

# ***“Igniting, Inviting & Investing”***

Acts 28:23

May 22, 2016

## **INTRO: Video – Charles Faust: Christian Legacy**

- How many want that kind of story?
  - What's it take to get there?
  - **ANSWER:**
    - **Biblical “hope & courage!”**
    - **God's transformative grace...**
- AND**
- **Your tenacious investment**

**T/S: Take note... no one “bumps into” a lasting legacy!**

The LORD's loving legacy  
is a portrait of His empowered people  
prioritizing His purposes and promises,  
thru 3 living & lasting stages of life:

**PREVIEW: “Igniting, Inviting & Investing”**

- A. **Igniting** – review Acts 23:11 – 28:16
- B. **Inviting** – review Acts 28:17-22
- C. **Investing** – today’s text: Acts 28:23
  - 1. **R.** - Return
  - 2. **O.** - On
  - 3. **I.** - Investment

**T/S:** By way of review... lets remind ourselves of the “micro & macro” view of the miraculous “igniting” process that Paul (and EVERY other Christian) experienced (at some level)...

## **I. IGNITING:**

- A. **Damascus road experiences** (at some level)
- B. **Acts 23:11...** Jesus in the jail cell...
- C. **Paul and ALL “*Sojourners with Jesus...*”**
  - a. **Send-off**
  - b. **Ship-out**
  - c. **Storm-tossed**
  - d. **Ship-wrecks**
  - e. **SEE-Rome!**

**T/S:** **Paul obeyed!** (True igniting leads to inviting!)

## II. INVITING:

**17**After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and when they had gathered, he said to them, “Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

**18**When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. **19**But because the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against my nation. **20**For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain.”

### A. Paul Engaged

1. Matthew 28:18-20
2. John 20:21
3. Acts 1:8

### B. Paul Explained

1. We are *Encouraged for Hope*
2. We are *Commissioned for Hope*
  - a. BE the Church...
  - b. BE a “Hope-line!”
3. We are *Challenged for Hope*

**T/S:** vv.21-22 = “RESPONSE”

**21**And they said to him, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you. **22**But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.”

### **III. INVESTING:** (Acts 28:23)

*When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.*

**T/S:** Let’s look at Christian “investing” through the lens of this text and the paradigm of biblical R.O.I. (return on investment)

## **R = RECEIVE** those who **RESPOND**

*When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers.*

- See the providence in the appointments
- Paul went... “they came” (Both/And)
- “...in large numbers...”
  - **Obedience + Providence = Attendance**

## **O = OVERTIME** (over & above standard expectations)

*From morning till evening...*

- Compare work-ethic & mission-ethic
- See thru the lens of Matthew 28:19...
- Consider the typical “church-continuum”
  - *Defy*
  - *Ignore*
  - *Scraps given to God*
  - *Hobby-like*
  - *Part-time (a.k.a. “lukewarm”)*
  - *Full-time (“it’s like a 40 hr. job”)*
  - *Devoted (up to 99.9%)*
  - *Dead-to-self... ALL-in!*

**QUESTION:**

Where does “born again” begin?

**ANSWER:**

“Dead to self” per **John 3:3**

**I = INFORM, INSPECT, INSPIRE**

*(From morning till evening...)*

*he/Paul expounded to them,  
testifying  
to the kingdom of God  
and  
trying to convince/persuade them  
about Jesus  
both from the Law of Moses  
and  
from the Prophets.*

**T/S:** Let's take this last section in 3 parts:

1. ***Inform***
2. ***Inspect***
3. ***Inspire***

## **A. Inform**

*Paul expounded to them,  
testifying  
to the kingdom of God  
and  
trying to convince/persuade them  
about Jesus*

**\*\*\* 5 Key terms/concepts to grasp \*\*\***

- **Expound**/Explain/Expository
- **Testifying**/Witnessing/Evangelizing
- **Kingdom of God** (see Holman Bible Dictionary)

## QUOTE:

Jesus made the kingdom of God central in His preaching. More than a hundred references to the kingdom appear in the Gospels, many in Jesus' parables...

The kingdom of God was the central image in Jesus' preaching as clearly seen in [Mark 1:14-15](#), which was a summary of the preaching of Jesus.

### *Jesus Begins His Ministry*

*14Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

Here-in the kingdom of God is the heart of the summary... In His parables (too), Jesus spoke of the kingdom in many different ways. He said that the kingdom is like a farmer ([Matthew 13:24](#) ), a seed ([Matthew 13:31](#) ), yeast ([Matthew 13:33](#) ), a treasure ([Matthew 13:44](#) ), a pearl merchant ([Matthew 13:45](#) ), a fishing net ([Matthew 13:47](#) ), an employer ([Matthew 20:1](#) ), a king inviting people to a marriage feast ([Matthew 22:2](#) ), and ten young women ([Matthew 25:1](#) ). He spoke also of the glad tidings of the kingdom ([Luke 8:1](#) ) and of the mystery of the kingdom of God ([Mark 4:11](#) ).

What did Jesus mean when he spoke of the kingdom of God? He meant, quite simply, the rule of God. The kingdom of God is the reign of God.

**- Holman Bible Dictionary**

➤ **Convince**/Persuade (URGENT URGING)

\*\* *“Compel them to come”* – Lk. 14:23 \*\*

➤ **“about Jesus”** = Word/Christ centered!

**T/S:** Mark Dever and his “9Marks Ministry” exemplify the combination of biblical Informing & Inspecting when it comes to Great Commission INVESTING, by in part, expounding 6 (of 9) sanctifying essentials for every healthy church & Christian...

1. **Expositional Preaching / Teaching**
2. **Biblical Theology**
3. **Biblical Understanding of the Gospel**
4. **Biblical Evangelism**
5. **Biblical Conversion / Salvation**
6. **Biblical Discipleship**

\*\*\* (7-9 = Membership, Discipline, Leadership)

**VIDEO:** *9Marks of Inspirational Investing*

## **B. Inspect**

*both from the Law of Moses  
and  
from the Prophets.*

**I don't want to impress you...**

**I want to implore you.**

**Trust God's Word!**

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17!**
- Genesis 3:15... the Gospel foretold
- Noah, the Flood & the Ark (a type of Jesus)
- Abe & Isaac - a chosen, covenant people
- Moses & the Passover lamb
- Joshua & Caleb... 40 years later
- Gideon & his 300 men
- David vs. Goliath
- 3 boys + One in the fiery furnace
- Hosea & Gomer...

## C. Inspire

- Inspiration is an intangible treasure...

*“Inspirational investing”  
generates  
eternal dividends!*

- JDP

*“Inspirational investing” is always  
Word-blessed, worship-backed,  
& work-based!*

- JDP

*We are BOTH, inspiring AND investing at our  
best when we are helping others to see &  
savior the Savior of the Scriptures... Amen!*

- JDP

**VIDEO:** *“Jesus in the Bible”*

## **CLOSE:**

Friend, I pray that you, like Paul, will be Christ-like and invest your life (as opposed to simply spending it)... that you will INVEST your life in kingdom service...

**For we are never more Christ-like  
than when we are selflessly,  
sacrificially, and Scripturally  
investing our lives in the Great  
Commandments, the Great  
Commission, and the  
Great Conflict  
of faith...  
in Jesus, the Christ.  
– Amen!**

# **Let's Pray**

# Study Notes:

<sup>23</sup> *When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.*

## ***When they...***

- When WHO?
- “they” = the Jewish leaders in Rome...
- See our active God in our fallen world
- God’s providence OVER their priorities

## ***When they had set a day for Paul,***

- God had/has a plan...
- When GOD wanted them to meet...
- After the preliminary meeting (v.16-22)
- Now comes the fulfillment of v.21-22
- See God’s providence IN their priorities

### ***...they came to him...***

- No doubt, in part, out of necessity...
- Paul can't go to them so they come to him
- No doubt, in part, out of sovereignty!
- God has a plan... & this meeting is a part...

### ***...at his lodging...***

- NOTE: this is not a trip to the prison
- See in that, once again, God's
  - Providence
  - Provision

### ***...in large numbers...***

- Think about this... who choose who came?
- God had/has a plan!
- God is casting a broad net...
- NOTE:
  - Paul introduces & invites...
  - Jesus sovereignly selects & saves

## **3 actions, 2 qualifiers, 1 King & kingdom**

1. **Explaining-by**
2. **Solemnly-testifying** (about the kingdom of God)
3. **Persuading** (about Jesus)

Let's take a closer look at 5 key terms:

## “Explaining”

Greek Strong's Number: 1620

**Greek Word:** ἐκτίθημι

**Transliteration:** ektithēmi

**Phonetic Pronunciation:** [ek-tith'-ay-mee](#)

**Root:** from [<G1537>](#) and [<G5087>](#)

**Cross Reference:**

**Part of Speech:** v

**Vine's Words:** [Expound](#)

### Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

expound 3

cast out 1

[Total Count: 4]

from [<G1537>](#) (ek) and [<G5087>](#) (tithemi); to *expose*;  
figurative to *declare* :- cast out, expound.

## Expound

Usage Number: 1

Strong's Number: [<G1620>](#)

Original Word: [ἐκτίθημι](#), *ektithēmi*

Usage Notes: "to set out, expose" (*ek*, "out," *tithēmi*, "to place"), is used (a) literally, [Acts 7:21](#); (b) metaphorically, in the Middle Voice, to set forth, "expound," of circumstances, [Acts 11:4](#); of the way of God, [Acts 18:26](#); of the kingdom of God, [Acts 28:23](#).

Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.

## “Solemnly Testifying”

Greek Strong's Number: 1263

Greek Word: [διαμαρτύρομαι](#)

Transliteration: diamartyromai

Phonetic Pronunciation: [dee-am-ar-too'-rom-ahee](#)

Root: from [<G1223>](#) and [<G3140>](#)

Cross Reference: TDNT - 4:510,564

Part of Speech: v

Vine's Words: [Charge](#), [Chargeable](#), [Testify](#)

## Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

testify 11

charge 3

witness 1

[Total Count: 15]

from [<G1223>](#) (dia) and [<G3140>](#) (martureo); to *attest* or *protest earnestly*, or (by implication) *hortatively* :- charge, testify (unto), witness.

**Usage Number:** 4

**Strong's Number:** [<G1263>](#)

**Original Word:** [διαμαρτύρομαι](#), *diamartyromai*

**Usage Notes:** "to testify or protest solemnly," an intensive form of No. 3, is translated "to testify" in [Luke 16:28](#); [Acts 2:40](#); [Acts 8:25](#); [Acts 10:42](#); [Acts 18:5](#); [Acts 20:21, 23, 24](#); [Acts 23:11](#); [Acts 28:23](#); [1 Thess. 4:6](#); [Heb. 2:6](#); "to charge" in [1 Tim. 5:21](#); [2 Tim. 2:14](#); [2 Tim. 4:1](#).

**Usage Number:** 3

**Strong's Number:** [<G3143>](#)

**Original Word:** [μαρτύρομαι](#), *martyromai*

**Usage Notes:** primarily, "to summon as witness," then, "to bear witness" (sometimes with the suggestion of solemn protestation), is rendered "to testify" in [Acts 20:26](#), RV (AV, "I take ... to record"); [Gal. 5:3](#); [Eph. 4:17](#); [1 Thess. 2:11](#), in the best texts (some have No. 1), RV, "testifying" (AV, "charged").

Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.

## “kingdom of God”

**Greek Strong's Number:** 932

**Greek Word:** [βασιλεία](#)

**Transliteration:** basileia

**Phonetic Pronunciation:** [bas-il-i'-ah](#)

**Root:** from [<G935>](#)

**Cross Reference:** TDNT - 1:579,97

**Part of Speech:** n f

**Vine's Words:** [Kingdom](#)

**Usage Notes:**

English Words used in KJV:

kingdom (of God) 71  
kingdom (of heaven) 32  
kingdom (general or evil) 20  
(Thy or Thine) kingdom 6  
His kingdom 6  
the kingdom 5  
(My) kingdom 4  
*miscellaneous translations* 18  
[Total Count: 162]

from [<G935>](#) (basileus); properly *royalty*, i.e. (abstract) *rule*, or (concrete) a *realm* (literal or figurative) :- kingdom, + reign.

## Kingdom

**Usage Number:** 1

**Strong's Number:** [<G932>](#)

**Original Word:** [βασιλεία](#), *basileia*

**Usage Notes:** is primarily an abstract noun, denoting "sovereignty, royal power, dominion," e.g., [Rev. 17:18](#), translated "(which) reigneth," lit., "hath a kingdom" (RV marg.); then, by metonymy, a concrete noun, denoting the territory or people over whom a king rules, e.g., [Matt. 4:8](#); [Mark 3:24](#). It is used especially of the "kingdom" of God and of Christ.

"The Kingdom of God is (a) the sphere of God's rule, [Psa. 22:28](#); [Psa. 145:13](#); [Dan. 4:25](#); [Luke 1:52](#); [Rom. 13:1](#), [2](#). Since, however, this earth is the scene of universal rebellion against

God, e.g., [Luke 4:5, 6](#); [1 John 5:19](#); [Rev. 11:15-18](#), the "kingdom" of God is (b) the sphere in which, at any given time, His rule is acknowledged. God has not relinquished His sovereignty in the face of rebellion, demoniac and human, but has declared His purpose to establish it, [Dan. 2:44](#); [Dan. 7:14](#); [1 Cor. 15:24, 25](#). Meantime, seeking willing obedience, He gave His law to a nation and appointed kings to administer His "kingdom" over it, [1 Chron. 28:5](#). Israel, however, though declaring still a nominal allegiance shared in the common rebellion, [Isa. 1:2-4](#), and, after they had rejected the Son of God, [John 1:11](#) (cp. [Matt. 21:33-43](#)), were "cast away," [Rom. 11:15, 20, 25](#). Henceforth God calls upon men everywhere, without distinction of race or nationality, to submit voluntarily to His rule. Thus the "kingdom" is said to be "in mystery" now, [Mark 4:11](#), that is, it does not come within the range of the natural powers of observation, [Luke 17:20](#), but is spiritually discerned, [John 3:3](#) (cp. [1 Cor. 2:14](#)). When, hereafter, God asserts His rule universally, then the "kingdom" will be in glory, that is, it will be manifest to all; cp. [Matt. 25:31-34](#); [Phil. 2:9-11](#); [2 Tim. 4:1, 18](#).

"Thus, speaking generally, references to the Kingdom fall into two classes, the first, in which it is viewed as present and involving suffering for those who enter it, [2 Thess. 1:5](#); the second, in which it is viewed as future and is associated with reward, [Matt. 25:34](#), and glory, [Matt. 13:43](#). See also [Acts 14:22](#).

"The fundamental principle of the Kingdom is declared in the words of the Lord spoken in the midst of a company of Pharisees, "the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you," [Luke 17:21](#), marg., that is, where the King is, there is the Kingdom. Thus at the present time and so far as this earth is concerned,

where the King is and where His rule is acknowledged, is, first, in the heart of the individual believer, [Acts 4:19](#); [Eph. 3:17](#); [1 Pet. 3:15](#); and then in the churches of God, [1 Cor. 12:3, 5, 11](#); [1 Cor. 14:37](#); cp. [Col. 1:27](#), where for "in" read "among."

"Now, the King and His rule being refused, those who enter the Kingdom of God are brought into conflict with all who disown its allegiance, as well as with the desire for ease, and the dislike of suffering and unpopularity, natural to all. On the other hand, subjects of the Kingdom are the objects of the care of God, [Matt. 6:33](#), and of the rejected King, [Heb. 13:5](#).

"Entrance into the Kingdom of God is by the new birth, [Matt. 18:3](#); [John 3:5](#), for nothing that a man may be by nature, or can attain to by any form of self-culture, avails in the spiritual realm. And as the new nature, received in the new birth, is made evident by obedience, it is further said that only such as do the will of God shall enter into His Kingdom, [Matt. 7:21](#), where, however, the context shows that the reference is to the future, as in [2 Pet. 1:10, 11](#). Cp. also [1 Cor. 6:9, 10](#); [Gal. 5:21](#); [Eph. 5:5](#).

"The expression 'Kingdom of God' occurs four times in Matthew, 'Kingdom of the Heavens' usually taking its place. The latter (cp. [Dan. 4:26](#)) does not occur elsewhere in NT, but see [2 Tim. 4:18](#), "His heavenly Kingdom." ... This Kingdom is identical with the Kingdom of the Father (cp. [Matt. 26:29](#) with [Mark 14:25](#)), and with the Kingdom of the Son (cp. [Luke 22:30](#)). Thus there is but one Kingdom, variously described: of the Son of Man, [Matt. 13:41](#); of Jesus, [Rev. 1:9](#); of Christ Jesus, [2 Tim. 4:1](#); "of Christ and God," [Eph. 5:5](#); "of our Lord, and of His Christ," [Rev. 11:15](#); "of our Lord, and of His Christ," [Rev. 11:15](#); "of our God, and the authority of His Christ," [Rev. 12:10](#); "of the Son of His love," [Col. 1:13](#).

"Concerning the future, the Lord taught His disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come," [Matt. 6:10](#), where the verb is in the point tense, precluding the notion of gradual progress and development, and implying a sudden catastrophe as declared in [2 Thess. 2:8](#).

"Concerning the present, that a man is of the Kingdom of God is not shown in the punctilious observance of ordinances, which are external and material, but in the deeper matters of the heart, which are spiritual and essential, viz., 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit,' [Rom. 14:17](#)." \* [\* From Notes on Thessalonians by Hogg and Vine, pp. 68-70.]

"With regard to the expressions "the Kingdom of God" and the "Kingdom of the Heavens," while they are often used interchangeably, it does not follow that in every case they mean exactly the same and are quite identical.

"The Apostle Paul often speaks of the Kingdom of God, not dispensationally but morally, e.g., in [Rom. 14:17](#); [1 Cor. 4:20](#), but never so of the Kingdom of Heaven. 'God' is not the equivalent of 'the heavens.' He is everywhere and above all dispensations, whereas 'the heavens' are distinguished from the earth, until the Kingdom comes in judgment and power and glory ([Rev. 11:15](#), RV) when rule in heaven and on earth will be one.

"While, then, the sphere of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are at times identical, yet the one term cannot be used indiscriminately for the other. In the 'Kingdom of Heaven' (32 times in Matt.), heaven is in antithesis to earth, and the phrase is limited to the Kingdom in its earthly aspect for the time being, and is used only dispensationally and in connection with Israel. In the 'Kingdom of God', in its broader aspect, God is in antithesis to 'man' or 'the world,' and the term signifies the

entire sphere of God's rule and action in relation to the world. It has a moral and spiritual force and is a general term for the Kingdom at any time. The Kingdom of Heaven is always the Kingdom of God, but the Kingdom of God is not limited to the Kingdom of Heaven, until in their final form, they become identical; e.g., [Rev. 11:15](#), RV; John [Rev. 3:5](#); [Rev. 12:10](#)." (An Extract).

**Greek Strong's Number:** 2316

**Greek Word:** [θεός](#)

**Transliteration:** theos

**Phonetic Pronunciation:** [theh'-os](#)

**Root:** of uncertain affinity, a deity, especially (with [<G3588>](#)) the supreme Divinity

**Cross Reference:** TDNT - 3:65,322

**Part of Speech:** n m

**Vine's Words:** [God](#)

### Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

God 1320

god 13

godly 3

God-ward + [<G4214>](#) 2

*miscellaneous translations* 5

[Total Count: 1343]

of uncertain affinity; a *deity*, especially (with [<G3588>](#) (ho)) *the* supreme *Divinity*; figurative a *magistrate*; by Hebrew *very* :- × exceeding, God, god [-ly, -ward].

## God

**Usage Number:** 1

**Strong's Number:** [<G2316>](#)

**Original Word:** [θεός](#), *theos*

**Usage Notes:** (I) in the polytheism of the Greeks, denoted "a god or deity," e.g., [Acts 14:11](#); [Acts 19:26](#); [Acts 28:6](#); [1 Cor. 8:5](#); [Gal. 4:8](#).

(II) (a) Hence the word was appropriated by Jews and retained by Christians to denote "the one true God." In the Sept. *theos* translates (with few exceptions) the Hebrew words Elohim and Jehovah, the former indicating His power and preeminence, the latter His unoriginated, immutable, eternal and self-sustained existence.

In the NT, these and all the other Divine attributes are predicated of Him. To Him are ascribed, e.g., His unity, or monism, e.g., [Mark 12:29](#); [1 Tim. 2:5](#); self-existence, [John 5:26](#); immutability, [Jas. 1:17](#); eternity, [Rom. 1:20](#); universality, [Matt. 10:29](#); [Acts 17:26-28](#); almighty power, [Matt. 19:26](#); infinite knowledge, [Acts 2:23](#); [Acts 15:18](#); [Rom. 11:33](#); creative power, [Rom. 11:36](#); [1 Cor. 8:6](#); [Eph. 3:9](#); [Rev. 4:11](#); [Rev. 10:6](#); absolute holiness, [1 Pet. 1:15](#); [1 John 1:5](#); righteousness, [John 17:25](#);

faithfulness, [1 Cor. 1:9](#); [1 Cor. 10:13](#); [1 Thess. 5:24](#); [2 Thess. 3:3](#); [1 John 1:9](#); love, [1 John 4:8](#), [16](#); mercy, [Rom. 9:15](#), [18](#); truthfulness, [Titus 1:2](#); [Heb. 6:18](#). See [GOOD](#), No. 1 (b).

(b) The Divine attributes are likewise indicated or definitely predicated of Christ, e.g., [Matt. 20:18, 19](#); [John 1:1-3](#); [John 1:18](#), RV, marg.; [John 5:22-29](#); [John 8:58](#); [John 14:6](#); [John 17:22-24](#); [John 20:28](#); [Rom. 1:4](#); [Rom. 9:5](#); [Phil. 3:21](#); [Col. 1:15](#); [Col. 2:3](#); [Titus 2:13](#), RV; [Heb. 1:3](#); [13:8](#); [1 John 5:20](#); [Rev. 22:12, 13](#).

(c) Also of the Holy Spirit, e.g., [Matt. 28:19](#); [Luke 1:35](#); [John 14:16](#); [John 15:26](#); [John 16:7-14](#); [Rom. 8:9, 26](#); [1 Cor. 12:11](#); [2 Cor. 13:14](#).

(d) *Theos* is used (1) with the definite article, (2) without (i.e., as an anarthrous noun). "The English may or may not have need of the article in translation. But that point cuts no figure in the Greek idiom. Thus in [Acts 27:23](#) ('the God whose I am,' RV) the article points out the special God whose Paul is, and is to be preserved in English. In the very next verse (ho *theos*) we in English do not need the articles" (A. T. Robertson, Gram. of Greek, NT, p. 758).

As to this latter it is usual to employ the article with a proper name, when mentioned a second time. There are, of course, exceptions to this, as when the absence of the article serves to lay stress upon, or give precision to, the character or nature of what is expressed in the noun. A notable instance of this is in [John 1:1](#), "and the Word was God;" here a double stress is on *theos*, by the absence of the article and by the emphatic position. To translate it literally, "a god was the Word," is entirely misleading. Moreover, that "the Word" is the subject of the sentence, exemplifies the rule that the subject is to be determined by its having the article when the predicate is

anarthrous (without the article). In [Rom. 7:22](#), in the phrase "the law of God," both nouns have the article; in ver. 25, neither has the article. This is in accordance with a general rule that if two nouns are united by the genitive case (the "of" case), either both have the article, or both are without. Here, in the first instance, both nouns, "God" and "the law" are definite, whereas in ver. 25 the word "God" is not simply titular; the absence of the article stresses His character as lawgiver.

Where two or more epithets are applied to the same person or thing, one article usually serves for both (the exceptions being when a second article lays stress upon different aspects of the same person or subject, e.g., [Rev. 1:17](#)). In [Titus 2:13](#) the RV correctly has "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Moulton (Prol., p.84) shows, from papyri writings of the early Christian era, that among Greek-speaking Christians this was "a current formula" as applied to Christ. So in [2 Pet. 1:1](#) (cp. [2 Pet. 1:11](#); [2 Pet. 3:18](#)).

In the following titles God is described by certain of His attributes; the God of glory, [Acts 7:2](#); of peace, [Rom. 15:33](#); [Rom. 16:20](#); [Phil. 4:9](#); [1 Thess. 5:23](#); [Heb. 13:20](#); of love and peace, [2 Cor. 13:11](#); of patience and comfort, [Rom. 15:5](#); of all comfort, [2 Cor. 1:3](#); of hope, [Rom. 15:13](#); of all grace, [1 Pet. 5:10](#). These describe Him, not as in distinction from other persons, but as the source of all these blessings; hence the employment of the definite article. In such phrases as "the God of a person," e.g., [Matt. 22:32](#), the expression marks the relationship in which the person stands to God and God to him.

(e) In the following the nominative case is used for the vocative, and always with the article; [Mark 15:34](#); [Luke 18:11, 13](#); [John 20:28](#); ([Acts 4:24](#) in some mss.); [Heb. 1:8](#); [Heb. 10:7](#).

(f) The phrase "the things of God" (translated literally or otherwise) stands for (1) His interests, [Matt. 16:23](#); [Mark 8:33](#); (2) His counsels, [1 Cor. 2:11](#); (3) things which are due to Him, [Matt. 22:21](#); [Mark 12:17](#); [Luke 20:25](#). The phrase "things pertaining to God," [Rom. 15:17](#); [Heb. 2:17](#); [Heb. 5:1](#), describes, in the Heb. passages, the sacrificial service of the priest; in the Rom. passage the Gospel ministry as an offering to God.

(III) The word is used of Divinely appointed judges in Israel, as representing God in His authority, [John 10:34](#), quoted from [Psa. 82:6](#), which indicates that God Himself sits in judgment on those whom He has appointed. The application of the term to the Devil, [2 Cor. 4:4](#), and the belly, [Phil. 3:19](#), virtually places these instances under (I).

Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.

## “Persuading”

Greek Strong's Number: 3982

Greek Word: [πέιθω](#)

Transliteration: peithō

Phonetic Pronunciation: [pi'-tho](#)

Root: a primary verb

Cross Reference: TDNT - 6:1,818

Part of Speech: v

**Vine's Words:** [Agree](#), [Agreement](#), [Belief](#), [Believe](#), [Believers](#), [Confidence](#), [Confident](#), [Friend](#), [Obedience](#), [Obedient](#), [Obey](#), [Persuade](#), [Trust](#), [Yield](#)

## Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

persuade 22

trust 8

obey 7

have confidence 6

believe 3

be confident 2

*miscellaneous translations* 7

[Total Count: 55]

a primary verb; to *convince* (by argument, true or false); by analogy to *pacify* or *conciliate* (by other fair means); reflexive or passive to *assent* (to evidence or authority), to *rely* (by inward certainty) :- agree, assure, believe, have confidence, be (wax) confident, make friend, obey, persuade, trust, yield.

## Persuade

**Usage Notes:** \* in the Active Voice, signifies "to apply persuasion, to prevail upon or win over, to persuade," bringing about a change of mind by the influence of reason or moral considerations, e.g., in [Matt. 27:20](#); [Matt. 28:14](#); [Acts 13:43](#);

[Acts 19:8](#); in the Passive Voice, "to be persuaded, believe" (see [BELIEVE](#), No. 2, and [OBEY](#)), e.g., [Luke 16:31](#); [Luke 20:6](#); [Acts 17:4](#); RV (AV, "believed"); [Acts 21:14](#); [Acts 26:26](#); [Rom. 8:38](#); [Rom. 14:14](#); [Rom. 15:14](#); [2 Tim. 1:5, 12](#); [Heb. 6:9](#); [Heb. 11:13](#), in some mss.; [Heb. 13:18](#), RV (AV, "trust"). See [ASSURANCE](#), B, No. 3.

Note: For [Acts 26:28](#), AV, "thou persuadest," see [FAIN](#), Note.

**Usage Number: 1**

**Strong's Number: <[G3982](#)>**

**Original Word: [πείθω](#), *peithō***

**Usage Notes:** in the Active Voice, signifies "to apply persuasion, to prevail upon or win over, to persuade," bringing about a change of mind by the influence of reason or moral considerations, e.g., in [Matt. 27:20](#); [Matt. 28:14](#); [Acts 13:43](#); [Acts 19:8](#); in the Passive Voice, "to be persuaded, believe" (see [BELIEVE](#), No. 2, and [OBEY](#)), e.g., [Luke 16:31](#); [Luke 20:6](#); [Acts 17:4](#); RV (AV, "believed"); [Acts 21:14](#); [Acts 26:26](#); [Rom. 8:38](#); [Rom. 14:14](#); [Rom. 15:14](#); [2 Tim. 1:5, 12](#); [Heb. 6:9](#); [Heb. 11:13](#), in some mss.; [Heb. 13:18](#), RV (AV, "trust"). See [ASSURANCE](#), B, No. 3.

Note: For [Acts 26:28](#), AV, "thou persuadest," see [FAIN](#), Note.

**Usage Number: 2**

**Strong's Number: <[G374](#)>**

**Original Word:** [ἀναπείθω](#), *anapeithō*

**Usage Notes:** "to persuade, induce," in an evil sense (*ana*, "back," and No. 1), is used in [Acts 18:13](#). In the Sept., [Jer. 29:8](#).

Note: For *plērophoreō*, rendered "being fully persuaded," in [Rom. 4:21](#); [Rom. 14:5](#), AV, see [ASSURANCE](#), B, No. 2.

**Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary.**

### **QUOTE:**

2 Corinthians 3:14-16 says, "Their minds—referring to people in the Old Testament—their minds were hardened for until this very day at the reading of the Old Covenant, the same veil remains un-lifted because it is removed in Christ. What Paul was saying there is, you can't understand the meaning of the Old Testament apart from Christ because all though He had not come, so much of the Old Testament predicts and prophesies and presents Him that it is incomprehensible apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. To this day, says verse 15, whenever Moses is read, Moses meaning the Old Testament, a veil lies over their heart. But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

The only people who can understand the Old Testament are the people who know and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, the veil is taken away. And when the veil from the Old Testament is removed, we immediately find out that the theme of the entire Old Testament is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The Pharisees and scribes and people of Israel who studied fastidiously the Old Testament couldn't understand it. They thought they did. Couldn't comprehend it. Couldn't grasp its

meaning and its significance because they rejected Christ. Only in Christ does the Old Testament make sense.

**We have come to know Jesus historically in the gospels. Theologically in the epistles. And eschatologically in the book of Revelation.** We have this glorious New Testament picture of Christ. The veil is off and now we can go back into the Old Testament and find Him every place that He appears. And we're going to be doing that. In fact, once we actually do it, we're going to begin in that most notable of all Old Testament passages that present Christ, Isaiah 53, the suffering servant.

**The Bible is the only divine revelation. All other religious books are forgeries by demons and men. Only the Bible is truly from God.**

**The Lord Jesus Christ of New Testament history is none other than the promised Messiah of Old Testament prophecy. In fact, I think the strongest proof of Jesus Christ and Christianity is in the fulfilled prophecies in the New Testament. Book one, the prophecies. Book two, the fulfillment. In book one you have redemption promised and outlined. In book two you have redemption realized and fulfilled.**

**The Lord Jesus Christ is the theme of the whole of Scripture.** In fact, someone said to me, "Where does Christ first appear in Scripture?" And I said, "In the first verse of the first chapter of the first book, Genesis 1. "In the beginning God created," and John 1 says, "That's the Word and without Him was not anything made that was made." And **in Colossians 1 it says, "He was the Creator of everything that exists."**

So the Bible has as its theme, the Lord Jesus Christ. But apart from the New Testament and belief in the Christ of the New

Testament, the Old Testament cannot be understood. The veil is still there.

Now, I want to build a bridge, as I've been saying, a little analogy. I want to build a bridge back to the Old Testament. So I'm taking a few weeks to lay some...some sort of groundwork here. I don't want to belabor this, but I want to be thorough, if you'll allow me that. Today may be a little bit more like a lecture than a sermon, although I'm not sure I know the difference. For some of you it may sound like I'm reading the phone book, this may not be one that you're going to rush out to buy the tape because it's going to challenge your mind to kind of pay some attention to what I'm saying. But I think it's really very important for us to have this foundation laid so that we understand what we're dealing with. You know, we spend a lot of time in small details, little verses, words, phrases. I want to give you a much bigger picture here so that we understand that this transition from the New back to the Old is the right thing to do. It's the necessary way to go. You can't go the other way. This is the way to go. And I want you to be confident in that and enthusiastic and excited about the importance of what we're going to discover.

Now to get this bridge built from the New back to the Old, for us, I've established four pillars, **four pillar ideas or pillar truths, that help us to erect this form of transportation back to the Old Testament.**

**Number one, the Lord Jesus Christ declared that the Old Testament revealed Him.** In other words, we're giving justification for doing this. Somebody might say, "Well that's ancient history. That's past. That's the letter that kills as you read. That's the dead Law by which you can't be justified, etc., etc. Why would we even bother with it?" But the Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared that the Old Testament revealed Him. And we looked at

that in detail, in careful detail.

**The second point that we're making is the disciples and Apostles didn't fully believe in Him and His work, His death and resurrection, until they understood the Old Testament.**

**Point number three, the Apostles and prophets who were the first generation of preachers of the gospel to fulfill the Great Commission based their preaching of Christ on the Old Testament.**

And **fourthly, the writers of the New Testament, the Apostles and their associates who wrote the New Testament grounded their writing in the Old Testament.** This shouldn't surprise you because the Old Testament presents Christ. And it was the only Bible Jesus had, it was the only Bible the disciples and Apostles had, it was the Scripture, the Word of God. And the Apostles, even when they wrote their books, were writing with reference to and familiarity with the Old Testament. So **that's the flow we're going to follow, Christ to the Apostles and their faith, to the Apostles and prophets and their preaching, and then to the writers of the New Testament, they all grounded what they said and did in the Old Testament.**

## **I. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared that the Old Testament revealed Him...**

The Old Testament revealed Him. We saw that in a number of

passages, **John 5; Luke 4; Luke 16; Luke 24**, and we could have gone to many, many others where the Lord establishes His own identity by using the Old Testament. Most notably was that Luke 24 road to Emmaus, remember? **Where our Lord begins at Moses and the prophets and all the holy writings. Those are the three sections of the Jewish Old Testament, and speaks to them concerning Himself.**

In particular, on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection, He speaks to them about His suffering and His rising and He does it from the Old Testament. Later that same day that **He rose from the dead in the evening, He shows up with the eleven in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, and He takes them also back to the Old Testament and shows the truth about His dying and rising from the Old Testament.** The end of that day, their faith was solid and the book of Luke closes with them full of joy and praise and worship.

So the Lord Jesus Himself declared that the Old Testament was speaking about Him, revealed Him. One illustration of it that I didn't give you, but it would be good to look at is in Matthew 22...Matthew 22, and I'm going to give you a lot of Scripture, so get your Bible handy and just kind of follow along here. And the reason I turned to this one is because this is His last public sermon. This is the last public sermon Jesus gave to non-believers. And in verse 41, it's the Pharisees who were gathered together during that final week of His life, this is the last day of His public ministry before the next day when He's going to be arrested and crucified and they're going back and forth. They ask Him questions, He asks them questions. And He's endeavoring all the while during this week to bring them to the true knowledge of Himself. He asks them a question, according to verse 41, and here's the question. "What do you think about the Messiah, the

Christ? Whose Son is He? What is your view of the Messiah as to His human genealogy? Whose Son will He be?"

And they said to Him, "David...David." Every Jew knew that the Messiah was going to be out of the family of David. That goes back to 2 Samuel 7, that God would give to David a greater son who would establish the Kingdom that would last forever. And they all knew that. In fact, Messiah was called "Son of David," when He entered into Jerusalem on the Monday of that very week, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Everybody knew Messiah was to be a Son of David. That was reiterated again and again in the Old Testament. Psalm 89, Amos 9, Micah 5, Ezekiel 37, this was known to everyone. All during the ministry of Jesus, people came up to Him and called Him Son of David, blind people, people who wanted healing, a Canaanite woman. They called Him the Son of David. That was His human lineage.

And, of course, the New Testament establishes that in a genealogy of Joseph who was in the line of David, and a genealogy of Mary who was in the line of David. So humanly speaking, He came from the line of David.

But the answer is insufficient because that's only a human identification. And our Lord is going to point that out. Verse 43, Matthew 22, "He said to them then, 'How does David in the spirit...in the spirit call Him Lord?'" If He's the Son of David, what is David doing calling Him Lord? If He's the Son of David, He wouldn't even exist in David's time. But He does exist, and He's called Lord and if He existed in David's time, then He's not just human. And He's not just eternal, but He's also divine because He calls Him Lord. The Lord supports this comment with a rendering of the 110<sup>th</sup> Psalm, "The Lord said to My Lord, The Lord God said to My Lord," meaning the Messiah, "Sit at My right hand until I put your enemies beneath Your feet." If David then calls Him Lord, how is He his Son? How can He be David's son and David's Lord? He must then be man and He must also be God. So in the final sermon Jesus ever preached, He takes the text from Psalm 110, His final effort to demonstrate who He is, is

based on Psalm 110 verse 1. The Jews universally accept that as messianic Psalm, although they didn't look at it very carefully. But they affirmed it as a Messianic Psalm. It is the most often quoted by New Testament writers more than any other Psalm. All three gospels attribute this to David and all three gospel record it as the designation of Jesus our Lord, interprets it in three gospels as referring to Him. So they've got a problem. They know it's a Messianic Psalm, they affirm it's a Messianic Psalm, and yet it is the Lord God who is calling the Lord the Messiah Lord. And how can He be David's Son and David's Lord?

This Psalm was so much used by the early church, historically. The early church parked on this Psalm and used it so extensively that in the same period of time, the first hundred years of the preaching of the gospel, the Jews began to change their interpretation of this Psalm. And they began to say it refers to Abraham, Melchizedek, they even said it referred to Judas Maccabees, who was an intertestamental character in Jewish history.

I only point this out to show you that when Jesus wanted to establish His deity, He went to the Old Testament...He went to the Old Testament. His deity is further established in the fact that God set Him at His right hand, that's the position of honor and power, preeminence where all authority is inherent and put all enemies under His feet, all enemies of the deity. David's Son is David's Lord, based on Psalm 110. That was Jesus' final exposition to unbelievers. His final exposition to believers was Luke 24 where He explained to them things concerning Himself throughout the Old Testament.

All right, so point one, Jesus declared repeatedly that the Old Testament revealed Him. Point two, and we covered this, the disciples and Apostles believed in Him because they understood the Old Testament. It wasn't until the Road to Emmaus, it wasn't until they gathered together on that same night of His resurrection and He explained to them His death and resurrection, from Old Testament passages that they got it, believed in it, affirmed it,

declared it and praised and worshiped Him as the true Messiah. Now let's go to the final two points, okay? Number three, and you're going to have to bear with me on this one, number three, the Apostles and Prophets who preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus based their preaching on the Old Testament. You could say it another way, the Apostles that went out into the world to preach the gospel, Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, from the day of Pentecost on, preached Old Testament expositions. The New Testament wasn't written yet. It didn't begin to be written until years after the Lord had gone back to heaven, and it wasn't completed until the end of the century when they were all dead, except for John. So they began preaching, and they had to preach Scripture. And they didn't have the New Testament and they needed to do more than give a personal testimony about what He said, or what they saw. Peter said, "We were with Him in the mountain when He was transfigured, but we have a more sure word." What word is more sure than your personal experience, Peter?" You were there, you saw Him, you heard Him. You were on the Mount of The Transfiguration, what's more sure than that? Scripture because the Spirit of God moved men to write the Scripture, Peter says, and that's a more sure word. So even the early preachers didn't preach their own experience, they didn't preach their own walking with Jesus, talking with Jesus, as if that were authoritative in itself. They had that experience. John says, "We saw, we touched, we handled the Word of Life." But they preached Jesus from the Old Testament. And that's why we say we can go back and find Him there. Old Testament expositors is what they were.

Now I want to show you this, don't give up on me, turn to Acts 2...turn to Acts 2. I want you to get the sense of the overwhelming reality of this point. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit comes, it's the Day of Pentecost, the church is born and now the preaching begins. But even the event itself of the Holy Spirit coming and empowering believers to speak the wonderful works of God in all kinds of different languages, so that the people who were there could hear

the truth concerning God in their own language and realize that there was something miraculous going on, even that is a fulfillment of Joel 2. And you find that Peter stands up in verse 14 and says, "You've just had an amazing experience. The Spirit comes down in a form like fire. Everybody starts hearing the wonderful works of God in their own language. Somebody says, "Oh, these people are drunk," which is a pretty lame thing to explain this kind of phenomenon in which people are not speaking something that's unintelligible like drunk people do, but speaking languages that are known and understood by the people who hear them, but aren't know and understood by the people who are speaking. This is a miracle. This is what was being spoken of as part of the last days in the prophet Joel.

Verse 16, he goes on to quote that. Now all of Joel's prophecy from Joel 2 won't be fulfilled until the Millennial era, until the future. But this is like a preview of it. "In the last days I will pour forth my Spirit." Verse 18, "I will in those days pour forth My Spirit." And there are more things to come, wonders in the sky and all of that. That's in the future, but here is the beginning of the pouring forth of the Spirit of God.

So Peter launches the first message on the first day of the church as the gospel goes out at its initial point with a text from the prophet Joel, chapter 2, just to say this is the beginning of what the Old Testament prophet said would come.

Then he goes into his sermon in verse 22. "Men of Israel, listen to these words, Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know." That's experience, you know Him, you saw His miracles, you heard His words. "This man delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men, you put Him to death but God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it's impossible for Him to be held by its power."

So Peter is telling them what they know. You killed Him, but God

raised Him. And then He says, "This establishes who He is because of Psalm 16," and He takes the text of Psalm 16 and He goes back to Psalm 16 which was penned by David, "I saw the Lord always in my presence; He is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted, moreover my flesh also will live in hope because you will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You have made known to me the path of life. You will make Me full of gladness with Your presence." What you have there in Psalm 16 is the promise that the Holy One, the Messiah, though He would die, would never have His soul abandoned in Hades. He would never undergo corruption but He would be shown the path of life. That's resurrection. The resurrection was presented in the sixteenth Psalm.

And it couldn't have referred...somebody said, "Well maybe it referred to David." No, verse 29, "I confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that He both died and was buried and His tomb is with us to this day." This isn't David, but rather He was a prophet, verse 30, and knew that God had sworn to Him with an oath to seat one of His descendants on His throne." And that's a quote from 2 Samuel 7. And a quote from **Psalm 132:11**, and from **Psalm 89:3**. So he bases the resurrection on Psalm 16, and he basis the subsequent to the resurrection, the seating of His Son on His throne in the other Psalms...Psalm 89, Psalm 132.

Then down in verse 34, he goes to Psalm 110, the same one our Lord preached on in Matthew 22. It wasn't David who ascended to heaven. He now grounds the ascension of Jesus into heaven in Psalm 110, "The Lord said to My Lord, sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." Based on Joel 2, based on Psalm 16, based on 2 Samuel 7, based on Psalm 110, verse 36, "Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified." That's the first gospel sermon preached by an Apostle after the beginning of the church and it's based on Old Testament texts.

That's how they preached from then on.

If you look, for a moment, at chapter 3, chapter 3, we can pick it up at verse 17, Peter's second sermon. "And now, brethren," verse 17, "I know that you acted in ignorance as your rulers did also, but the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled." And this is a cryptic summary of what Peter said. I'm sure he threw in the passages that talked about the suffering of Christ. There were plenty of Old Testament passages that talked about the suffering of Christ, of course. There was Isaiah 53, there was Zechariah chapter 12, there's Psalm 22 in a detailed description of His crucifixion. And they're all those passages that refer to the sacrificial system and the offering that God provided in Genesis 22, where God provided an animal to save the life of Isaac. We don't know what he used, but he definitely said God announced beforehand these things from the mouth of all the prophets that His Christ would suffer and He has thus fulfilled it, therefore repent and return." You need to repent and return based on the authority of the Old Testament Scripture so that the time of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord," that's the Kingdom, also called the time of restoration, verse 21.

"God," he says at the end of verse 21, "spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time about all these things." So, I'm saying that all these preachers go out on the day of Pentecost and the first two sermons you hear are grounded in Old Testament portions of Scripture. And then in verse 22, Peter quotes from **Deuteronomy 18:15** where Moses wrote, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren, to him you shall give heed to everything he says to you." The prophet that shall come, famous Messianic text in Deuteronomy chapter 18. And it will be, verse 23, that every soul that doesn't heed that prophet, that prophet that will come, Messiah Christ, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel who is called a prophet in **1 Samuel 3:20**, and all subsequent prophets onward

also announced these days.

How can you reject when you are the sons of the prophets and the covenants. And to you, to Abraham, your father, came the promise in **Genesis 22:18**, in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. By the way, in Galatians, Paul takes that word “seed” and says it’s not seeds, it’s seed, and that seed refers to Jesus Christ Himself.

That’s how they preached from the Old Testament. In chapter 4, after being dragged in before the authorities, the church is exploding, five thousand more believe, according to verse 4, and the rulers are greatly concerned. They bring them in, Peter filled with the Holy Spirit in verse 8, said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people. If we’re on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ, the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this name, this man stands here before you in good health. This Jesus, verse 11, comes right out of **Psalms 118:22**, He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief cornerstone. And there is salvation in no other name under heaven.

Again he affirms that Jesus is the one who being rejected became the head of the corner. They ought to know that. They know they rejected Him, they also know that thousands and thousands of people have come to believe in Him and the church has been established, the cornerstone being set. They did their apologetical preaching, their gospel preaching based on the Old Testament. Going over to the seventh chapter, if you want to have an interesting exercise, go through the seventh chapter, the sermon of Stephen, count how many references there are to the Old Testament. Don’t do it now. You’ll be here after we’re gone. There are dozens and dozens and dozens of them. He is so saturated with the Old Testament that it’s staggering and amazing.

Sometimes he quotes it specifically, sometimes he infers it. But it’s just packed, Genesis, Exodus, the writings of Moses are here,

references to the prophets, to Joshua as well. The prophets, First Chronicles, the history books, 2 Samuel he quotes, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings. This sermon is loaded with Old Testament quotes, all the way down to verse 53 when he brings his sermon to the end in chapter 7 and they then stone him to death. He has proven from the Old Testament the person of Christ and the gospel of Christ and their response is to kill the messenger with stones. And one of the ones who was there affirming it was none other than Saul who later was converted on the Damascus Road and became the Apostle Paul. Stephen preached the Old Testament.

I can't resist this. Look at the eighth chapter of the book of Acts, let's follow them a little further. This is Philip and the eunuch, remember the story of Philip, and the eunuch? Philip was a member of the early church and Philip was sent by the Lord to join this chariot. There was an Ethiopian eunuch who was a court official, verse 27 says of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was a financial guy in charge of all of her treasure, and he come to Jerusalem to worship. This is a Gentile Ethiopian who has become a proselyte to Judaism and he comes to worship the true God. He's returning, sitting in his chariot reading the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit says Philip, "Go up and join the chariot. Philip ran up, heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, 'Do you understand what you're reading?' How could I unless someone guide me." And that's the veil, right. The veil is over his eyes. He's reading Isaiah 53, he doesn't know who it refers to.

If you ask a Jew today, you can ask an Orthodox Rabbi, you can take your pick of any of them, and they'll give you every interpretation of Isaiah 53, except Jesus Christ. And there are as many as you can think of. How can I? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. The passage of Scripture which he was reading was he was led as a sheep to slaughter, as a lamb before its shearers is silent, so he doesn't open his mouth. In humiliation his judgment was taken away. Who will relate his generation for his life is removed from the earth. The Jews sort of typically would refer to that to Israel. Israel was the suffering servant. But it

doesn't quite work because it says he didn't open his mouth and Israel complained endlessly and widely about their troubles. And it couldn't refer to them because their life was never removed from the earth either, so he doesn't know who this refers to. But he had certainly heard the conventional wisdom which would have been some rabbinical interpretation that didn't make sense.

The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Tell me, of whom does the Prophet say this, of Himself or someone else?" Who's he talking about? "Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this scripture he preached Jesus to him." Don't you love that? That's what they did. They started with the Old Testament and they preached Jesus. And, you know, the message was effective and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing because he gave his heart to Jesus and he was baptized on the spot.

If you look at the tenth chapter again, you get more of this early apostolic preaching. This again is Peter, at the end of the tenth chapter, you remember, the situation in Caesarea, Cornelius and the other Gentiles who were there, Peter launches into the story of Jesus in verse 38, and Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, how he went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed by the devil for God was with him. We are all witnesses of these things he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a cross. God raised him up on the third day and granted that he become visible not to all the people but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is to us, who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead. And he ordered us to preach to the people and solemnly to testify that this is the one who has been appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead...and here it comes...of him all the prophets bear witness.

And what do they testify? "That through His name, everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins." Is there that in the Old Testament? Is the message of forgiveness of sins by believing in Jesus in the Old Testament? Yes, Isaiah 53,

Jeremiah 31, **Zechariah 13:1**, yes the forgiveness of sins will come through faith in the Messiah.

If you follow along a little further into the thirteenth chapter, we leave Peter behind, the great preacher of the opening section of Acts. And we come to Paul, and Paul and his companions leave Pathos, come to Perga and Pamphilia, southern part of Asia Minor. “John left them, returned to Jerusalem. But going on from Perga, arrived at the city in Antioch and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After reading the law and the prophets, the synagogue officials sent to them saying, ‘Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.’” So they’ve just read that the reading...whatever the set reading for that Sabbath was, Paul stands up as a visiting rabbi, motions with his hand and says, “Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt.”

“With an uplifted arm, he led them out from it.” He goes back to the exodus. For a period of about 40 years, he put up with them in the wilderness and then he destroyed...and when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he distributed their land as an inheritance, all of which took about 450 years, these things followed that, he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet, they asked for a king and on and on he goes, describing all of the history of the nation Israel.

Verse 22, “After he had removed them, he raised up David to be a king, their king, concerning whom he also testified and said, ‘I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart who will do all my will.’”

Then verse 23, “From the descendants of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior Jesus.” A Savior, Jesus.

So Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise to David. Again it goes back to 2 Samuel 7, that verse actually looks at a text in 1 Samuel 9 and 10, a couple of references there. Again they’re preaching Jesus the fulfillment of the Old Testament. If you knew your Old

Testament, you would know Jesus is its fulfillment.

Let's go to Acts 18, there are more, as you would expect. But I **Acts 18:24**, a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, there was a large colony of Jews in Alexandria, Egypt. An eloquent man came to Ephesus and he was mighty in the scriptures." This is a Jew who has mastered the Old Testament. A powerful Old Testament preacher, this man had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in spirit, he was a passionate preacher, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John. He had a knowledge of Jesus, he had the knowledge of the baptism of John meaning when John baptized Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," everything he knew about Jesus, he was preaching. And he was connecting it to the Old Testament.

He began to speak out boldly in the synagogue about Jesus. But then Priscilla and Aquila heard him, a Christian couple who had come to full knowledge of Jesus, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more extensively, really. They gave him the rest of the story because he didn't know it all yet. He hadn't had the full story. And when he wanted to go across to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. And when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace."

How did he help the people who had already believed? "For he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Old Testament Scripture that Jesus was the Christ. The power of His ministry was in connecting Jesus as the fulfillment to the Old Testament prophecies. That's what they did. That's what Apollos did, this mighty, powerful. Old Testament preacher.

Acts 26, quickly. Acts 26, Paul before Agrippa...now we're moving along in the book of Acts. We're moving along in the history of Paul. And he's before Agrippa. He's going to be sent to Rome as a prisoner. New Testament books, by this time, have been written. But he talks to King Agrippa who's had extensive

exposure to Jewish religion and the Jewish Scripture. He said, “I didn’t prove to be disobedient to the heavenly vision,” the Damascus Road experience, “but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem, and then throughout all the region of Judea, even to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance, and for this reason some Jews ceased me in the temple and tried to put me to death. So having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both small and great, stating nothing—and this is the nature of my preaching—I have been stating nothing but what the prophets and Moses said was going to take place that the Christ was to suffer and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead, He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people, and to the Gentiles.”

And by the way, light to the Gentiles through Messiah is the theme of the opening section of some of Isaiah 42 and the opening section of Isaiah 49. So he is saying, “I’ve said nothing but what is in the Old Testament.” And they want me dead. Down in verse 27, “King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do.” And he’s stuck. In a short time, he’ll persuade me to become a Christian. What was the persuasion? The connection of Jesus to the Old Testament. He is clearly the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises. In the last chapter of the book of Acts, nothing changes. The final recorded event in the book of Acts is Paul and he’s lodged in Rome and lots of people are coming to him, verse 23, and he’s explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the Kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening. Isn’t that amazing? It’s amazing. Jews and Gentiles, and some were being persuaded because it’s pretty powerful to say, “Here’s an ancient book, written centuries ago and here is a man who specifically fulfills all that that ancient book said about the Messiah, whether you’re a Jew or not, that’s convincing.” That’s powerful. And some were being persuaded and others wouldn’t believe.

And when they didn't agree with one another, they began leaving. And so Paul gave them a parting word, and guess where his parting word came from? Isaiah 6 verses 9 and 10, "Go to this people and say you will keep on hearing and will not understand, you will keep on seeing but will not perceive. The heart of this people has become dull, with their ears they scarcely hear. They have closed their eyes otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand what their hearts in return and I would heal them." He pronounces doom on them, judgment on them because with a full understanding of Christ, from the Old Testament, as the fulfillment of all that the prophets said, they turn their back on that powerful incontrovertible evidence. They walk away and he pronounces final judgment on them. Verse 28, "Let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles. They will also listen. And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching from the Old Testament concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness unhindered."

That's what they did. That leads us to a final point, and we only have a few minutes, but that's okay. The final point is this, first point—the Lord Jesus Christ said the Old Testament revealed Him. The disciples and the Apostles of Jesus Christ didn't fully understand Christ in His death and resurrection, until they understood the Old Testament. The early Apostles and preachers of the gospel based their preaching on the Old Testament. The fourth point, the writers of the New Testament based their revelation on the Old Testament. And there's so much of this...if I even began to do this, we would be here for days and days. There are literally hundreds of references by the writers of the New Testament to the Old Testament. Including all the New Testament writers, there are 312 different Old Testament passages quoted, referenced specifically...specifically. Some have suggested there's as many as two thousand New Testament texts that allude to an Old Testament passage. There are 50 Old

Testament references in Romans alone. The writers of the New Testament were saying that the whole of Christianity, all that's contained in the Christian gospel, in all its fullness and all its richness is bedded and rooted and grounded in the Old Testament, which is the greatest single defense of the Christian faith because you have all that was prophesied in an ancient time fulfilled with centuries in between. That's divine work.

For example, just a couple of simple examples, Paul begins the great book of Romans. "Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called as an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures." I preach a gospel bedded in the Holy Scriptures. When Paul wants to characterize the sinfulness of man, in chapter 3 starting in verse 10 through verse 18, that most familiar of all definitions of human sinfulness, none righteous, no not one, none who understands, none who seeks for God. All of it is from the Old Testament.

Every statement he makes is found in the Old Testament and borrowed from the Old Testament. And there are 50, as I said, Old Testament references in the book of Romans alone. When Paul preaches to the Corinthians, the gospel chapter 15, 1 Corinthians, I make know to you, brethren, the gospel which I preach to you which also you received in which you stand, by which you are saved." Then he says, "I delivered you as a first importance what I received that Christ died for our sins according to the Old Testament Scriptures, that He was buried, He was raised on the third day according to the Old Testament Scriptures." All through his ministry that's what he did. And when they wrote it down, they wrote based on the Old Testament. The great overwhelming evidence for Christ as the Messiah, Redeemer and Savior is that He is the one who fulfills the Old Testament prophecies in broad scope and in tiny minute detail. And those are just a couple of references.

And you'll find them in the books, all the books of the New Testament record. It's not much wonder then that this was the theme. Christ and the Old Testament of all apostolic life and

ministry. So, when we go back now into the Old Testament, we're going to find Christ. And since we already know all this revealed about Him in the New, He will become even more wonderfully known to us in the beautiful anticipatory prophecies that were given about Him.

One final word. Turn to Revelation 19—Revelation 19. An angelic visitor comes in a vision to John and says to him in verse 9, write, "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb," and he said to me, these are the true words of God." And then in verse 10, "Then I fell at His feet to worship Him." Well it's a nice gesture, John, but it's out of line. The angel says, "Do not do that, I'm a fellow servant of yours and your brethren, who hold the testimony of Jesus." Don't worship me.

Do you remember [Hebrews 1:14](#) says, "Angels are sent to minister to the saints?" I'm your servant, you don't worship me. I'm sent from God as a fellow servant of yours and your brethren, other believers who hold the testimony of Jesus, the story of Jesus, the account of Jesus, the truth of Jesus, the revelation of Jesus, then this, he says, "Worship God, worship God." And then this closing statement. "Don't worship an angel; worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." If you want to know the heart of prophecy, the soul of prophecy, the center of prophecy, the theme of all preaching, and by prophecy we don't just mean predictive, although we don't exclude that. All Old Testament prophecy, all New Testament prophecy, all predictive prophecy, all proclamatory prophecy, there's a sense in which prophecy biblically is predicting the future when God does it. There's a sense in which prophecy is proclaiming and preaching what is already been revealed. When I do it, that's a form of *prophemi*, speaking before, declaring, proclaiming, whether you're talking about biblical prophecy, biblical revelation or apostolic preaching, or the preaching of anybody, the Spirit, the heart, the life, the *ruach*, the *pneuma*, the breath, the soul, the loving aspect of all preaching, whether it's biblical revelation or whether it's proclamation of what is in the Bible, the heart of it all is the

testimony of Jesus. He's the theme of all of it. That's why Paul says, "I'm determined to know nothing among you except Christ, and Him crucified."

I feel like Paul in **Ephesians 3:8** who said, "To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the nations the unfathomable...unfathomable riches of Christ."

So, we're going to the Old Testament, folks, but nothing's going to change. We're going to preach Christ.

Father, we thank You for opening up to us so much of the glory of our Redeemer, our Savior, our Lord, on the pages of Holy Scripture, both New Testament and Old Testament. Fill our hearts with joy in anticipation of what it is that we're going to experience in coming to know Him and seeing Him in ways and from vantage points and angles and avenues and perspectives that perhaps we have never really fully understood, that will be revealed to us as we look at Him in the Old Testament in all His glory. Help us to be reminded again that You are the author of this book for no one can know the end from the beginning, no one knows the future but You. No one can write history before it happens but You. And the very evidence of Christ in the New Testament, being unmistakable the one promised in the Old Testament is proof that this is a divine book, this is Your book, and that means that all it says comes from You and You are true and in You there is no lie and every Word of this is true. We live by this book. We love this book. We long to obey this book and to proclaim its truths. And mostly, the soul of it, the life of it, the breadth of it, the *ruach* of it, the blast of it is Christ and the testimony concerning Him. May it be on our lips, on our hearts at all times, we pray in His name.

- **John MacArthur**

- I care to know nothing but Christ crucified
- We preach Christ...
- That I may KNOW Him... Phil. 3:10

- To know Him is to love Him
- To love Him is to obey Him!
- 2 Corinthians 3:14-16 (Christ is the KEY!)
- Genesis 1 & John 1 (and Colossians 1)
- Genesis 3:15 & John 3:16
- Noah
- Abraham & Isaac
- Gideon & his 300
- David & Goliath
- Proverbs 3:4-6
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm
- Isaiah 53
- Daniel & his 3 friends
- Jonah & his 3 days in the fish
- Hosea & Gomer
- Joel 2 (the millennial reign of Christ)

Jesus said that the O.T. referred to Him!

- Luke 24 road to
- Matthew 22:41ff (last public sermon)
- Over 300 prophecies fulfilled in Christ

312 references to the O.T. in the N.T. (50 in Romans!)

- See Romans 1:1ff
- See Romans 3...

Apostles preached O.T. exposition!

- They preached Jesus from the O.T.
- Acts 2 1<sup>st</sup> sermon builds on Joel 2 & Ps.16
- Stephen's sermon = dozens of O.T. ref.

- Philip with the Ethiopian reading Isaiah 53
- Acts 10 Peter to Cornelius... “He is the One”
- Acts 13 Paul in the Synagogue... SAVIOR!
- Acts 18 Apollos: proving Jesus via the O.T.
- Acts 26 Paul before Agrippa... “stating nothing but what the prophets & Moses said...”
- Acts 28:23... our text today!

## Jewish Rabbi: Jesus' Coming Foreshadowed in Old Testament

The book of Daniel describes one of the most dramatic appearances of the Son of God in the entire Old Testament. The passage in Daniel 3 tells of three Jews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who were sentenced to death for refusing to worship an idol that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon erected and commanded all his subjects to revere.

The king was enraged that they had questioned his supreme authority and ordered that they be thrown into a furnace and it be heated to seven times its normal intensity. The fire became so hot that it killed the soldiers assigned to push them into the inferno.

But when the three were in the blaze, Daniel states: “Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?’

They answered and said to the king, ‘True, O king.’

“‘Look!’ he answered, ‘I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God’” (vv. 24-25).

What Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fire—the fourth man—was God in human form, Yeshua (Jesus). Many times I have been asked, “If Jesus is Messiah, why isn’t there anything about Him in the Tanakh (the Jewish Old

Testament)?” The answer is, there are many references to Yeshua in the Old Testament—throughout the Torah (Genesis to Deuteronomy), the books of the prophets and the other Scriptures.

In fact, when I began to read the Bible with an open mind, **I was astounded to discover that Yeshua is mentioned more than 150 times in the Old Testament. The apostle Paul even used the Tanakh to teach about Yeshua: “[The leaders of the Jews] arranged to meet Paul on a certain day. ... From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets” (Acts 28:23, NIV).**

Understanding the Scriptures—both the Old Testament and New Testament—is a matter of spiritual revelation. As Jesus Himself said, **“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Mark 4:9, NKJV).** **Everyone who reads the Scriptures, then, does so through either a lens of faith or a lens of doubt.** If one reads the Tanakh with an open mind, he or she will see many references to Yeshua.

For example, **the name Yeshua means “salvation” or “God saves.”** His name signifies why He came into this world—to rescue us from the penalty we deserve because of our sins. Let’s take a look at a few times Yeshua’s name is mentioned in the Old Testament (with emphasis added):

- **“The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my *salvation*” (Ex. 15:2). In other words, “He has become my *Yeshua*.”**
- **“God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, that Your way may be known on earth, Your *salvation [Yeshua]* among all nations” (Ps. 67:1-2).**
- **“And it will be said ... ‘Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. We will be glad and rejoice in His *salvation [Yeshua]*’ ” (Is. 25:9).**

You see, Yeshua is much more than a name in the human sense, such as

Jonathan, David or William. It is a description of His mission: to bring salvation to people everywhere.

Still I am often asked, “OK, but why didn’t the writers of Scripture tell us plainly, ‘The Messiah’s *name* will be Yeshua’?”

My answer simply is: God does not work that way. **Studying His Word is like working on a jigsaw puzzle. He gives us a piece of the complete picture here, another piece there, and so on. The evidence is all there, but we must do our part. He wants us to seek Him wholeheartedly, and when we do, we will find Him (see Deut. 4:29).**

The Lord in Human Form

Finite human beings simply cannot understand the greatness or holiness of an infinite Creator. The only way we can even begin to comprehend God is to understand Him in finite terms.

This is where the concept of the Messiah comes in. Isaiah 53:1 asks, “Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” In the context of this chapter, it is obvious that when Isaiah says “arm of the Lord,” he is referring to Messiah. They are the same.

**The Hebrew Scriptures tell of a number of occasions before the birth of Jesus when God revealed Himself in human form. Theologians refer to these instances as *theophanies*.**

**Theophany is Greek, meaning “God” (*theo*) and “to reveal oneself” (*phaneia*).** As already mentioned, Daniel 3:24-25 is one of the Old Testament’s most dramatic theophanies. But there are many others. Here are a few others among the **more than 152 contained in the Old Testament:**

**The Son of Man.** Four chapters later, the same “Son of God” figure who Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fire makes another appearance, this time to Daniel in a vision.

Daniel writes: **“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached**

**the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.**

**“He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14, NIV).**

**Yeshua often used the title “Son of Man” when referring to Himself (see Matt. 20:18, 24:30, 44; Mark 10:45, 14:62; John 3:13).** Obviously this Son of Man Daniel saw is divine, or He would not accept the worship of “nations and men of every language.”

The Mysterious King. The first theophany may be a bit controversial due to scholarly interpretation of the passage, but it is worth mentioning. In Genesis 14 the patriarch Abram (Abraham) has a mysterious encounter with King Melchizedek:

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying, ‘Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.’ Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything” (Gen. 14:18-20, NIV).

Abraham *tithed* to Melchizedek, which says a great deal about his regard for this man who was both a priest *and* a king (as we’ll see). Abraham is the paramount character in Judaism—the father of the Jewish people. And yet he pays homage to Melchizedek by giving him a tithe. He clearly recognizes that Melchizedek is greater than he is.

Centuries later, the psalmist tells us that Messiah is “a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek” (Ps. 110:4). While this is a mysterious passage and there are differences of opinion about it, some Bible scholars believe that Melchizedek was God in human form.

In fact, the name Melchizedek comes from two Hebrew words: *melech*, which means “king,” and *Ts’dek*, which means “righteous” or “righteousness.” Hence, “king of righteousness.” I believe this is the first Old Testament reference to Yeshua.

**The Judge With a Warning.** The next theophany takes place in **Genesis 18**. **The “angel of the Lord” appears to Abraham along with two other angels, who all look like men, to warn the patriarch of His plans to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham clearly understands that one of the men he is talking to is God Himself, for he refers to Him as “the**

## **judge of all the earth” (v. 25).**

The Nameless Stranger. Another appearance of God in human form is found in Genesis 32, where Jacob, father of the 12 tribes of Israel, wrestles all night with a stranger. Jacob holds his own in the fight and then asks his foe for a blessing. The Bible tells us the stranger answered:

“Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.’ Then Jacob asked, saying, ‘Tell me Your name, I pray.’ And He said, ‘Why is it that you ask about My name?’ And He blessed him there. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: ‘For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved’” (vv. 28–30, NKJV).

*Peniel* means, “face of God.” The meaning of this story is that Jacob believed he had been face-to-face with God.

**The Angel of the Lord. Judges 6 says that “the angel of the Lord” sat down under an oak tree and had a conversation with Gideon,** a man chosen to rescue the Israelites from their oppressors, the Midianites. At first Gideon does not realize who the “angel of the Lord” is. When he discovers the truth, he thinks he is going to die.

“But the Lord said to him, ‘Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.’ So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it The Lord Is Peace” (Judg. 6:23-24).

**God the Son. In the ninth chapter of Isaiah, the prophet talks about a “Son” who will be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (see v. 6).**

No devout Jew, and especially not a prophet like Isaiah, would refer to a mere human being as “Mighty God” or “Everlasting Father.” This language would be blasphemous if it were not true.

Theophanies occurred, then, throughout the Old Testament. Perhaps their purpose was to begin to give human beings a glimpse of God in terms we could understand. **If Jesus is indeed God in human form, then it follows that these theophanies were appearances of Him.**

I am convinced that Yeshua HaMaschiach was God, who came to Earth in

human form so that we might better relate to Him and understand Him.

### Jesus and the Ancient Rabbis

In the years since I came to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, I have heard from many rabbis who insist that I am misusing Old Testament Scriptures. They tell me I am stretching the meaning of some passages and finding references to a Messiah where they do not really exist. I also have been told that belief in the Messiah was never a central tenet of Judaism. Some make it sound as if the Messiah's arrival was not really that important.

I beg to differ. And Israel's ancient rabbis felt differently from modern rabbis about the importance of the Messiah. I know this because I have studied their words in the Targums.

The Targums are ancient paraphrases of Old Testament Scriptures. The oldest of them, Targum Onkelos, was completed about 60 years before the birth of Yeshua. And the newest, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, was finished by the end of the seventh century.

The Targums were written because most Jews could no longer understand or read Hebrew. In Yeshua's time, most of them spoke and wrote in Greek or Aramaic.

Here is Micah 5:2 as recorded in Targum Jonathan, which was completed less than 100 years after Yeshua lived:

“And you, O Bethlehem Ephrath, you who were too small to be numbered among the thousands in the house of Judah, from you shall come forth before Me the Messiah, to exercise dominion over Israel, He whose name was mentioned from before, from the days of creation.”

Consider Genesis 3:15, from Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, written in the seventh century:

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between the offspring of your sons and the offspring of her sons; and it shall be that when the sons of the woman observe the commandments of the Torah, they will direct themselves to smite you on the head, but when they forsake the commandments of the Torah, you will direct yourself to bite them on the heel. However, there is a remedy for them, but no remedy for you. They are destined to make peace in the end, in the days of the King Messiah.”

Here is Genesis 49:10 from Targum Onkelos:

“The transmission of dominion shall not cease from the house of Judah, nor the scribe from his children's children, forever, until the Messiah comes ... whom nations shall obey.”

And the Babylonian Talmud, which was completed 500 years after Jesus, offers a commentary on Zechariah 12:10. The verse reads, “They will look on Me, the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”

The Targum asks, “What is the cause of the mourning?” and answers, “It is well according to him who explains that the cause is the slaying of Messiah, the son of Joseph.”

Finally, the Sanhedrin tractate of the Babylonian Talmud goes as far as to suggest that the world was created for the sake of the Messiah.

It is obvious from these examples that belief in the Messiah and expectation of His coming was an important part of the faith of many ancient rabbis and their followers.

Jesus, From the Beginning

One more fascinating reference to the Messiah from the Old Testament goes back to the very beginning—when Adam and Eve hid from God after they sinned and heard Him walking in the Garden of Eden during the cool of the day (see Gen. 3).

The Bible goes on to record a face-to-face conversation between the first humans and their Lord and even says that God “made garments of skin for [them] and clothed them” (Gen. 3:21, NIV). (By the way, this is the first instance of blood being shed to deal with the consequences of sin.)

Targum Onkelos, which was completed within the first four centuries after Jesus lived, says that Adam and Eve heard the *Memra* of the Lord walking in the Garden. *Memra*, according to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, means “The Word.”

It was only when I read the Gospel of John for the first time that I understood what this passage in Genesis is referring to.

John 1:1-3 explains, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him” (NKJV).

In verse 14 John explains further: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

The Word, then, is not just a random statement of some minor aspect of God’s character. It is a person who is one with God yet has His own being. This person is Messiah, who walked with God in the Garden of Eden and

later came to us in human form to save His people.

It always amazes me to see how the “puzzle pieces” God has scattered in His Word, including in the Old Testament, Scriptures come together to reveal the image of His Son and our Savior, Yeshua.

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## **Holman Bible Dictionary**

### **“Kingdom of God”**

God's kingly rule or sovereignty. The Old Testament contains no references to the kingdom of God. However, in the Old Testament God is spoken of as ruling (for example, [Psalm 47:2](#); [Psalm 103:19](#); [Daniel 4:17](#), [Daniel 4:17,4:25-37](#) ). The Old Testament emphasis on God's sovereign power over all kings and kingdoms sets the stage for the New Testament teaching. Jesus made the kingdom of God central in His preaching. More than a hundred references to the kingdom appear in the Gospels, many in Jesus' parables. See Parable.

The kingdom of God was the central image in Jesus' preaching as clearly seen in [Mark 1:14-15](#) , a summary

of the preaching of Jesus. The kingdom of God is the heart of the summary.

In His parables Jesus spoke of the kingdom in many different ways. He said that the kingdom is like a farmer ([Matthew 13:24](#) ), a seed ([Matthew 13:31](#) ), a yeast ([Matthew 13:33](#) ), a treasure ([Matthew 13:44](#) ), a pearl merchant ([Matthew 13:45](#) ), a fishnet ([Matthew 13:47](#) ), an employer ([Matthew 20:1](#) ), a king inviting people to a marriage feast ([Matthew 22:2](#) ), and ten young women ([Matthew 25:1](#) ). He spoke also of the glad tidings of the kingdom ([Luke 8:1](#) ) and of the mystery of the kingdom of God ([Mark 4:11](#) ).

Jesus spoke Aramaic; the Gospel writers translated Jesus' sermons and parables into Greek. Mark, Luke, and John translated Jesus' words as "kingdom of God." Matthew sometimes used this phrase too, but often he preferred to translate Jesus' Aramaic words as "kingdom of heaven." The two phrases mean exactly the same thing, because they are translations of the same Aramaic words of Jesus. See [Aramaic](#); [Greek](#). What did Jesus mean when he spoke of the kingdom of God? He meant, quite simply, the rule of God. The kingdom of God is the reign of God.

This is best understood if it is distinguished from what Jesus did not mean. He was not speaking of a geographical area such as the Holy Land or the

Temple. He was not speaking of a political entity such as the nation of Israel or the Sanhedrin. He was not speaking of a group of people such as His disciples or the church.

Rather, the kingdom of God is God's ruling. It is the sovereign reign of God. This rule is independent of all geographical areas or political entities. It is true that the rule of God implies a people to be ruled, and Jesus called upon people to enter the kingdom. The kingdom itself should be distinguished from the people who enter it.

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God looks unimpressive, but it is going to grow into something tremendous. The kingdom is like a tiny mustard seed which grows into a bush large enough to provide shelter for God's creatures ([Mark 4:30-32](#) ).

Jesus never said that people are to build the kingdom of God. On the contrary, the establishment of the kingdom is a work of God. God will reign, and people can contribute nothing to that reigning of God.

When will God establish his kingdom? In one sense, the kingdom will not come until some unspecified time in the future (see, for example, [Matthew 25:1-46](#) ).

There is a sense in which modern Christians may still look forward to the coming of the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, Jesus also said that there is a sense in which the kingdom of God had come in His own time. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" ([Mark 1:15](#) ). He said in an even more

explicit way: “But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you” (Luke 11:20 ).

So the kingdom of God was the rule of God which He extended over human lives through the ministry of Jesus; and it also is His rule which will be consummated or made complete in the future. See [Eschatology](#); [Future Hope](#) .

Since people cannot build the kingdom of God, what response are they to make to Jesus' message about the kingdom? First, they can make the kingdom their priority and seek it ahead of everything else (Matthew 6:33 ). It is a pearl of such value that they should sell everything else they have in order to be able to purchase it (Matthew 13:44-46 ). Second, they can repent and believe the good news of the kingdom (Mark 1:14-15 ), and so enter the kingdom like little children (Mark 10:14 ). Third, they can pray for the rule of God to come soon: “Thy kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10; compare 1 Corinthians 16:22 ). Finally, they can be ready when the kingdom does finally come (Matthew 25:1-46 ).

The Lord's Prayer contains three requests, as follows: “Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10 ).

These three phrases mean just about the same thing, and they tell us a lot about the kingdom of God.

“Hallowed be thy name” means: “Let Your name be hallowed, or honored”; or, “Bring all people to respect

and reverence You.” “Thy kingdom come” means: “Extend Your rule over human lives.” “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” means: “Extend Your rule over human lives here and now so that they will reverence and respect You.” See Lord's Prayer.

In His preaching Jesus regularly invited people to enter the kingdom of God, that is, to open their lives to the ruling of God. It is important to notice whom He invited. He invited everyone. That is the great surprise. He did not restrict the invitation to the respectable people, or the religious, or the wealthy or powerful (in Jesus' day wealth and power were often thought to be signs of God's blessing). Jesus included everyone without distinction. He spoke of God sending His servants out to highways and hedges to urge people to come in to the kingdom. He even said that it is more difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle ([Matthew 19:24](#) ). He said that the tax-collectors and prostitutes would go into the kingdom before the moral and religious people ([Matthew 21:31](#) ).

In brief, God is very gracious and loving toward all people, and His kingdom is offered to everyone.

After Jesus had returned to heaven, the apostles did not continue to make the kingdom the central theme of their preaching. Instead, they began to speak of eternal life, salvation, forgiveness, and other themes. In doing this, they were not deserting Jesus' concern for the kingdom of God. They were simply expressing the same idea in their way. To speak of salvation is to

speak of the kingdom. We might express it as follows:  
God is graciously giving salvation as a free gift  
(extending His kingdom) to anyone who will receive it  
(enter the kingdom) through His Son Jesus Christ, and  
this salvation begins now (the kingdom is in the midst of  
you) and will be completed in the future (the kingdom  
will come like a thief in the night). As Paul put it, the  
kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in  
the Holy Spirit ([Romans 14:17](#) ). See Jesus; Christ;  
[Salvation](#) .

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