

Preaching Christ in a Post-Modern World
Notes on Lecture 2
Expounding Christ: Structure of Redemptive History Part One
 By Edmund Clowney

We must see scripture as a whole. When Christ's disciples were leaving Jerusalem for Emmaus they were discouraged. Christ says that the disciples didn't understand the whole of scripture. They didn't understand that the concept of spiritual redemption came from the Jewish scriptures. Christ showed them that Old Testament is all about him. The disciple's hearts burned within them.

In scripture we have one complete story with Christ being the completion of this story. We live in the time of climax. He said, 'It is finished' (John 19:30).

The Lord in his own redeeming act initiated redemptive history.

The Exodus was a move of liberation on God's part. The Israelites were delivered by the power of God. God didn't only bring them out of Egypt; he brought the people into covenant relationship and the promised land of Canaan on eagle's wings (Exodus 19:4).

In Leviticus 26 God promises to walk among his people and be their God. He promises his presence through the construction of the tabernacle.

The people become stiff-necked. God couldn't be in the midst of them because of their sin. He went ahead of them. The people were dismayed. Moses prays to 1) know God's name and 2) see God's glory.

God met with the people in the tent of meeting outside the camp. When Moses cried out and prayed God answered. This showed that God was willing to forgive their sins and dwell among them.

The prayer of Moses (Exodus 34:9) asks God to go in the midst of the people even though they were a stiff-necked people. Moses repeats what God said he couldn't do. Moses says "go in the midst of us because we are a stiff-necked people". He's asking God for the forgiveness of sins. God responds and the tabernacle is perfectly built. The glory cloud came down and filled the holy of holies.

When Christ says "destroy this temple..." Christ refers to his body as greater than the tabernacle. Christ was full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

Exodus 3:15 talks about the name of God revealed at the bush. Moses takes off His shoes because of the holiness of the place. The name of the angel is revealed as the Lord Himself: YHWH. The Lord himself leads the people and dwells among them. YHWH binds the people to himself.

The covenant is too often simplified to a legal form. This covenantal treaty has an emotional depth to it.

"I am the Lord your God...you shall have no other God's in my presence." This is not legalism. The perquisite to obeying the law is having a God that delivers and leads! Obedience is the response to salvation. Redemptive history shows us that we do not have a basis for legalism.

The people are tested in the wilderness (Deut 8). Israel's testing gives us a shadow of the testing that Christ endures. The judgement of the wanderings teaches the people to be humble and submit to him as God.

Deut 7:7-9 "I love you because I love you". God loves with an electing non-valuing love. Redemptive history is against moralism and legalism.

The OT is a record of God's covenant faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness. Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel etc ask the question: "How are the people responding to God's love?"

Ezekiel and the valley of dry bones shows us the power of God demonstrated for his glory. The bones were dry and scattered.

The OT tells us that the people are so bad and that there is little solution. God must come and bring the only deliverance possible. He came in the person of his Son and gave his Son up to die.

Ezekiel 34 shows how God must come as a shepherd.

Isaiah 59 shows how God must come as a warrior.

In Exodus 17 we see the people getting angry thinking that God has broken the covenant with them. They want to stone Moses as they can't stone God. God instructs Moses to pick up the rod of judgement (Isaiah 34) with a panel of judges and go to the rock. Moses is to hit the rock on which God stands. God takes the punishment for the sin of the people.

God's servant will come (God's anointed) as the shoot out of the root of Jesse. God's anointed comes as Lord and Servant.

The Word of God

1) The Power

When God speaks it happens. His word is declarative and regulative. Everything responds to Him as He commands it and everything acts within his will. God is deliberate in His guiding of all history. The plan of God is expressed in the Word of God. The Word of God produces man in the image of God. Man is made and upheld by God's word for the worship of himself. Man, the rebel, speaks the word of man to create his own god in man's image. Man worships his own god, which is his own being.

2) The Promise

Salvation is promised and represented as God's initiative.

The people in Babel wanted to build a stairway to Heaven. Man wanted God to come down on his own terms. God did come down but in an unexpected way. God comes and curses the people by making their language diverse.

In the dream of Jacob, God comes down the stairway and promises to never leave cheating Jacob.

The NT is full of OT images. We must know the OT well as Christ did to exegete the text properly.

3) The Presence

From the Babel story we can say that to encounter God's presence we must come to him on his own terms, and not try to make ways of reaching him ourselves.