

END-TIMES ISSUES

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#32 Mosaic and New Covenants compared.

1

GOD IS IN THE PROCESS OF RECLAIMING THE WORLD!

✓ The final outcome can be seen in the words of this song, which will be sung in the presence of God:

"... you [= Jesus, as the "Lamb"] were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God **persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.**

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Revelation 5:9b-10 (NIV)

✓ But many things need to happen before this time.

- ✦ To start, those who will be a part of the kingdom of God need to know how to *live* as members of the kingdom!
- ✦ Two covenants accomplish this: The **Mosaic Covenant** teaches us how to live, and the **New Covenant** embeds within us (God's people) the desire to live that way.

2

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE MOSAIC ("OLD") AND NEW COVENANTS.

3

THE LAW, IN THE MOSAIC AND NEW COVENANTS:

Mosaic Covenant's LAW	New Covenant's LAW
God's Law is external , written on tablets of stone.	God's Law is internal , written on the heart.
This law is addressed to a group , which contains both saved and unsaved people.	This law is embedded in the hearts and minds of saved individuals . (Unsaved people may try faking it.)
People must choose whether or not to live by it. Doing so requires trusting God for the needed heart change.	These people do choose to live by it; they <i>do</i> trust God; they <i>do</i> have a changed heart.
Many who hear this law remain unsaved . They <u>all</u> are born with unchanged hearts, and many <i>never</i> trust God (in order to receive the changed hearts/minds, which would result in changed lives).	100% of those who "hear" (recognize and submit to) this law are saved . (In this present world, there will be others who <i>claim</i> to be saved, but who's hearts and lives remain unchanged.)

4

WHO IT IS ADDRESSED TO:

Old (Mosaic) Covenant

Addressed to the *entire group*. As individuals, they must decide whether or not to trust God.

New Covenant

Embedded within the *individual*. They *do* respond with trust in God.

The accomplishments of the New Covenant could not occur until Jesus made it possible, through his sacrifice and resurrection.

The New Covenant brings changes in our *desires and actions*. (The *moral obligations* do not change.)

5

HOW A PERSON ENTERS THE COVENANT:

Old (Mosaic) Covenant

By physical birth. The person is born unsaved, and may (or may not) choose to trust God.

New Covenant

By spiritual birth, by the Holy Spirit, *at the time* the person is saved.

The people had to be repeatedly told to *trust* God, because most of them didn't. More often than not, Israel's history was characterized by rebellion against God.

Those under this covenant *do* trust God – though at times they may have a *temporary lapse* of faith, or may need encouragement to *grow* in their faith/trust.

6

THE PLACE OF OTHER NATIONS (GENTILES) UNDER THE COVENANTS:

Old (Mosaic) Covenant

Other nations are *not* a part of this covenant, though *individuals* from other nations may be saved.

New Covenant

This covenant affects *individuals anywhere*. People from *all* nations are being saved.

7

UNDER THE NEW COVENANT: WHAT WE SEE, VS. WHAT GOD SEES:

Being part of the **New Covenant** is NOT the same as being in a **"church."**

- In some Scripture passages, the word "church" refers only to saved people. These people have changed hearts. (We might call this "the church as God sees it.")
 - This would match the concept of "New Covenant."
- In other passages, the word "church" refers to people in a local area, who meet together. This would include not only saved people, but also people who have *not* made such a commitment – children (who are not old enough to understand), fakes (who might claim to be saved, though their actions deny it), and even people asking questions (about what it means to follow Jesus).
 - This mixture of individuals would be more similar to the mixture of saved-unsaved people that were present in Israel, under the Old Covenant.

8

THE "PARABLE OF THE SOWER" (FARMER WHO PLANTED SEEDS)*

ILLUSTRATES THESE DIFFERENCES:

Old (Mosaic) Covenant

ALL of these might be present.

On the HARD PATH (NO faith)

In rocky soil (TEMPORARY faith)

Among the WEEDS (MEANINGLESS faith)

FRUITFUL grown plants (Genuine, LIVING faith)

ONLY these are under the **New Covenant.**

New Covenant

ALL of these might be present in a "church."

On the HARD PATH (NO faith)

In rocky soil (TEMPORARY faith)

Among the WEEDS (MEANINGLESS faith)

FRUITFUL grown plants (Genuine, LIVING faith)

* (Parable found in Matthew 13, Mark 4 and Luke 8, illustrating 4 types of people.)

9

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT YOU ARE UNDER THE NEW COVENANT?

Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

2 Timothy 2:19 (NIV)

- The Lord knows. You can't fool him – and it's *stupid* to try!
- Our duty isn't merely to *claim* we are saved. We must back up this claim with a willingness to turn away from wickedness! *If we aren't willing to do this, we aren't saved.*
- This obligation is found throughout the New Testament. It's *not* a "work" for salvation. If we do it out of love for God, *we are demonstrating that the heart changes have actually occurred.*
- Even under the *Old Covenant*, there was a need to *trust* God and to *obey* him.

10

THE OLD COVENANT REQUIRED NOT ONLY OBEEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDS, BUT THE HEART CHANGE THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE:

Old (Mosaic) Covenant

ALL of these might be present.*

On the HARD PATH (NO faith)

In rocky soil (TEMPORARY faith)

Among the WEEDS (MEANINGLESS faith)

FRUITFUL grown plants (Genuine, LIVING faith)

ONLY these have the necessary **heart change.**

- The purpose of the Old Covenant (also called "the Law") was to show people how to live.
- People needed changed hearts; but **changing hearts wasn't the Old Covenant's purpose!**
- Anyone who was willing to *trust* God would have a changed heart – and they would be willing to do what the Law taught.

* Types of people, based on the "Parable of the Sower."

11

THIS IS WHY MOSES AND THE PROPHETS (AND GOD) KEPT EMPHASIZING THE NEED FOR A CHANGED HEART... IN PEOPLE WHO WERE ALREADY UNDER THE OLD COVENANT!

Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

Deuteronomy 5:29 (NIV)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

Deuteronomy 6:5-6 (NIV)

"These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

Isaiah 29:13b (NIV)

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A FOCUS ON THE MOSAIC ("OLD") COVENANT, AND WHY WE NEED THE NEW COVENANT.

13

THE MOSAIC (OLD) COVENANT: **WORTHLESS** FOR SAVING PEOPLE.

- ✓ The Old Covenant sacrifices *could not* accomplish what Jesus did.

The former regulation [= what the Levitical priests did] is set aside because it was weak and useless (**for the law made nothing perfect**), and a better hope is introduced [= what Jesus did], by which we draw near to God.

Hebrews 7:18-19 (NIV)

- ✓ We have *all* sinned *many times*. Yet even just *one* sin – just *one* violation of the Law – would place us under its curse.

All who rely on works of the law are **under a curse**. For it is written: "**Cursed** is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

Galatians 3:10 (BSB); quoting Deuteronomy 27:26.

14

- ✓ Our only hope is in Jesus, who lived a sinless life.

[Jesus] has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet **he did not sin**.

Hebrews 4:15b (NIV)

... Jesus Christ, **the Righteous One**.

1 John 2:1b (BSB)

- ✓ He paid for *our* sin, by dying in *our* place, on the cross. He *became* our curse.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law **by becoming a curse for us**. For it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Galatians 3:13 (BSB); quoting Deuteronomy 21:23.

15

- ✓ What the Law couldn't do, God did through Jesus, who – by his death and resurrection – brought to us the New Covenant.

"This is the **covenant** I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord.

I will put My laws in their hearts and inscribe them on their minds."

Hebrews 10:16 (BSB)

- ✓ This covenant was confirmed/sealed/ratified by his blood – the sacrifice of himself on the cross.

... **the new covenant in My blood**, which is poured out for you.

Luke 22:20b (BSB)

[You have come] ... to Jesus the mediator of **a new covenant**, and to **the sprinkled blood** ...

Hebrews 12:24a (BSB)

16

- ✓ Under the New Covenant, Jesus accomplished the "great exchange," which enables us to be seen as righteous in God's sight.

- The Law requires *perfect righteousness*. We could *never* meet this requirement. *But Jesus met it for us with this "great exchange."*

God made Him who knew no sin **to be sin on our behalf**, so that in Him we might **become the righteousness of God**.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (BSB)

- ✓ What Jesus did affects not only our standing before *God*, but also our attitude toward *doing good*!

[Jesus Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, **eager to do what is good**.

Titus 2:14 (NIV)

17

WHY DID THE LAW FAIL?

(Salvation wasn't its purpose; but it couldn't accomplish it anyway.)

- ✓ The LAW is *good*. In fact, its commands are *holy, righteous* and *good*.

So then, the law is **holy**, and the commandment is **holy, righteous, and good**.

Romans 7:12 (BSB)

- ✓ But SIN used that *good* law to increase our *desire to sin*.

For **sin**, seizing its opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through the commandment **put me to death**.

Did that which is good, then, become death to me? Certainly not! But in order that **sin** might be exposed as sin, it **produced death in me** through what was good, so that through the commandment **sin** might become utterly sinful.

Romans 7:11, 13 (BSB)

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- ✓ What the Law couldn't do (because of what sin did with it), God did through Jesus. *Sin used our flesh to destroy us... so Jesus took on human flesh to destroy sin!*

For what the **law was powerless** to do because it was **weakened by the flesh**, God did by sending his own Son **in the likeness of sinful flesh** to be a sin offering.

And so he **condemned sin in the flesh**, ...

Romans 8:3 (NIV)

- ✓ Now, God sees the law's righteous requirements as having been met in us – people who, under the New Covenant, now desire to live according to the Spirit!

And so **he condemned sin in the flesh**, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, **who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit**.

Romans 8:3b-4 (NIV)

19

(Though *worthless* for *saving* people...)

THE MOSAIC (OLD) COVENANT: EXCELLENT FOR SHOWING PEOPLE HOW TO LIVE.

↻ As long as we keep things within context. ↻

- ✓ Moral principles that apply to **all people**, at all times, everywhere.
- ✓ Regulations that apply **only to nations**, and not to individuals.
- ✓ Obligations given **only to Israel** – because God chose them to be a light to the world.

As a nation, Israel failed in *all* of these matters.

Yet we cannot necessarily say that we have done any better.

There is much we can learn from the law. If we *trust* God, we can pursue the "obedience of faith" (Romans 1:5; 16:26) that the Holy Spirit – under the New Covenant – enables us to pursue!

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OUR MISSION:

Learn to think CLEARLY about these issues!

- ⇒ Both Old and New Testaments affirm that the Law is *GOOD*.
- ⇒ Yet, because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross, parts of the Law have been fulfilled and no longer apply to us. (Other parts, written for specific groups, might have *never* applied to us.)
- ⇒ We need to learn to distinguish between the parts that *don't* apply to us, and the ones that *do* apply! (*This is our future goal.*)

We will end with a **CONSIDERATION** and a **WARNING**.

21

A CONSIDERATION: THE LAW (PRIMARILY THE MORAL LAW) IS GENERALLY VIEWED AS HAVING THREE USES UNDER THE NEW COVENANT:

1. **To RESTRAIN SIN.** Even though sin *still* finds ways to express itself, knowledge of the law has at least some restraining effect. *None of us lives up to our maximum potential to sin!*
2. **To POINT US TO CHRIST.** We discover that we *don't* and *can't* attain the righteous requirements of the law. *We need* the "Great Exchange," in which Jesus takes *our* sin, and gives us *his* righteousness. Though we aren't *sinless*, this exchange means that God sees the righteousness of Jesus (instead of our sin) as though it were accomplished in us.
3. **To SHOW US HOW TO LIVE.** The law *is* holy and good. Under the New Covenant, God embeds within us the *desire* to live holy and to do what is good. We learn from the law what these holy and good things are!

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WARNING: PEOPLE TEND TO EMPHASIZE HALF OF THE TRUTH.

- People who emphasize *works* tend to forget the need to *trust* God for the ability to do those works.
- People who emphasize *trust/faith* in God tend to forget the need to pursue the holiness that results in *obedience* to God.
- *We need to emphasize both, being fully aware that God is the one who makes both possible.* He gives us a *living* faith!

For it is by **grace** you have been saved through **faith**, ... created in Christ Jesus to do good **works**, ...

Ephesians 2:8a, 10b (BSB)

For **God is working in you**, giving you the **desire** [= the heart change] and the **power to do** [= action/works] what pleases him.

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

So too, **faith** by itself, if it does not result in **action**, is dead.

James 2:17 (BSB)

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Credits

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