

Understanding the Old Testament 11

Overview

We'll review our study of the Old Testament by follow the three main threads we have taken notice of, the Seed or lineage of the Messiah, the covenants, and lamb of atonement.

The Seed or Messianic lineage began with the promise to Eve in Genesis 3:15. After man had lost access to the Tree of Life and was destined to die, there needed to be a way back to the Tree. Rebellion against God made it impossible for man to do so. There needed to be a sinless man who could take on the sins of others and take back the right for man to access Life. God promised Eve that He would raise up that Someone from her lineage.

We see of a descendent that would bless the world in God's covenant with Abraham. That promise is passed on to Isaac and Jacob. Jacob prophesied that his son Judah would be the one that would rule over his brothers until Shiloh came. Shiloh is another name for the Messiah. A number of generations pass before any additional information is given. David, a descendent of Judah, is told by Nathan the prophet, that God will set up one of his sons (can mean descendent or seed) to reign eternally.

This is why it is so important for the genealogies of Jesus to go back through David, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham. God made a way for us to return to the Tree of Life. Revelation 22:14

The covenants begin with the covenant God made with Noah. A covenant is an agreement between two parties that is binding. The covenant with Noah was that God would never destroy the earth again by means of water.

The second great covenant was with Abraham. God went through the ancient ritual of covenant alone, meaning that only God was bound to keep the agreement. The covenant promised to give Abraham the land of Canaan and to bless the world through him. Genesis 12:1-3; 15

God also initiated the covenant of circumcision with Abraham. Genesis 17 It was to confirm the previous covenant. The land of Canaan was again promised to the descendents of Abraham.

Moses and the Children of Israel entered into the Sinaitic Covenant. This was a covenant based on the obedience to the Law. If they obeyed they would be blessed. If they didn't then God would bring difficulty into their lives to turn them back.

David also entered into a covenant with God. It must have happened when he ate the shewbread. It is called a salt covenant. It represented life long friendship and a commitment to one another. We can see that the covenants and the promise of the seed overlap in the lives of Abraham and David. Some of the covenants are conditional, and others are not.

Jesus promised to bring the New Covenant. (1Corinthians 11:25) We can read the predictions of this in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 37:26 The Sinaitic, Circumcision, and Abrahamic covenants were all made with blood. The New Covenant was made with perfect blood. See Hebrews 12:24

The lamb of atonement is our last theme. It begins with the covering of Adam and Eve in the Garden. After they sinned they tried to cover themselves with fig leaves. God provided the first clothes for them of animal skin. The passage does not say it was a lamb, but I would make a guess that this was the case. Genesis 3:21. Atonement means covering.

The next lamb is the first sacrifice mentioned in Scripture. Cain and Abel worshipped the Lord. Cain brought a grain offering. Abel offered the fat from one of the animals in his flock. Sheep were the first domesticated animals, and in fact, they cannot live in the wild. God accepted Abel's offering because of Abel's heart.

When Abraham was tested by God, he took his son Isaac up the hill to sacrifice him to the LORD. Isaac asked where the sacrifice was. Abraham declared that God would provide Himself the lamb. Genesis 22:5-8

We see the lamb again in the Passover. In the last plague on Egypt, God instructed his people to take one lamb per family. They were to slay the lamb before their door and mark the header and posts with the blood of the lamb. Then they were to enter in and shut the door and the angel of death would pass over them. Jesus said, "I am the door." John 10

The Levitical Priests were also to sacrifice a lamb or a goat for the sins of the people. The lamb had to be a year old and without blemish. It could not have any broken bones. When John the Baptist saw Jesus he declared, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world."

Jesus is our unblemished, sinless sacrificial lamb of God that brings us into a new blood covenant with God. He is the promised Seed that would crush the head of Satan and reign forever. He is the One through whom all the world is blessed.

