

Sermon Title: JESUS AND THE OT

Sermon Text: Luke 24:25-27

Date: January 10, 2016 (New Beginnings Baptist)

Intro

a. Intro to the Series

For those of you who do not know me, I had the privilege of living and ministering in this wonderful city some years ago. I arrived in town around a dozen years ago to serve as the Director of the Ark. It was not long before the Lord's providence ensured that I met Pastor Mike, who along with his dear wife, Lynda, poured their lives into the lives of our family. It was during that time in our lives that the Lord reminded me of my calling to the pastorate and fueled my passion to preach. So unfortunately our time in Dawson was short and just over ten years ago we left and headed for Fort Worth Texas to attend seminary and from there the Lord led us to Halifax Nova Scotia where I have been pastoring Gospel Light Baptist church for the last half a dozen years. As some of you know, I have been married almost a quarter century to Diana, who sends her greetings and regards. She did not make the trip with me as she is not much of a traveller and is needed at home right now for our children, who really cannot be considered children for much longer. My daughter, Jaquelle, is 18, and just finished college, and my son Travis is 16 and is one year away from graduating high school, both kids having been home-schooled since our Texas days. But that's enough about me. You did not bring me here to talk about me; no, you brought me here to talk about someone else. You brought me here to talk about: the One through whom all things were created (**Col 1:16**), the second person of the Trinity (**Matt 28:19-20**), the image of the invisible God (**Col 1:15**), the Bread of Life (**John 6:33**), the Lamb of God (**John 1:29**), the Light of the World (**John 8:12**), the Head of the Church (**Eph 1:22**), the Word of God (**Rev 19:13**), the Son of Man (**Luke 24:7**), the Way, the Truth, and the Life (**John 14:6**), the better Moses (**Hebrews 3:3**), the better Jonah (**Matt 12:40**), the better Solomon (**Matt 12:42**), the Good Shepherd (**John 10:11**), the High Priest (**Hebrews 2:17**), the Prophet Par Excellence (**Luke 24:19**), the True Vine (**John 15:1**), the Faithful and True Warrior (**Rev 19:11**), the Prince of Peace (**Isaiah 9:6**), the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (**Rev 19:16**), the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ: virgin-born, crucified, buried, raised from the dead, ruling and reigning, and coming again . This is why I am here or there or anywhere: TO MAKE MUCH OF JESUS, to exalt the name of Jesus, to direct your eyes and hearts towards Jesus, to teach Jesus and to preach Jesus. But I was given a fair bit of freedom concerning how I would do that, and I was given four times to preach. So the way I decided to do that was to go to the Old Testament. "What?" you say, "I thought he was going to talk about Jesus?" Or that is how some Christians would respond, but I am sure you know better. The question does reveal what an awful lot of Christians think though, easily demonstrated by what is preached from pulpits around the world. Again, I know that is not the case here, as I know Pastor Mike spends time in both testaments, but I assure you that is not the case in many Christian

churches. There are many Christian churches and many Christian pastors and many Christians in general who only read and study and learn the New Testament. Oh sure, the Old Testament is a great place for Sunday School stories for the kids and for bible trivia, but when it comes to preaching, sadly many churches and pastors all but ignore the Old Testament. And that is sad. It is sad because the Old Testament is nearly 2/3rds of the whole Bible. It is sad because the Old Testament was the Bible of Paul and Peter and James and John ... and Jesus. And it is sad because the Old Testament is all about Jesus. And we know that because Jesus said it. So, before we get into the Old Testament and what it says about Jesus, today we are first going to investigate just exactly what Jesus says about the Old Testament, and to do that I will invite you to turn in your Bibles to Luke 24, and I am going to read from verse 13 through to verse 27. But before we do that, as you are turning to Luke 24 let me give you a little bit of the background, a little bit of the setting, a little bit of context.

b. Intro to the Text

It was Sunday morning 2000 years ago and darkness and fog still loomed over many followers of Jesus. They thought that Jesus was the one prophesied about, the One to whom the Old Testament was pointing. They thought He was the Saviour of the people of Israel, here to deliver them from their earthly oppressors. They had followed Him, they had sat under His teaching, some had even given up house and home for Him. They knew that controversy surrounded this rabbi from Nazareth, but they thought He was the One ... that is, until He was arrested, accused of blasphemy, and sentenced to death by crucifixion. It was at the place aptly called The Skull where they watched Jesus get nailed to a cross among common criminals. They watched Jesus die, and they watched His body be removed from the cross at which time He would be taken to what His killers thought would be His final resting place. While some of His followers went home, surely others remained at the execution site in a state of shock and unbelief. But some women went to the tomb and after watching Jesus die they watched him be put into the tomb (**Luke 23:55**). They wanted to be sure Jesus received a proper burial so they prepared spices and ointments to get His body ready for burial (**Luke 23:56a**) ... but by this point the Sabbath was upon them so they had to spend the day resting (**Luke 23:56b**). I imagine that for those women that was the longest Sabbath day they had ever experienced ... but eventually it came to an end and early Sunday morning they headed to the tomb to prepare Jesus' body ... but when they got there they found something they did not expect...an empty tomb (**Luke 24:1-3**). This no doubt caused a fair bit of confusion for these women, but then two heavenly messengers appeared to tell them that Jesus was not there because He had done as He promised, He had been crucified and risen from the dead and was now alive (**Luke 24:4-7**). Well, if you can imagine what that must have been like for those women, you can imagine they were pretty excited by this astounding news and thus they rushed back to tell Jesus' disciples the great news (**Luke 24:8-10**). To these original disciples of Jesus the past Friday seemed like the worst day of their lives, and they just could not bring themselves to believe the women's news. Then there were the few who had to see for themselves (**Luke 24:11**), one of those being one of Jesus' closest disciples,

Peter, who rushed to the tomb and you will never guess ... he found it empty (**Luke 24:12**). Jesus had risen from the dead just as He said. But where was He?

Text: Luke 24:13-27

The verses we will narrow in on are the last three I read, and in those three verses we will learn three things about Jesus view of the Old Testament: (1) It is to be heard and believed; (2) It is to be fulfilled; (3) It is to be interpreted correctly.

1. Believed (v. 25)

The text, as you heard, takes place on a journey between Jerusalem and Emmaus. Two disciples of Jesus are on a journey discussing the happenings of the previous two days when along comes an unknown traveller. Now you and me—thanks to our good friend Luke—know who this traveller is, though the two disciples do not. You might wonder how after following Jesus and spending time with Jesus they could not recognize him. That is easy though, for God simply prevented them from recognizing Him (**Luke 24:16**) as Jesus has a specific purpose for being on this road and it has to do with teaching these two disciples a lesson or two. It begins with Him asking them what they have been talking about, to which one of them, named Cleopas, responds by enquiring as to how this traveller could not be aware of what has taken place in Jerusalem with Jesus of Nazareth (**Luke 24:18-19**). Furthermore, Cleopas tells Jesus that some women found the tomb empty and were claiming to have received a heavenly message that said that Jesus was alive (**Luke 24:20-24**). This is where Jesus' lesson on the Old Testament begins, and while Cleopas and his friend will eventually figure it out (see **Luke 24:32**), for now they clearly don't have a clue how fortunate they are to sit at the feet of this teacher. The first thing Jesus says to these two disciples is: *"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"* (**v. 25**). Now as we will see in a few verses, when Jesus refers to the prophets He is not referring only to that genre of the Old Testament that we call the prophets, no, He is talking about the writers of *"all the Scriptures"* (**v. 27**), which of course at that point in time was the Old Testament...ALL OF IT. But to believe something, you first must know it, which means that according to Jesus we should read and study the Old Testament. Some Christians think the books of Moses can be difficult to get through, especially books like Leviticus or Numbers. Others think that the prophets are often difficult to understand, and they are right, sometimes they are. Some of us left-brain thinkers sometimes have trouble with the poetry found in places like Job and Psalms. But none of that means that we should ignore the Old Testament, not according to Jesus anyway. What it does mean is that we should spend more time reading and studying it. It means they require more of our time, not less. In our English Bible, 39 of the 66 books are in the Old Testament. In the arrangement of the Old Testament that the NT authors used (which I will say more about in my next message) there were only 24 but that was because our 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, and Ezra and Nehemiah were considered one book

each, and the 12 minor prophets were considered only 1 book. Nevertheless, it was the same material and the point is that the majority of the Bible is the Old Testament, and as such

“is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).

How deficient would our Biblical knowledge be, specifically concerning Jesus, if we steered clear of the Old Testament? Jesus says that it is foolish to not believe the prophets, thus if we wish to avoid folly, we will read, study and preach the Old Testament with a heart to believe. May we learn from the disciples on the road to Emmaus who were slow to believe what the Old Testament said about Jesus. Their slowness to believe was demonstrated by the sadness which overwhelmed their faces when Jesus asked what they were talking about (**Luke 24:17**). It is further demonstrated by the fact that they would not believe the women who testified to Jesus’ resurrection, as they said *“we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel”* (**Luke 24:21**), the key word being *“hoped.”* They hoped what the Old Testament said was true, but they were slow to believe it. The Bible is replete with verses which speak of the need to believe the Word of God, yet we will only consider two, the first being from the pen of the prophet Moses:

“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 8:1-3).

Here the people of Israel are commended to do what the Word of God says, to remember the Word of God, obey the Word of God, and depend on the Word of God more than on life itself. The second place we will go is to the NT, this time to the pen of the apostle John:

“After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God” (John 6:66-69).

Peter recognized Jesus’ Words as the Word of God and thus not only did He need to hear His Words but he needed to believe them. So when you open the Old Testament, which is often I hope, according to Jesus, the first thing we must be prepared to do is believe it.

2. Fulfilled (v. 26)

As we get back to the Emmaus Road I would like us to notice the two things about Himself that Jesus highlights concerning the Old Testament and what it says must be fulfilled. Jesus said:

“Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” (26).

Now, as we see, this is a rhetorical question. Jesus does not expect an answer and He does not

leave time for them to give an answer. In other words, what Jesus is saying here is that it was most definitely, absolutely, completely, totally necessary that the prophets should be fulfilled. But why?

a. The Righteousness of God

As I have already noted, the prophets spoke the Word of God. But let me demonstrate this a wee bit further with a brief excerpt from the call of the prophet Jeremiah:

“Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, “Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.” (Jer 1:4-9).

This text makes absolutely clear that when a prophet of God speaks he speaks God’s Words, and if that is the case then what could we surmise if a prophecy of God did not come true? That God lies. But we know that God is righteous and for that reason, according to the author of Hebrews:

“it is impossible for God to lie” (Hebrews 6:18).

It is impossible for Him to lie because He is God, and as such, He is perfectly righteous, perfectly holy and perfectly honest. He is not like us, as we read in Numbers:

“God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?” (Numbers 23:19).

Again, we find another rhetorical question with the implied answer to both of these questions being a resounding “NO!” When God says He will do something He will do it, end of story. Likewise when He speaks through one of His prophets to predict something that prophecy is always fulfilled. That being said, if God prophesied through the prophet Isaiah that the Messiah would suffer and die for the sins of His people, then Jesus would suffer and die for His people (**Isaiah 53**). And if God prophesied through the prophet Hosea that Jesus would raise from the dead on the third day, well then, that is the way it is going to be (**Hosea 6:2**). And if God prophesied through the prophet Daniel that Jesus would ascend into glory and would rule and reign over an eternal kingdom, then that is how it will play out (**Daniel 7:13-14**). In other words, prophecies were written for the express purpose of being fulfilled, and if they were God’s prophecies you can be sure they would be fulfilled. Just read through Matthew some time and count how many times you read the words: *“this was to fulfill”* or this *“took place to fulfill.”* You see, Matthew understood something that the disciples on the road to Emmaus were struggling to believe, namely, that when God prophesies something He fulfills it because He is righteous and He cannot lie. But there is another reason why the prophecies of the Old Testament must be fulfilled.

b. The Love of God

Think again about the two specific prophecies that Jesus refers to when telling the disciples that they had to be fulfilled. The first is that *“Christ should suffer.”* Now it is not difficult to understand why it was necessary for this prophecy to be fulfilled. If Christ had not suffered then every human being to ever live would have to suffer for their sins, which is to say that every

human being ever born would have to face eternal punishment in Hell apart from the presence of Christ where they would receive the wrath of God. And God would be perfectly just in doing so, as since the fall of mankind every person is born in enmity with God (**Romans 5:12**). That means that all people since Adam and Eve are born dead in their trespasses and sins (**Eph 2:1**), and as such are enemies of God whether they know it or not, and whether they like it or not. And for that reason all mankind owes the wages of their sin which is death (**Rom 6:23**). But God determined before the foundation of the world that He would save a people for His own glory (**Eph 1:3-6**), and if this was to happen then an appropriate candidate would have to substitute Himself in the place of all those God intended to save. Someone who was fully man (so he could be a substitute for man) and fully God (so He could be a perfect sacrifice) would need to suffer in the place of those God would save. And of course that is what Jesus did, for as Paul says it:

“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (**Romans 5:6-8**).

It is not difficult to understand why this was necessary then, especially for those who Jesus died for, namely, everyone who repents of their sins and trusts in Christ. This is why we are here today after all, to worship the One who stood in our place, the One who was forsaken for us, the One who was nailed to the cross that we deserved, the One who received the wrath of the Father we earned, the One who was crucified, the One who had He not suffered in our place we would face an eternity of suffering.

But look at the second thing that Jesus mentions concerning prophecies that were necessary to be fulfilled, that the Messiah would “*enter into His glory*.” This is the second half of what we call the gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. The first half is the death of Christ, a truth which Christians hold near and dear to their hearts, but this second half is no less important than the first. These two truths are a package deal, for it was Paul who summarizes the gospel most succinctly:

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (**1 Cor 15:3-4**).

Jesus not only needed to suffer and die, He also had to rise from the grave, for it was His victory over death and acceptance of the payment for our sins that was declared by His resurrection. I like the way Tom Schreiner puts it in his comment on Romans 4:25 from the ESV Study Bible: “When God the Father raised Christ from the dead, it was a demonstration that he accepted Christ’s suffering and death as full payment for sin, and that the Father’s favor, no longer his wrath against sin, was directed toward Christ, and through Christ toward those who believe. Since Paul sees Christians as united with Christ in his death and resurrection, God’s approval of Christ at the resurrection results in God’s approval also of all who are united to Christ, and in this way results in their justification.” Now that reminds me of Romans 6 where Paul connects Jesus resurrection with ours:

“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life”

(Rom 6:4).

In other words, if Jesus hadn't entered into His glory through the resurrection then neither would we. If Jesus had only died for our sins we would be forgiven, but we would not have eternal life. If we were to be saved, to be born again, to be made children of God with the hope of resurrection life then Jesus had to die and Jesus had to rise from the dead. In other words, if God is a God of love and He was to pour out His love on His people then it was necessary for the prophecies concerning Jesus death and resurrection, as well as the entire Old Testament, to be fulfilled.

3. Interpreted (v. 27)

There is one last thing we need to know about the Old Testament, that is, that it has to be interpreted correctly. What this means is first we need to know what OT texts meant in their original context. For that reason, when we study an Old Testament book we must consider who wrote it and who it was written to. We must also consider what was going on when it was first written and what the original author intended to communicate to the original audience. Then, and only then, can we attempt to understand what it means to us, the people of God, today living on the other side of the cross as Christians. And here in Luke 24 Jesus makes very clear what that means we must do, namely we must figure out what it is telling us about Jesus. Look at what happens there on the road to Emmaus: *“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself”* (v. 27). When Jesus refers to *“all the Scriptures,”* He is speaking of the Old Testament and he provides us with the master key for interpreting it correctly: What does it say concerning Himself? In other words, as it has been said the Old Testament is where you find Christ concealed, but the New Testament is where you find Christ revealed. I actually had a professor in seminary, an OT professor of course, who loved to point out that if you want to know who Jesus is, look at the New Testament, but if you want to know about Jesus, look to the Old Testament. And what exactly should you look for? Well, imagine with me, if you would, what it was like on the road to Emmaus as these two disciples received a once in a lifetime lesson on the Old Testament and Jesus. That had to be the most intense, interesting, insightful and enlightening Bible-study ever. I could imagine Jesus starting at...

- **Genesis:** The Messiah would be born of woman and would defeat Satan (**Gen 3:15**). The Messiah would sacrifice himself for the sins of His people (**Genesis 22**).
- **Exodus:** The Messiah would be the Lamb of God who will deliver His people from their sins.
- **Leviticus:** The Messiah would be perfect thus the books of the law reveal a great deal about how Jesus would live (**Lev 19:1-2**).
- **Numbers:** In Numbers we read a fair bit about how a priest is to intercede as a mediator for God's people (**Numbers 18-19**), pointing us to the Messiah who is the perfect priest

and mediator for His people. We also learn about a bronze serpent who was set up on a pole that people who were cursed by a plague could look to and live, pointing us to the Messiah who would be lifted up on a cross who sinners could look to and be saved (**Numbers 21:4-9**).

- **Deuteronomy:** Here we find the words of God delivered through Moses, God's first prophet, yet this points forward to God's perfect prophet, the Messiah (**Deut 18:15**).
- **Joshua:** The Messiah would be the conqueror who through His death and resurrection would lead us into the Promised Land.
- **Judges:** The Messiah would deliver us from our enemies.
- **Ruth:** The Messiah would be our redeemer.
- **Samuel, Kings & Chronicles:** The Messiah would be the perfect king: we learn from the bad kings what Jesus would not be like; from the good kings that Jesus would be better.
- **Ezra and Nehemiah** – The Messiah will bring us back from spiritual exile caused by our sins and failure to repent when warned.
- **Esther** – The Messiah, like Esther, would stand before the king prepared to suffer for His people, but unlike Esther He would suffer for His people.
- **Job** – Our redeemer lives and will rescue us (**Job 19:25**).
- **Psalms** – The Messiah is the blessed man (**Psalms 1**) with clean hands and pure heart (**Psalms 24**), and He is the only perfect, sovereign king of the universe (**Psalms 110**).
- **Proverbs** – The Messiah is perfect wisdom (**Proverbs 8**).
- **Ecclesiastes** – Through the Messiah we find the only way to find meaning and purpose in life.
- **Song of Solomon** – The Messiah would be the perfect husband.
- **The Major and Minor Prophets** – Now in general, the call of the prophets was most often a warning to repent and escape judgement, and of course there is only one way anyone can escape judgement, through the Messiah.

What a Bible study that must have been. These two disciples were definitely beginning to realize the significance of what was taking place, as when they arrive at their destination they don't want this lesson to end: *"So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them"* (**Luke 24:28-29**).

Conclusion

As I mentioned at the beginning of my sermon, there are those Christians who believe that we should spend most of our time in the New Testament. They often say this because we are New Covenant believers. I think Cleopas and his friend might disagree. Not with the fact that we are New Covenant believers and that the new covenant is fully revealed in the NT, but that we should spend most of our time in the New Testament. After all, according to Jesus it is in the Old Testament where we learn about the New Covenant. The Old Testament is about Jesus from

Genesis 1:1 through to Malachi 4:6. Now we must be careful that we don't insert Jesus into the Old Testament finding references to Him that are and never were there. Instead, we must have a more holistic approach in an attempt to see Christ in the Old Testament as we were intended to see Him. Sidney Greidanus, author of *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, describes what it means to rightly preach Christ from the Old Testament: "preaching sermons which authentically integrate the message of the text with the climax of God's revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament." In other words, when we look at Scripture in its context, if we interpret it properly we must see how it speaks of Christ or points forward to Christ. If Jesus "*interpreted to* [the disciples on the road to Emmaus] *in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*" how can a Christian preacher do anything less? He can't. So for the remainder of my time with you all this week, that is what I intend to do: preach Christ, and specifically to preach Christ from the Old Testament. Because according to Jesus the Old Testament must be believed, fulfilled, and interpreted correctly, and when it is we will see Jesus.