
Appendix 5

A Survey Of the Old Testament

As we begin reading the Bible, it does not take us long to see who is the hero of the Bible. “In the beginning God . . .” (Genesis 1:1). The Bible is the story, not so much of man, but of God—a God who acts in history, a God who plans for our redemption, a God who has a part in our lives as He did in the lives of the people of old.

The story begins in Genesis 1 with the creation: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . . Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light” (Genesis 1:1, 3). God created the firmament and separated the waters above from the waters below. God caused the dry land to appear, and He brought forth the vegetation: the trees, plants, flowers, and grass. And God put the sun, moon, and stars in their places, the sun to rule the day, and the moon, the night. Then He made the air and sea creatures (Genesis 1:6–23). On the sixth day He made the land animals, and then He said, “Let Us make man in Our image” (Genesis 1:26). God created man in His own image, and from man He

took the rib, literally the side piece, and made a woman. He said she is “a helper suitable for him” (Genesis 2:18), and brought her unto the man. Genesis 2:24 says, “For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”

It was not long until the beauty and the purity of their existence in the Garden of Eden were marred by the sin of eating the forbidden fruit. A curse came upon them, and death came upon all mankind. Man and woman were driven from the garden. Soon after that, a child was born named Cain and another one named Abel. Cain killed his brother Abel because God had respect unto Abel’s sacrifice and did not have respect unto Cain’s. Cain was jealous and hated his brother for it. (See Genesis 3:1—4:8.)

Man continued to get worse until finally the Lord was sorry that He had even made man and said, “The end of all flesh has come before Me” (Genesis 6:13). Only one family found favor in the sight of God, the family of Noah. Noah and his wife and Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their wives all entered into the ark to be saved from the flood that God would send upon the earth. Two of every unclean animal and seven pairs of the clean animals were brought into the ark, and God shut the door. It rained for forty days and nights, and the fountains of the deep were opened. All flesh upon the earth was destroyed. (See Genesis 6:9—7:24.)

The generations continued, and they became worse and worse. They tried to build the Tower of Babel, and God confounded their language so that they could not complete it. (See Genesis 11:1–9.)

Then we come to one particular man who would become a most important person in the genealogy of our Lord, Abraham.

About 2,000 B.C. came the word of God to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees: "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). Then He said, "And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). This is the first definite reference to Christ in the Old Testament.

Abraham, Sarah, Lot, Abraham's father, and a number of others left Ur of the Chaldees and journeyed northwest till they came to Haran and settled there. After the death of Terah, his father, Abraham moved down into the Promised Land at the age of seventy-five. He sojourned there. During this time he was separated from Lot, and he went into Egypt briefly and came back. During this time, God said that he would have a son, even though he and Sarah were past the age of having children. (See Genesis 11:31—13:1.)

One evening God told him to look up into the sky to see if he could count the stars. Of course, he could not. God said, "So shall your descendants be" (Genesis 15:5). Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. Twenty-five years after the promise had been given to him at the age of seventy-five, when Abraham was one hundred and his wife Sarah was ninety, the child Isaac was born. (See Genesis 21:1-7.)

The child of promise grew up and became a young man. One day God told Abraham to take Isaac unto the place that He would show him in the

land of Moriah and there offer him as a burnt offering. Without even wincing, Abraham took his son and was willing to sacrifice him; but an angel of God stopped his hand and said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me" (Genesis 22:12). God later told him, "And in you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28:14b).

Isaac found a wife from the land of Paddanaram. He married his cousin Rebekah. They had sons named Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the child of promise. He married Rachel and Leah; and they had twelve sons, four by the handmaidens and eight by the wives. The favorite of these sons was Joseph. The brothers hated Joseph and sold him into Egypt. (See Genesis 24—37.)

Joseph was sold into the hands of Potiphar. When he was accused of making advances against Potiphar's wife, he was cast into prison. In the prison he interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker. Two years later, he interpreted the dream of Pharaoh. Pharaoh had dreamed that seven healthy cows came out of the Nile River and seven gaunt cows ate them. Then seven good ears of grain were devoured by seven bad ears. By this, Joseph predicted seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. He sent for all of his family to come to Egypt. They came and settled in Goshen. Thus they were spared from the famine. (See Genesis 39—46.)

The children of Israel lived in the land of Egypt for four hundred years or more. There arose a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he oppressed

the children of Israel greatly. He tried to wear them out by making their service hard in making bricks for his building projects. (See Exodus 1.) The children of Israel cried unto the Lord for deliverance.

A man from the tribe of Levi had a child who was later named Moses. Little Moses was placed in the bulrushes in the Nile River, and Pharaoh's daughter found him there. She even paid Moses' mother to take care of her own child. (See Exodus 2.)

At the age of forty, Moses left the land after he had killed an Egyptian. Moses fled to the land of Horeb, the land of Sinai. There he kept the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, for forty years. At the age of eighty, he observed a bush that was burning. He went up to see why it was not consumed and heard the Lord say, "Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. . . . I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:5, 6). Then God said to Moses, "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt"; ". . . you shall worship God at this mountain" (Exodus 3:10, 12).

After much persuasion, Moses went. When Moses returned to Egypt, Pharaoh would not listen to him, but even made the work harder for God's people. Ultimately, with the help of his brother, Aaron, Moses, through the power of God, brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians: the water turned into blood, the frogs, the lice, the flies, the murrain on the cattle, the boils and the blains, the hail, the locusts, darkness, and the death of the firstborn. The Passover lamb was killed, and the blood was

put on the doorposts and the lintels of the Israelites' houses. God said, "For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:12, 13). All the firstborn in Pharaoh's house and in all Egypt died, but those who had the blood on the doorposts and the lintels of their houses were spared.

A great cry went throughout Egypt that night. All the children of Israel gathered their materials and journeyed eastward toward the Red Sea. Pharaoh came after them shortly thereafter. They saw Pharaoh coming and cried unto Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?" (Exodus 14:11). Moses said, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD" (Exodus 14:13). The Lord told Moses to stretch the rod over the water. He did, and the waters parted. The children of Israel marched through on dry land. Pharaoh and his army came in behind them. Moses raised his hand over the waters, the waves returned, and Pharaoh and his army perished in the Red Sea. About 600,000 men of war (close to 3,000,000 people in all) came out of Egypt on that day. (See Numbers 1:46.)

They journeyed southeastward toward Mount Sinai. They ran out of water, and Moses brought water from the rock to the waters of Rephidim. They were attacked by the Amalekites. By the hand of

Moses and the help of the Lord, Joshua defeated the Amalekites. (See Exodus 17.) Finally, after three months' journey, they arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai.

They saw the smoke billow from the mount and heard the thunder of God and saw the lightning flash. The voice of God spoke to them:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

You shall have no other gods before Me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them. . . .

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain. . . .

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. . . .

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness. . . .

You shall not covet . . . (Exodus 20:2–17).

Moses went up on the mountain and stayed there forty days, where he received instructions from God regarding the building of the tabernacle and the Jewish system of worship. (See Exodus 24:18—31:18.)

During these forty days, the children of Israel became impatient and asked Aaron, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the

man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him" (Exodus 32:1). Aaron took their gold, and from it he fashioned the calf, and they worshiped the golden calf.

When Moses came down from the mountain and saw what they had done, he broke the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. He burned the calf and ground it into powder, scattered it on the water, and made them drink it. (See Exodus 32:15–20.)

Moses returned to the mountain and stayed forty more days. Then he came down with the instructions for the tabernacle. There, at the foot of Mount Sinai, they built the tabernacle. It was a movable structure with tents laid over the boards. A veil divided it into a holy place and a most holy place. The ark of the covenant, the most holy piece of furniture, was in the most holy place. The table of showbread, the lampstand, and the altar of incense were in the holy place. The brass altar and the brazen laver were outside. Aaron was ordained as high priest. His four sons, Eleazar, Ithamar, Nadab, and Abihu, were the priests who served with him. Their robes and their garments were made, and the worship was set up. The cloud from the Lord descended, symbolizing His presence there. (See Exodus 33–40.)

They stayed at the foot of Mount Sinai for eleven months. One day that cloud moved and headed northeastward, and the Lord said, "You have stayed long enough at this mountain" (Deuteronomy 1:6). They were told to go northward, so they journeyed toward Kadesh-barnea. (See Numbers 10:11, 12.)

On the way they complained, and a fire of the Lord devoured some of them. They lusted when the

quail were sent, and many of them died. The place was called "Graves of Lusting," Kibroth-hattaavah (Numbers 11:34).

They came to Kadesh-barnea. From there they sent twelve spies; two of them were Caleb and Joshua. They went into Canaan and came back, bringing a sample of the fruit. It was a cluster of grapes so large that it took two men to carry it on a pole. They said, "It is a good land, but it is a land that devours its inhabitants. They have cities with walls that reach to heaven. There are giants in the land, and we're as grasshoppers in our own sight, and so were we in their sight"; but Caleb and Joshua stilled the people and said, "We're well able to overtake it. The Lord will give us the land." The people did not believe the report of the two, and they said, "We cannot take it. Let us choose a captain and go back to Egypt." Because of their unbelief, they wandered for forty years in the wilderness. For every day they were gone, the people had a year of wandering. (See Numbers 13; 14.)

During this time Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and the ground opened up and swallowed them. Moses was told to speak to a rock and bring forth water; and he, in his anger, said, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" (Numbers 20:10), and he struck it. God said, "Because you have not believed Me, . . . you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:12). At this time the fiery serpents were sent among them because they complained and murmured against the Lord. Also at this time Balaam was brought over to bring a curse upon

Israel by Balak, the son of Moab, because the Moabites feared this horde of Israelites who had already defeated Sihon and Og and had taken possession of the east side of the Jordan River. (See Numbers 21; 22.)

At the age of 120, Moses died on Mount Nebo. First, God showed him all the land and all the beautiful hillside and the valleys and then said, "I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there" (Deuteronomy 34:4b). Moses died and was buried, and Joshua was chosen to be his successor (Deuteronomy 34:5; Joshua 1:1–9).

Joshua led the children of Israel across the Jordan River. As the priests stood there holding the ark of the covenant in the waters of the Jordan, the waters were cut off, and the people marched over on dry land. The first city to be taken was Jericho. The children of Israel marched around it once a day for six days and seven times on the seventh day. Then they blew the trumpets and shouted, and all the city was destroyed. Rahab and her family were saved because she had befriended the two spies. (See Joshua 1–6.)

From about 1400 to 1350 B.C., the land was taken from the Canaanites. During this time Israel cut through the middle of the land, from Jericho in the east to Ai and Bethel, which divided the land in two. They defeated the southern confederacy of the Canaanites and then the northern confederacy of the Canaanites. This was the day that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still. God listened to the voice of a man, and the sun stayed in its course. (See Joshua 7–11.)

All the land was divided among the Israelites.

The tabernacle was set up at Shiloh as a religious center at that time. The Levites were put in forty-eight different cities, and the cities of refuge were arranged so the manslayers could flee to them for safety. Joshua died. The children of Israel served God all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua. (See Joshua 13—24.)

During a period from about 1350 to 1050 B.C., we have a recurring cycle: (1) The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. (2) They were sold into the hand of their enemies. (3) They cried to the Lord for help. (4) God sent them a deliverer known as a judge. Then the cycle would begin again. They would sin again, get in trouble again, cry for help again, and be delivered again.

These were the days of Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar. Deborah, along with the help of Barak (and I might add Jael), defeated Sisera and his armies; Gideon defeated the Midianites with three hundred men; Jephthah made the rash vow and, it seems, may have offered his daughter as a sacrifice; and Samson began the defeat of the Philistines. During these days, Ruth lived. She came from Moab and gleaned in the fields of Boaz and ended up becoming his wife and the great-grandmother of David. The last of the judges were Eli and Samuel. These were dark days for the children of Israel. (See Judges 1—16; Ruth 1—4; 1 Samuel 1—7.)

The people tired of being ruled by the judges and said, "Appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5). God said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them"

(1 Samuel 8:7). So it was that their first king, Saul, from the land of Benjamin, was anointed over the land of Israel; and the period of the judges ended. (See 1 Samuel 9; 10.)

From about 1050 to 930 B.C., we have the period known as the United Kingdom. Saul reigned for forty years. He disobeyed the Lord by not destroying the Amalekites as he should have. Samuel told him, "The LORD has rejected you from being king" (1 Samuel 15:26). God had chosen for Him a new king, a man after His own heart. Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem, and there he anointed David to be the next king. (See 1 Samuel 11—16.)

David first reigned in Hebron and then moved to Jerusalem. His capital became Jerusalem when it was taken from the Jebusites. The ark of the covenant was brought there, and Jerusalem was made not only the political center, but also the religious center of the land (2 Samuel 2:1–4; 5; 6). David wanted to build a temple for the Lord, but the Lord said, "No. You're a man of blood. You can't do it. You don't make me a house. I will make you a house. One of these days when you're dead, I'll raise up your son who will build a house for me" (see 2 Samuel 7:8–13). That was a prophecy of Solomon, to be sure; but there was more to it than that. It was a prophecy that the Messiah would come through David (Hebrews 1:5).

David was not perfect. He committed a grievous sin in the matter with Bathsheba, killing Uriah and taking her for his own wife, and his family paid for his sins. Nathan himself had given David God's message: "Now therefore, the sword shall never

depart from your house, because you have despised Me . . ." (2 Samuel 12:10). Amnon, David's son, raped his own sister. Another son, Absalom, had Amnon killed. Then Absalom rebelled against his father and would have taken the kingdom and the life of his father if he had been able to do so. His rebellion was put down. Near the end of David's life, Adonijah decided he would be the king, and his rebellion was put down. Solomon was finally proclaimed as king. (See 2 Samuel 13—19; 1 Kings 1; 2.)

Solomon reigned from about 970 to 930 B.C. He was the last of the three kings of the United Kingdom—Saul, David, and Solomon. With the help of Hiram, king of Tyre, in the land of Phoenicia, Solomon built the temple of the Lord. Solomon was asked in a dream what he would have. Of all the things he could have chosen, he chose wisdom. He became the wisest of all, and his proverbs and his songs were legendary. (See 1 Kings 5—10.)

During the time of David and Solomon, most of the psalms were written and the proverbs were collected. Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon and likely even the Book of Job were written at this time, though Job probably lived before the days of Abraham. The wisdom and the poetic literature were very prominent at this time.

Solomon committed a great sin in marrying the women of the nations around them which God had forbidden (1 Kings 11). His going after the gods of these foreign women led to the division of the kingdom. When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam was asked to lighten the load of his father. Solomon had practically bankrupted the country to have the splendor that he enjoyed; but Rehoboam followed the

advice of the young men, who told him to say, “My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins! Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions” (1 Kings 12:10, 11). Because of this, the kingdom split.

Ten tribes went north and formed the kingdom of Israel, or Ephraim, as it was called. Later it was called Samaria. They appointed Jeroboam to be their king. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, was left with only two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. Many of the Levites moved south. There were not any good kings in the north. Jeroboam is always known as the one who made Israel to sin. When he died, his son, Nadab, followed him, and then Nadab was killed. The whole family of Jeroboam was killed by a man named Baasha. Baasha was followed by his son, Elah. All of his family was killed by Zimri. He lasted only seven days as king and then was killed by Omri, who moved the capital of the north to Samaria. Omri was the father of Ahab, who took Jezebel to be his wife. (See 1 Kings 12—16.)

During these days, Elijah spoke against Ahab and condemned him for his sins. The contest on Mount Carmel occurred, and the fire came down from heaven and burned up the sacrifice prepared for God. Ahab was followed by Ahaziah and then Jehoram. Then Jehu came and destroyed the whole dynasty of Ahab. Jehu was followed by Jehoash, Jehoahaz, and Jeroboam II. (See 1 Kings 17—22; 2 Kings 9—14.)

In the days of Jeroboam II, two great prophets arose in the land of Israel, up in the north: Amos, the prophet of God’s justice, and Hosea, the prophet of

God's love. After Jeroboam II, there was a sharp decline. Zechariah and the whole family of Jehu were destroyed; Shallum was killed; Menahem paid a great tribute to Assyria just to stay alive; Pekahiah was killed, as was Hoshea. In 722 B.C., the Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom and carried them off into exile. The northern kingdom, as such, was no more. (See 2 Kings 14—18.)

Meanwhile, in the southern kingdom, Rehoboam was a wicked ruler. He was followed by Abijah, a wicked king, who was followed by Asa, a good king, and then Jehoshaphat, who was also a good king and oddly enough a friend of Ahab's. Their children married each other. Jehoshaphat was followed by Jehoram, and then Ahaziah, who was also killed by Jehu. (Jehu killed both the king of the south and the king of the north.) (See 1 Kings 12—15; 22; 2 Kings 8; 9; 2 Chronicles 10—22.)

Then came a reign of terror. Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, took over in the south for about six years. Jehoash was put on the throne at the age of seven; he was the only one left in the line of David. Then little Jehoash was followed by Amaziah, who was followed by Azariah, known as Uzziah. He burned the incense in the temple, as only a priest was authorized to do, and was smitten with leprosy. In the year that Uzziah died, Isaiah saw his vision and cried out, "Here am I. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8). He was followed by Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The prophet Micah prophesied in the days of these men. (See 2 Kings 11—20; 2 Chronicles 22—32.)

The Assyrians in 722 B.C. had already taken the northern kingdom. In 701 B.C., under Sennacherib,

they decided to take the southern kingdom, and they would have, had God not intervened. They called upon Hezekiah to surrender, and Isaiah sent a message from God to him saying, "God will save you." Hezekiah took the letter demanding surrender to the temple and spread it out before the Lord, as if to say, "God, it's Yours. I can't do anything about it." One night the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 of the Assyrians; and when the people arose the next morning, dead men were all around them. The Assyrians left and never returned to threaten the southern kingdom. Hezekiah was given fifteen additional years to live because he petitioned God for it. (See Isaiah 36—38.)

After Hezekiah, one of the best kings, came his son, Manasseh, one of the worst kings. He reigned the longest and, without doubt, was the most wicked of all the kings of the south. He reigned for fifty-six years. (See 2 Kings 21; 2 Chronicles 33.)

Manasseh was followed by Amon, who was followed by Josiah, another good king. Under him, the temple was repaired. This is when the book of the law was found. We think it was the book of Deuteronomy. Josiah inaugurated a great reform about 621 B.C., called the Deuteronomic Reform. He was killed by Pharaoh Neco in 609 B.C., when he went out to attack the Egyptian army. He was followed by a series of weak kings who were mostly vassals, first to Egypt and then to Babylon: Jehoahaz, who lasted three months; Jehoiakim, who lasted eleven years; Jehoiachin, who lasted three months; and Zedekiah, who lasted eleven years. In 586 B.C., the kingdom came to an end. (See 2 Kings 21—24; 2 Chronicles 33—36.)

In 606 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar had come down the first time and carried away Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and other choice young men to Babylon (see Daniel 1). In 597 B.C., he came again and carried away Ezekiel, Jehoiachin, and many other outstanding people (see Ezekiel 1:1–3). In 586 B.C., the wall was broken down after an eighteen-month siege. The temple was torched, the city was burned, and the people were led off into exile for seventy years (see Jeremiah 52).

These were the days of Zephaniah, who predicted that the day of the Lord would be a day of judgment upon the land.

These were the days of Jeremiah, who was called in the days of Josiah in 627 B.C., and preached till about 580 B.C., telling the people that resistance was useless, that God had decreed the fall of the kingdom. He was called “the weeping prophet.”

These were the days of Ezekiel. He was carried off in 597 B.C. to Babylon to preach to the exiles by the river Chebar. He told them that Jerusalem would be destroyed and then gave them hope that one day God would bless them.

These were the days of Habakkuk, when the Jews were asking, “Lord, why are You letting the wicked Babylonians overrun us? I know we’re bad, but we’re not as bad as they are.” The answer God gave is, “You trust in Me, and I’ll take care of the world. You take care of Habakkuk. The just will live by being faithful to Me.”

These were the days of Nahum, who rejoiced over the fall of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, in 612 B.C. The people did not rejoice for long because the scourge of Babylon soon succeeded it. These

were the days of the exile.

The empire of Babylon fell in 539 B.C. Cyrus, the king of Persia, took Babylon. One of the first things he did was tell the captives to go home. Those who had been carried from their land were to go home and dwell in their cities and build temples. The children of Israel headed home about 538–37 B.C. (See Ezra 1:1–4.)

In 536 B.C., led by Zerubbabel, they reached the land of Palestine. A mongrel race of people had taken over the land. They were the Samaritans, who gave the Jews much trouble; but the children of Israel laid the foundation of the temple. Then again came opposition; but under the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah, they were encouraged to go ahead and get the temple underway, and so they did. In 516 B.C., exactly seventy years after it was destroyed, the temple was rebuilt. (See Ezra 3–6.)

Not long after that, Ezra appeared. Under his leadership with a company of priests that he brought, the worship was restored. Then in 444 B.C., Nehemiah returned, and under his leadership the walls were built around the city. (See Ezra 7; Nehemiah 1–4.)

Shortly before that, Esther lived. King Ahasuerus had deposed Vashti from being queen, and Esther became his queen. It was she who saved her people, through the intervention of Mordecai, from the wicked plot of Haman. The Jews still celebrate a feast to commemorate this event, the Feast of Purim.

The Old Testament closes with the Book of Malachi. The temple had been rebuilt, the worship had been restored, and the people were back into their routine. Already, it was becoming common-

place. About 400 B.C., the prophet Malachi warned them that they were not to take God lightly. He ended with a promise: "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. . . . I am going to send you Elijah the prophet. . . . He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers . . ." (Malachi 4:2-6). The Old Testament ends on this note.

The Old Testament is not a complete book because the story was not over with the Book of Malachi. Many prophecies had been given to show that something better was coming. Abraham had been told, Isaac had been told, and Jacob had been told that their seed would bless all nations. The tribe of Judah was told that the scepter would never depart from them. The Son of Man/the Son of God would come through them. David was told that God would make him a great family. The great prophets even more explicitly described God's theme of redemption which would be fulfilled some day; but the Old Testament ended, and that "some day" had not come.

Now the significance of all of the worship and the sacrifices in the Old Testament days can be seen because these point to the sacrifice of Christ. The kingdom that was predicted is His kingdom, His church; and the message is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, is a story of a God who acted, of a God who planned, and of a God who took an interest in the lives of people and intervened in their lives and in their fortunes to accomplish His will among them. That is the God whom we can serve today.