

Chapter 1 – Old Testament Law vs. New Testament Grace

The Transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament

I. The Purpose of the Old Testament

A. Paul tells us the purpose of the Old Testament Law was to make people aware of sin

Romans 3:20

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

B. The Law protected mankind from becoming more wicked and made us aware of our need for a Savior

Galatians 3:21-25

²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed.

II. How Jesus Changes Things

A. Jesus moves us from physical Old Testament Laws to spiritual New Testament truths.

1. The Old Testament Law only had physical requirements for mankind, but Jesus said the requirement for salvation is a spiritual rebirth

John 3:3-5

³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

2. The Old Testament Law provided very detailed instructions about living righteously. These laws were impossible for anyone to fulfill, so Jesus came to save sinners.

Matthew 9:13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

B. The perfect Man, Jesus, came and kept the entire Law and through His undeserved death, He provided atonement for our sins.

Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1. The Law of the Old Testament has now been completely fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:17

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

2. Jesus fulfilled the Law **physically** so that all who trust Him enter into the **spiritual life** it foreshadowed

Colossians 2:16-17

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:46-49

⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. ⁴⁹ And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

C. When we look to Jesus, He reveals the spiritual truths behind the Old Testament Law.

Hebrews 12:2

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.





III. Looking to Jesus to Understand the Law

Here are some examples of how Jesus reveals the spiritual truths behind the Old Testament physical laws:

A. Sacrifices

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

Leviticus 17:11 *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is THE BLOOD that makes atonement for the soul.”*

2. Look to Jesus:

- a. Jesus informed His disciples that His own blood must atone for their sins

Matthew 26:26-28

²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” ²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Romans 6:10

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

- b. Jesus' crucifixion and death on the cross paid the price for all man's sin once and for all, therefore ending any further need for animal sacrifices

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:

Hebrews 10:4

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”

Hebrews 10:12

“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God”

Hebrews 13:15

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

B. Members of God's Assembly or Church

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

- a. Only Israel and a select few could be members of the assembly of the Lord

Deuteronomy 23:1-8

“He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD.² “One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD. ³“An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, ⁴ because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. ⁵ Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you. ⁶ You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever. ⁷ “You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land. ⁸ The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

2. Look to Jesus

- a. Jesus brought all people together in Him, by breaking down the wall of separation

Ephesians 2:14

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:

- a. The Law is fulfilled and now there is no separation between Jew and Gentile in Christ. All are part of God's assembly.

Ephesians 2:11-22

¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to

create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

C. The Enemies of God

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

- a. Israel was to destroy their physical enemies

Deuteronomy Chapter 20

2. Look to Jesus

- a. We learn our enemies are not physical but spiritual powers. We are to love our physical enemies, pray for those who persecute us and overcome evil with good

Matthew 5:39-48

³⁹ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.⁴⁰ If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.⁴¹ And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.⁴² Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?⁴⁷ And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?⁴⁸ Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Ephesians 6:12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:

- a. We are not to use carnal weapons, but spiritual ones and trust the Lord to take vengeance for us

2 Corinthians 10:4

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

Romans 12:17-21

¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.¹⁸ If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.¹⁹ Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

²⁰ Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

D. Our family members

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

- a. Men were to bear children for their dead brothers with the widow

Deuteronomy 25:5-10

⁵ “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband’s brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her. ⁶ And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷ But if the man does not want to take his brother’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband’s brother.’ ⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, ‘I do not want to take her,’ ⁹ then his brother’s wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, ‘So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother’s house.’ ¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, ‘The house of him who had his sandal removed.’

2. Look to Jesus

- a. In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven

Matthew 22:30

For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:

- a. God loves and cares for all widows and orphans.

1 Timothy 5:3

Honor widows who are really widows.

James 1:27

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

E. The Sabbath

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

- a. Israel was to keep the seventh day of the week Holy to the Lord by resting on it

Exodus 20:8-11

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

2. Look to Jesus
 - a. Jesus is the Sabbath

Hebrews 4:4-9

⁴ For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; ⁵ and again in this place: “They shall not enter My rest.” ⁶ Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again He designates a certain day, saying in David, “Today,” after such a long time, as it has been said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.” ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹ There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:
 - a. The Sabbath isn't about a “day,” but about resting in the forgiveness of God every day

Romans 14:5-6

⁵ One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.

Colossians 2:16-17

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

F. Food

1. Old Testament Physical Law:
 - a. The people of Israel were forbidden to eat or drink unclean foods.

Leviticus 11:1-47

2. Look to Jesus
 - a. Jesus tells us that a person is actually defiled by what comes out of their mouth, not what goes into it.

Mark 7:15

There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:
 - a. We are free to eat all foods

1 Corinthians 8:4-13

⁴ Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. ⁵ For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), ⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. ⁷ However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. ⁹ But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰ For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹ And

because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? 12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

G. Tithing

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

a. Regular giving was required by God

Deuteronomy 14:22 “

You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.

Malachi 3:8-9

⁸ “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation.

2. Look to Jesus

a. God does not require financial payments from His own Son.

Matthew 17:24-27

²⁴ When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?”

²⁵ He said, “Yes.” And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?” ²⁶ Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free. ²⁷ Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:

a. "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Galatians 6:6-10

⁶ Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

H. Church Attendance

1. Old Testament Physical Law:

a. God required every adult male in the entire country to travel to Jerusalem three times each year for worship.

Exodus 34:23

“Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the LORD God of Israel.

Deuteronomy 12:11

then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD.

2. Look to Jesus
 - a. Our Savior declared that true worship has nothing to do with location, but rather, sincerity and truth.

John 4:21-24

²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Hebrews 9:24

For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

3. New Testament Spiritual Truth:
 - a. Now, under the gospel, we have no temple nor altar, but Christ only.

Colossians 2:16-17

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

IV. Conclusion

A. Jesus paid a physical penalty to give us a spiritual blessing.

1. "It is finished" was a word used to end a business transaction.
 - a. On the cross, Jesus traded His physical righteousness for our unrighteousness, giving us His spiritual reward...eternal life

John 19:30

So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

B. In conclusion, when we read the Old Testament, we must look to Jesus to understand the spiritual application to our life.