

## The World's Debt to the Old Testament (Anthimos, Metropolitan of Alexandroupolis)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)

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Many people nowadays question the relevance of the Old Testament and the contribution it can make- if any- to society as a whole. Some attack it and disapprove of it. They are making a grave mistake. The Old Testament is God's second gift to us after that of reason and self-determination. While other peoples were still fighting shadows in the dark, the Israelites were conversing with God. While other nations were speculating about God and attempting to locate Him in multi-faceted idols, Israel was coming to terms with Him. While other nations were sacrificing their children to appease God, Israel was singing psalms and hymns to God.



In days gone by, the texts of the Old Testament guided the people away from times of barbarity through to a relatively enlightened society. In the realm in which the

people of God functioned, with such “building materials” as they found, they laid the foundations of the enduring religious sense of the world.

The books of the Old Testament are read multifariously and exude an air of confidence in God and indicate how this trust can be restored when it has been shaken. In our relations with God, each of us is Jewish inside, to this day.

The Christian Church should never forget what it owes to the Old Testament and to the people of Israel, our “custodian until Christ came”. There have been extreme times when it has forgotten, and has then acted in ways that were both unchristian and inhumane.

It is time to start discussing the Old Testament and to respect its contribution to society as a whole. To have an understanding of this requirement, try removing from world legislation, from morality, from art, from human decency, what the Old Testament has contributed and then you will realize how appallingly impoverished and pointless the world would be. If you tried to read the New Testament with no previous knowledge of the Old, you would not understand more than a few fragments.

Like it or not, “they are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is Christ (*Rom. 9, 4-5*). We need to remember that always. And to recognize it.