

“HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES”

PART II

“HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES, YE WOULD HAVE BELIEVED ME,
FOR HE WROTE OF ME”

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5:39, 40, 45-47).

The Jews of Jesus’ day were seeing *the letter of Scripture*, BUT *they were NOT* going beyond the letter and allowing the Scriptures to be opened to their understanding. *They were NOT* going beyond the letter to *the spirit of Scripture*. When Moses was read, there was a “veil...upon their heart,” something which remains even to this present day. But this *veil* could then and can today be “done away in Christ” (II Cor. 3:13-16).

NOT seeing beyond the letter, they were NOT seeing that of which the letter spoke. “The letter” spoke of a *person*. It spoke of *Christ*, though He is seen only in “the spirit” of Scripture (II Cor. 3:6, 17). And the Jews of Jesus’ day, reading and studying the letter of Scripture, BUT *NOT going beyond this, were failing to see the One of Whom Moses and all the Prophets spoke.*

They had the written Word (*which was LIVING*) in

their possession, which told about *the LIVING Word* dwelling in their midst.

BUT, though both had come down from heaven, they were failing to see the latter in the former. They were seeing the letter of Scripture, but NO further.

They were failing to see *a spiritual discernment* within the letter. And, as a hunter might search and search but (through a wrong fashion) still fail to find the quarry, these Jews were searching and searching but (through a wrong fashion) still failing to see that of which the Scriptures spoke.

This was something which the Jews were doing at Christ’s first coming, when the kingdom of the heavens was being offered to Israel. And dire consequences followed. The Jewish people rejected both the King and the kingdom; and, as a result, the kingdom (that part of the kingdom being offered, the kingdom of the heavens) was taken from Israel, with a view to a new entity (the Church) being called into existence to be the recipient of this offer.

But, with the subsequent offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Christians, things in Christendom throughout the present dispensation have followed the same course that they did in Israel throughout the past dispensation.

In relation to the message pertaining to the kingdom of the heavens, near the end of the past dispensation, Israel’s religious leaders (mainly the fundamental Scribes and Pharisees) misled the people; and the people blindly followed their leadership.

And *EXACTLY* the same thing is happening in Christendom *pertaining to this same message near the end of the present dispensation.* The religious leaders (relative to this message, those in liberal and fundamental circles alike [as the Pharisees and Sadducees in Israel]) are misleading the people; and the people are blindly following their leadership.

What will be the end result?

It was all foretold in the history of Israel at Christ’s first coming. That which befell Israel, because of their blindness in this respect, will befall Christians, for they are blind in this same respect (II Cor. 3:14-4:6; cf. Rom. 11:17-21; Rev. 3:17).

They Testify of Me

The Old Testament Scriptures testify of Christ, and New Testament revelation — which deals with Christ throughout — cannot be properly understood apart from comparing the two Testaments. The gospel accounts in the New Testament have to do with an unveiling of events previously made known through Moses and the Prophets. And it is the same with all the other portions of the New Testament as well — from the Book of Acts through the Book of Revelation.

This is simply the WAY in which God has structured His Word, and the checks and balances ,MUST be run accordingly if one would properly understand this Word.

HOW though do Moses and the Prophets testify of Christ in that which they wrote, for their writings deal with numerous events and /or numerous individuals and their experiences?

The answer is evident, for Scripture deals with this issue many places. And these places can be found in the gospel accounts during Christ’s earthly ministry, in the Book of Acts following His ascension, in the epistles, and in the Book of Revelation which closes the Canon of Scripture. The New Testament is replete with instances of how the Old Testament has been structured. It would have to be, for it draws from the Old Testament in its entirety.

First, the kingdom offered to Israel — the kingdom of the heavens — *was NOT something new.* This kingdom was first introduced in the Old Testament, beginning with Moses (cf. Gen. 1:1-2:3; 14:18-22; 22:17, 18; Dan. 4:17-26; 7:18, 22, 25, 27; 10:13-21), and numerous Jews during this past dispensation aspired to a higher calling, *a heavenly* (Heb. 11:8-16, 32-40; cf. Matt. 8:11, 12; Luke 13:28, 29).

Then, the one initially offering the kingdom to Israel wasn’t unknown. Isaiah had written about John the Baptist over seven hundred years prior to the time he appeared to Israel as the forerunner of Christ (Matt. 3:3; cf. Isa. 40:3). And this same prophecy will have a future fulfillment in the person of Elijah, when he appears as the forerunner of Christ at His second coming (Matt. 11:12-14; cf. Mal. 4:5, 6).

(For additional information on the future ministry of Elijah, refer to the author's book, *Coming in His Kingdom*.)

Then, after John had been imprisoned, Christ continued with *the same message*. And since ALL of the Old Testament Scriptures have to do with ALL things surrounding Christ's person and work, *we can ONLY expect* parts of the Old Testament to deal with Christ's appearance to Israel at the time of His first coming, with the remainder dealing with Christ's appearance to Christians and/or Israel at the time of His second coming.

And that is EXACTLY what we find when going back to these Scriptures.

All About Christ

The experiences of Joseph, for example, depict numerous things about the person and work of Christ.

They MUST, for they are part of the revelation which Christ referred to in Luke 24:27. And *the SAME can be said* for the experiences of Moses, David, and multitudes of others throughout the Old Testament.

But how is Christ seen in the experiences of these individuals? He is seen in their experiences *EXACTLY* the same way He is seen in the experiences of Jonah in Matt. 12:38-40, or in that which Moses did with the brazen serpent in John 3:14. That revealed in the Old Testament (*individuals* and their experiences [*e.g.*, Adam, Abel], *events* [*e.g.*, that revealed in Gen. 1:1-2:3], *objects* [*e.g.*, the tabernacle, the brazen serpent]) forms types, and these types all reflect on some aspect of the person and work of Christ.

(The typical aspect of Scripture, to this extent, is easy to establish. A typical structure of this nature is *NOT ONLY specifically stated to exist BUT it is self-evident in Scripture as well*.)

[God, in His sovereign control of all things, allowed certain events to occur and certain individuals to pass through different experiences in order that He might have these events and experiences to draw upon at later points in time to teach His people the deep things in His Word].

I Corinthians 10:6, 11 *specifically states* that the experiences of the Israelites under Moses happened as *types* [the word in the Greek text in both verses — translated, “examples,” “ensamples” — *istupos*, from which we derive our English word, “type” (some Greek texts have the adverb rather than the noun, *tupikos*, “typically,” in v. 11)]. This covers parts of that portion of Scripture from Exodus chapter twelve through Deuteronomy. Then, going to Christ's statement in Luke 24:27, the remainder of Scripture, where the experiences of individuals have been recorded, can easily be seen to fall within this same category. It would have to, for the remainder of Scripture is simply a building on that previously set forth by Moses. *And an unchangeable God [Mal. 3:6] does NOT change* the manner in which He presents His Word throughout.

Then, aside from the preceding, this typical aspect of Scripture is *self-evident*. As one reads Scripture, this typical aspect surfaces numerous times in the N.T. through the manner in which the writers call attention to or allude to different people and things in the O.T. It is something evident at almost every turn as one moves through both Testaments, comparing Scripture with Scripture.)

But back to the thought of Christ at His first coming being depicted through the experiences of individuals in the Old Testament. That can be seen, for example, through the experiences of Joseph when he went to his brethren the first time (Gen. 37), or through the experiences of Moses when he went to his brethren the first time (Ex. 2), or through the experiences of David in association with his brethren (I Sam. 16ff).

And each of these accounts, though presenting one part of the same picture of Christ, adds to the picture by presenting things peculiar to each.

Each of these individuals was rejected, as Christ was rejected. And other types, along with that of Joseph, depict that which immediately followed — His death, burial, and resurrection (*e.g.*, the experiences of Abel in Gen. 4, the experiences of Isaac in Gen. 22, or the experiences of Jonah in Jonah 1, 2).

Then, these same types, among others, continue with material concerning the person and work of Christ following His ascension.

Joseph, between the time of his rejection and acceptance by his brethren, took a Gentile bride (Gen. 41:45; 45:1ff); Moses is seen doing the same thing (Ex. 2:21; 4:20, 29-31); and David, between the time of his rejection and the time he took the kingdom, gathered faithful men who would rule with him (I Sam. 22:1, 2; II Sam. 2:4; 5:3-5).

And all the preceding, of course, typifies certain aspects about the person and work of Christ during both the present and coming dispensations. This is something extensively dealt with in the New Testament, referring back to and drawing from the Old Testament.

Christ's present high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is patterned after that of Aaron, as he ministered in the earthly sanctuary. Christ, on the basis of His shed blood on the mercy seat (as Aaron, on the basis of shed blood on the mercy seat), is presently providing a cleansing for the kingdom of priests (for whom He previously died) which He is about to bring forth.

Christ alluded to His present ministry in this respect when He girded Himself, took a basin of water, and began to wash the disciples' feet shortly before His crucifixion (John 13:8-10); and Christ's present ministry is dealt with extensively by John in his first epistle (1:6ff) and by the writer of Hebrews (chs. 7b-10; *cf.* I Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 5:26, 27).

And all the preceding (along with numerous other things about the person and work of Christ) cannot be properly understood apart from an understanding of various things revealed in the typology of the tabernacle.

It has all been laid out in the Old Testament. *And APART from* that revealed in the Old, the Word which became flesh — the Son (John 1:14) — *CANNOT* be properly seen and known in a true Scriptural respect;

NOR can the New, which opens up and further explains things previously seen in the Old, be properly understood.

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