

Why Study the Old Testament?

By Keith Greer

WE LIVE IN NEW-TESTAMENT TIMES. THEN WHY SHOULD WE STUDY THE OLD? ALSO, I HEAR PREACHERS QUOTING OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES, HOW CAN THEY USE THEM SINCE THAT TESTAMENT IS NO LONGER VALID?

Possibly, you have this same question in your own mind. Certain religions, or preachers, say we are no longer under the Old Law. Some religions keeps different parts of that Law and use it as a source of "authority" for some of their practices.

A close look at the following scriptures shows that GOD is the one who said we are no longer under the Old Law.

Hebrews 7:18-19: "For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God."

Hebrews 8:6-8: "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."

Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives."

When Jesus died on the cross, the law given by Moses was taken away. Colossians 2:14 says: "Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." If we believe the Lord, there can be no question about it. The Old Testament was taken away, and we live under the New Testament.

Does this mean there is no value in studying the things contained in the Old Testament? Not from God's viewpoint!

In Romans 15:4, Paul said: "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

The apostle Paul wrote of the many examples we have of God's dealings with Israel. Then he added: "Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted... Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."{1 Corinthians 10:6,11} What does the Old Law do for us?

Galatians 3:24 tells us "...the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Reading how God, through the nation of Israel, brought this about helps us to better understand how God deals with us. The law changed, but God's nature and what He expects of His children today have not.

Yes, we need to study the Old Testament scriptures so we can better understand the New and our duty to live according to its teachings. Without an understanding of the Old Testament, it would be very difficult to understand the books of Galatians, Hebrews, and Revelation? Jesus and some of His apostles quoted many Old Testament prophecies. Everyone needs to study the Old Testament, as well as the New.