

THE FATAL FLAWS OF CHARISMANIA – Fatal Flaw #2: Failing to Recognize the Difference Between “A Time of Transition” and “The New Normal”

All Bible-believing Christians agree that the redemptive purpose of God was accomplished through the person and work of Jesus Christ. This fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation created a new people of God, Jews and Gentiles together in one body, Christ’s Church. What can sometimes be overlooked is the fact that Christ’s redemptive work established a new and better covenant under which Christians have functioned ever since (Luke 22:20). It replaced the Mosaic Covenant which governed the behavior of the theocratic nation of Israel (2 Corinthians 3:1-18). The replacement of the former covenant with the new and better one, required a period of time where such a monumental transition could take place. It occurred in the church at Antioch rather smoothly, but never took hold in the Jerusalem church (Galatians 2:11-21; Acts 21:20-21).

However, the establishment of the Christian faith, under this New Covenant, demanded more than just a period of time. The credibility of this new expression of God’s redemptive purpose had to be confirmed in a manner which left no doubt that this was a movement which had its source in God and not man. Notice how the author of Hebrews explains this in Hebrews 2:3-4 –

“ . . . how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was CONFIRMED (emphasis added) to us by those who heard, God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”

The author of Hebrews is describing the apostolic era in the first century Church. It was a time of transition from one covenant to another, one group of people to another; all of which required confirmation from God Himself that this was indeed a movement of God and not merely the machinations of men. That confirmation took place on a human level through a group of men who were uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit with the ability to perform signs, wonders and various miracles. Paul, in Romans 15:18-19, testifies to the fact that as an apostle, he possessed this ability which in turn enabled him to successfully carry out his ministry to the Gentile population of the ancient Middle Eastern world. By the way, if you still think that the apostle Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, think again. Read Hebrews 2:3-4 again, and compare it with what Paul says in Romans 15:18-19. The author of Hebrews clearly disassociates himself from the apostolic group who were performing those signs, wonders and miracles. Whereas, Paul does not.

This time of transition, which took place during the days of the early church, was never designed or intended by God to be permanent in nature. By the end of the first century, the Christian faith had been firmly established as a legitimate work of God. The New Covenant was properly understood and accepted by all, with the exception of a few struggling Jewish believers here and there. This was the precise purpose for which the epistle to the Hebrews was written; to help some struggling Jewish believers to finally make the transition from one covenant to another.

The ultimate purpose of this time of transition was to establish “A NEW NORMAL,” governed by the specific teachings of the New Covenant, as expressed in the New Testament. Under this new normal, the credibility of the Christian faith no longer needed miraculous confirmation from God, as it did during the transitional apostolic era. With this purpose being fulfilled, the signs, wonders and miracles performed by the apostles ceased to be normative. This has become **FATAL FLAW #2** within Pentecostal teaching, which claims that a new era of apostolic manifestation has come into existence, without offering any Biblical proof whatsoever, to support such an assertion.