

Chapter 5

The Pattern of NT Faith

The New Testament was not written in a vacuum. It builds on the Old Testament and its stories about Adam, Abraham and Israel. The New Testament applies the whole history and experience of the Old Testament saints to Jesus, using the method of typology or spiritualization of the type, a method we have already seen illustrated in the Old Testament. The New Testament interprets the Old the same way that the Old interprets itself. This is a strong basis for the legitimacy of New Testament interpretation as a valid way to understand the Old.

What we will do in each section of the chapter to come is first offer some clear, unambiguous texts that demonstrate the New Testament association of Jesus with a specific Old Testament character or historical situation. We will then examine the life and experience of Jesus to show how such an association might have come about. We will find that the writers of the New Testament based almost everything Jesus said and did on the words and actions of Old Testament predecessors. Jesus is the fulfillment and the natural successor of Adam, Isaac, Moses, Israel, David, Solomon and Elisha, to name just a few. To ignore these parallels is, in the end, to totally misunderstand what Jesus meant to them. And if we misunderstand what

Jesus meant to them, there is a good chance that we will not understand what Jesus means to us either.

The New Creation

In the Old Testament there was a clear anticipation that God would one day create a new heavens and a new earth (Isa 65:17) in the context of a restored Jerusalem (Isa 65:18-20). In the New Testament, however, this anticipation undergoes a surprising transformation. The concept of the new creation is seen to find its fulfillment and completion in the person and the work of Jesus Christ, when He appeared on earth some 2000 years ago. To understand this will take some stretching for most of us, but this basic concept holds the key to understanding how people can get right with God today.

We begin our look at the New Testament use of the history and experience of the Old Testament “saints” with the first verse of the Gospel of John (John 1:1): *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* It is significant that the first words of the Greek Old Testament are “in the beginning God made the heaven and the earth.” (Gen 1:1 in the Septuagint Greek version of the OT) The Gospel of John and the Book of Genesis both beginning with the same phrase “in the beginning.” But in the place of God creating the heaven and the earth, John simply states “in the beginning **was the Word**” (a title for Jesus in the book— cf. John 1:14). John sees Jesus as in some sense the full equivalent of the original creation. When Jesus came to this earth, God was doing a new creation. For the New Testament writers, the greatest, mightiest act of God was sending Jesus to this earth. As a

mighty act of God, it was the full equivalent of the original creation. Jesus as *the Word* becomes the full equivalent of “and God said.”

This idea is repeated many times over in various ways in the New Testament. Notice Luke 1:35: *“The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.’”* The Greek phrase that is translated “overshadow” here is reminiscent of the Spirit of God moving upon the waters of the original creation in Gen 1:2. When the Spirit overshadowed the waters of the earth, the result was the Creation. When the Spirit overshadowed Mary the result was the conception and the birth of Jesus. Once again, Jesus is understood to be God’s new creation. But whereas John makes reference to Jesus’ divinity and pre-existence, Luke sees the new creation also in the humanity of Jesus, born of Mary as well as of the Spirit.

This is not an isolated concept in the New Testament. In two places the apostle Paul makes a major point of the analogy between Adam and Jesus. In Romans 5 Jesus is a new Adam who undoes the consequences that Adam’s original sin had for the entire human race (Rom 5:12-19). By Jesus’ mighty act of righteousness He brings life to a human race that subject to Adam’s sentence of death. The actions of Jesus reverse the consequences of Adam’s fall.

A similar point is made in 1 Corinthians 15 (verse 22– *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive*). Here Jesus is the “last Adam” or the “second Adam” who comes from heaven and provides the possibility for human beings to overcome death through the resurrection at the “last trumpet” (1 Cor 15:45-57). So for Paul Jesus is not only the New

Creation, he is the ideal counterpart of the original Adam as well.

This is further underlined when New Testament writers use the “image of God” concept in relation to Jesus. Adam was the original embodiment of the image of God. This image is restored in the person of Jesus. *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation (Col 1:15).”* *“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Cor 4:4, cf. Heb 1:3).”* If it is unbelief not to see in Christ the image of God, then Paul is saying that seeing Jesus as the fulfillment of the image of God concept is a central part of New Testament belief. So there is no question that for the writers of the New Testament Jesus is God’s New Creation, the Second Adam, the full restoration of the image of God that was lost.

In what sense is Jesus the new Adam? In what sense is he like Adam and yet greater than Adam? The crucial element is that Jesus is like Adam in His relationships. Like the original Adam Jesus too had a perfect relationship with God, with others and with the environment around Him. Jesus came to earth to become Adam as Adam was intended to be when he came forth from the hands of the Creator. When this principle is understood, a number of simple concepts in the four gospels become filled with fresh meaning.

In John 14:28 Jesus makes the statement, “The Father is greater than I.” This text is freely used by Jehovah's Witnesses to try to show that Jesus is inferior in nature to the Father. But they have failed to understand the “second Adam” significance of this text. As the new Adam Jesus was in perfect subordination to His Father. As the image of God Jesus obeyed the commands of His Father (John 15:10). As the second Adam Jesus did not operate on His own,

but was taught by His Father (John 8:28). He was in a relationship of perfect subordination to His Father. He was Adam as Adam was intended to be.

Jesus also had a perfect relationship with His fellow human beings as He walked on this earth. This relationship with others was beautifully illustrated by the foot washing service in John 13. Jesus "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45). "He went around doing good" (Acts 10:38). "He made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant... he humbled himself" (Phil 2:5-8). If every person on earth had the spirit and attitude of Jesus there would be sweet harmony in the loving service each would provide for others. True equality is found in mutual submission and service. Jesus demonstrated in His relationships with others that He was Adam as Adam was intended to be.

It is in His relationship with the environment that the parallels between Jesus and Adam become especially interesting. The first Adam was created to rule over the earth (Gen 1:26,28; Heb 2:6-8). The second Adam (Jesus) inherited that role from the first by the new creation (Heb 2:8,9). He was Adam as Adam was intended to be. Thus many of the stories in the gospels make sense as illustrations of Jesus' dominion over the earth.

The disciples went fishing on the Sea of Galilee one night, for example, but they caught nothing (John 21:1-3). Why were they fishing at night? Lure fishing takes place in daylight. You want the fish to see the lure, be attracted, and bite into the line. But net fishing works best at night. The fish "stumbles" into the net without even realizing that anything is there. If you have had no luck during the night, the net fisherman has one last chance in the early hours of the morning. He can throw the net on the shady side of the boat. A fish enjoying the early

morning sunshine wanders into the shadow of the boat, is blinded momentarily, and
ZZZAAAPPP!!! The fish is caught.

But in the biblical story there was a man standing on the beach (John 21:4,5). He knew a lot about preaching, but He seemed to know very little about fishing. He called out, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat" (John 21:6). Since the disciples weren't stupid, He was clearly inviting them to throw the net on the sunny side of the boat! Not a great strategy under ordinary circumstances. But this was no ordinary preacher. This was Adam as Adam was intended to be. He had dominion over the fish of the sea (Gen 1:26,28)! So 153 fish instantly obeyed Him, and swam into the disciples' nets.

On another occasion, Jesus directed Peter to catch a particular fish that had scooped up just the right amount of change to meet an urgent tax bill! So Jesus was clearly in dominion over the fish of the sea. He also ruled over all the earth (Gen 1:26). Even the winds and the waves obeyed Him (Matt 8:26,27). So the disciples were right to ask, "What kind of *man* is this?" He was Adam as Adam was intended to be.

A week before His crucifixion Jesus took a ride on an unbroken colt (Mark 11:1-8). If you or I were to try this, the ride would be a short and merry one! But Jesus had dominion "over every living creature that moves along the ground" (Gen 1:28). He could freely declare, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt 28:18). He was Adam as Adam was intended to be. He lived perfectly in all three of Adam's relationships, He lived in obedience to God, in loving service to others, and in dominion over the earth and its animals. The image of God was fully restored, not only spiritually, but also socially and physically in Him.

The Adam-Christ typology has some further dimensions. Like the first Adam, the second Adam had a wayward bride. "I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (1 Cor 11:2,3). The church is here likened to Eve, carrying the "second Adam" typology a step further. The first Adam was put to sleep in the garden, and an opening was made in his side. From that opening came the substance from which God made the woman (Gen 2:21-22). Similarly, the second Adam was put to sleep (on the cross) and an opening was made in His side (John 19:31-37). From that opening came the substance (water and blood-- cf. 1 John 5:6) from which God created the church.

Jesus Christ is all that Adam was meant to be. He was tempted on the point of appetite (in the wilderness, cf. Matt 4:1-3). In his temptations He was passing over the same ground where Adam had failed, but where the first Adam failed, the second Adam conquered. In overcoming Satan's temptations Jesus passed over the ground of Adam's failure and redeemed it.

On the other hand, Jesus also accepted the consequences of Adam's failure. Because of sin, the first Adam came under the curse. He was cursed with nakedness (Gen 3:10,11), thorns (3:18), sweat (3:19), and death (2:17; 5:5). Likewise, on the cross the second Adam came under the curse of the first Adam. He too was naked (one purpose of crucifixion was humiliation in front of your family and friends-- Heb 12:2), and suffered from thorns, the sweat of anguish and ultimately death.

So we see a great reversal in the experience of Christ. He lived a perfect life in human flesh, though he had to battle the full force of human temptation. He was Adam as Adam was intended to be. On the basis of His perfect life, the human race inherits eternal life and justification. What had been the original Adam's by right of creation has been purchased back at infinite cost. At the same time, although He did not deserve it, He carried in His body on the tree (Rom 8:3; 1 Pet 2:24) all the consequences of human sin. He reaped the full force of the curse. As a result, the death and condemnation that the human race inherited from the first Adam is no longer held to their account (Rom 5:19).

The New Testament understanding of how people get right with God, therefore, is firmly grounded in the sense that Jesus Christ is the New Creation, the Second Adam and the Image of God. He is the One who undoes the curse that came on the human race as a result of Adam's sin. He is the One who overcame at the same point where Adam failed. Jesus experiences the full history of Adam and redeems it. We will discover that these biblical concept hold the key to authentic, confident Christian faith, a faith that is able to overcome the slavery to addiction and sin that the Old Testament record so graphically records and that we ourselves so painfully experience. We are beginning to glimpse the most incredible mighty act of God that anyone could even imagine, much less carry out.

The Redeemer of the Exodus

In the New Testament there are even stronger connections between the life and experience of Jesus and Israel's experiences during the Exodus. This is explicitly stated in Luke

9:30-31: *"Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem."* That's a rather odd statement: "They spoke about his *departure*, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem." Since Jesus was in Galilee at this time you would expect Him to talk about His departure to go to Jerusalem. But that's not what He said. He talks about "His departure to be fulfilled in Jerusalem." The key is in the Greek word behind "departure," it is the word *exodos* (which roughly means "the way out").

In Luke 9 Moses and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration talking to Jesus about His "exodus" that is about to be fulfilled in Jerusalem. The whole context in Luke is about Jesus breaking the news of the upcoming cross to His disciples. That cross will be a new Exodus. Just as Israel went down into the water and came out on the other side free from Egypt, so Jesus dies on the cross, goes down into the grave and comes out on the other side.

It is interesting, then, that the Lord's supper is seen as parallel to the Jewish Passover (1 Cor 5:7). When a Jewish family gets together on Passover, it breaks the matzo and recites, "This is the bread of affliction that we experienced in Egypt." But when Jesus breaks the matzo on His last earthly Passover He says, "This is my body." The cross of Jesus Christ was a new experience of slavery in Egypt. At the cross, Jesus experiences a new Exodus in behalf of His people.

In the New Testament baptism is connected to both the Exodus and the cross (Romans 6 and 1 Corinthians 10). Romans 6:3-4 relates the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus to baptism. Just as Jesus died, was buried, and rose again, so also in baptism we die to the old

nature and rise up to newness of life. When we are baptized, it is as if we die, are buried under the water, and then come out to live a new life.

In New Testament thinking the Exodus is the same thing: the Israelites are standing on one shore, they pass through the waters of the Red Sea and then come up on the other side. As a result of the Exodus, they are now free. Slavery is over for them. They are free to take hold of a new life. Likewise, through baptism the cross of Christ becomes a new Exodus for the disciple of Jesus (1 Cor 10:1-11).

The New Moses

In light of the above it should not surprise us, then, that the New Testament might draw a connection between Moses and Jesus. That Jesus is not only a new Exodus, He is also a new Moses. Let's start with some explicit texts for that.

Deuteronomy 18:15: *"The LORD your God will raise up a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him."* Moses himself prophesies that a new Moses is coming. Now you may wonder, does this give interpreters the right to see a new Moses wherever they want? Absolutely now. The parallels and analogies we are working with here are all grounded in clear statements within the New Testament itself. The Hebrew way of thinking draws the parallels, but the reader is not left to guess which parallels are valid and which are not. Let me illustrate from this New Moses concept that is embedded in Deuteronomy 18.

Within the Old Testament, three later leaders of Israel play a role similar to Moses;

David, Hezekiah and Josiah. The interesting thing is that only David and Josiah are described in the Old Testament along the lines of Moses. Specific language is chosen that parallels their activities with the earlier activities of Moses. Hezekiah had a ministry that was very similar to David and Josiah, he rebuilt the temple, he reformed the faith along the lines of the laws of Moses, etc. But he is not described as a new Moses. In the Hebrew language these parallels are intentional things when they happen, they are not just accidents of reading. Moses did not have to describe the Flood in terms of Creation, the choice of language was deliberate. So are the parallels between Moses, David and Josiah in the Hebrew text. Three individuals act like Moses later on in the Old Testament, but only two are deliberately stated as such.

In the New Testament Jesus is clearly seen as a new Moses. Acts 3:22-24: *“For Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people’ Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.”* This text is a quotation of Deuteronomy 18:15. It not only states that Jesus fulfills the prediction of a New Moses, it states that the entire history of the Old Testament was placed there by God as a deliberate fore-ordaining of the life of Jesus Christ. It's all there to teach us something about Jesus.

There are many other texts in the New Testament that draw explicit parallels between Jesus and Moses (look at John 1:17 and 1 Corinthians 3 as further examples). But having established the Moses-Jesus connection let's take a look at how his life parallels the life of Jesus. Both Moses and Jesus experienced attempts on their lives as infants. Interestingly

enough, in both cases it was a hostile king and not just a random mugger. In each case the child was seen in some way as a threat to the throne. In each case, many babies were destroyed in order to get that one, and the one who was targeted escapes. The two stories are remarkably parallel and the only stories quite like that in the entire Bible.

Moses is the only person in the Old Testament to see the actual person of God in any way, shape or form (Exod 33:20). Moses only gets to see the backside of God, he never sees His face (Exod 33:21-23). But the experience is still totally unique for the human race in the Old Testament (Isaiah did get to see God in a vision-- Isa 6:1-13). Then in John 1:17-18 it says that no one has seen God except Jesus. The reason John says that is because Jesus is "in the bosom of the Father." That means that He had a face to face relationship with God. This is in direct contrast to Moses seeing God walking away from him. So Moses stands out as a type of Jesus, because he is the only figure in the Old Testament who gets to see God at all. And Jesus sees God as well, but even more clearly.

There are many other parallels between Moses and Jesus. Moses fasted for forty days and then gave the law on a mountain (Exod 24:18; 34:28). Jesus fasted for forty days in the wilderness and then He went up on a mountain and gave the law of His new kingdom, the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 4 and 5). Moses appointed seventy elders (Num 11:16-30); Jesus appointed seventy disciples (Luke 10:1). Both Moses and Jesus were glorified on a mountain (Exod 34:29-35; Matt 17:1-8). Moses got water from the rock (Exod 17:6; 1 Cor 10:4), and Jesus speaks about that living water that will flow from Him and even from the belly of His believers (John 7:37-39). John 3:14 compares Jesus "lifting up" on the cross with Moses'

lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness (Num 21:8-9).

The writings of Moses are collected into five books and in Matthew—it's easy to see if you have one of those red-letter editions--Jesus' sayings are collected into five sermons. This is not the case in Luke—many of the same sayings are scattered all through the book there. But, in Matthew, they're grouped into five distinct messages. For Matthew, Jesus is clearly a new Moses who reveals the ways of God as Moses did.

In the Gospel of John Jesus does seven miracles that parallel the plagues that Moses brought on Egypt. Moses turns water into blood--Jesus turns water into wine. Moses smites the first born sons of Egypt--Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. Moses brings darkness over the land, Jesus brings sight to a blind man. Moses brings sickness on the people--Jesus heals the sick, etc. If you work your way through all the miracles in the Gospel of John, you see that they parallel the plagues of Egypt. Jesus is a new Moses, but whereas Moses had a negative effect on Egypt, Jesus has a positive effect in the lives of the people.

The New Israel

In the New Testament the concept of Jesus as a New Exodus and a New Moses is not far from seeing Him as a New Israel as well. This is most clearly expressed in Matthew. Jesus is Mary's firstborn (in the exodus story Israel is God's firstborn, Exod 4:22-23). Jesus is brought up out of Egypt in order that the prophecy might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I've called my Son"—an Old Testament reference to the Exodus (Hosea 11). Jesus comes out of Egypt in order to fulfill the experience of Israel. He passes through the waters of baptism just as Israel passed

through the waters of the Red Sea. And just as Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, Israel spent forty years in the wilderness. In the original experience, the law was given on a mountain--Jesus does the same in Matthew 5-7. And He feeds 5.000 in the desert, just as Moses gave Israel manna in the desert. What's Matthew doing here? He's using the language of the past--the mighty acts of God--set the tone for God's future mighty acts in Jesus Christ.

So Jesus is the new Israel as well as the new Moses. He lives the experience of Old Testament Israel all over again. He is faithful to God where Israel was unfaithful. Jesus also reaps the consequences of Israel's failure. Remember Deuteronomy 28 where it says that if you obey, all these good thing will happen; if you disobey, all these other things are going to happen? Most of the bad things that were to happen to Israel are found in the experience of Jesus as well.

Deuteronomy 28 predicted that a disobedient Israel would be stripped of its wealth and force to live in poverty (Deut 28:15-20). Matt 8:20 tells us that Jesus had nowhere to lay His head. He was a homeless wanderer through much of His ministry. The cursed ones of Deuteronomy 28 were to be "smitten before your enemies" (verse 25), this certainly took place on the cross. Among the other curses of Deuteronomy 28 was darkness (Matt 27:45), being mocked (Mark 14:19,31), hunger (Matt 4:2), thirst (John 19:28), and nakedness (Matt 27:35). With the exception of hunger, all of these was fulfilled in Jesus experience at the time of the cross.

The climax of the curses in Deut 28 is found in verses 65-67. It is to suffer with an anxious mind and a despairing heart. In the middle of the night you're groaning and saying,

"Oh, I wish it were morning," and in the middle of the day you're saying, "Oh, I wish I could go to bed," life is just not worth living anymore. Did Jesus ever experience an anxious mind and a despairing heart? I believe He did, at a place called Gethsemane. So we see powerful connections between the curses of the covenant and the experience of Jesus. Jesus not only relives the life of Israel and redeems it, He also takes up the curses of Israel and experiences them. In other words, He reaps the consequences of Israel's failure. He is the complete historical counterpart of Israel's experience. He redeems her failures and exhausts the curses of the covenant which were against her.

We will explore the individual and personal significance of all this at the end of the book. But we must first take the time to make the foundation clear. When the complete biblical picture is in place there will be no confusion as to how people get right with God. Although building a solid foundation takes time, the quiet confidence that results is well worth the effort. Many people have had their confidence in God taken from them by an isolated text here and an isolated text there. When the full picture of the whole Bible is in place, however, we are immunized against debilitating extremes of interpretation.

The Redeemer of the Monarchy

The New Temple

The crowning achievement of the monarchy period was the construction of the temple under Solomon. The temple, in a real sense, represents the monarchy, just as the tent

sanctuary that was built at Sinai represents the wilderness and the exodus experience. When the Jews came back from Babylon a third temple was built in the post-monarchy period. But the temple of Solomon is the building that represents the whole monarchy period.

The New Testament clearly presents Jesus as the successor of the temple concept. Let's take a look at some explicit statements. Matthew 12:6: *"I tell you that one greater than the temple is here."* Jesus claims to be greater than the temple. Now if you know a little bit about the rabbis, you might be aware that, according to them, there was only one thing greater than the temple and that was the Shekinah glory inside the temple. What makes the temple great? The glory of God that resides inside the temple. So when Jesus said, "one greater than the temple is standing here, " He was identifying Himself with the Shekinah glory that represented the presence of God in the temple.

A parallel text to Matt 12:6 is Matt 18:20: *"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."* The force of the Greek behind this text is "there I am in the middle." Jesus is saying, "Anytime you get a small group together to study about Me, I will be there right in the middle of the group." What makes this even more interesting is the fact that the statement was a common one within Judaism at the time. Jesus was making a statement that everybody recognized adding a few little adjustments. The rabbis liked to say, "Where two or three gather together to study Torah, the Shekinah glory is in their midst." Instead Jesus says, Where two or three come together ***in my name***, there am ***I*** with them." Note that Jesus identifies both the Torah (the books of Moses in particular, but often the OT by extension) and the Shekinah glory with Himself. He is the New Torah and the New Temple.

For the Jews the synagogue became a valid equivalent of the temple. If ten men come together and study the Torah, it's a new temple all over again. This insight was the key to the survival of Judaism--the temple was not necessary anymore. Even though the temple was destroyed in AD 70, Judaism was not. Jesus takes that principle, accepts it, and goes one step further. "When you come together in my name, the Shekinah glory is there--I am in your midst."

There is one further text equating Jesus with the temple, John 2:19-21. There Jesus says, *"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."* Those who heard him were thinking, "Man, how can You do it in three days? It's taken us forty-six years to build this thing!" But John clarifies for them that Jesus was talking about the temple of His body. The Shekinah glory dwelt in a human body for about thirty-three years here on this earth.

So in the New Testament, the sanctuary is wherever Jesus is. Is Jesus in heaven at the right hand of God? Then there is a sanctuary or temple in heaven, just as the Book of Hebrews indicates. The key principle is that wherever Jesus is, that is the temple. Is there a temple on earth today? According to Paul, yes. He says, "You are the temple of God" (1Cor 3:17). The "you" in this text is plural. In 1 Peter 2:4-10, Peter says, *"You are living stones put together into a glorious temple, with Jesus as the cornerstone."* So the church becomes new temple on earth because Jesus is present in the church. The church becomes a temple because Jesus is in the midst when the church gathers together.

But there's even more in the New Testament: *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Col 1:27-28). Jesus also dwells in human bodies through the Holy Spirit. 1Cor 6:19-20 Paul goes

singular: *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?”* All who receive Jesus and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit become body-temples. That's why Adventists don't smoke: it's the wrong kind of incense, you know. It's a poisonous atmosphere for this new temple, a strange fire.

So in New Testament terms the temple is wherever Jesus is, whether in heaven, present in the church, or dwelling in human bodies by the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the full counterpart of the temple and the priesthood of the monarchy period.

The New King

A common designation of Jesus in the New Testament is “Son of David.” David became the representative person for the whole monarchy period. "Son of" in Hebrew emphasizes likeness as well as kinship. That's true in English as well. Nobody is more like the father than the son who reaches the same age, etc.

There are some parallels, then, between Jesus and the life of David, although these are not nearly as detailed and complete as those between Jesus and Adam, Moses or Elisha (as we will see). Although the analogy between Jesus and David is crystal clear in the New Testament, the detailed connections are not consistently worked out. For starters, both Jesus and David were beloved sons, and both were born in Bethlehem.

They both began their ministry by encountering a giant--Goliath for David, Satan in the wilderness for Jesus. In both cases, they represented in their person their entire people. In other words, when David killed Goliath, the Israelites beat the Philistines. It's that simple. It

was a representative battle and the battle was over as soon as the two finished their fight.

When Jesus conquered Satan in the wilderness, He did it in behalf of all of us. His victory over sin becomes ours.

In a most touching episode, David so loved his rebel son Absalom that he was willing to die for him (2 Sam 18:33). Jesus did exactly that for the whole human race, sons of God through Adam (Luke 3:23-38), when He died on the cross. This Absalom story is applied by Jesus Himself in John 13. When Jesus anticipates betrayal by Judas He says, "He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me" (John 13:18). This is a quotation of Psalm 41:9 where David refers to Ahithophel.

Ahithophel was a trusted friend and brilliant advisor to David. When Absalom rebelled against his father David, Ahithophel decided to join the rebellion, perhaps because he was Bathsheba's grandfather (David had earlier seduced her and killed her husband). When David learned as he was fleeing that Ahithophel had gone over to Absalom, he said, "God help us! This man is so sharp, he will smell out our every strategy before we can even think it. If we can't find a way to counter his advice to Absalom, we're finished." So he told Hushai, his second best counselor, "You're no use to me here. If you go back to Jerusalem you can do something to counter the brilliant advice of Ahithophel. Just advise the opposite of whatever Ahithophel says and see what happens."

So Hushai went back to Jerusalem and was welcomed into Absalom's court. Ahithophel gave his advice, Hushai listened to it and gave the opposite advice and convinced the rebel king. When Ahithophel saw that Absalom had rejected his advice he knew that the cause was

lost and that he would end up tried as a traitor, so he went home and hanged himself. In John 13, the quotation of Psalm 41 applies the treachery of Ahithophel to the actions of Judas the night that he betrayed Jesus. Judas started out by dipping his chips in the same dip as Jesus, then hanged himself when the betrayal didn't work out as he had expected. John 13 makes it clear that New Testament writers understood Jesus to be reliving the life and experience of David, Israel's most famous king.

As the "son of David" Jesus also paralleled the life of Solomon, David's royal son. Matt 12:42 offers an explicit statement. *"The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here."* Jesus here says something similar to what he said of the temple earlier in the same chapter, "One greater than the temple is here." Now "one greater than Solomon is here." Solomon was the greatest son of David--the one who, in fact, succeeded him.

Solomon was considered the wisest man who ever lived--Jesus is the Word. The name "Solomon" means "peace"--Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Solomon's career was in tune with his name. There is no record of a single war being fought during Solomon's reign. It was a time of peace. David had done all the fighting; Solomon presided over all the wealth and prosperity that resulted from David's victories (see 1 Kings 5:3-4). So like Jesus he was the prince of peace.

Solomon was also a king of kings, he was actually an emperor. In addition to his control over the 12 tribes, he also rule Moab, Ammon, Edom, Philistia and Syria, among others (see 2

Sam 8:1-14). So, it was actually an empire with many sub-kings under the general rule of Solomon. So, he was a king of kings, a designation applied also to Jesus (Rev 17:14; 19:16).

When the temple was constructed, it was built without a sound (1 Kings 6:7). In other words, everything was supposed to be fitted together at the construction site, all hammering and chiseling took place at the quarries, the construction project itself was eerily silent. Jesus built the temple of His church quietly, a kingdom without visible sign.

Solomon did not go out to the Gentile nations to convert or subdue them, instead the glory of his kingdom attracted people of the other nations to come to him, like the Queen of Sheba. When they heard about the wisdom and the wealth of Solomon they came to find out more. Likewise, Jesus did not go out to the Gentiles, the Gentiles came to Him--John 12 is one example. It was a ministry of attraction rather than persuasion.

So the parallels between Jesus and the great kings of Israel portray Jesus not only as an equivalent to the temple and the priesthood, He is also the true monarchy of Israel. He was both the ideal Priest and King. In His person the Mosaic system and the royal system were united together.

The New Prophet

There is one further tie between Jesus and the monarchy. He is seen as the successor to Elijah and the embodiment of Elisha, the two great prophets of the monarchy period. The name Jesus is not only cognate to the Hebrew of Joshua, it is also cognate to Hebrew of Elisha. In Hebrew Joshua means "Yahweh is my Savior" and Elisha means "God is my Savior." So the

two names are related. Jesus is a new Elisha. At the transfiguration, when He met with Moses and Elijah, He represented their successors--Joshua and Elisha. Joshua is Hebrew for Jesus; Elisha is cognate to Joshua.

So we have a pattern running from Elisha to Jesus. Jesus is the new Elisha. And this series of parallels is quite detailed. First of all, they both began their ministry at the Jordan River. Elijah was taken up to God at the Jordan and passed his mantle on to Elisha, at the Jordan (2 Kings 2:9-12), Jesus received his commission from John the Baptist (Matt 3:13-17). And who is John the Baptist? Elijah. "If you're willing to accept it," Jesus says, "he's Elijah" (Matt 11:11-15). John came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17), Jesus came in the spirit and power of Elisha.

Interestingly enough, Elijah and John the Baptist are both austere figures. They live out in remote places sometimes living off the land. They wear rough clothing and when they encounter people they holler a lot. They are somewhat frightening, hermit-type people. Elisha and Jesus, on the other hand, live more normal lives. They lived in towns (see Matt 4:13; John 2:12)--Elisha, in fact, lived in the capital city. He had a house that people could stay in, etc. Jesus spent a lot more time in the cities than John the Baptist did. He was more rural than Elisha, but He was not such a wild man as John the Baptist was.

Let's take this just a little deeper. Let's compare the miracles of Elisha and the miracles of Jesus in the gospel of John. If you take the seven miracles that Jesus did in the gospel of John, the first one was a transformation of water into wine. In 2 Kings 2:19-22 Elisha's first miracle is to transform polluted water into clean water. So both ministries begin with

transformations of water.

The second miracle in each case was healing a boy who was sick unto death: 2 Kings 4:32-37 and John 4:46-54. Then, in John 6, Jesus multiplies barley loaves; Elisha did the same at Gilgal (2 Kings 4:42-44). And in each case it specifically says "barley loaves"--that's not the only kind of bread that people ate in those days. There seems to be a special connection between the two events, barley loaves are common to both.

Jesus heals a sick man in John 5:1-15--these actions are not exactly the same order but very, very close--and Elisha heals Namaan in 2 Kings 5:1-14. Both Elijah and Jesus do miracles of levitation: Elisha makes an ax-head float (2 Kings 6:4-7) and Jesus walks on the water (John 6:16-21). As far as I know, those are the only levitation miracles in the Bible. Then Elisha heals the blindness of the Syrians (2 Kings 6:15-18) and Jesus heals the blindness of the man in John chapter 9. And, finally, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44). The very last act of Elisha, after he was dead, was to raise another man from the dead! After Elisha was dead and buried, they open up his grave and tossed a man in (they were under attack and acted in a hurry) there and when his body hit the bones of Elisha, the man came to life and got up.

It seems quite evident, therefore, that the experience of Elisha was recognized as a parallel of the experience of Jesus. Jesus takes the place that prophets occupied during the monarchy period. He is the ideal prophet, priest, and king. So Jesus is taking the place of Israel not just in the time of the Exodus but also in the monarchy period. He plays the role of the ideal prophet, priest, and king.

The Redeemer of the Exile.

In our previous journey through the Old Testament we started out with the Creation, moved to the Exodus, and then on to the monarchy period. Now we turn to the last great period of the Old Testament historical record, and that is the exile of Israel to Babylon and their return after 70 years..

This time, we're going to do it a little bit differently. We're going to take a New Testament text and seeing how Paul utilized the Old Testament record of the Exile. Galatians 3:10-14: *"All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." Clearly no one is justified by God by the law, because 'The righteous will live by faith.' The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, 'The man who does these things shall live by them.' Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.' He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we receive the promise of the Spirit."*

Now, one reason that people have so much difficulty sometimes with Paul is that they don't read him in the context of the Old Testament. When you look at the whole picture of Paul, including his dynamic and continual allusions to Old Testament ideas and events, things often become much clearer than they were before.

Now Paul, in Galatians 3, is working up-front with the story of Abraham. Paul is working with Abraham as a character in the Old Testament who became right with God. So Paul says, "Let's find out how Abraham got right with God. That will probably provide a good model for

how we get right with God." Let's take a look at verse 10 once more, a little more closely:

"All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.' " Where is it "written"? In Deuteronomy 27:26. That is the introduction to the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28, about which we have already had a lot to say.

So Paul, at this decisive point, moves right into the blessings and curses of the covenant. We'll have more to say about covenant and law in the next chapter, but for now I want to focus on the history side of the story. Paul quotes from the motivations of the covenant, the blessings and the curses (Deuteronomy 27:26). He does that because the subject of this part of Gal 3 is "the curse." Now Deuteronomy, as you know, was a covenant with the nation as a whole. It is not for individuals, although later books of the OT do individualize some of its teachings. Deuteronomy is to the entire nation. And the nation is offered blessing if, as a people, they are faithful to God. It is offered a curse if, as a people, they are unfaithful to God.

Now what happens when the entire nation is under the curse--what happens when the entire nation fails to obey God? Deuteronomy has an answer. The ultimate curse for the nation is exile (Deut 10:1-6). The ultimate curse for a nation is for its people to be scattered to where it no longer has its land--no longer has its government. No longer do the people have a unified existence but they are scattered throughout the world. They live with foreigners and they no longer have that corporate existence as a people. Normally, exile is a destruction of a nation. It is the ultimate curse.

Now Paul has a problem: Israel, for all practical purposes, is still in exile. Even though they are back in Palestine they are ruled by Rome, not by David or one of his descendants. What do you do when the whole nation is in exile? The path of Deuteronomy runs out at a dead end. You come to the end of the Old Testament, and the people of God have never been fully re-established as a nation. The promises of Deuteronomy have never been fulfilled. Israel seems to have no future. An anguish of Judaism is that it's central scripture is a message of failure. It didn't work. And perhaps even worse, since Israel failed to achieve the blessing, Israel as a nation can no longer be the means by which the blessing comes to the gentiles. The whole world becomes doomed by the curse pronounced upon Israel in the Old Testament.

So what do you do when the whole nation is under the curse? That's the question Paul is asking. To put his question in other terms, "What is the point of Christianity? Why should a Jew consider Jesus? What Jewish significance does being a Christian have?" In verse 13, he explains it: *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'"*

Now a problem we have as Westerners is that we see this right away in individual terms--Christ died for me. And that's not wrong. Paul can say that. He says it in Galatians 2:20. But here, he has a much bigger picture in mind. He sees the whole nation, Israel, under a curse. And he asks, "What is God's answer to this big problem, how can God deal with a cursed nation?" The answer he comes up with is that Jesus Christ takes that curse upon Himself. Jesus Himself relives Israel's experience of exile.

In Philippians 2 we come to understand that Jesus exiled Himself from heaven, became

a human being, and went even lower than that to slavery and death. Phil 2:6-8: *"Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!"* What Paul is saying in Galatians 3 is that in His exile to earth Jesus functions as the representative of Israel, He relives Israel's exile. In Jesus' suffering and death, Israel itself comes to an end in His person. So the life and death of Jesus is understood by Paul as a new Israel experiencing a new Exile. That for Paul is critical. In Gal 3 Paul is not interested in individual religion. He's interested in re-establishing as a nation, fully right with God under the blessing of the covenant.

So Paul's answer to the exile of Israel is the cross of Jesus Christ. The death of Jesus is the consummate exile of Israel. You cannot understand Galatians 3 unless you see it in the context of the whole history of Israel. That's why we've taken the time to do all this because now every salvation text in the New Testament will suddenly have an Old Testament light shining on it that will give it a new significance. Israel was exiled and, in a sense, the nation was finished. But, now at the cross, an even deeper exile has taken place. And it's a redeeming exile that would enable Israel to become whole again.

And for Paul the stakes here are high. As we have seen in Gen 12:1-3, it was God's intention that Israel would be a blessing to the nations. That was a promise made to Abraham. But according to Deuteronomy, in order for Israel to be a blessing to the nations it must first become blessed itself. Israel's obedience would not only bring blessing to Israel, but to the

whole world. Because Israel failed to achieve the blessing for itself it could not be the conduit through which the blessing would come to the whole world in Abraham. Here we see the passion behind Paul's theology. He was under persecution, he was getting beaten right and left, his face was being spit at, yet he says, I can't give this up. I love Judaism too much to give it up. To reject Jesus is to give up on Israel. To find Jesus is to revive hope in the promises made to Abraham.

Gal 3:13-14: *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. . . He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit."* If the nation as a whole had failed to bring the blessing to the world, God could redeem those under the curse through the action of the nation's representative, Jesus. In Jesus Israel as a whole is accepted by God. In Jesus the promises made to Abraham find their fulfillment, including the promises of blessing to all the nations of the earth. From the beginning Israel had always existed for the benefit of the Gentiles. Israel was never intended for itself. We saw that already in Genesis. It was intended for the nations.

Remember back in Genesis 10 that all those nations were under the curse. In Gen 12 God says to Abraham that all these nations will be blessed through him. In Genesis 17 the promise was expanded, they were not only to Abraham, but to his many descendants as well. In Gen 22:18 the promise is further clarified. It is through the "offspring" or "seed" of Abraham that all these nations will be blessed. Now the seed there is not a singular seed. It is a corporate seed. Through you national seed the nations will be blessed. But for Paul that

corporate seed finds its fulfillment in the singular seed, Jesus. Gal 3:16: *"The promises were spoken to Abraham and His seed. The Scripture does not say 'and to seeds,'* (the Hebrew of "seeds" is neither singular or plural, but a collective noun, the Greek does not make any distinction between singular and collective) *meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ."*

Faith in Jesus Christ becomes the means by which the Gentiles receive the promises made to Abraham.

For the New Testament writers Pentecost was the sign that the covenant had been fulfilled and that the blessing had come to the Gentiles. Why? Because it was at the tower of Babel that the languages of the world were scattered (Gen 11). When at Pentecost representatives from all over the world miraculously heard the gospel in their own languages (Acts 2:1-11), it became the sign that Genesis 12 is now being fulfilled. The blessing of Abraham was now coming to the nations. Pentecost was not simply a missionary action on the part of God, it was a theological sign that the promises of Gen 12 were now beginning to be fulfilled, that the nations of Gen 10 and 11 were receiving the blessing that had been promised.

Whereas the blessing was once going to come to the world through the obedience of Abraham and Israel, it is now to come through faith in the obedience of Jesus, the New Israel who redeemed the failure and exile of Old Testament Israel. Gal 3:11: *"Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because 'the righteous will live by faith.'"* Paul here quotes from Habakkuk 2:4. Habakkuk was one of the prophets of the Exile. He wrote at the very time of the Babylonian invasion and captivity. Habakkuk was asking , "what's going on here, I

thought this was the people of God. How can God allow the exile to happen?” And right at that decisive point, going into exile, God gives this message to Habakkuk, “The just will live by faith.” Deuteronomy had failed. The obey and live, disobey and die theme hadn’t worked. So God replaces it with a system based on faith. Like Habakkuk Paul redefines the covenant community along the lines of faith. He redefines it along the lines of faith and points out that this is no different than the original covenant to Abraham. Because Abraham believed and it was counted to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6). It was Abraham’s faith in God that made him the conduit of the blessing and now it will be faith in Jesus, whether by Jew or Gentile, that people become the conduit of the blessing. Just as faith was the key to the covenant in Genesis 12, so faith is the key to the covenant here in Galatians 3.

Just as Israel had faith in God at the time of the Exodus, so now Paul urges the Galatians to have faith in God in this new Exodus in Jesus Christ. The neat thing about faith is both Jews and Gentiles can get in. You no longer have to be in the right home, or born with the right skin color, or born into the right territory. Instead, you have faith in a mighty act of God. Which was really where Israel was at all along.

The deeper perspective of Deuteronomy is that Israel was to be defined all along by its response to the mighty acts of God. As Israel responded to those acts with obedience and praise they were to be blessed and become the center of blessing to the world. So Paul was not really giving a different theology than that of the Old Testament, he was going below the surface and showing that faith in Jesus is an act in harmony with the deeper meaning of the Old Testament, an act in harmony with what the Old Testament meant all along.

As the covenant was given to Abraham through faith, Abraham believed and it was counted to him as righteousness. In response to the mighty acts of God in the Exodus, the people were to obey God and worship him in the sanctuary. At its heart the obedience of Deuteronomy is not a works kind of obedience. Deuteronomy is really about faith. All of their obedience was to be a faith response to God's mighty acts. Just read it through in the Hebrew sometime. It's very, very plain. It is reasonably plain in translation as well.

For the writers of the New Testament, then, the coming of Jesus was God's greatest and mightiest act. In the person of Jesus Christ the God of the universe walked in human flesh. If this claim is true, it is the greatest thing that has ever happened in history of the human race. That's the key. If you don't buy into that conviction, if you don't have Jesus, you might as well be a non-Christian Jew, a Muslim, perhaps even a Buddhist, the options outside of Christ are many.

But if Jesus Christ is who He claims to be, then that is the greatest possible act that God can do. And that is exactly the conviction of the New Testament writers. They believed that when God sent Jesus to this earth it was a mighty act of God, the equal of Creation, the equal of the Flood, the equal of the Exodus, the equal of all God did in the experience of Israel.

And what is the purpose of seeing Jesus as the fulfillment of Israel's history? It is to focus our attention on the greatness of that act. This is the decisive event of human history. God promised that in Old Testament times that if Israel failed to respond to the covenant they would eventually be exiled and destroyed. But God never did that. And when the New Testament comes we find out why. Israel was spared the ultimate curse of non-existence as a

people because throughout this experience God always had Jesus in mind. In all of Israel's failings He was looking forward to His great mighty act in Christ (Rom 3:25-26).

The Old Testament as it stands is an unfinished book. By itself it could never be the basis for a great world religion. Every Old Testament-based religion has some sort of final conclusion tacked on to the Old Testament scriptures. For the Jews there was the Mishnah and the Talmud, where the laws and faith of the Old Testament were updated for succeeding generations. Islam adds the words of the Koran and its interpretation as a completion of the faith. Christians see the New Testament as the completion of the Old. The ultimate issue is, which of these three claims to completion is most in harmony with the dynamic of the Old Testament's self-understanding? The New Testament makes the most radical claim. It claims that ultimately the Old Testament was not so much a story of failure as a grand preparation for the mighty act of God in Jesus. It claims that all the Old Testament history and all of the prophets had one goal in mind, to foreshadow God's greatest and mightiest work. In Jesus Christ all the law and the prophets find their meaning and their fulfillment. Nothing is discarded. All comes together in a single goal. How can you evaluate this claim? By reading and studying for yourself. Taste and see if the picture presented in this book is really so.

The personal implications of all that we have covered in this chapter are enormous. They can make all the difference in how we live from day to day. In the concluding chapter of this book we will ponder the implications of this. We will ponder what it means to have a new history personally. We will ponder what it means to have a new relationship with God, what it means to live a life of faith. We will explore that in practical terms, in some cases even

shockingly practical terms. But first there is another dimension of the Old Testament that we must explore before we can reach our final conclusion.