



Old Testament: an Insult to Jews?

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

There is a movement today, especially on University campuses and other havens of political correctness, to cleanse the imperialistic theological language of Christianity by attacking the term "Old Testament." Why is this term, and its complement ("New") considered offensive? The word "old" implies that it has been replaced by something new and better. This is considered an offense to Jews who are completely happy with their Hebrew "Testament" as the ultimate revelation of God. They believe that the 39 books we call "old" are sufficient and worthy, without any addition of "Christian writings" – that is, without Jesus. The insane tyranny of tolerance and absolute nuttiness of seeking to avoid hurt feelings has moved some Christian pastors to buy in to the pressure of changing the terms. I have discovered some possible inroads even in "conservative" circles, probably in the attempt to win or keep the "millennial generation". Some pastors change the liturgical announcement of the Bible readings to "the reading from the Hebrew Bible" and "the reading from the Christian Scripture". Sometimes they substitute the words, "first Testament and second Testament". One wonders what these cool and hip pastors, not to mention their over-sensitive followers, would have thought of the plain-spoken, rugged Jesus, if we could only transport them back to the first century. They would certainly have been as outraged as the Pharisees with Jesus' comments about new wine bursting old

wineskins. And they certainly would not have been happy with the clear and persistent claims of Jesus that the law and the prophets testify to Him. In fact, we have to wonder how they react when these words are read in "the Christian Scriptures" today!

The whole argument is, in fact, nonsense in the light of BOTH Testaments, for the inspired Scriptures are not two unrelated religious writings forced together and glued by the Christian Church. The old and new Testaments form one united, harmonious, beautiful whole picture of the revelation of God. They are both inspired by the same Holy Spirit, and they agree totally. In fact, the old and new Testaments testify to each other! These testaments are married by God Himself, and what God has joined together let not man tear asunder. The modern so-called "scholars" are pitting against one another two communities of faith who love and honor one another, for they are both "children and heirs of Abraham."

The Old Testament people of God fully recognized that they were living under a testament that was destined to be fulfilled and superseded in a new and wonderful way by the coming of Messiah, the "Anointed One." They believed that this new era would be inaugurated through the "seed of the woman" (Gen. 3:15) who would also be "Abraham's seed" (Gen. 12:1-3) and ultimately "David's descendant" (2 Sam. 7:12—13) who would inherit David's throne and bring about an everlasting Kingdom. All nations, through Messiah, would flow to them and become one people with them (Isaiah 2:1-5). They believed that the testament instituted at Mt. Sinai through Moses would be replaced by one like Moses whom God would send to them in the end of times (Deut. 18:15). They believed that bringing forth this Messiah-King was their destiny, and that He would establish a new covenant, a better covenant, and that He would inaugurate a new era. They waited joyfully for the fulfilling of these

(Continued on page 2)



Inside this issue:

Feed My Starving Children	2
Worship and Good Order	3
Youth News	4
Miscellany	4

*That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God, and that by believing
you may have life in His name. —John 20:31*

Old Testament, cont..

promises and for the new age to come through Messiah (Zech. 9:9). It was the hope inspired by their prophets even as their political fortunes waned. Thus, they knew quite well that their temporary testament was "old" and would be replaced by a new and better one. Jeremiah the Prophet spoke in clear terms about all this in Jeremiah 31, saying,

³¹ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

It is true, of course, that these faithful prophets did not receive a hearty welcome. In fact, most of them were persecuted by leaders of Israel. Jeremiah himself was cast into a well. But those who hated these

words were not the faithful people of Israel. They were not the true "sons of Abraham." The true believers, even though a small remnant of Israel were looking with great joy upon the future glory of Israel foretold by the prophets. In other words, they foresaw the believers of the new age and loved and welcomed them into the "new Israel." They did not mind at all that their "Old Testament" would be fulfilled in the Messiah. God created them to be a vessel to carry the promise to its fulfillment (Luke 2:29-32).

On the other side, Jesus and His followers loved and submitted to Moses and the Prophets. They taught and confessed the Old Testament Scriptures boldly. They proved from Scripture (Old Testament) that Jesus fulfilled the promises of the prophets in every detail, including His death and resurrection. Jesus chided the leaders who rejected Him, saying, "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life, **and they testify concerning Me**" (John 5:39). Jesus taught His disciples from the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, showing in all parts of the Old Testament the things concerning Himself (Luke 24:27). Jesus and the Apostles spoke in glowing terms of Moses, Abraham, and the Prophets, and claimed that all who believed in Jesus were the true sons of Abraham and members of the chosen nation (Eph. 2:11-22). The Gentiles knew very well that they were the branches growing from

the root of Israel, and they loved their spiritual forefathers (Rom. 11:17-18). And they bowed to the Scriptures of the Old Testament even as the New Testament was being recorded.

Both Testaments are in one accord and speak with one voice. Both Testaments bear witness to Jesus and the Covenant He established by the shedding of His blood. Jesus Himself called this the "New Covenant" established by His own blood (Matt 26:26-29) and instituted a new supper to replace the Passover.

Those who desire to change the name so as to make peace are the spiritual children of those who persecuted and killed the prophets of old. By denying that Moses and the Prophets are properly called "old," and by affirming that they stand fully completed without Christ and the teaching of the Apostles is a clear denial of Christ Himself. They deny that the prophets testify about Him. They deny that Israel was created by God to be a blessing to all nations through the salvation won by Messiah. They deny the claims of Jesus to be the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. They deny every fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, and of the Old Testament promises. This debate is not a matter of mere nomenclature. This is a matter of faith and confession. Let us confess with all true believers of Old and New Testament that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the World.



Blessed are those who are generous,
because they feed the poor.
- Proverbs 22:9

Please join us to pack food at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, FW. We will be packing food for Haiti from 3:30-5:30. This event is open only by registration and offered to volunteers ages 5 and up. If you want to join our group, please RSVP with Pamela Buhler 972-342-7697. The average packer packs about \$50 worth of chicken, veggie, soy, and rice during their 2 hour shift. If you can't make it, but would like to donate we would certainly appreciate any monetary help. Not all volunteers are able to afford the \$50 donation to support their packing spot, so donations are very welcomed.



Worship and “Good Order” — Pastor Tom Chryst

“But all things should be done decently and in order.”
—1 Corinthians 14:40

The church in Corinth was certainly Paul's “problem child”. They were full of conflict, sexual immorality, and perhaps worst of all, their congregational gatherings were chaotic. They played favorites between rich and poor. Some abused the wine served in the sacrament. People disregarded their proper roles. And they did not handle the Word of God with the care it was due.

Tongue-speaking was common, a means for God to declare His Word before the New Testament was completed. But this gift was also not used in accord with His purposes, but rather became a point of pride and contention, without proper interpretation. It lead to confusion.

Paul builds the argument in this chapter for “good order” in worship. And while the problems we may face today are different expressions, they share the same root cause. Sin leads to disorder. But God is a God of order. And he would have this reflected also in our public gatherings around His holy Word. These principles, we see, are timeless for the Christian church. God is a God of peace, and not confusion. It all begins with His own character.



That God is a God of order can be seen throughout Scripture. First, He creates the world in an orderly way. Though it began “formless and void”, He spends the first three days “forming” and the next three days “filling” His creation. He sets patterns in the days, months and years. He makes each of His creations according to its kind, and finally creates Man as the crown of His creation.

Likewise, God's orderliness is seen in the Sinaitic Covenant, with all its careful prescriptions for worship, sacrifice and prayer. He gives instructions for the Tabernacle, its furnishings, even the color of fabrics. He appoints a priesthood to tend to these things, and orders them similarly.

The New Testament, too, urges Christians to do things according to good order. This is why Jesus tells us to pay our taxes, giving to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. It's why He observed the religious customs of his day, even celebrated the Passover. It's seen in the teaching of vocation, that each of us has a godly calling, that is an ordered place in which to serve.

And all of this “good order” serves for the good of God's people. We know what to expect with God. He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Everything has its purpose, and everything is in its place. Everything that He created, he declared “good”. And so it was. Until sin.

While sin brings death and suffering, and separates us from God, it is also identified with chaos. It is lawlessness. Each one does what is right in his own eyes. Proper roles are ignored. Proper authority is despised. Certainties are shaken and it seems almost anything can happen. Disorder and sin go together.

Which is why the Christian church seeks to heed Paul's advice and honor good order **especially in worship**. The “Divine Service” means that this is God, serving us with His gifts. Because these are the gifts of God, they are rightly distributed according to the character of God. This is one main reason when we gather to receive the gifts, we follow a set “order” of service.

There is freedom, yet, even within the constraints of good order. We don't do exactly the same thing every time we gather. But even the variety we see in the Divine Service is not off-the-cuff, but an orderly variety that seeks to consider the “whole counsel of God”.

Even so, we honor the orders of service that have been handed down to us by the ages of saints who have

gone before. We gather in God's Triune Name with an invocation. We depart also, with an ancient Benediction. We pray, read the Word publicly, and it is proclaimed in the sermon. Christ's words, especially his Testament, are given center stage as we observe the Sacrament.

All with careful purpose. All with planning and forethought. All with great respect for the precious gifts God gives through his Word and Sacraments. These things are *eternally* important, and they are not to be done willy-nilly.

Traditional churches like Messiah are sometimes maligned as being stuck in a rut, or somehow unknowing victims of our own thoughtless habits. We are seen as stale and arcane, or even, gasp... boring! But our orderliness is quite intentional. And entertainment is not and shouldn't be a chief value or concern here.

Still, the more we learn about the orderliness of the liturgy and the reasons behind “why we do what we do”, the more interesting it all becomes. For Jesus should always be of interest to sinners who need him.



In rightly ordered, decent, liturgical worship, we can see the church's faithful desire to fulfill these words of St. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, that “all things ought to be done decently and in good order”. The well of liturgical worship is very deep. Scripture undergirds and is woven throughout. And it all works together to serve the Gospel, pointing sinners to Jesus. To Him be the glory!



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Academy Office: (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Associate Pastor

www.messiahkeller.org

From Our Youth — by Pamela Buhler

Halloween/Reformation Costume Ball Fundraiser



Save the date for our costume ball. All families and friends of Messiah are welcome to join in the fun. Tickets are \$20 in advance. This event is geared towards children ages 10 and up. Mr. Woolsey will be leading English Country Dance lessons throughout the night. See Pamela Buhler for more information on this Thrivent supported fundraiser. (*Demonic or bloody costumes will not be allowed.*)

Halloween Canning Event Food Baskets for Open Arms Home & PH4U

For many years, our youth have turned trick-or-treating into serve-and-greeting. Our youth will be out once more this Halloween to collect food again for Open Arms Home. Open Arms provides emergency housing for women and children who are fleeing domestic abuse. Donations of baby food will be brought to Swaddling Clothes.

Come join us this Halloween and be part of our team effort to provide food for families in need. Dress up and head to the Buhler's house at 9524 Drivers View Trail on Monday, October 31st at 5pm for fun & games and bring a snack or finger food to help with dinner. We will venture out around 6pm and ask neighbors for donations. These collections consisted of non-perishable canned and boxed items from our amazing neighbors.

Thanks in advance to all our wonderful youth and neighbors who will help turn this year's Halloween into Thanksgiving!



Miscellany (/ˈmɪsəˌlənē/) noun. —a mixture or collection of different things

New keys: our security is being upgraded and the locks have changed. Your old key cards will no longer work. We want each of our member families to have access to the church, so new key cards will be distributed during the month.

hostess packet. Tickets will go on sale in November.

form found on the counter by the mailboxes., or order online at www.lutheranhymnfestival.com



Christmas by Candlelight:

Save the Date: This year's Christmas by Candlelight will be held on Monday, December 5th at

7pm. Please mark your calendars and plan on joining us this Advent season for our ladies dessert social by candlelight. If you would like to host or co-host a table this year please give Joan Burk or Pamela Buhler a call and they will get you a

Messiah's 35th Anniversary Celebration: We turn 35 on October 18! We're going to celebrate with a dinner at the Texas Motor Speedway on Sunday, November 13, from 4:00—6:00pm. Tickets for the event will be on sale in the foyer.

Lutheran Hymn Festival: October 16 at 7:00pm at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas. The theme: *Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone*. Join in singing hymn tunes and texts by Martin Luther! All tickets are reserved. To order, use the ticket

New books are being added to our library each week. The library is for ALL of our church members! It's a beautiful, restful space, with a great view. Take some time to check it out!

Help wanted! The library needs help with covering books and preparing them for cataloging, shelving books, and shelf-reading. No experience necessary—we will show you what to do. Some jobs can be done at home. If you would like to help in the library, please see Marcia Huebel.