

The Old Paths

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“I Am Relying On God!”

Jarrod Jacobs

How many times do we read about folks in the Bible proclaiming their trust and reliance in God? Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and other noteworthy Old Testament folks certainly did this; as did the apostles, and early Christians. David said twice in the Psalms that he would not fear what man would do to him because he put his trust in God (Ps. 56:4, 118:6). The Hebrew letter says: *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”* (Heb. 13:5-6).

Sometimes, it takes being “brought low;” to suffer disappointments, sorrows, tragedies, and the like in order to really appreciate such statements as the above. Whether it be through unfair treatment by others (II Cor. 11:26), through the death of a loved one and its subsequent grieving process (Ecc. 7:2), through suffering the consequences of our mistakes and sins (Ps. 51:3; Jer. 3:25), or in a number of other ways; we sometimes are oblivious to Who it is that is actually in control of things (Dan. 4:17, 25, 5:21) until we are brought to our knees. Sometimes, it takes being “brought low,” being humbled, etc., to be able to put our lives and attitudes back in proper perspective. (When being brought to our knees, this is a prime oppor-

tunity to pray!!)

After we pray and promise the Lord we will not act in such a proud way again, let us then live that way! Be determined to simply rely on the Lord for it all. I know I cannot please everyone. I know I cannot make everyone happy. I am well aware of the fact that people think they know better than me how to run my life. Rather than being worried about how to please “everyone else,” my concern needs to be how I can please God!

Paul made this clear when he said, *“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord”* (I Cor. 4:3-4). In other words, Paul was content to let others say *what* they would, *when* they would, and *how* they would because ultimately, he would answer to the Lord for his life and not to those critics!! He would say this again in another way when he reminded the Corinthians that they would be judged one day: *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad”* (II Cor. 5:10).

Sometimes, it is the realities of life that help us appreciate all the more the fact that this life is temporary (I Jn. 2:17)! We all need to be striving, not for the temporary, but for the eternal! (Col. 3:2) We need to have our eye, not on the “here and now,” but on what is to come (Matt. 6:19-21;

Heb. 11:13-16)! I remember hearing some folks talking about how they thought it would be “good” to return to the days when they were children. One said, “I would like to go back because in my youth, we didn’t have _____ (problems) like we have today.” To which another responded, “I don’t think it is that the problems were not there, but rather it was the fact that in our youth, our parents loved us and shielded us from such problems. Now, we are adults and have to deal with them.” How true this is, and how this ought to illustrate our great need to rely on God! In our youth, we relied on parents to help, provide, and protect us. In like manner, we need to look to God, our Father, to protect, shepherd, help, and provide. Friend, are you doing this? This question must be answered by all of us! I am afraid too many times, many of my brethren are so married to this world, that the idea of relying on the Lord, and looking to Him for help is a foreign concept. How tragic!

Jeremiah wrote, *“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps”* (Jer. 10:23). Our dependence upon God should be more evident with each passing day. Yet, for too many, it seems that their dependence is in self rather than God. Sadly, the end result will not be pleasant for such folks. Jesus told us to *“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”* (Matt. 6:33). Are we doing this? If we neglect seeking first God’s kingdom and righteousness, how can we honestly say that we are relying on God? If we are trying to direct our own steps from day to day, how can we honestly say we are relying on God? If we are allowing critics, nay-sayers, and such to dictate what we do, how we do it, when we do it, etc., how can we honestly say we are relying on God?

I will take my stand with the Lord and let the chips fall where they may.

The Importance Of Studying The Old Testament

E.A. Elam

Some say they regret when the lessons are in the Old Testament. This is a serious mistake. The writer indulges the hope that, having studied the lessons of these Notes, all will realize with him that it is a great mistake not to study the Old Testament.

The following reasons for studying the Old Testament are briefly given:

1. God would not have preserved it and so connected it with the New Testament if He had not intended for us to study it now. He exhorts us to study it. (See II Pet. 3:1-2)

2. "The sacred writings" which Timothy knew from childhood were the Old Testament Scriptures, which make "*wise unto salvation*," in that they lead to faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God. (II Tim. 3:15-17).

3. Paul and Apollos reasoned from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. (See Acts 17:1-3, 18:27-28) These Scriptures testify of Jesus (Jn. 5:39-46).

4. We cannot understand various references in the New Testament to passages, principles, and facts of the Old Testament without studying the Old Testament.

5. Occasionally some will say that they have not time to study the Old Testament; if so, they have not time to obey God. Some others say they cannot become interested in it. That is because they are not in-

terested in the works of God — His dealings with the nations of the earth; the history of His people; His purposes, promises, and prophecies concerning the redemption of the race; and His evidences that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ; and it is because they do not read it enough to understand its characters and history.

6. The Bible is a unit, or one historic whole. Genesis opens with the beginning — the creation of all things — and states the cause of all that which follows; while Revelation gives the conclusion — the grand and glorious consummation of all

7. One cannot understand the New Testament without the Old Testament.

The best way and the best time to study the Old Testament are other considerations, but it must be studied.

To become interested in its study, one should read it regularly and sufficiently to become familiar with its places, characters, histories, facts, and purposes. Consult the maps; learn what prophets, kings, and other prominent persons were contemporary; read both the Old Testament and the New Testament through consecutively, reading some in each every day; when reading the New Testament, look up all the references made to the Old Testament, for in this way the study of the Old Testament will soon become both interesting and

profitable.

Above all, as David says, one should lay up the word of God in one's heart, that one may not sin against Him (Ps. 119:11); and, as Paul exhorts: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16).

(From: Elam's Notes, 1926, Vol. 5, p. 196)

Editor's Note:

Do you sometimes wonder about the purpose behind studying the Old Testament? Well, wonder no more! What inspiring and helpful words! Some 77 years ago, brother Elam taught a lesson about studying the Old Testament that folks need to learn today. I have run into brethren who have taken the position that there is no reason to study the Old Testament. After reading the above, I hope you know that position is as wrong as it can be!

A couple of passages brother Elam did not give, but fit in well in this study include Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:6. To the Romans, Paul wrote: "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope*" (Rom. 15:4). The Old Testament is useful for our learning, for giving men comfort, and providing hope! Paul wrote the Corinthian brethren and let them know that what had happened in Old Testament days were recorded for our "examples" (I Cor. 10:6). Let us have a proper respect for the Old Testament!

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