

MINISTRY OF DISCIPLESHIP





Lecture 2 The Old Testament Picture of Discipleship

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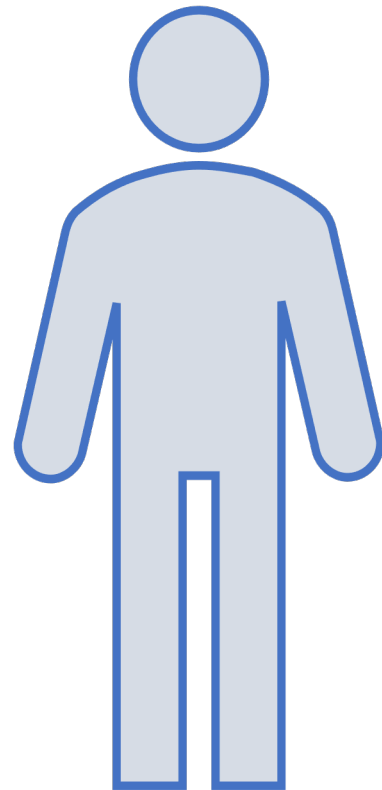
The Creation Narrative

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." ¹⁹ So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. ²⁰ He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the opening. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. ²³ "At last!" the man exclaimed.

"This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken from 'man.'"

(Genesis 2:18-23 NLT)

The 3 Key Relationships - A Whole-Person View



Adam





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The Old Testament Terms For Disciple

- The term לָמַד (lamad), is a verb that means to learn, exercise in.
- The adjective (limmud), derived from the verb means ‘taught’. It occurs six times and always in the prophets (Isa. 8:16; 50:4 [2x]; 54:13; Jer. 2:24; 13:23). It is also rendered “taught one” or “disciple.”
- The term talmid, means “taught one”.



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The Old Testament Terms For Disciple

- The Jewish “Talmud” is Hebrew for “learning”, and it consists of the full exposition of the Jewish oral law and traditions compiled and edited between the 3rd and 6th centuries. It consists of 2 parts, The Mishnah (or Second Law), and the Gemara (the supplement, or completion).
- There are six sections of the Talmud. They are:
 - a. Seeds
 - b. Festival
 - c. Women
 - d. Damages
 - e. Holy Things
 - f. Purities



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The Old Testament Concept Of Disciple National Discipleship

- God with His People (Leviticus 26:12)
- 12 I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people.
- To “walk among you” is reminiscent of God “walking” with Adam in Eden. This becomes a consistent refrain throughout both the Old and New Testaments.



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The Old Testament Concept Of Disciple The People as they Follow God

- When the nation is fulfilling its covenant commitments it is said that they are following God (Deut. 4:1-14; 1 Sam. 12:14) and walking in his ways (Deut. 10:12).
- When the people are said to be far from God the terminology shifts to “following after other gods.”



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The Old Testament Concept Of Disciple Individual Discipleship

- Leaders of the people were evaluated by whether or not they were following God and/or walking in his ways.
- Joshua (Num. 32:12) and Caleb (Num. 32:12; Josh. 14:8-9, 14) are two examples.
- David is one of the ultimate examples. See 1 Kings 14:8.

...like my servant David, who obeyed my commands and followed me with all his heart and always did whatever I wanted.



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The Old Testament Concept Of Disciple Relational Discipleship

1. Individual Discipleship Relationships

- There are unique characteristics in the OT form of discipleship. (See Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Jeremiah and Baruch).
- The relationship was oriented towards service, for the community, in contrast to institutional leadership.



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The Old Testament Concept Of Disciple Relational Discipleship

1. Individual Discipleship Relationships

- Both master and disciple were chosen by God to carry out his work.
- The relationships between these individuals was functionally related to periods of crises in Israel's history.
- The human master never took primary place of importance.



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The Old Testament Concept Of Disciple Relational Discipleship

2. Group Discipleship Relationships

The Prophets

- Groups of prophets surrounding Samuel (1 Sam. 10:5-10). He had “mentor” authority over them (1 Sam. 19:20-24).
- The “sons of prophets” and Elisha (1 Kings 20:35; 2 Kings 2:3, 5, 7).



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2. Group Discipleship Relationships

The Scribes

- Political responsibilities – advisors in the royal court (2 Sam. 8:16-18; 20:23-25; 1 Kings 4:1-6).



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2. Group Discipleship Relationships

The Wise Men

- The “sage” and the Old Testament concept of “wisdom” is framed in a three-fold manner:
 - Wisdom as a world outlook.
 - A posture for teaching.
 - A tradition.



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Discipleship in the World of Judaism

- Disciples of Israel's religious heritage. Philo of Alexandria described it as —a person who was a direct disciple of God, guided directly by God and could in turn guide others. The ability to learn from God Himself without recourse to external instruction.
- "Disciple of Moses" commitment to God and His revelation (cf. John 9:28), a direct line with the revelation of God to Moses through Torah (cf. v. 29).



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Discipleship in the World of Judaism

- Josephus writing of John Hyrcanus called him a "disciple of the Pharisees" (Ant. 13:289), an adherent of the Pharisaic organization or a follower of the organization's way of thinking. The Pharisee Pollion and his disciple Samaias (Ant. 15:3; 15:370).
- In Matthew 2:18 and 22:16-it is the intense study of the Scriptures, and uniquely the oral tradition, but also fully committed to living out the Law and tradition.
- Later rabbinic master-disciple relationships evolved into a formal educational system for training rabbis. The student centered his studies on learning and practicing Torah.



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Discipleship in the World of Judaism

The Qumran community.

- Although neither Hebrew nor Aramaic terms for "disciple" are found in the Qumran literature, the organization of this community demonstrates concepts of discipleship.
- Some of those are...
 - The community saw itself as the righteous remnant of Israel.
 - The Teacher of Righteousness was the founder/organizer of the community (CD 1:10-11),
 - And it developed into a cloistered, communal, brotherhood in the desert.



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Discipleship in the World of Judaism

- Specific guidelines were developed for admission to the community (1QS 6:13-23):
 1. After examination by an official,
 2. The initiate entered into agreement with the “Covenant”
 3. After which followed an examination by the “Many.”
 4. Investigation of the person's spirit and work conducted by the Community for a year, with examination of his understanding of Torah at the end of that year.
 5. After that examination, the initiate yielded possessions, turning them over to common use & control of the group.
 6. A second trial year came with an examination for final admission following the second year.



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Discipleship in the World of Judaism

The Qumran community.

- Lack of technical terminology for “disciple” indicates all were part of one brotherhood.
- Discipleship was not a scribal or academic or philosophical pursuit, but rather was expressed in imitation & community conviction (CD 4:19).
- Shared communal lifestyle and commitment to the interpretations of the Teacher made the community one brotherhood and made them distinct within Israel.



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Implications Of Old Testament Discipleship

- God with his people finds explicit fulfillment in Jesus with his people. This is especially stressed in John's Gospel (see John 1:14; 14:1-17:25).
- The relationship established between God and Israel was a divine-human one that anticipates the relationship to which Jesus would call his followers.
- The various discipleship relationships of the Old Testament prepare us for the kind of relationship Jesus calls the apostles, and the kinds of relationships that would develop within the church. We can observe three key points:



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Implications Of Old Testament Discipleship

- a. A form of mentoring is initiated in the OT that carries into the NT. Jesus personally prepared his disciples to carry on his work. In turn, the disciples prepared others to continue that work (e.g. John Mark, Timothy, Titus).
- b. The mentoring relationships in both Testaments are oriented towards service.
- c. Service oriented mentoring provided training for leadership. In the OT they were to point to Yahweh. In the NT they point to Jesus, who commanded to “make disciples of all nations”.