

The Last Days re-visited

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Chapter seven

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

Thus, Paul and the people he was writing to lived in “the last days” of that period which he referred to as “this age” which he and the other writers of the NT identified as “the last days” i.e. the last days of the Mosaic Marriage Covenant given at Sinai. The writer of Hebrews explains:

Yahweh, who at different times and in various manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has **IN THESE LAST DAYS** (of the Mosaic Covenant) spoken unto **us** (in the first century) **by his Son**, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the **AGES** (past, present, & future); (Hebrews 1:1-2, emphasis and comments added)

For if that **first covenant** (the Mosaic given at Sinai) had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for **the second** (the new given in the blood of Jesus Christ Lu.22:20, 1Cor.11:25). For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make **a new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...In that He said, **A new covenant**, He has made the first (Mosaic) old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away. (Hebrews 8:7-13, emphasis and comments added)

And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning (of the Mosaic Covenant, aka heaven and earth by the Jews) has laid the foundation of the land (Canaan, later called the land of Israel); **and the heavens** (aka as the temple and its priesthood etc. by the Jews) are the works of thine hands: **They** (the foundations of the Mosaic Covenant) shall perish; but thou remains; and **they** (the foundations of the old covenant) **all shall wax old as does a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.** (Hebrews 1:10-12, emphasis and comments added)

And the Apostle John tells of his vision of the New Covenant:

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And **the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together;** and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (Revelation 6:12-14)

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth (the new covenant given in the blood of Jesus Christ [Lu.22:20]) for the first heaven and the first earth (the Mosaic Covenant with its law, temple, priesthood,

etc.) were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem (Christians, within the New Covenant under the blood of Jesus Christ), coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. (Revelation 21:1-6. comments and emphasis added)

Now let us review what we should have learned for the Scriptures quoted above. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews clearly states that the time of the incarnation of Jesus Christ was the “last days.” It should be obvious to all Christians that the coming of the Messiah was to occur at the end of the Mosaic Covenant (Heb.9:26) and was to inaugurate a New Covenant i. e. a new age. Therefore, the days from the birth of Jesus Christ to the destruction of the Jewish strength (Dan.12:7), their temple and all that went with it, and their city, Jerusalem (Dan.9:27; 2Peter 3:10-12) was a transition period that contained both the **end of the Mosaic Covenant** (“the last days”) and the inauguration of the New Covenant. This transition period ended in 70 AD following (Matt.24:29) the period of “great tribulation” (Matt.24:21, et.al.) with the promised destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. (Matt.24:2)

The writer of Hebrews describes this transition period in terms of the Mosaic Covenant which had “decayed”, was “growing old” and “was about to vanish away” as a result of the “**wrath**” of Yahweh (Heb.10:27; Matt.3:7; Lu.21.23; Rom.9:22, 13:4; Eph.5:6 et.al.) and the triumph of the New Covenant. The Revelation is a prophecy and the record of **the very end of this transition period** which includes the demise of the Mosaic Covenant and the victory of the New. John describes it as “the last hour” (1John 2:17-18). The writer of Hebrews provides the language bridge between Hebrews and Revelation. After his discussion of the passing of the old covenant and the much better status of the New, he turns to a discussion of the faith of Abraham because both the old covenant and the new are embodied within the totality of the Abrahamic Covenant.

By faith Abraham,...with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:...looked for **a city** which has foundations, whose builder and maker is Yahweh. (Hebrews 11:8-10]

Dear brothers read very carefully here, Abraham, “looked for a city...whose builder and maker was Yahweh” and that city (aka country) was a “heavenly” city (Heb.11:16).

Then the author of Hebrew tells those first century Hebrews he is writing to that, “**you have come** unto mount Zion and **unto the (that) city** of the living Yahweh” and **that city** was “**the heavenly** (aka new) **Jerusalem** (Heb.12:22; Rev.21:2).” Now dear brothers pay very close attention as the author of Hebrews gives a clear description of the new heavenly Jerusalem:

...**the general assembly and congregation** of the firstborn (i.e. the resurrected Jesus) which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, **And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling**, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. (Hebrews 12:23-24)

Hebrews states, “the assembly, the ekklesia (congregation) of the firstborn (the resurrected Son of Yahweh), which are written in heaven. Thus the heavenly Jerusalem of Hebrews is the (first century) called out assembly, the congregation which is the bride of Jesus Christ. John saw in his vision of Rev.21:1-6 that the new “city” was a “New Jerusalem, coming down from Yahweh out of heaven, as a bride (the first century congregation, 2Co.11:2) adorned for her husband (the bridegroom, Jesus Christ, Ps.19:5; Isa.61:10, 62:5, et.al.)

In Revelation John describes the passing of the old Mosaic Covenant and the glorious triumph of the New Covenant as the passing away of the old heavens and earth and the coming of the new heaven and earth. Note the similarity of his words describing this passing to those of the writer of Hebrews, “the heaven departed as a *scroll* when it rolled together” - “the old covenant...a *vesture* folded up,” and the coming of the “**city**” “**the heavenly Jerusalem**” and “**the holy city, new Jerusalem...out of heaven**”. Can any serious student of Scripture doubt that they are describing the same transition from the old covenant to the New Covenant? In Paul’s words, “God forbid.”

As you read this, please answer **this question** before you go any further: Is the Mosaic Law still in force or has it passed away (no longer in effect)? There is a very strong general consensus, especially among dispensationalists, that it is absolutely certain that the Law has passed away and is no longer to be followed especially the ceremonially portion of the Law.

Think not that I am come to abolish the law, or the prophets: I came not to abolish, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, until the heaven and the land shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, until all be fulfilled (all the law come to pass). (Matthew 5:17-18)

This verse very clearly states that heaven and land shall pass away BEFORE even the tiniest portion of the law passes away (becomes of no effect)! Thus all who believe that the Law has passed away, *but* the “heaven and land” referred to in this verse has not passed away have a very, very big problem. Either the “law” has not passed away as all of them believe or the “heaven and land” **has passed away!** Which will it be? They cannot have it both ways! All those who believe that the “heaven and land,” referred to in the above verse, has not passed away **must** accept the premise that the “law has not passed away and is still in full force and effect today, including all ceremonial law, sacrifices, and rituals, particularly the sabbath day law.