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Proof of the Superiority of the New Covenant 8: 7-13

Proof of the superiority of the New Covenant DIG: Through whom did God imply that the First Covenant had faults? In what sense was the B'rit Chadashah new? With whom was the New Covenant made? When will all Isra'el be saved? How will the knowledge of ADONAI be different at that time? What is the greatest feature of the B'rit Chadashah (Matthew 5:27-32)? What was Messiah telling His listeners about the New Covenant in terms of external and interior proof? Why will the New Covenant never need to be overhauled or replaced? The priests mediated the covenant under the Dispensation of the Torah (Ex 19:5-6, 20:1-17 and 29:35-41). How does the B'rit Chadashah mediated by Yeshua differ in verses 10-11?

REFLECT: Before the coming of the Lord, a boy or girl took on "the yoke of the Torah" at their bar mitzvah or bat mitzvah, and were expected to live up the impossible standard of obedience to the 365 prohibitions and 248 commandments contained there-in. Even worse, future generations tried to obey the traditions of men (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Ei – The Oral Law**). **Are you trying to measure up to some impossible standard that is not biblical today? What does it mean to you that the B'rit Chadashah is based on God's actions in Christ – not on your actions. Under the New Covenant, God puts His Torah in our minds and writes it on our hearts (8:10). Have you experienced this? If so, give an example of how.**

There was an incompleteness that was evident in **the First Covenant**, especially in the way the people of **Isra'el** related to **YHVH**. Hebrew religion was characterized by a corporate relationship with **ADONAI**. It was **the nation**, an **extended family,** that was in a covenant relationship with **Ha'Shem**. **Isra'el**, as **a people**, was **God's son**. The priests and the prophets represented **the nation** before **the LORD**. Even when judgment was meted out, there was a collective dimension to it **(Lamentations 5:7)**. **Isra'el's** relationship with **God** was not fully developed at the end of the book of **Jeremiah**. **ADONAI** would have more to add with other

prophets. **The prophet** knew, as did the writer of **Hebrews**, that there was something **wrong with the First Covenant**. **For if there had been nothing wrong with that First Covenant, there would have been no need for a second one (8:7). Jeremiah's** prophecy of a **New** and better **Covenant** to a people about to be exiled is a message concerned with their healing. It is full of hope because the radical cure that is prescribed is directed right at the location of mankind's infection: the heart and mind.[203]

The writer to the **Hebrews** in the Diaspora (the worldwide dispersion of **Jews** after 70 AD) was not criticizing **God's** Covenant with Moshe (see the commentary on **Exodus, to see link click Dd – The Mosaic Covenant**), but merely making clear what **Jeremiah** had implied. **But God found fault with them, the people,** not with the Torah. In **Romans 7:12** Rabbi Sha'ul states that the Torah was holy, perfect and good as the righteous standard of **YHVH**.

What follows next is the longest quotation from the TaNaKh to be found anywhere in **the B'rit Chadashah**. These verses contain evidence that **the New Covenant** is **better**. The reason it is **better** is because the Dispensation of Torah and **the First Covenant** were temporary, but **the New Covenant** is eternal. The author's point is that the Jewish prophets themselves recognized that one day **the First Covenant** would be superseded by a **New** and better **Covenant**. He does not quote this passage to show that the Church has replaced **Isra'el** or that the Church is fulfilling **the New Covenant**. He quotes this passage only to prove it was already known in the TaNaKh that the Dispensation of Torah and **the First Covenant** were temporary. The content of **the B'rit Chadashah** has the promise of the **forgiveness** of sin causing an internal change and a new relationship with **ADONAI**.[204]

Although the rabbis spoke of the *yetzer hara*, or *the evil inclination*, few took seriously **Jeremiah's** comment pronouncing the heart **incurably corrupt (Jeremiah 17:9)**. Jewish thought also believed in the *yetzer hatov*, or *the good inclination*. **The writers of the Talmud taught that Adam was created with both, although Rabbi Assi noted that the yetzer hara begins like spider's thread but becomes like wagon ropes.** The best the natural man or woman can produce is external religion. Although **Jeremiah** witnessed and gladly influenced the reforms under good King Josiah, the prophet could see that **Judah did not return to the LORD with all her heart (Jeremiah 3:10).** What was needed was a wiping clean of mankind's filthy slate. A radical remedy was envisioned – personal

knowledge of **God**.[205]

The writer now quotes **Jeremiah 31:31-34**, one of the great Jewish prophets. This is a smart move. He puts the Jewish recipients of this letter in the place where they will have to accept **the New Covenant** and the testimony of their own prophet to the effect that **God** would bring in **a New Covenant**, or, if they reject **the B'rit Chadashah**, they will be forced to reject their own **prophet**. Thus, the writer builds his argument upon the TaNaKh, the very word of **God** his readers claim to believe. **The days are coming, says ADONAI, when I will make a New Covenant with the whole house of Yisra'el and with the house of Judah (8:8).** It is important to understand that **the New Covenant** is not Christianity (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Eo – The Days are Coming, declares the LORD, When I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra'el**). The book of **Hebrews** is not written to prove that Christianity is better than Judaism as seen in its Founder – **Jesus Christ**. **The First Covenant** was made with **Isra'el**. **The New Covenant** is also a covenant made **with the whole house of Yisra'el** (the northern Kingdom) **and with the house of Judah** (the southern Kingdom). Notice, the covenant is made with the Jewish **house of Yisra'el and of Judah**, not with Gentiles. **God** makes no covenant with Gentiles; but **God** does make a provision for Gentiles to come into that covenant; thru **Yeshua's purpose to create in himself one new man out of the two, thru making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.(Ephesians 2:15-16**). **Isra'el** is the chosen channel through which **He** brings salvation to the human race.[206]

It will not be like the Covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke My Covenant, and I turned away from them, declares **ADONAI (8:9).** The words **took them by the hand** speak of the fact that **the First Covenant** was given to a people in **her** youth. **Ha'Shem** put **her** under commandments and regulations. If **Isra'el** behaved **herself**, **she** was rewarded, and if **she** misbehaved, **she** was punished. But even after **the Israelites** showed a lack of faith by refusing to enter the Promised Land after leaving Egypt, **YHVH** did not cease loving **the Jewish people**, but **God's** holiness required **Him** to give **His people** over to **their** own desires. It is not that **ADONAI** stopped loving **them**. **Ha'Shem** says of **the people of Isra'el**, **I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving kindness (Jeremiah 31:3). God** had chosen **Isra'el**, rescued **them** out of slavery and longed to bring in a wonderful promised land. **ADONAI** still **loved** and

cared for **them**, but **their** hearts had become so hard that they lost sensitivity to **the LORD** and could no longer can hear **His** call of **love** to **them**. There came a point when **Ha'Shem's love** and holiness caused **Him** to give **them** over to **their** own sinful heart attitude. We need to understand that when we turn away from **Him** with sufficient stubbornness, **He** turns away from us **(Romans 9:17-21).**

God's arms of love are always open to the prodigal child when they choose to leave behind sinful desires of the heart **(Romans 1:24, 26, 28)** and return home to **God** (**Luke 15:11-31**). But **God** will not go out and grab him to drag him home. He must make that decision to turn from his old sinful ways – whether they be deep habits of sin **(Ephesians 4:18-19)** or just stuck in old patterns **(Hebrews 3:12-15)** that deny that **Yeshua** is **LORD**, both are sinful and wrong. Wisdom says, examine yourself and choose to follow the eternal **High Priest**, **Yeshua**, who is the **God** of extravagant **love**!

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days, says ADONAI, "I will put my Torah into their minds and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be My people" (8:10). The New Covenant will have a different sort of commandment – an internal, not an external reason to be faithful. Although the righteous of the TaNaKh obeyed primarily out of a love for **ADONAI**, most Israelites during the Dispensation of Torah (see the commentary on **Exodus Da – The Dispensation of Torah**) obeyed out of fear of punishment. Under **the B'rit Chadashah** our obedience is to be totally out of love and thankfulness for our salvation and all **the LORD** has done for us. Formally **God's** commandments were given on stone tablets and was to be written on their wrists and foreheads and doorposts as reminders **(Deuteronomy 6:8-9)**. But now, however, **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh puts YHVH's** commandments **into the minds and on the hearts**, of those who belong to **Him (Ezeki'el 11:19-20, 36:26-27; Yochanan 14:17)**.[207]

"No longer will they teach (emphatic in the Greek) **their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know ADONAI,' for *all* will know Me from the least of them to the greatest,** the young and the old, and the humble and the famous **(8:11).** Being internal, **the New Covenant** has to be personal. Under **the First Covenant**, none but the educated could understand the details of the Torah. A priest had to be consulted. But under **the B'rit Chadashah** these intermediaries were abolished. Not only is **His** Word within us, but **His** very **Spirit** is within us also. Every believer has a resident **Helper**, a resident **Teacher**, and a resident **Friend**. **But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will**

teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you (John 14:26).

At the very end of the Great Tribulation, just before the Second Coming, **all Isra'el will be saved** (see the commentary on **Revelation Ev – The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**). Therefore, during the Messianic Kingdom, individual Israelites will be saved and indwelt by **the Ruach ha-Kodesh**, who will both sanctify and teach the individual. No intermediaries will be needed **(Zechariah 12:10-13:6).** There will be priests who will be **providing burnt offerings, sin offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings and fellowship offerings at the festivals, the New Moons and the Sabbaths – at all the appointed feasts of the house of Isra'el** during the Millennial Kingdom **(Ezeki'el 45:17)**. This sacrificial system will serve the same purpose as communion in the Dispensation of Grace. It will be, **do this in remembrance of Me**, for Jewish believers. Yet the people will be on an even basis with the priests so far as their understanding of **God** and **His** Word is concerned. This knowledge of **God** will be without any distinction of age or station in life.[208]

For I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sin no more" (Hebrews 8:12 quoting **Jeremiah 31:31-34).** Here is the capstone of **the New Covenant**. Here is what mankind needs more than anything else – and what the TaNaKh pictured in type, but could not deliver. Under **the First Covenant**, **sins** could never really be forgotten because they were never really **forgiven**. **They** were only temporarily covered, foreshadowing and anticipating true **forgiveness** in **Messiah**. Under **the New Covenant, sins** are forgotten because **they** have been paid for. **God remembers them no more**.

I was thanking **the Father** today for **His** mercy. I began listing **the sins He'd** forgiven. One by one I thanked **ADONAI** for forgiving my stumbles and tumbles. My motives were pure and my heart was thankful, but my understanding of **God** was wrong. It was when I used the word **remember** that it hit me. "**Remember** the time . . ." I was about to thank **Ha'Shem** for another act of mercy. But I stopped. Something was wrong. The word **remember** seemed out of place . . . "Does **He remember**?" Then *I* remembered. I remembered **His** words: **And I will remember their sins no more.** Wow! Now, that is a remarkable promise. **YHVH** doesn't just forgive, **He** forgets . . . For all the things **He** does do, this is the one thing **He** refuses to do. **He** refuses to keep a list of my wrongs.[209]

By using the term, "new," God has made the First Covenant obsolete; and

what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear altogether **(8:13).** Are we to infer that the Jewish holidays, Shabbat, kashrut, civil and moral commandments of Torah are **outdated and will soon disappear** altogether? No, **God** forbid, the author could hardly have been unaware that the Mosaic Covenant presents itself as eternal, good and holy; also the context shows that he is speaking only of its system of priests and sacrifices, not its other aspects. Since the commandments concerning the system of priests and sacrifices constitute the majority of the Mosaic Covenant, it is an appropriate figure of speech to say that **the First Covenant** itself **is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear**.

The writer to the **Hebrews** presents a rationale for messianic Jews not to be distressed by the passing of the Temple and to carry on anyhow. In this sense, the role of the book of **Hebrews** is comparable with that of the Yavneh Council in non-messianic Judaism (90 AD), which transformed its focus from the Temple to the Written and Oral Law (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ei – The Oral Law**). So **Hebrews** teaches messianic Jews not to center their attention on the Temple, but on **the Messiah** and what **He** has done.

Those who believe in Replacement Theology, or the notion that the Church has inherited all the promises of **God** to **Isra'el** because of **her sin**, use this verse to try to bolster their argument. However, **[they] are deceived because [they] do not know the Scriptures or the power of God (Mattityahu 22:29).**

What was actually on the verge of vanishing was the Levitical priesthood, not the Torah – or perhaps we could say, not **YHVH's** unchanging nature that stands behind the Torah. The priesthood is the subject of this whole section (see **Av – Messiah is in a Better Position Than Aaron**). Therefore, this refers to the replacement of the old sacrificial system by sacrifice of **Christ**, not to a change in the ethical requirements of Torah! The Torah continues to be a blueprint for living (see the commentary on **Exodus Dj – The Ten Commandments**). But there is now a new system of *cohanim*, as has already been said and will be explained further in the next two chapters.[210]

Look over the verses in this file. Let's suppose you were a persecuted believer in a country where you were not allowed to have a copy of the Scriptures by the decree of an atheistic government, and these were the only verses you were able to acquire. If you had the responsibility of teaching other believers, what would you teach them from these verses alone? How may attributes of **YHVH** can you find that are either implied or explicitly stated? Take time to thank **ADONAI** for what **He** has

done, to praise **Him** for who **He** is, and to rejoice in the hope that only such a **God** as **He** can provide.[211]