

God’s salvation is revealed in the gospel, which forms the central focus of both Old and New Testaments (Luke 24:26–27, 44; John 20:30–31; Romans 1:1–4). In the Old Testament, the gospel was proclaimed through the promises, types and prophecies, which predicted the “sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow” (Hebrews 10:1–12; 1 Peter 1:10–12); the New Testament proclaims the fulfilment of God’s redemptive purposes through the life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ (Acts 13:38–39; Galatians 3:16–22). Thus, believers of all ages receive salvation through their union with Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man (Romans 4:16, 23–25).

(Sola 5 Confession 4.2)

Pop quiz (no cheating!): What is the main message of the Bible? How would you summarise the primary teaching of Scripture in just a few sentences? _____

The Bible is a collection of inspired writings, spanning an array of genres, written by forty-plus authors over a span of some four thousand years. Yet it presents a single, united message. It is easy to miss this central theme in the complexity of the Scriptures, particularly in an individualistic age in which we tend to read each verse looking for some form of personal inspiration for our day. Confession 4.2 seeks to bring us back to the overriding message of the Bible.

It would be a helpful exercise before you proceed through the questions below to take a few minutes to read Romans 4 in its entirety.

The Confession begins with the simple assertion that **God’s salvation is revealed in the gospel, which forms the central focus of both Old and New Testaments.**

Luke 24:25–27, 44 claims that “the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” all reveal that “the Christ should suffer these things [betrayal and death] and enter into his glory [resurrection and ascension].” Can you identify some of the ways in the Old Testament in which “these things” were foretold? _____

Romans 1:1–4 similarly tells us that “the gospel of God” was “promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures.” Read some of the Scriptures below and identify what elements of the gospel they prophesy. Each of the below verses is quoted in the New Testament as fulfilled in Christ. Can you source the New Testament reference(s) for each?

“For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:10–11).

Propheesied event: _____

New Testament cross-reference: _____

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:22–24).

Propheesied event: _____

New Testament cross-reference: _____

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn” (Zechariah 12:10).

Prophesied event: _____

New Testament cross-reference: _____

The most certain way to know that a prophecy was actually messianic is to look for a place in the New Testament that ascribes it to Christ. There are some texts that seem as if they might have a messianic element to them, but which are not explicitly said to have in the New Testament. It should be noted, however, that ultimately all of Scripture is designed to point us, in one form or another, to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Confession continues by clarifying the different means by which Jesus’ ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension were foretold.

In the Old Testament, the gospel was proclaimed through the promises, types and prophecies, which predicted the “sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”

Hebrews 10:1–12 describes the Old Testament as a “shadow of the good things to come,” while Peter speaks of “the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours” (1 Peter 1:10–12). Can you point to a promise, a type, and a prophecy in the Old Testament that points to Christ? What is the difference between a promise/prophecy of Christ and a type of Christ? _____

The New Testament proclaims the fulfilment of God’s redemptive purposes through the life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Acts 13:38–39 and Galatians 3:16–22 specifically point to Christ as the fulfilment of these Old Testament types, promises, and prophecies. Galatians 3, in particular, shows how specific some of the prophecies were, pointing even to the use of a singular rather than a plural word on which the prophecy hinges. How should the truth presented in this part of the Confession change the way that we often tend to engage with the Old Testament? _____

There is often confusion about how saints in the Old Testament were saved. The Confession makes a bold claim: **Thus, believers of all ages receive salvation through their union with Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man.** Having read Romans 4, can you explain how salvation came by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone? _____
