

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Adult Bible Equipping Class
Anchorage Grace Church
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The law of Yahweh is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of Yahweh is sure, making the simple wise. The precepts of Yahweh are right, making the heart rejoice; the commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of Yahweh is clean, standing forever; the judgments of Yahweh are true; they make one completely righteous.

—Psalm 19:7–9

The Importance of the Old Testament, Part 2

Reasons for Studying the Old Testament

1. The Old Testament is INSPIRED

- **2 Timothy 3:16–17:** “All Scripture is **God-breathed** . . .”
- **The character of God INFORMS the character of Scripture**
 - If God is true then Scripture is true
 - If God is trustworthy then Scripture is trustworthy
 - If God is without error then Scripture is without error
 - If God is authoritative then Scripture is authoritative

2. The Old Testament is PROFITABLE

- **2 Timothy 3:16–17:** “All Scripture is God-breathed and **profitable** . . .”
 - . . . for *teaching*
 - . . . for *reproof*
 - . . . for *correction*
 - . . . for *training in righteousness*
- **Inspiration and profitability go hand in hand**
 - If the Scripture is **inspired** then it is **profitable**
 - If the Scripture is **not** profitable then it is **not** inspired

3. The Old Testament is NECESSARY

- An accurate and effective understanding of the NT is dependent upon a knowledge of the OT

Effective New Testament preaching is virtually impossible without an appropriate balance of Old Testament preaching.

—Michael Duduit, “Introduction: The Church’s Need for Old Testament Preaching,” in *Reclaiming the Prophetic Mantle: Preaching the Old Testament Faithfully*, ed. By George L. Klein (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 11

- It is understandable why a Christian would be drawn to study the NT. After all, in it we find the completion and the filling up of the program of God.
- However, even the NT writers draw frequently from the OT both for their theology as well as to encourage and instruct the church:

OT Quotations or Allusions in the NT				
NT Passage	# of Quotations/Allusions	# of Vss in Passage	% of Passage	Fraction of Vss
Matthew 5–7	39	111	35%	~1/3 vss
Romans 4	12	25	48%	~1/2 vss
Romans 9–11	64	90	71%	~5/7 vss
Hebrews	222	303	73%	3/4 vss
James	52	108	48%	~1/2 vss
Jude	16	24	67%	2/3 vss

Expositions in the Epistle to the Hebrews	
Hebrews Passage	Exposition Passage
1:1–2:4	Psalms, 2 Sam 7, & Deut 32
2:5–18	Psalms 8:4–6
3:1–4:13	Psalms 95:7–11
4:14–7:28	Psalms 110:4
8:1–10:18	Jeremiah 31:31–34
10:32–12:3	Habakkuk 2:3–4
12:4–13	Proverbs 3:11–12
12:18–19	Exodus 19–20

OT Allusions in the Epistle of Jude	
Jude	OT Allusions
Verse 5	Exodus; Numbers
Verse 6	Genesis 6:1–4
Jude 7	Genesis 19
Jude 11	Gen 4:3–8; Num 22–24; Num 16

- **The Church's Existence**

The church is made up of believers in the Gospel message concerning Jesus Christ—a message that flows directly from the OT!

- **Unity of the Message**

The Church's message is the same as that which was proclaimed by Moses and the prophets

- **Acts 26:6–7**

“And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers; the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by the Jews.”

- **Acts 26:22–23**

“So, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating **nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place**; that the Christ was to suffer and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”

- **Acts 8:29–35**

Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go up and join this chariot.” Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: **“He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He does not open His mouth. In humiliation His judgment was taken away; who will relate His generation? For His life is removed from the earth.”** The eunuch answered Philip and said, “Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?” Then Philip opened his mouth, and **beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.**

- **1 Corinthians 15:3–4**

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**, and that

He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day **according to the Scriptures.**

- **Universality of the Message**

The extension of the Gospel and of the membership of the church was founded upon OT revelation and preaching

- **Acts 15:14–17**

“Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. **With this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,** ‘After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen, and I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, so that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,’ says the Lord, who makes these things known from long ago.”

- **Acts 13:44–49**

The next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. **For so the Lord has commanded us, ‘I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, that You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.’**” When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

Concluding Points

- If the Old Testament is **inspired**, then to neglect the Old Testament is to neglect the very words of God Himself.
- If the Old Testament is **profitable**, then without the Old Testament, the man of God cannot be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work
- If the OT is **necessary**, then without the Old Testament, the New Testament revelation becomes incomprehensible and its gospel becomes groundless.

In spite of . . . major hurdles, there are many reasons why pastors must preach from the Old Testament: (1) the Old Testament is part of the Christian canon, (2) it discloses the history of redemption leading to Christ, (3) it proclaims truths not found in the New Testament, (4) it helps us understand the New Testament, (5) it prevents misunderstanding the New Testament, and (6) it provides a fuller understanding of Christ.

--Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 25.