

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

Our Bible has two testaments. It is important to understand their relationship to each other. The New Testament often quotes from the Old Testament.

WAYS THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS ARE THE SAME

1. God is the Author of both testaments. This is seen by many passages, including Hebrews 1:1-3 and II Timothy 3:14-17 which state that God is the Author of the Old Testament. This is consistent with the New Testament teaching regarding the Old Testament.
2. There is one plan of redemption. The two testaments do not teach two different ways of salvation. The Scriptures that Timothy learned as a child (II Timothy 3:14-17) were from the Old Testament since there were no New Testament Scriptures written at the time he was instructed by his mother and grandmother.
3. Christ is the center of both testaments. Christ is the Greek word for Messiah whom the Jews were expecting. This means we can find Jesus in the Old Testament. [a] We see Jesus Christ creating the universe. Compare Genesis 1 with John 1:1-4; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2). [b] We see Christ in actual appearances. Jesus appeared in the Old Testament in human form. These appearances are referred to as theophanies (appearances of God before the incarnation). Jesus came in the flesh at the incarnation (John 1:14). See Genesis 16:7-13; 22:11-12; 31:11-13). [c] We see Christ in types. Types of Christ include Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:15-17) (Some see Melchizedek as a theophany); The brass serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14-15); The Passover (I Corinthians 5:7-8).

WAYS THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS ARE DIFFERENT

1. The two testaments are actually two covenants. In Hebrews 8:5; 9:10-11; 12:18-24 the earthly (material) aspects of the Old Covenant are contrasted with the spiritual aspects of the New Covenant. The material aspects of the Old Covenant are said to be a shadow of true things. The latter is Heaven. The Tabernacle is contrasted with the reality in Heaven as well as with the spiritual blessings we experience in this life. Under the Old Covenant (Law) there were offerings, festivals, and rituals which are not a part of the New Covenant. The Jews observed civil laws and ceremonial laws that are not required today. Hebrews 9:11-14 and 10:1-10 teach that God has abolished the shadow because the reality is here.
2. In connection with this is a contrast between weakness and power. Man did not have the ability to keep the Law. The sinful nature of man makes it impossible to obey what the Law requires. Under the New Covenant, God places His law in men's hearts so that by the Holy Spirit they can keep God's Law (Jeremiah 31:31; Romans 8:3; Hebrews 7:18).
3. That brings us to another contrast between the Old and New Covenants. The Old Covenant is about the Law; the New Covenant is about grace. The power of grace is described in Romans 8:3-5: "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."
4. In comparing Law and grace, remember that in the Old Testament God was calling out an earthly people to whom He would reveal Himself, and through whom He would redeem the world. Since Jesus came and redeemed us, God is free to forgive those who come to Him through His Son. The emphasis is much different in the New Testament due to the cross. The sacrifice of Christ changed everything, so

that God may bestow blessings on us by the Holy spirit. We live in response to God's love under the New covenant. Under the Old Covenant the focus was on duty; under the New Covenant the focus is on love.