

Fall 2015 Newsletter
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MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS

"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, ... Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you... Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."
Acts 3:22,24

Perhaps someone has said to you, "I'm a New Testament Christian," meaning the Old Testament is unnecessary for a Christian. Some even think the Old Testament is nothing but a book of Jewish fables. This is a misapprehension often held by otherwise well-meaning followers of Christ. It becomes evident that this is mistaken when a closer study of the teachings of Jesus and the writings of the apostles reveal the many references to Old Testament prophets and prophecies. In Galatians 3:8, the Apostle Paul tells us that even the "gospel" was "preached...unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." It was upon the Old Testament scriptures that the early church depended to establish the new faith. The Gospels and Epistles of the Apostles were still unwritten.

One of the appearances of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection occurred on the road to

Emmaus. It was necessary that the disciples see Jesus and understand why he was crucified and, most importantly, that he had been resurrected from death. Therefore, Jesus made many significant appearances to his disciples. The account of this meeting is in Luke 24:13-27. The disciples did not at first recognize Jesus, so were willing to freely express their dismay regarding Jesus' unexpected death and their vanquished hopes. Then Jesus said to them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And **beginning at Moses and all the prophets**, he expounded unto them **in all the scriptures** the things concerning himself."

During Jesus' ministry, men sent out by the Pharisees to arrest him returned awed and empty handed with the report, "Never man spake like this

man.” (John 7:46) We can imagine that the words spoken by this fellow traveler lacked none of the power of Jesus’ former teachings and, therefore, must have been thrilling to the disciples. They were unwilling to let him leave them but pressed him to remain with them for the evening meal. It was then by the familiar way in which he blessed and broke the bread, as he had done so many times before during the three and a half years that they were in his intimate circle, that their “eyes were opened, and they knew him.”

In his great sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-42), the Apostle Peter called upon the Old Testament scriptures to testify of Jesus. The crowds had observed wondrous changes in the disciples who had just received the Holy Spirit. They were wondering how it was that unlearned men should suddenly be able to speak in the many languages of the countries around Judea. Peter used the opportunity to preach Christ to the crowds and call them to repentance. Peter quoted from the prophet Joel (2:28,29) and from David’s Psalms (16:8-11; 110:1) to impress on the people gathered there that what they were observing had been foretold as evidence that Jesus had indeed been resurrected out of death. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon them and its manifestation in the gift of languages was the guarantee of its truth. (Ephesians 1:13,14)

Later on that same day, Peter healed a paralytic man just as Jesus had so often done. Again he took the opportunity to turn the people’s attention to Christ, telling them of his coming Kingdom which



will be a great time of “refreshing” for all mankind from the “presence of the Lord.” There will then be a “restitution” of all that had been lost in Eden because of sin—life, health, and the dominion of the earth. Again he showed how all the Old Testament prophets were used by God to express his plan of salvation, formed from the beginning of the world. “He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath **spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets** since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-24)

All God’s holy prophets? Does this sound like a gross exaggeration? Below is a **partial** list of the prophets and the prophecies which tell of the coming of Jesus and the subsequent blessing of all.

Abraham: Genesis 22:16-18; Galatians 3:8,16,29

Moses: Deuteronomy 18:15

David: Psalm 37:10; 85:11

Isaiah: Isaiah 26:9; 28:17; 35:1-10; 65:22,23

Jeremiah: Jeremiah 31:33,34;

Micah: Micah 4:1-5

Habakkuk: Habakkuk 2:14

Ezekiel: Ezekiel 34:26

Zechariah: Zechariah 14:8,9

Daniel: Daniel 12:1-3

Job: Job 19:25,26

All the experiences of Israel are important for the thoughtful child of God to study and to learn from. The Apostle Paul explains that they were “written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.” All the Old Testament stories have value for us. God wants us to learn from their mistakes. The Apostle writes, “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them...Neither let us commit fornication...Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.” (1Corinthians 10:1-11 NKJV)

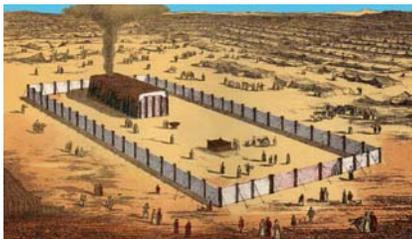
Do some of these admonitions seem unrealistic in this day and age? After all, no one would be taken in by Baal worship. Ah, but what about movie stars, athletes, politicians, high-profile preachers, prominent churchmen, or even self. Do we allow any of these to distract us from the study of the Scriptures or from our service to God? Are we careful to follow the moral precepts of the Bible, or do we live by the accepted norms of society? Are we naming the name of Christ but living like “cafeteria” Christians, selecting only those teachings that are convenient? Do we tempt Christ by putting our trust in riches or worldly position rather than in him? There is much to be learned from the experiences of Israel.

In his Gospel, Matthew repeatedly references statements from the Old Testament prophets showing how Jesus fulfilled their prophecies. From the place of his birth and Herod’s killing of the

infants, his ministry for three and a half years, to the price paid for his betrayal, the Hebrew Scriptures foretold the life and death of Jesus.

In 1 Corinthians 10:11 (KJV), the Apostle Paul writes, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples.” The word rendered “ensamples” comes from the Greek word *typos*, a “type” or “a die” such as is used to stamp out identical parts in a factory. In the book of Hebrews, chapters 8, 9 and 10, the Jewish Law and, in particular, the Tabernacle structure and sacrifices, are called a “shadow,” or type, “of things to come” (Hebrews 10:1) pointing to Christ.

After leaving Egypt, the nation of Israel, under Moses, was given their Law which we know as the Ten Commandments. God’s law, however, was much more detailed than the Ten Commandments which was a summation of their duty to God and to their fellowman. The elaboration of the Law fills the greater part of the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, a large portion of which concerns the Tabernacle.



In an account beginning in the 25th chapter of Exodus, God tells Moses to collect free will offerings of gold, silver, copper, oil, fine linen, precious stones, red, blue, and purple yarns, and spices for the construction of the Tabernacle, a very special meeting place of God with his people. Because God was preparing this structure to teach very specific lessons to the Church, Moses was admonished to be careful to make everything according to the specifications given him by God. (Exodus 25:9,40; Hebrews 8:5) The Tabernacle and all the sacrifices connected with it were “types” of the “better sacrifices” of Christ and his Church. (Hebrews 9:23)

Structurally the Tabernacle was a two-chambered structure, surrounded by a courtyard. Since it was designed to be portable to serve the nation of Israel during their wilderness wanderings, most items were made of “shittim wood” (a variety of acacia) overlaid with gold. Four coverings were over the Tabernacle. The first was a white linen curtain embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet threads.

The second cover was made of goat’s hair. This was covered by a ram’s skin dyed red. Lastly, a badger skin covering was placed over the first three. The Tabernacle was enclosed by a courtyard comprised of white linen curtains.

From the outside, the Tabernacle was a dull structure covered by that dark covering. However, inside the boards and furnishings overlaid with gold, the beautiful embroidered linen covering overhead, and the curtains of embroidered work covering the doorway and separating the two chambers were a glorious sight.

The first room contained a golden table, a golden candlestick and a golden incense altar. The second room contained only the magnificent Ark of the Covenant. When the Tabernacle was moved, all the



furnishings were covered so none of the people saw the beauty of the inside of the sanctuary; only the priests saw its inner beauty. The Tabernacle was “the example and shadow of heavenly things.” (Hebrews 8:5) As Jesus told his disciples, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see.” (Matthew 13:16)

For a fuller explanation of the Tabernacle, the significance of its furnishings and how the sacrifices of bulls and goats show the sacrifice of our “Great High Priest,” Christ,

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