

**YAHWEH, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, IS WITH US!**

**Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins ...  
(Isaiah 58:1)**

# Animal Sacrifices

**Study Carefully & Study Prayerfully**

**Hebrews 7:27**

**Who needeth not daily, as those priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did Once, when he offered up himself.**

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## The Old and New Covenants

A covenant is a formal agreement between two parties. In the old covenant Yahweh made a formal agreement with the nation of Israel that He would be their God and they would be His people. As a man would take a wife, Yahweh took Israel to be His very own. In the old covenant Yahweh's **primary laws**, ([The Ten Commandments](#)) were written on tablets of stone and the people of Israel agreed to obey them. Unfortunately Israel broke her part of the agreement. Israel committed spiritual adultery with pagan gods and grievously sinned. Having sinned, Yahweh's **secondary laws**, involving animal sacrifices, cleansing, pardon and reconciliation came into effect. If forgiveness was not sought via this prescribed route then other **secondary laws** (penal laws) would be applied. And so we have:

### 1. Primary laws

These include all Yahweh's moral commandments which will abide for all time. (For example

Deut.6:5, Exodus 20:1-17)

## 2. **Secondary laws**

These laws only come into effect when Yahweh's moral commandments are violated. They include for example:

- The sacrificial system - if pardon was requested
- The penal system - if pardon is not requested.

There are more laws (primary & secondary) mentioned in the Scriptures which are not considered here. Laws which concern:

- Marriage
- Property
- Agriculture
- Food etc.

In this lesson we will mostly concentrate on the secondary laws which involved **animal sacrifices**. To do this we will first look at what is referred to in Scripture as the **old** and **new covenants**. In the **old covenant** Yahweh's secondary laws, the ones which called for animal sacrifices and diverse purification rites, may be compared to an engineer's blueprint, an architect's model or a teacher's visual aid. They contained **symbolic rituals which the Almighty designed to teach His people the real lessons** He had in mind. The old covenant, however, had certain weaknesses. For example, the people promised to obey God, but their promises were soon broken and they repeatedly lapsed into sin. In the old covenant, God's law was written on tablets of stone: but few Israelites really wanted to obey it. In the **new covenant** the Almighty makes a formal agreement - **again with the people of ISRAEL**; but there is a difference:

Hebrews 8:6 *"... he (Christ) is the mediator of a better covenant, which is established on **better promises.**"*

verse 10 *"For this is the covenant that I will make **with the House of Israel** after those days, saith the Lord: **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts ...**"*

In other words in the new covenant Yahweh's law will not be obeyed reluctantly, but by choice, from a willing heart. For God promises to write His law on the willing believer's mind and soul, thereby ensuring **spontaneous obedience** and **willing** obedience. In the new covenant, Gentile believers (because of their faith in Christ) are also reckoned as descendants of **Abraham**. They are **spiritual Israelites!**

Galatians 3:29 *"If you belong to Christ, then you are descendants of Abraham and will receive what God has promised."*

Romans 2:29 *"But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart."*

For more information about this, see [Who/What is a Jew?](#)

The main difference between the two covenants as regards forgiveness and cleansing is concerned is this:

- Under the **old covenant** the repentant sinner brought an innocent animal victim to the door of the

Tabernacle or Temple where an Aaronic priest officiated. The sinner confessed his/her sin over the animal, which was then slain and the animal's blood was sprinkled on the repentant sinner. He/she was then forgiven.

- Under the **new covenant** the repentant sinner has no need to bring an animal to gain forgiveness or **cleansing**. All he needs now is to approach God with faith in Jesus Christ: who as High Priest of the new covenant pleads his own blood in the Temple in heaven.

Remember that both covenants are made with **Israel**: and that Yahweh's moral laws remain unchanged in the new covenant. Few believers realize these facts.



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