

THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (Faith Grounded in the OT Scriptures)

The Christian faith is not in a vacuum! It is presented in a HISTORICAL and PROPHETICAL context. It is prophetic and it is historic. And it builds. The New Testament builds on the Old Testament. Thus, the revelation of God as seen in the Scriptures was progressive in nature. Note the following examples of OT Scripture that the NT then builds on.

1. **Isaiah:** In Isaiah 37:16 Hezekiah prayed, *“O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.”* And in verse 20 he prayed, *“O LORD our God, save us...that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD, You alone.”* In Isaiah 43:10-11 God says, *“Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord, And besides Me there is no savior.”* And in Isaiah 44:6 God is presented as the LORD Who is the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the LORD of hosts, and He says, *“I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God.”*

2. **Ezekiel:** In Ezekiel 38:23 God in the context of the latter days says, *“Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.”* In this same context, God says He will so work that Israel will recognize Him as *“the LORD their God”* (Ezek. 39:28-29).

The title *“Lord GOD”* is Ezekiel’s favorite designation for God. Lord is *“Adonai”* meaning Master – the One with sovereign authority. GOD is *“YHWH”* which is God’s covenant Name. It refers to God as eternal in an everlasting covenant relationship with Israel (cf. Ex. 6:1-7). One can no more change God’s covenant relationship with Israel than they can change His Holy Name YHWH (cf. Jer. 31:35-37). *“Lord GOD”* literally means *“Master YHWH”*. Ezekiel uses this title a total of 217 times in the book. Elsewhere in the whole of the Old Testament, this designation is found only 103 times. Some variation of the phrase ***“shall know that I am the LORD”*** is found 63 times in the book of Ezekiel. God wants Israel and the whole world to know WHO He is as YHWH! He wants the entire world to know that He is the faithful covenant keeping God of Israel and that He ALONE is God!

3. **Daniel:** Daniel emphasizes the absolute and supreme LORDSHIP of God. In Daniel 2 when God revealed the king's secret, Daniel's response was this:

Daniel 2:20–22 (NKJV)

20 Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His.

21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.

22 He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.

At the end of Daniel 2 King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and said to Daniel, "***Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and revealer of secrets...***" (Dan. 2:47). Yet, the king still needed to learn the truth in a deeper way. He needed to be humbled before the Most High God.

Three times in Daniel 4 we are told that Nebuchadnezzar's experience of being turned out to pasture for 7 years demonstrates that "***the Most High rules in the kingdom of men***" (Dan. 4:17, 25, 32). When Nebuchadnezzar finally came to his senses he said, "***Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven...those who walk in pride He is able to put down.***" (Dan. 4:37).

4. **Hosea:** In Hosea 13:4 God reminded rebellious Israel that they should have acknowledged Him for Who He is as their God and Savior saying, "*you shall know no God but Me; for there is no other savior besides Me.*" (Hos. 13:4)

5. **Joel:** When God finally brings Israel to repentance then God says they shall know, "*I am the LORD your God and there is no other.*" (Joel 2:27).

6. **Jonah:** Jonah even in his rebellion still feared the one true God of Israel saying, "*I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.*" (Jon. 1:9)

7. Zechariah: In the coming kingdom Zechariah 14:9 says, “*And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be ‘The Lord is one,’ And His name one.*”

NOTE: BASIC TO Old Testament SAVING FAITH WAS PERSONALLY RECOGNIZING THE GOD OF BIBLICAL REVELATION (the God of Israel) TO BE THE ONE TRUE SOVEREIGN GOD OVER ALL WHO IS ABLE TO SAVE (cf. Isa. 45:22; Heb. 11:6).

In the OT God revealed Himself as the ONE true God and He uniquely did so in relationship to His chosen people Israel. We see this brought front and center in bringing His people Israel out of Egypt in the Exodus. Pharaoh infamously said, “***Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.***” (Ex. 5:2). And so, God proceeded to demonstrate to all involved WHO He was as the One true Almighty God Who is in special relationship with Israel as seen in the 10 plagues that came upon Pharaoh (cf. Ex. 7-12). The climax of the matter is not only seen in God demonstrating His almighty power but in then delivering His people which is commemorated in the event called Passover which climaxed in deliverance through the Red Sea. Thus, the God of Israel is shown to be the one true Almighty God Who is a God of deliverance – a God Who delivers His people (cf. 2 Cor. 1:10).

In this, God is shown to be both LORD and SAVIOR – which is an indissoluble package. The rest of the OT builds on this truth and prepares the reader for the ultimate fulfillment of God’s revelation of Who He is as Lord and Savior as seen in the PERSON of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament God revealed Himself most clearly and completely in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Heb. 1:1-3). The nature of saving faith ever remains the same but the object of faith is now specifically centered in the person of Christ which of course recognizes His saving work on the cross as all-sufficient.

Following the resurrection of Christ God NOW commands all men everywhere to REPENT and BELIEVE on Jesus as personal Lord and Savior (cf. Acts 17:30-31; 1 Jn. 5:11-13). In the Person of Christ, we see the power (arm) of God put on display (Isa. 53:1) and we see His salvation provided (Isaiah 53:6).

The first great developed emphasis of the gospels is to present Jesus as Messiah-God. This is what the bulk of Christ's earthly ministry emphasized as He went about doing miracles as seen for example in the seven I AM statements in John's gospel (cf. Jn. 6:35-48; 8:12, 9:5; 10:7, 11-14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1-5). The purpose statement of John drives home the necessity of believing on the PERSON of Christ for WHO He is as Messiah-God (Jn. 20:30-31).

Building on this (Who He is) towards the end of His ministry Christ also emphasized that He was going to the cross which would be His great DELIVERANCE (salvation) work (Mt. 16:21). So, in Jesus we have the full revelation of the truth of God as both LORD and SAVIOR in one person (cf. Matt. 1:21-23). Thus, we see that God's progressive revelation consistently puts forth the great truth of WHO He is as both Lord and Savior which climaxes in the revelation of Jesus Christ (cf. Rev. 19:10).

The GOSPEL of the New Testament is according to the Old Testament Scriptures – repeated twice for emphasis in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 (NKJV)

3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,