

THE AMAZING BIBLE RACE

CLUE FOR SEPTEMBER 23

WHY THE OLD TESTAMENT?

LEG 1

GENESIS 1-15

GENESIS 16-34

GENESIS 35 - 50

EXODUS 1 - 14

EXODUS 15 - 25

EXODUS 26 - 40

LEVITICUS 1 - 15

LEVITICUS 16 - 27

NUMBERS 1 - 20

NUMBERS 21 - 36

DEUTERONOMY 1-18

DEUTERONOMY 19 - 34

WEEKLY
CHALLENGE

Find out
what the
word

EI

means

in Hebrew

As Christians, we base our entire faith on the fact that Jesus is the Messiah, the one and only Son of God, the one who sacrificed his life for the forgiveness of our sins and rose again, proving his power over death and substantiating his ability to give us everlasting life. We know that Jesus is God in the flesh, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He is one hundred percent human and one hundred percent divine. We know that he was able to perform miracles. We know that he was able to heal the sick. We know that he was able to rise from the dead. All of this information, along with Jesus' teachings and instructions for living our lives, is found in the New Testament.

So if Jesus is key to our religion, and if the stories and teachings of Jesus are found only in the New Testament, why do we bother with the Old Testament? Is there any reason for Christians to study the Old Testament? Yes, there are good reasons.

Aside from establishing God as the Creator and sustainer of the universe, the Old Testament contains prophecies about the Messiah that were fulfilled in the life of Jesus.

As we read through the Old Testament, we see that God would speak to a single person, such as Noah, Abraham, or Moses. God did speak to the entirety of the Israelite population once, but the people were so afraid to hear the voice of God that they asked that God speak to them only through Moses. After Moses, those to whom and through whom God spoke were called prophets. God would give these persons a message to deliver to the people. Sometimes, the messages criticized the Israelites' living,

calling them to clean up their acts; or they announced punishment against them for their sinful ways. Often, the prophets' messages contained predictions about upcoming events, such as famines or wars. Because the prophets were speaking the word of God, the predictions always came true.

More than three hundred prophecies about the Messiah are contained in pages of the Old Testament. Micah, for example, said that the Christ would come out of Bethlehem—the town where Jesus was born. Zechariah said that the Messiah would be sold for thirty pieces of silver—the exact amount paid to Judas for his betrayal. All three hundred of these messianic prophecies came true, and they all came true in the life of one person: Jesus Christ. The Old Testament gives us the foundation for our faith in Jesus. The fulfillment of these prophecies gives Jesus credibility as the one, true Messiah.

Most of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the language of the Israelite people, a language that is at least four thousand years old. The written language features only consonants; but when Hebrew is spoken, the vowel sounds are inserted. Reading Hebrew text would be quite difficult if you weren't familiar with determining the correct vowel sounds to insert.

Today's Old Testament is nearly identical to the Hebrew Bible; only the order of the books is slightly different. This was Jesus' Bible, and the New Testament stories show that he was very familiar with the content of the Old Testament scrolls. We will become more familiar with it too, as we begin our race at the very beginning of the Old Testament.

Reading for Week 2: Genesis 16 - 34

- Day 1: Genesis 16 - 19 (Ishmael; sign of covenant; Sodom and Gomorrah)
- Day 2: Genesis 20 - 23 (Gerar; Isaac's birth and sacrifice; Sarah's death)
- Day 3: Genesis 24 - 26 (Isaac's marriage; Abraham's death; Abimelech)
- Day 4: Genesis 27 - 30 (Jacob's blessing, escape and marriages)
- Day 5: Genesis 31 - 34 (Jacob and Esau reunion; Dinah's rape)