MAKING THE FIRST OBSOLETE

Most scholars ascribe the negative characterizations of the covenant and law to the historical old covenant (the Sinai covenant). This interpretation forms their primary argument against the applicability of observing the seventh-day Sabbath in the New Testament era. But this interpretation collides with the biblical teaching that the Sinai covenant and historical new covenant share the same spiritual DNA and gospel.

At the same time, every one of these negative characterizations fits perfectly with an interpretation that identifies the old covenant specified or alluded to in these passages as an old covenant experience of “not continuing in My covenant” (Heb. 8:9, NKJV), i.e., rejecting its gospel appeal or merely legalistically complying with it—that God said created the need for a new covenant in the first place. Not acknowledging the existence of an old covenant experience leads to mistakenly assigning all these negative characterizations to the Sinai covenant.

The opposite extreme view that all New Testament references and allusions to the old and new covenants have experiential, not historical, emphases in mind blinds its adherents to a full appreciation of the monumental significance of the historicity of the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and high priestly ministry of Jesus that demarcated the historical new covenant.

This brings us to our extended passage for this lesson, and most particularly to Hebrews 8:13, which is generally interpreted to apply to the Sinai covenant as a whole (including the Sabbath). What does it mean?
Write out Hebrews 8:1–13 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out Hebrews 8:7–13. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse in Hebrews 7–10. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

Why does Hebrews 7–10 focus its comparisons of the historical old and new covenants on how Jesus’ life, death, and ascension to heaven fulfilled the entire Old Testament ritual system?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov11-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Of the eighteen comparisons that Hebrews 7:1–10:18 makes between the historical old and new covenants, which is the only one that is not a contrast, but an exact similarity between the two?
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Matthew 27:50, 51
Psalm 103:12
Isaiah 38:17; 44:22
2 Timothy 1:8–10
1 John 5:7, 8
2 Corinthians 5:17
Colossians 1:20–22
Hebrews 13:20, 21

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Hebrews 7–10?

Where is Jesus in Hebrews 7:1–10:18?

What do you imagine your life might be like today, in terms of ultimate purpose and hope, if Jesus had never come the first time?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov11-6
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, what applications are you convicted of in your personal life?

What are practical applications you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/cov11-7
inQuire

Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

What is the first big message of Hebrews 7–10?

What strikes you about the four divine promises of the covenant?

Though there is some complexity to the topic of covenants, what does it reveal about the heart of God after you see the whole picture?

How do you feel about the fact that Christ’s death didn’t initiate grace but ultimately revealed it?

How do you see the plan of salvation being revealed to all of humanity through the span of human history?

How does this revelation of the covenants fit into the great heavenly narrative between the forces of good and evil?

In light of the covenants, how is Christ’s first coming linked with His second coming?

Obsolescence & Permanence of the Covenant