

Understanding the Transition from Old Covenant to New Covenant

{Based on teaching by Graham Cooke}¹

As the Creator, God's very ordered and intentional in what he does and when he does it. He thinks logically, sequentially and 'outside of the box', because he's not constrained in his thinking like us. He's always intentional and deliberate with everything – nothing is left to chance, so to speak.

When God says or does something for the first time he sets a precedent. This precedent alerts us to something about him which becomes part of our knowledge of him – it's how we understand him from learned experience. When he reveals himself like this he declares the eternal nature of that knowledge because he doesn't change who he is: "This is who I am and this is who I will always be".

This doesn't mean he's static because he can always expand our knowledge of him or improve on it. This is why we must always be prepared for him to do new things because he's always wanting to bring us into a fuller set of knowledge and he's always looking to bring a blessing to us out of it.

When he changes our knowledge of him, it's for improvement. When he does this he uses the original (former) knowledge as a stepping-stone to the new (latter) knowledge. This is exactly what occurred with the change from the Old Covenant (OC) to the New Covenant (NC).

The covenant with the nation of Israel was a contract he made with the descendants of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob. He made this specifically because they were to be his chosen people, having rejected all the existing nations for their worship of the sons of God whom he put in charge over them. It was a covenant that only existed with Israel (and later Judah following the division into two kingdoms), no other nation had this arrangement. Within this covenant was everything that God was for the Israelis. In other words, he revealed himself through his covenant and the laws and statutes he set up for them to follow. Every Israeli knew the blessings, curses and requirements that were part of the covenant, and this gave them their understanding of what God was like.

When Jesus came to re-establish the Kingdom of God on Earth as it was immediately following the creation, he changed the old blood covenant with physical Israel and instituted a new blood covenant with his own perfect blood. In so doing, as members of this NC we to have a different understanding of God because it is a better, fuller contract.

Jesus taught the new knowledge of the Kingdom of God (NC) from the very start of his time as the messiah by changing the knowledge they had from the Kingdom of Israel (OC). He would say things like: "You've heard it said...", "But now I say..."² By doing this he was inferring that the covenant that they were in is being replaced by a new one which he was bringing.

Some of the practices, rules, ideas, etc., didn't make it into the NC: e.g. "an eye for an eye"³. This is because this newer covenant relationship with God is deeper, more profound and more extensive than the Israeli one. The reason for this is that the former covenant was for people who had God imposed his will on, whereas the latter is voluntarily entered into, and where God lives within them. This new relationship is diametrically opposed to the old one and required a new understand (knowledge) of God. This is expressed in a whole new set of principles and values that are part-&-parcel of the NC and an expansion or augmentation of the former agreement.

This is why the OC is a set of types and symbols which point to and preempt the vastness of the new one. The former was a *bone fide* covenant for the Israeli people, but it is updated in the latter one for spiritual Israel. This means that the new covenant overshadows the old one and releases greater and more profound things for its members.

1 – **AUDIO:** Graham Cooke "The Lord's Precedent" [1:00→] soundcloud.com/grahamcookebbh/the-lords-precedent

2 – Matthew 5:21-48

3 – Matthew 5:38-42

This means that everything in the OC, which we find outlined in the OT, has to be filtered through the grid of the NC so that it is compatible with the greater contract, which we find described in the NT. Some of the things that don't make it into the NC are curses and penalties because there are none for those in the new one. This is because Jesus became a curse for every believer and he also died, paying the penalty for their every sin⁴. So, all penalties and curses are done away in Christ for every Kingdom citizen. But, these two have been replaced in the NC by consequences – i.e. the principle of reaping and sowing. There's no judgement on us because Jesus took away the sin which requires judgement, but we pay for what we say and do as the enemy has been given permission to operate when we are in sin. So, "reaping what you sow" passes through the filter into the NC, whereas curses and penalties don't.

In the NC we operate from a "great heart space" rather than from a legalistic (law-based) standing because we've been transformed (if we allow it to take place).

For example: One change in the NC is God's rest. The first thing God did after creating man was to rest. This means that mankind entered rest on the first day of their existence. In the OC this was set in place as a rule – the law of the Sabbath. However, rest makes it through the filter into the NC in the form of resting in the Lord because he is the Lord of the Sabbath⁵ and the Prince of Peace⁶. This is a greater, more glorious version of the precedent of rest. Resting in the NC is actually very easy to do, if we let it. Because here, God does all the work and we rest while he does it, and receive the benefits of the fruits of his labour. As a result, our lives should be calm and untroubled if we enter into NC rest. A good example of this principle, which should remind us of our need not to do work for God, is that he did the work for salvation and gave it to us free of charge.

IMPORTANT: It is crucial that we understand that we are in the NC and that the OC has no jurisdiction over us – none whatsoever. One of the debilitating tactics of the enemy is to keep us fearful that we are not keeping the requirements of the OC. This saps our energy and takes away our Kingdom freedom, causing us to move back into legalism. (I know, I've been there.) Some examples of this reversion to the OC that we see others doing are: Observing the Jewish feasts; keeping the Sabbath; setting the 10 Commandments as the benchmark; & seeing the nation of Israel as God's chosen people rather than his Kingdom sons and daughters.

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4 – Sin is being out of alignment with the King and his Kingdom, not just being naughty. It's about operating unrighteously instead of righteously. We must discard the legalistic OC definition of sin and replace it with the NC one. (See Romans 14:23)

5 – Matthew 12:8

6 – Isaiah 9:6