

# **DIVINE FULFILLMENT**

*“Fulfill”* Matthew 5:17

## **LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT**

I am dismayed by many who are saying we should ignore the Old Testament as many younger folks are turned off by a God who sanctioned and actually commanded His people at times to go to war with their enemies. And in case you think this is a fringe view, it is the position taken by the pastor of the second most attended church in America. The best response to the immature demands should be increased instruction in the Word rather than acquiescence to people's unwise requests. The Old Testament has so much to teach us. I cannot even begin to catalog all we can receive from studying its pages. However, I will mention two of its most important lessons.

- God, who is holy, demanded of His people that they obey His holy law in order to be in relationship with Him and receive His blessings.
- Man was completely unable to fulfill that command because of the weakness of His flesh and the evil present in his carnal nature.

If you accept Scripture as God's Word, the truths contained in these two lessons are irrefutable. They illustrate the rock and the hard place, the irresistible force meeting, the immovable object that mankind faced once sin entered the picture through Adam's willful, disobedient action in defiance of God's instructions. And man was unable to solve this problem: full stop. It is the Old Testament that makes this so clear.

## **THE ANSWER TO THIS DILEMMA IS FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

And these two lessons, found in the Old Testament, lead us directly to the heart of the New Testament. This dilemma had to be solved, to allow mankind to have the relationship with God that He desired for us to enjoy. And so Jesus came.

## **FULFILLMENT NOT DESTRUCTION**

But Jesus, who never broke one tenant of God's law, said He did not come to destroy the law or toss the Old Testament into the trash can. The law laid out in the Old Testament is where we learn the difference between behaviors that please God and those that displease Him. Those lessons are not meant to be discarded. They should rather be studied. Because what Jesus did by fulfilling the law, released us not from the wisdom of the law, but from the penalty due us when we break it. By not breaking the law, Jesus was able to become the sacrificial penalty for our sins in a way the animal sacrifice system of the Old Testament never could. His sacrifice eternally does away with the penalties demanded by the law when we sin. Believers should embrace the Old Testament, as it was the path to the New Testament. Praise the Name of Jesus!