



NEW WINE FOR OLD

Mark 9:2 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”— because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear (Listen to) Him!” Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves. Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels (messengers), as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

1. THE OLD WINE

Luke 16:16 “The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus was not come to amend the Law in any way. There would be no alternative – more easily attainable – Law. He was come to fulfil all the righteous requirements of the Law on behalf of all mankind and as the sinless, perfect Lamb of God take away the sins of the world. He even submitted to John’s baptism of repentance ‘to fulfil all righteousness’ even though He Himself knew no sin.

Luke 4:16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

The law and the prophets – typified by Moses and Elijah- were accessed through the scrolls kept at the synagogues in every Jewish community. They were a precious resource and were maintained, taught and interpreted there. Jesus reveals that the Law is not to be amended or changed. The synagogue with its leaders and teachers of the law were an appropriate institution to protect and make available the Holy scriptures.

2. NEWWINE

Jeremiah 31:31 “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Matthew 3:4 Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you *Jews* say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “**Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.**” The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “**I who speak to you am *He*.**”

Matthew 26:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, “**Take, eat; this is My body.**” Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, “**Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**”

Acts 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let

every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.

Acts 19:1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all.

3. OLD AND NEW WINESKINS

Luke 5:33 Then they said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?” And He said to them, “**Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.**” Then He spoke a parable to them: “**No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken* out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old *wine*, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’”**

Jesus makes a clear distinction between the old ‘wine’ of the law and the prophets compared to the new covenant of the kingdom of God accessed through the Christ – the Lord Who is the Spirit. But folks who had been brought up on a diet of the old covenant of laws and observances were not going to easily move from what they were used to.

As the old covenant through the Law had its container – the synagogue and its associated culture of leaders, teachers, interpreters and enforcers – so the new covenant of Life through the Spirit would have its container – the local body of Christ. A synagogue like container cannot hold the life that is in the Spirit of the Christ Jesus.

Jesus gives this clear warning because human nature clings to old ways and even when a better way is revealed and experienced. Some folks may wish to mix in some of the old. As demonstrated by those early disciples in Jerusalem:

Galatians 2:11 Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. [But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I

through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain. O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain? Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— just as Abraham “*believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.”* So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Here are disciples of Jesus Christ attempting to patch the old garment of the Law with the new covenant that is in Christ. And spreading the vile error.

It is to be noted that the re-introduction of the Law into the freedom that is in Christ was brought by men teaching others. Like in the good old days in the synagogue . Those who wish to be leaders and teachers of others miss the old wineskin of the synagogue and its culture.

Is it then any wonder that today we are surrounded by ‘churches’ that are essentially a re-incarnation of the synagogues with emphasis on men teaching and leading others. They are fine for those who themselves are full of ‘old wine’ but those who are full of the new wine will not stay long.

The lesson is that those blessed by God to be granted repentance to life; given faith in the name of Jesus Christ to have their sins washed away through being baptized in His name; who have tasted of the heavenly gift in receiving the Holy Spirit; Should be knit together in love with one another as the local body of Christ and watch out for the dogs that resent our freedom in Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:7 But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away *was* glorious, what remains *is* much more glorious. Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— unlike Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

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