

TakeFive

Biblical insights for the week of **November 5-9, 2018**
written by **Michelle Tumes**

Prophets and Providence

Monday — Genesis 1-11

The ancient texts in the Bible are beautifully weaved together to depict the living God in His sovereignty and the infinite love He has poured out for His children. As we examine Romans 3:19-20, we can see the Hand of Providence throughout history pointing the way to the Messiah who came to earth to fulfill the Law that the scribes and prophets foretold. The holy prophetic writings comprising the Old Testament or the Tanak were initially a series of scrolls and texts before they were combined to create synergistic and comprehensive instructions for the Christian faith.

The Old Testament begins in Genesis 1-11, where God creates man and woman, establishing a glorious paradise and bestowing upon them the gift of earthly sovereignty. This was the initial direct link from God to human and the tragic example of Adam and Eve being conscious of their sin. (Romans 3:20) The serpent was the clear nemesis to God's holy law. His purpose was fragmented in that moment of sin. It was the first cry for a new Adam and Messiah to fulfill the purpose of God to redeem the brokenness of humankind.

For Today: Lord, thank you for revealing your purpose from the beginning.

Tuesday — Genesis 4-6

The Old Testament continues and reinforces that characters throughout history have attempted to define their versions of the law. Without following God, failure was inevitable. Stories of violence and corruption unfold in stories such as Cain, Abel, and Lamech where the characters replace the law of God and insert themselves into an equation that will never end well. They build earthly empires of oppression and place trust in themselves and not God. This is exemplified in the city of Babylon where humans have overrun the city with their wild abandon and all that God intended for them. These early biblical examples tried to create their own law, which essentially puts them on a path of destruction because they will never be 'declared righteous' in God's sight by the works of (their own) the law.

How many times have we tried to superimpose our law onto God's law and missed the point of reference; our true North? The Holy Spirit convicts us with the law God created before the beginning of time. No matter how fancy the diversions get, none of us can become righteous without it.

For Today: Jesus, please create in me a clean heart where Your law reigns and drive out any attempts I make to rule my own fate.

Wednesday — Genesis 12-50, Hebrews 11:12

The demise of human culture and their attempt to exalt themselves set the stage for a solution created by God to speak through His people. His law would be preserved despite the gross mismanagement of the gifts He bestowed on His people. The good news is, God, didn't give up on the people He created in His image and hope continues to unfold in the Old Testament through the characters of Sarah and Abraham. They leave Babylon to a new garden and attempt to rectify the brokenness created by their predecessors. The proverbial 'wheels fall off' due to cheating, lying and they are eventually exiled into Egypt. However, God makes a promise in the form of a covenant to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 15. He promises to rescue and bless humanity through them which is referenced in the New Testament by God promising Abraham's descendants will be 'as numerous as the stars.' (Hebrews 11:12)

For Today: Lord thank you that you have never given up on us.

Thursday — Deuteronomy 18:15

The fascinating lineage of the Christian heritage continues with God appointing Moses, an unlikely candidate, who becomes a priest, prophet, and king. In Deuteronomy 18:15, God builds on the covenant given to Abraham and reveals 613 laws which are required to become a redeemed human and in community with God. Another series of failures ensue and latter prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel shoulder the mantle of preserving the laws of God and fan the flame of hope for the future. The Old Testament progresses and continues the theme of hope for a new Adam or human that will annihilate the serpent that attempted to propel the course of evil into eternity. The prophets foretold the new Adam would be from the lineage of King David, and He would redeem the errors and brokenness of the sins committed against the laws of God. God said, "I will put my laws in their hearts." We see the hope of the Messiah unfolding.

For Today: Lord, please reveal Your laws you have written in my heart and may I act accordingly.

Friday — Romans 3:20

The conclusion of the Old Testament is the Ketuvim, which is a series of reflections, songs (Psalms) and encouragement centered on the hope of the Messiah. Many commentaries and references harken back to the early Old Testament (such as Job.) They pertain to the failures of the early prophets, kings, and priests and conclude that the only answer to fulfilling the laws of God is through a new Adam. The complex assortment of writings meticulously compiled and fashioned into the Old Testament as a whole, all point to Jesus defining what is good and evil. Through God's Holy Spirit, we become 'conscious of our sin.' (Romans 3:20) We need Jesus in our hearts to be the compass of all our thoughts and actions.

For Today: Lord, thank You for the examples of the Old Testament that point us to You and the knowledge that only You can redeem.