

New Covenant



Jesus Christ Prison Ministry

P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

PUBLISHER
Jesus Christ Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

E-mail: ministry@icpm.com
Web Page: www.icpm.com



New Covenant

“By calling this covenant ‘new’, he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.” Hebrews 8:13. What is the writer of Hebrews talking about? If we serve a God who does not change, how can this be a “new” covenant? In fact, the writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 13:8 that Jesus is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow.

The best way to look at this is to look at it historically. The writer of Hebrews 8:13 is referring us to a quote he used from Jeremiah 31:31-33. This quote has nothing to do with “New Testament” times. Jeremiah was writing in reference to the time when the Jews would be returning from the Babylonian exile in 538/37 BC. That was about 500 years before Christ.

Over and over again the Israelites broke the covenant that they had agreed to keep with God. It wasn’t God who broke His covenant of love, it was the nation of Israel. “Because this nation has violated the covenant that I laid down...” Judges 2:20. “It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers,” Deuteronomy 29:25. Each time they broke it, it had to be renewed. “All these now join their brothers and nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath (to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the Lord our Lord.)” Nehemiah 10:29.

The same was true in the New Testament. The Jews had again broken the covenant of love and it had to be renewed. “You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men... You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!” Mark 7:8, 9.

When the Jewish exiles returned to Jerusalem, they renewed the broken covenant. Jeremiah 31:23 explicitly states that the “new” covenant is for the returning exiles. The “new” covenant was simply a renewal of the old covenant, since they had broken it. All of this is confirmed in the book of Nehemiah. Nehemiah was in the service of King Artaxerxes and returned to Jerusalem to help renew the covenant. If you read chapter nine entirely, pay close attention to verses 13, 16, 17, 29, 32, 34, 38. In chapter 10 this is shown specifically in verse 29.

So why did the writer of Hebrews bring Jeremiah up for discussion if it was for the Jews coming back from exile in 538/37 BC? Because he wanted to remind the readers of the fact – which they knew all too well - that Israel was always breaking the covenant. As such, God was always renewing it. His point being that it should come as no great surprise that the Jews had broken it again and it needed to be renewed again.

But unlike the other renewals, this time the “Civil Codes” and “Temple Rituals” of the covenant were no longer needed. The covenant of love, the Ten Commandments, remained the same. ***Only the civil, national and temple codes of the covenant had been done away with.***

To understand this better, we go back to Exodus. Exodus 20:1 says that God spoke all these words. Then it goes on to give the Ten Commandments. God spoke them, and He wrote them with His own finger. But the “codes” of the covenant were written by Moses; by the fingers of Moses: Exodus 21:1; Deuteronomy 29:1. This can be better understood if we draw it out.

The Ten Commandments are the foundation of all the world’s governments and laws. All laws on earth are based on the Ten Commandments. They are also the foundation of God’s Government and His throne.

Let me take you back into history and help you to “see” the dynamics at work, and the words that are used to help us

Jesus Wrote Moses Wrote Covenant Codes of Covenant



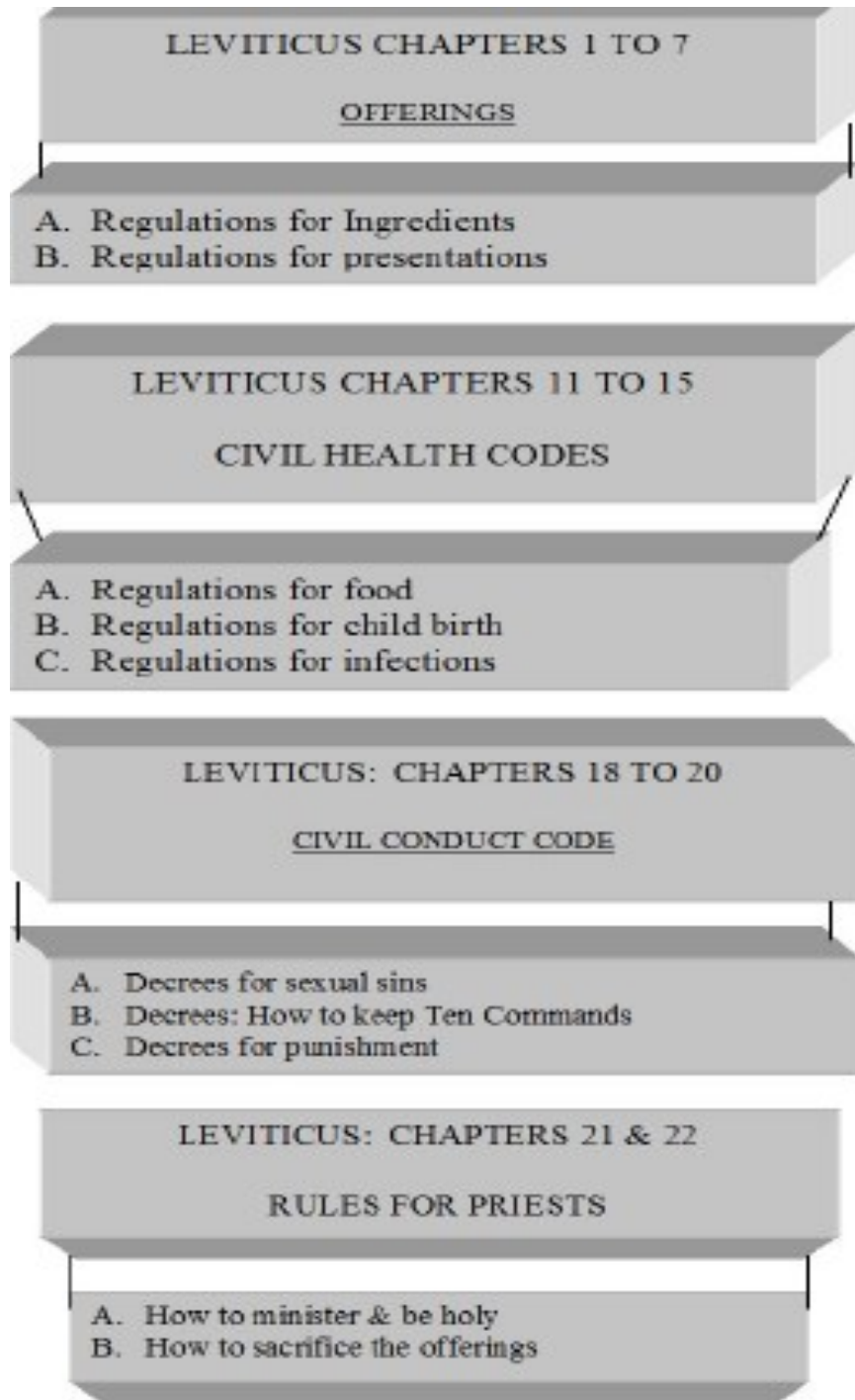
Related Texts

Deuteronomy 7:9
Deuteronomy 31:16
Joshua 24:14, 15
1 Kings 18:21
2 Kings 17:22, 23
2 Kings 18:11, 12
Nehemiah 9:38
Nehemiah 10:29

John 14:15, 21, 23, 24
Romans 13:8-10
1 John 2:3-6
1 John 3:21, 22
1 John 5:2, 3
2 John 1:6
Revelation 12:17
Revelation 14:12

understand this concept better:

1. Adam and Eve were given the Covenant by God in the heart. The Covenant between God and mankind was:
 - A. Man would accept God as his God
 - B. God would give mankind eternal life and everything he needed to live a happy joyous life on earth.
 - C. Terms of this Covenant: Obedience to the Ten Commandments.
2. God renewed the Covenant with Noah.
 - A. Terms of this Covenant: Obedience to the Ten Commandments.
3. God renewed the covenant with Abraham and his descendants to give them the Land of Promise.
 - A. Terms of this Covenant: Obedience to the Ten Commandments.



As the Israelites came out of Egypt, they were fresh from the hand of slavery. God wanted to make a great nation out of slaves. Using the Ten Commandments as their foundation and guide, the Israelites developed righteous decrees that explained how to implement the Ten Commandments into a workable civil code. These civil codes are found in the texts used in the illustration at the end of the chapter.

The decrees and some regulations were for the Israelites as a nation. They were an orderly codification of the principles of the Ten Commandments. As long as Israel stayed faithful to God He allowed them to remain as His nation and the throne of David enforced the national decrees.

But the Israelites rebelled against God and broke His covenant. He refused to forgive them - 2 Kings 24:3, 4 - and sent them off to exile. "All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God." "The Israelites secretly did things against the Lord their God that were not right." "But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers who did not trust in the Lord their God." "The Lord had ordered them, 'Do not do as they do', and they did the same things the Lord had forbidden them to do." "They forsook all the commands of the Lord their God." "And sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking Him to anger. So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from His presence." 2 Kings 17:7, 9, 14-18.

Civil codes were fine for civil order and justice, but the people still needed to be brought back into oneness and order with Heaven and Heaven's government. The ordinances and the other regulations had to do with temple worship. This is where the second part of the codes of the covenant came into play. The temple services brought them back into a relationship with the Kingdom of God.

Through the temple service, praise and honor, faith and hope, ascended to God. Through communion with God, study and

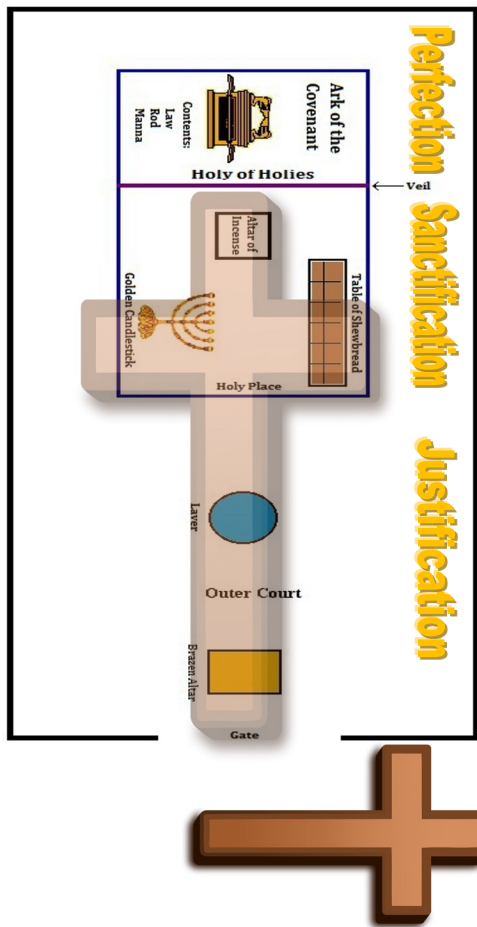
prayer, the people received the Holy Spirit of God to give them the power to obey God's Ten Commandments. They now were clean and obedient to God's law and the civil government.

The sacrificial, symbolic services helped the listeners to grasp by faith the reality of their prayers and acts of service and devotion. Through the symbolic services they could be sure and certain that the Messiah would come to blot out all the past sins that they had confessed and turned away from.

As the cross of Christ was lifted up, the Jewish nation no longer needed the symbols and shadows to point them to the Messiah.

The substance had died. The lamb was no longer needed. The candlesticks were no longer needed. The bread was no longer needed. The altar of incense and basin of water were no longer needed. The feast days were no longer needed. Instead of looking forward in faith to the Messiah, we could now look back in faith to the Messiah. ***SAME faith, SAME gospel, SAME salvation in both Old and New Testament.*** Only the symbols changed.

"The former regulation (those referring to the temple) is set aside because it was weak and useless, (for the law [the written code of Moses] made nothing perfect), and a



do with salvation. Salvation was and is only the keeping of the Ten Commandments.

"The sorrows for the appointed feasts I will remove from you; they are a burden and a reproach to you." Zephaniah 3:18. Folks, the same goes today. All of our church "worship" is detestable to Him unless we are living the perfect, righteous, holy, Ten Commandment life of Jesus. Let us worship Jesus in spirit and in truth, not in form, church or ceremonies.

Another reason we are not to celebrate those ceremonies is, under the Old Covenant, those feast days, services, temple rites, holy days that were "shadows of things to come" could only be held and observed in "the place that the LORD your God will choose". They were not allowed to "offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you." Deuteronomy 12:11,13. That is why we cannot observe the Passover, Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths now that Jesus has been crucified. The Jews were rejected as a nation and Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. God did all of that to firmly let it be known that all those ceremonies, feast days and rituals that were in connection with the Jewish nation and Jerusalem only, were now to be treated as an abhorrence. We are to have nothing to do with them now. God has not chosen any other place to observe them.

Now, our only obligation is to live as Jesus lived, perfect, sinless and Commandment keeping. "If you love Me, keep My Commandments." John 14:15. "Showing gracious love to the thousandth generation of those who love Me and keep My Commandments." Deuteronomy. 5:10

Honor everyone. Keep on loving the community of believers, fearing God, and honoring the king.” 1 Peter 2:13-17.

It is very plain to the astute Bible student that the thrust of Hebrews is not to do away with the Ten Commandments but only the symbols and shadows that pointed to Christ. This is easily seen in Hebrews, chapter nine. As the writer begins to show what was “new”, he takes out of discussion the Most Holy place where the Ten Commandments were located. This is found in Hebrews 9:3-5. The writer never discusses the Ten Commandments in the light of doing away with them. They are as eternal as Jesus Himself.

Only the temple, feast days, and services that went with the temple were eliminated at the death of Jesus. They were only temporary until the time of Christ. They were only shadows to point us to the One who would come and show the more perfect way. Those shadows, temple activities and feasts, had nothing to

better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.” Hebrews 7:18, 19. (Brackets added for clarification)

The Ten Commandments were never done away with. It has only been opened to us through a better and living way, Jesus Christ, not by symbols or shadows. “Therefore brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is His body.” Hebrews 10:19, 20.

The pointers and arrows of the temple service were no longer needed. This you can see from the illustration. The articles that were symbols and shadows made an outline, a shadow, of the cross that pointed to the righteous Ten Commandments of the Most Holy Place.

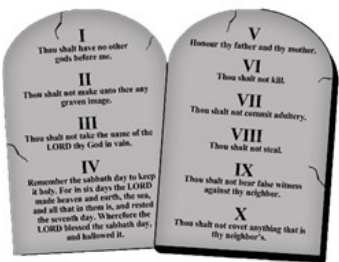
Jesus Christ came and pointed the way more perfectly. He is our example to follow. “But if anyone **obeys His word**, God’s love is truly made complete in Him. This is how we know we are in Him: whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.” 1 John 2:5, 6. We must walk as Jesus walked – perfect in His righteousness, His Ten Commandments.

The civil codes were slowly abolished as the nation deteriorated and lost its sovereign power. The Babylonians, the Medo-Persians, the Greeks, and finally the Romans; all stripped the Jews, in successive waves, of their power to implement their own civil rule.

The Jews rejected Jesus Christ as their king and acknowledged Caesar as their king – John 19:15. God then gave them their desire and turned them over to Titus. He marched against Jerusalem and in AD 70 destroyed their temple. Israel as a theocracy ceased to exist. All temple rites, services and feasts came to an end with the death of Jesus. No longer needed!

“Titus Flavius Vespasianus, b. Dec. 30, AD 39, d. Sept. 13, 81, spent most of his life in military service before succeeding (79)

Moral Law
Of Covenant
NOT ABOLISHED



Mat 5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them.

Rom 3:31 Do we, then, abolish the Law by this faith? Of course not! Instead, we uphold the Law.

Ordinance Law
Of Covenant
ABOLISHED



Heb 7:24 But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.

Heb 9:9-10 This illustration for today indicates that the gifts and sacrifices being offered could not clear the conscience of a worshiper, since they deal only with food, drink, and various washings, which are required for the body until the time when things would be set right.

his father, VESPASIAN, as Roman emperor. In 70, Titus was entrusted with the command against the Jewish rebels. He captured Jerusalem and in 71 returned to Rome, where his father made him commander of the Praetorian Guard. Later historians regarded Titus as an ideal emperor, in part because he spent great sums on games and monuments, including the COLOSSEUM. To the victims of the famous eruption (79) of Vesuvius and the plague and fire (80) in Rome he dispensed generous aid. The 'era of good feeling' ended when he was succeeded by his brother Domitian.”*

“While suppressing a major Jewish revolt, the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in AD 70. In 135, after the failure of the BAR KOCHBA revolt, Jews were banished from Jerusalem.”*

They had forsaken their God: He had forsaken them. With the destruction of their nation, the written code of Moses as it defined the civil and religious codes, was nailed to the cross. Paul said, “Having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross.” “Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a sabbath day (this is not the Ten Commandment’s Sabbath). These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.” Colossians 2:14, 16, 17

How could he write that? Who gave him that authority? Well, the answer to that is actually quite simple. He read the Old Testament and believed it. Listen very carefully and do not be deceived by those who are trying to get your eyes off of Jesus and onto the very ceremonies and rites that God hates.

“Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to Me. New Moons, sabbaths and convocations -- I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts My soul hates. They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them.” Isaiah 1:13, 14. “**I will stop**

all her celebrations; her yearly festivals, her New Moons, her sabbath days -- all her appointed feasts.” Hosea 2:11. “I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies... Away with the noise of your songs!...” Amos 5:21, 23.

The written code that required the death of a lamb, the feast days, the sabbath days that went with the feast days, the many rounds of ceremonies that symbolized the righteous life were now abolished. Jesus Christ is now our reality. It is clear now why Paul required Timothy to study the Old Testament (Scriptures to Paul), in 2 Timothy 3:15-17. It is by studying the Old Testament that we see the beauty of the plan of salvation and understand more clearly the work, life and death of Christ. We understand our part to play and the requirements of eternal life.

All those codes were left in the dust of the old destroyed temple. When the dust settled, the Ten Commandments radiated brighter and clearer to the whole world. “For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, **but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.**” “Do we then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! **Rather, we uphold the law.**” “Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. **Keeping God’s commands is what counts.**” Romans 2:13; 3:31; 1 Corinthians 7:19.

The civil codes that had to do with the stoning of a transgressor and all the other civil laws of the nation of Israel no longer existed. They were eliminated when the nation was eradicated and the people scattered across the face of the earth. Now the Christian would be required to keep the Ten Commandments, but would be under the civil codes of the nations they lived under to punish the transgressor. That is why Peter tells us “For the Lord’s sake submit yourselves to every human authority: whether to the king as supreme, or to governors who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing right you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. Live like free people, and do not use your freedom as an excuse for doing evil. Instead, be God’s servants.