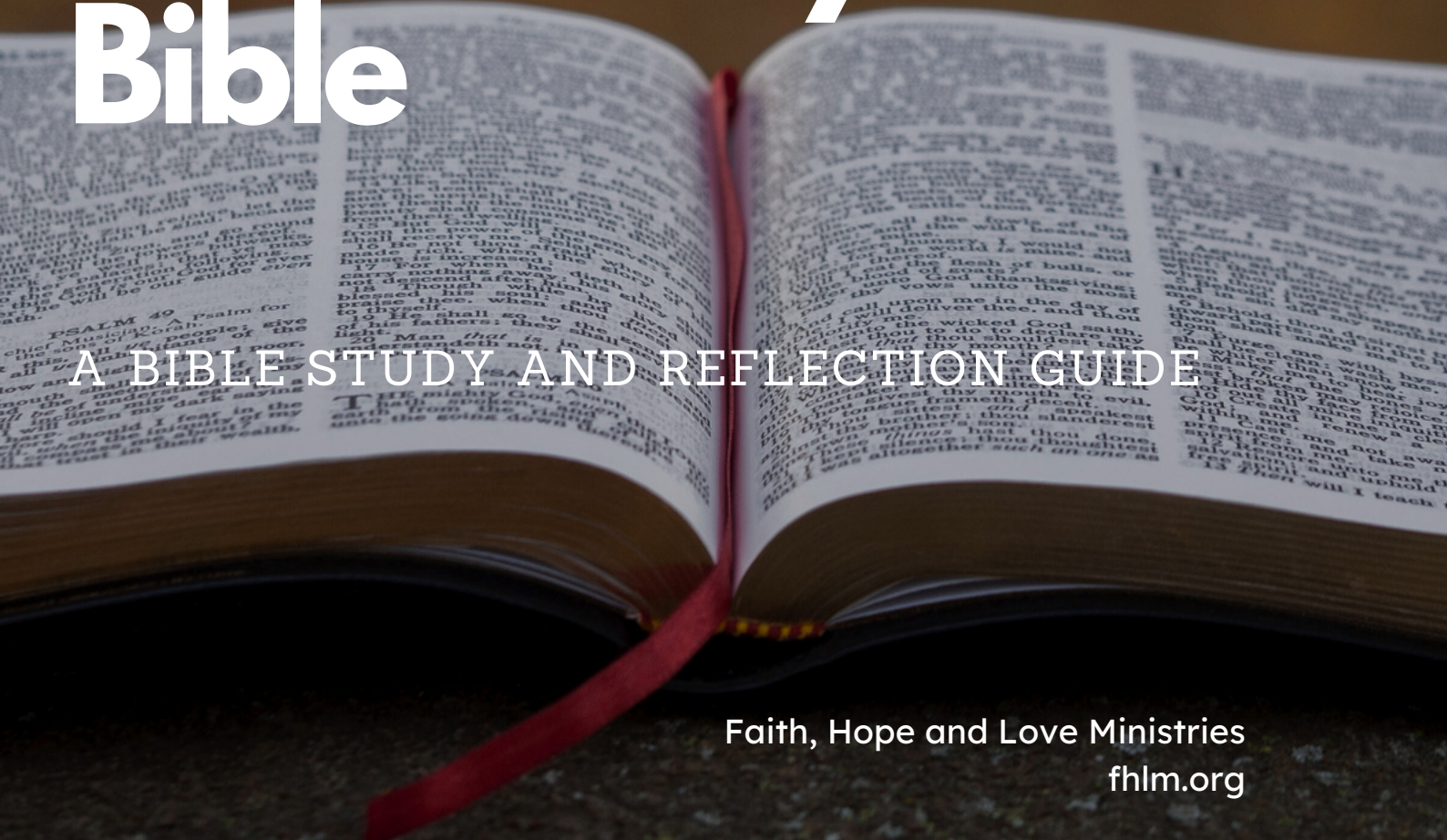


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One God, Two Testaments: Unveiling the Consistency of the Bible

A BIBLE STUDY AND REFLECTION GUIDE

Faith, Hope and Love Ministries
fhlm.org



One God, Two Testaments: Unveiling the Consistency of the Bible

Ever wondered how the God of the Old Testament
relates to the God of the New Testament?
Dive into this guide to discover the unchanging nature of God
and the seamless thread that ties the entire Bible together.

Session 1 - Introduction: The Seamless Story of God's Love

The Bible is not just a collection of unrelated stories, laws, and teachings. It's a unified narrative that tells us about God's relationship with humanity. From the first page of Genesis to the last page of Revelation, we see a consistent thread woven through the Old and New Testaments. This thread is God's love and His plan for redemption.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1, NIV). This same God, the Creator of all things, is the one who sent His Son, Jesus, to save us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NIV). The God of creation is the God of salvation. His character remains the same throughout both Testaments.

One of the most compelling proofs of this continuity is the promises God makes and keeps. In the Old Testament, God promises Abraham that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3, NIV). This promise is fulfilled in the New Testament through Jesus Christ. "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say 'and to seeds,' meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ" (Galatians 3:16, NIV).

The laws given in the Old Testament were not meant to be burdensome but were designed to guide people in living a life pleasing to God. Jesus summarizes the essence of these laws as love for God and love for neighbor. "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:37-39, NIV).

Miracles are another way we see God's consistent character. Whether it's parting the Red Sea to deliver the Israelites from Egypt—"Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided" (Exodus 14:21, NIV)—or Jesus healing a blind man—"After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 'Go,' he told him, 'wash in the Pool of Siloam' (this word means 'Sent'). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing" (John 9:6-7, NIV), these miracles show God's power and compassion in both Testaments.

The prophets of the Old Testament serve as heralds for the events and teachings of the New Testament. Isaiah prophesies about the coming of a suffering servant, a clear reference to Jesus. "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5, NIV).

This is just the beginning of our exploration into the seamless story of God's love. In the next sessions, we'll delve deeper into each of these points, examining how they reveal the consistent character of God throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: Introduction - The Seamless Story of God's Love

As we embark on this journey to understand the unified narrative of the Bible, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How does understanding the Bible as a unified story, rather than a collection of separate texts, impact your view of God's character?
2. In what ways does the continuity of God's promises, from Abraham in the Old Testament to Jesus in the New Testament, strengthen your faith?
3. How do you reconcile the miracles in the Old Testament, like the parting of the Red Sea, with those in the New Testament, such as Jesus healing the blind man? Do they serve the same purpose?
4. Jesus summarized the essence of the Old Testament laws as love for God and love for neighbor. How does this perspective change your understanding of the laws?
5. How does the concept of a "suffering servant" prophesied by Isaiah relate to your understanding of Jesus' role in the New Testament?
6. How do you think the Old Testament prophets serve as heralds for the events and teachings of the New Testament? Can you give an example?
7. What are some practical ways you can apply the "first and greatest commandment" and the "second like it" in your daily life?
8. How does the consistency in God's character, as seen through both Testaments, affect your personal relationship with Him?
9. Do you think the Old Testament is still relevant for Christians today, given that we are under the New Covenant? Why or why not?
10. What are your personal commitments to diving deeper into understanding the seamless story of God's love as we continue in the next sessions?

Session 2 - Promises Made, Promises Kept

One of the most compelling ways to understand the continuity between the Old and New Testaments is through the promises that God makes and fulfills. God's promises serve as a bridge between the two Testaments, revealing His unchanging nature and faithfulness.

In the Old Testament, God makes a covenant with Abraham, promising that he will be the father of many nations and that all peoples on earth will be blessed through him. The full promise is as follows: "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:2-3, NIV).

Fast forward to the New Testament, and we see this promise coming to fruition through Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul explains this in his letter to the Galatians: "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say 'and to seeds,' meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ" (Galatians 3:16, NIV).

Another significant promise is the coming of the Messiah, prophesied in various books of the Old Testament. For instance, Isaiah speaks of a child who will be born to us, a son given to us, who will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. The full prophecy is: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6, NIV).

This prophecy is fulfilled in the birth of Jesus, as narrated in the Gospels. The angel announces: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11, NIV).

The New Testament doesn't just fulfill the promises of the Old; it also expands upon them. Jesus not only fulfills the role of the promised Messiah but also introduces the promise of the Holy Spirit. He says: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:16-17, NIV).

Understanding God's promises and their fulfillment provides a cohesive view of the Bible. It shows us that the God of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament—faithful, loving, and true to His word.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: Promises Made, Promises Kept

As we delve into the theme of God's promises and their fulfillment across the Old and New Testaments, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How does the fulfillment of God's promises from the Old Testament in the New Testament affect your trust in God's word?
2. In what ways does the covenant with Abraham serve as a foundational promise for the rest of the Bible?
3. How do you interpret the Apostle Paul's explanation in Galatians about the promise being to "your seed," meaning Christ? What significance does this hold for you?
4. Isaiah's prophecy about the coming Messiah is quite detailed. How does its fulfillment in Jesus strengthen your belief in the accuracy of the Bible?
5. How does the New Testament expand upon the promises of the Old Testament, such as the promise of the Holy Spirit?
6. What are some other promises in the Old Testament that you see fulfilled in the New Testament? How do these examples further illustrate God's faithfulness?
7. How does understanding the continuity of God's promises impact your view of the Bible as a unified narrative?
8. Jesus is described as the "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." How do these titles deepen your understanding of who Jesus is?
9. How does the promise of the Holy Spirit as an "advocate" resonate with you in your daily life?
10. What are your personal commitments to studying and relying on God's promises as we continue to explore the Bible's seamless narrative?

Session 3 - The Essence of the Law - Love

The laws and commandments in the Old Testament may seem complex and numerous, but they serve a purpose: to guide people in living a life that is pleasing to God. These laws are not arbitrary rules but reflect the character and will of God.

In the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments serve as a foundational ethical code. “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments” (Exodus 20:3-6, NIV).

When we transition to the New Testament, Jesus simplifies these laws into two primary commandments that encapsulate all the others. He says, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:37-40, NIV).

Jesus’ teaching on love doesn’t negate the laws of the Old Testament; rather, it fulfills them. He makes it clear that He has not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matthew 5:17-18, NIV).

This fulfillment is not just about ticking off a checklist of do’s and don’ts. It’s about a transformation of the heart, enabled by the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul writes, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23, NIV).

Understanding the essence of the law as love helps us see the continuity between the Old and New Testaments. It reveals a God who is not just interested in external compliance but in a relationship built on love and trust. This is the same God we encounter from Genesis to Revelation—consistent in character and steadfast in love.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: The Essence of the Law - Love

As we explore the essence of the law as love, and how it serves as a continuous thread from the Old Testament to the New Testament, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How does understanding the essence of the law as love change your perspective on the Old Testament commandments?
2. Jesus simplifies the laws into two primary commandments. How do these two commandments encapsulate the Ten Commandments and other laws in the Old Testament?
3. What does Jesus mean when He says He has come to fulfill the Law, not to abolish it? How does this relate to the concept of love?
4. How does the Apostle Paul's description of the "fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians align with Jesus' teaching on love?
5. In what ways does understanding the law as love affect your daily interactions and decisions?
6. How does the concept of love as the essence of the law impact your relationship with God?
7. What are some practical ways you can live out the "first and greatest commandment" and the "second like it" in your community?
8. How does the continuity in God's character, as seen through the lens of love, deepen your trust in Him?
9. Do you think the Old Testament laws are still relevant for us today, considering Jesus' teaching on love? Why or why not?
10. What are your personal commitments to embracing the essence of the law as love in your spiritual journey?

Session 4 - Miracles and the Power of God

Miracles serve as a powerful testament to God's character, revealing His compassion, authority, and ability to intervene in human affairs. Both the Old and New Testaments are replete with instances of miracles that demonstrate God's unchanging nature.

In the Old Testament, one of the most dramatic miracles is the parting of the Red Sea. As the Israelites flee from Egyptian slavery, they find themselves trapped between Pharaoh's army and the sea. At this critical moment, Moses stretches out his hand over the sea, and God performs a miracle. "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left" (Exodus 14:21-22, NIV).

In the New Testament, Jesus performs numerous miracles, each serving a specific purpose—whether to heal, to teach, or to demonstrate His divine authority. One such miracle is the healing of a blind man. "After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 'Go,' he told him, 'wash in the Pool of Siloam' (this word means 'Sent'). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing" (John 9:6-7, NIV).

It's not just the miracles themselves but also the reactions to these miracles that show the consistency of God's character. In both Testaments, the miracles lead people to faith and awe. After crossing the Red Sea, the Israelites "feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant" (Exodus 14:31, NIV). Similarly, after the blind man is healed, he testifies, "One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" (John 9:25, NIV).

The miracles in both Testaments serve as signs pointing to a greater reality: the Kingdom of God. Jesus often uses miracles to illustrate spiritual truths. For example, after feeding the 5,000, He teaches about being the Bread of Life. "Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty'" (John 6:35, NIV).

These miracles, spanning from the Old Testament to the New, reveal a God who is actively involved in the world, compassionate toward human suffering, and powerful enough to intervene in miraculous ways. They serve as a testament to the unchanging nature of God, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: Miracles and the Power of God

As we examine the role of miracles in both the Old and New Testaments, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How do miracles in both Testaments serve as a testament to God's unchanging nature?
2. In what ways do the miracles in the Old Testament, such as the parting of the Red Sea, parallel the miracles performed by Jesus in the New Testament?
3. How do the reactions to miracles in both Testaments, like the Israelites' faith after crossing the Red Sea and the blind man's testimony, reveal the impact of God's power on human lives?
4. Jesus often uses miracles to teach spiritual truths. Can you think of an example where a miracle led to a deeper understanding of God's Kingdom?
5. How do miracles contribute to your personal faith journey? Have you experienced or witnessed a miracle that strengthened your faith?
6. What are some common misconceptions about miracles, and how can understanding their purpose in the Bible help to clarify these?
7. How do miracles reveal God's compassion toward human suffering?
8. In what ways do miracles serve as signs pointing to a greater reality, such as the Kingdom of God?
9. How does the consistency in the nature of miracles across both Testaments affect your view of the Bible as a unified narrative?
10. What are your personal commitments to seeking a deeper understanding of miracles as we continue to explore the Bible's seamless narrative?

Session 5 - Prophets as Messengers and the Fulfillment in Christ

The role of prophets in the Old Testament is significant; they serve as God's messengers, foretelling future events, calling people to repentance, and pointing towards the coming Messiah. The New Testament reveals the fulfillment of these prophecies in the person of Jesus Christ, thereby establishing a clear link between the two Testaments.

One of the most poignant prophecies comes from Isaiah, who speaks of a suffering servant who will bear the sins of many. "Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:4-6, NIV).

This prophecy finds its fulfillment in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter, in his first letter, directly links Isaiah's prophecy to Jesus: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24, NIV).

Another significant prophecy is from the book of Micah, which predicts the birthplace of the Messiah. "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" (Micah 5:2, NIV). This prophecy is fulfilled when Jesus is born in Bethlehem, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew: "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem" (Matthew 2:1, NIV).

Jesus Himself acknowledges that He is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. In the synagogue at Nazareth, He reads from the scroll of Isaiah and then declares, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21, NIV).

The New Testament writers frequently cite Old Testament prophecies to show that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah. For example, the Apostle Paul writes, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, NIV).

Understanding the role of prophets and the fulfillment of their prophecies in Jesus Christ strengthens the thread that ties the Old and New Testaments together. It reveals a God who not only knows the end from the beginning but also faithfully brings His plans to fruition.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: Prophets as Messengers and the Fulfillment in Christ

As we delve into the role of prophets in the Old Testament and how their prophecies find fulfillment in Jesus Christ, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How does understanding the role of prophets as God's messengers deepen your appreciation for the Old Testament?
2. In what ways does the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in Jesus Christ strengthen the link between the two Testaments?
3. How does Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering servant resonate with your understanding of Jesus' crucifixion?
4. What significance do you find in the Apostle Peter's direct link between Isaiah's prophecy and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross?
5. How does Micah's prophecy about the birthplace of the Messiah and its fulfillment in Jesus' birth in Bethlehem impact your view of the Bible's accuracy?
6. How do you interpret Jesus' declaration in the synagogue at Nazareth that He is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies?
7. How does the Apostle Paul's citation of Old Testament prophecies in relation to Jesus' death and resurrection affect your understanding of the New Testament?
8. What are some other Old Testament prophecies that you find compelling in light of their fulfillment in the New Testament?
9. How does the fulfillment of prophecies reveal God's character as one who faithfully brings His plans to fruition?
10. What are your personal commitments to studying the role of prophets and the fulfillment of their prophecies as we continue to explore the Bible's seamless narrative?

Session 6 - Themes of Redemption and the Unfolding Plan of Salvation

The theme of redemption is a golden thread that runs through both the Old and New Testaments, revealing God's unfolding plan for the salvation of humanity. From the earliest chapters of Genesis to the final pages of Revelation, God's redemptive work is evident, showcasing His unchanging love and faithfulness.

In the Old Testament, the concept of redemption is often tied to the nation of Israel. After years of slavery in Egypt, God redeems the Israelites through miraculous interventions. "Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgement'" (Exodus 6:6, NIV).

The New Testament presents the ultimate act of redemption through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself declares His redemptive mission: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45, NIV).

The Apostle Paul elaborates on this theme in his letters, explaining how Jesus' sacrifice fulfills the Law and offers salvation to all, both Jews and Gentiles. "But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:21-24, NIV).

The theme of redemption also extends to the future, as depicted in the book of Revelation. John's vision includes a new heaven and a new earth, where God will dwell with His people and wipe away every tear. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:4, NIV).

Understanding the theme of redemption in both Testaments helps us appreciate the depth and consistency of God's love. It shows that the God who redeemed Israel from physical slavery is the same God who redeems humanity from the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ. This theme serves as a powerful testament to the unchanging nature of God and His eternal plan for the salvation of His people.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: Themes of Redemption and the Unfolding Plan of Salvation

As we explore the overarching theme of redemption and God's unfolding plan for salvation, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How does the theme of redemption serve as a connecting thread between the Old and New Testaments?
2. In what ways does the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt foreshadow the ultimate redemption offered through Jesus Christ?
3. How do you interpret Jesus' statement that He came "to give his life as a ransom for many"? What implications does this have for your understanding of redemption?
4. How does the Apostle Paul's explanation of redemption in Romans deepen your understanding of God's plan for salvation?
5. What are your thoughts on the inclusivity of redemption, as Paul states that it is available to both Jews and Gentiles?
6. How does the future aspect of redemption, as described in the book of Revelation, impact your view of God's eternal plan?
7. In what ways does understanding the theme of redemption affect your personal faith journey?
8. How does the consistency in God's redemptive work from Genesis to Revelation deepen your trust in Him?
9. What are some other instances in the Bible where you see the theme of redemption at play?
10. What are your personal commitments to understanding and embracing the theme of redemption as we continue to explore the Bible's seamless narrative?

Session 7 - The Covenant Relationship - From Old to New

The concept of a covenant (a binding agreement) between God and His people, is another theme that spans both the Old and New Testaments. These covenants are not mere contracts but sacred relationships that reveal God's faithfulness and love.

In the Old Testament, God establishes several covenants with individuals and the nation of Israel. One of the most significant is the Mosaic Covenant, given on Mount Sinai. "Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, 'We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey.' Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, 'This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words'" (Exodus 24:7-8, NIV).

In the New Testament, Jesus establishes a new covenant through His death and resurrection. During the Last Supper, He makes this clear to His disciples: "In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you'" (Luke 22:20, NIV).

The Apostle Paul explains how this new covenant fulfills and transcends the old one. "But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as he is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second" (Hebrews 8:6-7, NIV).

The new covenant is not just for Israel but for all people, breaking down the barriers between Jews and Gentiles. Paul writes, "Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called 'uncircumcised' by those who call themselves 'the circumcision' (which is done in the body by human hands)— remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:11-13, NIV).

Understanding the covenants in both Testaments helps us grasp the depth of God's commitment to His people. It shows that the God who bound Himself to Israel through laws and sacrifices is the same God who establishes a new covenant through the grace and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This continuity in covenant relationships underscores the unchanging nature of God and His eternal commitment to redeem and restore His people.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: The Covenant Relationship - From Old to New

As we delve into the concept of covenant relationships that God establishes with His people, here are some reflective questions to guide our group discussion or personal contemplation.

1. How do you understand the concept of a covenant in the context of the Bible? How is it different from a contract?
2. What significance do you find in the Mosaic Covenant established on Mount Sinai? How does it set the stage for the new covenant in Jesus Christ?
3. How do you interpret Jesus' words during the Last Supper about establishing a new covenant in His blood?
4. What are your thoughts on the Apostle Paul's explanation that the new covenant fulfills and transcends the old one?
5. How does the inclusivity of the new covenant, as described by Paul in Ephesians, impact your understanding of God's relationship with humanity?
6. In what ways do the covenants in both Testaments reveal God's faithfulness and commitment to His people?
7. How does understanding the continuity in covenant relationships deepen your trust in God's unchanging nature?
8. What are some other covenants in the Bible that you find significant, and why?
9. How does the concept of covenant relationships affect your personal relationship with God?
10. What are your personal commitments to understanding and embracing the concept of covenant relationships as we continue to explore the Bible's seamless narrative?

Session 8 - The Character of God - Consistent from Beginning to End

Understanding the character of God is crucial for recognizing the continuity between the Old and New Testaments. God's attributes—such as His love, justice, mercy, and holiness—are consistently displayed throughout the Bible.

In the Old Testament, God reveals Himself as compassionate and gracious. When Moses asks to see God's glory, the Lord responds, "And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation'" (Exodus 34:6-7, NIV).

In the New Testament, these attributes are fully embodied in Jesus Christ. The Apostle John writes, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16-17, NIV).

God's justice is also evident in both Testaments. In the Old Testament, He punishes the wicked but also provides laws to ensure justice for all. "Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly" (Leviticus 19:15, NIV). In the New Testament, Jesus fulfills the demands of justice through His sacrifice, offering forgiveness and reconciliation. "God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished" (Romans 3:25, NIV).

The holiness of God is another attribute that remains consistent. In the Old Testament, God instructs His people to be holy because He is holy. "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19:2, NIV). In the New Testament, believers are called to be holy through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:15-16, NIV).

Understanding the consistent character of God across both Testaments helps us appreciate the unity of the Bible's message. It reveals a God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, unchanging in His love, justice, and holiness.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: The Character of God - Consistent from Beginning to End

As we explore the consistent character of God across the Old and New Testaments, here are some questions to guide your reflection or group discussion:

1. How do you perceive God's character based on the attributes mentioned in the Old and New Testaments?
2. What insights do you gain from Moses' encounter with God in Exodus 34:6-7? How does this shape your understanding of God's character?
3. How do you reconcile God's love and justice as presented in both Testaments?
4. What are your thoughts on the Apostle John's description of God's love in John 3:16-17? How does this align with your understanding of God?
5. How does God's justice manifest in the Old Testament laws and in Jesus' sacrifice in the New Testament?
6. What significance do you find in the concept of holiness as it appears in both Testaments?
7. How does the New Testament call to holiness through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit resonate with you?
8. In what ways do you see God's mercy displayed throughout the Bible?
9. How does understanding God's consistent character affect your personal faith journey?
10. Are there any other attributes of God that you find particularly meaningful, and why?

Session 9 - The Role of Faith and Obedience

Faith and obedience are two key elements that define the relationship between God and His people in both the Old and New Testaments. These elements serve as a testament to God's unchanging expectations and His consistent character.

In the Old Testament, faith is exemplified by figures like Abraham, who trusted God's promises even when circumstances seemed impossible. His faith was credited to him as righteousness. "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6, NIV). Obedience is also emphasized, as seen in the Mosaic Law, which required the Israelites to follow God's commandments. "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession" (Exodus 19:5, NIV).

In the New Testament, faith takes on a more profound meaning through the person and work of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul writes, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9, NIV). However, this faith is not devoid of obedience. Jesus Himself says, "If you love me, keep my commands" (John 14:15, NIV).

The relationship between faith and obedience is further clarified in the New Testament. James, the brother of Jesus, writes, "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?... As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:14, 26, NIV).

The Apostle Paul also emphasizes the importance of obedience that stems from faith. "Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake" (Romans 1:5, NIV).

Understanding the role of faith and obedience in both Testaments helps us see the consistency in God's relationship with His people. It shows that the God who called Abraham to step out in faith is the same God who calls us to a living faith in Jesus Christ—a faith that is demonstrated through our obedience. This consistency underscores the unchanging nature of God and His eternal plan for humanity.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: The Role of Faith and Obedience

As we delve into the intertwined roles of faith and obedience in both the Old and New Testaments, here are some questions to guide your reflection or group discussion:

1. How do you understand the relationship between faith and obedience in your own spiritual journey?
2. What lessons can we learn from Abraham's faith as described in Genesis 15:6? How does this Old Testament example resonate with you?
3. How do you interpret the Apostle Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:8-9 about being saved by grace through faith? How does this align with your understanding of faith?
4. Jesus emphasizes the importance of keeping His commands (John 14:15). How do you reconcile this with the concept of grace?
5. What are your thoughts on James' assertion that "faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:14, 26)? How does this statement impact your understanding of faith and obedience?
6. How does Romans 1:5, where Paul talks about "the obedience that comes from faith," shape your perspective on the relationship between these two elements?
7. Are there instances in your life where you've found it challenging to balance faith and obedience? How did you navigate through them?
8. How does understanding the role of faith and obedience in both Testaments affect your relationship with God?
9. Do you think the New Testament adds new dimensions to the concept of faith and obedience as compared to the Old Testament? If so, how?
10. In what ways does the consistency in God's expectations regarding faith and obedience across both Testaments impact your faith journey?

Session 10 - The Ultimate Goal - Reconciliation and Eternal Life

The ultimate goal that God has for humanity is evident in both the Old and New Testaments: reconciliation with Him and the promise of eternal life. This overarching aim reveals the heart of God, who desires a loving and eternal relationship with His creation.

In the Old Testament, God's desire for reconciliation is evident in His dealings with Israel. Despite their repeated disobedience, God continually calls them back to Himself. The prophet Isaiah relays God's invitation: "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool" (Isaiah 1:18, NIV).

In the New Testament, the theme of reconciliation reaches its climax in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul writes, "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them" (2 Corinthians 5:18-19, NIV).

The promise of eternal life is also a thread that runs through both Testaments. In the Old Testament, figures like David express a hope in God that extends beyond this life. "As for me, I will be vindicated and will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness" (Psalm 17:15, NIV).

In the New Testament, the promise of eternal life is explicitly offered through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself declares, "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day" (John 6:40, NIV).

The Apostle John also emphasizes this promise: "This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:11-12, NIV).

Understanding God's ultimate goal for humanity—reconciliation and eternal life—helps us see the Bible as a unified story of God's love and faithfulness. It shows that the God who called Israel back to Himself is the same God who offers eternal life through Jesus Christ. This unchanging goal reflects the unchanging nature of God, who desires that all should come to repentance and experience the fullness of life with Him.

In summary, the journey through the Old and New Testaments reveals an unchanging God whose ultimate goal is to reconcile humanity to Himself, offering the enduring promise of eternal life through faith and obedience.

Discussion and Reflection Questions: The Ultimate Goal - Reconciliation and Eternal Life

As we conclude this series with a focus on God's ultimate goal for humanity, here are some questions to guide your reflection or group discussion:

1. How does the concept of reconciliation resonate with you personally? Have you experienced this reconciliation in your own life?
2. Isaiah 1:18 speaks of God's willingness to forgive and cleanse. How does this Old Testament perspective align with your understanding of God's character?
3. What are your thoughts on 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, where Paul talks about God reconciling the world to Himself through Christ? How does this New Testament teaching deepen your understanding of reconciliation?
4. How do you interpret the promise of eternal life as presented in both the Old and New Testaments? Do you see a continuity in this promise?
5. Jesus' statement in John 6:40 offers a clear promise of eternal life. How does this promise impact your faith journey?
6. 1 John 5:11-12 emphasizes that eternal life is found in Jesus Christ. How does this New Testament teaching affirm or challenge your beliefs?
7. How does understanding God's ultimate goal for humanity affect your daily life and decisions?
8. Do you see the Bible as a unified story of God's love and faithfulness? If so, how does this perspective influence your reading of Scripture?
9. How does the unchanging nature of God's ultimate goal for humanity—reconciliation and eternal life—impact your relationship with Him?
10. As we wrap up this series, what are some key takeaways that you will carry forward in your spiritual journey?

Worksheet for “One God, Two Testaments: Unveiling the Consistency of the Bible”

Instructions for Group Leaders/Solo Readers:

This worksheet is not intended to be a formal part of the Bible study but rather a supplementary resource for participants to engage with individually. Here's how you can incorporate it into your study:

- **Group Setting:** If you are a group leader, provide copies of this worksheet to your participants to take home. Explain that it is meant for personal reflection and practical application of the study's concepts.

In group meetings or during personal reflection time, you can encourage participants to share their insights, challenges, and experiences related to the worksheet's content. However, emphasize that completion of the worksheet is not mandatory but highly beneficial.

- **Solo Reading:** Use this worksheet as a personal guide to reinforce your understanding and application of the study's themes.

Instructions for Participants:

This worksheet is designed to serve as a practical aide-memoire to help you deepen your understanding of the continuity between the Old and New Testaments. It offers ten actionable steps that you can follow on your spiritual journey.

10 Actionable Steps to Understand the Continuity of the Bible

By implementing these steps, you'll deepen your understanding of the unchanging nature of God and the seamless thread that ties the entire Bible together.

- 1. Read Both Testaments**
Commit to reading both the Old and New Testaments to see the full picture of God's character and plan.
- 2. Identify Key Themes**
As you read, jot down recurring themes or concepts that appear in both Testaments.
- 3. Study Biblical Characters**
Choose characters from both Testaments and study their relationship with God. Note the similarities and differences.
- 4. Pray for Insight**
Before each reading session, pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate your understanding of the Scriptures.
- 5. Join a Study Group**
Engage in an *active* Bible study group that focuses on the continuity between the Old and New Testaments.
- 6. Consult Commentaries**
Use trusted Bible commentaries to gain scholarly insights into the text.
- 7. Ask Questions**
Don't hesitate to ask questions when you encounter difficult or seemingly contradictory passages.
- 8. Reflect on God's Nature**
Take time to meditate on the attributes of God that remain consistent across both Testaments.
- 9. Share Your Insights**
Share what you've learned with friends or family, reinforcing your own understanding and perhaps enlightening others.
- 10. Apply to Life**
Consider how the unchanging nature of God impacts your daily life and decisions. Make any necessary adjustments to align with His character and plans.

May God richly bless you as you engage in this sacred practice of studying His Word. Your commitment is a testament to your desire to know God more deeply and to live in accordance with His eternal truths.



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