

THE OLD TESTAMENT

“These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” —JOHN 5:39-40

For many people, the New Testament seems far more vibrant and alive, because it reveals the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and all that He taught and did. On the other hand, the Old Testament seems more of a documentation of the history of the Israelite people, with little pertaining to what we know of Jesus. However, the Old Testament is supremely a revelation of Jesus Christ. From Genesis to Malachi, the Scriptures bear witness to Him, and apart from Him, cannot be adequately understood or make sense.

Jesus said to a group of Jews who were trying to antagonize Him, “You diligently study the Scriptures, because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” A few verses later, He tells them, “Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?” (John 5:45-47). On another occasion, Jesus said to Jews who were trying to kill him, “Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad” (John 8:56).

In all their diligent studies of the Scriptures, Jesus accused the Jews of failing to understand that the end product is a revelation of Jesus

Himself. To have missed that is to have missed it all. We must read the Old Testament through ‘Jesus glasses’, interpreting it in the light of Him whom it foreshadows and to whom it constantly bears witness. Otherwise it will be little more than a record of Jewish history or an ancient message to a past era. At best it may be valuable as background to the New Testament, but apart from a few psalms and choice prophetic statements, it will only play a secondary role.

Right from the Garden of Eden, all roads in Scripture lead to Christ. There are over 300 prophecies, some written in explicit detail as many as 800 to 500 years before Christ was born. Statisticians and mathematicians state the chances of all these prophecies coming to fruition in one man exactly as foretold are so infinitesimally small as to be non-existent. But in every way, Old Testament prophecy came to fruition in Jesus Christ. When reading the Old Testament in the light of Christ, all of Scripture comes alive!

PRAYER: Thank you, God, for the Old Testament Scriptures in which we come to know You, and the revelation of Your Son through prophecy and His role in the history of the Israelite nation.

TO REFLECT UPON: How much importance do I attach to the Old Testament?