after they had died? We saw last week how the Word was brought forth from God in eternity before anything else existed. And that same Word became a human being - in the person of Jesus - so unlike any other human being Jesus existed before he was born. Some have speculated about reincarnation and of memories from former lives. Scripture teaches that each of us is uniquely created by God from nothing, we are each a new unique person. Where do past memories come from - they come from demons who inhabited people long since dead and pass on their memories to living people now.

Jesus is the only human to have existed before he was conceived; so he did exist even before Abraham and Abraham rejoiced to know that from his seed would come one who would bless the whole world, the one that Moses wrote of and whom King David called Lord. The coming of the Christ was predicted many times in the OT, and Dave will look at some of those prophecies next week. But today I want to us to look at some other ways in which we see Jesus in the OT. Listen to these words of Jesus in John 5:39

"You study the Scriptures because you think that in them you'll have eternal life; but these speak about Me, yet you won't come to me to get life."

Jesus said the scriptures testify to him - the OT is all about him. But the Jews were so taken up with their religion and trying to serve God and please him they were completely blind to who Jesus was and what the OT said about him. They thought we can have eternal life if we keep what the Bible says. XX. The only way to get life is through Jesus - I am the way the truth and the life. Only Jesus has the words of eternal life. We get life only by coming to Jesus and receiving his forgiveness and his free gift of new life. Too many people die because they are too proud to accept something they have not earned. Have you come to Jesus to receive life, or do you feel you need to earn your salvation from God in some way? You can never do that.

But let's see where we find Jesus in the OT. There are a number of times where God himself shows up in physical form. Sometimes he is identified as the angel of the LORD - angel only means messenger and who better to be his own messenger than God himself. Let's see how many accounts you can recall of the Word appearing as a man before he actually became flesh and lived amongst us?

Walking in the Garden of Eden. Gen 2
Appears to Abraham & blesses him Gen 16:7, 18:1
Cares for rejected Hagar Gen 21:17
Appears at top of Jacob's ladder Gen 28:13-16
Wrestles with Jacob. Gen 32:24
Appears in the burning bush Ex 3:1
Stands in way of Balaam's donkey Num 22:22
Captain of the Lord's Host meets Joshua Jos 5:13
Appears to Gideon in winepress Judges 6:11
Appears to Samson's parents Judges 13
Strengthens Elijah on his way to Sinai 1Kings 19
Appears in fiery furnace Dan 3:23
His finger writes on Belshazzars' wall Dan 5
Protects Daniel in the Lion's den Dan 6:22
Appears to Daniel as man in linen Dan 10-12

So we have some remarkable events where Jesus was involved with people on earth before his birth. He was probably the 'Angel of the Lord' in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, leading, watching, protecting the Hebrews as they wandered for forty years through the wilderness. Yet he didn't live with them, his home was in his Father's presence from where he upholds all things by his powerful word. God's only begotten, who is God's Wisdom and The Word. But at one amazing point in time God the Word would actually lock himself into all the limits of human existence for about 30 years. But we will think more about this over Christmas.

As well as many as thirty OT appearances, we have over thirty OT passages with specific prophecies of his coming, referenced in the NT and others that are possible allusions to Christ. Some count over a hundred OT separate statements about Jesus that are recorded as being fulfilled in the NT. Then in addition there are hundreds of illustrations, pictures types and metaphors of Jesus throughout the OT. In fact we could say that anywhere we look in the OT we can usually see some reflection of Jesus.

Some specific illustrations:

- Noah's ark Gen 7:16
- Jacob's ladder Gen 28
- Passover Lamb Exodus 12,
- The ark, the tabernacle, & all its parts altar, candlestick, table, laver, mercy seat etc. Exod 25-40
- All the sacrifices, offerings, firstfruits, scape goat.
- Brass serpent on a pole, Num 21
- The Rock Ex 17.

One of the most moving of all these images of Christ is found in Genesis 22.

Read the passage through slowly.

Jehovah-Jireh the name of this place means 'the Lord will provide'. This provision has nothing to do with money! On this mountain, Moriah, the Lord promised that he will provide. That provision was of a substitutionary sacrifice. It is part of the very same mountain range that David bought for Solomon to build the Temple. Jews believe that sacrifices on Temple mount took place at this very same spot. But Golgotha was also one of the peaks of Moriah and it is more likely that Isaac was spared being sacrificed at the exact place that 1000 years later Jesus would be sacrificed for the sins of the world.

How could Abraham have gone through with the sacrifice of Isaac, knowing the promises God had given him for his son?

Heb 11:17-19 "By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death."

Abraham was spared having to sacrifice his son since a ram was provided, caught in the thicket. Another Father did not spare his only son but gave him up freely for us all.