

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

LESSON 1

Whenever you study a book, here is what to do:

- Look through the book
- Look at the pictures and charts
- Look at the chapter names

These things will tell you what the book is about.

In this course we will use "Bible," "Scriptures" and "Word of God" to mean the same thing.

1. WHAT WE WANT TO LEARN IN THIS COURSE

- A. What time in history a Bible book tells about.
- B. The outline of each book.
- C. The main thought of each book. (This helps us in teaching and preaching).
- D. The people in the Bible:
 - what they were like
 - how God worked in their lives
 - where they lived
 - what their country was like
 - who lived near them

2. WHY STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT?

A. The Old Testament will help us in our Christian life.

We may ask, "Why study the Old Testament?" The answer to this question is found in 2 Timothy 3:16,17(KJV). It says, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" What are the Scriptures good (profitable) for (2 Timothy 3:16)?

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What do the Scriptures do for the man of God (2 Timothy 3:17)?

How was the Bible given to people long ago (2 Peter 1:21)?

B. The Old Testament helps us to understand the New Testament.

The Old Testament was the only Scripture Jesus and His disciples had. The New Testament was written after Jesus went back to heaven.

Jesus used words from the Old Testament. See Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:14-19; Mark 15:34. See Psalm 22:1. Peter used words from the Old Testament. See Acts 2:17-22; 2:25-28. Philip used words from the Old Testament. See Acts chapter 7.

More than 300 times words from the Old Testament were used in the New Testament. Another 300 times the New Testament speaks about the Old Testament. That is why we must know the Old Testament to understand the New Testament.

3. TO WHOM WAS THE OLD TESTAMENT FIRST GIVEN?

The Old Testament was first given to the Jews. What does Romans 3:2 say?

The Jews were to tell everyone, "The Lord is the only true God" (Isaiah 43:10,12).

The Bible uses the names: Jews, people of Israel and Hebrews to mean the same group of people. God chose this group of people or nation to give us the Scriptures (Word of God).

4. SPECIAL WORK OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

God chose the people of Israel for three special kinds of work:

- To give us God's Holy Word (the Bible) (Romans 3:1,2).
- To give us a Savior (Jesus Christ) (Romans 1:3; 9:5).
- To tell us what God is like (Isaiah 43:10-13).

5. MAIN THOUGHTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament teaches us:

A. Who God is and what He is like (Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 6:3; Isaiah 40:25,26; Isaiah 43:10-13).

B. God created all things (Genesis chapter 1).

C. God made man (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25).

D. Who people are and what they are like (Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9).

E. That God loves people and wants to draw them to Himself (Jeremiah 31:3).

F. How God would send a Savior to pay for people's sins.

- Jesus Christ would come as Savior (Isaiah 53).
- Jesus Christ would come to rule as king (Isaiah 9:6,7; Jeremiah 23:5,6; Daniel 7:13,14; Zechariah 9:9).

G. There are six things said about Jesus Christ.

- He was to be a man (Genesis 3:15).
- He was to come from Abraham (Genesis 12:3).
- He was to come from Judah (Genesis 49:10).
- He was to come from David (Isaiah 9:7; Luke 1:31-33).
- He was to come from a virgin (Isaiah 7:14).
- He was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

6. WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT IS ABOUT

A. Meaning of Testament.

The word "testament" means a covenant, promise or agreement. "To make a testament" is something like "to make a treaty." The Old and New Testaments are great promises made to those who believe and obey God.

B. Story of God.

The Old Testament is not a story of people looking for God. **It is a story of God looking for people.** God did not give us the Old Testament to teach us history. God did not give us the Old Testament to teach us about different people. The Old Testament does tell us about history. It tells us about different people. It tells about people to show **how** God worked in their lives. What the Old Testament says about them is true. There are no mistakes in what the Old Testament says.

C. Given by God to teach.

- The Old Testament and the New Testament are the most important books that teach us the truth about God. Only the Bible shows us what God is really like.
- The Old Testament shows us how God worked with people.

- The Old Testament shows us how God can help us with problems in our lives. It shows us how He can help us with our government problems. It shows us how He can help us live with each other.

D. What is taught in the Old Testament.

- The Old Testament tells us about the time from the creation of the world till Malachi lived.
- The Old Testament gives us God's laws and commandments.
- The Old Testament promises blessing and eternal life to those who believe God and obey His commandments. It tells how God blessed those who obeyed Him. It tells how God punished those who did not obey Him.

E. Written by the help of men.

The Old Testament is a group of 39 books. These were written during a time of about 1500 years. About 30 different men wrote these books. Some of these men wrote stories; others wrote poems. Moses wrote down the laws God gave. Moses also wrote down the way people were to worship God.

God told some men what was going to happen in time to come. These men spoke and wrote in the name of God. They were called prophets. What they wrote is called prophecy.

God made some men very wise. These men wrote wise words. These words are found in Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

7. IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

A. God worked miracles.

The Old Testament is a story about the people of Israel. It tells how God worked miracles in their lives. God also worked miracles with the other nations.

B. God gave the Scriptures.

The Scriptures tell us that they are from God (Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 12:6; Isaiah 55:10,11; Jeremiah 23:29).

The Old Testament has 39 books. They were written by at least 30 different people. It took about 1500 years to write all of the Old Testament. Yet, every part of the Old Testament fits together as one book. Every part of the book agrees with the other parts. This shows us that God gave us the Scriptures.

C. God guided the writers of the Bible.

God told the writers of the Scriptures what to write (2 Peter 1:21). Because of this all 39 books fit together like one book. As we read through the Old Testament, we can see how God, through the Holy Spirit, guided these men.

WORDS TO LEARN

1. commandments - laws, rules, what God tells us to do.
2. covenant - a promise, or agreement, something like a treaty.
3. guide - to lead.
4. history - it is sometimes called "His story", (God's story). It is a story of how God worked in the lives of people and nations. This happened before we lived.
5. inspiration - it means "God breathed." It is what God told men to write. That is why the men who wrote the Bible wrote the Truth.
6. knowledge - what a person knows.
7. miracle - something only God can do.
8. nation - a group of people who live in the same country.
9. prophecy - God's Word to men.
10. prophet - one who speaks or writes in the name of God.
11. testament - a great promise made to those who believe and obey God.

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