

SEEING AND SAVORING
THE DIVINE SON IN ALL OF SCRIPTURE

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Thinking! Thinking about the Word. Thinking about the Word written, and thinking about the Word that was in the beginning with God and who was God and by whom and through whom and for whom all things were made (John 1:1–3; Col 1:16) and in whom all things hold together (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3). I want you to think today about the Word made flesh and how this Word is revealed in the Word written, most specifically in the initial three-fourths of the Christian Bible. I want you to think how to faithfully see and savor the divine Son in all of Scripture.

But is this a justifiable task? On what basis do we think that we should be able to find glimpses of our glorious Savior in the Old Testament (OT)? Let's begin briefly by considering three ways the New Testament (NT) authors talked about Jesus's relationship to the OT.

First, the NT authors believed that *the OT was the first to promise the good news embodied in the person and work of Jesus Christ*. The NT is not the first place that we learn that the reigning God would save and satisfy believing sinners through Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Rather, from the earliest stages of Scripture we find a progressing, developing plot that anticipates and finds its goal and terminus in Jesus. The progress from creation to fall to redemption to consummation is in a very real sense *his-story*.

Look with me first at Rom 1:1–3: “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son.” The Lord commissioned Paul for *the gospel*. Notice what we learn about this good news:

- (1) *It finds its source and content in God*. God is the initiator of good news. “We were dead.... But *God*” (Eph 2:1, 4). “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.... For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom 8:1, 3). *God* is the source of the gospel. But when Paul says “the gospel of God” he may also mean that *God* is the content of the gospel. Isaiah 40:9 is the

first place in the Bible where the term *gospel* is used with respect to the end-times intrusion of salvation, ultimately through the Servant-Savior. Here we read, “Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of *good news*, lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of *good news*; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’” Notice that the good news being proclaimed has only one thing in quotes: “Behold your God!” *God is the gospel*. Similarly, just before the great Suffering-Servant text in Isaiah 53, we read in Isa 52:7, “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings *good news*, who publishes peace, who brings *good news* of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns.’” Again, while we know the gospel relates to peace, happiness, and salvation, the only content given to the news itself is, “Your God reigns!” Paul was set apart for “the gospel of God,” which means either that the good news he proclaimed finds its source in God or its content in God.

- (2) But now notice that *the gospel also has a history that includes agents and a vehicle*: “[Paul was] set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures” (Rom 1:2). Remember, Paul’s Bible was the OT; his audience had never read Romans until he wrote them the letter. When he speaks of the prophets and the holy writings, he is talking about the initial three-fourths of our Bibles. And the very OT prophets who gave us the Scriptures predicted the good news that we now enjoy. Remember how Peter talked in 1 Pet 1:10–11? “Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.” People like Moses and Isaiah and Zephaniah were studying their Scriptures, longing to learn more about who the Messiah would be and when the Messiah would come. The OT prophets predicted the good news that we celebrate, and the more we read their writings, the more we will grow to treasure the grace that is now ours.
- (3) Finally, notice that the gospel that finds its source and content in God and that was first announced by the OT prophets in the OT Scriptures—*this gospel concerns the Son*. Philip told Nathanael, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth” (John 1:45). John further says, “You search the Scriptures [the OT] because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.... If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me” (John 5:39, 46). And again, “Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad” (John 8:56).

Jesus said, “The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached” (Luke 16:16). In Jesus, the old age, old creation, and old covenant give rise to the new age, new creation, and new covenant. In Jesus, all of the OT’s history (Matt 2:15; Gal 4:4), laws (Matt 5:17; Rom 10:4), and prophecies (Acts 3:18) find their goal and terminus. “When the fulness of time had come, God sent forth his Son” (Gal 4:4). All of history progresses, integrates, and climaxes in Christ. “The end of the law is Christ for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom 10:4, author’s translation). “The law was a guardian until Christ came. . . . But now that faith has come, we are no longer under the guardian” (Gal 3:24–25). Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished” (Matt 5:17–18). Finally, “All the promises of God find their Yes in [the Son of God, Jesus Christ]” (2 Cor 1:20), and this includes OT promises, for after Paul listed a number of them in 2 Cor 6:16–18, he asserted in 7:1, “We [Christians] have these promises!” (2 Cor 7:1). In Jesus and Jesus alone do all the Bible’s anticipations find their realization.

After the resurrection, we are told that, “Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] interpreted to [his disciples] in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). Then later, Jesus asserted that “everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (Luke 24:44). These particular verses do not say that everything in OT concerns Jesus but that everything that does concern him he came to fulfill. People like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah “all died in faith, not having received the things promised but having seen them and greeted them from afar” (Heb 11:13). The OT saints anticipated the coming of the divine Son and royal deliverer, and in Jesus their hopes find realization.

Second, with respect to how the NT authors talk about Jesus’s relationship to the OT, they think that *a proper understanding of the OT as a whole will move us to identify a unified message focused on the Messiah and the mission he would spark*. Again, following his resurrection, we are told that Jesus “opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, ‘Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem’” (Luke 24:45–47). Peter declared, “What God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he has fulfilled” (Acts 3:18; cf. 1 Pet 1:10–11), and “All the prophets . . . proclaimed these days” (Acts 3:24). Likewise,

the apostle Paul claimed that “to [Jesus] all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name” (Acts 10:43). And when facing King Agrippa, Paul asserted that he was speaking “nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:22–23). Paul was an OT preacher, yet he could say, “We preach Christ crucified” (1 Cor 1:23) and “I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor 2:20). When you read the OT do you find such a unified message about the Christ’s tribulation and triumph? The divine author of Scripture intends that we see and savor the divine Son not only in the NT but also in the OT.

Third, the NT authors believed that *God created all things (including the OT) by the Son, through the Son, and for the Son, so the Old Testament was written for the glory of the divine Son*. In Col 1:16, God declares of the divine Son, “By him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.” There is not one spec of this universe that king Jesus does not declare as, “Mine!” “He is before all things, and in him all things hold together” (Col 1:17). When we approach the Scriptures—including the initial three-fourths of our Christian Bible, we must recognize that all of it testifies to God’s greatness and grace revealed in Christ. Jesus said, “Not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished” (Matt 5:18). Even the smallest strokes on the letters of the biblical text magnify the Messiah. Do you realize that the very presence of Scripture testifies to blood-bought mercy? While Gen 1–2 record events prior to humanity’s fall and the world-wide curse, those events were written post-fall to sinners. That means that we would not even have Scripture were it not for grace purchased through Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection. Every name, every narrative that we read in the Bible comes to us as a gift from the divine Son, through the divine Son, and for the divine Son—down to the very letters and individual words.

So if the OT predicts Christ’s coming with all history, laws, and promises being fulfilled in him, and if all of the OT contains a unified message about his suffering and victory, and if every detail of the OT down to the very letters testifies to divine grace purchased through Jesus, then when we read the OT we should find the divine Son revealed on its pages. The OT is foundation, the NT fulfillment, and all of it points to and is upheld by Christ.

Now, as we have already seen, to say that all the OT points to and/or testifies to the majesty of the divine Son does not mean that all of it does so in the same

way. Jesus' fulfillment of the Law and Prophets is not uniform; he "fills-up" or realizes the OT's eschatological anticipations in numerous ways, and each of these provides avenues by which we can exalt Christ and the gospel through our biblical interpretation. I am going to propose seven possible ways to see and savor the divine Son in the initial three-fourths of the Bible.

1. When you read the OT's direct messianic predictions, see and savor the realization of the divine Son.

Peter stressed "what God foretold by the mouth of *all* the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled" (Acts 3:18). Every one of the prophets from Moses onward anticipated the work of the Messiah and the mission he would spark (3:22–24; 10:43). The OT is loaded with explicit and implicit predictions. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa 53:5). These words in Isaiah portray a servant of God who would suffer as a substitute for many, and Peter, writing about the Christ, saw this text fulfilled in the person of Jesus: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds we have been healed" (1 Pet 2:24).

YHWH promised Abraham that a single, male offspring would "possess the gate of his enemies" and that in him "all the nations of the earth [would] be blessed" (Gen 22:17b–18). Then Paul notes that the gospel of international blessing that God promised Abraham came to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:8, 14). Indeed, "the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring ... who is Christ... And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (3:16, 29). Similarly, YHWH promised through Ezekiel, "I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them" (Ezek 34:23). Then in John 10, Jesus declared, "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11), and again, "There will be one flock, one shepherd" (10:16). At times, the element of prediction-fulfillment is even more pronounced, as when Mic 5:2 foretells that the royal deliverer would be born in Bethlehem, and then Matt 2:6 explicitly asserts that it happened just as the prophet wrote. Christ fulfills the OT as the specific focus or goal of direct OT Messianic predictions and redemptive-historical hopes.

2. When you consider the OT's salvation-historical story and trajectories, see and savor how the divine Son stands as the goal and climax of all Scripture's progress and integration.

The OT does a great job creating problems for which Jesus is the solution. Both the Old and New Testaments are framed by the narrative of redemption—a historical plot designed to magnify that God reigns, saves, and satisfies through covenant for his glory in Christ. The entire storyline progresses from creation to the fall to redemption to consummation and highlights the work of Jesus as the decisive turning point in salvation-history. I have attempted to capture the basic plot line through the acronym K.I.N.G.D.O.M.

God's K.I.N.G.D.O.M. Plan			
OT Narrative Foundation	K	1. Kickoff and rebellion	Creation, fall, and flood
	I	2. Instrument of blessing	Patriarchs
	N	3. Nation redeemed and commissioned	Exodus, Sinai, and wilderness
	G	4. Government in the land	Conquest and kingdoms
	D	5. Dispersion and return	Exile and initial restoration
NT Narrative Fulfillment	O	6. Overlap of the ages	Christ's work and the church age
	M	7. Mission accomplished	Christ's return and kingdom consummation

The biblical authors highlight the progression of salvation-history many times, always with Christ as the center. “The Law and the Prophets were until John [the Baptist]; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached” (Luke 16:16). “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom 10:4). “The law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith” (Gal 3:24–26).

The plot line of the Bible is guided by five major salvation-historical covenants, each of which finds its terminus in Christ.

- In fulfillment of the *Adamic/Noahic covenant*, Jesus is the Son of Man, last Adam, and image of God (Mark 10:45; 14:62; 1 Cor 15:45; 2 Cor 4:4).
- In fulfillment of the *Abrahamic covenant*, Jesus is the offspring of Abraham and agent of universal blessing (Gen 22:17b–18; Acts 3:25–26; Gal 3:16).
- In fulfillment of the *Mosaic (old) covenant*, Jesus represents Israel and stands as God's Son, YHWH's servant, the embodiment of wisdom, the one who fulfilled the law's demands, and the substance of all covenant shadows (Exod 4:22–23; Isa 49:3, 5–6; Matt 3:17; 11:2, 19; 12:42; 13:54; John 2:19–21; Acts 3:25–26; Rom 5:19; Col 2:17; Heb 9:9–12; 10:1).
- In fulfillment of the *Davidic covenant*, Jesus is the King of the Jews and Son of David (Matt 2:1; 21:9; Luke 1:32–33).

- In fulfillment of the *new covenant* promises, Jesus is the prophet like Moses who was to come and the only true mediator between God and man (Deut 18:15, 18; Luke 7:16; 22:20; Acts 3:22–26; 7:37; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).

We also see that various themes develop or progress as God gradually reveals more of himself and his ways through biblical revelation. Some of the main ones would include covenant, God's kingdom, law, temple and God's presence, atonement, and mission, all of which find focus in Jesus. Christ fulfills all of the OT's salvation-historical trajectories.

3. When you recognize similarities and contrasts between the old and new ages, creations, and covenants, see and savor how the divine Son influences all reality.

The progress of the biblical covenants and the history of redemption display numerous points of similarity and contrast, many of which are centered in the person of the divine Son. Many of the analogies and differences come in type–antitype relationships, which I unpack in the next unit. Another major similarity comes in the old and new covenants structure of grace, both having a gracious redemption give rise to a gracious law giving. The pattern in both covenants is that obedience follows deliverance and not vice-versa. In light of this, the interpreter can build numerous analogies between the surface features of the old and new covenants, recognizing similarities and then magnifying Christ as the one who now supplies the pattern, pardon, power, and promise for living God's way for God's glory.

In the way of contrast, the nature of grace between the old and new covenants is different, for whereas the new covenant supplies freedom from sin and power for obedience to *all* covenant members, there was nothing organic to the old covenant itself that changed hearts. Under Moses, the redemption and giving of the law remained external for the majority, whereas the redemption and law in the new covenant are both internalized in all members by the eschatological work of the Spirit of Christ.

Numerous other points of contrast (or progression) are also apparent. For example, whereas Adam disobeyed and brought death to all, Christ obeys and brings life to many (Rom 5:18–19). Whereas God used the blood of bulls and goats to picture atonement in the old covenant, Christ's own substitutionary sacrifice provides the ground for eternal redemption (Heb 9:11–14). Whereas access to YHWH's presence in the temple was restricted to the high priest on the Day of

Atonement, Christ's priestly work opens the way for all in him to enjoy God's presence (9:24–26; 10:19–22). Whereas the nations needed to come to the tabernacle/temple to encounter the Lord's presence in the old covenant, the Spirit of Christ now empowers the church in its witness to the nations from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Matt 28:18–20; Acts 1:8).

The work of Jesus creates both continuities and discontinuities. We can celebrate his work more by identifying the patterns and transformations.

4. When you identify OT characters, events, and institutions or objects that clarify and anticipate the person and work of Christ, see and savor the divine Son as the substance of all earlier shadows.

The author of Hebrews said the OT law was “a shadow of good things to come” (Heb 10:1). Similarly, Paul asserted that clean and unclean food laws, the various Jewish festivals and monthly sacrificial calendar, and even the Sabbath were each “a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ” (Col 2:16–17). In the NT, these anticipations and pointers are called “types” or “examples” that in turn find their counter or fulfillment in Jesus as their ultimate realization. God structured the progressive development of salvation-history in such a way that certain OT characters, events, and institutions or objects bear meanings that color and predictively anticipate later characters, events, or institutions, all of which escalate and culminate in the life and work of Jesus Messiah. Without attempting to be exhaustive, here are some examples of OT types that find their terminus in Christ.

a. *Typological persons:*

- Adam was a type of Christ as the ultimate human (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:45–49).
- Melchizedek was a type for Christ's eternal royal priesthood (Gen 14:18–24; Heb 5:5–9; 6:20; 7:1–10, 17).
- Moses was a type for Christ's prophetic role (Deut 18:15–19; Acts 3:19–26) and faithfulness (Heb 3:1–6).
- Aaron was a type for Christ's high priesthood (Heb 5:1–5).
- Israel as God's corporate son (Exod 4:21–22) and servant (Isa 42:18–20) typified Christ as the representative son (Matt 4:1–4) and servant (Isa 49:3, 6; cf. 42:1–3 with Matt 12:15–21).
- David as Israel's king and God's royal son typified Christ's representative kingship and sonship (2 Sam 7:14–16; Ps 2:7; Matt 21:9; Heb 1:5).

- Jonah's time and departure from the belly of the fish made him a type for Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Jon 2; Matt 12:40).

b. *Typological events or acts:*

- Every one of God's major creative or redemptive acts in the OT anticipates Christ's salvific work. Creation gives rise to new creation; the original exodus points to the second exodus; the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem on the day of the Lord finds culmination at the cross and final day of judgment; the initial restoration to the land prepares for the ultimate reconciliation with God.
- Also, the elevation of the bronze serpent typified the crucifixion of Christ (where he became sin and bore our curse) and its resulting benefits (Num 21:4–9; John 3:14).
- The flood and Red Sea deliverances typified baptism (1 Cor 10:2; 1 Pet 3:20–21).
- The smiting of the rock typified Christ's substitutionary, life-giving sacrifice (1 Cor 10:4).
- Other events in Israel's wilderness years were types to benefit Christians (1 Cor 10:11).

c. *Typological institutions or objects:*

- The earthly tabernacle and all its furniture (Exod 25:9, 40) were but "a copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Heb 8:5; cf. 8:2; 9:11; cf. Acts 7:24). This included "the mercy seat" (Exod 25:21–22; Lev. 16:14–15) that points directly to Christ as the one upon whom atonement is realized (Rom 3:24–26).
- The earthly temple typified Christ (John 2:19–21; cf. 1:14) and his church (1 Cor 6:19).
- The OT priesthood (Zech 3:8) anticipated Christ as the high priest (Heb 2:17; 9:11; cf. 9:24) and the church as priests (1 Pet 2:5, 9).
- The Passover lamb (Exod 12:3) typified Christ's substitutionary death (Isa 53:7; John 1:29; Acts 8:32; 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pet 1:19).
- The substitutionary sacrifices in Leviticus typified Christ's own substitutionary sacrifice (Isa 53:4–5, 8, 10–12; 1 John 1:9–2:2; 10; Heb 9:12–14; 10:1–4, 10; cf. Col 2:13–14).
- Clean and unclean food laws and the various Jewish festivals and monthly sacrificial calendar typologically pointed to Christ (Col 2:16–17).

- The Sabbath typologically anticipated the rest that Christ's resurrection inaugurated (Matt 11:28–12:8; Col 2:16–17; Heb 4:1–11).

5. When you revel in Yahweh's identity and activity, see and savor the person of the divine Son.

You will recall that Jesus said that “no one has ever seen God” the Father except the Son (John 1:18; 6:46), but that “whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). What this means is that when YHWH becomes embodied in a human form in the OT, we are most likely meeting the pre-incarnate Son. We see him in the stories of Abraham's third guest (Gen 18), Jacob's wrestling opponent (Gen 32:24–30), Joshua's “commander of the army of YHWH” (Josh 5:13–15), Ezekiel's exalted king (Ezek 1:26), Daniel's “son of man” (Dan 7:13–14), and the numerous manifestations of the “angel/messenger of YHWH” (e.g., Gen 16:7–13; 22:11–18; Exod 3:2; Num 20:16; 22:22–35; Judg 2:1–4; 5:23; 6:11–12, 21–22; 13:3, 13–21; 2 Sam 24:16; 1 Kgs 19:7; 2 Kgs 1:3, 15; 29:35; Dan 3:24, 28). We also see him in Isaiah's vision of the Lord seated on the throne (Isa 6:1). As John asserts, the prophet “saw [Jesus's] glory and spoke of him” (John 12:41; cf. 1 Kgs 22:19). Each of these revelations are glimpses of the promised Christ who would come as the God-man, and when we read these texts we should see and savor our coming Savior, the Lord Jesus.

But there is more. When Yahweh revealed himself to Moses in Exod 3:14, he declared, “I am who I am.” When John wrote his gospel, he went out of his way to show that Jesus explicitly linked himself to Yahweh by his identity statements and his actions:

- Jesus is the calmer of storms: “*I am*; do not be afraid” (John 6:20).
- He is the all-satisfying one: “*I am* the bread of life” (John 6:35).
- He is the ultimate guide and enabler: “*I am* the light of the world” (John 8:12).
- He is the one in whom you must be saved: “Unless you believe that *I am*, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24).
- He is the one whom people will link with Yahweh after his death and resurrection: “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that *I am*” (John 8:28). “I am telling you this now, . . . that when [the resurrection] takes place you may believe that *I am*” (John 13:19).
- He is the one who existed before Abraham: “Before Abraham was, *I am*” (John 8:58).
- He is the only entry to refuge: “*I am* the door of the sheep” (John 10:7, 9).

- He is the ultimate provider and protector: “*I am* the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14).
- He is the one who provides eternal life and access to the Father: “*I am* the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). “*I am* the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).
- He is the one who helps us grow: “*I am* the true vine.... Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit” (John 15:1, 5).
- He is the one whose identity demands homage: “When Jesus said, ‘*I am,*’ they drew back and fell to the ground” (John 18:6).

When we hear Yahweh speaking or acting in the OT as the object of people’s faith in the OT, we are seeing the very one who would embody himself in the person of Jesus. The Word who was “in the beginning with God” “was God” (John 1:1–2). The very Son who would be named Jesus “was in the form of God” (Phil 2:6), was the very “image of the invisible God” (Col 1:16), and was “the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature” (Heb 1:3). Thus, the author of Hebrews could attribute Moses’s reproach for *God’s* sake as a reproach endured for *Christ*: “He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward” (Heb 11:26). This is also why Jude could identify Israel’s deliverer at the exodus as *Jesus*: “Now I want to remind you ... that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe” (Jude 5). Who fought for Israel and rescued them at the exodus? Was it not Yahweh? Yes! And it was *Jesus*!

Similarly, anticipating the messianic era, Isaiah declared, “A voice cries: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD [i.e., YHWH]’” (Isa 40:3), and each of the Gospel writers identify this with John the Baptist’s pointing to the coming of *Jesus* (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23). Similarly, Joel proclaimed, “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD [i.e., YHWH] shall be saved” (Joel 2:32), and Paul applies this verse to *Jesus* in Rom 10:13. Finally, Malachi asserted that a new Elijah would come before the day of YHWH when “the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple” (Mal 3:1; 4:5[H3:23]). Jesus claimed that John the Baptist was this Elijah (Matt 11:11–15; 17:10–13), who himself pointed to Christ as the anticipated Lord (3:11–12), whom we know from elsewhere was also God’s tabernacling presence (John 1:14; 2:21).

Jesus said that if we have seen him, we have seen the Father (John 14:9), for he only does what the Father is doing (15:19). This close identity between YHWH and his royal Servant is already anticipated in texts like Isaiah 42 where both bear influence among the coastlands (Isa 42:4, 10, 12), redeem the blind (42:7, 16),

serve as guides (42:4, 16), overcome darkness with light (42:6–7, 16), and put to shame carved idols (42:8, 17). Isaiah’s servant would be nothing less than “the arm of the LORD” (53:1; cf. 51:9), the Spirit-endowed agent of God (42:1; cf. 11:2; 61:1; Luke 4:18), who would embody the presence of God (Isa 7:6; Matt 1:23), bear the character of God (Isa 9:6; cf. 10:21; 28:29; 63:16; 66:12), and establish God’s reign on the earth (9:7; 52:7; 53:10). When John the Baptist asked Jesus, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” Jesus replied, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them” (Matt 11:3–5; cf. Isa 35:4–6; 61:1–4).

Christ’s words bear unparalleled authority (Mark 1:22), and he did what only God can do—commanding demons and healing the sick (1:34; 3:10–11, 22), forgiving sins (2:7, 10–11) and raising the dead (5:35–36, 41–43). Every OT manifestation of God’s punishment and pardon, retribution and reconciliation, directly foreshadows and ultimately flows from the work of God’s Son, “whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom he created the world,” who “is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,” and who “upholds the universe by the word of his power” (Heb 1:2–3). The very Word that “was God ... became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14; cf. Exod 33:18; 34:6). When we meet Yahweh in the OT, we are catching glimpses of the divine Son.

6. When you observe how the OT law and wisdom express ethical ideals, see and savor the justifying work of the divine Son.

The OT is filled with stories of sinners who needed a savior. The Mosaic law pointed to the importance for Christ in the way it identified and multiplied sin (Rom 3:20; 5:20; cf. 7:7–12; Gal 3:19), imprisoned the sinful (Rom 3:19–20; 8:2–3; Gal 3:10, 13, 22), and showed everyone’s need for atonement. The law by its nature, therefore, predicted Christ as “the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom 10:4).

Jesus is the perfect embodiment of God’s character and the ideal image of dependence, law keeping, wisdom, praise, and perseverance. Paul stressed both that in the law we have “the embodiment of knowledge and truth” (Rom 2:20) and that “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (7:12). The same can be said of Christ, who remained sinless (2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22; 1 John 3:5), “became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1 Cor 1:30).

Paul stressed, “But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” (Rom 3:21–22). Figures like Moses, David, and Isaiah anticipated the righteousness displayed through the gospel (1:16–17). It’s bound up in Christ’s perfect obedience climaxing in his death on the cross (3:22–26; Phil 2:8), through which we are justified by faith (Rom 3:27–30; 5:1). Jesus incarnated the portrait of the worshipping sufferer and victorious king of the Psalms. He perfectly kept his father’s commandments and abided in his love (John 15:10). Through Christ’s substitutionary work, God canceled “the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands” (Col 2:14). He “condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us” (Rom 8:3–4).

As God’s word made flesh, Jesus manifests in his person the essence of every ethical ideal aligned with YHWH’s revealed will, and it is this perfection that is then imputed to believers. “Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous” (Rom 5:18–19; cf. 8:4). And being “found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith” (Phil 3:9). “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21). With every law and every wise saying in the OT, we find fodder to magnify the greatness of Christ on our behalf.

7. When you use the OT to instruct or guide others, calling them to love and thus fulfill the law, see and savor the sanctifying work of the divine Son.

The NT authors recognized that the OT law was “imposed until the time of reformation” (Heb 9:10) and that “the law was our guardian until Christ came.... But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian” (Gal 3:24–25). Nevertheless, Paul had no hesitation declaring that “all Scripture [which in context principally meant the OT] is ... profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16). In this context, the apostle could even charge Timothy, “Preach the word” (4:2), urging this Christian pastor help his people find hope in the gospel mostly from the OT Scriptures. What we must recognize is that, for Paul and the other apostles, while the old covenant law and wisdom no longer bore direct authority in the Christian’s life, it still bore indirect authority when read through the mediation of Christ. Thus, he could say to

Timothy about the OT, “From childhood [as a Jew, see Acts 16:1 and 2 Tim 1:5] you have been acquainted with the sacred writings [i.e., the OT], which are able to make you wise for salvation *through faith in Christ Jesus*” (2 Tim 3:15). The OT continues to matter for Christians, but we must approach it through the light and lens of Jesus. As Paul says elsewhere, “To this day, when [the majority of Jews] read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away” (2 Cor 3:14). Jesus’s coming unlocks the significance of the OT text, and through him we now have access to a massive amount of Scripture that can clarify how to love God and love our neighbor.

Some of the OT promises that “find their Yes in [Christ]” (2 Cor. 1:20) are those that predicted how new covenant believers would live out God’s law. For instance, Moses promised, “The LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut 30:6; cf. 6:5). He also envisioned that this same people would “obey the voice of the LORD and keep all the commandments that I command you today” (30:8). Deuteronomy would continue its relevance in the day of heart change. Similarly, through Ezekiel God promised, “I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules” (Ezek 36:27; cf. Jer 12:16). In this day of restoration, all the children “shall be taught by the LORD” (Isa 54:13; cf. John 6:44–45). Having the law written on their hearts, “they shall know [the LORD], from the least of them to the greatest” (Jer 31:33–34; cf. 1 John 2:20–21, 27).

Both Moses and Ezekiel predicted a future, eschatological day when God’s people would keep the Lord’s “statutes” (LXX = plural of *dikaiōma*) (Deut 30:10; Ezek 36:27). Through his one “act of righteousness” (singular of *dikaiōma*), Jesus secures our justification (Rom 5:18), fulfilling this “righteous requirement” (singular of *dikaiōma*) in us (8:4) and by this moving us to live by the Spirit (8:13; Gal 5:25).¹ We who are in Christ are now empowered to keep the “precepts” (plural of *dikaiōma*) of the law, as we live with circumcised hearts by the power of the Spirit (Rom 2:26, 29; cf. 2:14–15). We fulfill the law as we love our neighbor (13:8–10; cf. Matt 7:12; Gal. 6:2). Christ is our teacher (Isa 42:4; 51:4; Matt 17:5;

¹ In contrast to my earlier view (Jason S. DeRouchie, “From Condemnation to Righteousness: A Christian Reading of Deuteronomy,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 18.3 [2014]: 87–118, esp. 111–12), I now side with Moo on his reading of Rom 8:4 as pointing to *Christ’s* fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the law in us (i.e., positive imputation) (see Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996], 483–84). Nevertheless, I still see a place for Christian’s fulfilling the law—just not in this text (see Rom 2:26; 13:8–10). As such, though I disagree with McFadden’s reading of Rom 8:4, I do agree with him that our imperfect loving of others today truly fulfills the law but only because the Spirit’s liberating work will become completed at the resurrection, at which time we will fulfill the law’s righteous requirement perfectly (see Kevin W. McFadden, “The Fulfillment of the Law’s *Dikaiōma*: Another Look at Romans 8:1–4,” *JETS* 52 (2009): 483–97, esp. 491–94).

28:20), and his own law-fulfillment now clarifies for us what it means to follow God (Matt 5:17–19; cf. 1 Cor 9:21; Jas 1:25; 2:8, 12).

In Jesus, we find a new pattern for surrender and service (Phil 2:5–7; Heb 12:1–3; 1 Pet 2:21; 1 John 2:6), and in Jesus we experience true pardon (Rom 3:23–26; 5:8–9, 18–19; 8:3–4; 2 Cor 5:21), which in turn supplies both power to obey (Rom 1:16; 6:22; 8:13; 1 Cor 1:18; 15:10) and promises that motivate this obedience (2 Cor 1:20; 7:1; 2 Pet 1:4; 1 John 3:3; cf. Isa 41:10; Phil 1:6; 1 Thess 5:23–24; Heb 13:20–21). When we instruct or guide others from the OT, we have an opportunity to celebrate the sanctifying work of the divine Son.

8. Summary

I have given seven ways that Christ fulfills the eschatological hopes of the OT. Each of these provides readers and teachers of Scripture fresh avenues to make much of Jesus. See and savor the divine Son in all of Scripture by:

- Reading the OT’s direct messianic predictions;
- Considering the OT’s salvation-historical story and trajectories;
- Recognizing similarities and contrasts between the old and new ages, creations, and covenants;
- Identifying OT characters, events, and institutions or objects that clarify and anticipate the person and work of Christ;
- Reveling in Yahweh’s identity and activity;
- Observing how the old covenant law characterizes the nature of perfect righteousness and wisdom; and
- Using the OT to instruct or guide others and experiencing the power to love and thus fulfill the law.

As I conclude, I want to make one final note, recalling something I said earlier. The very presence of the Bible testifies to a God who does not immediately wipe out rebels. The Triune God who reveals himself in this Word has done so to sinners and only sinners. Although the Lord was speaking before the fall of man, he did not have this sacred text written until after sin entered into the world. Rather than definitively destroying all of mankind as we deserved, he by grace initiated a history of salvation culminating in Christ. Every word, indeed, every letter of this book testifies to reality of divine grace, and we enjoy all grace only because of Jesus’s substitutionary sacrifice (see e.g., Gen 8:20–21; John 3:16–17; 1 Tim 4:10; 1 John 2:2). All things, including the very letters of Scripture (Matt 5:18), are from the divine Son, through the divine Son, and *for* the divine Son (Col 1:16). If, after evaluating any given OT text through the seven above ways, you still don’t find a

bridge to magnifying the Messiah, then recognize that we can see and savor the divine Son in the mere fact that we have the Word. God is speaking through the Old and New Testaments, and he is speaking only because Jesus purchased both common and saving grace; Jesus purchased the grace that allows sinners to receive the sacred text.

I have here sought to help us think how to faithfully see and savor the divine Son in all of Scripture. I urge you today: Engage the initial three fourths of our Christian Bible for the glory of Jesus. In doing so, you will honor God, feed your soul, and serve the church.