

## The Old Testament Abolished!

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by Wayne Goff

A great mistake made by our denominational friends is to believe that both the Old and New Testaments are equally binding today. Christians who accept only the New Testament as their current rule of faith and practice are often accused of not accepting the whole Bible. Is this true?

### The Old Law Abolished

The Bible is full of Scripture which affirms that the Old Testament would be done away with and the New Testament would supplant it because it is a better law! The Hebrew writer makes this very argument in Hebrews 8 when he writes: *"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. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second"* (vv. 6-7). Notice the words **again**, *"He is also Mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established on better promises."* What is that *"better covenant"*? Is it not the Gospel of Jesus Christ? And what are the *"better promises"*? Are they not the ones founded upon the **permanent** forgiveness of the blood of Christ, as opposed to the animal sacrifice under the Law of Moses (Heb. 10:1-4)? Be sure and study carefully Hebrews 8-10 to understand the context.

Furthermore, Hebrews 8:8-12 shows us that the *"first covenant"* is the Law of Moses. The writer quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 which says that there will be a replacing of the covenant which God made with the Jews when He took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. Obviously that is a reference to the Law of Moses in general, and the Ten Commandments in particular! The writer even gives a **reason** for this change: *"...because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD"* (v. 9). In other words, the Jewish people broke the covenant made with God at Mt. Sinai and He rejected them because the covenant had been destroyed. That covenant made no allowances for its violation by sin. Once it was violated, the covenant was null and void!

Hebrews 8:10-13 describes the new covenant which God would make with His people one future day. Notice the description:

- *"I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts"* (v. 10). This is a subtle reference to the contrast between the Law of Moses and the Gospel. Under the Law of Moses one was *physically born* into the covenant. Under the Gospel of Christ one is *spiritually born* (Jn. 3:3, 5) into the covenant once he is old enough to understand and believe the terms of entrance. Thus, those in this covenant will have God's laws already in their minds and hearts.
- *"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"* (v. 11). This is a reiteration of the previous point. Those in this new covenant will not need to be taught to *"know the LORD"* for they will **already** know Him as a result of the terms of entrance required: faith and baptism (Mk. 16:15-16). We do not baptize *unbelievers* today, but *believers*.
- *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more"* (v. 12). God's ability to **permanently** forgive sins under the Gospel immediately made this *"new covenant"* superior to the Law of Moses which only offered animal sacrifice for temporary forgiveness of sins.
- *"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"* (v. 13). This is the necessary conclusion based upon the arguments just made. The *"new covenant"* suggests that the first covenant was obsolete. It could not forgive sins like the new covenant, and thus was ineffective.
- The two natures of the two covenants are incompatible together. One demands perfection {Law}, the other offers grace {Gospel}.