

Discipleship and Bible Study Part Four: Saving the Old Testament

Premise: The whole Bible is the inspired word of God.

A big question: What do we do as Christians with the Old Testament? So much of it does not seem to apply to us

Options:

- 1) **Get rid of it** like Marcion
 - a) **Read it simply as history**
 - b) **Don't read it at all**

- 2) **Allegorize it**

How do we interpret difficult parts of the Bible?

General Considerations:

1. **Basic Premise:** Jesus is the center of scripture.

2. **Remember progressive revelation:** God dealt with the people at their level and in their understanding.

3. **Consider God's sovereignty:** God used one nation to punish another for its sins.

4. **Laws:**
 - a. There is a timeless truth behind each law, but many laws are for specific times and situations.
 - b. Some Old Testament laws become more strict in the New Testament.
 - c. Some Old Testament laws are no longer literally valid because of New Testament teachings.
 - d. Laws that are no longer literally valid still have timeless truths for us.

Principles:

1. Find the meaning of the passage for the original authors and readers
 - a. Listen to the ancient context
 - b. Consider any cultural conditions
Consider the passage in its context in the Bible

2. Finding the general principle involved in the passage
 - a. Compare the passage to what the New Testament teaches.
 - b. Decide if the passage (law) should be taken literally or by principle

3. Finding a corollary message to our present situation