

Abstract

This dissertation is an attempt to promote increased use of the Old Testament in Christian worship. Of all the many important themes in the Old Testament, the scope of this study only permits four aspects to be examined by the author. It is hoped that the four aspects chosen, namely, Suffering, Lament, Poetry and Preaching will suffice to demonstrate something of the vast, rich treasure of the Hebrew Scriptures and persuade those who are not already doing so, to incorporate more of the Old Testament into their worship through liturgy, preaching and pastoral ministry.

Ancient Israelite faith, by the very nature of its development and growth, lends itself to the complexities of our twenty-first century world. The Jewish faith always had to struggle against the prevailing polycultural and polytheistic society in which it was situated. Similarly we find ourselves in an increasingly secularist situation today, where church attendance is greatly reduced and there are many other competing voices clamouring for attention. We also live in a very divided and conflicted world with ongoing problems of inequality and racism, necessitating us to be more inclusive in our outreach. The Old Testament contributes greatly with respect to encouraging a fairer and more equitable distribution of wealth, urging that the voices of the poor and marginalized need to be heard and addressed. It is my contention that the Old Testament has much to offer our fragmented, broken and suffering society.