



A Spiritual Encouragement Message August 11, 2020

Let's Not Ignore the Scriptures by Oscar Velazquez

We all know the story of the stiff-necked Israelites. God chose them from among all nations, trusted them with His Word and commanded them to read it, and live by it. In turn, God was going to bless them in everything they would do (Deuteronomy 6:1-9). But they failed to do that, they got too busy with "life" and other secondary things forgetting to obey their living God. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children" (Hosea 4:6) ESV. By ignoring the Scriptures they even failed to identify their Messiah. "But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29). They separated themselves from God and consequently His glory left them until they turn to believe in the Messiah who can still redeem whatever is left of them.

In His sovereign plan God opened up a huge door of opportunity for us gentiles to believe, repent, and obey the Lord. "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age". (Matthew 28:18-20).

Almost every detail in the New Testament can be understood just by reading the Old Covenant Scriptures that the Israelites ignored. For example: When Peter with a sword cut off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest's servant. Do you know why Jesus healed Malchus by putting back his ear? First of all, this healing miracle is recorded by all four gospel writers (Mt. 26:51-56, Mk. 14:47-49, Lk. 22:50-51). "Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He. So, if you seek me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one." Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear (The servant's name was Malchus). So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?" (John

18:8-11). Second, Jesus was saving Peter's ear from being cut off, according to John, because they live under the measure-for-measure (talion) principle. "If anyone injures his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him, fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him" (Leviticus 24:19-20). Third, Jesus was fulfilling all Scripture to show them who He was, because on top not even Moses ever performed a healing miracle like that. Peculiar of Luke the Medic, he is the only one who mentioned the miraculous healing. "And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him" (Lk. 22:50-51).

Not just me, but New Testament writers encourage and exhort us to read the Old Covenant Scriptures. "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom 15:4), (2Tim. 3:15-17), so we can get a better understanding of the New Testament and in doing so we can really understand our Messiah.