

Why Is The Bible Divided Into Two Covenants?

Why are there two covenants instead of just one? We need to understand the answer to that question if we are going to correctly interpret the Bible. The answer is actually very simple. The difference between the two covenants is defined by **physical and spiritual**. The Old Covenant is about things that are physical: a physical creation, physical man, a physical form of worship, physical promises, et al.

Everything that is physical is temporary. “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are **temporary**; but the things which are not seen are **eternal**” (2 Corinthians 4:18). In due time the physical creation will be destroyed, and it will be replaced by a creation that is composed of spirit, which will remain for all eternity.

“...[T]he heavens shall pass away...and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up....Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new [2537, *unheard of, novel, better, of higher excellence*] heavens and a new [2537] earth, wherein dwells righteousness” (2 Peter 3:10, 13).

The Old Covenant is God’s **blueprint** of the creative process that He is using to create the eternal kingdom. A **blueprint** is a detailed plan of action, but it is not an exact image, because it is only a sketch, i.e. a shadow of that which is to come. A set of blueprints for a building project is not the reality. You cannot live in a blueprint. The completed project, which in this instance is a spiritual kingdom, is the reality. The New Covenant is the spiritual interpretation and application of the Old Covenant.

The First Covenant involved physical worship, which was used to reveal the Second Covenant. “For the law having a shadow [4639, *a sketch, an outline*] of good things to come, and **not the very image of the things**, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereto perfect....For **it is not possible** that the blood of bulls and goats **should take away sins**” (Hebrews 10:1, 4).

Salvation cannot come through animal sacrifices, which were only a physical type of the reality which was to come, which was Jesus Christ, Who, “...after He had offered **one sacrifice for sins forever**, sat down on the right hand of God” (v. 12). Jesus’ death, for the sins of man, made an end of the sacrificial system forever.

Early in His ministry Jesus told the woman from Samaria, “...the hour comes, when you shall neither in this mountain, **nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father**....But the hour comes, and now is, when the **true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth**: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is **Spirit**: and they that worship Him must worship in **spirit** and in **truth**” (John 4:21, 23, 24). The Eternal God destroyed the physical temple at Jerusalem in 70 A.D., which ended the physical form of worship **forever**.

Truth is the Word of God. “Sanctify them through Your truth: **Your word is truth**” (John 17:17). “In spirit” is the spiritual interpretation and application of the Word. The Word of God was **not** changed, but the form of worship was. Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1). The Word does not change. “Jesus Christ the **same** yesterday, and today, and forever. **Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines...**” (Hebrews 13:8, 9). In order to avoid “divers and

strange doctrines,” we must use the blueprint.

Jesus’ announcement was a major change in worship that theretofore was unprecedented. The worship of God was being transformed from physical worship under the Old Covenant to spiritual worship under the New Covenant. Our worship is no longer at a physical temple, but at the tabernacle in heaven. “If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection [5426, *mind*] on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1, 2).

When Jesus and His disciples walked on the earth, the only scriptures that were available were what we now call the Old Covenant. Jesus and His disciples taught out of the Old, or First Covenant. The New Covenant Scriptures are the spiritual interpretation of the First Covenant which Jesus taught. A New Covenant doctrine must be in agreement with the Old Covenant. **The teachings of the New Covenant cannot be contrary to the Old Covenant!**

In God’s blueprint, physical things always precede spiritual things. “And so it is written, The **first man** Adam was made a living soul [5590, *breath, physical life*]; the **last Adam** a quickenings [2227, *life giving*] spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is **spiritual**, but that which is **natural**; and **afterward that which is spiritual**. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven....And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Corinthians 15:45-47, 49). The first man was only a temporary copy of what he was to become.

Conclusion: The Old Covenant is the blueprint of God’s plan. The New Covenant is the spiritual interpretation and application of the blueprint. You cannot establish true doctrine in the New Covenant without using the Old Covenant **first**. The Old Covenant is the foundation of the New Covenant, and therefore you cannot use the New Covenant as your starting point, because its starting point **is the Old Covenant**. The relationship between the Old and New Covenants has been described as: “The Old Covenant is the New Covenant concealed, and the New Covenant is the Old Covenant revealed.”