

Hebrews 7:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

Analysis

The former commandment (Levitical law) is 'annulled' (Greek 'athetēsis' - set aside, disannulled) because of 'weakness and unprofitableness.' This is radical - God's law is weak and useless? Not in its purpose (revealing sin, pointing to Christ) but in its power to save. Law commands but can't empower; it diagnoses but can't cure. Reformed theology emphasizes law's good purpose while denying salvific power - only grace saves.

Historical Context

This would be deeply challenging to Jewish Christians attached to Mosaic law. The author carefully shows from Scripture itself that God intended to replace the old system with a better one, so accepting the new covenant isn't apostasy but faith in God's progressive revelation.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How was the law 'weak,' and what does this teach about the impossibility of earning salvation?
2. If the law is set aside, what role does it play in the Christian life?

Interlinear Text

ἀθέτησις	μὲν	γὰρ	γίνεται	προαγούσης	ἐντολῆς
a disannulling	verily	For	there is	going before	of the commandment
G115	G3303	G1063	G1096	G4254	G1785
διὰ	τὸ	αὐτῆς	ἀσθενὲς	καὶ	ἀνωφελές
for	G3588	thereof	the weakness	and	unprofitableness
G1223	G846	G772	G2532	G512	

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:3 (Word): For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

Acts 13:39 (Word): And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Hebrews 7:19 (Word): For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Galatians 4:9 (Parallel theme): But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

1 Timothy 4:8 (Parallel theme): For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

Hebrews 13:9 (Parallel theme): Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

Galatians 3:17 (Word): And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

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