

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

(revised 10/11/2024)

Week 50: Fix Your Eyes on Jesus - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. Onesimus is a runaway slave presumably belonging to Philemon. Paul meets him and sends him back with the entourage that delivered the letter to the Colossians (Colossians 4:9). His name means “useful” in Greek, but Paul informs Philemon how he has been transformed from being “useless” to being “useful” to his ministry.

2. Paul is sending a runaway slave (Onesimus) back to his original owner (Philemon) asking Philemon to welcome Onesimus back, not as a slave, but as a freedman in Christ and fellow brother who can become useful to his ministry. It is a story of extreme forgiveness and restoration that can only be found when one is in Christ.

3. God spoke to Moses from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2), to Elijah in a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12), to Isaiah in a Temple vision (Isaiah 6:1), to Hosea through his family conditions (Hosea 1:2), and to Amos in a basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:1). God employs visions, dreams, angelic messengers, Urim and Thummim, symbols, natural events, a pillar of fire, etc. God uses variety to communicate to His people of old.

Those were Old Testament ways, but now (New Testament) God has chosen to speak to us through His Son, His Word and His Spirit.

4. The author seems to want to make the point that in Christ, life itself is better. There are better things (6:9), the less is blessed by the better (7:7), a better hope (7:19), a better covenant (7:22), better promises (8:6), better sacrifices (9:23), a better possession (10:34), a better country (11:16), a better resurrection (11:35), something better (11:40) and blood that speaks better (12:24). The author is deeply convicted that Jesus Christ is “better” and accomplished something “better.”

5. Psalm 22 was considered messianic by the early church. In the first-person Jesus quotes Psalm 22:1 while on the cross (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34). Psalm 22:6, 16, 18 and others specifically describe what He experienced during His trial and crucifixion. Here, the author proclaims that Jesus was the one speaking (Psalms 22:22), referring to proclaiming God’s name (character) to the people God chose to send Him to, His brethren.

6. Hebrews 2:6-8 quotes from Psalms 8:5-7. Hebrews 3:7-11 quotes from Psalms 95:7-11. He compares the High Priest, Melchizedek, to Christ in the following: Hebrews 5:5-6 (quoted from Psalm 2:7), 110:4, and Genesis 14:18-20. Hebrews 7:17 is quoted from Psalm 110:4. The Perfect Sacrifice is mentioned in Hebrews 10:5-7 quoted from Psalm 40:6-8. The author seems to rely heavily on the writings of David and others from the Psalms which should encourage us to read the Psalms with the intent of looking for Messianic revelation.

7. The author clearly does not wish to criticize or down play the role of the Old Testament pillar Moses. In fact, he calls Him “*therapon*,” a Hebrew word for an honored servant of God. Moses was an honored servant to be revered, but Jesus reigns with honor and glory forever. Moses foretells of the Messiah in Deuteronomy 18:15-18. Moses delivered the Law, whereas Jesus fulfills the Law and provides us grace.

8. Some believe the Word of God was Jesus since John calls Him “the Word” in John 1:1. More likely, it is any utterance that proceeds from the mouth of God (or Jesus) who was living and active. Whatever it is, it is capable of penetrating man’s soul, reaching the innermost recesses of our being, revealing hidden sin, sparking conviction and repentance.

9. The term “Throne of Grace” is only used here in the New Testament. Jesus, our Mediator and High Priest, instills confidence in us that He will mitigate our sins away at the Throne of Grace before a judgmental God. Our Savior is keenly and personally aware of our sins and temptation, thus is able to bring them before our Father. Knowing Jesus is our Savior and the Son of God gives us confidence in approaching God with our petitions of prayer.

10. Melchizedek is introduced in Genesis 14 having no known human genealogy, no death, and was king over Jerusalem. He is portrayed as a priest higher than the Levitical priesthood. Jesus, who did not have a human father, did not come from the tribe of Levi, but from the tribe of Judah. Jesus is considered a higher priest from the order of Melchizedek. What the Levitical priesthood could not accomplish, Jesus did as our High Priestly sacrifice.

11. Hebrews chapter 11 is often called the Hall of Fame for Heroes of the Faith. It is a list of Old Testament faithful subjects and the acts of faith attributed to them. The author included them so that his readers would be encouraged by those who had gone before them in following the commands of God. It is evident that God used each one in a unique manner to bring about His glory.

Additional Questions:

1. The High Priest had authority over the priests who were in charge of upkeep in the Temple. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, he would enter into the Holy of Holies to present an offering of the people as a propitiation for their sins. In so doing, he became a sort of representative of the people before a holy and just God. Today, Jesus is our High Priest. He offered Himself to the Father as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of His people.

2. Preservation of the Saints is often called Perseverance of the Saints and is predominantly a Calvinist doctrine asserting that once a believer has given their life to Christ, been baptized and received the Holy Spirit, their salvation can never be taken from them. This concept was initially adopted by Augustine of Hippo in the 5th century. Supporting Scripture can be found in Ephesians 1:13-14 and Philippians 1:6. Jesus alludes to this concept in John 10:27-30.

3. The large cloud (overlooking us) of witnesses that had gone before are the heroes of faith in the Old Testament. They were included for us to reflect upon and to be inspired by their faith. As the Hebrew writer says, without faith it is impossible to please God for our very lives are grounded in our faith that Jesus is God and that He and He alone died for our sins to redeem us back to God.

4. The fact that Jesus is unchangeable means that He always was, is and always will be the second person of the Godhead.

