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The Old Testament and the New

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Abstract: This article discusses the relationship between the Old and New Testaments and the importance of the Old Testament.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

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THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW.

IN presenting scriptural arguments in support of the claims to divinity of the Book of Mormon, references to Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc., are often met with the objection that these are from the Old Testament, which many professed "Christians" seem to regard as of far less authority and importance than the New Testament. Indeed, those ancient scriptures are frequently much belittled by persons who seem to think that the New Testament superseded and set aside the older scriptural writings. This appears somewhat inconsistent when the relationship between the New and the Old Testaments is brought to view.

All the references to sacred Scriptures in the New Testament relate entirely to the Old Testament. Jesus Christ announced, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." (Matt. 5: 17-18.) He frequently mentioned "Moses and the prophets," and it was to these that He directed the Pharisees when He said: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye *think* ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." (John 5: 39.) By the term "Scriptures" He undoubtedly meant the Pentateuch and the books of the major and minor prophets, which were held as authorities by the people among whom He ministered.

A great many persons quote this saying of the Savior as though it referred to the New Testament writings, which were not then in existence and to which He could not possibly have had reference. It is the same with the sayings of the Apostles, which are often interpreted as relating to the entire contents of the book called The Bible. But that volume was not compiled until many decades after the Apostles were dead. Paul, in writing to Timothy, remarked: "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (II. Tim. 3: 15.) Timothy had no Scriptures when a child but those of the Old Testament. Peter's declarations

concerning the Scripture, saying that "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation," and that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," had direct reference to the prophecy that "came not in *old time* by the will of man." (II. Peter 1: 20-21.)

The New Testament writings, although of more modern date, are intimately associated with the books of the Old Testament, and the latter cannot be ignored by those who believe in the former. The celebrated Dr. George Adam Smith, who is looked upon in the Christian world as an eminent authority, has this to say on the subject now touched upon: "Few realize that the Church of Christ possesses a higher warrant for her canon of the Old Testament than she does for her canon of the New. For us its supreme sanction is that which it received from Christ Himself. It was the Bible of His education and the Bible of His ministry * * * above all, He fed His own soul with its contents, and in the great crises of His life sustained Himself upon it as upon the living and sovereign word of God * * * What was indispensable to the Redeemer must always be indispensable to the redeemed."

Believers in the New Testament should not pass by the account given therein of the Savior's instructions to His Apostles after His resurrection. Take that remarkable manifestation to the two disciples when on their way to Emmaus from Jerusalem, when Jesus, raised from the dead, "drew near and went with them." He upbraided them for being "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken," and "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." And further, when the eleven were gathered and were informed of this visitation and the Savior appeared also to them, He said: "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24: 13-45.) The Scriptures which Christ opened to the understanding of those disciples were the Books of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms, and were presented and expounded as authoritative, and as having special reference to Him, His ministry, His atonement and the works He should perform in the great Divine plan of human redemption.

We have the Savior's guarantee that all that the prophets had written would assuredly have their fulfillment; that even though heaven and earth should pass away, not one jot or tittle of inspired prophecy should pass away till all was fulfilled. That much of the prophecy that "came of old time" has been literally fulfilled is demonstrated by history; that many of these predictions remain as yet unfulfilled is just as certain. Taking the words of Christ as recorded in the New Testament for our guide, we must rationally

look for the accomplishment of those unfulfilled predictions. And when we see events occurring which come exactly as foretold by Old Testament writers, we are justified in referring to those Scriptures as proofs that these occurrences were Divinely foreshadowed and are part of God's plan for the redemption of mankind. And it will not do to wave them aside because they are not mentioned in the New Testament, for every mention of Holy Scripture in the New Testament has direct reference to the Old.

The prophecies of Jacob when blessing his son Joseph and his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh; also the prophecy of Moses concerning the same things (Genesis 48: 9-20; 49: 22-26; Deut. 33: 13-17), and that of Isaiah (chapters 18 and 29), of Ezekiel, (chapter 37), of Hosea (8: 11-12) clearly, to those who have had their eyes opened to see their signification, relate to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon on the land of Joseph, where are "the everlasting hills," and which is blessed with all the rich treasures of mountain and valley, in the precious fruits "brought forth by the sun and put forth by the moon," the land which is sending its messengers forth upon the waters to the ends of the earth to push together the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh.

The exact manner in which the "book that is sealed" has come forth, the words of which were presented to the learned and the book itself to the unlearned, its translation by the gift and power of God so that "the deaf hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind see out of obscurity and out of darkness," is as definite and perfect a fulfillment of ancient prophecy as anything that is accepted by the Christian world concerning the first coming of the Messiah for the work of redemption. So with the prediction of Ezekiel concerning the stick of Judah (the Bible) and the stick of Joseph (the Book of Mormon), the two records containing the Word of God, one from the Eastern hemisphere and the other from the Western, blending together as witnesses for God in the latter days and testifying to the Divinity of Christ the veritable Son of the Living God.

The Old Testament prophecies concerning the second advent of the Redeemer must all be fulfilled as literally and certainly as those that relate to His coming as the babe of Bethlehem. He is destined to be King of all the earth. He will reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. He is now sending forth His messengers to preach "the gospel of the kingdom as a witness to all nations." The warning voice as to the doom of the kingdoms of this world has been sounded from on high. The angels of God are engaged in gathering His elect from the four quarters of the earth, and the great consummation of all things is near at hand. Search out the predictions of inspired holy men, whether in the Old or the New Testament, and seek for the same Spirit by which they wrote and spoke, and that which is about to come to pass will be made plain and "the wise" will understand and prepare for the

mighty changes that are impending. The Word of the Lord is sure, no matter when it was uttered or by whom it may be rejected, and the time is near at hand when all things shall be fulfilled.

C. W. P.

MINUTES OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE.

LAST Sunday, the 18th inst., the semi-annual London conference was held at "Deseret," South Tottenham. President Charles W. Penrose, of the European mission, Sister Romania B. Penrose, president of the Relief Societies in Europe, Elders William A. Morton and Ralph H. Ludlow, of the Liverpool office, conference president Alvin E. Jordan, forty-two traveling elders of the London conference, and four elders from other conferences were in attendance. The large assembly hall was decorated with palms and flags; everything had a neat, clean appearance, which made the surroundings a fit dwelling-place for the Spirit of God. All who attended the conference came with one desire: that of hearing the Word of the Lord and of applying it to their lives.

The meetings were conducted under the direction of President Jordan. The morning session commenced at 10:30 by the choir and congregation singing, "We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." Prayer was offered by Elder Ludlow. The choir sang, "Though deep'ning trials," after which the sacrament was administered by Elders Don C. Rushton and H. G. Dodman. During the ordinance appropriate instrumental music was rendered by Mrs. E. Bottly.

President Jordan welcomed the saints and elders in conference, trusted all would have their hearts and minds in the proper condition to receive lasting spiritual food. Read statistical report of the conference for the past six months, which was accepted by the assembly; presented the general and local authorities of the Church for the vote of the saints, and they were unanimously sustained.

A quartette, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," with variations, was sung with excellent harmony and feeling by Elders W. P. Whitehead, W. S. Bassett, A. B. Worsley, and N. L. Smith.

Elder Don C. Rushton, president of the North London branch, reported that conditions in the branch are steadily improving, that the saints are observing the Word of Wisdom and the law of tithing more thoroughly, and that prejudice among unbelievers in the district is rapidly giving way to the glorious truths of the gospel.

Elder William J. Willes, president of the South London branch, expressed his happiness on being able to report that the branch in which he is laboring is one to be proud of. Bore an impressive testimony to the divinity of the gospel.

Elder George E. Anderson, of the Stratford branch, said that the exemplary lives of the saints with whom he is laboring are exert-