
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **Doesn't the Bible teach adulterers should be executed?**

Adultery has always been a very grievous sin in the eyes of God. Modern day movies and television programs make light of adultery, but every person in all the world making fun of it does not make it right. It is still a sin that will send men and women to hell.

Hebrews 13:4

⁴ Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

According to the Bible, then, men and women who commit adultery will be punished on the great Judgment Day of God. In addition to this judgment, the Old Testament also taught that adulterers were to be executed:

Deuteronomy 22:23-24

²³ "If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her,

²⁴ "then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you.

Now the question we are asking is, "Why don't we teach today that adulterers should still be executed by stoning?" As far as that goes, why don't we do a lot of things which the Old Testament teaches. For example:

- a) The Old Testament teaches no work should be done on the Sabbath Day (the 7th day of the week) and violators are to be stoned to death.
- b) It teaches that men cannot eat pork, nor catfish.

- c) It teaches that animals should be sacrificed to make atonement for sins.
- d) It teaches that rebellious children should be stoned to death.
- e) It teaches that men must assembly in the city of Jerusalem three times a year to worship God.

Why is it that we do not observe any of these things?

A NEW COVENANT

The answer to this great question lies in the fact that all of these things were taught in the Old Testament, but they are NOT taught in the New Testament.

Hebrews 8:6-13

⁶ But now [Jesus] has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

⁸ Because finding fault with them, He says: "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;

⁹ "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt

¹³ In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to **vanish away**.

Listen to verse 13 again: "*What is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away!*" Here is the Bible itself saying that the Old Testament was going to vanish away. It would be replaced with the New Testament and the New Testament would bring with it new laws. The laws of the Old Testament would "vanish away," but Jesus said:

Matthew 24:35

³⁵ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

WHEN DID THE OT CEASE?

Now, when did the Old Testament pass away? When did it come to an end? The Bible clearly teaches that the laws of the Old Testament were fulfilled and taken away when Jesus died on the cross:

Colossians 2:14-16

¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

Clearly, then, and beyond question, the Old Testament came to an end with the death of Jesus.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

With the ending of the Old Testament came the beginning of the New Testament. Jesus' death on the cross ushered in a New Covenant:

1 Corinthians 11:25

²⁵ In the same manner [Jesus] also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

In the communion the one cup represents the one New Testament that was ratified by the blood of Jesus. One cup, then, reminds us there is just one New Testament and the fruit of the vine reminds us not only of the great price that was paid, but also when this New Testament came into force.

APPLICATION

Now:

- a) Why don't we today stone adulterers to death?
- b) Why don't we offer animal sacrifices today?
- c) Why don't we assemble three times a year in Jerusalem for worship?

Because all of these things are part of the Old Testament law, but none of them are part of the New Testament law.

In like manner, some churches today teach that we should observe the 7th day Sabbath. But that was part of the Old Testament law. The New Testament teaches that we are to assemble on the 1st day of the week for worship (Acts 20:7).

Some churches teach their members to tithe, but tithing was part of the Old Testament. The New Testament teaches:

2 Corinthians 9:7

⁷ So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Some churches use mechanical instruments when singing praises to God. But mechanical instruments were part of Old Testament worship. The New Testament teaches instead:

Ephesians 5:19

¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

A WARNING

Let us be careful not to base our religion on the Old Testament because it has been nailed to the cross.

Acts 13:38-39

³⁸ "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;

³⁹ "and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Notice carefully that we cannot be justified by the law of Moses. Neither can we choose only the portions of the Old Testament that we like and leave the rest.

Galatians 5:3

³ And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.

We must decide to either keep the whole Old Testament law (which cannot save us), or else we must decide to live under the New Testament. We cannot have both at the same time. We cannot keep the Sabbath Day, tithing and instruments of music without also keeping the animal sacrifices and stoning adulterers.

Galatians 5:4

⁴ You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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