

The Book of Hebrews

Hebrews 8 Part 3

Hebrews 8:7

Why is it called the “first covenant”?

The Mosaic Covenant is the first covenant only from the point of view that it is the first covenant that unfolds God’s promise to Abraham to make a people to be His own and to bring that people into His land. *Genesis 15:12-21, 17:1-8*

Hebrews 8:7-8a

Something wrong with the Covenant *and* Something Wrong With the People

God thought up and presented the covenant and He hand-picked the people. So, from the point of view of God’s perfect plan nothing is wrong with either of them. Therefore, in what sense is something wrong?

- What’s wrong with the old Covenant? The Old Covenant could condemn people, but it could not reconcile them to God and it could not change their hearts. *2 Corinthians 3:1-18, Ephesians 3:1-13*
- What’s wrong with the people? The nation of Israel in the Old Covenant era was a rebellious and unfaithful bunch of God-haters (with a few notable exceptions). They were just like you and I before we became believers. *2 Kings 21:10-15, Malachi 3:6-7, Matthew 8:10-12, Acts 28:23-31*

Hebrews 8:8b-12

When Scripture Does Not Mean What It Says

These verses quoted from Jeremiah clearly say that the New Covenant is made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. But the author of Hebrews is quoting “the language of the picture” to speak of the fulfillment, which is the church.

The New Covenant is the sacrifice of Christ which was made for God’s elect from all nations.

Hebrews 10:14-18, Revelation 5:9, Luke 22:20

- The authors of the New Testament consistently interpreted Old Testament promises to ethnic Israel as fulfilled in the church. *Amos 9:11-15, Acts 15:12-19*
- We often have no choice but to read many of the promises in the prophets as God speaking of the fulfillment in the language of the picture. *Jeremiah 33:14-26*

Hebrews 8:8b-12

How is the New Covenant unlike the Old Covenant?

The New Heart: Unlike what God did with Israel under the Old Covenant, in the New Covenant God will make every last one of His people love Him more than anything else. He makes them incurable God-lovers.

- “I will put my laws on their minds and write them on their hearts”
- “...They will all know me from the least of them to the greatest”

Jeremiah 24:4-7, Ezekiel 36:24-35, Philippians 1:18b-26, 4:10-13

The Perfect Record: God ultimately punished Old Covenant Israel for their sins because they would not repent and because the blood of bulls and goats could not satisfy God’s wrath. The only way our holy God can make us His people is by actually punishing our sins in the person of His own Son.

- “I will be will be their God and they will be My people”
- “I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” *Romans 3:21-26, 8:32*

Hebrews 8:13

The Old Covenant is Absolutely, Entirely, and Completely Done

The covenant is null and void (obsolete). The practices of the priesthood, sacrifices, and temple were still going on even though they accomplished nothing. It (the OC) would “soon disappear” because God would destroy the temple in A.D. 70. *Luke 21:20-24*