

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John Old Testament or New Testament?

**A Discussion of this Question in Light
of Scriptural Teaching**

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Preface

The purpose of this document is to establish the truth. The authors have neither desire nor motive to promulgate error. We both feel strongly that if we do so it will cost us our souls. We, also, recognize that we could be wrong on any issue, and that there is a very serious obligation on teachers to be sure that what they are teaching is the truth (James 3:1f).

Many may wonder why we would address this issue at all, since the predominant view of most Christians is that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (MML&J) are New Testament books. It was only after we learned that this issue was causing division in some churches that we decided to address it in a formal document. While it might seem strange to some that this is an issue, we can see several issues in the New Testament that we would probably conclude to be as strange today. For example, that there is no resurrection from the dead (1 Cor. 15:12), that Jesus did not come in the flesh (1 John 4:3), or that circumcision is binding (Acts 15). There is no requirement that a doctrine be *reasonable* for it to cause faithful Christians to be swept away by it, and, therefore, for it to cause division and suffering.

In this document, we will try to present fairly the arguments that are made on behalf of MML&J being part of the Old Testament. We will attempt to analyze these arguments objectively in light of all that the Bible teaches. In order to assure the reader that some Christians hold specific beliefs, we will draw upon quotes taken from several different sources. The main source will be an e-mail discussion list called “nicelist.” A more detailed set of these quotes can be obtained through the “Catalogue of Available Answers” in Chapter 5, which are freely available upon request. We recognize the problem in quoting this as an anonymous source. First, this list does not have an archive for the reader to check and verify. Those who post to this list can either personally save it or discard the posts, so unless they personally saved it, it will be lost. However, we have no interest in setting up straw men to argue with and wasting our time in writing this document just to chase after non-existent arguments.

A second problem is in not identifying the individual who posted the thought. However, we do this because we have no interest in making this a personal matter. In order to give some assurance that we are not mis-quoting or taking quotes out of context, we will give the general source with *date* and *time* of quote. It is not our intent to hurt or embarrass anyone. The purpose of quoting is merely to demonstrate that we are not creating a bogus argument or position. We pledge to do our best to be fair and not to take quotes out of context so that they present the opposing viewpoint in a bad light. We will make every attempt to address the strongest arguments that we know exist supportive of MML&J being Old Testament books. Anything short of this would be self-defeating.

All should recognize that those who are quoted may no longer continue to hold the view they once expressed. This, along with the difficulty in getting permission from each individual involved, is another reason for anonymity. In the process of the authors’

study and continuous debate and discussions, we have learned much. There are many arguments that we would not express in the same way that we originally did. There are some arguments that we would abandon completely in defending our position. Thus, we want to impress on the readers that the persons quoted may no longer hold the position expressed. Our intent is to identify the arguments, not the persons. It is impossible for us to tell what position any given person holds at this very minute. Focusing on the “who” of a position can be counterproductive, and it can lead to a cult of personalities. It is important that we focus on *learning the truth* as taught in God’s word, and then refuting error no matter who is teaching it.

One of the most convincing arguments in favor of MML&J being part of the New Testament is that they were written decades after the cross. It was impossible for them to be nailed to the cross if, in fact, they did not even exist when Jesus died. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the gospels for Christians to read. This will be covered in more detail in Section 4.1.

Let it also be noted that some of those we quote will grant that MML&J are indeed New Testament books, but books that contain no binding commands stated before the cross that can be applied to Christians later. Others that we quote will contend that these are indeed Old Testament books. Thus, we will have a stronger argument against the position of one group than the other at times. Some of our arguments will be irrelevant to one group but devastating to the position held by the other group. Both groups do not hold to their conclusions with the exact same arguments. We will be shifting gears at times to answer one side and then the other. So, please keep in mind the two positions, the common ground they hold as well as their differences.

Finally, we believe strongly that most Christians can avoid the necessity for reading this document altogether just by reading MML&J. Ask yourself – could this just be Old Testament teaching that is restricted to the Jews living at Jesus’ time that would be nailed to the cross in a matter of a few months? We urge you to start in the gospel of John, and remember that if just *one* doctrine taught applies to us today, then this book could not have been nailed to the cross with Christ (given that this was even possible). To those who might still struggle with this, we offer the discussion given in this document.

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CHAPTER 1

The Basic Argument

The controversy over Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John turns on the basic argument that Jesus lived His life under the Law of Moses, and, therefore, could not have given any commands that would uniquely go into the New Testament before His death. To do so, it is thought, would create a dilemma for Jews who were told, on one hand, to keep the Law of Moses and, on the other hand, to keep Jesus' commands (that sometimes seem to contradict the Law of Moses). For example, it is reasoned that the contemporaries of Jesus could not keep both Moses' and Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage. To keep Jesus from confusing the Jews before the cross, and to keep Him from putting Jews into a situation of "spiritual adultery," it is reasoned that Jesus did not teach any new laws for *the New Testament age* before the cross. To do so would cause them to attempt to be following Moses, and at the same time following Jesus' counter commands, thus causing them to be torn between two husbands. (Note: we understand that what we are calling *the New Testament age* was initiated with the preaching of the apostles on the Day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2.)

It is reasoned that He could not do so, and thus He did not do so. Instead, He merely explained the law, and gave the true meaning and intent of the law. To allow for the other portions of Jesus' teachings, it is claimed that anything that looks new is merely "prophecy" with no binding quality unless it is quoted after the cross, and more specifically, after the church/kingdom began on Pentecost (recorded in Acts 2). Thus, the content of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (MML&J) will fall into just a few categories: 1) Law of Moses, 2) prophecies that have no binding quality unless reaffirmed again after Acts 2, and 3) parables of the kingdom.

The basic argument of this position was set forth on a discussion e-mail list in these probing and convincing words:

To me it doesn't make any difference about what is in the New Testament or in the Old Testament. The thing we need to know is at what point did the law of the Lord go forth. At what point did Jesus cease to teach the Law of Moses and begin to teach His will? I do not believe that He mingled them together, for that would be pouring new wine in old wineskins and making spiritual adulterers of those He was expecting to obey His words. I don't think we ever see a time in the Bible when two contradictory laws are being taught at the same time.¹

This statement encapsulates most of the major arguments put forth in defense of the position that MML&J are Old Testament books, or New Testament books that contain *no* binding commands for us today. For this reason we will consider this summary argument first before getting into more detail. In the following sections, we will dissect this statement into its basic propositions.

1.1 PROPOSITION 1: LAW WENT FORTH

The statement was made above: “*The thing we need to know is at what point did the law of the Lord go forth.*” The premises of this proposition are as follows:

No part of the New Testament could be delivered before the “law of the Lord went forth.”

The law of the Lord went forth from Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts 2.

Therefore:

No part of the New Testament is recorded before Acts 2.

The error is that the major (first) premise is false. The point or location from which the “law of the Lord went forth” has no bearing on whether Jesus could or could not have delivered New Testament teaching before that point in time. This is clear from what Jesus taught (especially Jno.13-17). What does matter is what was *contained* in the law of the Lord when it went forth from Jerusalem. The law of the Lord was to go forth from Jerusalem (Isa.2:1-4; Lk.24:46-49), so there is no problem with the minor (second) premise. But, all of this law was yet to be written when it went forth. All 27 books of the New Testament went forth from Jerusalem. These 27 books were first in oral form spoken by the Spirit through the apostles and prophets, and even the Lord Jesus himself. Speaking of these things the Hebrews writer states (Heb. 2:3-4):

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?”

Indeed, on the Day of Pentecost, Peter spoke of things that were later to be recorded in MML&J (Acts 2:22-24, 36).

Examine the books that were written by those who were the instruments of the Holy Spirit after Acts 2 (the record of when/where the law of the Lord began to go forth). We must conclude that MML&J were among the things the Spirit revealed as the law of the Lord was going forth from Jerusalem. What does matter is *what* went forth from Jerusalem. Now, let us see *what* was to go forth from Jerusalem into the entire world. Notice what Jesus said would be among the things going forth from Jerusalem:

1. “*This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world*” (Matt.24:14). Thus, the message Jesus *had been preaching* would be among the things that would go forth from Jerusalem into all the world. Jesus did not intend that the message He had been preaching to Jews only would *always* be for Jews only. The pre-cross gospel He had been preaching would “be preached in all the world.” MML&J present to us the gospel that Jesus wanted preached in all the world, the gospel that was first spoken to the Jews (Rom.1:16). Reference to the gospel is

made about 15 times in MML&J (Mt. 4:23, 9:35, 11:5, 24:14, 26:13; Mk. 1:1, 1:14, 1:15, 13:10, 14:9, 16:15; Lk. 4:18, 7:22, 9:6, 20:1).

2. The story of the woman who anointed Jesus before the cross (Matt.26:6-13) was to be told “wherever *this* gospel is preached in the whole world.” Notice again that the gospel Jesus preached before the cross was to be preached “in the whole world.” Thus, once again, Jesus makes it irrelevant that during His ministry He had been talking to Jews only. The gospel He first preached to Jews only would eventually be preached “in the whole world.” This is important, because the argument will be made quite forcefully that Jesus only talked to Jews during His ministry. From that fact, it will be argued that Jesus could not have talked to the Jews about New Testament principles, and that He could only talk to the Jews about their law or prophecy about the kingdom. But Jesus tells us in the above two verses that what He was teaching as “*this* gospel” (before the cross) would extend to “all the world.” Those who teach that MML&J are not the gospel have to answer the question of whether the following statement of Jesus could be true:

“Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her” (Matt 26:13).

How did Jesus expect us to know the story of the woman in question? The story of the woman is not found in Acts 2 through Rev. 22, (which is falsely taught to be the New Testament that was to go forth from Jerusalem). Since only Matthew and Mark tell this story, it is inescapable that Matthew and Mark would contain part of “this gospel” that was to be preached in the entire world. Another thing we cannot escape is that the *message* Jesus was preaching before the cross would be among the things that would “go forth from Jerusalem.” We will re-emphasize this point again later.

3. “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). The time: before the cross. The speaker is Jesus, and the persons spoken to were the apostles. Matthew and John are presenting the Spirit’s divine recall of what Jesus taught them. John was inspired by the Holy Spirit and *the Holy Spirit was bringing this event to his remembrance when he wrote John 14:26*. How could he not be writing a New Testament book? Mark and Luke are doing the same, even though we cannot establish that Jesus talked to them personally in the past. But, these pre-cross sayings of Jesus were going to be recalled to them by the Spirit later, beginning at Jerusalem in Acts 2. Therefore, whatever it was that would “go forth from Jerusalem,” would have to contain some of the sayings Jesus spoke before the cross. MML&J definitely present to us the kind of things Jesus said would be recalled by the Spirit. MML&J were written with the Spirit’s help in perfect recall. These books are presented during the Spirit’s administration beginning from Jerusalem. Therefore, these books are beyond dispute New Testament

books, and even though they present some of the pre-cross words of Jesus, it is beyond dispute that Jesus *intended* that these words be recalled by the Spirit *after* the cross for the benefit of all the world.

4. The disciples were told to remember some things Jesus told them while He was with them. An example is John 15:20: "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also." The apostles were learning things from Jesus' example of service that they would carry over into their service after the cross. Jesus had given an example (Jno.13) that they should do as He had done. That example was to be carried in their memory and expressed in their activities after the cross. MML&J were written for us to see the example He wanted us to follow. The example of humble service was seen before the cross in Jesus' service to them. Therefore, some things before the cross were to be carried out in practice after the cross. We learn many of these binding examples only in MML&J. These are New Testament books that record the truth that went forth from Jerusalem.
5. The great commission (Matt.28:20) expressly commanded that "whatever I have commanded you" was to be extended to those that the disciples taught beginning at Jerusalem. Some argue that this refers *only* to the commands Jesus gave after the cross in the 40-day period before his ascension (Acts 1:3). However, this defeats the argument that it is impossible for any New Testament to have been given prior to the "point that the law went forth." If it is allowed that *Jesus gave some commands* before Pentecost (pre-Acts 2-Jerusalem), this contradicts the argument that the New Testament "law" went forth from Jerusalem. Those who take refuge in the 40-day loophole have allowed that *some* of the law went forth from Jesus before Acts 2. (We are not granting the assumption that the command of Matt.28:20 speaks only of commands given in the 40 day period. We are simply showing that the explanation made on Matt. 28:20 contradicts another argument that is made.) If everything had to wait until Pentecost, then the great commission should have said for them to "teach them to observe all things I *will* command you (when My law goes forth from Jerusalem)." Either the argument on Isa.2 ("go forth from Jerusalem") is used faultily, or the argument on Matt.28:20 ("teach them to observe all things I have commanded you") is used faultily. We believe that both passages are being misused. The law did go forth from Jerusalem, but it contained many of the teachings that Jesus gave to His disciples and told them that the Holy Spirit would help them to remember, as it says in John 14:26.

We will look more extensively at the great commission, and detailed discussions are given in some of the additional information that can be requested (referenced at the end of this document). Right now we are simply addressing the earlier quote and the first proposition. The simple, straightforward interpretation of Matthew 28:20 is that Jesus wanted them to teach that *all* things that Jesus taught them would be applicable. It is clear that he did not have to qualify this general statement to say that it should exclude

those incidental things, such as His command to Peter to catch a fish that would have a coin in its mouth. It is also clear that this excluded many specifics of the law that would no longer apply. The disciples were told to teach whatever Jesus had *commanded* them that would be applicable in the New Testament age.

We have established in the five points above that the major premise of the first proposition is false, and, therefore the entire proposition is false. The question of “at what point did the law of the Lord go forth” is really not a crucial point. What does matter is *what* went forth from Jerusalem. When we consider that the Spirit gave us these 27 New Testament books after Pentecost (Acts 2), then it is easy to see that part of the law of the Lord that went forth from Jerusalem were the books of MML&J. These books contain some of the things Jesus intended to be “preached in all the world.” If it is crucial “at what point” something went forth from Jerusalem, then MML&J have as much right to the New Testament canon as any of the other 23 books. If it is crucial as to *what* went forth from Jerusalem, then the Holy Spirit’s *reminders* of what Jesus had said to the apostles are essential content that are only recorded in MML&J. Thus, MML&J become just as much a part of the Spirit’s ministry of revelation as any of the other 23 New Testament books.

1.2 PROPOSITION 2: WHEN DID JESUS CEASE TEACHING THE LAW?

The statement was made above as to the importance of: “*At what point did Jesus cease to teach the Law of Moses and begin to teach His will?*” This is based on the following proposition:

In order for Jesus to reveal New Testament teaching that applies to us today, he would have to cease teaching about the Law of Moses.

Jesus did not cease to teach about the Law of Moses because he lived under it, and it was not set aside until Jesus died on the cross.

Therefore:

No New Testament teaching that applies to us occurred until *after* Jesus died on the cross.

We agree that the bible teaches the minor premise. The question, then, is the validity of the major premise.

Let us explore some other possibilities before we address this directly. Is it possible that Jesus could talk to His Jewish enemies about the Law of Moses and at times talk to His disciples about life in His coming kingdom? In talking of other possibilities, we are not building our case on mere “possibilities,” we are suggesting other possibilities, because the *major premise requires that there be only one possibility*. It assumes that there had to be a point in which Jesus ceased to teach the Law of Moses and began to

teach the will of Christ regarding the kingdom. There is no scripture that says it had to be handled that way. Therefore, the major premise is building a case on only one “possible” assumption. This premise can easily be proven false (by counterexample) if other alternatives can be shown to be possible. We will show that they are not just possible, they are highly probable.

Why is it unreasonable to think that Jesus could describe the nature of His future kingdom and declare some of its doctrines while still recognizing that He was living under the Law of Moses? In John 6, Jesus stated His will that people are required to “eat His flesh and drink His blood.” Obviously, it is stated in the present tense, “I *am* the bread of life.” We realize that the present tense is not always significant. God calls things that are not as though they were (Rom.4:17). He is not bound to our tenses. Future tenses and present tenses are often used interchangeably to indicate the inevitability of something. However, past tenses seem to be consistently used in reference to the past. For example, “For My flesh *is* food indeed, and My blood *is* drink indeed” (Jno.6:55). Was His blood available to drink even before the cross? (Recognize here that the body/blood were then and are now *the words of truth* that he spoke – John 6:63.) If we go strictly by the present tense, we see that it would have been “in effect” right then for them to figuratively eat His flesh and drink His blood (i.e., obey His word). But, would this *ever* apply to the New Testament age? Of course! This being the case it is clear that Jesus had here already “ceased to teach the Law of Moses and began to teach His will?” Surely no one denies that John 6 applies to us today. Jesus is the bread of life and we have to (figuratively) eat His flesh and drink His blood in order to have eternal life. This was absolutely *not* an interpretation or explanation of the Old Testament law.

The major premise above is not accurate because it forces the idea that Jesus had to do one or the other exclusively (teach the Law of Moses *or* teach His New Kingdom will, but not both). By reading the New Testament gospels, we can see that this either-or proposition does not hold true. There were times when He taught the Law of Moses and there were times when He spoke of what would be required of those entering and living in His kingdom.

This major premise is also faulty when applied to the other end of the Bible. One might read Genesis 1 - Exodus 19 and ask: “*At what point did Moses cease to teach the law of the patriarchs and begin to teach the Law of Moses?*” There were some special commands given to Israel who had known only Patriarchal Law. Yet, the Passover was commanded in Ex. 12 before the law was given on Mt. Sinai. Did giving a new law that would remain binding upon Israel cause a conflict with their old Patriarchal Law? Of course not! Did giving a new Passover law exclusively for Israel cause them to commit spiritual adultery? No! The major premise is faulty in that it disallows Jesus to talk to an element of Judaism about His New Kingdom will while maintaining the integrity and life of Moses’ law. Yet, it will allow Moses to speak some new commands to Israel while they were still under the law they had been under (Patriarchal Law) before the Sinai law.

1.3 PROPOSITION 3: PROBLEM OF “MINGLING”

Going back to the original quotation: *“I do not believe that He mingled them together, for that would be pouring new wine in old wineskins and making spiritual adulterers of those He was expecting to obey His words. I don't think we ever see a time in the Bible when two contradictory laws are being taught at the same time.”*²

This proposition can be analyzed into the following premises:

Jesus’ revealing New Testament teachings applicable to us today before the cross would: 1) constitute “mingling” two laws together, 2) create a situation of “spiritual adultery,” and 3) constitute pouring new wine into old wineskins.

Jesus would not do these things.

Therefore:

Jesus did not reveal New Testament teaching applicable to us today before the cross.

Generally, we agree with the minor premise. Let us examine the validity of the three assumptions of the major premise.

1. *Mingling of the laws.*

If Jesus taught any doctrine applicable to His New Kingdom while the Law of Moses was still in force, would this cause two laws to be “mingled together?” Consider Acts 7, which gives a review of Old Testament history as part of Stephen’s defense. Is this a mingling of Old Testament with New? Perhaps, depending on the definition of “mingling.” The point is that we have been given a command to “rightfully divide” or to “handle aright” the word of God (2 Tim. 2:15). As long as the average reader is able to discern the difference (as surely is the case in Acts 7), then the Lord cannot be accused of so mingling the laws together that we have no ability to tell the one from the other. Few take the position that certain passages, such as John 3:16 and John 6, do not apply to us today. When confronted with this, those claiming MML&J to be Old Testament have admitted the applicability, but have called such passages “prophecy.” However, they have the very same problem in “rightfully dividing” to determine what is their “prophecy” as we do in determining the difference between Jesus’ Old Testament and New Testament teachings. We will go into more detail on the “prophecy” argument later.

2. *Spiritual adultery.*

Would Jesus teaching things applicable to us today while the Law of Moses was still in effect cause Jesus or the Jews to commit “spiritual adultery?” First, let us say that

this term is rather inflammatory, and we need to be objective about it. If, in fact, we have no way of determining which of Jesus' teachings are Old Testament and which are New Testament, then this term might apply. However, the arguments given above show that this is not the case.

The issue of binding new laws while the Old Testament law is still in effect is a valid concern. It seems clear that Jesus said new things to which the hearers would then have to respond (i.e. figuratively "eat my flesh and drink my blood" from John 6). The big question is: would obedience to this violate the Old Testament law? Clearly, Jesus commanded his disciples: "Follow me." Their response can hardly be considered a violation of Old Testament law. If the objection of Jesus giving commands in addition to the Old Testament while on this earth is to hold up, then it must apply to all of the commands that Jesus gave. One might say, "well it is obvious that this was just to those that Jesus was addressing." That makes the point perfectly: the Holy Spirit has established the context in order to enable us to rightfully divide these things today.

There has always been "law" even from the very beginning. If there were no law, then there would be no sin. Rom. 4:15 says, "because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression." There was some kind of law that the Patriarchs were under before the Sinai law was given. Thus, while Moses and Israel were under what we call the "Patriarchal Law," Moses gave Israel additional instructions to keep the Passover (Ex. 12). His instructions were to be obeyed right then while the Patriarchal Law was still in effect. Was Moses forcing a situation of "spiritual adultery" here? It is obvious that this statute was to be carried on and incorporated into the coming Sinai covenant. It was not "prophesied." The Old Testament shows that it was obeyed immediately. So, if Moses was a prophet and could enjoin a new statute while one law was still in effect, then the "prophet *like unto* Moses" (Deut. 18:15f), could do the same. If not, why not?

So, what would constitute "spiritual adultery"? In the pre-Sinai situation, were not the Israelites under Patriarchal Law and *at the same time* also responsible to God's directions through Moses? Some try to solve this by saying that Moses was a patriarchal prophet. This does not change the fact that his instructions applied to Israel who did not yet have their new codified law. They were still subject to Patriarchal Law and Moses' instructions would be the basis for what they would always keep, even after Sinai. What Moses commanded in Exodus 12 was *not* a new addition to Patriarchal Law that would be discarded once the new law was given at Sinai. His instructions became part of the Sinai law. Israelites would be right in saying, "We keep the Passover, because Moses commanded it before they left Egypt" in that they would still be respecting the authority of God through Moses. They did not have the mentality that "we can only keep what was delivered at Sinai because we are under the Law of Moses." They recognized that certain things that Moses taught were uniquely their instructions from God because it applied to them, even though it was delivered before Sinai. They did not reason that whatever Moses instructed before Sinai could not apply. Their Passover feast would be forever practiced because of what happened in Egypt before Sinai. Israel was a nation in development.

As a developing nation, the “spiritual adultery” principle did not apply to Israel due to the special circumstances that required time to establish national identity and law. Israel’s new Passover command in Ex. 12 was unique, but not yet part of a fully developed national law for Israel. Yet, Israel was already under Patriarchal Law. By giving them this instruction, was He putting them under two laws at once? Or, were these temporary instructions that belonged to the Patriarchal Law and would be discarded at Sinai? If, after Sinai, an Israelite kept the Passover *because* Moses commanded it in Egypt, would they be putting themselves under Patriarchal Law and Mosaic Law at the same time? If an Israelite, after Sinai, kept the Passover because it was commanded when they were in Egypt, would they be committing “spiritual adultery” by keeping “Patriarchal Law” and “Mosaic-Sinai law?” We cannot see that it would be spiritual adultery. If it were argued that the Passover was entirely “prophetic,” it would only establish that things were kept because pre-Sinai “prophecies” have binding authority. The children of Israel would always keep the Passover feast because of what happened and what was commanded before Sinai. In like manner, since Jesus was “a prophet like unto Moses,” His miracles established His right to command, just like Moses’ signs established his right to command. Everyone agrees that Jesus had the right to forgive sins while on this earth. Who among us will limit Jesus’ authority not only to interpret the Old Testament law but also to fulfill and extend some of its principles to apply to ourselves today?

Finally, in the Old Testament, “spiritual adultery” never related to the people of God mixing the Patriarchal and Mosaic laws of God. It never related to preparatory laws and preliminary laws as one age was ending and another was about to begin. Notice the cases where figurative or spiritual adultery are mentioned in the Old Testament. (For example, these references are clearly not referring to the literal act: Jer. 3:8-9, 5:7; Ez. 16:32, 23:37; Hos. 4:2, 13, 14.) In all cases it refers to something that competes with God for our affections and service.

In the New Testament the symbol of spiritual adultery relates to Christians allegiance only after the two systems are completed (Rom.7:1-3). The Law of Moses is represented as a complete husband, and the “newness of spirit” is represented as a complete husband. Preliminary laws do not represent the husbands, else they would be incomplete husbands. Jesus’ personal New Kingdom teaching was only a sampling of “all truth” (Jno.16:13) that the Spirit would complete. This was not what represented the husband in Romans 7.

3. *Pouring new wine into old wineskins.*

The proposition being conveyed by this argument is as follows:

Jesus taught against pouring new wine into old wineskins (figuratively speaking) in the context of Matt. 9:14-17.

If Jesus were to teach anything that applies to us today, then he would be pouring

new wine into old wineskins.

Therefore:

Jesus did not teach anything that applies to us prior to the cross.

In this case we agree with the major premise. However, the minor premise is false, and therefore the conclusion does not follow. Let us here examine the passage and context of the “new wine/old wineskins” reference.

Matt 9:14-17

- 14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"
- 15 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.
- 16 "No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse.
- 17 "Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."(NKJ)

The question Jesus is addressing is: "*Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?*" Something new was happening right then. What? Jesus' disciples were not now fasting. Why? The bridegroom was now with them. It was now time to be happy, not sad and fasting. *Illustration #1: The unshrunk cloth.* Fasting while Jesus was present would be as inappropriate as putting a new, unshrunk piece of cloth on an old garment. It is counter-productive. It was a new and exciting thing to have the bridegroom present with them. If they tried to attach this new experience to the old garment of Judaism and fast through this blessed experience, it would be counter-productive. Would the Jews think it appropriate to fast before or during a wedding? The figure here is clear. *Illustration #2: The Wineskins.* Fasting while the bridegroom was present would be out of place. It would be like putting new wine in old wineskins. The new wine would burst out. The old wineskin was no longer elastic enough to expand with the new wine. The joy of having the bridegroom present was like new wine. The excitement of having Jesus present would burst out of the old form of fasting. The context is not about differences in the Old and New Testaments. It is not about Jesus pouring the New Testament into the Old Testament system.

Here are J.W. McGarvey's comments on this passage.

[Question about Fasting, 14-17 (Mark ii. 18-22; Luke v. 33-39.)

14. the disciples of John.-The fact that the question about fasting was propounded by the disciples of John should not be overlooked. It shows that the question was not intended as a captious objection, but as an honest inquiry: for although the disciples of

John were not, as yet, identical with those of Jesus, we can not class them among the enemies of Jesus. Fasting twice in the week was regarded by the Pharisees as a mark of superior piety (Luke xviii. 12), and the disciples of John seem to have agreed in this matter with the Pharisees. Indeed, John himself practiced what may be regarded as a continual fast, eating only locusts and wild honey, and this was well calculated to impress his disciples with great respect for fasting. It appeared to them, therefore, as a serious defect in the religious life of Jesus and his disciples, that they paid no respect to the regular fast days. The feast at Matthew's house, which occurred on a fast day (see note on Mark ii. 18), very naturally brought the matter up for consideration, because it shocked the sensibility of the objectors.

15-17. Jesus said unto them.--- Jesus reduces the objection to an absurdity by three arguments from analogy. *First*, he refers to the wedding customs of the day, and demands, "Can the children of the bridechamber"--that is, the invited guests at a wedding"--mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them?" While he remained with his disciples, they were enjoying a wedding feast, and it would be absurd if they were mourning. But when he should leave them they would fast, because that would be a time of sorrow. *Secondly*, he draws an argument from the absurdity of putting a patch of *new* (properly rendered unfulled) cloth on an old garment. The unfulled piece, never having been shrunk, would shrink the first time it got wet, and would tear open the rent still wider. *Thirdly*, it would be equally absurd to put new wine into old bottles. The bottles being made of goatskins, an old one had little strength and no elasticity, and therefore the fermentation of new wine would burst it. The argument drawn from these two examples is not, as some have supposed, that it would be absurd to patch the old Jewish garment with the unfulled cloth of the gospel, or to put the new wine of the gospel into the old Jewish bottles; for the question at issue was not one concerning the proper relation of the gospel dispensation to the Jewish law, but one concerning the propriety of fasting on a certain occasion. Moreover, in Luke's report of this answer we find the additional argument, "No man, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he says the old is better." (Luke v. 39.) To carry out the interpretation just named, would make Jesus here argue that the old dispensation was better than the new. But the argument is the same as in the first example. It shows that it would have been absurdly inappropriate to the occasion for his disciples to fast, as much so as to mourn at a wedding, to patch an old garment with unfulled cloth, or to put new wine into old bottles. The arguments not only vindicated his disciples, but taught John's disciples that fasting has value only when it is demanded by a suitable occasion].³

1.4 THE SUMMARY ARGUMENT

The summary of the argument stated: "*I don't think we ever see a time in the Bible when two contradictory laws are being taught at the same time.*" This argument implies that Jesus could contradict His own teachings on the old law if He waited until after the old law was nailed to the cross. When it is stated that way, it sounds suspicious. "Changing the law" (Heb.7:12) sounds all right. "Contradicting the law" sounds negative. Some believe that any change indicates a contradiction. We agree that changes were made, but whether these changes were contradictions or not is a different matter,

since the New Testament reality today was shadowed by the Old Testament law (Heb. 10:1). Let us not quibble over this, but to avoid prejudice, let us reword the argument as follows: “*I don't think we ever see a time in the Bible when two different laws are being taught at the same time.*”

We showed above that there *was* a time when two different laws were being taught at the same time. The allowing of Jesus to reveal doctrine that is applicable to us today is not as extreme as it might seem. It is only reasonable that there cannot be an instantaneous point in time at which one law is removed and a second becomes effective, and at the same time the second law cannot be revealed until this time. How would anyone have any idea of what law they were under, or what the new law was? Since Jesus was only preaching on this earth for three years, it is totally unreasonable that His time and His life would be dedicated *only* to clarifying a law that was to be done away in just a matter of a few months, depending on when He delivered the teachings. On the other hand, it is fully consistent with reason that Jesus would introduce considerable teachings that would apply to His new spiritual kingdom, so that when the Old Law was taken out of the way something would exist to take its place. (We emphasize *only* above, for this is the position of those who wish to put MML&J in the Old Testament. For if he could deliver just *one* new command, he could deliver two; and if two, twenty, and if that, hundreds. Certainly, even just one applicable command would be sufficient to keep it from being nailed to the cross.)

The 40-day period after the cross provides a convenient refuge for much of the New Testament to be revealed. Acts 1:3 tends to support this: “To these [the apostles] He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over {a period of} forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.” But this does not prove that *everything* that Jesus said in the gospels was Old Testament doctrine and does not apply to us today. In fact, it introduces far more questions than it answers. Among them:

1. What law was mankind (allowing that Jews and Gentiles might have been under different laws) under during the 40-day period between the resurrection and Pentecost?
2. When Jesus revealed the new law (supposedly for the first time) only to his disciples in the 40-day period, were they under two laws at the same time, since we all understand that the law did not go forth until Pentecost? Some say that no law was in effect during this time, but this introduces its own set of problems.
3. How did the Jews who were converted on the day of Pentecost understand the meaning of what was going on, and the meaning of the commands that were given, since they were not instructed in this 40-day period. For example, how did they understand (immediately and with no documented questions) the meaning of being “baptized for the remission of your sins” – a doctrine that is clearly introduced before the cross, but was clearly not part of the Old Testament. It is clear that the work of John the Baptist and Jesus had laid a foundation upon which the apostles had no problem building. (We realize that the baptism in the name of Jesus was not practiced before the cross, but the baptism that was practiced was to

bring the Jews to a point where they could accept Christ, which is exactly what it did on the day of Pentecost.)

These questions illustrate the dilemma that those who teach that MML&J are Old Testament books must resolve. In attempting to do so they create many additional theories and strange doctrines that all Christians are duty bound to challenge (Acts 17:11).

In the next chapter we look at some other major arguments being used to teach that none of Jesus' teaching in MML&J applies to us. Then, in Chapter 3, we will consider the issue of whether Jesus' teachings that everyone agrees apply to us today can and should be called prophecy. Afterwards, in Chapter 4, a summary of the positive evidence in support of the gospels being New Testament books will be given. Finally, we will present a listing of related topics that are available for further study upon request.

Chapter 2

Other Arguments Answered

In this chapter we counter several other arguments that are used to prove that MML&J were Old Testament books that have no doctrinal application to us today.

2.1 JESUS LIVED UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW

Quote 1. Jesus was "born" under the law (Gal. 4:4) and he died on the cross to "end" the Old Testament Law of Moses (Rom. 10:4; Col. 2:14). This means that everything Jesus said and taught was under the authority of the Old Testament Law of Moses. ⁴

Answer:

- a. Moses was born under Patriarchal Law, but that did not keep him from issuing the Passover command before he got to Sinai. See Ex.12, which occurred eight chapters before he ever gave the Sinai law.
- b. Moses commanded the Passover which carried over into the Sinai testament, and Israel would always look back to what Moses had taught them in Egypt concerning the Passover and would continue to base their actions on that teaching Moses gave *while* he was under Patriarchal Law.
- c. Being born under Patriarchal Law did not prevent Moses from working toward the establishment of national Israel. Neither did the fact that Jesus was born under the Law of Moses prevent Him from working toward the establishment of spiritual Israel.
- d. Being born under Patriarchal Law did *not* mean, "everything Moses said and taught was under the authority of the Patriarchal Law." Moses was given divine right to speak things that pertained to Israel in a unique way that was not understood or expressed by mere Patriarchal Law. Likewise, being born under the Law of Moses did *not* mean, "everything Jesus said and taught was under the authority of the Old Testament Law of Moses." Jesus had the divine right to speak things that pertained to spiritual Israel in a unique way not understood or expressed by mere Mosaic Law.
- e. While Moses was born under Patriarchal Law, his major concern was not the people's relationship to Patriarchal Law, but his focus was on preparing Israelites for separation from Egypt so that he could bring them into national identity with their own new laws. The "prophet like unto Moses" (Jesus) had a major concern, too. It was not Israel's relation to the Mosaic Law, but on preparing people for separation from the world, so that He could bring them into a new spiritual identity, the kingdom of heaven. The coming kingdom was the major focus of Jesus' preaching (Matt.4:23; 5:3,10,19; 6:10; 10:7; 11:12; 13:11,19; etc.). Being

born under the law did not mean the focus of His preaching was on the “tutor” (the law – Gal.3:24). But, being the Christ, His focus was on preparing the “tutored” for graduation into kingdom faith. Those who were graduating needed to know some things about the life they would be expected to live in the kingdom. This is what Jesus was giving them. The Sermon on the Mount is laying out the expected life in His kingdom.

2.2 ONLY ONE LAW IN FORCE

Quote 2. The Old Testament Law of Moses was the only covenant law in force during the time of MMLJ -- before the cross. The New Testament of Christ was not revealed or did it come into force before the death of Christ (Heb. 9:16-17).⁵

We agree that the New Testament of Christ did not come into force before the death of Christ. This is not the issue. The entire issue is whether Jesus could and did reveal His will prior to the cross.

Answer:

- a. The law of the patriarchal age was the only covenant law in force during the time of Genesis - Ex.19 -- before Sinai. Yet, the Passover law was revealed uniquely for Israel before the Sinai law. Also, the Passover is still part of the first testament that was dedicated with blood at Mt.Sinai. The Passover command (Ex.12) was not itself the testament, yet the testament contains the Passover command that was stated in command form before the testament was ratified at Sinai. The situation forces two choices: 1) The Passover of Ex.12 was part of the Patriarchal Law and was to be discarded after the Sinai testament was dedicated with blood, or 2) The Passover of Ex.12 was not part of the Patriarchal Law but was a preliminary part of the law to be fully declared at Sinai. The Passover command was not itself the testament, but would combine with the Sinai testament and be considered part of the testament. Jews would always understand the preliminaries to the Sinai covenant were just as significant expressions of the divine will for them as the things given at Sinai. The Passover is used here as one example – other examples include the feast of unleavened bread (Ex. 13) and the Sabbath (Ex. 16).
- b. Likewise, the whole ministry of Christ was looking forward to the kingdom, not backward to the Sinai law. The “prophet like unto Moses” (Deut.18:15f) would have at least the same capabilities as Moses. If Moses could speak pre-Sinai commands that would belong exclusively to Israelites while they were under Patriarchal Law, then the prophet like Moses (Jesus) could speak pre-Pentecost commands that would belong exclusively for those preparing to enter His kingdom. Like, Moses’ pre-Sinai commands, Jesus’ pre-cross and pre-Pentecost commands would naturally be remembered and followed by His kingdom of disciples.

- c. It is admitted that Jesus taught things that would apply to the kingdom (i.e., “eat My flesh and drink My blood” -Jno.6). This command was spoken while the Law of Moses was the “only covenant law in force.” We have two choices: 1) This command was part of the Law of Moses and was nailed to the cross, never to be carried out, or 2) This command was a preliminary command, much like the Passover command of Ex.12, that would be incorporated into the directives guiding the New Testament kingdom of Christ. It is easy to see which is the case.

2.3 ONLY ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP

Quote 3. The only acceptable worship of God during the time of MMLJ -- before the cross -- was under the Law of Moses and in the Jerusalem temple.⁶

Answer:

- a. No angels or mere prophets were allowed to be worshipped under the Old Testament system of worship. But, Jesus, being more than a prophet allowed people to worship Him. (Matt.8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 18:26; 20:20). This was a *new* situation. God had come in human flesh. Notice that Jesus was not worshipped just at Jerusalem. It was everywhere He went that people worshipped Him. While this was new, and not part of the Old Testament law, neither was it inconsistent or contradictory to it. It was part of what fulfilled the law.
- b. The above position holds that under the Old Testament system God could only be worshipped at the Jerusalem temple. Yet, Jesus was worshipped repeatedly in Galilee. In Jno.4: 23, Jesus said, “*But the hour is coming, and NOW IS (emphasis ours), when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.*” Notice that what “now is” was to also join with the “hour that is coming.” Again, we are seeing that the pre-cross ministry of Jesus was to join with the hour that was coming. Instead of viewing Jesus’ ministry as a mere attachment to the Old Testament system, John views the pre-cross “now is” circumstance as something that joins with “the hour that is coming.” When a person was honoring and worshipping Jesus before the cross, they were worshipping the Father (Jno.5:23). The pre-cross honor of Christ would join with the post-cross honor of Christ. ***True worshipers*** were already honoring the Father by honoring He Whom the Father sent. The hour had arrived for the people of Samaria to join in the honor of the Father by honoring the Son. The hour was coming and “now is” when Jerusalem would not be the only place to worship the Father. By honoring Jesus wherever He was, they were participating in that which would belong to “the hour that is coming” (the New Testament age).

2.4 JESUS WAS AN OLD TESTAMENT ISRAELITE

Quote 4. Jesus was an Old Testament "Israelite" -- not a New Testament "Christian." Jesus lived the life of a Jew under the Law of Moses; Jesus was not a New Testament "Christian" and did not live the "Christian life."

Answer:

- a. This argument states that Christ was not a Christian. We agree. Did Jesus become a "Christian" after the cross? Do we listen to Jesus after the cross because Jesus, the "Israelite" became a New Testament "Christian"? Of course not. If He were a Christian, He would have to be a *follower* of Christ. A Christian is someone who belongs to Christ, is in Christ, and follows Christ. Thus, in order for Jesus to be a Christian, someone else would have to be the Christ. Then, Jesus could *follow* the Christ, and be a Christian. Of course, this is absurd. Jesus did not need to be a Christian. He needed to be the Christ, the role model, and the pattern that "Christ-ians" would need to follow. Since He intended for His words He had been speaking to Jews only to be preached "in all the world" (Matt.24:14; 26:13), then He intended His pre-cross words and actions to be a part of that which would be a model for "all the world" to follow.
- b. The fact that He was an "Israelite" by nationality did not prevent Him from "giving an example that you should do as I have done" (Jno.13:15). His disciples were given the example of service in Jno.13, and then in chapter 15:20 they were told to "*Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also*"(KJV). They were to take that lesson (given before the cross) and remember it when they got into the kingdom age and began to suffer persecution. They were to be Christians, and *remember* "Christ" as having set the pattern for Christians to follow. They were not just to restrict their memory to what Jesus said in the 40-day period that he was with them after the cross.
- c. But Jesus was much *more* than an "Israelite," He was the Christ, the Son of God, and the Mediator of the New Testament (Heb.9:15). Heb.9:19 compares the New Testament to the Old Testament mediated by Moses. It says Moses first "spoke" the precepts (but did not give "all" of the Old Testament, the rest to be revealed by the Spirit through the prophets), and then "dedicated" it with blood. So, while the Patriarchal Law was still "in effect" for Moses and Israel, Moses "spoke every precept of the law" and then "dedicated" it with blood. He did not first offer the blood and then tell them the precepts of the new law He was enjoining upon them. He first "spoke" the law, then dedicated it with blood. At this point it (the Mosaic Law) came into effect. Likewise, "the prophet like unto Moses" (Jesus) spoke of many precepts that He expected of His disciples who would enter the kingdom. He told them that there were other things He wanted to say, but the Spirit would complete it (Jno.16:12,13). Thus, Jesus mediated the New Testament, speaking some of it and promising the Holy Spirit's help in revealing "all" truth. Moses

spoke the precepts and the Spirit through the prophets revealed the rest of the Old Testament in time. After speaking the precepts, Moses dedicated it with blood. Likewise, Jesus spoke the kingdom precepts, and then dedicated the *New Kingdom* law with His own blood. And, of course, following true to form, the rest of the New Testament was revealed in time by the Spirit through the first century apostles and prophets.

- d. Being an Israelite by birth in no way implies that Jesus was forbidden to speak New Kingdom precepts. Neither did Jesus have to become a “Christian” before revealing what we must follow today. The fallacious argument would have us believe that one must be a follower in order to reveal what must be followed. Moses spoke the new Sinai precepts while the Patriarchal Law was still in effect, and then afterwards dedicated it with blood. Jesus revealed New Testament precepts while the Old Testament law was still in effect and then afterwards dedicated it with His own blood.

What we have here is quite sublime – it demonstrates the fact that the Old Testament contained the shadows of those things that are now reality in the New Testament. The fact that Jesus was so much like Moses (to the very detail) is no accident. But the superiority of Jesus over Moses is as clear as the superiority of reality over a shadow.

2.5 THE BIBLE SAYS IT

Quote 5. More than 100 times in MMLJ -- before the cross, Jesus declared that he was teaching the Law of Moses. Not once did he ever state that he was teaching New Testament doctrine.⁸

Answer:

- a. Jesus taught much more, comparatively speaking, about the new coming kingdom, than He did about the Law of Moses. The above implies that Jesus spent most of His time teaching the precepts they already had from Moses. The “more than 100 times” is very misleading. There are four gospels that refer to the same occasions. Thus, the four writers may talk about the same occasions, which, instead of four times Jesus said, such and such, it was one occasion. Taking into consideration the overlapping of the four reporters’ documentation, it would probably be safe to say that Jesus made reference to the Law of Moses less than forty times. In contrast, His references to the coming kingdom took up the majority of His teaching time. Just read through the gospels, and with a notepad in hand, jot down in one column each time He talks about the law, and in another column each time He speaks about something New Kingdom related. We have tried this exercise, and it is overwhelmingly evident that Jesus focused His teaching mainly on the coming kingdom. Kingdom teaching far outweighs the time spent explaining the Law of Moses.
- b. Not once in all the times that He does refer to the Law of Moses does He say, “I

am teaching the Law of Moses,” or “I am teaching Old Testament doctrine.” We realize that it is unreasonable to expect such exact quotes, but regrettably, some have been just that unreasonable about there not being a statement from Jesus that says “I am teaching New Testament doctrine.” It seems to us to be a very shallow argument, one that does not really deserve much attention, yet we are continually surprised to hear of Christians who have been influenced heavily by just such arguments as this.

- c. It seems more than reasonable, that if the “kingdom” was going to be a New Testament domain, then the descriptions and precepts describing a New Testament domain, *would be the teaching that would be New Testament kingdom teaching*. If Jesus never said “New Testament kingdom” (and He never used those exact words), does that mean the kingdom Jesus taught about was not the New Testament kingdom? If Jesus did talk about His kingdom, without saying “New Testament” kingdom, could He likewise talk about the doctrines and precepts of that kingdom without actually saying “New Testament doctrine?” Of course, He could, and he did in both instances. He taught about the New Testament kingdom AND He gave some of the precepts of the New Testament kingdom before the cross. When He did so, He was teaching the things pertaining to the New Testament.

2.6 JESUS WAS THE LAST OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET

Quote 6. Jesus was an Old Testament "prophet" not a New Testament "evangelist." Jesus never preached the New Testament "gospel" in MML&J -- before the cross. He never produced one New Testament "Christian." ⁹

Answer:

- a. Jesus was more than an Old Testament “prophet,” He was “a prophet like unto Moses” in that He could speak the new precepts while one law was still in effect, just as Moses did. But He was much *greater* than Moses (see Hebrews on this point). God was speaking through His SON (Heb.1:1-3; 2:1-4). His words are “spirit, and they are life”(Jno.6:63). But the kingdom was spiritual (Jno.18:36). The word of the kingdom would be the seed that had life in itself (Lk.8:11). The gospel of the kingdom Jesus had been preaching among Jews would be the message “preached in *all the world*” (Matt.24:14; 26:9-13). Therefore, Jesus’ words (that were “spirit” and “life”) would be the seed that produced the kingdom (Lk. 18:11). The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ would give the kingdom message He had been preaching the substance for becoming a reality. The spiritual kingdom could not exist without the atonement for sin (destroying the power of darkness to accuse us before God -Col.1:13), the resurrection (assuring the hearts of power over death), and the Spirit confirmation in the miraculous help He gave the Lord’s ambassadors. All of these elements were part of the means of establishing the kingdom, the gospel Jesus had been preaching from the start of

His ministry. (Matt.4:17,23; 24:14; 26:13). The power to bring all of Jesus' teaching of the kingdom into reality was given in Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and the Helper power of the Holy Spirit. Since, Jesus said the gospel He had been preaching before the cross would be preached "in all the world" (Matt.24:14), then it follows that Jesus' teaching is the very thing that would make "Christians" once the battle with sin and death was out of the way. At the cross, the battle with sin was waged and the accuser (Satan) lost his right to accuse us. Sin was paid for, and the power of darkness to take us to hell with the devil and his angels was lost. When Jesus overcame death, Satan was crushed. He could not claim the souls of the redeemed. Jesus could sit down on the throne, and the Spirit would verify and testify of Christ. The kingdom was set up as a spiritual kingdom. It won on a spiritual front between the forces of good and evil. The good news that it *was coming* could now be the good news that it *has come*. It is still the good news of the kingdom. Yes, the gospel Jesus was preaching before the cross would be "preached in all the world" after the cross. Indeed, Jesus' words that were "spirit" and "life" were the words that made "Christians."

- b. Some people thought that they were doing Jesus a favor by calling him a prophet and putting him in the classification with the great prophets of old. Listen to Jesus' response to this (Mt. 16:14-17): "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Notice the consistency between this and Hebrews 1 and 2. Given this, we ask the readers: is it correct to make the *unqualified* statement that Jesus was an Old Testament prophet (and nothing else)? Given the clear statements to the contrary, we would argue that to leave a statement like that unqualified is sin. It just does not hit the mark of New Testament accuracy and truthfulness. Peter did, the "some" in Mt. 16:14 did not.

2.7 NO CHRISTIANS IN MML&J

*Quote 7. The word "Christian" was not used by Jesus and his Jewish disciples under the Law of Moses in MML&J -- before the cross. The word "Christian" is not found in MML&J -- before the cross.*¹⁰

Answer:

- a. Once again, we see that an argument that proves too much, proves nothing. The disciples were not called "Christians" until about the time recorded in Acts 11:26. Does that mean that those who were converted from Acts 2 to Acts 11 were not "Christians"? Surely no one would so contend. Were the ones who were "taking Jesus' yoke and following Him"(Matt.11:26f) going to be the ones who would enter His kingdom and later be called "Christians?" Yes, definitely. Therefore, the fact that the word "Christian" was not used before Acts 11 does nothing

toward proving that MML&J were Old Testament books. We recognize, of course, that there were no Christians converted until Pentecost (Acts 2). That is not the issue. The issue is: did Jesus reveal doctrine that applies to us today that is recorded in MML&J, and are the teachings of MML&J themselves New Testament?

- b. The fact that the gospel Jesus had been preaching would be “preached in all the world” implies that those very words were intended to make Christians once the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension set the stage for the kingdom to come. And it also implies that they were intended to be a part of the New Testament that was for “all the world,” not just the Jews.

2.8 TESTAMENT DETERMINED BY WHAT IS “DESCRIBED”

*Quote 8: It didn't make a difference that Genesis was recorded many years after it took place. And it doesn't make any difference as to when MML&J "penned" the things that were spoken during the last 33 years of the Old Testament age. **

and

*“MML&J describe the Old Testament age of Moses as "in effect" when those events took place.”**

and

*“Jesus characterized His teaching as the law and the prophets”(Matt.7:12).”*¹¹*

Answer:

- a. Genesis is in the *same* testament as is the book of Deuteronomy or any of the other 39 books. Paul does not attach Genesis to a former Patriarchal law. Paul has Genesis attached to the law of Moses (Gal.4:21ff).
- b. Ex.2-19 still records the last 80 years of Israel under Patriarchal law. Yet, this record is allowed to remain in the Old Testament, the same testament with Ex.20-Malachi.
- c. Just as the Passover regulations (Ex.12-13) were given during the patriarchal age but remained law for Israel, so likewise, there were kingdom requirements given during the last days of the Mosaic age, that still represent to us the will of Christ for His kingdom. If MML&J are not New Testament books, then Gen.-Ex.19 are not Old Testament books.
- d. No one ignores the fact of *when* the words of Ex.12-13 were spoken. We all realize and admit that they were spoken during the Patriarchal period of Israel's

history. But, those words, though *spoken* during the Patriarchal period, still are recorded for Israel in an Old Testament book. And, these things spoken during the patriarchal age and recorded in the Jews' testament, were written to tell Israel an ongoing command that applied to them. These things were not written "after the fact" to teach those who were still under patriarchal law.

- e. The argument that MML&J were "written after the fact" to still go into a previous testament, is faulty. They were not written "after the fact" to be attached to an already abolished law. To be consistent it would have to be argued that Gen.-Ex.19 were written after the fact to go into a previous testament.
- f. Gen.-Ex.19 attaches itself to the law of Moses (Gal.4:21f) and was considered part of the law belonging to Israel. The books of Gen.-Ex.19 do not attach to patriarchal law any more than Acts 7 attaches to Patriarchal law. Both Gen.-Ex.19 and Acts 7 describe things in the Patriarchal period, but neither can be considered part of the Patriarchal law. Gen.-Ex.19 is that part of the law of Moses that gives the Jews a description of their previous Patriarchal history, and Acts 7 is that part of the New Testament law of Christ that describes a portion of Patriarchal and Mosaic history.
- g. The internal evidence of Gen.-Ex.19 was that this speaks of the Patriarchal period in which Moses commanded Israel some things that would always apply to them. For example, the Passover regulations and the feast of unleavened bread (Ex.12-13). His commands (Ex.12-13) were to be obeyed as being "in effect" during the Patriarchal age. This did not prevent them from extending beyond the few days that they remained under Patriarchal law. We are not saying that this necessarily infers that *everything* that Jesus said had to go into effect immediately, only that some of it could have been obeyed without violating Old Testament law.
- h. The argument that Jesus "characterized all of His teaching as "the law and the prophets" is an obviously bogus argument. It states something Jesus never said. Quite the contrary. What we call the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Matt.7:12) is what Jesus said was "the law and the prophets." Jesus' point was that the law and the prophets could be summarized in the principle of treating others like you would like to be treated. This was repeated by Paul in what everyone agrees is New Testament: (Rom 13:8-9):
Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
Was Paul teaching Old Testament when he taught the *identical* principle that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount?

Jesus' point was not at all: "All My teaching is about the law and the prophets."

His teaching centered on the coming kingdom (Matt.4:23; 5:3,10,19; 4:17; 10:7). If anything, Jesus characterized His teaching as the New Kingdom of heaven.

- i. The argument that Jesus “characterized” His teaching as the law and the prophets, ignores those commands that had to do with what people were to do to enter and live in His kingdom. For example, “Eat My flesh and drink My blood” (Jno.6). Is *this* the law and the prophets? Is *this* command to be nailed to the cross? Does *this* command enjoin upon people now a duty and responsibility? The answers are obvious, and it only takes one counter-example to prove that Jesus did not characterize *all* of His teaching as the law and the prophets. We wonder if he characterized any of them as being exclusively “the law and the prophets.” It is clear that neither Jesus’ teaching nor the rest of the New Testament *excluded* the principles of righteousness and love established in the Old Testament, but this is not the point. It is totally unreasonable to expect that all of the Old Testament principles would be excluded, since we know that many were incorporated into the New Testament.
- j. The argument that Jesus “characterized” His teaching as the law and the prophets, is the equivalent of saying: Paul characterized his teaching as “all the law” when he stated in (Gal.5:14): “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Grammatically, Matt.7:12 and Gal.5:14 make basically the same point. In neither case is the point being made that Jesus or Paul are *only* teaching the law of Moses. If it is right to use Matt.7:12 to prove that Jesus taught the law *exclusively*, then we must conclude that Gal.5:14 says that Paul characterized his teaching as *exclusively* the law of Moses. We know that this is not what these verses are trying to communicate.
- k. If it is the subject matter and not *when* the books were written that determines their testament, then Acts 7 would belong to the Patriarchal and Mosaic ages and could not be a part of the New Testament. Much of Heb.11 would have to go into previous testaments.
- l. The Old Testament had long been nailed to the cross when MML&J were written. Oral preaching, such as that done on the day of Pentecost, were efforts to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. In fact, the material of Peter's sermon is a scaled-down version of what we find in MML&J. If MML&J are Old Testament books, then Acts 2:22,23 are Old Testament verses. While memories were still fresh, there was no need for as much record of detail in the sermons, but as time went on the Holy Spirit delivered through MML&J a more detailed record of that which was "most surely believed among us" (Christians - Luke 1:1-3). The sermons belong to the New Testament, and the more detailed records of MML&J belong to the New Testament. It would be absurd to think that Peter added Acts 2:22,23 to the Old Testament that was already nailed to the cross. Likewise, it is absurd to think that four other Christians (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) added four books to the Old Testament that was already nailed to the cross.

- m. We should not be confused between the testament of the *events described* as opposed to the *records that talk about them*. Gen.-Ex.19 is the *record* of the Patriarchal age events. The record remains a part of the first testament, the same testament with Ex.20-Malachi. Likewise, MML&J are the *records* of Mosaic age events. The records remain a part of the second testament, the same testament with Acts through Revelation. Some things in Gen.-Ex.19 remained applicable to the Jews (such as the Passover command of Ex.12-13). Some things in MML&J are still applicable to disciples of Jesus (such as eating the bread of life, and many more things He spoke about His coming kingdom rule).

We have addressed all of the major arguments made for MML&J being Old Testament books that were nailed to the cross with Christ. In the remainder of this document we will demonstrate the error of assigning the name “prophecy” to teachings that we all agree are applicable to us. We close, in the final chapter, by presenting those positive arguments directly from scripture that prove that MML&J are New Testament books.

Chapter 3

Jesus' Teachings as "Prophecy"

Time and time again when we point out that there are obvious teachings of Jesus that were not Old Testament elaboration but were clearly intended for us today, those who want to contend that MML&J are Old Testament books will counter that this was just "prophecy." First, notice that this is an outright admission that MML&J do contain doctrine applicable to us today. Second, naming it something else does not make it so. This is just a semantic trick. Even if we agree that some, most, or even all of the doctrines that Jesus spoke as recorded in MML&J that apply to us were prophecy, this would not prove that MML&J are Old Testament books. But the fact is that *most* of what is being rationalized as prophecy, just is not.

The rationale of those calling the clearly applicable teachings "prophecy" is to negate their authoritative power. For, after all, if MML&J are Old Testament books then they were nailed to the cross with Christ, and they have no binding power. The proposition that must be proven is discussed next.

3:1 PROPOSITION: PROPHECY SOLVES THE DILEMMA

PROPOSITION: Prophecy solves the dilemma of spiritual adultery, but prophecy holds no authority over the Kingdom.

This proposition can be analyzed as follows:

Jesus did "prophecy" some things regarding life in the New Testament kingdom.

But, all prophecy stated before Pentecost of Acts 2 has no binding authority over those living in that kingdom.

Therefore:

None of Jesus' "prophecies" stated before the Pentecost of Acts 2 has any authority over His kingdom today.

In this case, the major premise is true if we define "prophecy" as forth-telling and not just fore-telling. Jesus did say many things regarding the kingdom that was then at hand. However, the minor premise is faulty because it assumes that Jesus' words, including the obligations He issued toward those who would enter the kingdom, were nailed to the cross, and thus they never called upon anyone to act upon them. This attempt to have one's cake and eat it too leads us to ask: why would Jesus issue these "prophecies" if they have no binding power on us today?

As an example, this position pretends that Jesus' command to take the bread and "this do in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22:19) was a prophecy to one day remember Him after He died. But then after He died, the command goes out of force with the Old Testament. It assumes that Christians cannot carry out what Jesus instructed in Matt.26, and that they can only get their authority to remember His body and blood from scriptures found after Acts 2. For, to do something by the authority of the Old Testament is sin (Gal. 5:1ff). If this is not a consequence of this teaching then all we have here is a purely semantic argument. We have no problem with people stating that the commands of Jesus to be followed after the cross were "prophecy" (in some sense of the word) provided that they have the full authority of that given by the Son of God (Mt. 28:18). However, this would certainly do nothing to justify the doctrine of those who want to set all of the MML&J commands aside.

3.2 FACTS AND PROPHECY NOT NEW TESTAMENT LAW

As we have seen, often, to diminish the prospects of some of Jesus' pre-cross words being applied to the New Testament Christian, it is argued that Jesus' statements of "fact" or "prophecy" can be no more binding upon us than the facts and prophecies of the Old Testament.

Quote 9: There are statements [in MML&J –TWB] about the coming kingdom, yes. But these statements do not make law. They are merely statements of fact and prophecy.¹²

Answer:

- a. MML&J recorded these "statements of fact" later for us so that we could make the applications that Jesus intended for the kingdom. For example, it is a statement of fact that Jesus said "I am the bread of life." Now that this has been recorded as fact, do I have an *obligation* to that fact? Or, did Jesus intend that this "fact" no longer carry an obligation once the Old Testament was nailed to the cross? Calling it a statement of fact does not remove the obligation to that fact to live by eating the bread of life, or to teach Jesus as the bread of life as New Testament doctrine.
- b. These so-called "prophecies" or "facts" carry an intended *duty* or obligation (if nothing else, to teach them). Let us examine what is being called prophecy. Am I released from the duty intended by Jesus' instructions to take the Lord's Supper "in remembrance of Me" simply because it was "prophesied?" If I do it because Jesus commanded it in Matt.26:26f, have I brought myself under the law of Moses or the instructions of Christ?
- c. Does the so-called prophecy to eat His flesh and drink His blood (Jno.6) cease to carry an intended *obligation* on my part simply because it is dubbed as "prophecy?" Or, did the Christian writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, give us these words of Jesus to teach us intended duties to His words? Those who call Jesus' words "facts" and "prophecies" have done nothing toward removing the

intended obligations those words bring to the disciple of Christ.

3.3 MUST WAIT FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Quote 10: If the teaching of Jesus about the kingdom is prophecy then you must wait for God to say when that prophecy is implemented just like we had to wait for the temple and the king under the law of Moses and wait for the Holy Spirit on Cornelius to bring the Gentiles under the law of Christ.¹³

Answer:

- a. The above reasoning is too general to hold true. When Jesus said “eat My flesh and drink My blood” (Jno.6), do we have to “wait for God to say when that prophecy is implemented?” If we do, then when did God implement it?
- b. MML&J were written for Christians largely so that they could study the things Jesus had taught His disciples. By the time MML&J were written, the so-called “prophecies” would now be fact. They were writing to tell Christians some of the expressions of Jesus’ will for His kingdom. Applications are necessarily inferred from the New Kingdom teachings of Jesus.
- c. We do not have to wait to hear God say, “Now eat His flesh and drink His blood.” Why? Because, it is obvious that the words apply to us today. We need not invent such a rule that God has to *tell us* again later what He expected from what we choose to call “facts” and “prophecies”.
- d. Let us assume, for the present, that this is just a trivial semantic argument. Let us allow that we can call those teachings of Jesus that apply to us today “facts” and “prophecies.” It is evident that some method would still be required (what some have derisively called “picking and choosing”) to determine what will be called prophecy/fact, and also to determine if and when these prophecy/facts ever carried an intended obligation. As an example, since God never said after the cross, “Eat Jesus’ flesh and drink His blood,” would we tell people that Jno.6 carries no intended duty for us to carry out? Would we choose to say that this does *not* express Jesus’ will for us today? We fear it is the intent of those who teach that MML&J were nailed to the cross to solve this problem by summarily dismissing *all* of these teachings of Jesus. But if this is not the case, then their method for determining what is prophecy/fact is probably quite close to that which we use to determine what applies to us today.

3.4 WHY THE PROPHECY ARGUMENT?

The prophecy argument was invented to be able to sustain the argument that Jesus could not teach New Testament doctrine while living under the Old Testament (which we refuted above). It follows a faulty supposition that “prophecy” is the only way Jesus

could tell of new laws without forcing the Jews into a situation of spiritual adultery. Thus, it is argued that He taught the Law of Moses and He “prophesied” some new things regarding the coming kingdom. These “prophecies” prevent Jesus from *binding* two laws at once. This might sound like a plausible way to prevent the two-law conflict, but then the argument is made that *none* of Jesus’ “prophecies” ever held authority over the New Testament kingdom. This follows from the contention that MML&J were nailed to the cross and should not be given the weight of Acts 2 through Rev. 22.

The major problem with the entire theory is that Jesus taught most of these things in the present tense, and so they cannot be rightfully called prophecy in the sense in which they are trying to apply this word. You cannot have your cake and eat it too – either Jesus was speaking of things that would strictly not be enforced until after the cross or he was not. We allow for the fact that *many things that Jesus taught were not to become effective until after the cross* (e.g., the Lord’s Supper). This is exactly what our contention is, and it is the reason that MML&J cannot be Old Testament and cannot have been nailed to the cross. However, there are many things that we just cannot legitimately and honestly state to be prophecy.

Among the things they allow Jesus to “prophesy” is the new birth of Jno.3:1-5, eating His flesh and drinking His blood in Jno.6, taking up our cross and following Jesus in Lk.14:26ff, abiding in Jesus in Jno.15, and loving each other as Christ loved us in Jno.13. Read these verses and decide for yourself if they were prophecy or if Jesus expected the hearers then and there to understand and obey Him at that very moment. So, is this two laws at one time? Re-read them and ask yourself: if a person obeyed Jesus right then and there, would he be disobeying the Old Testament law? Were the disciples who obeyed the command “follow me” disobeying the Old Testament law? Were the 12 disciples and the 70 disciples who Jesus sent out disobeying the Old Testament law when they followed the directives of the Son of God?

But these so-called prophecies also let *us* know what Jesus’ expects of us. We can look at these “prophecies” and know that we need to be born again, abide in Him in order to grow and live, put Him first, and love our brethren. We can do these things because the Spirit reminded us of what Jesus said by delivering these sayings in the New Testament books of MML&J. We can do these things *better* because the Spirit reminded us of what Jesus actually did himself in fulfilling these commands and being for us the perfect example. As is generally true, an example is worth many commands. His “prophecies” still state what He wants for us and from us in the church/kingdom He came to establish. MML&J were written to help us know more about the will of Jesus, even if He stated *some* of His will in the form of “prophecy” (which He did).

So, we return to the original proposition and turn it back to our friends. Did Jesus “prophecy” His will for *us* “to eat His flesh and drink His blood?” If He did, we can learn His will for the New Testament kingdom from these “prophecies.” So, “*At what point did Jesus cease to teach the Law of Moses and begin to teach His will?*” (Proposition 2). It is admitted that He began to teach His will when He “prophesied.” The only conflict that is solved by this description is that of two laws being enforced at

the same time. It is still a difficulty for our friends to determine what may be classified as “prophecy,” and this semantic classification does not prevent the statements from being an expression of His will for the kingdom.

We all agree that Jesus “prophesied” some expectations for the kingdom. Jesus did this *while* the Law of Moses was still in effect. Some of the “prophecies” are stated in present tense language as if it was then “in effect” (i.e., “my flesh *is* food indeed and my blood *is* drink indeed”— John 6). The statement calls for an intended duty to be carried out by the hearer. The statement carries a directive to eat His flesh and drink His blood and an obligation thereto. So the fact that it is “prophecy” is not obvious. If our friends can handle the “mingling” of two laws by deciding *contextually* what is New Kingdom oriented (“prophesied”) and what is Law of Moses, they should not suppose that we have any greater problem than they do in deciding which is which. If they can determine what is “prophecy” (and we think they can), then we can take those “prophecies” and determine a significant part of the will of Christ for the New Testament age. (We are *not* saying that the Holy Spirit did not reveal additional truth after Pentecost.) If they cannot determine what is “prophecy,” then they have solved no problems by arguing that Jesus kept from “mingling” two laws together by teaching one and “prophesying” the other.

So, no matter what you want to *call* Jesus’ teachings, there are some things that belong to the Law of Moses and some things that belong to the New Kingdom. The *context* will have to determine the difference together with a *comparison* of all other scripture (Mt. 4:4). Believing that MML&J are Old Testament books (in the case of some who so argue) solves nothing. But our friends who concede that MML&J are New Testament books that contain no binding obligations and instructions have not solved the “mingling” dilemma either. The assumption is not valid in either case. There is still an admission by all that Jesus taught some things that apply to those in the kingdom today. Some call it “prophecy” while others call it doctrine, but whether called doctrine or prophecy, these sayings of Jesus express His will for His kingdom today, and we are wrong to dismiss them as being Old Testament.

Our friends try to solve the dilemma to their satisfaction by saying that Jesus “prophesied” New Kingdom expectations and demands. If that is how they solve it to their satisfaction, then we have no problem with that. But, then they disallow that these “prophecies” have any binding quality even after the cross. This is where it becomes a major error. We can allow that the new things Jesus taught were to be practiced in the kingdom when it came (and in that sense be allowed to be prophetic projection). But, our friends are not content to stop there and allow these “prophecies” to have binding power on the kingdom that they say was being prophesied. ***Why else would Jesus have “prophesied” them?***

We can refer back to MML&J to find these “prophesies” to be expressions of Jesus’ will for the kingdom. We are to “eat His flesh and drink His blood.” We are to “abide in Him.” We can tell people, “you *must* be born of the water and the Spirit.” These so-called “prophecies” still express the divine will for us today. Following these

“prophecies” and acting upon the so-called “facts” (i.e. “no man comes to the Father but by Me”— John 14:6), will not put *us* in a situation of spiritual adultery. If it bothers some that Jesus spoke these things while the Law of Moses was in effect, and it helps them to solve the dilemma by calling the new things “prophecy,” then we have no problem with them solving it this way. It is not proper to argue over trivial semantics (1 Tim. 6:4). However, when they claim that these new things do not express the divine will for us today *because* they were *just* prophesying, that causes a serious problem of undermining the authority of Christ.

If Moses could give pre-Sinai commands that would remain just as binding as post-Sinai commands, then the prophet “like unto Moses” (Jesus – see Acts 3:22) could give pre-cross commands that would remain binding. *The two-law dilemma is solved by there being absolutely no violation of the Old Testament in what was commanded.* If, a person is unwilling to accept this, then it would still mean that His “prophecies” do still have the same binding authority as the pre-Sinai “Passover” prophecy had over Israel. Call it what you will, Jesus’ pre-cross commands still have as much authority as Moses’ pre-Sinai commands (i.e. the Passover of Ex.12). If Israel had authority to keep Moses’ Passover “prophecy” *because* it was commanded by Moses, then we, likewise, have authority to keep Jesus’ pre-cross commands that apply (those that our friends want to call His “prophecies”). They still express the will of Christ for us, just as Moses’ pre-Sinai Passover “prophecy” expressed to Israel the divine expectation. Calling it “prophecy” does not remove it’s binding authority, and calling it “spiritual adultery” in the closing stages of their life under Patriarchal Law to follow Moses’ pre-Sinai commands, does not necessarily make it so.

Neither, in the closing stages of Mosaic Law, is it spiritual adultery to follow new commands given in preparation for the New Kingdom. But, if one insists that it does present such a case or condition, then they will have to solve it. It still has enduring and *binding* quality for the kingdom. Likewise, now that the New Testament has come into effect, we agree that it would be spiritual adultery to try to maintain allegiance to both testaments at the same time. We hope all can see that Moses’ pre-Sinai commands were not illegal, causing spiritual adultery. And that being so, Jesus did not force a situation of spiritual adultery either. Call it “prophecy,” call it “transitional,” or call it “fact,” – it does not matter -- these things still have an intended obligation for the kingdom. They still express His will for the kingdom. Just as Israel can read Ex.12 and understand their obligations to keep the Passover and the reason for it, so today we can read MML&J and get an understanding of the will of the Lord *that can come in no other way.*

Our friends have argued that our “method” of determining what is applicable to us and what is not, is totally arbitrary and subjective, often referring to it as “pick and choose.” Yet, they claim it is easy to tell when He was teaching the Law of Moses and when He was “prophesying” of the kingdom. If their “method” is not arbitrary and subjective in determining when something is “prophecy,” then we are not at all inclined to believe the charge that we have a more difficult time than they do. The prophecy argument simply does not solve the dilemma, and certainly does not represent any reasonable scriptural exegesis.

Chapter 4

Summary of Positive Evidence

Other than in a brief reference in the Preface, we have restricted ourselves to responding to quotes which represent the assertions of those who teach that MML&J are Old Testament, were nailed to the cross, or that they do not contain any of Jesus' teachings for us today. In this chapter we wish to summarize the evidence, the full elaboration of which can only be obtained by reading the entirety of the New Testament. However, there are some excerpts that are very definitive. The following sections present a summary of this evidence.

4.1 HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

As stated in the preface, the most compelling evidence is plain old common sense. Would Jesus have come to this earth and spent three years to do nothing but have his every word nailed to the cross? Would all of his teachings become irrelevant in (on average) 18 months from the time that they were spoken?

Without getting into speculation as to the exact time of their writing, all agree that MML&J were written decades after the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (as recorded in Acts 2). Note the following promise given to the apostles (John 14:26):

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

Now think about this carefully: when John wrote these very words, was this not *one case* of a fulfillment of Jesus' promise? Was the Holy Spirit not guiding John to remember exactly what Jesus said to him on this occasion? Of course. So *this* was one of the teachings that Jesus would bring to John's memory. But this teaching was before the cross!

Some rationalize that the promise in John 14:26 refers only to the 40-day period when Jesus was “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). We agree that Jesus spoke to them at this time, but it is a perversion and twisting of scripture to restrict John 14:26 to that described in Acts 1:3. This is not what the average person reading it would think. Read it again above: “... whatsoever I have said unto you.” Would you, if you were John, think that Jesus was talking about something that Jesus was going to say to him in the future? Does the word “whatsoever” restrict it from three years to 40 days? Should we not rather believe what Peter said when Jesus asked him if he was going to depart like the others were departing from Jesus (John 6:68):

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

According to our friends Peter was wrong as well – Jesus would not have these words until after the cross.

4.2 TEACHINGS OF JESUS IN ACTS

Quite often the proponents of MML&J being nailed to the cross claim that Jesus teachings in MML&J are never quoted after Acts 2. Even if we could not find a single quotation, this would not prove that MML&J are Old Testament. However, there are a number of teachings unique to Jesus (e.g., the Lord's Supper and John 6) that clearly apply to us and were practiced after Acts 2. (In fact, 1 Cor. 11:24 contains a direct quote from Jesus.)

One of the most definitive example is in Acts 7:

Acts 7:59-60

*59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.
60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

This cannot be mistaken for anything other than following the example of Jesus in:

Luke 23:34

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

This is a perfect exemplification of a principle that is not taught in the Old Testament (at least not in so many words):

Matt 5:44

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

... nor is this taught in so many words after Acts 2. Certainly it *is* taught by Stephen's example, but that only shows that he knew and understood the principle that Jesus was laying down in Mt. 5:44 and exemplifying perfectly in Luke 23:34.

It is clear that Stephen was following the teaching of Jesus before the cross here, and that he would not responded in this way had Jesus not provided this example for him. To argue otherwise would be to argue that Stephen's righteousness was through his own good works and not due to his love and obedience to his Lord. There is no question that the words from Jesus mouth, and the documentation of his behavior before/during the

cross, illustrate the principle of “love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you” (Mt. 5:44) better than anything which we might find after Acts 2. We dare not nail these great principles and examples to the cross.

4.3 SERMONS IN ACTS COMPARE

Please notice the following carefully. Paul’s sermon given in Acts 13 obviously was spoken after the cross, in the New Testament age. Notice our notes in parenthesis in between the verses:

Acts 13:16-33

16 Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen:

17 The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it.

18 "Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness.

19 "And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment.

20 "After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21 "And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

22 "And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'

23 "From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior-- Jesus—

(This is what you find in Matthew 1-2).

24 "after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

(This is what you find in Matthew 3)

25 "And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.'

(Also Matthew 3)

26 "Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent.

27 "For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him.

(This is found in Matthew 4-27)

28 "And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death.

(This is found in Matthew 27)

29 *"Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.*

(Also Matthew 27).

30 *"But God raised Him from the dead.*

(Matthew 28)

31 *"He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people.*

(Matthew 28; Mk.16; Lk.24; Jno.20-21).

32 *"And we declare to you glad tidings-- that promise which was made to the fathers.*

33 *"God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' (NKJ)*

The promise or gospel to Abraham is fulfilled in the gospel of Christ, so that there were not three or four different gospels as some teach. *One* gospel is predicted, taught, and fulfilled in Jesus.

Notice that this is basically the same material we find in MML&J. Question: Why can Paul here cover the same period of Jesus' life under the law, but if MML&J cover that *same material* with a little more detail, their books become Old Testament books or part of the law of Moses? Is Paul's sermon the Old Testament law of Moses? Or, is Paul simply preaching the New Testament gospel? But, if Paul's sermon is not the law of Moses and nailed to the cross, how can Matthew's gospel be an Old Testament book and nailed to the cross? Why can Paul talk about the same thing as Matthew, both giving their material *after* the law of Moses was nailed to the cross, but Matthew's gospel becomes an Old Testament book, part of the law of Moses? If Paul had written what he said in Acts 13, adding a few more details, would his letter become a part of the law of Moses? Would he have written an Old Testament book that gets nailed to the cross after the fact? This is the position that has been taken by some of our preaching brethren, which has called for this study. Obviously, MML&J are presenting the same New Testament gospel that Jesus said He wanted "preached in ALL the world" (Matt.24:14; 26:13f; 28:19-20).

Some have indicated that Jesus was teaching one gospel (the gospel of the kingdom), but the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection was another gospel, the New Testament gospel. The gospel described in 1 Cor.15:1-6 is not another gospel. The good news is that Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection makes possible the kingdom among men. The gospel of the kingdom is not one gospel, and the gospel of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection another. The kingdom is spiritual and a spiritual relationship with God could not be established without Jesus' death and payment for our sin. The resurrection makes valid the death, because if Jesus had remained dead He would have been just a man, and a liar who promised to be raised from the dead. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is the foundation upon which the kingdom can be experienced among men. Jesus wanted the gospel of the kingdom He had been preaching to continue to be preached in all the world (Matt.24:14; 26:13f). It was continued. The Christians did not trade what Jesus wanted preached for another gospel. They continued to preach the gospel of the kingdom. Notice the following:

Acts 8:12

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women (KJV). Was Philip preaching a different gospel than the gospel described in 1 Cor.15:1-6? No, the facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are among "the things concerning the kingdom of God".

Acts 19:8

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.(KJV)

Wasn't he supposed to be preaching the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, described in 1 Cor.15? He was preaching this. These points are among "the things concerning the kingdom of God." In fact, doesn't MML&J teach "the things concerning the kingdom of God" and also present the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ? Unless a person just wants to miss it, he can easily see that MML&J are presenting the things concerning the kingdom that Jesus taught as well as the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. MML&J present the same material as we see presented in the sermons in Acts.

Acts 20:25

25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. (NKJ)

Wasn't he still preaching the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ as well?

Acts 28:23

23 So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. (NKJ)

Isn't this precisely what Matthew does in His gospel? If so, how can it possibly be an Old Testament book? If Paul's lesson lasted from morning till evening, it is probable that he presented the same material that you find in MML&J. If he had written it all out, are we to believe that it would have been an OT book that was nailed to the cross? Surely the evidence of the sermons in Acts, plus the fact that the four gospel were written after the cross, are enough to show positively that MML&J are not Old Testament books.

MML&J were Christians inspired by the Holy Spirit after the Old Testament was nailed to the cross, inspired by the Holy Spirit to give us the record of Jesus' life and kingdom teaching. Jesus promised to bring to remembrance the things Jesus taught so that the kingdom could carry out the will of the King and enjoy the benefits of following His example and kingdom instructions. MML&J give us a better picture of His goodness, and a rich resource for the defense of the faith. They give us the very foundations and the

basis for our faith in Christ. Matthew lays the foundation for the Jews to become Christians. Mark lays the foundation for Roman people to become Christians. Luke lays the foundation for a Gentile ruler, Theophilus, to become a New Testament Christian. John gives a powerful defense of the basic Christian faith so that Christians can defend what they believe against the Gnostics of his day. These writings serve a Christian purpose, not a Jewish purpose. They definitely belong to the New Testament, and definitely give us many expressions of Jesus' will for His kingdom. If all we had were MML&J, we would know enough to become Christians, but we would need the rest of the New Testament to fill the other needs that Christians have. But, by all means, if all we had were MML&J, we would not find these books to be like Isaiah or Jeremiah, written for the Jews with a Jewish purpose. MML&J would not tell how to be Old Testament Jews. Mark would convince a Roman that the Jews made themselves the enemies of the Son of God, who came to bring a kingdom that all nations could enjoy. Each writer served a purpose that laid a foundation for faith in Jesus, the door into everlasting habitations for "whosoever will".

So, is it reasonable that four books inspired by the Holy Spirit, written decades after the Old Testament was fulfilled and nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14), would themselves contain only Old Testament doctrines that were also to be nailed to the cross before the words were even written? We need to beware lest the absurdity of this position brings reproach on our legitimate efforts to save the lost.

The following is a summary of historical evidence from the early church period that is quoted from Brother Ed Knapp (slightly edited):

“Neither the Reformationists nor the Restorationists ever suggested such an idea that these false teachers are attempting to impose on Christianity. For two thousand years Christianity has never even hinted that the four gospels were anything but New Testament doctrine. The Apostle Paul declared the whole counsel of God, yet never mentioned that MML&J were Old Testament books, or that any of the sermons they were preaching were just things pertaining to the law of Moses. Peter and the other apostles could have mentioned that MML&J were Old Testament books but didn't. He said that the prophets searched diligently for the salvation but that it was revealed unto *us* (1 Peter 1:10-12). The Syrian and Coptic MSS were written long before Catholicism, and they have Malachi at the end of the Old Testament prophets. Some 5000 books were written during the first century AD. Not one even hints that MML&J were considered to be Old Testament books. The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Brazen Plate of Capernaum do not mention MML&J. The Essenes took all the Law of Moses with them when they escaped the siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. No MML&J were included in it. No greater proof is given that MML&J are New Testament doctrine as that which is said by the apostle John 1:17: "The law came by Moses *but* Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ."

4.4 RAMIFICATIONS OF MML&J BEING OLD TESTAMENT

To those who think that this is a trivial subject, our tendency is to agree.

However, more trivial subjects than this have cost men their souls. Most, who hold the position of MML&J being Old Testament, do not take the implications of this false doctrine to its logical conclusion. However, others do. One of the authors asked point blank if the one holding the erroneous position thought that the author was fallen from grace. The response was that we were “falling from grace” for teaching and believing that MML&J are New Testament books. Now this only represents the radical fringe, but we must be vigilant for what is on the horizon.

But, we commend the person who said we were “falling from grace” for reaching the only logical conclusion of his beliefs. If you believe that MML&J are Old Testament books, then you *have to conclude* that those who are teaching and binding doctrine from these books are teaching Old Testament as law. Listen to what Paul has to say about people who did this (Gal. 5:4):

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (KJV)

Read the context and see what it was, specifically, that Paul was concerned with. Certain Christians were trying to bind just one thing from the law: circumcision. (Of course, this was a ploy, and they were actually trying to bind the entire Old Testament law, but they were making circumcision their “test doctrine” so to speak.) Paul stated that if they were to bind just this one doctrine, they might as well go ahead and bind the whole law – consistency demanded it!

If MML&J are strictly Old Testament books, and we take one doctrine out of them and bind it today, would we not be in the identical situation as the false teachers were in Galatians 5? Our erring brother thought so when he said that we were “falling from grace,” and we think so as well. This is one point on which we agree. The doctrine that MML&J are Old Testament books has some terrible ramifications to Christians of the past 2000 years who have been teaching from them.

Consider, for a moment, all of the Christians of times past who have quoted Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, for instruction and obligation, in preaching a sermon. Now the fact that something might be reiterated in Acts 2 through Rev. 22 is irrelevant. We do not teach “Thou shalt not covet” today because it is in the Old Testament law; we teach it because it is New Testament doctrine. If we taught it by the authority of Moses, we would have to bind *all* that Moses bound. And so it is with those who would draw on the authority of MML&J. If these be Old Testament books then we can bind nothing from them. When one comes to the Lord’s Supper and reads from Luke 22:19 ...

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me...”

...as authority for our taking of the Lord’s Supper, this person would be guilty of being fallen from grace as taught in Galatians 5. If this is not true, then Luke is a New Testament book. Remember that if only a *small part* of a book is binding on us today,

then that book could not have been nailed to the cross with Christ. We are not stating that *everything* that Jesus taught (e.g., some of the details of the Old Testament law) apply to us today. But we know that Luke 22:19 surely does apply.

The ramifications of MML&J being Old Testament and nailed to the cross is that all Christians who have used them authoritatively as the teaching of Jesus for us today are, as Paul stated: “fallen from grace.” We know that this is not evidence one way or the other, but before one embarks on a battle, it is wise to count the cost. Can all of these people be wrong? Sure, they could be. It has happened before. But, perhaps if it is phrased a little differently it will hit home better: “Am I so much smarter or more spiritually enlightened than all of the Christians who have held the opposite position?” That, my friends, is a much more sobering question.

Let us discard forever the notion that these are Old Testament books. But with this, let us also discard the notion that they contain nothing applicable to the kingdom Jesus came to establish. We need unity, but not unity on false premises. Let us pursue the truth with a hope for unity on the truth, and that alone. Any other unity is a sandy foundation for the massive confusion that will surely follow.

4.5 STATEMENTS OF MML&J, JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

This is not an exhaustive list, just excerpts. But they are sufficient (all KJV):

Mark 1:1

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

Mark 1:14-15

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Matt 4:23

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Matt 24:14

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Matt 26:13

13 *Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.*

Mark 1:15

15 *And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

Mark 16:15-16

15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

16 *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Luke 16:16

16 *The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*

We have faith in the reader that you can draw the proper conclusion from these scriptures. When doctrines of multiple kingdoms and multiple gospels have to be invented to explain away the obvious, the obvious becomes even more obvious.

If something in MML&J is also found later in the Acts 2 – Rev. 22, how could one be Old Testament and the other New Testament? The specific reference in question is:

John 13:34-35

34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

Compare this with ...

I Jn 2:8-10

8 *Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.*

9 *He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.*

10 *He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.*

and ...

II Jn 1:5-6

5 *And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.*

6 *And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.*

When did John hear this “from the beginning?” Did John think that we should appeal to the authority of Jesus’ words before the cross?

Finally, consider:

John 1:1-17

- 1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
- 2 *The same was in the beginning with God.*
- 3 *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
- 4 *In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*
- 5 *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*
- 6 *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*
- 7 *The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.*
- 8 *He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.*
- 9 *That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*
- 10 *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*
- 11 *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*
- 12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*
- 13 *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*
- 14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*
- 15 *John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.*
- 16 *And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.*
- 17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

You be the judge: what part of this is Old Testament? But do not stop here, keep on reading. Let us notice, in particular:

John 5:19-27

- 19 *Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*
- 20 *For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.*
- 21 *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*
- 22 *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:*
- 23 *That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

- 24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*
- 25 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.*
- 26 *For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;*
- 27 *And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*

Read *all* of MML&J and take note of how much is an elaboration on the Old Testament and how much pertains to the “at hand” kingdom of God and the good news (gospel) about it. Again, *you* will have no problem in arriving at the right conclusion unless you seek help from false teachers.

4.6 THE HEBREWS WRITER

Again, just some excerpts. Please read through the entire book of Hebrews searching for evidence one way or the other. You will be richly blessed for it.

Heb 1:1-4

- 1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,*
- 2 *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*
- 3 *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 on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*
- 4 *Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*

Heb 2:3-4

- 3 *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*
- 4 *God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?*

When was “at the first?” The answer to this is quite simple. When did Jesus first bring the message of this great salvation? The answer is in MML&J. Acts 10:36-37 also confirms this:

Acts 10:36-37

- 36 *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)*
- 37 *That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;*

It is true that Acts 11:15 uses a very similar term (at the beginning – same Greek root

ARCHEEN) to apply to the Day of Pentecost. But there is no necessity for any term to mean exactly the same thing *every* time that it is used in scripture. (Example: “In the beginning” in Genesis 1 is speaking about the beginning of time as we know it.) Further, if “at the first” in Hebrews 2:3 is speaking of Pentecost it would *exclude* the 40-day period before Pentecost, which, according to the false theory, is the time when Jesus gave the commands that apply to the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18f).

Heb 2:9-12

- 9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*
- 10 *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*
- 11 *For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,*
- 12 *Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.*

Heb 2:16-18

- 16 *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.*
- 17 *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*
- 18 *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

Heb 4:1-2

- 1 *Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*
- 2 *For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

Heb 4:15-16

- 15 *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*
- 16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Heb 5:5-6

- 5 *So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.*

6 *As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

4.7 JESUS' MISSION

What was the purpose of Jesus coming to this earth and spending three years teaching? Those who teach that MML&J are Old Testament books contend that it was *only* to teach the law more perfectly to the Jews. The following is an edited excerpt of the refutation by our brother Ed Knapp, who took the position that Jesus' primary mission was not to teach the Old Testament law at all.

“I have said many times that Jesus *never* came to teach the Law of Moses. Jesus reminded several of the Jews *what the law said*, and told them to comply with it. Jesus spent about half of His mission teaching His disciples through parables so that the Jews could *not* understand what He was teaching (Matt. 13:11, Mark 4:11-12, Luke 8:8-10). This was certainly not teaching the Jews the law of Moses. Most of the other half of Jesus' mission was in *confrontation* with the Jews. There are no scriptures that say that Jesus came to *teach* the Law. There are plenty that say "He came to save sinners." And salvation came to all sinners after His death through the preaching of the basic truths found in MML&J. The rest of the New Testament applies what Jesus taught His disciples in MML&J.”

4.8 WHY WERE THEY WRITTEN?

Consider the following passages and ask yourself: did the writer expect the words in their books to be considered as nailed to Jesus' cross?

Matt 28:18-20

- 18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*
- 19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*
- 20 *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Question: did Matthew interpret the “all things” to be what he wrote or to be the 40-day period conversations that he did not even report?

John 20:30-31

- 30 *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*
- 31 *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

Question: did John believe that eternal life could be obtained by believing the things contained in the book that he wrote?

4.9 A PROPHET LIKE UNTO MOSES

Moses stated (Deut. 18:15): “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken ...” That this is referring to Jesus Christ is not in question, given the following:

Acts 3:20-23

- 20 *And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:*
21 *Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*
22 *For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.*
23 *And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.*

This prophecy of Moses has been used to assert that Jesus was “the last Old Testament prophet,” since clearly Moses was an Old Testament prophet. But is that how Jesus was to be like Moses? Some assert that Jesus was like unto Moses in that Jesus was an Old Testament prophet. Is that what this passage would lead us to believe?

This has been covered well elsewhere in this document, so we will try not to be repetitive here. What we wish to emphasize here is what Peter emphasized in his sermon of Acts 3. Note the following according to the verses above:

- 20 Jesus Christ had already been preached unto them. When? We suggest that the evidence is that it was before the cross. It is unlikely that these were the same people as Peter preached to on Pentecost, or that he had preached to them since then. The idea is one of their knowing it either from the preaching of John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples, or else directly from the prophecies of the Old Testament, which is where Peter is going here.
- 21 This introduces the idea that Jesus was well established in Old Testament prophecy, which is the major subject that we are considering.
- 22 Notice the authority that Jesus will have: “him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.” Would the hearers here think that this was referring to Jesus speaking *exclusively* through the Holy Spirit, or would they not respect the words that Jesus spoke while on this earth?
- 23 What did it mean: “to hear that prophet?” Did it mean to hear what he said when he said it, or to wait for further messengers later on? How would the hearers here interpret this with regard to the credence and authority of the words spoken by Jesus while on this earth?

The words spoken by Moses were to *exalt* Jesus, not to limit His authority. Jesus was like Moses in that:

1. He ushered in a new dispensation, and
2. He delivered new truth from God that had not been known to mankind prior to that time.

But Jesus was unlike Moses in the following ways:

1. First and foremost, He was God, with all the authority of God, to forgive sins, to accept worship, and to deliver truth in and of himself. This is made quite clear in Hebrews 3:1-6. We recognize that when Jesus became flesh (a man) he gave up being on an equality with God (Phil. 2), but He did not give up being God.
2. He delivered salvation and the truth by which salvation could be received by mankind.

It is in this second point that those teaching MML&J as Old Testament books make their greatest and gravest error. A reading of MML&J will show clearly that what Jesus delivered was not just a rehashing or perfecting of the Old Testament law. It went as far beyond this as reality is beyond the shadow of reality. This could not be done by an “Old Testament” prophet.

IN CONCLUSION ...

Our goal has been to set forth the principle reasons that some think that MML&J are to be considered either Old Testament books, or books that contain nothing that binds and obligates disciples of Jesus today. The evidence herein is exhaustive enough for you to evaluate the major premises from which their conclusions have been drawn. We have shown that the evidence for the four gospels being Old Testament books does not stand. Key premises are faulty, but they are usually combined with others that have a ring of truth to cushion the subtle error. We hope you will be reminded of God’s warnings to us about the subtlety of “persuasive words” (Col.2:4) that allure and eventually cheat us of our reward. Col 2:8-10 says:

“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. (NKJ)

We hope we have offered you something that will aid you in your study of His word, and in your defense of the gospel of Christ. We pray that God will bless you as you study to show yourselves approved unto God, and we hope to see you all in heaven. To God be the glory, forever and ever. Amen!

Chapter 5

A Catalogue of Available Answers

The following list catalogues many of the common arguments used to teach that MML&J belong to the Old Testament instead of the New Testament. These topics have been documented and they may be requested by e-mailing Terry Benton at terrybenton@msn.com. In addition, both Terry and Dave Brown (dbrown@cs.ua.edu) are willing to answer any specific questions on this or other religious subjects.

1. Did Jesus "Say" He was Teaching "New Testament doctrine"?
2. The "Go Forth From Jerusalem" Argument
3. The Argument that Jesus Referenced The Law More Than 100 Times.
4. The "End-of-the-Law" Argument From Rom.10:4
5. The "All-Things" Argument on Matt.28:20
6. The Argument That There Are Four Gospels
7. The "Only-Three-Ways-To-Interpret" Argument
8. The "Facts" and "Prophecy" Argument
9. The Argument on Jno.3:16
10. The Divorce-Frees-All-Parties Argument
11. The Matt.19:9-Explains-Deut.24 Argument
12. The "Jesus-Came-To Israel-Only" Argument
13. The "Adultery-Equals-The-Act-Of-Remarriage,-Not-Sexual-Intimacy" Argument
14. Various Other Misused Verses - I
15. Various Other Misused Verses -II
16. Did Matthew Write An Old Testament Book?

17. Did Mark Write An Old Testament Book?
18. Did Luke Write An Old Testament Book?
19. Did John Write An Old Testament Book?
20. Does Genesis - Exodus 19 Belong In The Old Testament?
21. Picking And Choosing Arbitrarily?
22. Does The Sermon On The Mount Apply To Us Today?
23. Does Matthew 19:9-12 Apply Today?
24. A Contextual Consideration of 1 Cor.7

¹.Wednesday, January 06, 1999 8:33PM, via Nice-List

². Ibid.

³. A Commentary on Matthew and Mark, By J.W.McGarvey, p.83-84. 1875 - Chronicle Publishing Company, Inc. Abilene, Texas

⁴. Nice-list, 10-17-98, 2:11PM, Re: Doctrinal Harmony Within The Covenants

⁵. Ibid.

⁶. Ibid.

⁷. Ibid.

⁸. Ibid

⁹. Ibid

¹⁰. Ibid

¹¹. *Note: Combines three quotes from same author. Nice-list, 1-20-99 thru 1-28-99.

¹². *From Nicelist, 1-30-99, 9:01 AM.*

¹³. Ibid.