

Hebrews 8:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Analysis

By calling it a 'new covenant,' God 'has made the first obsolete' (Greek 'pepalaiōken' - has made old/worn out). What is obsolete and aging 'is ready to vanish away.' This is pastoral courage - declaring God's clear intention to replace the old covenant system. Written before AD 70, this may have been fulfilled shortly after in the temple's destruction. The old covenant served its purpose and is now superseded by the superior new covenant in Christ.

Historical Context

The temple's destruction in AD 70 physically ended the Levitical system, confirming this prophecy. Yet even before that historical event, Christ's coming made the old covenant spiritually obsolete. It had pointed forward to Him; His arrival meant its purpose was fulfilled.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How should the obsolescence of the old covenant affect your approach to Old Testament law?
2. What does God's replacement of His own prior covenant reveal about progressive revelation and redemptive history?

Interlinear Text

ἐν τῷ λέγειν Καινὴν παλαιούμενον τὴν πρώτην·
In G3588 **that he saith** G3004 **A new** G2537 **covenant he hath made** G3822 G3588 **the first** G4413
G1722

τὸ δὲ παλαιούμενον καὶ γηράσκον ἐγγὺς ἀφανισμοῦ
G3588 **Now** G1161 **covenant he hath made** G3822 **and** G2532 **waxeth old** G1095 **is ready** G1451 **to vanish away** G854

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 5:17 (Parallel theme): Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Hebrews 9:15 (Covenant): And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

1 Corinthians 13:8 (Parallel theme): Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.