

The Difference Between The Old & New Covenants

Introduction

Having established the Bible as God's only book, we next examine an important distinction about the Bible itself: *the Bible has two different covenants*. Defined, a "covenant" is "*an agreement between persons or parties*" (*Webster's*). There may be no greater contributor to the lack of respect for Biblical authority among religious people than in the failure to recognize, understand, and apply this difference in how God has dealt with His people through the ages based on 2 different covenants.

Many erroneous religious practices that exist among good people result from a failure to understand the difference in the Old and the New Covenants. Even among brethren there has arisen a movement that denies the difference between the two covenants. Many brethren teach that the Old Testament never ended...the New Testament is simply a "continuation." This is clearly not Biblical because the Scripture refers to these covenants as the "*first*" and "*second*" ones (**Heb. 8:7**), and as the "*old*" and "*new*" ones (**Heb. 8:13**).

Those who contend for this difference between the covenants of the Scripture are often misunderstood as believing the Old Testament is not important at all. They have been misrepresented as saying all we should use is the New Testament. Just because the Old Testament is not our source of authority does not equate to saying it should be removed from the Bible altogether. In fact, until one learns the Old Testament, the New Testament makes little sense at all. The Old Testament is important because...

- ◆ ...the apostle Paul said as much (**Rom. 7:6-13**)
 - it makes us aware of sin, our need for mercy & forgiveness
- ◆ ...it contains valuable lessons for servants of God today (**Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1-11**)
 - if Christians commit similar sins as did Israel, we also will be punished (**cp. Heb. 2:1-3**)

The Old Covenant

- ◆ Its Origin, Confirmation, & Violation
 - God desired a covenant with a people He considered His own (**Ex. 3:7,10; 19:4-6**)
 - What were the conditions of this covenant?

 - For whom was this covenant? (**Deut. 5:2-4**)

 - God recorded this covenant in a book (**Ex. 24:3-7**)
 - How was it confirmed? (**Heb. 9:18-21**)

 - Israel later violated the covenant (**Jer. 31:32**)
 - How did Israel break the covenant? (**Heb. 8:9**)

First Principles Of The Oracles Of God

Lesson 5

- ◆ *Its Purpose*
 - To be a national & religious law for Israel
 - Mandated proper civil & moral treatment of fellow man (Ex. 21-23)
 - Regulated proper worship of Jehovah (Ex. 25-31)
 - To make transgressions, sin evident (Rom. 7:5-11; Gal. 3:19)
 - What is personified as our "real" enemy?
 - To bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24)
 - What should result from our being brought to Christ?

- ◆ *Its Forecast Of The New Covenant*
 - The first covenant was given around 1445 B.C.
 - Almost 900 years later, God said He would make another one (Jer. 31:31-34)
 - The old covenant served as our a "schoolmaster" or "tutor" (Gal. 3:19-25)
 - Tutor => *paidagōgos* (a child conductor, not instructor)
 - Responsibility was to lead the child to the one who would teach
 - How does Timothy illustrate this? (2 Tim. 3:15)

The New Covenant

- ◆ *Its Origin*
 - Though the old covenant pointed to the coming of the Seed, the new covenant did not begin at His coming (Gal. 3:19)
 - Which covenant did Jesus keep, fulfill? (Mt. 5:17-18)
 - When was the old covenant fulfilled, satisfied? (Col. 2:14)
 - Exactly when did the new covenant begin to be in force? (Acts 1-2)

- ◆ *Its Relation To The Old Covenant*
 - Of the original 10 Commandments (Decalogue), how many are repeated in the new covenant, either verbatim or in principle?
 - What do these repetitions suggest about God and morality?
 - What is the subject matter in the one difference between the new covenant and the Decalogue of the old covenant?

