

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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History (the past - part two)

"If you want the present to be different from the past, study the past." – Benedict de Spinoza

"History is always repeating itself, but each time the price goes up." – Anonymous

"We learn from history that we don't learn from history." – Anonymous

"The best benefit we derive from history is the enthusiasm it excites." – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The knowledge of historical events is so essential to our lives. So many discount the past, but they don't realize that such ignorance has no value, and in fact can be quite detrimental.

The apostle Paul twice emphasized in his writings the importance of the past. "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). "Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted...not let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did...nor complain, as some of them also complained. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Cor. 10:6-11).

There is an old saying, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (George Santayana). Actually there is a lot of truth in that statement.

What is amazing today, however, is the number of Christians who see little to no value in studying the Old Testament. Some have even gone so far as to call it "the old Bible," as though it is separate from the New Testament and not of the same caliber. Such an attitude shows that they do not respect the writings of Paul, even though they are inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). And the sacred text specifically says that the things of the past "were written for our learning."

People don't like the Old Testament, but one can't help wondering if they realize that every New Testament writer either quotes from Genesis or alludes to it? In fact, New Testament writers used Old Testament texts in their references time and time again.

Even when you come to the apocalyptic writings of the Book of Revelation, without an understanding of the Old Testament, a true understanding of what John penned eludes folks. Even good brethren don't understand the simple and profound truth that you can't understand the New Testament without a knowledge of the Old Testament!

History is important and has such a tremendous impact upon our lives. Don't discount it. Learn it!