

Shadows of Christ

Romans 5:14 says:

Adam...was a pattern of the one to come. (NIV)

And from Colossians 2:17:

These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. (NIV)

In the Old Testament, not all portraits of the coming Messiah were painted by the words of prophets. Some were painted by the lives of God's people. Living individuals became sign posts pointing us toward Jesus Christ. As we saw God working through them, we caught glimpses of the way He would work through His Son.

Notice how these lives paralleled the coming Messiah

- ADAM was the first of the human race, as Christ is the first of a new, holy humanity. Adam introduced sin. Christ introduced righteousness.
- Like Christ, NOAH pleased God in a time when sin seemed overwhelming and inevitable. Through him God saved our race from destruction.
- Like Christ, ABRAHAM trusted God, and through him God created a people uniquely His own. In him all nations on earth were blessed.
- Like Christ, MOSES was God's instrument for leading His people out of bondage. He served as deliverer, leader, prophet, and mediator.
- JOSHUA shared Jesus' own name, and like Him, led God's people into their promised land. ("Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew "Joshua".)
- Like his Greater Son, DAVID was lifted from humble beginnings to become a glorious leader of God's people. He was a man after God's own heart, and God considered him His own son (Psalm 89:26-27).
- Foreshadowing Jesus Christ, MELCHIZEDEK was a priest of the Most High God by divine appointment, not by birth. His name means, "King of Righteousness". In the Old Testament account he is greater even than Abraham, "without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3, NIV).

The Old Testament includes many others whose lives paralleled and pre-figured Christ. Here are just a few:

- ENOCH "walked with God" and left this world without facing death, being taken up directly into God's presence. (Genesis 5:22-24)

- ISAAC was a long-promised son and heir, miraculously born and later offered up by his father as a sacrifice. (Genesis, chapters 15 and 21 – 22)
- JOSEPH endured betrayal, injustice, and great suffering, then was dramatically exalted to a high position. From that position he saved his family and his entire nation from death. (Genesis, chapters 37 – 50)
- BOAZ willingly accepted responsibility as the kinsman-redeemer of his people and thereby became an ancestor of King David and Jesus Christ. (Ruth, chapters 3 – 4)
- SAMUEL was miraculously born by God's promise and was wholly dedicated to God's service before birth. Though not of the priestly tribe, he was God's chosen mediator between Himself and His people. (1 Samuel)

As we consider these lives and others, we see shadows of the coming Messiah. We catch passing glimpses of how the high and holy God would incarnate Himself in flesh and blood. Their faith and God's faithfulness to them prepare our hearts for His fullness so beautifully revealed in the Living Christ.

*Father, the human race is like a prism.
Through it we begin to see Your life
exploded into its full range of
color, variety, and dazzling beauty.
Shine through us,
Glorious Father!*

Hymn: [Prepare Us](#)

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