

Arlington Church of Christ

Following the Scriptural Trail

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Old Covenant, New Covenant



OLD Covenant

RIGHTEOUSNESS of LAW

1. *Blood of animals*
2. *Written on stone*
3. *Shadow*
4. *Glorious*
5. *Had an end*
6. *Law of Moses*
7. *Law of works*
8. *Law of sin and death*
9. *Many sacrifices*
10. *Powerless to save*
11. *Annual atonement*
12. *Earthly tabernacle*
13. *Ministry of death*
14. *Outer form - flesh*
15. *Ministry of condemnation*

1st Covenant

**For
if the first
covenant had
been faultless
then should
no place have
been sought
for the second.**

Hebrews 8:7

NEW Covenant

RIGHTEOUSNESS of CHRIST

1. *Blood of Christ*
2. *Written on hearts*
3. *Substance*
4. *More Glorious*
5. *Has no end*
6. *Law of Messiah*
7. *Law of faith*
8. *Law of Sprit of Life*
9. *One Sacrifices*
10. *Powerful to save*
11. *Eternal atonement*
12. *Heavenly tabernacle*
13. *Ministry of life*
14. *Inner reality - spirit*
15. *Ministry of reconciliation*

2nd Covenant

Can you spot the difference?

OLD COVENANT

If you do...

- If you listen (Ex 23:22)
- If you look (Deu 4:29)
- If you bring (Lev 2:4)
- If you follow (Lev 26:3)
- If you pay attention (Deu 7:12)
- If you make (Deu 23:21)
- If you obey (Deu 28:2)
- If you disobey (Deu 28:15)

NEW COVENANT

It is done...

- You are forgiven! (Col 2:13)
- You are healed! (1 Pe 2:24)
- You are blessed! (Eph 1:3)
- You are righteous! (2 Co 5:21)
- You are holy! (Heb 10:10)
- You are mighty! (Eph 1:19)
- You are accepted! (Rm 15:7)
- You are loved! (Rm 8:39)

**Salvation by perfect obedience
of man
Saved by works**



**Salvation by perfect obedience
of Christ
Saved by grace**

Deuteronomy 5:1-4

Moses summoned all Israel and said: Hear, Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. ² The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. ³ It was not with our ancestors that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. ⁴ The LORD spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain.

The Old Covenant was given specifically to the Jewish people at the time of Moses, not to the entire world of the time.

Now Abraham was given promises by God:

Nehemiah 9:7-8

“You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham. ⁸ You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.



Abraham was made three promises due to his faithfulness:

- 1) That he would have a son and descendants like stars of the sky.
- 2) That his descendants would receive the land of Canaan
- 3) That all nations would be blessed by his 'seed'

Joshua 23:14

“Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.”



Joshua said that God had fulfilled the promises to the Israelite people at the time they entered the promised land.

Nehemiah 9:9-13

“You saw the suffering of our ancestors in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. ¹⁰ You sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. ¹¹ You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. ¹² By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take. ¹³ “You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good.

Nehemiah acknowledges that the Old Covenant made with Moses was given to the Israelite nation as they came out of Egyptian bondage

Jeremiah 31:31-33

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

But because they broke that Old Covenant, God promises a New and better Covenant.

Ezekiel 16:59-60

“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will deal with you as you deserve, because you have despised my oath by breaking the covenant. ⁶⁰ Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.

Galatians 3:16-19

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ.¹⁷ What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.¹⁸ For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.

¹⁹ Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.

Notice that the promise to Abraham was not affected by the giving of the Old Covenant Law . God’s promise to bless all nations through Abraham’s seed (the Messiah) still stands.

Galatians 3:16-19

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Genesis 22:18

and through your seed all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

Galatians 3:16-19

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(To point out sin until the Messiah had come)

Acts 3:18, 25-26

But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying **that his Messiah would suffer.**

.... ²⁵ And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, ‘Through your seed all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ ²⁶ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you **by turning each of you from your wicked ways.**”

While God had told Abraham that ‘his seed’ would bless all nations, **the message of Jesus’ death for forgiveness of sins was first taken to the Jewish nation.**

Acts 3:18, 25-26

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Acts 13:45-47

When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. They began to contradict what Paul was saying and heaped abuse on him. ⁴⁶ Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:11-18

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—

¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

How did Jesus bring both the Jews and Gentiles together and reconcile them to Himself?

Colossians 2:13-14

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

The Law of Moses required perfect obedience. If one did not obey it perfectly, they were legally indebted to pay the price for their failure to do so. But Jesus paid the sin price for us on the cross giving us a new covenant with God!

But if the Old Law and the Old Covenant is taken away, and a new Covenant established - then we need a different High Priest as a mediator of that new Covenant.

Hebrews 7:11-14

If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood—and indeed the law given to the people established that priesthood—why was there still need for another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? ¹² **For when the priesthood is changed, the law must be changed also. ¹³ He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ **For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.****

The fact that Jesus is from a different tribe than Levi indicates that God was instituting a New Covenant through a new priesthood -

Hebrews 8:6-13 But in fact the ministry **Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one**, since the new covenant is established on better promises.⁷ For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another.⁸ But God found fault with the people and said: **“The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.**¹⁰ This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. **I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.** I will be their God, and they will be my people.¹¹ No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.¹² **For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”**¹³ By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is outdated will soon disappear.

Old Covenant

Written on stone tablets

Inferior

Moses was mediator

Physical promises

People did not keep it so it
could not forgive sins

Obsolete, and disappearing
Temporary until Messiah

New Covenant

Written in the heart and mind

Superior

Jesus is mediator

Better promises (spiritual)

Jesus' sacrifice on cross paid
for the forgiveness of sins

Everlasting Covenant

But the Jews had a lot of problems letting go of the Old Covenant Laws to embrace the New Covenant of Jesus – so Paul describes the difference in another way to help them understand that a change has now occurred.

Romans 7:1-6

Do you not know, brothers —for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? ² For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him... But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man. ⁴ So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. ⁵ For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶ But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

The Old Covenant has died – we are now subject to the New Covenant

2 Corinthians 3:7-11

Now if **the ministry that brought death**, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was,⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?⁹ If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!¹⁰ For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory.¹¹ And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

Old Covenant

New Covenant

Galatians 5:3-4

Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are **trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.**

Going back to the Old Testament laws as the basis for your salvation requires that you keep every command in the Old Testament perfectly. Trying to live that way is the equivalent of rejecting the sacrifice of Christ and accepting the penalty for your failures yourself.

So does that mean that the 'Ten Commandments' have no meaning for us today?

Nine of the Ten Commandments are referenced in the New Testament epistles:

- 1. You shall have no other gods before me ([1 Timothy 2:5](#))**
- 2. You shall not make idols ([1 John 5:21](#))**
- 3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord ([1 Timothy 1:20](#); [6:1](#))**
- 4. Honor your father and mother ([Ephesians 6:1-4](#))**
- 6. You shall not murder ([Romans 13:8-10](#); [1 Peter 4:15](#))**
- 7. You shall not commit adultery ([1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#); [Hebrews 13:4](#))**
- 8. You shall not steal ([Ephesians 4:28](#))**
- 9. You shall not bear false witness ([Ephesians 4:25](#); [Revelation 21:8](#))**
- 10. You shall not covet ([Colossians 3:5](#); [Hebrews 13:5](#))**

4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.

When Gentiles began turning to Jesus, the New Testament church dealt with the issue of which Jewish laws were to be kept by Gentiles. At the Jerusalem Council in [Acts 15](#) the Sabbath command was not one the apostles included for Gentiles. [Colossians 2:16–17](#) says, "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ."

The Sabbath is typically thought of as a day of rest and worship. Of course, we are to worship God every day ([Romans 12:1](#); [Colossians 3:16–17](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:16–18](#)) and we are to regularly gather with other believers to do so ([Hebrews 10:23–25](#)). But the Saturday Sabbath command is not given for New Testament believers.

Jesus is now our Sabbath rest. [Hebrews 3:7—4:13](#) describes this in great detail.

But in spite of the clear teachings of the New Covenant about the Messiah Jesus, there are still those who do not understand and look for either another Messiah or for Jesus to return and set up an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem. They are promoting the construction of a 'third temple' on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The first temple built by Solomon was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC, the second temple built (rebuilt) by Herod was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. So various groups are promoting the construction of a 'third temple' so the Messiah can come and reign on the earth from there.

In Jewish eschatology, the term "Messiah", refers specifically to a future Jewish king from the [Davidic line](#), who is expected to save the [Jewish nation](#), and will be anointed with [holy anointing oil](#) and rule the Jewish people during the [Messianic Age](#)

Orthodox Jews hold that the Messiah will be descended from his father through the line of King David, and will gather the Jews back into the Land of Israel, usher in an era of peace, build the Third Temple, father a male heir, re-institute the Sanhedrin, and so on. Jewish tradition of the Essenes during the second Temple period alludes to two redeemers, one suffering and the second fulfilling the traditional messianic role.

Belief in the future advent of the Messiah is one of the fundamental requisites of the Jewish faith, concerning which has written: "Anyone who does not believe in him, or who does not wait for his arrival, has not merely denied the other prophets, but has also denied the Torah and Moses, our Rabbi.

Building a 'third temple' has been in the news because of the importation of 4 or 5 red heifers from Texas to Israel in Sept 2022. This has been taken as a sign that prophecy about the coming of the Messiah is about to be fulfilled.....

This comes from a regulation given in Numbers 19 about the sacrifice of a red heifer whose ashes were to be mixed with cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet wool – then mixed in water and used to wash in the ‘water of cleansing’ to be used to purify the people from ceremonial uncleanness.

The rabbis, however, have added to this simple instruction and taught that there have been 9 red heifers sacrificed since the time of Moses, and the tenth red heifer will be sacrificed by the Messiah himself (Rabbi Maimonides- 1135-1204). The group backing the construction of a third temple takes this as the fulfillment of prophecy and a major step toward plans for a new temple.

Some others see the red heifer sacrifice as symbolic of the sacrifice of Jesus – as the heifer had to be perfect, be killed outside the camp, and its ashes used to purify the people as the blood of Jesus did – so they see it as a sign of the

return of Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom.

This is promoted and taught by those who take the view that Revelation describes everything that will happen all throughout human history – so they are looking for a 1000 year reign on earth for the Messiah, a rebuilt temple and the return to power of Jerusalem over all the earth. They teach the return of animal sacrifices, and the temple worship as in the Old Covenant.

But does a red heifer have to be sacrificed to purify the people and a new temple be built for ceremonial worship? No, Jesus fulfilled all the requirements of the Old Covenant and established the New covenant under which we now live today. Going back to the Old Covenant is a rejection of Christ's sacrifice as the all sufficient payment for sin.

Hebrews 9:13-14

The blood of goats and bulls and **the ashes of a heifer** sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them **so that they are outwardly clean.**

¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!