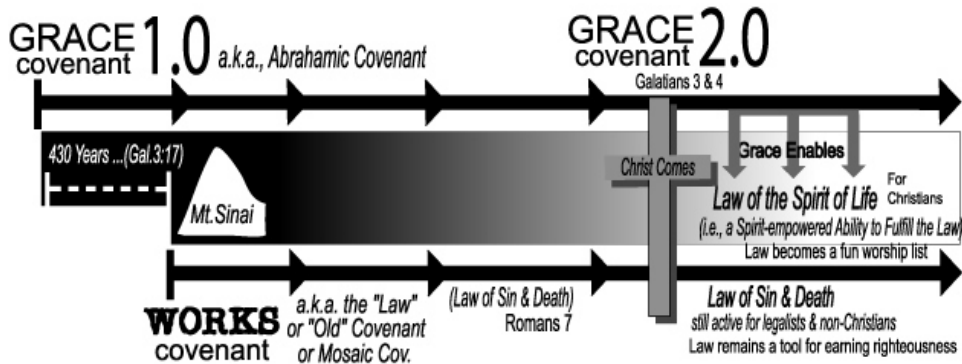


The Parallel Covenants



⊛ Most Christians *over-simplify* the covenant time-lines:

(E.g.,) **Era of Works** → Death & Rez. of Jesus → **Era of Grace**

- This example is **not** accurate *because*: There was *always* a covenant of *Grace through faith* that remained in force since Abraham in the Old Test! (Gal.3:17-20); which means, the grace covt. is actually older than the “Old” Covt by 430 yrs (see Gal.3:17)
- So it is **not** accurate to say that there was no “Grace through faith” covenant available to those in the Old Testament.
- It is also **not** accurate to say that the Law ceases in function during the era of the New Test. (Mt.5:17;19; 1 Tim 1:8)

(Note) When we refer to the “Old Covenant” we are referring to the Mosaic Law, but more specifically often used to refer to the “Ceremonial Laws”(a segment of Mosaic laws which were permanently made obsolete by Christ).

Ques.#1: *If there already was a grace covenant → why did Christ come?*

- To bring a better covenant w/better promises: (Heb.8:6)
More specifically: 1. A covenant better than ‘the Law’
2. A fully revealed Grace Covenant
- To reveal the Father’s character most fully to us: (He.1:1-3; Mt.11:27)
- To pour out His Holy Spirit on all people in unprecedented power:
(Ac.1:8; 1Cor.12:13)
- To write the code on hearts rather than a written code to be learned
(Heb.8:10) i.e., No one has excuses for not knowing God.
- To more deeply clean & hold accountable hearts & consciences:
(Heb.9:9-14; Heb8:7,10)
- To establish a grace covenant ‘eternally’ rather than annually
(Heb.13:20; Heb.9:12); No more annual sacrifices

Ques.#2: *what then was God’s purpose in adding the law?*

“[the law] was added b/c of transgressions.” (Gal.3:19)

- To show us what right & wrong is: (Ro.3:20; 5:13; 7:7-11)
 - To restrain (or leash) evil in us by judgement: (Gal.3:23-24; ...Deut.13:6-11; 19:16-21)
 - To show us our need for a Savior (Gal.3:24; Ro.7:24-25)
 - To foreshadow the brilliance of the completed Covenant of Grace: (Heb.10:1-4)
- ⊛ (E). To guide Christians into the good works God has planned for them (Eph.2:10) - only functions for those in Christ
* Theologians call the Law an ‘*administrative covenant*’

So is the law still useful to us today? Absolutely!

- There are 3 Types of Law in the O.T: **Moral Law** (good things to do all the time); **Civil-Political Law** (which applied only as long as Israel was a nation-state); and **Ceremonial Law** (worship laws that Christ fulfilled).
- For Christians: the moral law protects us from harm; it clarifies how God created us to live; it provides us with a worship list; thus...

Mt.5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law ...but to fulfill them!”

Mt.5:19 “Whoever practices and teaches [the Law] will be called great in the kingdom of heaven!”

1 Tim.1:8 “Now we know that the law is good if one uses it properly...”

- In Short: It empowers the grace covenant to function effectively!

We cannot confuse the law automatically w/legalism (or other negative ideas) for several reasons:

- The Bible shows that the law is still inherently “*holy, righteous, & good*” (Ro.7:12)
- The real issue isn’t the ‘*value*’ of the law, but rather. . .

How the Law is used: 1 Tim.1:8 (Ro.7-8)

A. **Legalistically:** *to attain ‘right standing’; gain more favor/love; To ‘earn’ your way into heaven?*

B. **In Response to Grace:** *to regenerate/Improve Lives; to honor & show love to God (Jn 14:20) in response to grace.*

“The Christian is free from the law as a supposed system of salvation (Rom. 6:14; 7:4, 6; 1 Cor. 9:20; Gal. 2:15-19; 3:25) but is “under Christ’s law” as a rule of life (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2).”

(J.I.Packer, Concise Theology)