

## IS THE OLD TESTAMENT RELEVANT?

1. It is God's \_\_\_\_\_ to us about who He is, what He is doing, and what He wants from us.
  - *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness* (2 Timothy 3:16).
2. It provides life \_\_\_\_\_.
  - *Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved...Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.* (1 Corinthians 10:6,11).
3. It offers \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope* (Romans 15:4).

## WHY STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT?

For some Christians, the New Testament can feel like the densely populated states on America's East Coast. The New Testament books are generally smaller, more traveled, more familiar. The books of the Old Testament, on the other hand, can feel like the unknown and storied lands of the American West probably felt to nineteenth-century pioneers. The great open plains of Patriarchal history, the impenetrable Rockies of Levitical law, and the thick forests and deep canyons of prophets frighten off many would-be travelers. Everyone knows a favorite story or two brought back by the brave souls who have ventured into the unknown, but many Christians are content to spend their quiet times among the more well-known, seemingly habitable landscapes of the Gospels or the epistles. The books of the Old Testament are large. We don't know them very well. They require us to know all sorts of history we have either forgotten or never learned. And all those unpronounceable names! The whole idea of journeying into the Old Testament begins to sound overwhelming, time-consuming, unprofitable, maybe even dangerous.

For reasons like these, most of us have abandoned the Old Testament for the New. Let the scholars, and the archaeologists, the prophecy-hounds, and the children's Sunday school teachers deal with it!

Yet, by abandoning these books, we abandon the revelation of God. More than that, we hinder our ability to understand the New Testament's revelation of Jesus Christ. If Christ is the key to human history, the Old Testament carefully describes the lock.

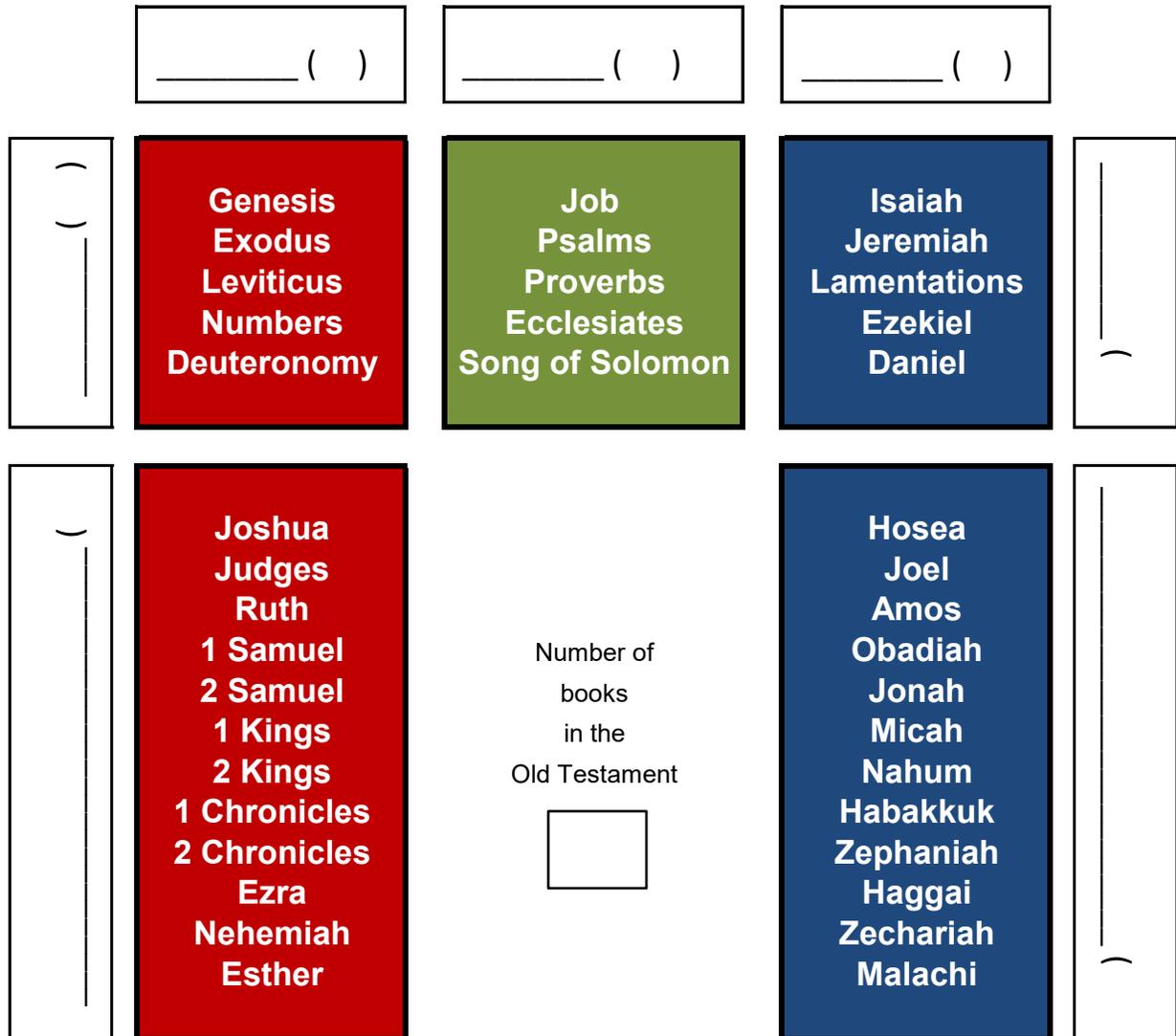
If Christ is the climax of the story, the Old Testament sets the stage and begins the plot. Do you read just the endings of books?

If the New Testament presents God's promises kept, the Old Testament tells us about God's promises made.

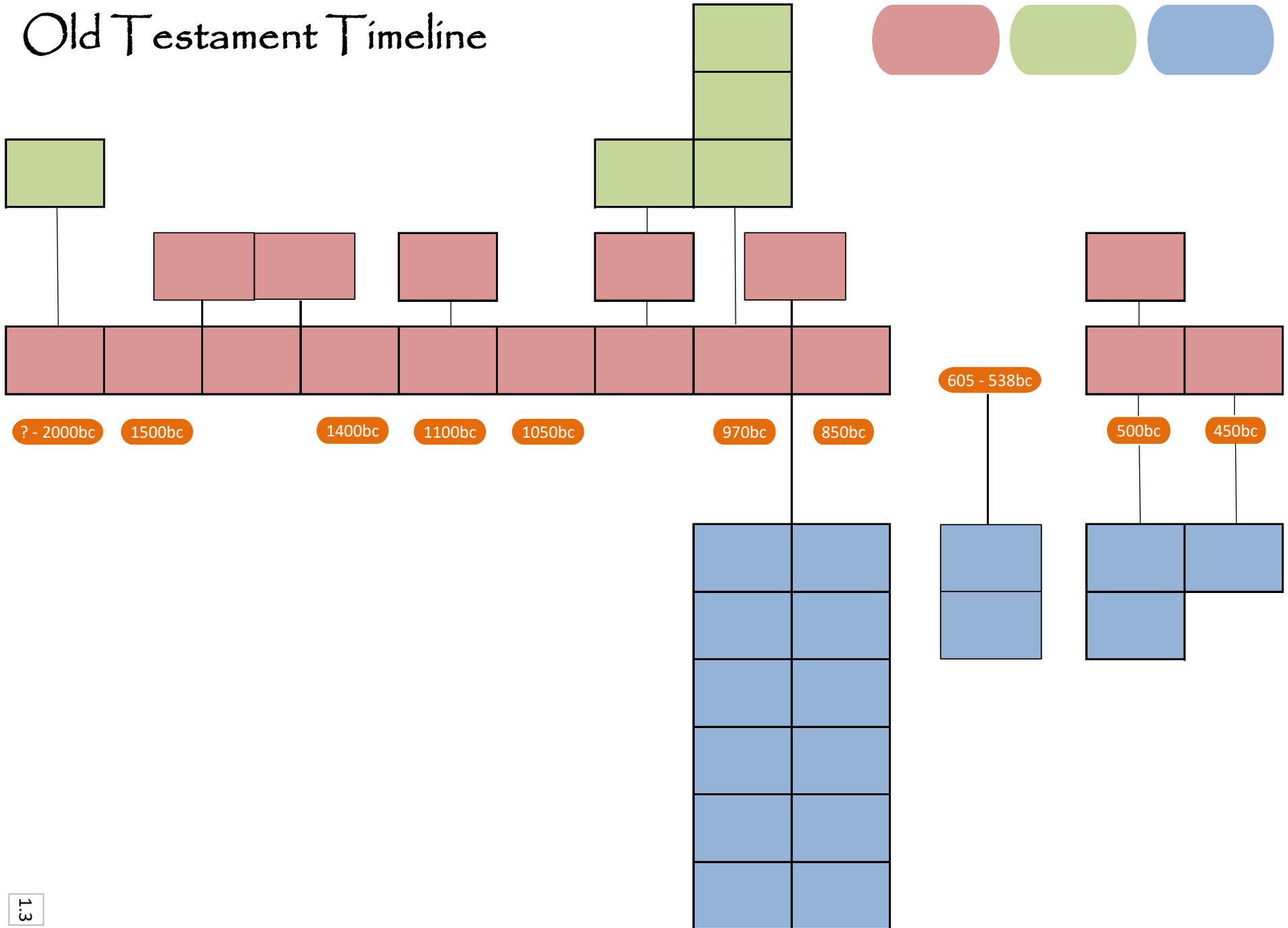
In other words, if you don't *get* what the Old Testament teaches, you'll never *get* Christ. Our God does not waste words. Each Testament needs the other. You will best be able to comprehend Christ's cross if you first understand the question left unanswered by the Old Testament. The cross is the answer. How well do you know the question?

In order to acquire a sense of the grandiosity of God's work, the majesty of his plan, the tenacity of his love, there is no replacement for the Old Testament. Deprive yourself of this part of God's revelation, and your God will seem smaller, less holy, and less loving than God really is.

# Structure of the Old Testament



# Old Testament Timeline



# TIMELY WORDS ABOUT GOD’S TIMELESS WORD

“It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.”

—George Washington

“The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it.”

—Napoleon Bonaparte

“I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to men. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this Book.”

—Abraham Lincoln

“To what greater inspiration and counsel can we turn than to the imperishable truth to be found in this treasure house, the Bible?”

—Queen Elizabeth II

“Sin will keep you from this Book or this Book will keep you from sin.”

—Dwight L. Moody

“If I were the devil, one of my first aims would be to stop folks from digging in to the Bible.”

—James I. Packer

“What makes the difference is not how many times you have been through the Bible but how many times and how thoroughly the Bible has been through you.”

—Gipsy Smith

“If we love the Lord Jesus, we shall love the Bible because it speaks to us of Him.”

—John R. W. Stott

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness*

—2 Timothy 3:16

*But know first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of the human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God*

—2 Peter 1:20-21