

Why Study the Old Testament Prophets?

1 Peter 1:10-12

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I. The Spirit of Christ in them (1 Pet 1:10-12)

¹⁰Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹²To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. (1 Peter 1:10-12)

II. Why study the OT prophets?

A. One God (cf. Gen 1:1; Jn 1:1-4; Acts 13:16ff; 17:22ff; Heb 1:1-4)

First, we receive and reverence the prophets because we worship the same God. The God who took on human flesh and dwelt among us in the Person of our Lord Jesus is the very God who _____ heaven and earth in Genesis (Gen 1:1; Jn 1:1; Acts 17:24-26) and rescued our fathers from bondage in Egypt (Acts 13:16ff).

²⁰[Christ] indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ²¹who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1 Pet 1:20-21)

B. One Savior (cf. Lk 24:44-49; Col 2:16-17; Heb 10:1-10; Rev 13:8)

Second, we receive and reverence the OT because there is One Savior, Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus is the One to whom the entire OT points (cf. 1 Pet 1:10-11). So Jesus declared to the disciples following His resurrection:

⁴⁴...“These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” ⁴⁵And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. ⁴⁶Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸And you are witnesses of these things.” (Lk 24:44-49)

Jesus is the promised Seed of the Woman who crushed the head of the seed of the serpent (Gen 3:15). He is the seed of Abraham in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Gen 12:3). He is the Prophet greater than Moses to whom all God’s people are to give heed (Dt 18:15). He is the Great High Priest to whom all the high priests of Israel pointed (Heb 8:1ff). He is the Son of David anointed by God to rule over God’s people and build God’s Temple (2 Sam 7:12ff). He is the _____ of God who takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29). Hence, our fathers in the OT were blessed and forgiven of their sin as they trusted in the _____ whom God would send to remove their sin. The Westminster Confession explains:

This covenant [of grace] was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel: under the law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come; which were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the old Testament. (VII.5)

C. One People (cf. Eph 2:11-22)

Finally, Christians receive and reverence the OT as Scripture because there is one _____ . As those united to Christ, we are Abraham's offspring (Gal 3:29), members of the commonwealth of Israel (Eph 2:12), the true circumcision (Phil 3:3).

¹¹Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹²that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Though we *were aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, we have now been brought near*, restored to fellowship with God and to union with God's people (cf. 1 Pet 2:9-10). In Romans 11, Paul illustrates this with the analogy of an _____ tree; in Hebrews 3, he uses the analogy of a single _____. There is one people of God.

III. Implications

A. Same Scriptures (1 Pet 1:19-21 cf. Ps 119; Rom 3:1-2; 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16-17)

First, we share the *same Scriptures* with our fathers and mothers. This book tells one central story: the story of our Loving Creator who manifest His glory in the Creation of the world and the rescue of that world from destruction through His Son Jesus.

¹⁹And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (1 Pet 1:19-21)

B. Same Hope (cf. Acts 24:14-16; 1 Pet 1:3-5 cf. Rom 8:18-25; 15:4)

Second, we share the *same hope*: the _____ of the dead: the deliverance of all creation, human beings in particular, from the bondage of sin and death.

"But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which [my enemies] call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:14-16).

C. Same Temptations (2 Pet 2:1-2, 9; 1 Cor 10:1-13)

Finally, we face many of the same temptations as our fathers. We are subject to the same sinful tendencies and need to beware lest we succumb to the same temptations:

- *¹But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. ²And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. (2 Pet 2:1-2)*
- *¹¹Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Cor 10:11-13)*

IV. Conclusion