

# Jesus Upgrades OT Law

## An Introduction.

There is a big difference between what is expected under the OT Covenant compared to what is expected under the NT covenant. This is introduced to us by Jesus in Matt. 5:17 ...*Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil...* Jesus is fulfilling or more explicitly, filling-full the OT law. This idea of filling-full is behind the Greek verb *πληρωω* translated fulfill in Mt 5:17, since it has the clear implied thought of something already partially filled. In christian circles, it is generally thought that the OT law was impossible to keep, but this is not what scripture says. ~~Read this article on the *Righteousness of the Law versus the Righteousness of the God* found at <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/Righteousness-of-the-Law-versus-Righteousness-of-the-God.pdf>.~~ Jesus goes on in the rest of Mat 5 to show the changes He is making to OT law but more on these changes in a moment.

The idea of a difference between OT and NT is clearly seen in the use of the Greek word, *λογιον*, *logion*, found in Rom 3.2 "*Much in every way: first of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles (logion) of God.*" AND in Heb. 5:12 "*For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles (logion) of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food.*" In these two verses, the Spirit through Paul's hand in the Greek calls the Old Covenant law, *logion* (*λογιον*). This Greek word is the diminutive<sup>1</sup> form (the immature or young form) of the Greek word, *λογος*, (*logos*). As such, *logion*, means the younger or immature *logos*; that which is not yet grown up to maturity, and therefore, that which yet needs to be filled-full. These "oracles", as the ASV translates *λογιον* in Heb 5.12, which were entrusted to the Hebrews, are immature by comparison with the *logos* now revealed to us through Jesus whose words to us ARE "*THE LOGOS of the God*" (John 1:1 with Rev 19:13). Paul hints again at this immaturity or incompleteness when he uses the word "*form*" in Rom 2:20 ...*having in the law the **form** of knowledge and of the truth;* AND again in **Heb 10:1** *For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things,....* Some might dispute the meaning of the word *form* here but it occurs only once more at the hand of Paul in 2Tim 3:5 where it clearly implies the outer shape or framework which is lacking the detail.

With this in mind, we can now understand that Jesus, in Mat. 5, was filling-full the already revealed immature *logion* (Old Covenant law) and so Christ gives us the mature *logos* in the New Covenant. The importance of this new fully matured *logos*, which comes to us in the words spoken by the Christ, is emphasised for us by the Father Himself. Three times it is recorded (Mt 17:5, Mk 9:7, Lk 9:35), that the Father says to us of Jesus, "**hear ye him**". And if that were not enough, Heb 1:1-2 signifies the importance and urgency of the words of Jesus, for it says that the God (Yahweh) "*hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son*". The writings of the Old Covenant are unquestionably important, but the *logoses*, the reckonings, of the Father given us through His own Son, filling-full previously spoken *logion* are, in these last days, of utmost importance. We might even venture to say that the change from *logion* to *logos*, signified the beginning of a new age, when grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. All this change is, of course, part of the Father's plan.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* by Thayer.

## Changes to OT Law.

Harking back to the start of the article, let's consider now these changes we see in Mat. 5. After the beatitudes which nearly everyone knows about and has heard preached many times over, few have thought, nor pastors preached, much about the remaining two-thirds of Mat 5 which records in verses 17-48, six statements which Jesus prefaces with these words, "You have heard that it was said, ... but I say to you..." These six statements (logoses) of Jesus are of supreme interest because Jesus takes Old Covenant law and CHANGES it. More specifically, He "upgrades" it to a higher standard. In each case, He makes the new requirement much more difficult to achieve than it ever was under "the law", in fact, seemingly impossible to the natural man. These six logoses deal with 'murder', 'adultery', 'divorce', 'perjury', 'revenge' and finally 'hate/love'.

### 1. Murder.

The Christ says in Matt. 5:21-22: *...Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell (Gehenna) of the fire.*

We no longer have to kill to be guilty of the law. Rather we are in danger of judgement if we just get angry with someone, but we are in danger of the Gehenna of the fire, if we call a person feeble-minded, so scorning their heart or character. The Greek word for feeble-minded here is the word moros from which we derive our English word moron.

Jesus goes on saying in Matt. 5:23-24: *...If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, 24 leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* Notice it says if your brother has something *against you*.

### 2. Adultery.

This is a good example with which most men are familiar. Matt. 5:27-28 says: *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* No longer is it a matter of not physically doing it, but now, if I do it in my heart, I am guilty. Surely it is seemingly impossible for the natural man to not lust after a woman in his heart especially these days when some women clad themselves with so little. Obviously a serious deep-rooted change has to take place in us men.

### 3. Divorce.

Jesus says in Matt. 5:31-32: *It was said also, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32 but I say unto you, that every one that puts away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, makes her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away commits adultery.*

In this day and age in the Western world, many men would fall foul of this command of the Lord, and many of them sit in churches.

### 4. Perjury.

Jesus speaks to us about perjury in Matt. 5:33-37: *...Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear (perjure) thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord (YHWH) thine oaths: 34 but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; 35 nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair*

white or black. 37 But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.

#### 5. Revenge.

Matt. 5:38 *Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. 41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

#### 6. Love thy neighbour versus Hate your enemy.

Matt. 5:43 *Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: 44 but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; 45 that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.*

In each of these issues, our obedience to them is way beyond our natural ability to fulfill them, even more so than the OT commandments. What then are all these verses really saying to us? Jesus would not be telling us if obedience to them were not possible. There must be a place, a position, a state we can come to, where such obedience IS possible? What might that place, position, state be? Could these changes to the law, be drawing our attention to the real purpose of the New Covenant — the abolition of sin from the conscience of man. We see this expressed in Heb. 9:9 *...Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience...* and Heb. 9:14 *...how much more will the blood of Christ, ... cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* We are called to come to this place/state where we have no consciousness of sin, where the very sin nature is removed from our beings. When Jesus was talking to the disciples in John 8:31-36, he said this: *...If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; 32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33 They answered unto him, We are Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Every one that does sin is the slave of sin. 35 And the slave abides not in the house<sup>2</sup> for ever (into the age): the son abides for ever (into the age).** 36 If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* In these verses Jesus makes it plain that if you sin you are a slave to sin and you do NOT remain in the house into the age. If you are not a slave (of sin) you are a son, and the son does remain in the house into the age. Only those who are not slaves of sin are sons. That we can be free from sin is taught in 1John 3:9 *...No one who is born of the God does sin, because His seed abides in him; and **he is not able to sin**, because he is born of **the God**.* So it is possible not to sin, but how is one born of the God and when does it happen? Some more insight into this can be gleaned from this article: <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/The-Father-and-the-Son-An-Observation.pdf>. Without any doubt, we need to be changed in the very depths of our being for this to happen. Paul alludes to this change in Hebrews referring to it as so great a salvation.

#### Other Changes to OT Law.

These six statements in Matthew are not the only Old Covenant laws which were upgraded in the New Covenant. They are simply some found together in close proximity probably to draw

2. Read <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/The-Two-Kingdoms.pdf> to understand the house the sinner is kicked out of.

our attention to the fact that Old Covenant law points to a higher and more beneficial New Covenant. It should not surprise us then to find other Old Covenant law that is upgraded to a higher level under the New Covenant. Here are a few of them.

### **1 Our new High Priest.**

Another difference between OT and NT law is clearly seen in Heb 7. Paul is telling us about our new High Priest, Jesus Christ, and the many ways He is different to Levitical priests. Paul says "*...if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood ..., what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place **a change of law** also. ... For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests. ... For, on the one hand, there is **a setting aside of a former commandment** because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God, ... as Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.*

Paul continues in Heb 8:6: *...But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.*

These words show there has to be a dramatic change in OT law. There has to be the *setting aside of a former commandment* for Jesus to become High Priest.

### **2. Circumcision.**

Circumcision was part of the old covenant, a seal upon those who were of the faith of Abraham, but now Paul says in 1Cor. 7:19: *...Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God.* Yes, there are commandments to be kept. In Rom. 2:28-29, the Spirit puts it this way: *...For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and **circumcision is that of the heart**, in spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

Scripture goes on in Col. 2:11 *...in whom (i.e. in Christ) ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the stripping off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ;* and in Phil. 3:3 *...for we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:*

In this we realise that OT circumcision was a picture of a much grander thing, the cutting away of the body of the flesh, a picture spoken of by Paul in the last verses of Rom 7 and the beginning of Rom 8, and only comes to fruition when one comes to be IN Christ. Read <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/The-Father-and-the-Son-An-Observation.pdf> to understand the fullness of this.

### **3 Tithing.**

It should not surprise us that tithing, the giving of a tenth, is also changed, or upgraded. No where under the New Covenant do we find the requirement to give a tithe, a tenth of our income. The fact that nearly every Christian denomination throughout the world preaches it, does not make it correct. If tithing, i.e. giving a tenth, were so important as the denominations indicate, it is reasonable to think God's Spirit would have said something specific about it in the New Testament.

Some have tried to argue from Hebrews 7, that tithing is applicable to New Covenant times but the argument has no validity. In Heb 7:1-10 the Spirit by the writer is simply recounting the Old Covenant law to establish the importance of Melchizedek after whom Jesus is likened. Nowhere in the epistles of Paul is it indicated that giving a tenth, is a pattern for giving under the New Covenant.

We do however, see Paul writing about taking collections for the poor among the holy-ones but he never ever mentions a requirement to give a tenth. In fact no where in the NT do we ever see the idea of a church group taking up a tenth for the support of a church organisation. Rather it was distributed among the people according to need.

As with other Old Covenant law, He 'raises the bar' beyond the reach of our own resources so that the goal to be achieved can never be of our own doing. No longer are we required to give just a tenth. We are called to give far more as we might expect in accord with the way Jesus has upgraded so much of the OT law. Listen to these words of Jesus in Luke 12:33: *...Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth....* and Luke 14:33 *...So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*

The great realisation and change of attitude we are required to come to, is that the Almighty God is **the OWNER of everything, every single atom** and that we are indeed only users of HIS possessions. Listen to these words in Psalm 50:7-12 *...Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you: I am God, your God, I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings, which are ever before me. I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it...* and Haggai 2:8 *...The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts...* and Romans 11:35 *"...Who has ever given to Him, that He should repay him?"*.

Even more importantly, we need to come to the realisation that the Almighty God, Yahweh, the Father, loves us and wants to be a Father to us. He wants to provide for us, just as He provided for His Son Jesus and the disciples. But we have to stop doing it ourselves and let Him. Are we willing to become the child of the Father?

What then are we required to give? The answer is simple, as the scripture shows. We are required to give all and let our Father provide for us. Under the New Covenant, the standard of the Old Covenant tithing law is raised beyond our ability to perform it. This whole issue of riches is dealt with in great detail in an article found at: <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/Yehovah-or-Mammon.pdf>