

## When Did the Old Covenant End and the New Covenant Begin?

Peter Ditzel

There has been much confusion concerning the New Covenant. Some might think that when the New Covenant began and when the Old Covenant ended is not important. I will show you that it is. Covenant theologians believe that the New Covenant is merely a new administration of the same covenant that is also called the Old Covenant. Thus, believing it all to be one covenant, they don't accept that there was an ending of the Old Covenant and a beginning of a truly fresh, New Covenant.

Dispensational theologians are divided and confused on the subject of the New Covenant. After saying the dispensationalists agree on many topics, dispensational theologian, Rodney J. Decker, admits, "Yet when we come to the new covenant it is challenging to establish consensus as to whether there is one new covenant or two, whether the church is party to the covenant, related only through the covenant mediator, shares similar blessings, or has nothing at all to do with it" ("Why Do Dispensationalists Have Such a Hard Time Agreeing on the New Covenant?" [http://www.bbc.edu/council/documents/New\\_Covenant\\_CDH\\_08.pdf](http://www.bbc.edu/council/documents/New_Covenant_CDH_08.pdf)). Some dispensationalists see the New Covenant as dealing with Israel and not the church. Others wonder whether the church may not have something to do with the New Covenant, although they seem not to know what. Thus there is disagreement over whether the New Covenant began at the Cross or whether it is yet to begin with the onset of what dispensationalists believe will be a future millennial reign.

So now, let's look at the Bible's plain answer to this question. Jesus Christ came to do many things. We usually, and quite rightly, focus on the fact that He came to atone for the sins of those who put their trust in Him. But this is really part of a bigger picture. The atonement is one way in which Jesus fulfilled the law. In Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus says, "Don't think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I didn't come to destroy, but to fulfill. For most certainly, I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not even one smallest letter or one tiny pen stroke shall in any way pass away from the law, until all things are accomplished" (Matthew 5:17-18). I have explained this Scripture in

Copyright © 2013 wordofhisgrace.org

Permission is granted to reproduce this article only if reproduced in full with no alterations and keeping the copyright statement and this permission statement intact. Unless otherwise noted, Bible references are from the *World English Bible* (WEB).

newcovenantstart.pdf

detail in the article "In what way did Jesus fulfill the law?" (<http://www.wordofhisgrace.org/jesusfulfilllawqa1.htm>). But, briefly, what Jesus is plainly saying is that He did not come to destroy or tear down the law; He came to fulfill its demands. And once He fulfilled those demands—with all that He did in His life and culminating in the Cross—the Old Covenant was completed and thus ended. Jesus ended the Old Covenant by fulfilling the Old Covenant law.

Confusion arises when we don't understand the contrast between the Old and New Covenants. But the Bible tells us:

But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which on better promises has been given as law. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he said, "Behold, the days come," says the Lord, "that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they didn't continue in my covenant, and I disregarded them," says the Lord. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days," says the Lord; "I will put my laws into their mind, I will also write them on their heart. I will be their God, and they will be my people. They will not teach every man his fellow citizen, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness. I will remember their sins and lawless deeds no more." In that he says, "A new covenant," he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and grows aged is near to vanishing away.

Hebrews 8:6-13

Nearer the end of this article, I will explain the aphorism "near to vanishing away." Here, with this Scripture, I want to just point out that the writer is clearly saying that the First Covenant is the Old Covenant and is the one God made with Israel at Sinai and that the New Covenant is the one Jesus established. The Bible makes a distinction between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

## **Made with True Israel**

In this passage, the writer of Hebrews has quoted Jeremiah 31:31-34. The writer uses Jeremiah's terminology in saying that the New Covenant will be made "with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." This refers to true Israel, the body of Christian believers. It does not refer to national Israel, which in Old Testament times was only a shadowy type of the assembly of believers under the New Covenant. As support for this, examine the following:

- Those who have faith in Christ are the children of Abraham (Galatians 3.7; notice the principle in Romans 9:6-8)
- If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed (Galatians 3.29)
- The present Jerusalem is in slavery, but the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother (Galatians 4.26)
- Like Isaac, we (believers) are children of promise (Galatians 4.28)
- We are not children of the slave woman—Hagar who represents Sinai, but of the free woman (Galatians 4.31)
- Those who walk in line with the rule that circumcision or uncircumcision means nothing but the new creation means everything (i.e. Christians) are the Israel of God (Galatians 6.15-16)
- A Jew is one inwardly, not outwardly and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit, not the letter (Romans 2.28-29)
- We (Christians) are the circumcision (true Israel), who serve God by the Spirit, who glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:2-3)

Old Covenant Israel was the forerunner and shadowy type of the New Covenant reality—the assembly of believers.

So, God made the Old Covenant with physical Israel only: "And Moses called all Israel, and he said to them, Hear O Israel, the ordinances and the judgments! as many as I speak in your ears in this day. And you shall learn them, and guard to do them. The lord your God

ordained to you a covenant in Horeb. Not with your fathers the lord ordained this covenant, but only with you; even you here all living today. Face to face the lord spoke to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire" (Deuteronomy 5:1-4, *Apostolic Bible Polyglot*).

But God has made the New Covenant with spiritual Israel. That's why He can say in the passages in Jeremiah 31 and Hebrews quoted above that he puts His laws into our minds and hearts. It also explains why He says in those places, "They will not teach every man his fellow citizen, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them." Some have said that we cannot be under the New Covenant today because we still teach people about the Lord. But this is not talking about evangelizing the unsaved. It is talking about those who are already in the covenant—the believers. God made the Old Covenant with a nationality, the Israelites. That nationality included believers and unbelievers alike. In fact, most under that covenant were unbelievers. One was in the covenant or not depending on his or her lineage. The few who were believers could evangelize the others, telling them about the Lord.

But God makes the New Covenant with believers only. They are from all nationalities, including Jews, but they must believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Within the New Covenant, we do not need to evangelize each other (Hebrews 8:11). We already know the Lord or we would not be in the covenant. And being in the covenant makes us spiritual Israel—a new, non-worldly, spiritual nationality: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: who in time past were no people, but now are God's people, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Thus, the Old and New Covenants are made with two, completely different sets of people. God made the Old Covenant with physical, national Israel, most of whom were not believers. He makes the New Covenant with spiritual Israel, consisting of only believers who might be of any nationality (Jews and Gentiles alike). The Old Covenant was for national Israel only: the New Covenant is for individual believers from many different nations.

## **Debunking Some Wrong Ideas**

Various theologians, even some New Covenant theologians, have proposed some unbiblical times for when the New Covenant began.

*Error 1. The Old Covenant ended and the New began at the juncture of the ministries of John the Baptist's and Jesus.* John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. Luke 16:16 reads, "The law and the prophets were until John. From that time the Good News of the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." (For more information, see "The Gospel of the Kingdom of God" <http://www.wordofhisgrace.org/gospelkingdom.htm>.) Speaking of Jesus, John also said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). The Old Testament was nearing its end, but at the time John spoke, it was still in force. John's ministry prepared the way for Jesus, who was the Mediator of the New Covenant (Hebrews 9:15 and 12:24); and, therefore, John's ministry also prepared the way for the coming New Covenant. The juncture of the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus was a significant time and was an important step toward the New Covenant. But so was the crossing of the Red Sea a significant time and important step toward the coming of the Old Covenant. But it was not the beginning of the Old Covenant, which was ratified with the blood of animals at Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:1-11). Neither was the juncture of the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus the beginning of the New Covenant.

*Error 2. The New Covenant began with Jesus' giving the Sermon on the Mount.* In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus was certainly giving laws for Christians under the New Covenant. They show the way of love that we are to live. But the giving of the laws is not the ratification of the covenant. God's stating the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai was not what began the Old Covenant. It began with the shedding of blood as shown in this passage:

And He said to Moses, Come up to Jehovah, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy from the elders of Israel. And bow yourselves from a distance. And let Moses approach by himself to Jehovah, and they shall not approach. And the people shall not go up with him. And Moses came and told all the words of Jehovah to the people, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, We will do all the Words

which Jehovah has spoken. And Moses wrote all the Words of Jehovah. And he rose early in the morning and built an altar below the mountain, and twelve memorial pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the sons of Israel. And they offered up burnt offerings, and offered sacrifices of bulls, peace offerings to Jehovah. And Moses took half of the blood, and he put it in basins. And he sprinkled half of the blood on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the ears of the people. And they said, We will do all that Jehovah has spoken, and we will hear. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled on the people, and said, Behold, the blood of the covenant which Jehovah has cut with you concerning these words. And Moses and Aaron went up with Nadab and Abihu, and seventy from the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel. And under His feet was as the work of a pavement of sapphire, and the same as the essence of the heavens for clearness. And He did not stretch out His hand to the nobles of the sons of Israel. And they saw God, and they ate and drank.

Exodus 24:1-11, *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*

Similarly, the New Covenant did not begin with the Sermon on the Mount, but with the shedding of blood.

*Error 3. The New Covenant began at the Last Supper.* At the Last Supper, Jesus inaugurated what is variously called the Lord's Supper, Communion, and Eucharist. Certainly, the Lord's Supper has a relationship to the beginning of the New Covenant. But the Lord's Supper as first eaten at the Last Supper was not the beginning of the New Covenant. It preceded it. In fact, the Lord's Supper at the Last Supper was a teaching lesson. Read Paul's description of it:

For I received from the Lord that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed took bread. When he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in memory of me." In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink, in memory of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Jesus says to take the bread and the cup "in memory of me." He also says that as often as we eat the bread and drink the cup, we "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." But have you thought of this interesting fact? When the disciples ate the bread and drank the cup that night, Jesus had not yet died and gone. The Lord's Supper is supposed to be a time when, in eating the bread and drinking the wine, we remember Jesus and proclaim (the Greek word is the same word often translated "preach") His death until He comes again. But that night, Jesus had not yet died. So, the Lord's Supper at the Last Supper was Jesus' lesson to His disciples (and recorded in Scripture for our instruction) on how to remember Him and how to proclaim His death after His crucifixion. We might say that it was a rehearsal, like a wedding rehearsal. You go through the moves but it's not yet the real thing.

It is argued that when Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood," He was initiating the New Covenant. But the cup did not contain his blood. It merely contained wine. He was teaching that we were to understand that the cup of wine was a symbol of the blood to begin the New Covenant. When He taught this, He hadn't yet shed His blood. After He had shed His blood, the cup of wine would be a memorial of Him and a proclamation of His death until His return and a symbol of the New Covenant in His blood. Jesus had to die for us to proclaim His death in the Lord's Supper; He had to shed His blood for the cup to become the symbol of the New Covenant in His blood. As we will see, it was His dying, His shedding His blood, that was important. The Last Supper was not the beginning of the New Covenant.

*Error 4. The Old Covenant ended and the New began at Pentecost.* In the Old Testament, we read that Pentecost was the day on which the Jews waved two loaves baked with leaven before the Lord (Leviticus 23:15–17). This was a picture. The two loaves represented the firstfruits of God's people. The reality of this began on the Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection: "There were added that day about three thousand souls.... The Lord added to the assembly day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:41, 47). Contrary to what some (e.g. Landmark Baptists) say, this was certainly the beginning of the New Covenant assembly (*ekklēsia*). But the New Covenant itself had already been ratified.

*Error 5. The Old Covenant ended and the New began in AD 70 with the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple.* The tabernacle, and

later the temple in Jerusalem, was the center of an elaborate worship system that was actually the dynamic pattern or shadow that pictured God's plan for Christ and His people under the New Covenant. This worship could not be implemented without either the tabernacle or the temple. Thus, soon after the ratification of the Old Covenant, God gave instructions for the building of the tabernacle (Exodus 25).

The destruction of the temple in AD 70 is not what ended the Old Covenant. It had by then already ended. But because the majority of the Jews did not recognize the ending, they continued performing the Old Covenant rituals in the temple for forty years after Christ fulfilled the Old Covenant. During this forty years, God tried Israel as He tried their forebears for forty years in the wilderness centuries before. He used His servants to preach the Gospel to them. Some heard but most did not believe because of their hardened hearts. Before AD 70, the writer of Hebrews wrote this to the Jews:

Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you will hear his voice, don't harden your hearts, as in the provocation, like as in the day of the trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested me by proving me, and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was displeased with that generation, and said, 'They always err in their heart, but they didn't know my ways;' as I swore in my wrath, 'They will not enter into my rest.'"... To whom did he swear that they wouldn't enter into his rest, but to those who were disobedient? We see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.

Hebrews 3:7-11, 18-19

And as we saw earlier, the writer of Hebrews also wrote to the Jews that the Old Covenant had grown old and was near to vanishing away. These were some of the many warnings and pleadings God gave to Israel. Yet, except for relatively few people, Israel continued with the temple service acting out the patterns that had outlived their usefulness and been replaced by the reality. And they died like their ancient fathers in the wilderness in unbelief.

But, if the Old Covenant was already fulfilled by Christ and the New Covenant started, why does Hebrews 8 (see above) not outright say so? In fact, it does. Let's look closely at verse 13: "In that he says, 'A new covenant,' he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and grows aged is near to vanishing away." The Greek word translated "new" is *kainos*. It means new in the sense of fresh. It can

be translated "fresh." "Old" is from the Greek word *palaiōō*. It means worn out or obsolete. "Grows aged" comes from the Greek word *gēraskō*. From this we get such English words as geriatric and gerontology that deal with aging. It means senescent, decrepit, senile. "Vanishing away" is from *aphanismos*, which means "disappearing."

So, the writer of Hebrews was saying, "In that he says, 'A fresh covenant,' he has made the first obsolete." That is a clear statement that the New Covenant made the Old Covenant obsolete. He then goes on to state a general principal about obsolescence: "But that which is becoming obsolete and grows decrepit is near to disappearing." He states this as an aphorism in the present tense, called a gnomic. Common examples are "violets are blue," "sugar is sweet," and "boys will be boys." We find a couple of examples from Jesus in Matthew 7:17: "Even so, every good tree produces good fruit; but the corrupt tree produces evil fruit." We see an example from Paul's writing in 2 Corinthians 9:7: "for God loves a cheerful giver." The writer of Hebrews uses the gnomic present in Hebrews 3:4: "For every house is built by someone."

The last half of Hebrews 8:13 is also an aphorism in gnomic present: "But that which is becoming obsolete and grows decrepit is near to disappearing." The writer of Hebrews is perhaps being tactful so as not to offend his Jewish readers. He first states that the Old Covenant is obsolete. He then states a timeless truth that tells them that, despite their continuing to go through the motions of the Old Covenant, even their ability to do this is about to disappear entirely. And it did when the Romans destroyed the temple. Through the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70, God showed outwardly what He had already done: He had already ended the Old Covenant, and He had already ended His special relationship with Israel as a nation.

*Error 6. The Old Covenant hasn't ended—it is just being newly administered as the New Covenant.* This is the position of Reformed or Covenant theology. I have already presented Scriptures in this article that the Old Covenant has become obsolete and disappeared, exposing the Reformed position as the imaginings of men.

By the way, Covenant Theologians often cite Hebrews 13:20 to defend their position. In the King James Version, it says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." They say that the "everlasting covenant" spoken of here is what they claim to be the one covenant of grace that includes both Old and New

Covenants. But the verse makes perfect sense without this assumption. The Greek contains no definite article before "everlasting covenant." Therefore, it could be translated "an everlasting covenant." The Bible plainly speaks of the Old Covenant as disappearing, so it is obviously not everlasting. Further, Ezekiel 37:26, which was written at the time of the Old Covenant, speaks prophetically of the everlasting covenant as something then future: "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore." It is obviously Jesus' blood and the New Covenant that are designated "an everlasting covenant" in Hebrews 13:20.

*Error 7. The New Covenant hasn't yet begun.* This is a position of many Dispensationalists. Those who hold this opinion do so because they believe the New Covenant is only for national Israel and that national Israel has not yet accepted the terms of the New Covenant. But if the New Covenant has not yet begun, why did Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:6 call himself a servant of the New Covenant? If the New Covenant is only for national Israel and not yet in force, why did Paul tell the Gentile Corinthians that the cup of wine in the Lord's Supper is the New Covenant in Jesus' blood? In fact, why do any Gentiles drink that cup if that covenant is not for them? Why did Peter, addressing the house of Israel (Acts 2:36) say that "the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are far off, even as many as the Lord our God will call to himself" (Acts 2:39)? Why did Paul, writing of God's calling "not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles" (Romans 9:24), go on in Romans 9:25-26 to support this by quoting Hosea 2:23 and 1:10? If you read those verses in Hosea, you will see that in their original context, they were clearly referring to the northern ten tribes of Israel. Yet, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul knew that this was only a shadowy type, and that the words ultimately referred to the Gentiles coming into the New Covenant relationship with God: "As he says also in Hosea, 'I will call them "my people," which were not my people; and her "beloved," who was not beloved.' 'It will be that in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," There they will be called "children of the living God"'. "

Well, I could write another entire article exposing the foolishness of the notion that Gentile Christians are not under the New Covenant and that God is waiting for Israel to accept the terms of the New Covenant before beginning it. For now, I will simply go on to show what the Bible says about when the New Covenant began.

## **When the New Covenant Began and the Old Covenant Ended**

I have already presented plenty of evidence that shows that the Old Covenant was fulfilled and ended and the New Covenant began at the Cross when Jesus died and His blood was shed. (For more information specifically about Jesus' fulfilling of the Old Covenant, read "In what way did Jesus fulfill the law?" <http://www.wordofhisgrace.org/jesusfulfilllawqa1.htm>.) But I will give a little more proof.

After speaking in Hebrews 8 of the coming of the New Covenant and the disappearing of the Old Covenant, the writer says this in Hebrews 9 of Jesus Christ:

For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, since a death has occurred for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, that those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a last will and testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him who made it. For a will is in force where there has been death, for it is never in force while he who made it lives. Therefore even the first covenant has not been dedicated without blood.

Hebrews 9:15-18

"Covenant" and "last will and testament" are translated from the same Greek word. The reason for the difference in translation is because the writer of Hebrews, beginning in verse 16, is explaining that Jesus set the New Covenant up as a last will and testament that would come into force with His death. Thus, it should be easy for all to understand that the New Covenant came into force when Jesus died on the Cross.

Notice that the writer also says, "Therefore even the first covenant has not been dedicated without blood." He goes on to say,

According to the law, nearly everything is cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.... For Christ hasn't entered into holy places made with hands, which are representations of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.... so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, without sin, to those who are eagerly waiting for him for salvation.... For the law, having a shadow of the good to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the

same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.... then he has said, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He takes away the first, that he may establish the second, by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.... but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from that time waiting until his enemies are made the footstool of his feet. For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. The Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them: 'After those days,' says the Lord, 'I will put my laws on their heart, I will also write them on their mind...."

Hebrews 9:22, 24, 28; 10:1, 9-10, 12-16

This is the covenant—the New Covenant that was established by the death of Jesus, the shedding of His blood as the ultimate sacrifice once for all, taking away the first that He may establish the second, perfecting forever those who are being sanctified, and putting God's laws into their hearts and minds. It is the covenant that made the Old Covenant obsolete, whose laws Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount and in His new command in John 13:34 that we love one another, that is pictured in the Lord's Supper, whose provisions allowed for the creation of God's assembly at Pentecost, whose rejection—synonymous with rejecting its Testator and High Priest—brought on God's rejection of Israel and the consequent destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

### **Why This Is Important**

Jesus Christ instituted the New Covenant at the cost of His life and has placed His people under that covenant as a fail-safe shelter from sin and condemnation. It is our contract of love with our Savior (John 15:13). How dare anyone say that, although Jesus died fulfilling the terms of His last will and testament, it is not yet in force? How dare anyone say that it is merely a new administration of the covenant of the law, of works, of condemnation, and of death? How dare people who say such things even raise their heads to teach such Christ-dishonoring doctrine?

Read these Scriptures. As can be seen from their context, they are Old Testament prophecies of Jesus Christ. "I the lord God called you in righteousness, and I shall hold your hand, and I will strengthen you;

and I gave you for a covenant of a race, for a light of nations; to open the eyes of the blind, to lead out of bonds ones being tied; from out of the house of prison also ones sitting in darkness" (Isaiah 42:6-7, *Apostolic Bible Polyglot*); "Thus says the lord , In the accepted time I heeded you, and in the day of deliverance I helped you, and I shaped you, and I gave you for a covenant of nations, to establish the earth, and to inherit desolate inheritances. Saying to the ones in bonds, Come forth! and to the ones in the darkness to be uncovered. In all the ways they shall be grazing, even in all the roads of their pasture" (Isaiah 49:8-9, *Apostolic Bible Polyglot*).

These verses tell us that Jesus Christ Himself *is the New Covenant!* When we get the New Covenant wrong, we are getting Jesus wrong. As seen in these prophecies, one of the central purposes of the New Covenant, of Jesus, is to bring salvation to the nations. Those who say that the New Covenant is not now in effect are denying one of the primary works of Jesus Christ in this age.

And those who place the beginning of the New Covenant prior to the Cross are undervaluing the core of the New Covenant without which it could not begin—the death and shed blood of Jesus Christ, the atonement of our Savior for the sins of His people. Those who place the beginning of the New Covenant at Pentecost confuse the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit with the redemptive work of Christ. Those who place the beginning of the New Covenant at the fall of Jerusalem confuse the wrath of God on a hard-hearted people with the grace of God on those who trust in the work of their Savior on the Cross.

Those who say that the New Covenant is merely a new administration of the Old Covenant confuse "the service of death, written engraved on stones," "the service of condemnation" with "the service of righteousness" (2 Corinthians 3:7-9); they profane the blood of the Savior by mixing it in the same covenant with the "blood of bulls and goats" that could not take away sins (Hebrews 10:4).

This subject is critically important because any teaching that misrepresents the New Covenant necessarily misrepresents the work Jesus Christ came to accomplish and thus misrepresents Him.

*But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable multitudes of angels, to the general assembly and assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made*

*perfect, to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel. See that you don't refuse him who speaks. For if they didn't escape when they refused him who warned on the Earth, how much more will we not escape who turn away from him who warns from heaven, whose voice shook the earth then, but now he has promised, saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens." This phrase, "Yet once more," signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain. Therefore, receiving a Kingdom that can't be shaken, let us have grace, through which we serve God acceptably, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.*

*Hebrews 12:22-29*