

The Way Of Our Lord Is Being Restored

Reality 25. Our Awesome And Limitless God Interacts With His Chosen Ones

In [Reality 24. The Older Testament Reveals A Sovereign, Powerfully Awesome God](#) we briefly summarized how European anti-Semitic theologians relegated the Older Testament to the dustbin of irrelevance or of greatly diminished significance for Christians. That's why we want to affirm at the outset of this Reality that there is absolutely no way you can fully experience and appreciate ➤an **interactive relationship** with our heavenly Father and His purposes for you, ➤the unfaltering rule of our Lord Jesus, and ➤the divine preciousness of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit — unless you first comprehend God as HE reveals Himself throughout the Older Testament.

Hellenist-influenced Christians have been subtly trained to view themselves and their goals and desires as central to their belief system with Christ as an add-on. When they read God's words, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26a), they're inclined to twist it to mean, "Let us make God in our image, after our likeness." That's because they don't perceive the awesome vastness and sovereignty of God as He reveals Himself throughout the Older Testament. Instead, they perceive Him to be just a holier and mightier version of themselves, "made just like them." To the contrary, however, the God of the Bible ISN'T just like us! And if you minimize Him to being the kindly grandfather figure you've always wanted or however you disregard how He has actually revealed Himself in BOTH Testaments, then you're trapped by these snares which defy His unchanging character and Person:

- 👉 you fail to possess the awesome regard that His limitless power and His gracious love deserve,
- 👉 you lack an appropriate reverent fear of Him in His righteousness and justice,
- 👉 you underestimate His perfect holiness and minimize your own need to repent,
- 👉 you place your own priorities on earth above His will and purposes for your life.

Please seriously consider this. If you've never read the entire Older Testament with the intent to understand everything that our God wants you to know about Him, we strongly urge you to do so. Your prior perusal of the Hebrew Scriptures likely focused on the individuals and the events and maybe your favorite psalms—but not on what God was purposing to reveal to you about Himself. This time as you go through the Older Testament, focus on God as the WHO Who is behind all that takes place. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you through the passages which He knows will help you discern the God in Whose image you've been created for HIS purposes. He'll open the eyes of your understanding to dispel any self-centered misconceptions that He's a lot like you. We encourage you, if possible, to pursue this with others so that you'll be mutually enlightened about (and grateful to) our amazing God.

You may find it helpful to read our 11/7/2019 Prophetic Insight: [The Cost Of Having A BIG GOD](#) (See the illustration from this Prophetic Insight on the next page.)

The Older Testament reveals our God as Covenant-Maker and Covenant-Keeper

We today won't fully cherish the New Covenant that's offered to us through the bloody sacrifice of our Lord Jesus as the complete Atonement for our sins unless we have a heart-appreciation of God as the One Who initiates covenants with mankind. Certainly the four Gospels affirm that the sacrifice of Jesus inaugurated a New Covenant. But the full

understanding of the true Gospel and what you must do to enter this New Covenant is found in the Hebrew Bible, the Older Testament. *Covenants* differ greatly from *contracts*. Covenants require ratification, consummation and responsibilities that must be fulfilled by the both parties to the covenant. Consider, for example, these four covenants which were initiated by our God:

<u>Covenant</u>	<u>Sign of Consummation</u>
Noah	rainbow in the sky
Abraham	circumcision
Moses	sprinkling of blood
Jesus	receiving the indwelling Holy Spirit

Think of a covenant as “**coming into union in order to work together to achieve a common purpose.**” This describes, for example, a biblical marriage covenant (see Malachi 2:15). The New Covenant our Father offers you in Christ invites you to live in union with Him and His purposes for you in fulfilling His will. By grace He draws you to a new birth from above, causing the Holy Spirit to indwell you in spiritual union. Union implies intimate oneness, and an ongoing pilgrimage with Him on earth until the time of your salvation when your name is read aloud before the host of heaven (Revelation 3:5).

For further insight into God’s covenants, watch our videos: Jesus In Your Home, [6. Biblical Covenants Aren't Contracts! \(Part 1\)](#); [7. Biblical Covenants Aren't Contracts! \(Part 2\)](#). Or, read [Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lesson 5](#) –THE OLDER TESTAMENT •Foundation For The Newer Testament •Disclosure Of God As Initiator and Revealer •Source For Understanding Covenants •The Prophetic Voice of God.

The true Gospel is contained within the New Covenant that's offered you in Jesus as your Lord AND your Savior. Entering this New Covenant not only saves you from your sins and reconciles you to our Father. You're also committing yourself to the Lordship of Jesus as a Big God as you fulfill the divine purposes of our heavenly Father in a very needy world. This Big God reality is so clear to the genuinely born again who comprehend Him from the Older Testament



before conversion and have rid themselves of anti-Semitic theology. Their Big God uses them in His love and power to penetrate the world which so desperately needs the reality of Jesus in their midst. In contrast, "Little God" parameters make people feel comfortable in their religious activities yet ignore God's heart for people who lie beyond organized religion's boundaries.

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5; also Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27).

It's in the Older Testament that you first learn that relating to our Lord and keeping His commandments emanates from your profound love for Him (OT: **ahav**; NT: **agape**). Loving our Lord and keeping His commands are inseparable. Jesus expresses this connection clearly: **“If you love Me, keep My commandments”** (John 14:15; see also Deuteronomy 7:9, 11:1; John 15:10; 1John 5:2,3).

There are 613 commands in the Older Testament and 1,050 in the Newer Testament.

•Do you know which commands in the Older Testament you are to observe, and which are no longer applicable to you? •Can you name even 10 commands which you have applied to your life?

Have you ever considered the intensity our Lord expects of you in your impassioned love for Him? He Himself strongly exhorts those who would belong to Him just how cherished and precious He is if they're to abide in the New Covenant:

*“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and **sold all he had** and bought that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant **looking for fine pearls**. When he found one of great value, he went away and **sold everything he had** and bought it”* (Matthew 13:44-46).

The love for our Lord Jesus in the life of the genuinely born again is of incomprehensible worth. And what wonder that when the Holy Spirit indwells you, your life becomes personally united with the limitless divine! When you begin to hear the voice and/or promptings of the Holy Spirit within you, your entire life is transformed. Being genuinely born again will no longer be a point of time in your past, but rather a way of life leading to eternity—a life that's filled with awe and trust in the Lordship of Jesus as you fulfill your Father's will by His amazing grace!

Immanuel (God with us)

The Older Testament's prophecies are written to reinforce your assurance of our Lord Jesus as God's Son and the coming King of the Kingdom. God's prophets in the Older Testament wrote over 300 messianic prophecies about our Lord—words of truth which were intended to provide confidence to those who would later put their trust in Him. Some of the Older Testament prophecies foretold Jesus' birth, others depicted His death, and still others announced His resurrection.

According to mathematician Peter Stoner, the mathematical probability of fulfilling just eight prophecies out of hundreds by one person would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. And one person fulfilling 48 prophecies would be a 1 chance in 10 to the 157th power. Our Lord Jesus fulfilled 300+ prophecies. Only Jesus, God Himself, can fulfill Bible prophecy. If you didn't learn about Jesus through the Older Testament, consider how your full appreciation of Who He is, of why He became man, and of the cost of His sacrifice on your behalf might be underrated. And if you've missed the presence of Jesus from eternity as presented throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, you most likely don't relate to His Lordship in your life to the fulness of what He commands and privileges His own.

The Older Testament reveals God's sovereign selection of people for His purpose

In [Reality 23. Cherish A Personal Connection With Our Lord As Abraham Did](#), we cite why the Patriarch Abraham is so vital for all of us who follow our Lord Jesus. God's choosing of Abraham also gives us insight into His sovereign selection of people and His use of them for His purposes:

“For I have chosen [Abraham], that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has promised him” (Genesis 18:19).

It's throughout the Older Testament that you first learn of God's sovereign selection and use of certain individuals to fulfill His purposes, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Gideon, David, and the various prophets He sent to warn Israel. (If you're genuinely born again, you'll realize how crucially important the Holy Spirit is to your own life as you examine the following foundational Older Testament examples of the Spirit's person and work: Genesis 41:38; Exodus 28:3, 31:3, 35:31 Numbers 11:17,25; Judges 3:10, 6:34, 11:29, 13:25, 14:6, 14:19, 15:14; 1Samuel 10:6, 10:10, 16:13; 1Chronicles 12:18, 28:12; 2Chronicles 15:1, 20:14; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 3:24, 8:3; Daniel 4:9.)

When you fully perceive our God and His divine selection of people in the Older Testament, you get a clearer understanding of your own conversion. Our Lord declares, *“You did not choose Me, **but I chose you** and appointed you that **you should go and bear fruit, fruit that will last**, so that whatever you ask the Father in My Name, He may give it to you”* (John 15:16). Jesus is saying this to all the genuinely born again who would live in covenant union with Him and His Father by the Spirit. Paul reinforces this reality: *“Also in union with Him we were given an inheritance, we who were picked in advance according to the purpose of the One who effects everything in keeping with the decision of His will”* (Ephesians 1:11). Have you considered your selection by God and His purposes for your life? If you're married, have you as a couple considered this?

The Older Testament reveals Abraham as the first called-out one

Abraham was the first “called-out one” in the Bible — God had called him out of Chaldea to the land of Canaan. As God's called-out one, Abraham trusted and obeyed God. Our Lord Jesus refers twice to the “church” in Matthew (chapters 16 and 18). He is speaking of the *ekklesia*, which means *“the called-out ones”*—His extended spiritual family whom He has called out of the world's values as His own to be His ambassadors (see 2 Corinthians 5:20) carrying out His Father's purposes on earth. “Church” isn't a place, as in “Let's go to church.” Rather, it's our Lord's followers, individually and collectively, who are doing our Father's will.

Paul penned a number of his letters to the “called-out ones” whose primary spiritual support was the load-bearing fellowship they shared in their homes as extended spiritual family. If you're genuinely born again, your Lord Jesus has called you to **mutually** bear lasting fruit on earth to His Father's glory. The Gospel of the New Covenant is consummated in you as you receive the indwelling Holy Spirit Who enables the genuinely born again to produce lasting fruit.

As Hellenism and the organizational patterns of Rome took over Christianity, the living organism of *ekklesia* became translated as “church institution”. No longer an extended spiritual family, the institution adapted heathen religious practices for passive pewsitting spectators.

In our next Reality we'll further explore why and how the Older Testament can help you live as our Lord's beloved called-out one.