

Old and New Covenants

Heb. 7:18,19 “For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness

19 (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”

It is useless, weak and makes nothing perfect

Ps. 19:7 “The Law of the Lord is perfect”

Ps. 119:18 “Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law.”

Which is it? useless or perfect? weak or enlightening?

Depends on the point of view. What are you needing the law for? to be saved or learn more about God?
we must get a grasp on this subject.

I. Separating the Covenants

A. No Principle More Important or Confused

Nothing is more important in understanding Bible Authority – how to do things by the will of God - than in making the proper distinction between the Old and New Testament – the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ.

1.) Importance

One of the most famous sermons preached during the early days of the Restoration Movement in America was Alexander Campbell's Sermon on the Law. This sermon was preached before the meeting of the Redstone Association on August 30, 1816.

It “set a basic pattern for the interpretation of Scripture in the Restoration Movement (James Deforest Murch, *Christians Only*, pg. 62).

Campbell's sermon was printed in pamphlet form and reprinted 30 years later in the *Millennial Harbinger* (1846, pg. 493ff).

This sermon was so stunning for its difference from mainstream thought.

2.) Need For Understanding

When one understands the Biblical distinction between the two covenants, he does not look to the Old Testament as authority for infant baptism,

observation of holy days

keeping of the Sabbath

mechanical instruments of music in worship

a special priestly order with distinctive garments

the burning of incense

the union of church and state, etc.

B. N.T. Clearly Shows Difference in Covenants

Entire sections of letters are dedicated to this teaching. Rom. 7; 2 Cor. 3; Gal. 3,4

Col. 2:13,14 “and when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He

made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,
14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us *and* which was hostile to us;
 and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”
 the entire book of Hebrews

C. Hebrews: 13 Times “Better”

This repeated use of the word “better” is the key to the book of Hebrews.

Ch. 1 Christ better Than Angels

Ch. 3 Christ Better Than Moses

Ch. 4 Christ Better Than Joshua

Chs. 5-7 Christ Better Than Levitical Priests

Ch. 8 Better Covenant

Ch. 9 Better Priesthood

Ch. 10 Better Sacrifice

Heb. 7:19 “(for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”

Heb. 7:22 “so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.”

Heb. 8:6 “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.”

Heb. 10:34 “you have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one.”

Heb. 11:40 “God had provided something better for us”

II. Reasons For The New Covenant

A. First Was Faulty

Heb. 8:7,8 “For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

8 For finding fault with them, He says...”

1.) Covenants Involve 2 Parties

– God - via the Book of the Law

– People of Israel - by agreement

Ex. 24:3,7,8 “Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, “All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!”

7 “Then he took the book of the covenant and read *it* in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!”

8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

2.) Neither God Nor His Law Was Faulty

Rom. 7:12 “So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.”

Ps. 19:7,8 “The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”

3.) The People Were At Fault they didn't keep the covenant

Heb. 8:9 "NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD."

B. Mosaic Law Had A Limited Purpose

1.) Secondary Purposes

a.) Health

all the unclean things and people, cleansings, regulations of touching dead bodies, etc. where for a reason

Leprosy cast the greatest blight that threw its shadow over the daily life of medieval humanity. Fear of all other diseases taken together can hardly be compared to the terror spread by leprosy. Not even Black Death in the fourteenth century or the appearance of syphilis towards the end of the fifteenth century produced a similar state of fright...Early in the Middle Ages, during the sixth and seventh centuries, it began to spread more widely in Europe and became a serious social and health problem. It was endemic particularly among the poor and reached a terrifying peak in the thirteenth and fourteenth century.

Leadership was taken by the church, as physicians had nothing to offer. The church took as its guiding principle the concept of contagion as embodied in the Old Testament...This idea and its practical consequences are defined with great clarity in the book of Leviticus...Once the condition of leprosy had been established, the patient was to be segregated from the community.

Following the precepts laid down in Leviticus the church undertook the task of combating leprosy...it accomplished the first great feat...in *the* methodical eradication of disease.

from George Rosen *History of Public Health* pp. 62,63

from *None of Those Diseases* by David Stern M.D. pg. 21

b.) Government

Protect from injustice– exact prescriptions on murders, frauds, assaults, etc.

This was their entire social order.

c.) Control of Man

Gal. 3:19 "Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made."

1 Tim. 1:8-11 "But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully,

9 realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers

10 and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching,

11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted."

semi-barbarous, two centuries slaves to pagans, many did not even know the name of God

Compare Jewish world with heathens - both under sin, but which was in a better condition?

Even realizing that the O.T. standard of morality is lower than that of true Christianity,

wouldn't this world still be so much better a place if men would live up to its code?

2.) Bring People To Christ

1.) by control of man until proper time

2.) by telling these controlled me to expect the Christ to come.

Jn. 5:39 “You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me”

I have often heard this passage applied as meaning we need Christ, not the N.T. texts.

This is ludicrous - how am I going to know Christ aside from the N.T.?

No, this is about people who claim to believe in the O.T. but say that they don't believe in Christ.

This is the person that has the problem.

Deut. 18:18,19 “I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

19 And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him.”

3.) When Purpose Fulfilled No Longer Needed

Gal. 3:24,25 “Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”

III. The New Covenant Foretold Jer. 31:31-33 & Heb. 8:8-12

A. New Replaces Old

Chronology

Law of Moses given in 1445 B.C.

Jeremiah Prophesied about 600 B.C. that a New Covenant coming Jer. 31:31-33

60 A.D. Hebrew writer says the new has come.

so 850 years after the law came and 630 years before the new came.

New

Heb. 8:8 “For finding fault with them, He says, “BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH”

2537 ΚΑΙ ΝΟΣ *kainos* AV - new 44; 44

1) new 1a) as respects for - recently made, fresh, recent...which as recently made is superior to what it succeeds

1b) as respects substance - of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of

Heb. 12:24 “and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.”

3501 ΝΕΟΣ *neos* AV - new 11, younger 7, young man 2, new man 1, young women 1, younger man 1, young 1; 24

1) recently born, young, youthful

2) new

kainos - denotes the new primarily in reference to quality – superior

neos - denotes the new primarily in reference to time – more recent

Thus the Old is replaced.

Heb. 8:13 “When He said, “A new *covenant*,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.”

Col. 2:14 “having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us *and* which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

Religious aspects of Law nailed to cross
civil institutions destroyed 70 A.D.

B. Better Things In The New Covenant

These passage quotes the old testament at length.

1.) Emphasis Is On The Heart vs. 10

vs. **10** “FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS”

The new system based on Inner Emphasis

Spiritual rather than external and formal

1.) First Covenant Written on Tables of Stone

2.) New Written on Heart

We are made to put the Divine Will on our own spirit and desires.

2.) Universal Knowledge For All In Covenant Relationship With God vs. 11

11 “AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.”

be their God, be My people

all of those who know God, and only those who know God, shall be in the church.

Jn. 6:45 “It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.'

Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”

3.) These Require Change of Entrance Requirements

a.) Old Covenant – Be Born In

circumcised on the 8th day

Gen. 17:10-12 “This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised.

11 And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you.

12 And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.”

Lev. 12:13 “And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.”

where you are born tells nothing of your heart

it tells nothing of what you choose to learn and make important in your heart

b.) New Covenant – All Shall Know – Be Born Again In

be born again in

Jn. 6:44,45 “No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone

who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”

The people will be drawn by hearing, and leaning - then coming.

Jn. 3:5 “Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

All will be taught and baptized.

You can choose to come to know God, you can choose to have a new heart and a new birth.

4.) Absolute Forgiveness of Sins vs. 12

12 “FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE.”

a.) Old Covenant Could Not Forgive Sins

Heb. 10:1-4 “For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.

2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

3 But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year.

4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”

b.) Pardon Provided Through the Blood of Christ

Heb. 10:10 “By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

Jn. 1:29 “The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

IV. Still Beneficial To Us

Rom. 15:4 “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

A. Illustrations & Examples

Necessary Background for Setting, History of the Teaching

Examples of N.T. Teaching

consider this extensive use of the O.T.

1 Cor. 10:1-11 “For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 and all ate the same spiritual food;

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

6 Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved.

7 And do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.”

8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.

9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents.

10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”

vs. 6 & 11 examples - for our instruction
 this teaches about the the fact that God's people can be drawn away,
 God's displeasure with sin,
 and the danger of falling away and the punishment that it brings.
 In the O.T. you can learn the history of man,
 about faith, repentance and redemption
 arrogance, departures and destruction
 there is no N.T. lesson that cannot be illustrated with O.T. examples

B. Lead To Christ - Proven Predictive Prophecies

We can establish beyond all doubt - even to the satisfaction of the skeptics - that the O.T. was certainly in existence in its present form before the time of Christ.

And it speaks of Him repeatedly.

From beginning to end of Jesus life

Isa. 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

Matt. 2:16-18 "Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its environs, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi.

17 Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying,

18 A VOICE WAS HEARD IN RAMAH, WEEPING AND GREAT MOURNING, RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN; AND SHE REFUSED TO BE COMFORTED, BECAUSE THEY WERE NO MORE."

even the things that happened after his death

Matt. 27:9,10 "Then that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, "AND THEY TOOK THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, THE PRICE OF THE ONE WHOSE PRICE HAD BEEN SET by the sons of Israel;

10 AND THEY GAVE THEM FOR THE POTTER'S FIELD, AS THE LORD DIRECTED ME."

Isa. 53:9 "His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth."

Though the O.T. is no longer our law, what better teacher is there?

where is there more wisdom than the proverbs?

where is there more encouragement than the psalms?

where is there more information on the past and character of men than the histories?

CONCL.:

- 1.) Old Covenant served an important purpose in the development of God's plan for the redemption of man. For nearly 1500 years the Mosaic Covenant contained God's law for the Israelites. But that covenant has been superseded by the better covenant. Now all men, both Jews and Gentiles, live under the same New Covenant Scriptures.
- 2.) Today, Use the Old Law as God intended – get background, to illustrate and give examples of principles and show proofs of God's plan and trustworthiness
- 3.) The New Covenant is superior in every respect and is our great guide.