

Are Christians To Keep The Seventh Day As A Sabbath?

by Bill Crews

{PLEASE REFER TO THE PREVIOUS FOUR ARTICLES ON THE SAME SUBJECT. THIS IS THE FINAL INSTALLMENT}

The Two Great Divisions of the Bible

Everyone who has studied the Bible at all knows that the Bible is made up of two great divisions, the old testament or covenant and the new testament or covenant. The Bible I have used the longest is the American Standard Version (or translation), published by "Thomas Nelson & Sons." It was produced in 1910. The flyleaf reads: "THE HOLY BIBLE CONTAINING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS." The flyleaf to the new testament reads: "THE NEW COVENANT COMMONLY CALLED THE NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST." Following the preface in the front of this Bible I find two lists of books. One is headed: "THE NAMES AND ORDER OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT." The other: "THE NAMES AND ORDER OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT."

Identifying Them Further

The old covenant is simply the law that God gave Israel through Moses. It is also called "*the law of Moses,*" "*the law of God,*" "*the law of Jehovah (or the LORD),*" and many other things. The new covenant is simply the law or teaching that God gave to all men through Christ. It is also called "*the gospel of Christ,*" "*the testimony of our Lord,*" "*the doctrine of Christ,*" and many other things. The old testament contains the background of the Israelite nation (Genesis and the first eighteen chapters of Exodus contain history before God began to give the law through Moses, just as Matthew through Acts 1 give background before the new covenant was introduced in Acts 2), and the story of God's dealings with that nation from the days of Moses to the days of Malachi. The new testament contains a record of the life, especially the ministry, of Christ and the story of the beginning and first century history of the Lord's church, which is made up of His disciples, the saved.

How The Old Covenant Came To Be

God called Abraham (Genesis 11-12) and through him raised up the nation of Israel (the rest of Genesis and the first chapter of Exodus). Through Moses God led the Israelites out of their bondage in Egypt and gave them a covenant or law. The ten commandments constituted the heart or core around which the entire law or covenant was built (at times the ten commandments are even called "*the covenant,*" "*His covenant,*" or "*the covenant of Jehovah or the LORD*"). God wrote the ten commandments on either side of two tablets of stone and had Moses write the whole of His law, **including the ten commandments**, in a book. The two tablets of stone were placed in a box or chest called "*the ark of the covenant*" (because it pertained to or contained the covenant). The book written by Moses was placed beside the ark of the covenant. (See 1 Kings 8:9 where we are told that there was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone, and see verse 21 where they are called "*the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, when He bought them out of the land of Egypt*") In time the two tablets of stone would be gone — perhaps stolen or destroyed by the enemies of Israel, but the book of Moses, and all the other books added by the prophets of the old testament would be preserved (all along copies of these were made). We still have them, along with the words that were on the two tablets of stone.

Prophecy Concerning The Making Of A New Covenant

Please read Jeremiah 31:31-34. Some 600 years before Christ the prophet Jeremiah wrote that the days were coming that God would make a new covenant (in contrast to the old covenant given in the time of Moses) with Israel and Judah (God's people had divided into two nations). This new covenant would be different from God's covenant

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