OLD TESTAMENT

The pre-Christian section of the Christian Bible, identical with the Jewish Bible except for the order of the book. In the Roman Catholic Church and some other denominations, the Old Testament is used in a form expanded by the Apocrypha.

On the whole, Old Testament study and pastoral studies have continued as separate disciplines within an academic field. Occasionally such large concepts as 'well-being’ *(shalom)* have been incorporated into pastoral thinking. Yet careful and critical study of the Old Testament can inform pastoral studies (Peterson, 1980; Capps, 1981). Pastoral studies also have the capacity to draw attention to aspects of the Old Testament's own concerns. Among the themes and insights which the Old Testament can provide pastoral studies may be included: (1) *fundamental insights on humanity:* e.g. men and women created equal but doomed to hierarchy, communal and individual, working and resting, responsible and needy, living and on the way to death, enjoying youth, maturity and old age; (2) *fundamental concepts for the shaping of human life,* such as blessing, well-being, decisive judgement, right/rights/rightness/righteousness/justice, faithfulness/constancy/truth, integrity/wholeness/innocence, passion/mercy, commitment/steadfast love, trust, hope, grace, covenant/contract/relationship; (3) *stories of God's activity in relation to individuals* (e.g. Abraham, David, Job. Jeremiah, Jonah) and communities (e.g. Exod., Num.), which as stories recognize the narrative form of human experience and resource the narrative aspect to the pastoral task; (4) *stories of human pastors at work,* both negative and positive models (e.g. Eli and Hannah, Nathan and David, Job's friends; (5) *stories of people facing the interwoven issues* raised by human involvement in sex and violence (Judges) and in power and wealth (David, Solomon); (6) *stories of people taking responsibility* for their destiny and their relationships, often despite contemporary cultural norms (e.g. Hagar, Joseph, Ruth, Esther); (7) *stories which subordinate ‘pastoral’ concerns* to the perceived priorities of the community and of God's purpose (e.g. Ezra—Nehemiah); (8) *anthologies* emerging from God’s pastoral/prophetic ministry to the people of God and to other peoples, in sin and in need, confronting both confidence and gloom (e.g. Isa., Jer., Ezek.); (9) *models of pastoral ministry,* such as prophet, priest and sage; and a subverting of the image of the 'pastoral' by an understanding of the pastor/shepherd as a person of power and authority as well as provider and carer, and one who thinks socially not merely psycholo­gically, and corporately not merely individu­ally; (10) *material and models for the pastor* to enable individuals and communities to express their grief, loss, anger, hurt, doubt, enthusiasm, joy, and gratitude, and to relate these to God, in pastoral and liturgical contexts (Pss., Lam., Eccles.); (11) *specific insights for everyday life* in connection with matters such as friendship, sexual relationships, relationships with God, and possessions (Exod., Deut., Prov., Song of Sol.).