

Samuel – God’s Kingdom and its King. (5) The Scriptures bear witness to him.

refs for Bible study 7/11/19: 1 Samuel 3v20-4v5 and Exodus 25v8-22

The NT starts with a string of OT quotes: Mt.1v1-17, v22-23, 2v3-5, v14-15, v17-18, v23 etc. Without the OT we cannot understand who Jesus is or what he came to do. The NT without the OT is like a building without foundations. In this study we look at the significance of the Prophet, 3v20-4v1a, and of the Ark, 4v1b-5.

The Prophet points to Jesus Christ: Samuel a man of prayer, Jer.15v1. Raised up by God to be king-maker. First of the prophets: ‘had been established’ v20 i.e. permanent office. Before him just Moses & 1Sam.2v27, Jdg.6v8. Worked systematically, 7v15-17. Soon there were ‘groups’ or ‘schools’ of the prophets, chp.10ff.

- **speaking about Jesus:** The prophet was God’s spokesman. Part of this meant prophesying about future events, including the coming of Jesus. The gospel of Christ is what all the prophets spoke of, Ac.3v18-21, 24.
- **foreshadowing Jesus:** Moses spoke of ‘a prophet like me’, Ac.3v22, ‘The Prophet’ Mk.6v15, Jn.1v21, 6v14. Samuel was ‘a prophet’, but Jesus ‘The Prophet’, Ac.3v24. Samuel came at a time of Word-starvation, 3v1, as did Jesus (400 year gap between OT & NT). He spoke the words of God, as did Jesus, Jn.3v34. He was a faithful intercessor, 7v5, 12v23, Jesus infinitely more so, Heb.7v25. But Samuel was a sinner, 8v1-3. The failures of prophets, priests & kings left people longing for Someone better. That Someone has come, wholly without sin, that he might be our Saviour! We need no other prophet now. God speaks to us through his Son.

The Ark of the Covenant points to Jesus Christ: May not be obvious to us now, but if we ignore it we miss out. A wooden, gold-covered chest, with a lid (‘mercy seat’ or ‘atonement cover’) topped by two gold cherubim. It was at the centre of the tabernacle, kept behind veil in holy of holies, seen only by the high priest just once a year.

3 things from the Ark itself: he Scriptures bear witness to him. (3v20)

- **God-with-us:** Tabernacle, symbolic dwelling place of God, Ex.25v8. The Ark, the God-given symbol of his presence amongst them. He is unapproachably holy, yet dwells amongst his people! Nm.10v35, Jsh.3v10-11, 1Sam.4v4. Points forward to Christ, God-with-us, Is.7v14, Mt.1v23, who ‘tabernacled’ among us, Jn.1v14.
- **The Lord our Ruler:** The Ark was seen as God the Ruler’s footstool, 1Chr.28v2. Jesus is the Lord our Ruler.
- **The Lord our Reconciler:** Golden cover, lit.‘the atonement cover’, the place where guilt was covered. God’s wrath against sinners propitiated. Reconciliation, ‘there I will meet with you’, v22. The Ark was soon spattered with blood, Lev.16v14-15. Jesus is the propitiation for our sins, Rm.3v25, Hb.2v17, 9v5, 1Jn.2v2, 4v10.

3 things from the contents of the Ark: Three objects, Heb.9v4, each full of meaning and pointing to Christ.

- **The Lord our Revealer:** The stone tablets of the Law, Dt.10v1-5. Ten precepts that reveal what the Lord is like & what he demands of his people. It testifies, v16, 21, to his holiness, and to our sin. But grace is also revealed! Compare v10 & v17. The dimensions of the cover are an exact match for the chest containing the Law. An exact covering! Christ kept the Law perfectly, and his death exactly covers our sin!
- **The Lord our Sustainer:** Pot of manna, Ex.16v32-33. Astonishing miracle sustaining the people in the wilderness. Jesus taught that he is the living bread who sustains his people, Jn.6v35.
- **The Lord our Mediator:** Aaron’s staff that budded, Nm.17v10. A permanent witness to a rebellion that centred on who could act as mediator between God and man, Nm.16/17. God showed by a miracle of ‘resurrection’ life that Aaron was the sole God-appointed mediator. Jesus once again prefigured: our High Priest, the sole Mediator, 1Tim.2v5, who ‘ever lives to make intercession for us’, Heb.7v25.

The Ark was to have central place to symbolise rich truth about God and his relationship with his people. The people sadly came to regard it as a lucky charm. The Lord ceased to be central in their lives. Challenge for us: is the Lord Jesus Christ central to our lives? Praise God for the gift of his Son – our Prophet, our Immanuel, Ruler and Reconciler, our **Revealer**, Sustainer and Mediator – and make sure that he is central to your life!

Turn your eyes upon Jesus...