



Session two: loving the **Old Testament**

In this session we will learn about how to understand the importance of the Old Testament in view of what we learnt last week: it's one half of a living revelation of God and through reading it we can learn more about His character, and ultimately know Him more.

In the Bible, God repeatedly told His prophets to write down what he said to them and through them. In this way, God's words were preserved for future generations. Why is this so important? Well, since God is unchanging, what God said in the past he still says today and has said to every generation in between.

Even when people reject what is written, God's word remains...

Read through the following verses in Exodus and describe in your own words what happened: Exodus 31:18; 32:15-19; 34:1; 34:27-28.

Let's take a look at how God's words written down by one generation are used to remind, encourage and rebuke generations that follow:

- Deuteronomy 6:6-9
- Deuteronomy 31:9-11
- Deuteronomy 31:19-26
- 2 Chronicles 34:14-21
- Nehemiah 8:1-3

But isn't the New Testament more important? Have a look at what Jesus thought of the Old Testament:

- Matthew 1:1-11
- Matthew 15:3-9
- Matthew 12:3-5
- Matthew 22:29-32
- Mark 7:1-13

How do the words of Jesus affect our view of the Old Testament?

If you STILL don't get why the Old Testament is so important, check out how much it points to Jesus, who is at the very *centre* of the gospel:

- Genesis 3:15
- Isaiah 9:6&7
- Isaiah 53
- Micah 5:3-5

- Luke 24: 25-27

That's all well and good, but I still need convincing: WHY do I still need to read the Old Testament?

Since God is unchanging, the words that He spoke in the past are still as true as they were when he first spoke them. Since God is outside of time, His words are eternal. If we love our Saviour, then surely we want to appreciate and adore Him in the full richness of His revelation, both in the Old *and* New Testaments.

Application

In small groups...

1. Be honest about how you usually view the Old Testament. Has this changed as a result of this session?
2. Pray that God would help us be disciplined in making sure we read the Old Testament regularly, and to help us resist the temptation just to stick to the New Testament. The historical books can be much tougher to get in to, so pray that the Holy Spirit would really open your eyes to the treasures they hold.

For later...

Go back and read Deuteronomy 31:19-26. Reflect on how forgetful humans are, and think about how important it is to get into a habit of reading the Bible regularly so prevent us from taking our eyes off God.

Make sure you leave time to pray about what you've learnt to the God who has graciously revealed Himself