

## CHAPTER IV

### THE OLD TESTAMENT

14. In carefully planning and preparing the salvation of the whole human race the God of infinite love, by a special dispensation, chose for Himself a people to whom He would entrust His promises. First He entered into a covenant with Abraham (cf. *Gen.* 15, 18) and, through Moses, with the people of Ismael (cf. *Ex.* 24, 8). Through words and deeds, He so manifested Himself to this chosen people as the one true and living God that Israel came to know the ways of God with men from experience. And when God Himself spoke to the people through the Prophets, they daily gained a deeper and clearer understanding of His ways, and they made them more widely known among the nations (cf. *Psa.* 21, 28-29; 95, 1-3; *Is.* 2, 1-4; *Jer.* 3, 17). The plan of salvation foretold, recounted and explained by the sacred authors is found as the true word of God in the books of the Old Testament; and so these divinely-inspired books remain permanently valuable. "For all that was written was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." (*Rom.* 15, 4).

#### Important to Christians

15. The principal purpose of the Old Covenant's plan was to prepare for the coming of Christ, the Redeemer of all and of the messianic kingdom, to announce this coming by prophecy (cf. *Lk.* 24, 44; *Jn.* 5, 39; *1 Pt.* 1, 10), and to indicate its meaning through various types (cf. *1 Cor.* 10, 11). The books of the Old Testament, in accordance with mankind's state before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to everyone the knowledge of God and man as well as the ways in which the just and merciful God deals with men. Although these books also contain some things which are incomplete and temporary, they nevertheless show us true divine pedagogy.<sup>25</sup> They reveal a lively sense

<sup>25</sup> Pius XI, Encyc. letter *Mit Brennender Sorge*, March 14, 1937: *AAS* 29 (1937), p. 151.

of God, and they contain a store of sublime teachings about Him, sound wisdom about human life, and a wonderful treasury of prayers. In these books the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way. Christians should receive them with reverence.

### Unity of both Testaments

16. God, the inspirer and author of the books of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old made manifest in the New.<sup>29</sup> For, though Christ established the new covenant in His blood (cf. *Lk.* 22, 20; *1 Cor.* 11, 25), still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, taken up into the proclamation of the Gospel,<sup>30</sup> acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament (cf. *Mt.* 5, 17; *Lk.* 24, 27; *Rom.* 16, 25-26; *2 Cor.* 3, 14-16). And in turn they shed light on it and explain it.

## CHAPTER V

### THE NEW TESTAMENT

17. The word of God, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe (cf. *Rom.* 1, 16), is set forth and shows its power in a most excellent way in the writings of the New Testament. When the fullness of time arrived (cf. *Gal.* 4, 4), the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us in His fullness of grace and truth (cf. *Jn.* 1, 14). Christ established the kingdom of God on earth, manifesting His Father and Himself by deeds and words. He completed His work by His death, resurrection and glorious ascension and by the sending of the Holy Spirit. Having been lifted up from the earth, He draws all men to Himself (cf. *Jn.* 12, 32, Greek text), He who alone has the words

<sup>29</sup> St. Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 2, 73: PL 34, 623.

<sup>30</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* III, 21, 3: PG 7, 950; (Same as 25, 1: Harvey 2, p. 115). St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses* 4, 35: PG 33, 497. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Sophonia* 1, 4-6: PG 66, 452D-453A.