

How did the early church understand the change in the Law?

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For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. (Heb. 7:12)

As it has been determined, the Bible states every word of God is considered the law (*Mt. 4:4). Therefore, when God enacts a change in His delegated structure of authority, it is noted in His word.

From before the foundation of the earth, God determined mankind would require a covenant with two phases in order to understand His will and enter His kingdom (Mt. 25:34; Rev. 13:8; Heb.4:3-11).

These phases involve changes that deal with the misconduct of individuals, groups, and nations (Pr. 16:6; Jer. 26:13; Ez. 6:1-14; Mal. 3:13-15; Zec. 8:13; Mt. 23:1-36; Rom. 11:11ff; 2Pet. 3:9).

Almighty God states He does not change (Mal. 3:6), but because He is merciful and knows that man is weak (Rom. 8:3-4), He permitted certain allowances (Ac. 14:16; 17:30; Rom. 11:29-36). Christ described this truth very clearly in the book of Mark,

And the Pharisees having approached were questioning him if it is lawful for a man to divorce a woman, testing him. ³But having answered, he said to them, “**What did Moses command you?**” ⁴And they said to him, “Moses permitted to write a certificate of divorce, and to release.” ⁵But Jesus said to them, “**Toward your hard heart he wrote this command,** ⁶“but from the beginning of creation, male and female he created them; ⁷“on account of this, a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸“and the two will become

one flesh; so that they are no longer two but one flesh. ⁹“What therefore God has yoked together, let no man separate. ¹⁰And in the house again the disciples were asking him about this. ¹¹And he said to them, “**Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her.**” ¹²“And if a woman releases her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” (Mk. 10:2-12, RNT).

As the Aaronic/Levitical priesthood, including the later Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt. 3:10), persisted in their disobedience to God’s clear instructions, and since the animal sacrifices could not take away sin (Heb. 9:9, 12-14), this priesthood was replaced by the order of Melchizedek, under Messiah. Christ qualified as High Priest of this new order through obedience to his Father’s divine instructions, culminating in his willing sacrifice (Heb. 7).



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Hebrews 7:12

The transfer of authority from Judah and the Levitical priesthood (Sanhedrin - the council of 70, Mt. 26:59, cf. Num. 11:16-17) is represented by Christ appointing seventy (plus two) disciples and sending them out to continue God’s work (Lk. 10:1-3, 17). This work is now the responsibility of, and undertaken by, those of the church which Christ built (Mt. 9:37-38; Jn. 4:34-38). This change of authority is also pictured in Christ’s interaction with the fig tree (Mt. 21:19; Lk. 13:6-9 cf. Jer. 24:1-10; 29:15-17). Even the fallen host (demons) understood the authority of Judah and the Levitical system had been removed (Ac. 19:13-17). Thus, to assert that Judaism continues to hold the oracles of God is fallacious. This is evident when one compares the traditions of Judaism, including the incorrect

Hillel calendar and its unbiblical postponements, with scripture (Ti. 1:13-16).

Therefore, the priesthood still exists today but is different from that of the Aaronic/Levitical system. God's people now serve as priests of Melchizedek within the structure of the New Covenant. The change in the law did not remove the requirement for a priesthood, neither did it remove the responsibility of God's people to continue obeying His law and commandments today (Rev. 5:10; Mt. 5:17-19; 19:17; Lk. 24:44; Rev. 14:12; Isa. 2:3; 8:20).

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man (Ecc. 12:13).

* When Almighty God first gathered His people Israel, He established them as a nation led by the Angel of Yahovah, under the authority of God, the Father (Ex. 14:19; 23:20; Isa. 63:9; 1Cor. 10:4). At Sinai, Israel was given God's law, commandments, statutes, judgments, and ordinances, as part of the system under which they would function as His people (Ex. 19, 20). Included in the law of God are commandments and judgments concerning crime and punishment that were observed and executed by the Israelites under Moses, and later, under the judges (Ex. 21-23). This system was a theocracy, that is, a nation governed by God through the Angel of Yahovah, and administered through a human priesthood and judges (Ex. 18:17-26).

Almighty God does not establish law and commandments by whim (Ps. 19:7; 119:151; Jas. 1:22). He is perfect and eternal, hence His words and actions are deliberate, perfect and eternal, therefore His divine law and commandments are deliberate, perfect and

eternal (De. 32:4; 2Ki. 17:37; Ps. 105:8; 119:44; Rom. 16:26).

The fact is God's people walked according to His law prior to Israel's slavery in Egypt and the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai subsequent to their exodus (Gen. 5:22; 6:9). Abraham, for example, was instructed to teach his children in righteousness and justice and to keep the way of the Lord (Gen. 18:19). His descendants include all Israel who will eventually become too great to number – like the sand of the sea, for this also comprises all spiritual offspring according to the promise of God (Gen. 32:12; Ps. 103:20-22; Gal. 3:26-29).

Unfortunately, ancient Israel was influenced by the nations around them and their pagan-based systems of government. This led to Israel's desire to have a human king over them rather than the Anointed of God - the Angel of Yahovah. Before granting Israel's wish for a human king, they were informed by God through the prophets that a king would introduce many negative and burdensome changes (1Sam. 8:1-22), some of which were contrary to the law of God. Their decision would ultimately lead to Israel's rebellion and subsequent capture, imprisonment, and disbursement under the hands of their enemies.

Within the second covenant system, those who constitute the servants of God are not determined by nationality or ancestry, rather, the congregation of God is determined by God's calling and election (Mk. 16:15; Gal. 3:26-29). Now each chosen individual is a priest who carries the personal responsibility of administering the will of God in their own lives, in a world we are not to be a part of (1Pe. 2:9; Rev. 1:5; 5:10). Therefore, the body of Christ or church of God includes people from many nations, languages, and regions (Rev. 5:9; 7:9). Consequently, God's servants recognize Jesus Christ as the Head of the church and king of kings, but as a people we are no longer a

physical theocracy whose members are determined by ancestral lineage (Gal. 3:26-29).

However, as mentioned previously, all of mankind is now governed by a system that runs contrary to many of God's laws. This makes it very difficult to fully administer certain aspects of God's law pertaining to governance, which would include certain legal judgments (i.e. Nu. 35:16-21; Lev. 20:27; Lev. 24:13-16; Deut. 13:6-10; Deut. 21:18-21; Deut. 22:13-29).

Nonetheless, the spiritual principles behind the legislation and indeed, all of God's commandments still apply. It is only under Jesus Christ during the millennium (Rev. 20:4-6) that God's people will be able once again to fully administer all of God's laws, including judgments pertaining to crime and punishment. Until that time, God's servants apply His commandments while seeking to fulfill the spiritual principles of His laws wherever possible.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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