

Introduction - The value of the Old Testament

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Some have said -

“The Old Testament is a closed book to me.”

“I don’t think we need read the Old Testament now we’ve got the New Testament.”

“God of the Old Testament is a different God from the God of the New Testament.”

“All that stuff about battles and wars and plagues and sacrifices, and all those lists of names, we surely don’t need to bother about the Old Testament?”

What the New Testament says about the Old Testament -

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” (Romans 15.4)

“You have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3.15-17)

“What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew ... Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.” (Romans 3.1-2)

Jesus and the Old Testament -

The Lord Jesus lived his life in fulfilment of the Old Testament, and was constantly quoting from it, for example about his messiahship, his healing ministry, his death, and his resurrection.

Not only his life, but also his teaching, is rooted in the Old Testament. He had soaked himself in the Old Testament, and framed his life and his teaching in accordance with it.

He regarded it as inspired by God. As he once said of a psalm, “As David said by the Holy Spirit”. He called the law given through Moses “The word of God”. He referred to words written by the author of Genesis, but not ascribed in the text to God, as words spoken by God. (Matt.19.4-5)

Not only that but he regarded the words of the Old Testament as carrying the absolute authority. When debating with the Pharisees he constantly went back to Old Testament Scriptures to settle a matter. When he said “it is written” that was final.

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Page after page of the New Testament is studded with quotations from the Old Testament.

It has been well said, “The new is in the old concealed. The old is in the new revealed.”

EAP