

The American Standard Version is also utilized in this sermon

## Proper Use Of The Old Testament

No. 105

### Introduction.

- I. The most wonderful book in all the world is the Bible. It is composed of two testaments - the Old Testament which contains 39 books and the New Testament which contains 27 books.
- II. Often as we open the Old Testament to study it, we are faced with the question, "What use does God expect us to make of it?"
  - A. There is a great deal of misunderstanding in the world today regarding this question and this confusion has resulted in many religious errors.
  - B. This is not, however, a new problem. It is as old as the church. The apostles constantly faced it in the first century and spent much of their time trying to correct it.
- I. **Two Extremes** - Regarding the Old Testament today we have two extremes.
  - A. There are some who affirm the Old Testament is equally binding with the New Testament. They maintain we obligated to keep the Sabbath and other laws found in the Old Testament.
  - B. There are others today who maintain we have no need whatsoever for the Old Testament.
    1. They think it is folly to prepare lessons from it and discourage study from the Old Testament. They ask, "Why study the Old Testament if we are saved by the New Testament?"
    2. I have even known gospel preachers who have been criticized and sometimes rebuked for preaching from the Old Testament.
  - C. I would like for us to examine the Bible to see if either of these positions is correct.

### II. The Truth

- A. A study of the Bible reveals that the Old Testament has been abolished. This fact is so clearly set forth that it is hard to understand how anyone could think the law is still binding today.
    1. Paul told the Roman Christians they had "become dead to the law" that they might be married to another, Jesus Christ. (Rom. 7:4).
- <sup>4</sup>Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, *even* to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. ASV
2. Paul told the Christians at Galatia that the law was added until the "seed" should come and that the

seed was Christ. (Gal. 3:16, 19).

<sup>16</sup>Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

<sup>19</sup>What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; *and it was* ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. ASV

3. He also stated that the “law was a tutor to bring us unto Christ” (Gal. 3:24, 25).

<sup>24</sup>So that the law is become our tutor *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup>But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. ASV

4 There are many other plain statements in the New Testament indicating the law is no longer binding. (Col. 2:14; Heb.8:6, 7).

<sup>6</sup>But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises. <sup>7</sup>For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. ASV

5. After asking this statement the Hebrew writer quoted a prophecy found in the book of Jeremiah. (Heb. 8:8-13).

**<sup>8</sup>For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; <sup>9</sup>Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers In the day that I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt; For they continued not in my covenant, And I regarded them not, saith the Lord. <sup>10</sup>For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, And on their heart also will I write them: And I will be to them a God, And they shall be to me a people: <sup>11</sup>And they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, And every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: For all shall know me, From the least to the greatest of them. <sup>12</sup>For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And their sins will I remember no more. <sup>13</sup>In that he saith, A new *covenant* he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away. ASV**

a. The Hebrew writer exclaimed the Old Covenant was nigh vanishing away even in the time of Jeremiah the prophet.

b. He said that Christians are under a New and Better Covenant.

6. The Hebrew writer also penned these words.

**HEB 9:15 And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who**

**have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. 17 For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. NASB**

B. Since the Old Testament has been abolished it necessarily follows that we cannot be saved from it. (Gal. 2:21; 3:11; 5:4; Heb. 10:9, 10). Today we are sanctified or saved by the second will, the New Testament.

### III. Reasons For Studying The Old Testament

A. Even though the Old Testament is not binding, it does not mean that we should discard it as some strongly suggest. There are many valuable lessons we can learn from the Old Testament. (Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

B. At this time let's consider a few of reasons we should study the Old Testament.

1. In the first place, we should study the Old Testament because **it contains many prophecies of Christ.**

a. Nearly every book has something to say about Him.

b. The Old Testament foretells many circumstances concerning His birth, ministry, death, burial and resurrection. (Gen. 49:10; Mic. 5:2; Isa. 7:14; Psa. 132:11; Isa. 35:4-6).

ISA 53:1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? 2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. **3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.** 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But **He was pierced through for our transgressions**, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. **6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.** 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; **Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.** 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? **9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.** NASB

2. In the second place, we should study the Old Testament because **many important truths of the New Testament are based upon events of the past.**

- a. For example in Numbers the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter we read of the **Israelites in the wilderness**. They were murmuring saying Moses had brought them out into the wilderness to die. They complained that they had no bread or water. Jehovah was angered and sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people and many of the people died. The Israelites cried out that they had sinned and prayed that God would take away the serpents. God told Moses to make a brazen serpent and place it upon a standard, and those who would look upon it would live. Jesus used this Old Testament narrative to teach the manner of His death. (Jn. 3:14, 15).
  - b. Another example is **Jonah the prophet**. (Matt. 12:40).
  - c. Still another example is **Melchizedek the king and priest of Salem**. The Hebrew writer made a comparison between Melchizedek and Christ. He argued that Christ was a priest after the order of Melchizedek. How could we understand these and other New Testament passages without a knowledge of the Old Testament? Much of the New Testament is meaningless to a person who has not carefully studied the Old Testament.
- C. In the third place, we should study the Old Testament because it presents **a shadow of Christianity**. (Heb. 10:1).
1. The **sacrifices of the Patriarchs** and the Levitical priests were a type (foreshadowing) of the sacrifice of Christ.
  2. The **salvation of Noah** by water was a type (foreshadowing) of baptism. (1 Pet. 3:20, 21).
  3. Someone has well said that “The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.”
- D. In the fourth place, we should study the Old Testament for **its valuable history**.
1. The Old Testament antedates any other history known to man.
  2. It tells us of the origin of the universe, the origin of man, the origin of sin and death and a host of other things. It gives us reliable and accurate history of the Hebrews, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans.
- E. In the fifth place, we should study the Old Testament because it gives us **examples of faith and obedience**. (Gen. 12:1; 22:1-13).
- F. In the sixth place, we should study the Old Testament because it contains many **examples of courage**.
1. Daniel 3:1-6
  2. Who among us could not profit from a study of these three young men?
- G. In the seventh place, we should study the Old Testament because it **teaches us of the providence of God**.
1. It is impossible to read the narratives of Joseph, David, Esther, and Daniel without being convinced that God intervenes in the affairs of man and makes all things work out for the good of His children.

2. These accounts all substantiate the truthfulness of Romans 8:28.

H. In the eighth place, we should study the Old Testament because it is the **source of comfort and inspiration.**

1. Learned Old Testament professor who required us to memorize many of the psalms.

2. Psa. 1:1; 8:1; 15:1; 23:1; 46:1.

### **Conclusion.**

I. There are many other reasons for studying the Old Testament, but these should be sufficient to convince us that the Old Testament is worthy of the careful study of Christians.

II. **Once I read a pathetic story about a beautiful teenaged girl who became seriously ill.** She went to the hospital and the doctor prescribed a certain wonder drug for her. This drug had cured many others who had the same disease, but the girl did not improve. Day by day she grew weaker and then died. Sometime later some workmen opened the ventilator of the register of the room where the girl had died. In this ventilator they found a handful of the capsules of the drug which she was supposed to have taken. An investigation was started. The nurse said that always when she brought the medicine and a glass of water to the girl, the girl asked to be alone. She said she had trouble swallowing the medicine. So when the nurse left the room, the girl drank the water and threw the capsules into the register.

III. **How foolish and fatal!** And it is even more foolish and more fatal for us to reject Jesus who both the Old and New Testaments teach is the remedy for all our sins and all our ills. Make Jesus your Savior. Come and give your life to Him. Be baptized for the remission of sins and arise to walk in newness of life. Come as we stand and sing.