

It's all about Jesus

Psalm 22:1-21, Matt 27: 45-50

So here we are on our road trip thru the bible again – and we've really covered a lot of ground over the past three weeks. We've looked at the bible's claims about itself; we've gone through the OT, and the NT. So I think you're ready to take a small pop quiz on this.

Show quiz PowerPoint.

Great, you are doing really well and you're remembering things.

Now last week we admitted that while we want to simplify bible reading to make it easier for you to get into it, we don't want to be simplistic and just ignore the fact that there are some questions that get raised when we say the NT is the good news that God kept his promise from the OT through sending Jesus Christ. Not everyone believes that – its one of the differences between a covenant approach to the bible and a dispensational approach to the bible.

And the Covenant approach describes the connection between the OT and NT with this little poem - *The NT is in the OT concealed.... And the OT is in the NT revealed.*

So we are going to look at three pictures in the OT about the promised messiah, and then find the example in NT of how Jesus is revealed in connection with those pictures.

Then you are going to get a chance to test what you've learned and see if you can do this yourself because there are many more and as you read the scriptures you'll come across them and be able to identify them.

So we find our first picture in Genesis 3:15. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

We'll call this picture the Serpent Stomper.

Now here's a bit of background on this picture – we have God confronting Adam and Eve and Satan in the Garden of Eden after Satan has deceived Eve and Adam into eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Their disobedience to God's command has some far reaching consequences. Sin and death have now entered into the world and the creation is cursed because of their actions.

However in spite of how things are all messed up God makes this promise (what does this tell us about God?) In this promise God addresses the serpent (Satan) and says

- 1) He will make Eve and the Devil antagonistic towards each other, the collaboration between Eve and the serpent is over. (this is goods news)
- 2) This antagonism will continue with their descendants. There will now be two lines of humanity with separate spiritual heritage, (even though they have the same biological heritage) – one line from Eve who serves God and the other from the Devil, rebelling against God. (explains much of the “genocide” in the bible)
- 3) **Eventually one of Eve's descendants - a male,** will crush the serpent's head, a death blow and the serpent will only wound him.

The New Testament match is from 1 Corinthians 15:21-26

²¹For since death came through a man, the resurrection of

the dead comes also through a man. ²²For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Here the apostle Paul is referring back to the event we just looked at in Genesis – explaining what the consequences of Adam's actions are – death for everyone.

Then he tells us how Christ reverses Adam's curse because he has been resurrected from the dead and that eventually this will be applied to all who believe in Christ
So Paul is connecting Christ back to Adam and Eve and portraying him as the promised offspring who will do what God promised.

When Christ returns death will be defeated, this will be the crushing blow of the foot on the head of the serpent. Christ reigns until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

So Paul is taking this OT picture and showing us how to find Jesus Christ in it. (kind of like Where's Waldo)

Now here are some more NT references which show how Jesus Christ is the Serpent Stomper pictured in Genesis 3:15.

Matthew 4: 1-11 – Jesus is tempted by the devil and resists him, rebukes him and sends him away.

Luke 10:18 – Jesus sends out the 72 disciples to heal the sick and proclaim the kingdom of God and says to them when they return – *I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning*

Romans 16:20 – Paul writes to the Roman church that *“the God of peace will soon crush Satan underneath your feet”*

Paul is taking the picture of Christ crushing the head of the serpent and extending to the church doing it as well because the church is the body of Christ.

So, because Christ is the serpent stomper – we get to be serpent stompers too, we can stand up and not only resist the devil but

as we mature in our faith we can go on the offensive against the devil and his demons and as Jesus said “the gates of Hell will not stand up against the church!”

So who's free on Wednesday night to go and attack the work which Satan has been up to in our community? Its time for the church to go on the offensive instead of always being under attack!

All right, let's look at another picture. **Exodus 12:1-14.**

The background of this picture is Israel having been enslaved in Egypt and God sending Moses to tell Pharaoh to let them go and finally God is going to send the his last judgment on Egypt which will free the Israelites.

So God instructs Israel to do the following so that the judgment won't fall on them as well.

- 1) **Take a year old lamb** with-out defect – a good healthy lamb, butcher it

- 2) **Them take the blood** and smear it on the doorframe of their house so that God's angel would pass-over the house sparing it from judgment.
- 3) **Then each year all** Israel was to repeat this in remembrance of God's salvation and they were reminded that God had spared them because of the blood of the lamb.

The New Testament match comes in John 1:29 when John the Baptist sees Jesus and says "**Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**"

Now if anyone would recognize Jesus as the messiah it would be John the Baptist, because he was the prophet who was sent to prepare the way for the messiah.

So John identifies Jesus by matching him to the OT picture of the Passover Lamb, and announcing him to the Jews as the Lamb that God himself had chosen.

Jesus fits this description because...

- 1) **He is perfect** with no defects of sinful rebellion against God.
- 2) **Jesus would** offer himself as a sacrifice so that his blood would save people from God's judgment.
- 3) **Finally, before** He offered his life, Jesus transformed the Passover meal into the Lord's Supper where eating the lamb was replaced by eating the bread and wine as symbols of flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, in remembrance that his death and his blood would accomplish salvation from Judgment.

Now if that doesn't convince you, there are more references to Jesus as the Lamb of God found in the NT.

Take Revelation 5:8-10. The apostle John sees a vision of heaven and the elders (Presbyterians) in heaven fall down and worship **a Lamb who had been slain**, saying worthy is the Lamb, and that by the shedding of his blood He had purchased people from all nations to be a part of the kingdom of God.

Yes, But so what? Well friends – this is good information to know. Because we always say that we're forgiven b/c of Jesus death – but know we can see why, and on what basis.

Because Jesus is the OT Lamb of God!

It gives you the confidence you need to know you truly are forgiven and its not just wishful thinking or psychological projection to get rid of guilty feelings – its real!

Now we're going to look at one last picture. We've seen one from OT narrative, one from OT Law, so now this time it's from OT prophecy.

This picture is given by the prophet Zechariah in 9:9 *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Now this verse is found in the middle of a section of prophecy where God is promising to neutralize Israel's enemies and bring them peace, a peace that will allow them to have a King in Jerusalem again.

But the prophecy makes it very clear that it will be God who accomplishes this because the King who will return is not one riding on a war-horse of conquest with great armies behind him. Nope, he comes riding in on a donkey, an animal of peace.

In today's context this would be like a situation where world leaders could go around without security concerns, and just being out among the people – and traveling around on a scooter – A Vespa.

Imagine all the world leaders coming to the G8 summit in Toronto with no security concerns or protestors, instead they would be out mingling with the people and riding to their meetings on Vespas (the Italians would love it!)

So where does the NT match this picture? Matt 21:1-11

Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

So this time it's Jesus himself who is identifying with the OT picture. When he goes up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover he had his disciples go ahead of him and secure a donkey for him to ride in on.

And Matthew states that Jesus did this deliberately to fulfill the OT prophecy. He was claiming to be this Prince of Peace.

Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a Donkey in order to bring in a new era of peace – not political peace, but the more fundamental spiritual peace between God and humanity,

Because if political peace is ever to be achieved individual people must first be at peace with God... and then they will be able to be at peace with each other and at peace with themselves – and only Jesus the Prince of Peace will ever be able to bring that about.

And you know, there is much talk about trying to bring peace into our world today – Rotary Club Commercials about achieving peace in our lifetime. I suppose they are good attempts, but...

don't be fooled by these attempts. They are based on the concepts of tolerance and relativism. (all religions lead to God)

Ideas are ok – but they can be twisted, misapplied, or forgotten. If we truly want to see peace in our lives and in the lives of others we need to introduce people to a person - the Prince of Peace – Jesus Christ, not an idea.

Only Jesus brings true peace with the God, only He brings true peace between humans – and it is a peace which is secure, solid, it will last... because as the Prince of Peace- He will reign forever!

So friends it's all about Jesus – and now you see how this isn't just a pat answer – but you've looked at some of the evidence which demonstrates it.

We've looked at three OT pictures, and we've seen how they are actually about Jesus,

I hope that you can begin to see the truth of the statement that

The NT is in the OT concealed.... And the OT is in the NT revealed.

For our scripture reading today we're going to look at another picture in the OT, and then read a NT passage and I want you to see if you can find the links between the two which make them all about Jesus.

Read *Psalm 22:1-21, Matt 27: 45-50*

What picture emerges from the Psalm?

How is Jesus portrayed in Matthew?

What common words or themes do you see between these two passages?

You see you're getting the hang of it

Let's call this final picture the Suffering Servant

We've seen the **Serpent Stomper**, The **Lamb of God**, the Prince of Peace and the **Suffering Servant** - all pictures of Jesus

Christ, and describing the work he would do and still does in our lives today

So friends I urge you to read the scriptures – you're being given tools to make these pictures of Christ become a reality in your life

Through reading the scriptures Christ defeats the devil's attack in your life

His sacrifice is applied to your sin and you receive forgiveness

He becomes your Prince of Peace and gives you true Peace

And finally He walks with you through the hard times in life –

He knows what it means to suffer.

May God increase our desire for his Word in us, Amen.