

WHY SHOULD WE STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT?

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A serious study of the the Old Testament is a great blessing! It is important to take truths discovered in the Old Testament and showing how they relate to the New Testament and our lives. The Old was written to provide light on the New and vice versa. It is critical that we, **as growing Christians**, have a deeper knowledge of the Old Testament. Jesus said in John 5:46-47 *“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?”* Also notice what He said in Luke 24:25-27 *“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”* The New Testament actually uses the name “Moses” 80 times and quotes the writings of Moses hundreds of times. The Old Testament prophets are also quoted hundreds of times in the New Testament. Thus, the main reason we are studying the Old Testament is to understand more about our blessed Savior and be conformed to His image.

The Old Testament is the Word of God! It was written by and given to the Israelites (Rom 9:4) but it is written for our admonition and learning. Romans 15:4 says *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”* From this verse we see a study of the Old Testament can produce “hope” in us if we patiently allow the Lord to work through the scriptures in our lives. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Hope comes by studying the Word and allowing the Spirit of God to work through His Word to transform us to the image of Christ (Romans 12:1-2).

The Old Testament provides real life examples of how to live our Christian life! First Corinthians chapter 10 has been called the doorway into the Old Testament. Notice what Paul says in the first 6 verses *“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.”* Paul is relating truths from the books of Exodus and Numbers that tell us we have much to learn from the ancient Israelites. Thus, we have many examples in the Old Testament, positive and negative, that will allow us to develop wisdom in our walk with Christ.

The Old Testament reveals all the various facets of the person and work of Christ! For example, the tabernacle in the wilderness described in chapters 25-40 of the book of Exodus foreshadows Christ. The brass altar points to the sacrifice of the Lamb of God for the sin of the world. The brass laver (wash basin) points to separation from the world and daily cleansing we need as believers. The table of showbread represents fellowship with Christ, the bread of life. The golden candlestick depicts walking in the light as He is in the light. The altar of incense

symbolizes a life of communion through prayer. Entrance into the holy of holies represents a spirit-filled life that is in close fellowship with the Lord. Perfect peace and rest for the believer are found at the blood-sprinkled mercy seat under the wings of the cherubim in the holy of holies. Even the materials, measurements, and colors that describe the tabernacle point to the person and work of Christ. Gold represents Deity, silver symbolizes redemption, and brass denotes judgment. The color blue illustrates the heavenly nature of Christ while scarlet represents His judgment and purple portrays Christ's royalty. **The pictures or types in the Old Testament are many times very vivid and help us see and understand our Savior much more clearly!**

The Old Testament was written to foreshadow Jesus! Hebrews 10:1 says "*For the law having a shadow of good things to come...*". We must remember the Old Testament was written to show us Jesus. Jesus is the Person of the Bible! He is the focal point of the "good things to come". In Genesis, Jesus is Creator, seed of the woman, and a lamb provided; Exodus-Jesus is the Lamb of God, the Passover, the Rock; Leviticus-Jesus is the High Priest typified; Numbers-Jesus is the Star out of Jacob; Deuteronomy-Jesus is the Prophet like unto Moses... Ruth-Jesus is the Kinsman Redeemer... Psalms-Jesus is the Shepard; Proverbs-Jesus is Wisdom... Isaiah-Jesus is the Suffering Servant and Glorified Savior; Jeremiah-Jesus is the LORD our Righteousness... And on it goes in the Old Testament. God has abundantly shown us His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, throughout all of His Word!

The Old Testament was actually written for the Church! According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:11-12 "*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they **are written** for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*" **Have you thought about the significance of this statement?** Paul says the Old Testament was **written** for **our** admonition or warning! God so cares about our success in the Christian walk that he has given us numerous examples or types from which to glean. He preserved His Word for us so we can stand in an evil day and not fall out of fellowship with Him. The church is so special to God that He has blessed us with the entirety of His revealed will for man, the Old and New Testaments! Israel did not have this privilege! The church is the most privileged generation of men and women to ever live on planet earth! However, where much is given much is required.

God does not want us to be ignorant of His Word but **full of wisdom and knowledge!** Notice Paul's prayer for the Ephesian believers *Ephesians 1:15-19* "*Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of **wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:** 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,*".