

## Relationship between Old and New Testaments Believers

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God made promise that through Abraham, through his family (Israel), his seed (Christ), **all families** (both Jew & Gentiles) of the earth would be blessed. (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-6). The Law came 400 years after Abraham (Gen.15:13; Gal. 3:17). From Adam to Moses, none were under the Law. It was given only to Israel. After Egypt!

**1. The Law was added:** Israel said: (Exodus 19:8) *“All the Lord has spoken we will do”*. **Why added?** Because of **transgressions:** (Gal 3:19) *“What purpose then does the law serve? It was **added** because of transgressions, till the Seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made...”*. (Galatians 3:24).

**Its purpose today:** *“Therefore the law was **our tutor (schoolmaster)** to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by **faith**.”* (Rom 3:20) *“Therefore by the deeds of the law **no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**”*

**2. Why Israel failed:** *“Why? Because they did not seek it **by faith**, but as it were, by **the works of the law**. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.”* (Romans 9:32). The law said ‘obey and live, disobey and die’ (Lev. 18:5; Gal. 3:12). Under law Israelites were servants (**slaves**) to obey.

Under the New Covenant believers both Jew and Gentile are **sons by adoption** (Rom. 8:12-17). Christians are not slaves to God but children and sons, a new relationship.

**3. What about Christ?** (Gal 4:4-7) *“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, **born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**”*

**4. Christ said:** *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill”* (Matthew 5:17). **Fulfill** means to fill up, to complete. He was the only man to perfectly keep the law (He exalted it and made it honourable and also made restoration (Isaiah 42:21; Psalm 69:4), and on the cross met all that the law demanded. He leads believers out from under law into the liberty of sons. (Gal 4:4-5) *“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”*

**5. Jesus was a Jew,** His disciples were all Jews. What did He teach them? He taught all to have ‘faith’ in God and His word, not like the Pharisees who relied on works of the law! He sent them out to preach the gospel (the good news). He taught them to keep the Lord’s Supper (Luke 22) and to make disciples and baptise them (Mat 28:18-20).

**The Apostles were all Jews.** Peter preached faith in Christ at Pentecost (Acts 2) and 3000 were saved. *“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”* (Acts 2:42)

**6. What did Paul preach:** He only preached the Gospel: *“For I determined not to know anything among you except **Jesus Christ and Him crucified**”* (1 Cor. 2:2). *“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek**”* (Rom. 1:16) . *“For the **message of the cross** is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”* (1 Cor. 1:18).

Paul preached this message in Jewish Synagogues (still under Law) on **the Sabbath**, where Jews met. The only day when Christians met was the **first day of the week**, our Sunday. (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).

**Jerusalem AD 33 on:** Jews and Proselytes (Gentiles who followed Judaism) were converted when Peter preached. Later Samaritans were saved (Acts 8). Then Gentiles were converted in Acts 10. These were gathered into local churches under elders and deacons.

There were no denominations as we have today. And where do we find Jewish congregations separating from Gentiles? Nowhere in the Bible do we find such teaching.

The early New Testament churches around Jerusalem were mainly made up of Jews, but further afield made up of both Jews and Gentiles who met under the new teaching given by Christ, and by His Apostles and Prophets.

**What Paul taught Jews and Gentiles:** *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one (Jew & Gentile), and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances (found in the law), so as to create in Himself **one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off (the Gentiles) and to those who were near (the Jews). For through Him we both (Jew & Gentile) have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, **in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit**”*** (Ephesians 2:14-22).

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**There were legalistic Christian Jews in Jerusalem** who tried to bring Gentile converts back under law. Paul answers this in the book of Galatians (Chapter 1 & 2). The Apostles and elders met in Jerusalem to consider this same question (Acts Chapter 15) and ruled on these issues.

It took the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 to finish off that form of worship with its priesthood and animal sacrifices, and to scatter the Jews among the Gentiles.

There is no indication in the New Testament **of any teaching** that separates Jewish believers from the Gentiles. Away from Jerusalem they all met together in local churches in the various locations. The Book of Hebrews was written to warn Jews who professed faith not to return to Judaism. Paul wrote to the Colossian Christians and warned them not to believe the philosophy of that age (man's wisdom), or return to Jewish legal practices (of abstaining from certain foods and drink, observing new moon festivals and Sabbaths (Col. Ch 2).