



Session Three

Christians and the Old Testament

Key Concepts

1. The Old Testament is important because it prepared God's people for the coming of their Savior.
2. The worship and teachings of the Christian Church constantly refer back to the Old Testament.
3. The Book of Genesis contains several stories which are not literal accounts of events, but signs of God's sovereignty and of His love for His creation.

Objectives

Students will

1. Examine some Old Testament passages related to our beliefs and our liturgical services.
2. Read Genesis 1–3 and list ways in which human sin changed the relationship between God and humanity.
3. Develop theme for collage on creation (in small groups).

Materials: Items to make creation collage in groups of 3 to 5. Poster board or oak tag – 14 X 22 is a good size, magazines with appropriate pictures (nature, people, etc.), glue, tape, scissors, markers.

Background: There are many efforts today to “debunk” the Bible. It will help our students resist these efforts and retain their respect for the Bible if we can show them that modern scientific theories of how the world came into being do not threaten the Genesis story. That story is about a loving creator God who cares for His creatures; it is not a literal creation account. The story of Adam and Eve is a poetic illustration of the disaster that befalls humanity (which Adam and Eve represent) when we turn our backs on God and try to be our own gods. These points are presented in this session.

The session also shows students that human beings are free creatures, with choices to make. Much of the evil in the world is due to our wrong and sinful choices.

Finally, the session helps students see the Old Testament as an integral part of our worship and beliefs today. This underlines the important fact that God has always been with His people, and He is present—however mysteriously to our limited minds—in all of human history.

Procedure

1. Open with prayer. Review the meaning of the word *Asdvadzashoonch*. Review passage to be learned (memorized.) Also, go over the titles and contents of the sections of the Bible that students marked with their paper bookmarks. (10 min)



2. Read **The Old Testament in Our Church** and **Interpreting the Bible**. For the matching exercise, let students work on their own. When everyone is ready, go over the answers together:

1) *i* 2) *a* 3) *b* 4) *g* 5) *h* 6) *e* 7) *c* 8) *f* 9) *j* 10) *d*.

Point out that these are only a small sample of the many references to the Old Testament in the worship of the Church. Also, Christ and the apostles constantly referred to the Old Testament to show how Jesus had fulfilled its promises. (Note: Make sure students understand that *Jesus* is the human name of God's Son. *Christ* is a title and means "messiah" or "anointed." This is why Our Lord is sometimes referred to as Jesus the Christ.) (15 min)

3. Have students work in pairs to read the first two chapters of Genesis in the Bible, and then the section **The Book of Genesis**, up to the section subtitled **The Fallen World**. Let each pair come up with their own answers about the changes that took place as a result of sin, and share their findings with the rest of the group.

Here are some possible answers:

Nakedness now became a cause for self-consciousness rather than a symbol of innocent closeness to the Creator; rather than gladly answering God when He called them in the Garden, Adam and Eve were now fearful and wanting to hide; trust and openness between man and woman were replaced by recriminations and mutual accusations; the harmony between humanity and the rest of creation was destroyed; humankind now doubted the promises of God rather than trusting Him and being willing to obey Him.

As you go over the answers the students have come up with, emphasize the uniqueness of the Hebrew (and Christian) understanding of our relationship with God—His personal love for us, and our freedom to respond to or reject it.

Have the pairs of students finish by reading **The Fallen World**. (20 min)

4. Divide the class into groups of three to five, and let them think about a theme for a creation collage i.e. nature, human diversity, sin, male/female, animals, etc. They can begin planning and working on the collages. Close the session with prayer. (15 min)

QUIK QUIZ #3 answers: (1-4. law, prophets, gospels, apostles, saints, would be correct, 5-8. His birth will be a virgin birth, He will suffer and dies for us, He will be like a shepherd who gives his life for his sheep, He will come from a small, insignificant place, He will be silent before His accusers – all acceptable answers, 9-T, 10-T)