

What's All This about the “New Covenant”?

What is the “Old Covenant”? What is the “NEW Covenant”? How are they different? How are they the same, or similar? Is the “Old Covenant” abolished? What are the terms of the “New Covenant”? There is a great deal of confusion on this subject! Millions have been deceived! Let's examine this mystery, and understand the plain TRUTH!

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(Proof Read For Typographical Errors & Updated August 2018)

In the book of Genesis, soon after the Flood, God made a covenant with Noah and his descendants that He would never again subject the earth to a worldwide deluge which would destroy all life on the planet, mankind and animals. God told Noah and his family, “ ‘As for me, I am establishing my COVENANT with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you that never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ God said, ‘This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth” (Gen.9:9-16, NRSV).

Notice that this is an ETERNAL covenant. It still stands today!

The next covenant mentioned in Scripture is found in Genesis 15. God came to Abraham, and commanded him to bring certain sacrifices to Him – a heifer, a female goat, a ram, and a turtledove and young pigeon. Abraham made the sacrifice, and as the sun went down a deep sleep overtook him, during which the LORD spoke to him and foretold that his offspring would be aliens in a land not theirs for 400 years, suffering oppression (Gen.15:7-14), but God would deliver them. When the sun had gone down, a flaming torch and a smoking fire pot passed between the pieces of the sacrifices. “On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt [the Nile] to the river Euphrates . . .” (Gen.15:17-21).

In Genesis 17, the great covenant God made with Abraham was elucidated. God told him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. And I will make my

covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous. . . . As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations . . . and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and your offspring after you. And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien” (Gen.17:1-8).

This covenant was to be throughout their generations – forever. Every male was to be circumcised on the eighth day following birth as a “sign of the covenant” between God and the descendants of Abraham (vs.9-14).

Note that this was an eternal covenant, throughout their generations.

The “Old Covenant”

When God brought the descendants of Abraham, through his son Isaac, and his son Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, out of Egypt, as He had promised, 400 years later, He made a covenant with all the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. At Mount Sinai the people all agreed to the terms of this covenant, whereby God took them to be His special people, and they agreed to worship Him alone and to keep all His commandments. God had just brought them out of Egypt by divine miracles – ten plagues which He used to destroy the Egyptian bondage, and then the great miracle at the Red Sea, where He destroyed their pursuing army and host. Then He fed them miraculously in the desert with manna, “angels’ food,” and miraculously provided them with water to drink. He also defeated the hordes of the Amalekites who attacked them in the desert. After all these wonders, Israel was ready to serve the living, true God.

He said to them, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore if you will obey my voice and KEEP MY COVENANT, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:4-6).

The book of Exodus relates: “The people all answered as one: ‘Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do’” (v.8). God then gave them the Ten Commandments, as well as His statutes and judgments, to be obeyed, as His terms for the covenant He gave them (Exo.20-23). After Moses told the people God’s commands, and instructions, and ordinances, “All the people answered with one voice, and said: ‘All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do’” (Exo.24:3).

To seal the agreement, Moses offered sacrifices and peace offerings, “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 will be obedient.’ Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, ‘See the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words’” (Exo.24:7-8). At that time, God permitted Moses, Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel to eat and

drink in celebration in His presence, “and they saw [looked upon] the God of Israel” (verses 9-11). This is what is commonly referred to as the “Old Covenant.” When the people proved to be recalcitrant and often disobedient, God commanded special sin offerings to be made; He ordained the sons of Aaron as priests to Him, the construction of a Tabernacle, with the Ark of the Covenant, a table of showbread, a special seven lamp menorah to give light in His Tabernacle, and further laws and commandments for His people Israel. These are numbered in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. In Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, God explained how He would bless His people if they obeyed Him and observed His covenant; but He also foretold how He would punish the nation and the people if and when they disobeyed Him and broke His covenant!

The book of Judges shows how time and time again God’s people turned aside from keeping His commandments, and He punished them, and caused foreign nations to invade them, steal their goods, and oppress them, until they cried out to God in heartfelt repentance – and then He sent deliverers to rescue them.

Finally, after many years of rebellion, God cast the northern ten tribes out of His sight, and banished them from the Holy Land, because of their sins, idolatry, and wickedness (II Kings 17). This was in 718-721 B.C. When the Jewish nation to the south also rebelled against God and worshipped idols and committed wickedness, God also banished them from the land, allowing Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to take them into captivity, as was foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. He allowed many of the Jews to return to the land, however, during the Persian Empire, and to rebuild Jerusalem, in the days of Ezra the priest and Nehemiah the governor. The people once again subscribed themselves to obey God and to adhere to His covenant, weeping and confessing their sins (Ezra 9-10). Ezra taught the people the laws and decrees of God once again (Nehemiah 8:1-8; 9:1-5). The people who returned all “separated themselves from the peoples of the land to adhere to the law of God . . . to walk in God’s law, which was given by Moses, the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord and his ordinances and his statutes” Neh.10:28).

Those who obeyed God would reap both physical, national, and spiritual blessings. The promises were prosperity, peace, and well-being as a people, but they also were a “type” of a future covenant God would make with His people. This was to be known as the “New Covenant.”

What is this “NEW” covenant?

The New Covenant

Because of constant sin and rebellion, on the part of the people of Israel, God said through Isaiah the prophet, that when His people repent of their transgression, He would in the “End of Days” redeem His people and bring them back from slavery and out of bondage, to the land of Israel (Isa.59:20). God declares, “And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD: *my spirit that is upon you*, and my words that I

have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouths of your children, or out of the mouths of your children's children, says the LORD, from now on and forever" (Isaiah 59:21).

In other words, God foretold that He would make a NEW COVENANT with His people, in which His Holy Spirit would remain upon them, and their children, forever! Speaking of that soon-coming time, God says, "For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an EVERLASTING COVENANT with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed" (Isa.61:8-9).

Jeremiah the prophet spoke of this same covenant. He adds, "The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD.

"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: *I will put MY LAW within them, and I will write it on their HEARTS;* and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:31-33).

This is the famous, aptly called "NEW COVENANT"!

But how is this New Covenant different from the Old Covenant? Many people would like to know – and know the *truth!* Much false information and erroneous teaching has been disseminated on this subject!

Jeremiah continues this subject in chapter 32. God said, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, never to draw back from doing good to them; and *I will put the fear of me in their HEARTS,* so they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing good to them, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and with all my soul" (Jer.32:40-41).

This covenant will be instituted when the Messiah returns and delivers His people from the ends of the earth. Jeremiah asserts, "In those days and in that time, says the LORD, the people of Israel shall come, they and the people of Judah together; they shall come weeping as they seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with faces turned toward it, and they shall come and join themselves to the LORD by an *EVERLASTING COVENANT that will never be forgotten*" (Jer.50:4-5).

God says His people have been "lost sheep." In fact, He says it is "their shepherds" who have "led them astray" (Jer.50:6). That is, their spiritual leaders – those who were supposed to feed them God's truth and teach them His commandments, have instead perverted the Word of God and led His people ASTRAY! They have said, "The commandments of God are now abolished!" "You don't have to obey God!" "Jesus

came to do away with that horrible, terrible old law!” “The laws of God are repealed!” “Just BELIEVE on Christ – that’s all there is to it!”

But what does God Himself say? He says that in the New Covenant, He will WRITE HIS LAW IN THE HEARTS of His people! He says, in His Word, that He will write the “FEAR” of Him within their very HEARTS! That’s what *God* says!

Whom are we to believe?

In other words, forget all the nonsense you have heard – it’s all spiritual drivel, twaddle, and foolishness. Stop listening to ministers and teachers who try to tell you that even ONE IOTA of God’s Law is done away or abolished!

It just ‘ain’t so!” Positively NOT! The very thought is ABSURD!

Other ministers seem to think that they can “pick and choose” which commandments to keep and which to ignore. They don’t really teach the “whole counsel” or “law” of God – they are “partial in the law.”

Malachi the prophet foretold about them. He says that a true priest or minister of God is to walk in truth and uprightness and integrity, and thereby will turn many from iniquity. “For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction [Torah – the Law] from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But *you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to STUMBLE by your instruction . . . You have not kept my ways but have shown PARTIALITY in your instruction*” (Malachi 2:6-9, NRSV).

The King James Version has this: “For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the LAW at his mouth . . . But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the LAW [of God] . . . Ye have not kept my ways, but have been PARTIAL IN THE LAW” (Malachi 2:7-9). The NIV says, “You have shown *partiality in matters of the law.*”

Beware! False ministers are those who proclaim that *any part* of God’s Law is done away or abolished! Any part!

God thunders: “For I am the LORD, I change not” (Mal.3:6, KJV). He declares: “I the LORD do not change” (NIV). “For I the LORD do not change” (NRSV).

If God doesn’t change, then *His Law does not change! It is ETERNAL – PERMANENT – EVERLASTING! And it NEVER CHANGES!*

David wrote, “The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy. *They are established for ever and ever*, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness” (Psalm 111:7-8).

David wrote, “Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all day long” (Psalm 119:97). He wrote, “Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is always with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your decrees are my meditation” (v.98-99). He declared: “I incline my heart to perform your statutes *forever, to the end*” (v.112). He said, “I hate the double-minded, but I love your law” (v.113).

David, who was he? He was a man “after God’s own heart” (Acts 13:22) – that’s who! The sweet psalmist, shepherd king of Israel! The one whom God blessed and made an eternal covenant with, that his progeny would occupy the throne of Israel throughout their generations (Psalm 89:3-4, 34-37).

David wrote: “The LAW of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb” (Psalm 19:7-10. He added, “Moreover by them is your servant *warned*; in keeping them there is *great reward*” v.11).

Is that *your* attitude toward God’s law? Is that the attitude of the ministers you know, listen to, and who rule over your church or flock? Think about it – seriously.

What the Messiah Said

What does Jesus Christ – Yeshua the Messiah – say about God’s Law? Did He come to change it, or to abolish it? Really? Think hard before you answer.

In the famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ declared in plain, unequivocal language, no question about it – He said: “Do NOT think that I have come to ABOLISH THE LAW or the prophets; I have not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, *until heaven and earth pass away, NOT ONE LETTER, NOT ONE STROKE OF A LETTER*, will pass from the law until ALL is accomplished” (Matt.5:17-18).

Did you really get that? Not a single, solitary stroke of a letter will be changed, or pass from God’s Law, so long as heaven and earth – Creation itself – endures!

Why, then, do we continue to hear various ministers and shepherds who claim that this law or that law was changed, altered, modified, reversed, abolished, abrogated, rescinded, or repealed? Why? *God’s Law is as eternal as God is! It stands steadfast FOREVER!* Beware of any minister or teacher who says otherwise!

Does it not therefore behoove us to STUDY carefully the words of Scripture, the words of God’s Law, so we can obey them all, FULLY, completely, and without missing a single one?

When asked by a young rich man what he must do to obtain eternal life, Jesus

responded: “If you wish to enter into life, *KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS*” (Matt.19:17). When asked which commandments, He clarified and expanded His commentary, pointing out which system of LAW He was talking about. He said, “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother; also, You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (v.18-19).

He was discussing the Law of GOD – the Torah! He specifically mentions the Ten Commandments, and then summarizes the rest. That specific commandment is found in Leviticus 19, where we read; “You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD” (Lev.19:18, NRSV).

Do we get the point? All God’s Law hangs or falls together. It is all interconnected, like a powerful chain of many links. Each link is a separate commandment. If we break one, we break the whole chain – and the result is SIN – and the result or consequences of SIN is *DEATH* (Rom.6:23).

The apostle James wrote: “You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But *if you show partiality* [in God’s law], you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the *WHOLE LAW but fails in ONE POINT* has become accountable for all of it. For the one who said, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘You shall not commit murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty [God’s holy Law – the Torah]” (James 2:8-12).

The Old Covenant was a system of LAWS which God gave to His people Israel. The NEW Covenant, as we saw in Isaiah and Jeremiah, will consist of *THOSE VERY SAME LAWS* – but this time God will also give us *HIS HOLY SPIRIT*, to write them down in our very hearts and minds!

The New Covenant, therefore, does not abolish or do away with the Commandments or Torah of God! God forbid!

As the apostle Paul wrote, in the epistle to the Romans: “All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law [that is, sin is sin, whether we realize something is sin or not – ignorance of the law is no excuse!], and all who have sinned under the law [knowing the law] will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who will be justified in God’s sight, but the *DOERS OF THE LAW* who will be justified” (Rom.2:12-13).

Paul wrote, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law” (Rom.3:31). Says the NIV, “Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, *we uphold the law.*” Moffatt: “Then ‘by this faith’ we ‘cancel the Law’? Not for one moment! We uphold the Law.”

Complete Jewish Bible: “Does it follow that we abolish *Torah* by this trusting? Heaven forbid! On the contrary, we confirm *Torah*.”

Amplified Bible: “Do we then by [this] faith make the Law of no effect, overthrow it or make it a dead letter? Certainly not! On the contrary, we confirm and establish and uphold the Law.”

Now, I think it should be perfectly obvious to any sane mind that you do not confirm and establish and uphold the Law of God by *breaking* it, or by *transgressing* it, or by *violating* it!

We uphold it and confirm it in our lives and establish it upon a strong, solid foundation, *HOW?* The answer is, by KEEPING it, *observing* it, living our lives in accordance to its precepts and principles and details, fully and completely!

The apostle Paul wrote about God’s Law, saying, “So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good” (Rom.7:12, NRSV). In fact, he exclaimed, “For we know that the LAW is SPIRITUAL; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin” (Rom.7:14). He went on to point out that our human nature does not like to submit to the laws of God, it is inherently weak, despicable, and prone to give in to temptations of the flesh. Paul saw his own human nature, in contrast to the holy law of God, and felt evil inside. He knew he needed help! He saw the law of God, in its perfection, but he also saw another “law” in his flesh, pulling him into sin (Rom.7:14-21).

Paul said, “So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at WAR with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin and death [the pulls of the flesh which lead to sin which leads to death] that dwells in my members” (vs.21-23).

It was all very frustrating. Paul exclaimed, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” The answer/ Paul virtually shouted, “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (v.24-25).

Our victory, our triumph, will come through the mercy of God and our Lord Yeshuah the Messiah! Says the Amplified Version here: “O unhappy and pitiable and wretched man that I am! Who will release me from [the shackles of] this body of death? Oh thank God! [He will!] through Jesus Christ (the Anointed One) our Lord!”

Our flesh is weak and easily pulled into sin. But God has a solution to the problem! It lies in the New Covenant!

The LAW of God is perfect, and eternal, so it is not the problem. Well, then, WHY was there determined to be a need for a “New Covenant”?

It should be obvious, by now, that the problem was *not in the code of Law itself*.

So where was the problem?

The NEW Covenant

The apostle Paul gives us the answer. He explains where the real problem arose. Paul wrote to the Hebrews, concerning the New Covenant, as follows:

“But Jesus has now obtained a more excellent ministry, and to that degree he is the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted through better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need to look for a second one. *God finds fault with them* when he says: ‘The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. . . . This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: *I will put my laws in their minds, and write them [the LAWS of God] on their hearts . . .*’ (Hebrews 8:6-10, NRSV).

Paul then says, “In speaking of ‘a new covenant,’ he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear” (verse 13).

The New Covenant, then, involves NEW PROMISES – what Paul calls “better promises.” Why? Because it is spiritual, not just physical! It does not just pertain to promises during this physical, fleshly life, but it contains promises relating to ETERNAL LIFE – the future throughout all eternity!

The New Covenant, also, involves a BETTER MECHANISM – that is, God will not just write His laws on tablets of stone. This time He will inscribe His commandments within our very MINDS and HEARTS – indelibly – by means of His Holy Spirit!

Therefore, the New Covenant involves God giving His people His Holy Spirit which will guide us into all truth, and empower us to obey God’s Law and power to overcome the pulls of fleshly human nature!

Notice carefully! In the passage above, we read that God never found fault with His Law, or the Old Covenant itself. Rather, we read, “God finds fault with THEM” – who is “THEM”? “Them” refers clearly to the people – the children of Israel – who were disobedient, and who did not have an obedient heart within them! Their heart continually led them astray!

God found “FAULT” with His people! Not with His Law!

The problem has never been the “LAW” of God! The problem has always been an unconverted, carnal human heart that refused to hearken to the commandments of God!

God said in the days of Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and instructions?” (Exo.16:28).

God declared, “Oh, that their heart would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!” (Deut.5:29, NIV). Or as the Amplified has it, “Oh, that they had such a [mind and] heart in them always [reverently] to fear Me and keep all My commandments, that it might go well with them and with their children forever!”

The fault, you see, was in the *people*. Their *heart* wasn't right. How does God intend to correct this problem?

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

Do we see the point? There was nothing wrong with the Laws of the Old Covenant, that God would abolish *any* of them! Rather, the *fault* was with the *people*! They refused to obey God's laws, just like some churches and ministers do, today! The rebellious, carnal human heart has *not changed*! As Paul wrote to the Romans, “Because the *carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be*” (Romans 8:7). As Jeremiah wrote: “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?*” (Jer.17:9). The fault was in the people, not the Law of God!

Notice! Jeremiah the prophet wrote:

“For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, *concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices*. But this is what I commanded them, saying, *OBEY MY VOICE, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people*. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' *Yet they did NOT OBEY or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward*” (Jer.7:22-24).

Obviously, the Old Covenant, at first did not include the Levitical priesthood and animal sacrifices. These came later and were made part of the Old Covenant, as “amendments” to the constitution, as it were. But when Israel came out of Egypt, God gave them His laws and commandments – including the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, and statutes and judgments. But He did not command them regarding the sacrificial system of sin offerings, and the sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood. These were added later, because of the disobedience of the people, to teach them the lesson and habit of obedience! They were added after the children of Israel demonstrated their penchant and proclivity for gross disobedience in the golden calf episode in the wilderness of Sinai!

While the Israelites were still coming out of Egypt, and God had just given them the knowledge of His holy Sabbath day, exactly *one month* after they left Egypt and 20

days before the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, God gave them manna from heaven for six days, and then on the weekly Sabbath He gave them none, having provided a double portion on the sixth day. Yet some of the people disobeyed God, and went out to gather *on the Sabbath* (Exodus 16:25-27). Therefore the Lord said to Moses of the children of Israel, “*How long do you REFUSE TO KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS AND MY LAWS?*” (verse 28). Disobedience was ingrained in the people. They were carnal-minded and naturally hostile towards God's Law. What would the solution to this dilemma be?

The solution, as Paul pointed out in the book of Hebrews, was not a change of the laws, but rather a **CHANGE IN THE HEART OF THE PEOPLE!** God did not do away with His Laws; He instead sent His Holy Spirit, and gave it as a begettal to those who repented of their sins, so it would empower them to OBEY Him (Acts 2:38; 5:32). As Paul wrote, “There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are IN Christ Jesus, who walk NOT after the flesh, but AFTER THE SPIRIT. For the LAW of the SPIRIT OF LIFE in Christ Jesus *hath made me free from the law of sin and death*” (Romans 8:1-2). The Holy Spirit writes the Laws of God in our hearts and minds. As Paul said, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of POWER, and of LOVE, and of a SOUND MIND” (II Tim.1:7).

Therefore, in truth, none of the eternal laws of God are done away. Temporarily, the laws dealing with animal sacrifices have been suspended, as there is no Temple. As Paul also wrote, the Temple and priesthood was “symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience – concerned only with foods and drinks [food and drink offerings], various washings, and fleshly ordinances [involving the Temple sacrifices and duties] imposed *until the time of reformation*” (Heb.9:9-10).

Christ is the fulfillment of the animal sacrifices. All the animal sacrifices pointed to Him, who was our true “sin offering” (II Cor.5:21), our true “peace offering” (Rom.5:1-2), our true “burnt offering” who gave up His all for us (Heb.10:8-10).

Nevertheless, so long as there is a Levitical priesthood – and the Word of God says it will *even last into the Millennial reign* of the Messiah – there will be daily offerings, holy day offerings, and a continual round of offerings and sacrifices performed, as an example, reminder, object-lesson and illustration for the people then living of the purpose and plan of God (see Ezekiel 40-48).

Old Testament Laws only Temporary?

Most modern “Christian” ministers tend to argue that ALL the Old Testament laws, found in the Old Covenant, are done away, superseded, abolished, replaced by new laws. They claim that Christians do not have to keep the law of Moses, because *those laws were a temporary package designed only to be in force until the Messiah came.*

As we have already noted, that belief is preposterous!

Go back and read the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,” “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain, “ “Honor thy father and thy mother,” “Thou shalt not murder,” “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” “Thou shalt not steal,” “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,” “Thou shalt not covet.”

Do *any of those laws sound “TEMPORARY”*? Do any of them sound as if they constituted a “temporary package” designed only to be in force until the Messiah comes?

Falderal and balderdash!

Of course, did you notice that I left out the fourth commandment? It reads: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” That one, of course, is the one most modern ministers have a problem with! Yet the God who gave the weekly Sabbath command, says that the Sabbath is commanded to be observed “throughout your generations” (Exo.31:13), and was instituted to be a “sign” between God and His people to be observed “as a *PERPETUAL [eternal] COVENANT*” (Exodus 31:16-17, KJV)!

God says, “Therefore the Israelites shall keep the Sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant. It is a SIGN FOREVER between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed” (Exo.31:16-17, NRSV).

Was that particular commandment abolished? God says it is a sign FOREVER! What part of “forever,” I wonder, don’t people seem to understand?

The Sabbath rest is an eternal law of Almighty God. Those who do away with it are being “partial in the law,” and they will inherit only a “partial” part of eternal life – that is, they will live until they are cast in the lake of fire which will annihilate the lives of the disobedient! Read our articles, “Sabbath Versus Sunday?,” “The Christian Sabbath,” and “30 Proofs on the Sabbath.”

The Annual Holy Days of God

What about the annual Sabbaths, or Holy Days, which God commanded His people? Most “Christian” ministers today say these were temporary, only lasting till the Messiah came. But again – what do we read in the Scriptures?

The Passover was commanded to be observed “as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an EVERLASTING ORDINANCE” (Exodus 12:14, KJV). Says the NRSV, “You shall celebrate it as a festival of the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.”

Likewise, the Days of Unleavened Bread were commanded to be observed “throughout your generations *as an everlasting ordinance*” (verse 17), “a perpetual ordinance” (NRSV). God said to keep it “as an ordinance for you and your sons

FOREVER” (v.24). Again, I ask – what part of “forever” don’t they understand?

Sadly, however, some think they are keeping these laws of God, but they have still gotten themselves thoroughly mixed up. They don’t keep the Passover on the right day or at the correct time. Some admit that they keep what they call “the Lord’s supper,” a day before the Passover – and they do not observe the true Passover. Others think that the Jewish people somehow lost track of time, and now observe the Passover a day late!

Falderal and balderdash, again! Read our articles, “The Battle Over the Passover,” “When Should the Passover Be Observed?,” “The New Testament Passover,” “Luke and the Passover Question,” and many others dealing with this subject.

Regarding the festival of Pentecost, or “Shavuot,” God says in His Word: “This is a statute forever in all your settlements throughout your generations” (Lev.23:21). Do most Christians observe this annual Holy Day, today? Or have they been brainwashed to think it has been “abolished” and “done away”? Remember what Jesus Christ said! “Not one letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law!”

Still others, who *think* they are observing Pentecost, follow the example of the wicked Sadducees who counted the day incorrectly. They refuse to follow the example of the Jewish rabbis during the time of Christ, the Pharisees, who, Christ said, “sit on Moses’ seat; therefore, *do whatever they teach you and follow it*” Matt.23:2-3). Instead, they follow the Sadducees, whom Jesus called ignorant, and said they “know neither the scriptures nor the power of God” (Matt.22:29, NRSV).

Write for our articles, “How to Count Pentecost,” “Pentecost – the Final Answer,” “Pentecost – the Full Story,” and “Luke 6 and Pentecost.”

The next Holy Day of God is the festival of Trumpets. God says: “In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a day of complete rest, a holy convocation commemorated by trumpet blasts” (Lev.23:23-25). Do you observe that day – with blowing a trumpet, or shofar, as God commanded? What part of God’s law don’t you obey? Read our article on “New Insight on the Feast of Trumpets.”

The Day of Atonement, known as Yom Kippur, is commanded on the tenth day of the Hebrew seventh month. It is a day of fasting and self-denial (Lev.23:27-29). God says: “It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements” (v.31). Read our articles on “The Hidden Meaning of Yom Kippur.”

The great fall festival is known as the Feast of Tabernacles, or Sukkot, a festival of seven days – in which we are commanded to worship God by building booths, called *sukkah* – temporary dwellings – as a reminder of the flimsy huts our forefathers dwelt in when they left Egypt and traversed the wilderness. We are commanded to wave palm branches and to “rejoice before the Lord” (Lev.23:40-43). God says: “You shall keep it as a festival to the LORD seven days in the year; you shall keep it in the seventh month *as a statute forever throughout your generations*” (v.41).

Again, I ask – what part of “forever” don’t we understand? The simple question I have for you is – are you willing to follow Christ, and obey God’s Law?

The Law that was “Added”

Some turn to the book of Galatians to attempt to show that God’s law is abolished. A favorite passage of the no-law people is Galatians 3:19-21. Let’s read it and understand.

The apostle Paul writes, “Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring would come to whom the promise had been made” (Gal.3:19).

Paul tells us in Galatians, concerning the law, “It was ADDED because of TRANSGRESSIONS.” What does this mean? Obviously, something was being “transgressed.” The apostle John tells us what: “Sin is the transgression *of the law*,” he declares (I John 3:4). Therefore, there had to be a law in effect which was being transgressed, and because of those transgressions God added *another law!*

This Law which was “added” was NOT the “Old Covenant”! Let’s not be confused. The Covenant and the Law are two different things! The Covenant was an AGREEMENT between Israel and God. The Laws were part of that agreement; they were, in effect, the TERMS of that Covenant. All of those spiritual, moral, ethical, and civil LAWS did not begin with Moses at Mount Sinai, but went back to CREATION! The Sabbath law, for example, goes back to Creation (Gen.2:1-3). God gave them the Passover commandments (Exodus 12:14-16) fifty days before the Sinai covenant!

God reminded Israel of which day was the Sabbath weeks before Israel ever got to Mount Sinai (Exodus 16). But notice, the Israelites upon learning of the true Sabbath, still did not obey it! Some went out to gather manna on the Sabbath day, which God had forbidden (Exo.16:27). They disobeyed. So God said to the people, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and instructions?” (v.28).

The problem was disobedience to God’s Law – so God added the laws of the Levitical priesthood and sacrificial system to the code of Laws He gave to Israel.

What, then, was really “new” – or “added” – to the system of Laws which God had already put in force, prior to Mount Sinai? Why, the answer should be obvious. At Mount Sinai the physical tabernacle, Levitical priesthood, prescribed sacrifices and rituals, were added – what we generally call the RITUALISTIC LAW, or the law related to the Levitical Priesthood!

These new laws were the “meats [meal offerings] and drinks [drink offerings], and divers washings, and carnal ordinances [marginal reference, “rites, or ceremonies”], imposed on them until the time of reformation” (Heb.9:10). The Greek word for “ordinances” here is

dikaionoma which means “what has been established and ordained by law, an ordinance,” “a judicial sentence,” “a righteous act or deed,” and in this verse clearly refers to those things related to the Levitical priesthood.

This was a whole body of legislation which was ADDED at Mount Sinai! These rituals pointed to Christ, and to heavenly objects, of which they were a type or shadow. These things are not obligatory for Christians today!

Ferrar Fenton, in his translation, translates these passages in Galatians 3:17-19 as follows: “And I assert this – the RITUALS, beginning four hundred and thirty years after, could not cancel a Settlement previously established by God, so as to abolish the promise. For if the inheritance comes from a RITUAL, it is no more from a promise; yet God granted it to Abraham through a promise. Why, then, the law [of rituals]? It was established BECAUSE OF SINS, until the Heir should come in Whom were the promises.”

We must carefully distinguish what was truly “added” at Sinai and what existed before, in terms of God’s Laws. Clearly, the rituals were added at Mount Sinai. But from the very time of Adam, it was a sin to worship false gods or idols (Gen.31:19-35), to take God’s name in vain (Gen.4:26), to desecrate the Sabbath (Gen.2:1-3), to dishonor one’s parents (Gen.9:17-25), to kill (Gen.4:7-10), to commit adultery (Gen.39:7-12), to steal (Gen.30:33), to bear false witness (Gen.3:1-3, 14), and to lust or covet (Gen.3:1-7). Thus all ten of the Ten Commandments were in force from the time of Adam!

Talking about this law of rituals and sacrifices, Paul goes on, writing to the Galatians: “Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded by the law [of rituals and sacrifices] until faith would be revealed. Therefore, the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian” (Gal.3:23-25).

In other words, the Greek word here for “disciplinarian” is *pedagogos* and means “a servant whose office it was to take the children to school; by implication, a tutor, pedagogue, instructor, schoolmaster” (Strong’s Concordance, #3807). The law is compared to this “servant” who leads the child to school, to be taught. This “law” which was added and “taught” the Israelites the habit of obedience, was the laws of the Levitical priesthood – consisting in sacrifices, washings, rituals of various kinds. These things were “added” UNTIL the coming of the Messiah – our true Teacher, the Anointed Teacher of God!

Tithing Law Abolished?

Many of these same ministers claim that tithing also is no longer a “law” of God but is strictly “voluntary” under the New Covenant. Is this so? We know Abraham paid tithes on all his increase (Gen.14:20). Jacob also made this same vow (Gen.28:22). Later God commanded Israel to give the tithes of their produce, crops, and increase to the Levites (Lev.27:30-33; Num.18:21,24).

However, the apostle Paul points out that the Levites themselves in essence

‘tithed’ when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, being still “in his loins” at that time (Heb.7:9-10). What about tithing? Is this law abolished, today?

Not at all. Paul points how that perfection does not come through the Levitical priesthood (Heb.7:11). However, it does come through Jesus Christ, and the ministry which He has established – which Paul calls the “order of Melchizedek”! Paul says, therefore, “For when there is a change in the priesthood [from Levitical to Melchizedek- Christ], *there is necessarily a CHANGE IN THE LAW as well*” (Heb.7:12).

What does this mean? It should be clear. Now that Christ has come, fulfilling the Melchizedek priesthood, the *tithes should now revert back to the Melchizedek priesthood, meaning they should now be given to Jesus Christ!* How do we do this? Who are His representatives on this earth?

Christ is alive, today, at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Heb.7:17, 24; 9:11-14). The tithes of God’s people, therefore, should go to HIM – that is, they should be paid to His true ministry which serves Him on this earth!

Jesus Himself acknowledged that tithing is a law today. It has not been abolished. He clearly acknowledged it when He said of the Pharisees, “For you tithe mint, dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced *without neglecting the others*” (Matt.23:23, NRSV).

Ignorance of the Law

No doubt that you have been ignorant of many of these things. Where will we draw the line?

Ignorance of the Laws of God seems to reign supreme in this modern *spiritually ignorant* generation! That means that people today do not understand the truth about the “New Covenant”! *It is based on the VERY SAME LAWS AS THE OLD COVENANT!*

BAR NONE! All God’s commandments are in force today and forever!

God’s Law reigns supreme eternally and shall NEVER be abolished! God gives us His Holy Spirit to enable us to OBSERVE His commandments, according to the Spirit and with spiritual POWER!

God does not just throw up His hands, and admit defeat, and say, “I’ll save them anyway, even if they sin and refuse to obey me and keep my commandments!” That statement is a Satan ploy to deceive and delude you! The truth is, *God will not save a single soul whom He cannot govern and who will not obey Him and follow the example of obedience Christ set for us!*

As the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “Be imitators of me, as I am of

Christ” (I Cor.11:1). Or as Peter wrote, Christ suffered for us, “leaving you an example, so that you should FOLLOW IN HIS STEPS” (I Peter 2:21, NRSV). To follow in Christ’s foot-steps means to live as He lived, a life obedient to the Laws of God in every way!

The apostle John also makes it plain: “By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says, ‘I abide in him,’ ought to WALK JUST AS HE WALKED” (I John 2:5-6).

Have you checked your walk lately?

By the specious reasoning of false ministers and teachings, the New Covenant does away with the need of all God’s Holy Days, the weekly Sabbath Days, and even the Calendar which God gave His people (instead of the modern “Roman” Calendar, which is based on Gentile and pagan months, named after pagan rulers and gods). Instead, they follow the pagans – and celebrate festivities which had their origin in ancient PAGAN celebrations – such as Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Valentine’s Day, etc. Write for our articles “The Shocking Origin of Christmas,” “When Was Jesus Born?,” “The Surprising Origin of Easter,” “Halloween – Trick or Treat?”

Will we obey God? Will we take these things seriously? Solomon wrote, “There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way of death” (Prov.14:12, NRSV).

God commanded His people to observe His annual Holy Days forever because *they are also part of the NEW COVENANT, written in our hearts and minds!* The fact that they were instituted “forever,” as “everlasting” ordinances, and “perpetual statutes” should prove this to us, once and for all!

Christ – High Priest of the New Covenant

Aaron’s sons were the high priests under the Old Covenant God made with Israel. But Jesus Christ is the High Priest of the New Covenant.

Paul wrote, “But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!” (Heb.9:11-14).

Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant! He is the eternal High Priest of God! We therefore no longer have need of bulls and goats; for us in His church, we have direct access to God anywhere, anytime, through Yeshua Notzri – Jesus of Nazareth!

Paul goes on, “For this reason he is the MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT,

so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant” (Heb.9:15).

Paul shows that the earthly sanctuary, and Tabernacle, was a “type” – a “sketch” – a “figure” – representing the true Sanctuary and Tabernacle which is in Heaven. The whole system, you see, was a “school-master,” or “pedagogue,” to teach us by way of illustration, using physical things, the true realities in God’s heavenly plan.

So, Paul explains, “Thus it was necessary for the sketches of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves need better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. . . . But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb.9:23-26).

The New Covenant is certainly much better than the Old Covenant. However, as a “type” of the New, and the same laws, commandments, and ordinances are to be written in our hearts and minds in the New Covenant which were written on stone in the Old Covenant!

How clear that should be to everyone! God will not be mocked. As a man sows, so shall he reap (Galatians 6:7).

Spiritualizing It All Away

Most modern ministers say that the laws of God have been “spiritualized away.” That means, they have been superseded by “spiritual” principles, and so we no longer have to obey them. In some strange fashion, they tell us, we have “internalized” the commandments *and so we don’t have to OBEY them!*

Do you see anything “funny” about such reasoning? Isn’t it a bit “strange”? How do you really “internalize” it if you cease to OBEY it?

Even so, “spiritualizing” everything away is the oldest trick in the book. Satan the devil used it in the first century, to lead the early church followers into apostasy, which began and was full blown by the days of the apostle Paul (II Thess.2:1-10). It is happening all over again, today, in our generation, before our very eyes. The apostle Paul wrote in warning to our end-time generation, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but, after their own lusts, will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto *fables*” (II Tim.4:3-4).

Or as the NRSV has it, “For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to

myths.”

The Amplified makes it crystal clear: “For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate (endure) sound and wholesome instruction, but, having ears itching [for something pleasing and gratifying], they will gather to themselves one teacher after another to a considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold. And will turn aside from hearing the truth and wander off into myths and man-made fictions.”

How do they wander off? They teach the Laws of God are abolished – we don’t need to observe the Sabbath day, or the annual Holy Days, all of which were commanded to be observed by the people of God *forever*. They also don’t prove for themselves exactly when and how to observe the annual Holy Days, but take the word of ministers and other people for it.

How sad!

Paul also warned, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons, *speaking lies in hypocrisy*, having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Tim.4:1-2).

The Amplified says, “But the [Holy] Spirit distinctly and expressly declares that in latter times some will turn away from the faith, giving attention to deluding and seducing spirits and doctrines that demons teach, through the hypocrisy and pretensions of liars whose consciences are seared (cauterized).”

Indeed, it has already happened. Satanic deception now characterizes the end of this age. That deception has begun. With a vengeance! It blows like a howling hurricane! It is everywhere!

Almighty God warns His people today, to watch out! He thunders, “This is a rebellious people, lying children, children who *will not hear the law of the LORD*; who say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things; speak unto us *smooth things*, prophesy *deceits*; Get out of the way, turn aside out of the path” (Isa.30:9-11).

People today want to hear “smooth” things, deceitful “illusions.” They don’t want to hear the plain, hard, truthful Word of Almighty God! And many false prophets and teachers today are giving them just what they want to hear!

May God help each one of us to learn the TRUTH about His holy, inviolate, immutable and eternal Law – to understand the TRUTH about the “New Covenant” – and to love God’s Law and His New Covenant, with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

