

Hebrews 10:1-18: "He takes away the first to establish the second"

Intro: True Christianity can only be established where there exists the proper understanding and distinction between the law and the gospel, between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. What are the inevitable consequences of disregarding this distinction? How does the Mosaic covenant and the sacrifices therein relate to the aforementioned covenants? What are the implications of living in and by the second or new covenant of grace?

- 1) The Mosaic Law is made up of the moral law (Decalogue), the civic laws (Israel's theocratic government), and the ceremonial laws and regulations (cultic/temple rituals, feasts, circumcision and sacrifices). While the reference is specifically here to sacrifices, the reference to the law as in the Mosaic first covenant always encompasses the rest of the laws. The word law in the Hebrew language is also used to make reference to God's word as a whole.
- 2) This law (Mosaic) is a type of works covenant in that it speaks the same language of inheritance by obedience or curses for disobedience (Deut 27:26, Lev 18:5, Gal 3:10-12). However, it differs from the first original-creation-works covenant in that mankind already fallen, God does not purpose to save through their keeping it. While Adam, without sin, could have kept God's command to inherit the world in righteousness, Israel and the world, already corrupted in their sinful nature, cannot be established by working their own righteousness in the works of the law.
- 3) The Mosaic Law, as a type of works covenant, is not introduced to save or establish man in righteousness by their own works as in the case of Adam (original-creation-works covenant), but rather to tutor worshippers about their sins highlighting the need and mode of salvation through the promise of another mediator and covenant. So, we have the following redemptive sequence: 1) creation-works covenant (Adam)>>> 2) Fall>>> 3) Promise (grace covenant)>>> 4) Mosaic covenant (a type of works covenant/tutorial unto grace)>>> 5) The New Covenant (Gospel/Grace).
- 4) The ceremonial laws with the animal sacrifices as the cultic center life of Israel emphasize and prefigure the perfect life and sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God, to take away sins by one righteous offering as promised before the law. Christ's person and work sums up and fulfills all aspects of God's original and eternal demand for righteousness (moral law) as well as the atoning/expiating/purifying sacrifice (ceremonial law) to offer reconciliation to sinners and membership in God's Kingdom, the church (no longer same civic-government laws).
- 5) By Christ's perfect fulfillment of the law, moral and ceremonial (obedience and death), sinners are purified before God by Christ's objective sacrificial sufficient offering. They subjectively appropriate such a reality through faith which brings the perfection of conscience as loved, forgiven, and justified of God in Christ; faith perfects the conscience to approach and worship God through Christ.
- 6) While sinners continue to be sinners in their own persons, God declares them righteous crediting to them all of Christ's obedience so that now they are actually simultaneously sinful (in themselves/their flesh), but sanctified/saints positionally or legally before God. Such legal sanctified position becomes the empowering grace that transforms the worshipper according to the moral law that God writes in the hearts/minds as sanctified/justified sinners.