

Hebrews 8:12-13 Commentary

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CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
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The Epistle to the Hebrews				
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MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE			DUTY	
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

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Hebrews 8:12 "FOR I WILL BE **MERCIFUL** TO THEIR **INIQUITIES**, AND I WILL **REMEMBER** THEIR **SINS NO * MORE**." ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [hoti hileos esomai \(1SFM\)](#) [tais adikiais auton](#), [kai ton amartion auton ou me mnestho \(1SAPS\)](#) [eti](#).

Amplified: For I will be merciful and gracious toward their sins and I will remember their deeds of unrighteousness no more. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

HCSB: For I will be merciful to their wrongdoing, and I will never again remember their sins.

NLT: And I will forgive their wrongdoings, and I will never again remember their sins." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Wuest: because I will be merciful in the case of their unrighteousnesses, and their sins I will in no wise remember anymore.

Young's Literal: because I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawlessnesses I will remember no more; ' --

FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE: hoti hileos esomai (1SFMI) tais adikiais auton kai ton hamartion auton ou me mnestho (1SAPS) eti:

- Heb 10:16,17; Ps 25:7; 65:3; Isa 43:25; 44:22; Jer 33:8; 50:20; Micah 7:19; Acts 13:38,39; Ro 11:27; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 1John 1:7-9; 2:1,2; Rev 1:5
- [Hebrews 8:1-13 Hebrews and the New Covenant](#) - excellent review of Hebrews 8:1-13
- [Hebrews 8 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

For (hoti) is a **term of explanation**- What is the writer explaining? He is explaining why the priesthood of Jesus is superior to the priesthood associated with the Old Covenant.

William MacDonald reminds us that "the law (Old Covenant) could not deal effectively with sins. It provided for the atonement of sins but not for their removal. (The Hebrew word for *atonement* comes from the verb meaning cover.) The sacrifices prescribed in the law made a man ceremonially clean, that is, they qualified him to engage in the religious life of the nation. But this ritual cleansing was external; it did not touch a man's inward life. It did not provide moral cleansing or give him a clear conscience.

John MacArthur - Here is the capstone of the New Covenant. Here is what men need more than anything else—and what the Old Covenant pictured but could not give. The promise of the Old Testament is finally fulfilled! Under the Old Covenant, sins could never really be forgotten, because they were never really forgiven. They were only covered, foreshadowing and anticipating true forgiveness in Jesus Christ. But for those who belong to His dear Son—whether they believed under the Old Covenant or under the New—God forgets every sin.

I will - Seven times in 3 verses. Clearly a key phrase. Every time God says "I will" it's like another degree of assurance regarding the trustworthy nature of the new covenant.

Andrew Murray offers an interesting comment "OF the blessings of the new covenant, the one which is here 'mentioned last is in reality the first. For I will be merciful—this is what precedes, and is the ground of the renewal of the heart and the fellowship with God. Pardon is the door; holiness of heart and life the pathway; the presence of God the blessedness of the Christian life. The first leads to the second, the first and second to the third. To live in God's presence and fellowship two things must be clear: the thought of sin must be put away out of God's heart, and the love of sin out of our heart. These two blessings are together secured in the new covenant. First, the forgiveness of sins so complete, that He remembers them no more for ever; they never more enter into God's heart. And, second, the renewal of our heart and will so complete, that the law of God is written there by the Holy Spirit, so that the will of God is our will. The three blessings—the pardon of sin, purity of heart, and the presence of God—are so joined, that as our views and our acceptance of one is feeble, our hold on the others will suffer. In Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant they are offered and secured to us in their fulness, in the power of an endless life. But our experience of this depends upon our knowledge, our faith, our surrender. And it is because our understanding and acceptance and experience of the two first blessings is so defective that our fellowship with God, our entrance into the holy presence, and our abiding there, is still so much in Old Testament failure—But they continued not. Let us try and realise this. ([Hebrews 8 Commentary \(Holiest of All\)](#))

Spurgeon - Suppose that you are under a sense of sin. Something has revived in you a recollection of past guilt, or it may be that you have sadly stumbled this very day, and Satan whispers, "You will surely be destroyed, for you have sinned." Now go to the great Father, and open this page, putting your finger on that twelfth verse, and say, "Lord, you have in infinite, boundless, inconceivable mercy entered into covenant with me, a poor sinner, seeing I believe in the name of Jesus. And now, I ask you, have respect unto your covenant. You have said, I will be merciful toward their wrongdoings—O God be merciful to mine. I will not remember their sins any longer—Lord, remember no more my sins: forget forever my iniquity." That is the way to use the covenant: when under a sense of sin, run to that clause which meets your case.

Merciful (2436) (**hileos** - related in stem and meaning to **hilaros** = glad, merry, cheerful) means propitious (Webster 1828 = "Be Disposed to gracious or merciful; ready to forgive sins and bestow blessings; favorable"), benevolent, forgiving or favorably disposed to another. It pertains to the demonstration of mercy or compassion. "Appeased, merciful, as of gods; cheerful, propitious, favorable, merciful, as of men." (Zodhiates)

Hileos is the root of hilaskomai in Luke 18:13

"But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, **be merciful** (be favorable) to me, the sinner!'

MacArthur: He had no hope but the mercy of God. This is the point to which the law aims to bring every sinner (cf. Ro 3:19, 20; 7:13; Gal 3:22–24).

The only other NT use of **hileos** is...

Mt 16:22 And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "**God forbid it** (Young's Literal = "Be kind to"), Lord! This shall never happen to You."

Comment: Its expanded sense in this statement would be, "God save you from those things"

NET Note: "Merciful to you." A highly elliptical expression: "May God be merciful to you in sparing you from having to undergo [some experience]". A contemporary English equivalent is "God forbid!"

BDAG: The idea is "may God be gracious to you, Lord, i.e. may God in mercy spare you this, God forbid!"

BDAG says **hileos** pertains to "being favorably disposed, with implication of overcoming obstacles that are unfavorable to a relationship, gracious, merciful, in the wider lit. mostly—in our lit. and in LXX always—of God.

TDNT - A predicate of persons, hileos means "happy," "friendly," "gracious." It is used especially of rulers and deities. In the LXX it is a predicate of God alone, e.g., in phrases for "to forgive," "to have pity."

W E Vine - Hileōs means propitious; not that God is ever to be conciliated, but that in grace and on a basis of righteousness, consistent with His attitude toward sin and with His essential holiness, and through the expiatory sacrifice of His Son, He delivers the sinner from his deserved doom and, in free, sovereign grace, justifies him.

NIDNTT in classic Greek **hileos** "is chiefly used of rulers or gods; in connection with gods the phrase hileo poiein, to make gracious, is found (Plato, Laws 10, 910a).

Hileos - 25x in the Septuagint (often with the sense " ("far be it from you, Lord" as in 1Kings 21:3; 1Chr 11:19) -

Ge 43:23 (LXE = And he said to them, **God deal mercifully** with you); Ex 32:12 (LXE = **be merciful** to the sin of thy people); Num 14:19-20; Deut 21:8 (LXE = Be merciful to thy people Israel); 2Sa 20:20; 23:17 (LXE **Lord, forbid** that I should do this); 1Kgs 8:30 (LXE = "and be gracious"), 1Ki 8:34, 36, 39, 50 (LXE **be merciful** to their unrighteousness); 1Chr 11:19; 2Chr 6:21, 25, 27, 39; 7:14; Isa 54:10; Jer 5:1, 7; 31:34; 36:3; 50:20; Amos 7:2

Jeremiah 31:34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive (Hebrew = salach = forgive, pardon; Lxx = Hileos = be propitious toward) their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Spurgeon - The covenant is the sure foundation of mercy, and when the whole fabric of outward grace manifested in the saints lies in ruins this is the fundamental basis of love which is never moved, and upon it the Lord proceeds to build again a new structure of grace. Covenant mercy is sure as the throne of God.

I will be merciful to their iniquities... I will remember their sins no more- These promises by God in essence are teaching that the New Covenant brings complete forgiveness of our sins, something the Old Covenant could never do as the writer explained in Hebrews 10...

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is **impossible** for the blood of bulls and goats (the only provision available in the Old Covenant) **to take away sins** (procure the forgiveness of sins). (See **notes** Hebrews 10:1; 10:2; 10:3; 10:4)

Comment: The new and better covenant would not have been needed if the first covenant had been flawless!

Iniquities (93) (**adikia** from **a** = without + **dike** = right, expected behavior according to an external standard, in this case God's) is literally "unrightness" or the condition of not being right according to the standard of God's holy demands.

Albert Barnes - Will I remember no more. This is evidently spoken after the manner of men, and in accordance with human apprehension. It cannot mean literally that God forgets that men are sinners, but it means that he treats them as if this were forgotten. Their sins are not charged upon them, and they are no more punished than if they had passed entirely out of the recollection. God treats them with just as much kindness, and regards them with as sincere affection, as if their sins ceased wholly to be remembered, or which is the same thing, as if they had never sinned.

Wiersbe adds that...

There is no forgiveness under the Law because the Law was not given for that purpose. "Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the Law is knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). The Law could not promise forgiveness to Israel, let alone to all mankind. It is only through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that forgiveness is possible to all who will call on Him. The Old Testament sacrifices brought a remembrance of sins, not a remission of sins (Heb. 10:1-3, 18)...

What does it mean that God remembers our sins and iniquities no more? (Heb. 8:12) This important statement is quoted again in Hebrews 10:16-17. Does it mean that our all-knowing God can actually forget what we have done? If God forgot anything, He would cease to be God! The phrase "**remember no more**" means "hold against us no more." God recalls what we have done, but He **does not hold it against us**. He deals with us on the basis of grace and mercy, not law and merit. Once sin has been forgiven, it is never brought before us again. The matter is settled eternally.

As a pastor in counseling ministry I have often heard people say, "Well, I can forgive—but I cannot forget!" "Of course you can't forget," I usually reply. "The more you try to put this thing out of your mind, the more you will remember it. But that isn't what it means to forget." **Then I go on to explain that "to forget" means "not to hold it against the person who has wronged us."** We may remember what others have done, but we treat them as though they never did it. How is this possible? It is possible because of the cross, for there God treated His Son as though He had done it! Our experience of forgiveness from God makes it possible for us to forgive others. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary - New Testament. 1989. Victor](#))

R emember (3415) (**mnaomai** from **mimnesko** = to recall to mind, to remind) means to be mindful of. God will not recall their sins to mind!

Note that "**remember... no more**" does not mean the omniscient God does not have a memory of our past sins. **Omniscient** means that God knows all things actual and possible and knows them in one simple and eternal act. God's attribute of eternal means that He has no beginning, end or succession of moments in His being and that He sees all time equally vividly, and yet also sees events in time and acts in time (Modified from Grudem's Systematic Theology). If you are believer, then you **can be confident** and at peace over the fact that God has forgiven (sent away, remitted the debt) all your sin, past, present and future (placing them on our Sin Bearer, the Lamb, Christ Jesus - Isa 53:6, 1Pe 2:24, 2Cor 5:21, Jn 1:29).

Some individuals say that they cannot forgive themselves. The question is this - is this genre of forgiveness mentioned in Scripture? You can search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you will never find a Scripture that says we are to forgive ourselves. This is simply not a Biblical teaching. Yes, the Bible speaks of VERTICAL (DIVINE) FORGIVENESS and HORIZONTAL (HUMAN) FORGIVENESS but there is not one word about a person forgiving themselves. It is simply not taught in Scripture!

Spurgeon - There is no "if" in the covenant of grace. It runs thus: "I will," and "You shall." That is the tenor of it. Its essence lies in the supreme word, "I will." Therefore, because the conditions of the covenant of grace have been fulfilled it is in no danger of abrogation, and Christ Jesus has become the surety of a better covenant.

DIVINE and HUMAN FORGIVENESS

DIVINE FORGIVENESS is predicated or made possible by the execution of the penalty of death and the shedding of blood (Heb 9:22, Lev 17:11, cp Ro 6:23). In the OT the penalty was death of a sacrificial animal. All of the OT ceremonies and sacrifices pointed to Christ but could not actually take away the sin (Heb 10:4). The sins which believers committed in the OT were "passed over" (Ro 3:25, cp Heb 9:15) but ultimately were paid for in full by Christ's death on the Cross ("It is finished" = "Paid in full!" = Jn 19:30). Jesus' death and shed blood inaugurated the "New Covenant in His blood" which made divine forgiveness possible (Mt 26:28).

Human forgiveness means the remission of a penalty deserved. As believers we are called to confess our sins and receive God's

forgiveness of our sins (1Jn 1:9). When someone sins against us (Let's say they gossip or speak falsely about us and we find out about it), we are called to forgive them (Col 3:13, Eph 4:32). But even then we recognize that their sin is primarily against God (Ps 51:4-note, cp Ge 39:9, 2Sa 12:13-note) and only He can forgive their sin against Himself. We are never expected to forgive the sins of others toward God because we have no power to do so (Read Mark 2:5-12, cp Lk 5:22-26, Mt 9:1-8), but we are expected to forgive others for the sins done to us. Jesus instructed us to pray for this forgiveness asking God to "Forgive us our debts, **as we** forgive our debtors" (Mt 6:12-note, Mt 6:14-15-note). When we **forgive** someone who has wronged us (by surrendering to the enabling power of the Spirit), we are giving up our right to any feeling of animosity we may have had against them and we re-establish a heart attitude of friendliness and affection (as far as that is possible on our part). We do not hold the wrong done to us against the person anymore. Why are we charged to forgive? We forgive others because we have been forgiven far greater offenses by God. Read- Eph 4:32 (note the phrase "just as God in Christ has forgiven you"- See note) and Col 3:13 (note the phrase "just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you."- See note)

So yes we are to forgive others but we are not ever told to forgive ourselves. When someone says "I just can't forgive myself", the problem is often that they do not have a true understanding of the completeness of God's forgiveness of their sin. What they are saying in essence is they cannot forgive themselves because they really doubt that God has truly forgiven them! If you struggle with guilt over a past sin and wonder if God still holds you guilty or condemns you, then ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your heart and enable you to meditate on Ro 8:1-2-note. Then take some time to meditate on the pictures of the completeness of divine forgiveness in the following passages...

Ps 103:12-[note](#) As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Comment: Ask yourself "How far is east from west?" Had the verse stated "as far as north is from the south" we would have been able to "measure" God's forgiveness by some "finite measurement." However, there is no east or west pole, so God is clearly teaching us that His forgiveness has no limits. It is "perfect" and complete forgiveness, whether we believe it or whether we feel like it. In both cases, it is absolutely, eternally true!

Isa 43:25-(([Spurgeon's sermon - A Sense of Pardoned Guilt](#))) "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

Isa 38:17-(([Spurgeon's sermon - God's Non-Remembrance of Sin](#))) "Lo, for my own welfare I had great bitterness; It is Thou who hast kept my soul from the pit of nothingness, For Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.

Mic 7:18-19 ([Spurgeon's sermon - Sin Subdued](#)) Who is a God like Thee, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love. 19 He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, Thou wilt cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea.

Nouthetic counselor Jay Adams says that the...

concepts (self esteem and self forgiveness), as Packer has seen, stand or fall together; they are of a piece. The problem supposedly is that men look down on themselves. But Jesus told us to love our neighbors as ourselves, implying that we already do pretty well in that regard and need instead to start working on loving our neighbor with some of the same devotion and concern that we already show ourselves (Lev 19:18, Mt 19:19, 22:39, Mk 12:31, Lk 10:27, Ro 13:9, Gal 5:14, James 2:8). There is never, in all of the Word of God, a statement to the effect that men have a **low self-image**, that they must **learn to love themselves**, or that they **must learn to forgive themselves**. On the contrary, it is assumed that we do this without the slightest difficulty. So the Bible aims all its commands at turning our concern from self to God and others.

It is not simply a matter of the Bible not using the jargon of the self-image teachers, as Packer thinks, but rather, a matter of the entire Bible knowing nothing of self-love, self-forgiveness concepts, and a doctrine of man that depicts him thinking so lowly of himself. It is not enough to assert that the Scriptures teach that man has a low self-image problem and, therefore, command him to think more highly of himself and learn to forgive himself. If we are told that not to do so is sin, biblical warrant for that fact must be clearly demonstrated. Otherwise, we have theologians, psychologists, and other writers placing new burdens on men's backs that they need not bear.

"But what is the problem then? Surely there are people who will tell you that they are having a hard time forgiving themselves. Haven't you ever had counselees who have said as much?"

Certainly, but their speech was filled with the lingo of the psychologists and others who propagate such things. I tell them, "You will never solve your problem by misunderstanding it as a problem of self-forgiveness."

"What do you tell them to do, then?"

Well, something like this. Suppose someone, through carelessness, runs over a child in his automobile and comes in saying, "I'll never be able to forgive myself for what I did." Or suppose a woman confesses the abortions she has had were murder and says much the same. I make it clear to them that the problem is not self-forgiveness. Their expressed agony stems from the very fact that, in the worst way, they want to forgive themselves. They want to put it behind them, they want to bury it once and for all. They want the burden of guilt lifted from their shoulders. If they had such low self-esteem as some think, they would instead be saying such things as, "Well, you'd expect someone like me to do that, wouldn't you?" Or, "I guess this is just true to form for a lout like me." But they don't. They say, "I don't know if I'll ever be able to forgive myself for what I've done," indicating they are certainly anxious to do so. Lack of ability to forgive self is not the problem.

The problem is that people who talk this way recognize something more needs to be done. Forgiveness is just the beginning; it clears away the guilt. They also recognize that they are still the same persons who did the wrong—that though they are forgiven, they have not changed. Without being able to articulate it, and using instead the jargon they have heard all around them, they are crying out for the change that will assure them they will never do anything like it again. When, as a counselor, I help them to deal with the problems in their lives that led to the wrong, in such a way that they have adopted a more biblical lifestyle, I then ask, "Are you still having trouble forgiving yourself?" Invariably, they say no. (Jay Adam's - [From Forgiven to Forgiving Learning to Forgive One Another God's Way](#) - 1994)

D L Moody spoke of **self forgiveness**

I want to ask you this question: If sin needs forgiveness--and all sin is against God--how can you work out your own forgiveness? If I stole \$100 from a friend, I could not forgive myself, could I? No act of mine would bring about forgiveness, unless my friend forgave me. And so, if I want forgiveness of sin, it must be the work of God.

Sins ([266](#)) (**hamartia**) originally conveyed the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow and then came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. In Scripture sin often describes our thoughts, words and deeds that miss the ultimate purpose God has for each individual, these thoughts, words and deeds falling short of God's perfect standard of holiness.

WHAT A GREAT GREEK DOUBLE NEGATIVE!

No more ([ou me](#)) is a double negative, which could be paraphrased "Absolutely no, never will I remember". Part of our difficulty with accepting the completeness of God's forgiveness and His promise to remember our sins no more" is because we don't really understand the meaning of remember. English dictionaries emphasize that remember means to bring to mind, to give attention to. When you remember something, you are retrieving that information from your stored knowledge (memory). To not remember is to not retrieve the stored data from your memory. **Not remembering does not mean that the data has been lost or deleted. Nor does it mean that it is irretrievable...** it is retrievable but not retrieved. That is the common use of remember. ... and is so used in many Biblical references. When we believed in Jesus, our sins were forgiven...and God remembers them no more. He no longer gives attention to our sins...no longer considers them...no longer brings them to mind. After we became His children, He disregarded our sins because they had already been paid for by Jesus on the cross. They were, and are, no longer of any consequence. The knowledge of our forgiven sins has not been deleted from His memory. There is just no reason for Him to retrieve that information. It is wonderful that our sins have been removed from us as far as the east is from the west ... and wonderful that God intentionally considers them no more. He knows absolutely everything about us. He has archived the data about our sins ... but does not retrieve it. God is omniscient. The data about our sins is in His memory ... but when He considers us, it is as if it had been deleted.

WHAT ARE THE BETTER PROMISES?

To summarize, the **better promises** of this **better covenant**, the New Covenant, are centered in the forgiveness of sins and the divine enablement (God's laws are now within = when we by grace through faith enter the New Covenant, God's Spirit gives us a "new inner control center").

Kent Hughes commenting on "superior forgiveness" of the New Covenant observes that...

This is precisely what the Old Covenant could not do. Under the Old Covenant, sins were never completely forgiven because they were never truly forgotten. They were covered, awaiting and pointing to the true

Breaking The Grip Of Guilt: Can you think of anything too hard for God to do? Put yourself in the shoes of a fellow Christian who has committed a sin so awful that **the person simply cannot imagine that God would forgive it.** Think about what he or she considers to be impossible for God.

In an article on forgiveness, Pastor Charles Stanley wrote about talking to a teenager who was having a hard time believing that God could forgive her sexual sins. She told him she was a Christian and had asked Jesus many times to forgive her. Even though she knew the Bible says God had forgiven her, she still felt dirty in her heart.

This teenager thought she had found something that was too hard for God to do—forgive her.

**When we tell ourselves that our sin is so bad God won't forgive us,
we are doubting His power. (Ed: and His promise)**

We are robbing ourselves of the great gifts of a clear conscience and fellowship with God (1John 1:5-10).

Does guilt for sin have its icy hands around your heart? Is it strangling your joy and making you forget that God's forgiveness is not based on what you do but on what Christ has done? Ask for His forgiveness. Then thank Him for it, and moment by moment remind yourself of the wonder of God's grace. — by Dave Branon

Thinking It Over: If you're struggling with accepting God's forgiveness for something you've done, meditate on these verses: Psalm 32; Ps 51; Ephesians 1:3-8; Colossians 1:13-14.

**When God forgives,
it's time for us to forget.**

Comment: We can **forget**, but that does not mean we can never remember. In this context the idea is that we consciously make a choice (enabled by the Holy Spirit) to cease remembering the sin and the guilt we felt when we were not forgiven by God.

Does God Forget? God longs to forgive sinners! But in the minds of many people, this thought seems too good to be true. Countless sermons have been preached to convince guilt-ridden individuals that it is true. Many of these sermons emphasize the idea that God not only forgives the sinner, but He also forgets the sin. I've often said it myself, never doubting its soundness. Then one Sunday I heard a sermon that revolutionized my thinking. The speaker caught my attention when he said, "The idea that God forgets my sins isn't very reassuring to me. After all, what if He suddenly remembered? In any case, only imperfection can forget, and God is perfect."

As I was questioning the biblical basis for such statements, the pastor read Hebrews 8:12,

"Their sins and their lawless deeds I will **remember no more.**"

Then he said, "God doesn't say He'll forget our sins--He says He'll remember them no more! His promise not to remember them ever again is stronger than saying He'll forget them. Now that reassures me!"

Do you feel that you are too bad to be forgiven? Remember, God promises to forgive and never bring up your sin against you. Confess it to Him now. --J E Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

*Forever gone the sins He bore,
His work is so complete
That He'll remember them no more;
I worship at His feet. --Anon.*

**To enjoy the future,
accept God's forgiveness for the past.**

Spurgeon has the following notes on God's non-remembrance of sin —

I. THERE IS FORGIVENESS.

1. This appears, first, in the treatment of sinners by God, inasmuch as He spares their forfeited lives.

2. Why did God institute the ceremonial law if there were no ways of pardoning transgression? Does not a type imply the existence of that which is typified?
3. If there were no forgiveness of sin why has the Lord given to sinful men exhortations to repent?
4. If you will think of it you will see that there must be pardons in the hand of God, or why the institution of religious worship among us to this day?
5. Furthermore, why did Christ institute the Christian ministry, and send forth His servants to proclaim His gospel? For what is the gospel but a declaration that Christ is exalted on high to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins?
6. Now, you do not want any more arguments, but if you did I would venture to offer this. Why are we taught in that blessed model of prayer which our Saviour has left us, to say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," or, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us"? It is evident that God means us to give a real, true, and hearty absolution to all who have offended us. If, then, our forgiveness is real, so is His; if ours be sincere, so is His; if ours be complete, so is His; only much more so, inasmuch as the great God of all is so much more gracious than we poor, fallen creatures ever can be.
7. The best of all arguments is this: God has actually forgiven multitudes of sinners. We have read in Holy Scripture of men who walked with God and had this testimony, that they pleased God; but they could not have pleased God if their sins still provoked Him to wrath; therefore He must have put their sins away.

II. THIS FORGIVENESS IS TANTAMOUNT TO FORGETTING SIN.

This is a wonder to me, a wonder of wonders, that God should say that He will do what in some sense He cannot do; and yet that it should be strictly true as He intends it. God's pardon of sin is so complete that He Himself describes it as not remembering our iniquity and transgression. He wishes us to know that His pardon is so true and deep that it amounts to an absolute oblivion, a total forgetting of all the wrong-doing of the pardoned ones.

1. You know what we do when we exercise memory. To speak popularly, a man lays up a thing in his mind: but when sin is forgiven it is not laid up in God's mind.
2. In remembering, men also consider and meditate on things; but the Lord will not think over the sins of His people. The record of our iniquity is taken away, and the judge has no judicial memory of it.
3. Sometimes you have almost forgotten a thing, and it is quite gone out of your mind; but an event happens which recalls it so vividly that it seems as if it were perpetrated but yesterday. God will not recall the sin of the pardoned. "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." "No more!" Let those words go echoing through the chambers of despair: "No more!" Is there not music in the two syllables? God will never have His memory refreshed. The transgressions of His people are dead and buried with Christ, and they shall never have a resurrection.
4. Furthermore, this not remembering, means that God will never seek any further atonement. The apostle saith: "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." The one sacrifice of Jesus has made an end of sin.
5. Again, when it is said that God forgets our sins it signifies that He will never punish us for them. How can He when He has forgotten them?
6. He will never upbraid us with them — "He giveth liberally and upbraideth not." How can He upbraid us with what He has forgotten? He will not even lay them to our charge.
7. Once more, when the Lord says, "I will not remember their sins," what does it mean but this — that He will not treat us any the less generously on account of our having been great sinners.

III. FORGIVENESS IS TO BE HAD.

1. Through the atoning blood. Why does God forget our sin? It is not on this wise? — He looks upon His Son Jesus bearing that sin.
2. Next remember that this forgetfulness of God is caused by overflowing mercy. God is love: "His mercy endureth for ever"; and He desired vent for His love.
3. How does God forget sin? Well, it is through His everlasting love. He loved His people before they fell; and He loved His people when they fell. "I have loved thee," saith He, "with an everlasting love"; and when that

great love of His had led Him to give His Son Jesus for His people's ransom, it made him also forget His people's sins.

4. Again, God forgets His people's sins because of the complacency He has in them as renewed and sanctified creatures. When He hears their cries of repentance, when He hears their declarations of faith, when He sees the love which His Spirit has wrought in them, when He beholds them growing more and more like His dear

Hebrews 8:13 [When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear \(NASB: Lockman\)](#)

Greek: [en to legein \(PAN\) Kainen pepalaioken \(3SRAI\) ten proten: to de palaioumenon \(PPPNSN\) kai geraskon \(PAPNSN\) eggus aphanismou.](#)

Amplified: When God speaks of a new [covenant or agreement], He makes the first one obsolete (out of use). And what is obsolete (out of use and annulled because of age) is ripe for disappearance and to be dispensed with altogether. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: When God speaks of a new covenant, it means he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and ready to be put aside. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Wuest: In the fact that He says, New in quality, He has permanently antiquated the first. Now, that which is being antiquated and is waning in strength, is near to the point of vanishing away.

Young's Literal: in the saying `new,' He hath made the first old, and what doth become obsolete and is old is nigh disappearing.

WHEN HE SAID A NEW COVENANT HE HAS MADE THE FIRST OBSOLETE: en to legein (PAN) kainen pepalaioken (3SRAI) ten proten to de palaioumenon (PPPNSN):

- Hebrews 7:11,12,18,19; 9:9,10
- [Hebrews 8 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

The New Covenant is...

a treasury of wealth,
a granary of food,
a fountain of life,
a store-house of salvation,
a charter of peace,
and a haven of joy.

When He said a new: Covenant is added by the translators but is clearly the intended meaning from the context. Even the word "new" indicates that first is now obsolete. When God said "new" in Jeremiah He made the Mosaic the old, and in so doing pointed to its temporary nature. To illustrate this point think of when you purchase a car. As soon as we say we have just purchased a "new" car, the car we had is now the "old" car. This is the logic that the writer uses, so that when he announces a new covenant it renders the previous one old.

Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new (Lxx = kainos) covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah

Comment: Don't you love God's timing! Here they are in Babylonian captivity and in the darkness of Israel's night, God shines the light of the brand new covenant, which is "divine shorthand" for the Messiah and His appointed blood sacrifice (Mt 26:28).

New (2537) (kainos) refers to that which is new kind (unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of). **Kainos** is new in point of quality, new in sense that it brings into the world a new quality of thing which did not exist before. The New Covenant was of a new quality that had not existed before. It relates to being not previously present. **Kainos** signifies qualitatively new in contrast to **neos** which indicates temporally new or new with respect to age.

In Mark 1:27 we read the reaction to Jesus' teaching...

And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? **Anew (kainos)** teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." (**Wuest** comments that "There are two words for "new," **neos**, referring to that which is new as to the matter of time, namely, that which has just come into existence, and **kainos**, which contemplates the new, not under the aspect of time, but of quality, the new as set over against that which has seen service, the outworn, the effete or marred through age. Compared to the stilted, staid, dry as dust rabbinical droning, this teaching of Jesus was like the fragrance of a field of clover in the springtime. It was fresh with the dew of heaven upon it.- from [Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: Erdmans](#))

Kainos denotes the new and miraculous condition that is emphasized especially in the church age. Thus we see **kainos** as a key term in eschatological statements -- the **new** heaven and earth in Rev 21:1-note; 2Pe 3:13-note, **new** Jerusalem in Rev 3:12-note; Rev 21:2-note, **new** wine in Mk 14:25, the **new** name in Rev 2:17-note; Rev 3:12-note, the **new** song in Rev 5:9-note, the **new** creation in Rev 21:5-note. This new creation, which is the goal of hope, finds expression in Christian life (2Cor 5:17-note). The new aeon has come with Christ. In him Jews and Gentiles are one **new** man, referring to the body of Christ (Ep 2:15-note). Believers are to put on the new nature that they are given (Eph 4:24-note). God's saving will is worked out in the promised **new** covenant that Jesus has established (Luke 22:20; 1Cor 11:25; Heb 8:8ff.; Heb 9:15). This is a better covenant (Heb 7:22-note), infallible (Heb 8:7-note), everlasting (Heb 13:20-note), grounded on higher promises (Heb 8:6-note). The fact that the old and the new cannot be mixed (Mk. 2:21-22) stresses the element of distinctiveness. The **new** commandment of love has its basis in Christ's own love (Jn 13:34).

Frederick Diven reminds us of the fact that "Whereas most of the other covenants are material and national in nature, the **New** Covenant is spiritual. It is an unconditional covenant, meaning that the fulfillment of its promises does not depend on the obedience of Israel, although, in time, the covenant will be the cause of their obedience (Ezek. 36:21-22-note). The fulfillment of the promises of the New Covenant depends totally on God's faithfulness to His Word. God enforced this fact by stating, "**I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it**" (Ezek. 36:36-note). (Israel My Glory : Volume 51 Issue 4. 1999)

The first (4413) (protos) in this context does not mean foremost or most important but means the covenant earlier in time (former, before), referring to the Old Covenant. The fault was ultimately with the people who were sinners and could not keep this law perfectly.

Made obsolete (3822) (**palaioo** from **palaios** = in terms of age this means "old"; in terms of use, it means "old" or "worn out" like a garment) in the active voice means to make old.

The **perfect tense** refers to a past event with the effect (of obsolescence of the Old Covenant) continuing into the present. It speaks of the permanency of the New Covenant in contrast to the temporal nature of the Old Covenant.

The point here is not only as he has stated is the New Covenant better than the Old Covenant, but that it takes the place of the Old Covenant.

Spurgeon - So the old covenant has vanished away, with all its types, and symbols, and sacrifices. As the morning mists dissolve upon the rising of the sun—as darkness flies away when the light shines—so has the covenant of works departed forever. In its place stands out the everlasting covenant of God's unmerited mercy to the most guilty and vile of the sons and daughters of men. May He graciously grant to us the privilege of having an interest in that covenant, for His dear Son's sake.

BUT WHATEVER IS BECOMING OBSOLETE AND GROWING OLD IS READY TO DISAPPEAR: to de palaioumenon (PPPNSN) kai geraskon (PAPNSN) eggus aphanismou:

- Isaiah 51:6; Matthew 24:35; 1Corinthians 13:8; 2Corinthians 5:17)

But - Introduces a **contrast** - whenever you encounter a contrast in your reading, pause to ponder what the author is contrasting. In so doing you are in effect practicing the blessed discipline of **meditation** on the Scripture (cp Josh 1:8-note, Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note). Even as the **Old law** passed away, the **old life** passed away when one entered the **new covenant**...

2Cor 5:17-note Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Comment: This is an important verse in our day where "conversions" are often treated lightly in the sense that

there is no expectation of a change in one's life. The idea is just believe and you will be saved. Clearly salvation is by "just believing" but if it genuine "believing" there will by "spiritual default" be genuine (new) behaving. In short, a person's general direction of their life after having repented and believed in the Gospel is good evidence of the new life of Christ in them. And remember, we're speaking of direction, not perfection! Struggles with the flesh will continue for the remainder of our life in the mortal flesh, but our life should give evidence of traveling on the highway of heaven not hell!

Becoming obsolete - Jeremiah's prophecy which was written sometime around 600 BC marked the beginning of the Old Covenant **becoming obsolete**.

If this is true (and it is) why do so many believers seek to hang on to the OT law (or some rule or regulation or some "Do" or "Don't"), living as if they were still in bondage under the law rather than living in freedom (in Christ) under supernatural, life transforming, enabling, amazing grace? (cf Gal 5:1, Ro 8:3, Gal 3:3, 4:9, Col 2:20-23) For believers it is no longer us who live but Christ in us living out His overcoming life in us by the power of His Spirit and the grace He supplies. The law puts us into bondage because of our inevitable failure to be able to keep it. In fact instead of "making us better" the law has the opposite effect for it actually arouses the old sin nature! Christ's life and Spirit now flows through us to elevate us and give us the power to do His will. The law promises death to all who break it but Christ promises life to all who trust Him. Truly the New Covenant is a better covenant and Jesus is its surety, the Guarantee of God's immutable promises, for they are all "yea and amen" in Christ.

Growing old ([1095](#)) (**gerasko** from **geras** = old, old age as in Lk 1:36; English "geriatrics") is used in John 21:18 (and often in the Lxx) of an individual growing old and figuratively here of the old covenant. **Gerasko** also can convey the sense of waning strength, growing weak with age. It speaks of being obsolescent or failing from age.

The legal covenant is continually (present tense) growing old! The old covenant is like a very old person (I'm 66 so I understand this picture very well! I am near to disappearing!) The point is - "Hebrew readers. Don't put yourself back up **under** (subject to, enslaved to) the law, if you have come **under** grace through faith!" (cp Ro 6:14-note, Gal 4:9, 21)

The only other NT use of **gerasko** is

John 21:18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you **grow old**, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."

Gerasko - 14x in Lxx

Genesis 18:13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?'

Genesis 24:36 "Now Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master in her old age, and he has given him all that he has.

Genesis 27:1 Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." 2 Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old and I do not know the day of my death.

Joshua 23:2 that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and their heads and their judges and their officers, and said to them, "I am old, advanced in years.

Ruth 1:12 "Return, my daughters! Go, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said I have hope, if I should even have a husband tonight and also bear sons,

1 Samuel 8:1 And it came about when Samuel **was old** that he appointed his sons judges over Israel... 5 and they said to him, "Behold, you **have grown old**, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations."

1 Samuel 12:2 "Now, here is the king walking before you, but **I am old** and gray, and behold my sons are with you. And I have walked before you from my youth even to this day.

2 Chronicles 24:15 Now when Jehoiada **reached** a ripe **old age** he died; he was one hundred and thirty years old at his death.

Psalms 37:25 I have been young and now **I am old**, Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken Or his descendants begging bread.

Proverbs 23:22 Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she **is old**.

Job 14:8 "Though its roots **grow old** in the ground And its stump dies in the dry soil,

Job 29:18 "Then I thought, 'I shall die in my nest, And I shall multiply my days as the sand.

Ready ([1451](#)) (**eggus**) can speak of position of one thing close to another or of time, where it describes a point in time subsequent to another point in time, albeit still relatively close. One might picture it as "Right at the door".

Ready to disappear - Although there is not total agreement on the interpretation, this phrase appears to be an allusion to the soon coming destruction of the Temple in 70AD when the Old Covenant with its temple rituals and sacrifices could no longer be practiced. In essence the Old Covenant with its Levitical system became obsolete and disappeared in 70AD.

Disappear ([854](#)) (**aphanismos**) means vanishing away. It is suggestive of utter destruction and abolition. Aphanismos is used to describe laws which are abolished or which fall into disuse.

Aphanismos is used in the Septuagint (LXX) of God destroying the enemies in the Promised Land

Deuteronomy 7:2 and when the LORD your God shall deliver them before you, and you shall defeat them, then you **shall utterly destroy** (Lxx = aphanismos) them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

Josephus used the word of cities that **disappeared** by destruction (Jos., Ant., 17:306) or of attempts to destroy ("cause to disappear") the ancestry or heritage of the Jews (Jos., Ant., 19:174).

In this passage the writer is declaring that the Old Covenant was disappearing and would be like a shadow that his readers might try to grasp at but never lay hold of because it had vanished into thin air.

Spurgeon - The ark was made of long-enduring gopher wood, but it has yielded to time. The veil was one of the most costly and durable fabrics, but it yielded to the strain, and was rent from top to bottom. The temple itself, if it had not been destroyed by the enemy, must have grown gray with age, for time strikes with impartial hand buildings both holy and profane. But see the doctrine of the cross of Christ! No time affects it. The message of salvation by grace is as fresh today as when Peter preached it at Pentecost. The great command, "Believe and live," has as much life-giving power about it as when it was first applied by the Holy Ghost. No time affects the promise of the Father, the merit of the blood of Jesus, or the energy of the Divine Spirit; hence our faith remains.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum a born again Jewish writer applies this truth of the old covenant ready to disappear in his discussion of the believer's freedom in Christ "The New Testament is clear that in the age of the Church the dietary laws, special feast days, and other legal observances are subsumed under our freedom in Christ. Paul stressed in Romans 14 (see notes beginning in Romans 14:1-note) that under the new covenant Christians can have the freedom to observe every day alike, rather than feeling the compulsion to fix certain days as unique, above the others. Since Christ has come, that to which all the shadows of the Old Testament were pointing (see Colossians 2:17-note), Paul encouraged the Colossians to "let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day" (see Colossians 2:16-note). Individual Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, have the freedom in Christ to enjoy all foods and days. They have the freedom to celebrate any number of Jewish events, (e.g., a bar mitzvah or Hannakah) as simply a part of the Jewish calendar, but not with any "redeeming" religious significance. Where the proponents of Hebrew Christian congregations err is in the incorporation of the "types and shadows" for the "Substance" of their worship. They err when they restrict their religious activities to the Sabbath, eat only kosher foods, and observe Yom Kippur and Passover, two holidays that have clearly passed away with the termination of the Levitical priesthood and sacrificial system of the old covenant (Hebrews 7:12-note, Heb 8:13- note). (Fruchtenbaum, A. G. Israelology : The Missing link in Systematic Theology. Tustin, Calif.: Ariel Ministries)

Articles by Arnold Fruchtenbaum related to Israel

- [Israelology: Part 1 of 6 Introduction: Definition of Terms](#)
- [Israelology: Part 2 of 6 Israel Present \(Note: Article begins on Page 2\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 3 of 6 Israel Present \(Continued\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 4 of 6 - Israel Future \(Part One\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 5 of 6 - Israel Future \(Part Two\)](#)
- [Israelology: Part 6 of 6 Other Relevant Topics - Illustrations of Israel \(including marriage\)](#)

F B Meyer explains that "When the Epistle of the Hebrews was written the institutions of the old covenant were becoming old, waxing aged, and were nigh unto vanishing away (Hebrews 8:13). But the destruction was only part of the natural process through which the ideal of the ancient Scriptures was being fulfilled. It was not a destruction which left no trace, as when the fire destroys the artist's studio, burning sketch and picture, the plaster cast and the finished statue, but the destruction of the less perfect form in face of the finished and completed design. Thus the rough sketch is superseded by the finished painting, the bud by the flower, the toys

and the lesson-books of childhood by the interests of the mature man. The emblems of the kindergarten fulfil their work in the child's mind by giving it conceptions of shape and form, and its first rudimentary knowledge. They are then cast aside; but the conceptions that they helped to form are the permanent possession of the nature which thus made its first trials on the tiny lake before it launched out upon the mighty ocean with its boundless horizon. The Aaronic Priesthood was destroyed that it might be fulfilled in the one unchangeable priesthood of the Son of God. The altars on which ten thousand victims had been consumed were destroyed, and their ashes poured out upon the ground, because they were fulfilled in that one Altar on which the supreme Propitiation was made. The Temple was destroyed, because the Shekinah of God's Presence had gone forth to fulfil that temple which is composed of saved souls, and of which the Apostle says that "the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord." The whole system of ceremonial observance, with which Leviticus is full, has been destroyed, because love has come to be the inner principle of the Christian heart, and "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (F. B. Meyer. The Directory of the Devout Life)

Elwood McQuaid reminds us of the cultural climate at the time of the writing of the epistle of Hebrews...

During the early days of the Church era, Jewish believers were faced with transitional questions that worked themselves out in due course as the composition and nature of the Church were clarified (see Will Varner's article). Extremities of the problem are identified in the Book of Hebrews where the writer deals with the issue of Jewish believers incorporating Judaism into their worship and lifestyle. The Temple was standing at the time Hebrews was written, and the forms and rituals of their former way of life had a strong magnetism for those who were not wholly committed to full salvation in Christ. Some were wavering between Christ and returning to the rituals and requirements of Judaism. The key word in Hebrews is better. The good things of biblical Judaism had been made better in Jesus Christ.

He is better than angels (Heb. 1:4).

He is better than Moses (Heb. 3:3).

He is better than Aaron (Heb. 7:11-22).

His New Covenant is better than the Old (Heb. 8:6-13).

Judaism, in the divine plan, had become only a "shadow of things to come" (Col. 2:17). Its temporary role gave way to Christ, who transformed the shadow into substance and reared a "greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands" (Heb. 9:11). "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

In totality, Hebrews emphatically sets forth the departure of the Old Covenant, with its institutions and rituals, in favor of Christ and the New Covenant. As the Law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, Judaism, with its sanctuary, sacrifices, services, and ceremonies, served to identify Him. Once this was done, biblical Judaism had served its lofty purpose. It was consummated in Christ.

Thus, the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., while legitimately mourned as a lost architectural treasure, could not be wept for as an imparter of spiritual light and life. A greater light had arrived, entered the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood once for all (Heb. 9:12), and made all earthly altars obsolete. (Israel My Glory: Volume 49 Issue 1. 1999)

The **KJV Bible Commentary** gives a succinct explanation of how Gentiles today relate to the New Covenant and how there is a yet future fulfillment to the New Covenant for all believers (when Israel is saved at the return of Christ)...

The relation of the New Covenant to the gentile, church-age believer is commonly viewed in several ways.

First, the amillennialists believe that the church replaces Israel; and so this covenant is fulfilled by the church.

A second view proposes that this covenant, like Jeremiah 31 suggests, is for the nation of Israel alone.

The third view suggests that two new covenants exist: one for Israel and one for the church.

In the understanding of this writer (**Ed note:** And I strongly agree), the best view is that there is one New Covenant, which God will one day fulfill with Israel and in which the church participates soteriologically today. In other words, though the covenant is not fulfilled, Christ's death has initiated its benefits for today for those who will some day share in its ultimate blessings when it is fulfilled with Israel. This view allows the witness of both the Old and New Testament to stand. Further, nowhere does Scripture speak of two new covenants, any more than it speaks of two old covenants. Paul was a minister to the churches of this New Covenant (2Cor 3:6). The ordinance of the Lord's Supper that has been given to the church is based upon the sacrifice of the New Covenant—Christ's death. Many references to the New Covenant within the New Testament clearly relate

it to the church (Hebrews 12:23, 24; 1Cor 11:25; 2Cor 3:6), and others also relate it to Israel (Hebrews 8:10; 12:23, 24; Ro 11:27). As heirs of Christ's kingdom, we partake of the New Covenant's spiritual blessings today and in the future will share in its fulfillment with Israel. ([Dobson, E. G., Charles Feinberg, E. Hindson, Woodrow Kroll, H. L. Wilmington: KJV Bible Commentary: Nelson](#))

F B Meyer in Our Daily Homily wrote...

THERE had been a manifest decay and vanishing away of the first Tabernacle or Temple with its rites and services. At the time when these words were written there were evident symptoms of the approaching collapse of the whole system of which pious Jews had been wont to boast. But the Holy Spirit reassures their failing hearts.

It is well, He seems to say, that these should vanish from the earth; that men may be certified that the old covenant, of which they were the sign and seal, has also gone--gone never to be recalled. Thereupon, the very natural enquiry was suggested: If the old covenant has decayed and vanished away, what is the agreement or arrangement under which we are living now? To this enquiry the present chapter is an answer.

Those who believe in Christ are still in covenant relationship with God. A new covenant has been set up, which indeed is as old as the everlasting hills. It is the covenant of love; the covenant which says very little of what man does, and much of the I WILL of Jehovah; a covenant which was entered into between God and His Son, standing as Mediator; a covenant which has been sealed with priceless blood.

The provisions of that covenant are enumerated in the foregoing verses: that God will engrave His law on mind and heart, and take us to be His people and be our God, and remember our sins no more. As the decay of the symbols of the Old Testament indicated that it was vanishing, so the ever-fresh beauty of the supper of our Lord, as it was practiced in the first Church, witnessed to the permanence of the New Testament.