

The Bible and the Whole Bible

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope” (Romans 15:4).

This was one of the earliest passages that one of the elders of the church taught me to commit to memory. What’s interesting about this is that in the era in which I grew up, the Old Testament was widely considered to have been nailed to the cross and thereby rendered of no value. Even today many still regard it as such.

However, Romans 15:4, as well as 2nd Timothy 3:16-17, which says, “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work,” establish the law and the prophets as valid resources.

Since the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, claims divine authorship, i.e., Genesis 1:3, “And God said...;” Leviticus 1:1, “And Jehovah called unto Moses, and spake...;” Revelation 22:16, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches,” and the Apostle Paul’s affirmation, “let God be found true, but every man a liar,” (Romans 5:3-4) it is evident that all that God has revealed is “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness.” It is without successful contradiction that the WHOLE Bible is profitable for teaching, etc.

The Law of Moses as a codified system is not the one under which we live, as it relates to salvation and matters that accompany salvation. However, there are principles contained in the Law that are true in every dispensation. Therefore, the Law is beneficial, and essential to our service to God.

When the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, saying, “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work,” (2 Timothy 3:16) the Law and the Prophets constituted the body of “Every scripture” to which Paul referred.

These scriptures were:

Profitable for Doctrine, defined as, “teaching, instruction,” (Thayer), regarding what God desires we know about Him and His word.

Profitable for Reproof, defined as, “proof, conviction,” (Strong’s), i.e., convicts those in error of their wrong and shows them how to change.

Profitable for Correction, defined as, “improvement of life or character” (Thayer). “The scriptures are a powerful means of reformation or of putting men into the proper condition in regard to morals” (Barnes).

Profitable for Instruction in righteousness: “Instruction in regard to the principles of justice, or what is right...Man needs not only to be made acquainted with truth, to be convinced of his error, and to be reformed; but he needs to be taught what is right, or what is required of him, in order that he may lead a holy life” (Barnes).

The Apostle Peter assures the Bible reader that God, through “his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:2-3). How many things? All things. Jude further affirms that God’s system of faith “was once for all delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). ret