

(Luke 9:44,45) They still held the same hope after that mission was accomplished, **(Acts 1:6)** and the apostle Paul, while a prisoner in Roman hands, said it was 'for the hope of Israel' that he was in bonds. **(Acts 28:20)**

It is true that the ritual of the Law of Moses as given in the Old Testament has been abrogated by the death of the Lord Jesus, but the Old Testament remains the basis of all that is revealed concerning the salvation that is mercifully offered to us in Christ. This is why true Christians hold it in the highest esteem and give it their closest attention; for its teachings, whether they take the form of type, shadow, or prophecy, provide the foundation on which Christianity is built. It is as true today as it was in the time of Paul, that 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works'.

(2 Tim. 3:16,17)

The Christadelphians

Please be assured that anything connected with the Christadelphians is entirely free, and based wholly upon Christ's precept, "freely ye received, freely give". Christadelphians, or as the name implies, brethren in Christ, are a body of people (established initially in the mid nineteenth century) bound together by a wholehearted belief in the Bible. We do not profess to have received any new revelation, but hold that the Bible itself is able to make one "wise unto salvation" **(2 Tim. 3:15-17)**. Believing in the Divine Authorship of the Bible, we do not accept any interpretation which does not harmonise with its teaching as a whole. Finding that the creeds and practices of those who claim to be Christian are in many ways opposed to this teaching, we feel compelled to stand apart from them. We believe in the personal, visible return of Christ to the earth, to establish his throne and reign thereon, and we seek to share this knowledge with others. However we guarantee that we will not pressurise you in any way, if at any time you wish to discontinue contact.

To find out more about the word of God please contact:

THE CHRISTADELPHIANS
FREEPOST (CN 2737)
CROYDON
CR9 7WZ

or the publisher:

Andrew G Stubbs, The Christadelphians (Sherwood Meeting), 14 Covedale Road, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 3HY, England.

or visit our website:

www.OnlyTrueGod.info

Christians and the Old Testament

Watchman Christadelphians - Leaflet 62

www.OnlyTrueGod.info

Christians and the Old Testament

The most superficial acquaintance with the Bible is sufficient to reveal that it is divided into two main sections, known as the Old and New Testaments. The New Testament contains accounts of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and many other inspired writings of his apostles; and the majority of those who claim to be Christians will say that their faith is founded on the life and teaching of Christ as presented in the New Testament.

There is a tendency in the churches and chapels of today to treat the Old Testament as archaic, as something virtually superseded by the teaching of the New. While they recognise that the Old Testament gives a history of the Jewish race prior to the time of Christ, and will freely use its graphic narratives in their Sunday Schools and so forth, they regard the orthodox Jewish hopes of a 'Messiah' and a visible glorification of Israel as a gross mistake, and they suppose that Christian teaching has to do with quite different matters.

But what was the attitude of the Lord Jesus himself?

He said, 'The Scripture cannot be broken', (**John 10:35**) and of course in his days 'the Scripture' was what we today call the Old Testament, the New not then being in existence. Jesus quoted from it many times. He used it to demonstrate the doctrine of the resurrection; (**Matt. 22:31,32**) he endorsed its account of the creation of man, (**Matt. 19:4**) the Flood, (**Matt. 24:37-39**) and the historical reality of Abraham and other patriarchal characters, moreover, he said 'Salvation is of the Jews'. (**John 4:22**) What is more, all of these endorsements of Old Testament teaching were used as bases for Jesus' own teaching.

The same is true of the teaching of Christ's apostles. One only has to glance at the marginal references in one's Bible to see how closely the New Testament is related to the Old.

The traditional attitude of Christendom to the Old Testament, derives from the doctrinal errors which have crept into the Church's teaching. They have been of such a character as to make any application of the Old Testament, from their point of view, meaningless. What interest can there be in the history of the ancient Jews, or the warnings and promises of God made to them through their prophets, if, as the traditional Church supposes, our salvation is in 'going to heaven'? Or if our fears should be centred on the possibility of ending up in a 'hell' of everlasting torments? Or if God is eventually going to burn up this planet in some cosmic catastrophe? The modernistic trends which 'play down' these doctrinal aspects of religion, and which would reduce 'Christianity' to a kind of elegant humanism, only increase this attitude of indifference to the Old Testament. But the true follower of Christ recognises that the teaching of the Lord Jesus and his apostles was very different from either the traditional or the 'modernistic' Church teaching. Bible salvation clearly means bodily resurrection and glorification at the return of Jesus to this earth, (**John 5:28,29**) and a share with him in the rulership of God's Kingdom to be set up on earth at that time. The Bible also teaches that the destiny of the wicked is simply - death. (**Rom. 6:23**)

Now these teachings are not confined merely to a few isolated passages of the New Testament. The whole of the Old Testament can be shown to provide the foundation on which they are built. The Old Testament not only tells of the origin of sin in Eden and its

consequent punishment, which has afflicted all men since; (**Gen. 3:11-19**) it also shows how, in the mercy of God, the whole process of salvation has an Israelitish basis. The final national salvation of Israel is always the great theme of the Old Testament prophets. (**Isa. 62:1; Jer. 31:35,36**) This was first promised to the father of the Jewish race, the great patriarch Abraham, (**Gen.12:1,3; 13:14-17; 17:6-8**) repeated to his son Isaac and grandson Jacob, and reiterated in closer detail and from many aspects in the later prophetic writings. Writing by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, the prophets taught that Jerusalem - the literal Jerusalem in the land of Israel - should be their capital city and indeed the metropolis of the whole earth (**Isa. 2:3**) and a great King or Messiah should rule over them. (**Deut. 18:15; Isa. 9:6,7**) It is the New Testament that reveals that Jesus will be this 'Ruler'.

(**Luke 1:31-33**) The covenant made by the Most High with King David of Israel, clearly indicated that he would have a descendant who would be the Messiah. (**2 Sam. 7:12,13**) Jesus is shown to be of royal descent, not only by those words of the angel to the virgin Mary, but by the genealogies given in the gospel records of Matthew and Luke and by the teaching of the apostles. (**Acts 2:29,30**) Jesus is, moreover, presented as the 'seed' or offspring of Abraham through whom God had promised to bless all nations of the earth. (**Gal. 3:16**)

The apostles' attitude to the mission of Jesus was clearly that of all devout Jews of the time; they firmly believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah and that he would set up a literal kingdom of Israel, and in this understanding they fervently preached 'the kingdom of God'; (**Luke 9:2,6**) before they even understood that Jesus had a sacrificial mission to perform.

