

Hebrews - Chapter 8 & 9, Part II

The Covenants

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One can read of several covenants made between God and his people, such as circumcision (Gen 17:10-11) and the blessings and curses (Dt 27-29:1). However, these also seem to be included in the two major covenants, referred to in the book of Hebrews and outlined below:

<u>NEW COVENANT</u>	<u>OLD COVENANT</u>
■ better, 8:6; 7:22	fault with the people 8:8
■ second 8:7	first 8:7; 9:1
■ new established 8:8, 13	old done away 8:13; 2 Cor 3:11
■ after those days (in wilderness) 8:10	made upon leaving Egypt 8:9
■ true tabernacle 8:2	earthly tabernacle 9:1
■ high Priest in heaven 8:1	high priest on earth 8:4-5
■ law of the spirit Rom 8:2; faith Rom 3:27	letter of the law 2 Cor 3:6-7
■ ministration of the Spirit 2 Cor 3:8	earthly priests & law shadows 8:5; 10:1
■ brings liberty 2 Cor 3:17-18; Gal 5:1	yoke of bondage Act 15:10; Gal 5:1

What was the old covenant? The author of Hebrews states it this way (quoting Jer 31:31-34): **Heb 8:8-9:** *8. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9. 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...* This covenant is clearly identified in the O. T.: **Dt 4:13:** *And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.* The old covenant was the ten precepts (or, words Ex 20:1) written in stone tables and given to Moses to put in the ark. This covenant was not made with Abraham, Isaac or Jacob, or anyone before Mt Sinai, also called Horeb (Dt 5:1-22; 6:10; 9:5).

How do the tabernacle services fit into this covenant? **Heb 9:1:** *Therefore, indeed the first (covenant) also had ordinances of service, and the sanctuary, a worldly (one).* (Greek Interlinear - with supplied words) When this verse is connected with the context of the discussion in chapter eight, it is clear that the commandments in stone and the ordinances of the wilderness tabernacle were part of the same covenant, which were about to pass away at the time this was written. (cp 8:7, 13; 9:15, 18; 10:9) This understanding brings up other questions that have to be answered.

Everyone pretty much agrees that animal sacrifices were to stop at the cross, but what about observance of the feast days? Was the ten commandment law to be abolished? Among world religions, some believe that the temple services should and will be reinstated. Others believe the feasts should be kept, but not the sacrifices. Then, there are those that believe the tabernacle services were abolished, but not the ten commandments. And still others say we are not under the law, but under grace. ALL of them divide the law! **Mt 5:17-18:** *17 Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.* (American Standard) When all of Matthew chapter five is read, it will be seen that Jesus quotes, not only from the ten in stone, but also from other parts of the law - i.e. he did not divide the law, nor did he delete any of it. Also, Paul states in Hebrews that it was of necessity to change the law (Heb 7:12), which verses were explained in the study on chapter seven, to be a transposing of the laws - i.e. the letter of it, since the cross, is to be considered from an allegorical point of view, as the Holy Spirit interprets.

Christ - the Mediator of the new covenant: **Heb 8:6**: *But now hath he (Christ) obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant...* A better ministry, a better covenant was confirmed in Christ by his blood (Heb 10:29; 13:20). Because of the Son's experience, he became mediator of the new covenant. What is meant by mediator? **Gal 3:20**: *Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.* **1 Tim 2:5**: *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus...* A mediator moderates, intercedes, intervenes, mediates between two parties. Jesus is not God who is mediating between himself and mankind! The scriptures are clear - God and Jesus, in this context, are two separate beings. The son is mediator between the Father and mankind!

What is the Son mediating? **Gal 3:19**: *Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.* Jesus is mediating the law - or revealing the spirituality of it, which helps us know the Father, and understand His ways. This is what is meant by writing the law in the heart: **Heb 8:10-11**: *10. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.* We come to know the Father by listening to the voice of the Son of God, and not man. We learn from others, but it is the Spirit that sets the truth in the heart.

What is the purpose? **Rom 11:26-27**: *26. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.* Jesus also, announced this deliverance when he instituted the communion service, as a figure: **Mt 26:28**: *For this is my blood, that of the new covenant, which in behalf of many is poured out toward deliverance* ⁽⁸⁵⁹⁾ *of sins.* (Greek Interlinear - also for deliverance see Lk 4:18)

Under law, under grace: These are common terms heard any time someone is teaching on man's relationship to God. But, what do the terms mean? I have heard several say that to be under the law was to be under condemnation. However, note Paul's statement to the Galatians: *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law* (4:21). Did keepers of the law in Paul's day want to be condemned? No, but they did desire to be governed by the law. To be under grace is just the opposite - one is governed by the voice and the law of the Spirit (Rom 8:2). Christ becomes our head (1 Cor 11:3), and we no longer live by man's interpretation of the law, and Christ is the fulfillment of the law in us (Rom 10:4; Heb 3:14).

Summary: Israel was governed by the law until Christ came and fulfilled the types, and Israel became a type of the spiritual church. The law did not change at the cross, only the way we look at it changes. It is the same law, but a different covenant, a different application, one that will purge sin from our lives. Mankind is no different today, as we all begin under the law, and some will eventually move under the spirit of grace (voice of Christ). **Gal 3:11-12**: *11. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. 12. And the law is not of faith...* **Gal 2:16**: *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* **Rom 10:17**: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* And, **Rom 14:23**: *...whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

Mt 5:6: *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.* (With the spiritual understanding of God - Col 1:9) Amen!