

## Why Read the Old Testament?



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) February 11, 2020

Some believers — even ministers — believe the Old Testament is not relevant to our times so there's no need to study it anymore. How wrong they are! The Old Testament explains the New Testament in clear, simple terms. Its stories are full of types and shadows of eternal truths, played out in the practical lives of real people.

A perfect example can be found in Israel, a type of Christ, while Egypt represents the world. Israel's journey through the wilderness represents our spiritual walk as Christians. The tree that healed the bitter waters at Marah is a type of the cross of Christ (see Exodus 15:23-25) and the rock that produced water in the desert (see Numbers 20:11) is a type of our Savior, who was smitten on the cross.

Indeed, Scripture makes it clear that all of Israel's physical battles mirror our spiritual battles today: "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 10:11). Even the tabernacle and its furniture are examples of heavenly things: "Who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, 'See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain'" (Hebrews 8:5).

Whenever you don't understand a truth in the New Testament, you can turn to the Old Testament to find it illustrated in some way. For example, let's say you wanted to learn how to bring down any spiritual walls the devil may have built up in your life. You could turn to the story of Joshua to see how the walls of Jericho were brought down (read the account in Joshua 6). Likewise, if you wanted to learn more about prevailing in prayer, read the story of Jacob wrestling with the the Lord in Genesis 32:24-29.

All these Old Testament examples are meant to keep us from falling into unbelief, as Israel did. The author of Hebrews writes, "Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience" (4:11). In other words, "Study the Old Testament and learn from Israel's example. Don't make the same mistakes they did!"

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