**The New Covenant Study**

**The Law of Moses and the Old Covenant**

The Law of Moses initiated the terms under which God entered into what Christians call the Old Covenant with his chosen nation, Israel. In this Gospel Age, however, God deals with his people solely under the terms of the New Covenant, which has completely displaced the Old. In Hebrews 8, gives us the longest Old Testament quotation to be found in the New. It is from Jeremiah 31:31-34, where the Lord first clearly announces to the people of Israel and Judah details of this glorious replacement covenant. No longer shall they be bound to keep the external law of Moses, inscribed on tablets of stone, because the Lord will put his ‘laws in their minds and write them on their hearts’.

**A New Covenant**

Jeremiah 31:31-34 NKJV “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—

v32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord

v33 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 in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

v34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

**The New Priestly Service**

**We are appointed as priests to serve God.**

Isaiah 61:6 NKJV But you shall be named the priests of the Lord, they shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast.

I Peter 2:5 NKJV you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:5-6 TPT and from Jesus Christ the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn from among the dead and the ruling King, who rules over the kings of the earth! Now to the one who constantly loves us and has loosed us from our sins by his own blood,

v6 and to the one who has appointed us as a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and dominion throughout the eternity of eternities! Amen!

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**The New Covenant Study Cont.**

**Jesus our High Priest**

Hebrews 8:1-6 NKJV We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

v2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

v3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore, it is necessary that this One also have something to offer.

v4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;

v5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.”

v6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

**A New Covenant (We are now His spiritual Israel individually & corporately).**

Hebrews 8:7-13 NKJV For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

v8 Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and Judah...

v9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

v10 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 in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

v11 None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

v12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

v13 In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

The New Covenant, he declares, ‘has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear’ (Heb. 8:13).

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**The New Covenant Study Cont.**

The Old Covenant became ‘obsolete’ the moment Christ sealed the New Covenant with his blood shed on the cross, and it ‘disappeared’ when the temple, along with its now defunct sacrificial system, was destroyed in AD70.

The Old Covenant was established upon the Law given to Moses on Mount Sinai. This Law was enshrined in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible, largely authored by Moses himself) and the rest of the Old Testament was written under its jurisdiction but what place does the Law of Moses occupy under the terms of the New Covenant?

‘How should we continue in the Old Covenant Law in the context of the New Covenant?’

The teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount gives us an answer.

In Matthew 5:17-21, Jesus begins by affirming the abiding relevance of the whole Old Testament in this New Testament age. He has not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. Not even the least of Moses’ commands is to be set aside or considered irrelevant.

Paul an Apostle of Jesus would later pen this scripture and affirm Jesus’s words.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16).

II Timothy 3:16 NKJV All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

v17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Christ Fulfills the Law**

Matthew 5:17-21 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

v18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

v19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

v20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

21“You have heard that it was said to those of old,...but I say unto you..

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**The New Covenant Study Cont.**

On the other hand, Jesus immediately goes on to say that if anyone wishes to enter the kingdom of heaven, then their righteousness must far surpass that achieved by the Pharisees and scribes, despite their obedience to the outdated Old Covenant Law.

**New Covenant Living.**

Christ has come to ‘fulfil’ the Law and the Prophets as far as their original role and purpose is concerned. What the Old Testament attributes to the Law, the New Testament attributes to Christ. From now on, therefore, Jesus’ followers are not required to fulfil the Law of Moses but the ‘Law of Christ’ (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2). We are to interpret the Old Testament Scriptures in the light of Jesus’ own teaching and practice, as illuminated by the Holy Spirit, who will indwell, guide, and empower us.

I Corinthians 9:21 NKJV to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;

Galatians 6:2 Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**Jesus reinterprets the Law of Moses**

Back in Matthew 5, Jesus proceeds to give six examples of his radical reinterpretation of the Law of Moses, starting with two of the Ten Commandments. Read verses 21-47 for yourself, and you will see how far the demands of Jesus outstrip the mere outward rule-keeping of the Pharisees. Jesus says in all begins with our inner heart not outward.

How shocking it must have sounded to many of his hearers when Jesus repeatedly says, in effect, ‘Moses said this, but I tell you...’! Of course, Jesus is not contradicting Moses, but penetrating an outward code of conduct to expose the issues of the heart that lie beneath.

In the same way Paul the Apostle deals with the Law of Moses, we find the same messages and fulfilment in his letters. As believers in Christ under the New Covenant, we are not ‘under the Law’ in any way. We are not imprisoned, guarded, or disciplined by it.

Paul never says that believers in Christ are to obey or keep the Law of Moses. Just as Jesus told his disciples to ‘obey everything I have commanded you’ (Matt. 28:20),

Paul the Apostle tells us simply to obey apostolic instruction. ‘It is for freedom that Christ has set us free’ from the slavery of the Law (Gal. 5:1). ‘

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**The New Covenant Study Cont.**

**Christian Liberty**

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

By dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code’ (Rom. 7:6).

Romans 7:6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

However, on the positive side, the Law speaks in its every aspect of the Christ who has now come. Its prophetic nature confirms the message of the gospel. Moreover, the Law is full of the wisdom of God. Israel’s story, in particular, is exemplary, complete with warnings for us ‘on whom the culmination of the ages has come’ (1 Cor. 1:11). The Holy Spirit still intends us to learn vital lessons about God and ourselves from the history of his dealings in the past.

**We now worship God in Spirit & in Truth from the heart.**

John 4:23 NKJV But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Jeremiah 33:33-34 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 in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

v34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Matthew 5:28 Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

This longing to be like God should mark out every true child of God.

- Safe in the knowledge that, in Christ, we are complete.

- God’s demands of us have already been fulfilled.

- living in faith to attain ever greater godliness should be nothing less than the normal

Christian life.

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