**"GIVE ME THE BIBLE"**

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**Why I Study The Old Testament**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. What benefit is the Old Testament (OT) to the Christian today...?
   1. Is the Christian under the OT as a system of justification?
   2. Is the OT authoritative regarding the work, worship, and organization of the church?

**-- If not, why even bother with reading and studying the OT?**

1. It is true Christians are not under the OT...
   1. Gentile Christians were never under the OT (or Old Covenant)
      1. The Old Covenant was made with the Israelites at Mt. Horeb (Sinai) - **[Deut 5:1-2](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Deut%205.1-2" \t "_blank)**
      2. Not even Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc., were under the Old Covenant - **[Deut 5:3](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Deut%205.3" \t "_blank)**
      3. Thus Gentile Christians were not required to be circumcised or keep the Law - [**Ac 15:1-29**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Acts%2015.1-29)
   2. Jewish Christians have been delivered from the OT law
      1. Through the body of Christ - [**Ro 7:1-6**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rom%207.1-6)
      2. By His death on the cross, Jesus brought the OT covenant to an end - [**Ep 2:14-16**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Eph%202.14-16)
      3. It served to lead the Jews to Christ, a purpose fulfilled - [**Ga 3:23-25**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Gal%203.23-25)
2. Unfortunately, some conclude from this that we need not read the OT...
   1. I have known Christians who had never read through the OT once
   2. I have heard some who will not attend services if a study or sermon series is based on the OT

**-- "Why bother, if we are not under the OT?", is the reasoning of some**

1. Is that the proper attitude of Christians toward the OT? This attitude...
   1. Is wrong, contrary to the teaching of the NT itself!
   2. Deprives the Christian of a wonderful source of peace and comfort
   3. Prevents the Christian from gaining wisdom and understanding concerning the life that now is, and that which is to come!

[To help us to appreciate the value of the Old Testament, let's begin by asking...]

1. **WHY STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT?**
   1. **WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING...**
      1. Note carefully what Paul wrote in [**Ro 15:4**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rom%2015.4)
         1. Things "written before" (i.e., the OT) were "written for **our** learning"
         2. The OT was written and preserved especially for the Christians' benefit!
         3. The OT provides "patience and comfort", that we "might have hope"!
      2. The OT provides a record of God's faithfulness, how He kept His promises:
         1. To Abraham and the nation of Israel
         2. To judge the wicked and avenge the righteous
         3. To forgive the penitent, and protect the humble

**-- The history of the OT is intended to give us hope that God will keep His promises to us!**

* 1. **WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION...**
     1. Paul reminded the Christians at Corinth of Israel's fall in the wilderness - [**1Co 10:1-10**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Cor%2010.1-10)
     2. Note carefully what he says in [**1Co 10:11**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Cor%2010.11)
        1. The events described may have happened to Israel
        2. But "they were written for **our** admonition..."
        3. Again, the OT was written and preserved especially for the benefit of Christians!
     3. Other NT writers often appealed to the OT in admonishing Christians
        1. The writer of Hebrews, in exhorting Christians to remain steadfast - [**He 3:12-19**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Heb%203.12-19)
        2. James, in encouraging Christians to be patient in their suffering - **[Jm 5:7-11](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%205.7-11" \t "_blank)**
        3. Peter, in warning of false teachers and scoffers - **2Pe 2-3**

**-- The history of the OT is intended to serve as a warning to Christians!**

* 1. **MAKES ONE WISE REGARDING SALVATION IN CHRIST...**
     1. Paul noted that Timothy had known the "Holy Scriptures" since childhood - [**2Ti 3:14**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Tim%203.14)
        1. When Timothy was a child, the only scriptures available was the OT
        2. So Paul clearly had the OT in view
     2. He said the OT is "able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" - [**2Ti 3:15**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Tim%203.15)
     3. How is this possible? The OT provides:
        1. The fall of man and the rise of sin
        2. The background and development of God's scheme of redemption
        3. Hundreds of Messianic prophecies which describe what to expect when He comes
     4. One cannot hope to fully understand such books of the New Testament like:
        1. Hebrews, without an understanding of the Levitical priesthood
        2. Revelation, without an understanding of OT prophecy and apocalyptic literature

**-- If one is to be wise concerning salvation in Christ, studying the OT is imperative!**

* 1. **PROFITABLE TO MAKE ONE COMPLETE...**
     1. Paul writes of the benefit of "All Scripture", which includes the OT - [**2Ti 3:16-17**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Tim%203.16-17)
     2. Therefore the OT is profitable for:
        1. **Doctrine** - such as the nature of God, man, and sin
        2. **Reproof and correction** - the need for repentance
        3. **Instruction in righteousness** - how to live godly lives
     3. The apostles often appealed to the OT concerning Christians' conduct:
        1. E.g., [**Ro 12:19-21**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rom%2012.19-21)**;**[**2Co 6:16-7:1**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Cor%206.16-7.1)**;**[**9:7-10**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Co%209.7-10)
        2. E.g., **[Jm 2:20-26](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%202.20-26" \t "_blank)**
        3. E.g., [**1Pe 3:8-12**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Pet%203.8-12)

**-- There is much we can learn from the OT about truth and righteousness!**

[Should the Christian study the Old Testament? Of course! Along with the NT, it was written "that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." ([**2Ti 3:17**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Tim%203.17))  
  
To not read and study the OT is to deprive one of much admonition, learning, wisdom, and instruction that God intended for His children! In encouraging others to study the OT, let me offer...]

1. **SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDYING THE OLD TESTAMENT**
   1. **INCLUDE IN YOUR BIBLE READING PROGRAM...**
      1. Do not limit your daily Bible reading to just the New Testament
      2. I encourage one to read the whole Bible through each year, both OT and NT
         1. One might start with Genesis and end with Revelation
         2. Others prefer both OT and NT concurrently throughout the year

**-- The important thing is make the OT a part of your regular study of the Bible**

* 1. **USE A MODERN TRANSLATION...**
     1. I grew up on the KJV, had no problem with the NT, but found the OT extremely difficult.

**-- I personally recommend either the NKJV, ESV, NASB**

* 1. **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF STUDY BIBLES, SPECIAL CLASSES...**
     1. Study Bibles provide historical background, maps, drawings, etc. (e.g., ESV)
     2. If your congregation offers classes or sermons in the OT, take them!

**-- Don't be like some who won't attend when the subject is from the OT**

* 1. **GIVE FOCUS TO PSALMS, PROVERBS, AND THE PROPHETS...**
     1. Certainly all of God's word is of great value
     2. But one might appreciate the value of the OT more quickly, by giving attention to:
        1. **The Psalms** - as a great source of comfort, peace, and drawing near to God, especially in troubling times
        2. **The Proverbs** - as a great source of practical wisdom for everyday living
        3. **The Prophets** - as a great source for learning about the righteousness, justice, mercy and love of God

**-- This is not to suggest that we neglect the other parts of the OT**

**CONCLUSION**

1. Should we only study Scriptures pertaining to the covenant under which we live...?
   1. Should Israel have discarded Genesis, and the first nineteen chapters of Exodus? No!
   2. Should we discard the gospels, since Jesus lived and died under the Old Covenant? No!
2. Neither should we ignore the OT, for it provides...
   1. The background and setting of the NT
   2. Much in the way of learning, admonition, comfort, hope, even wisdom concerning salvation!

Be careful not to neglect that which was written and preserved for **OUR** benefit...

**"For whatever things were written before were written for OUR learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." -**[**Ro 15:4**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Rom%2015.4)

**"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." -**[**1Co 10:11**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Cor%2010.11)

And remember that...

**"ALL Scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable..."**[**2Ti 3:16**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2%20Tim%203.16)