DO WE NEED THE NEW TESTAMENT?

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Category: Bible & Mission

From time to time I post something about my perception that Evangelicals, even Bible translatorsÂ (or a talk here), don't pay sufficient attention to the Old Testament. However, it isn't often that I come across someone suggesting that we may not actually need the New Testament; but that is the excellent issue that John Goldingay raises in this excellent article.

> ***Do we need the New Testament because the Old Testament focuses exclusively on Israel and we would not otherwise know that God was concerned for the whole world? Did God not reveal his concern for the nations before Jesus came?*** *In fact, that concern for the nations goes back to the beginning. God created the whole world and was involved with the development of all the nations. The aim of Godâ€™s appearing to Abraham was not simply to bless him but to drive the nations to pray for blessing like Abrahamâ€™s. Godâ€™s judgment of the Egyptians and the Canaanites does not mean God is unconcerned about other nations, as Godâ€™s judgment of Israel and Godâ€™s judgment of the church does not mean God is unconcerned about Israel and about the church. Prophets look forward to a time when nations will flock to Jerusalem to get Yahweh to make decisions for them. Psalms repeatedly summon all the nations to acknowledge Yahweh with their praise. (Emphasis mine.)*

Though he doesn't actually say that we don't need the New Testament, Goldingay successfully points out that there is less difference between the two testaments than we sometimes suppose and that some of the things which we see as being specific to the NT are actually shared by both. It's a great read.

If you are a reader, then you might enjoy Goldingay's web page which has a wealth of articles on the Old Testament as well as on a wider range of theological and biblical issues. If you are not a reader (and shame on you) then you can see him lecture on whether we need the New Testament in a video that I posted yesterday.