**Able Ministers of New Testament**

If the New Testament was made with Israel and not the Body of Christ, why did Paul write that we have been made able ministers of the New Testament?

(2 Corinthians 3:6-9 KJV) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. {7} But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: {8} How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? {9} For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

This passage is comparing the New Testament with the Old Testament. Paul says we are made able ministers of the *spirit* of the New Testament.

There is no difference between the letter of the Old Testament and the letter of the New Testament (i.e. they contain the same commandments and ordinances).

(Exodus 19:5-8 KJV) Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: {6} And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. {7} And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. {8} And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

What follows in Exodus are the details of the Old Covenant. The spirit of the Old Covenant is that of obedience.

The problem with the Old Covenant is although it is possible to fulfill the letter of the law there needs to be a change in one's heart.

(Matthew 23:23-28 KJV) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. {24} Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. {25} Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. {26} Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. {27} Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. {28} Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Here we see the scribes and the Pharisees were keeping the letter of the law but there was no inward change. In Psalms 51:5-6, David understood the problem was on the inside; he was born in iniquity. A change has to take place on the inside.

(Jeremiah 31:31-34 KJV) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: {32} Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: {33} But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. {34} And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

The New Covenant will have the same letter as the Old Covenant but the spirit will be different. Rather than a command to obey, God will write the law in their hearts

(Ezekiel 36:26 KJV) A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

In the New Covenant, God will give a new heart and a new spirit. God will write His law in the heart and cause His people to fulfill the law.

* Old Testament is based on Israel's ability to keep the law
* New Testament is based on God causing Israel to obey

Here we see what Israel could not do, God will cause them to do. The spirit of the New Testament is GRACE.

Grace is what God does for them what they could not do for themselves. God does the work and they receive what He does for them. The Old Testament demonstrated that Israel could not do in on their own. The New Testament gives grace to Israel and God will do what they could not do.

In the dispensation of grace, God's grace is for all.

(2 Corinthians 3:9 KJV) For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

Under the Old Covenant, one was never able to attain the righteousness God requires. The law would condemn them, always telling them they failed.

(Romans 3:21-22 KJV) But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; {22} Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Although the letter of the New Covenant is the same, the spirit is that of grace: God does for us what we cannot do ourselves. When Paul wrote, "we are made able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit..." he is saying we are made able ministers of the spirit of the New Testament which is God's grace. We are made able ministers of the grace of God.