

Old Testament Origins Undergird Our New Testament Faith

This is part one of a two-part article. Watch for part two, coming soon to .

Beloved, there should be no separation in our thinking between the writings of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and those of the New Testament, called *Brit Chadashah* in Hebrew, which means New Covenant. The Lord never intended for us to have two different Bibles. The Old Testament and the New Testament are portions of the same revelation from the same God.

We must understand that the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament fit together perfectly. They are completely compatible, complementary and inseparable.

Every book in the New Testament is a continuation of the Hebrew Bible. The New Testament was written by Israelites (with the possible exception of Luke) and is inspired by the same God as the Tanach (Old Testament). In short, the New Testament is also the Hebrew Bible.

Consider the apostle Paul, the author of much of the New Testament. I want to show how Hebrew, how Jewish and how much of an Israelite he was. Let's think about how Paul describes himself: "Circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee" (Phil. 3:5, NASB).

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Paul continues: "As to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless" (Phil.

3:6).

Paul was saying, 'I am a Jew; I am a Hebrew of Hebrews. I was persecuting the church until Yeshua revealed Himself to me and showed me that He is indeed the Messiah of Israel.' When we read Paul's writings, we must not overlook the Hebraic context of their origin.

We sometimes hear the erroneous teaching that when Yeshua met Paul, Yeshua changed his name from Saul to Paul. Actually, Yeshua never changed Saul's name to Paul, but rather, Paul was a Roman citizen with a Greek name: Paul. But he was also an Israelite and a Jew with a Hebrew name: *Sha'ul* or Saul. So he had two names, one Hebrew and one Greek. We only hear him being referred to more by his Greek name, Paul, because he was the ambassador and apostle to the Gentiles: "But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles" (Gal. 1:15-16a)/

Notice though, when Yeshua appeared to Paul and brought him into the faith, Yeshua called him by his Hebrew name: "But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me, and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting'" (Acts 22;6-8).

When we read the New Testament, we cannot view it from our own lens alone. We must see it from the perspective of the person who wrote it. Again, the people who wrote the New Testament were writing it out of a Hebraic context. In fact, the apostle Paul urged us in the book of Romans, Chapters 9 through 11, that we need to be very careful not to disconnect ourselves from the olive tree, which consists of:

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I want to help you to see that when you read the New Testament, you are still reading a Hebrew book.

In Revelation we read about going to heaven, where the heavenly city is called New Jerusalem, the gates of which are inscribed with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel:

“It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on *the gates*, which are *the names of* the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel” (Rev. 21:12).

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