Let’s carefully examine Hebrews 8:13:

> “By calling this covenant ‘new,’ he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.”

The word “obsolete” means something that has become outdated, worn out, or no longer fully effective. The verse shows that the Old Covenant—the covenant God made with Israel through Moses—is now surpassed by the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ.

Does this mean the Old Covenant is completely discarded or invalid?

No. Jesus clearly taught in Matthew 5:17-18:

> “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not

> an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”

This means Jesus did not reject or nullify the moral and spiritual truths of the Old Covenant. Instead, He fulfilled them—perfectly obeying the Law and fulfilling its purpose (Romans 10:4).

Why, then, does Hebrews say the Old Covenant will vanish?

The Bible is consistent; the apparent tension arises from different perspectives on the covenants. The Old Covenant was preparatory and partial; it pointed forward to Christ (Hebrews 10:1). When Jesus came and established the New Covenant through His death and resurrection, the Old Covenant’s system of sacrifices, priesthood, and laws became incomplete and obsolete.

An analogy is helpful:
A company releases a car model that serves well for years. Later, it releases a newer, better version of the same car. The first model becomes obsolete and is eventually discontinued. The new model doesn’t reject the idea of a car; it improves and fulfills it.

Similarly, the New Covenant fulfills and perfects the Old Covenant. It does not reject God’s moral law but deepens its meaning.

For example:
The Old Covenant commanded, “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). Jesus deepened this in Matthew 5:27-28:

> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Likewise, the commandment “You shall not murder” was expanded to include anger and hatred in the heart (Matthew 5:21-22).

Thus, the New Covenant intensifies the moral demands of the Old Covenant, calling believers to inward righteousness, not just outward conformity.

When did the Old Covenant become obsolete?

With the first coming of Jesus Christ, the mediator of the New Covenant (Hebrews 9:15). The sacrificial system and priesthood of the Old Covenant were shadows pointing to Christ's perfect sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1-14). When Christ offered Himself once for all, the Old Covenant rituals lost their effectiveness and faded away.

Today, Christians do not practice animal sacrifices or Old Testament rituals because Jesus' sacrifice is the ultimate atonement (Hebrews 9:12). The Old Covenant's ceremonies now belong to the past, fulfilled in Christ (Colossians 2:14).

We live by the Spirit, not by the letter of the law (2 Corinthians 3:6). Jesus' teaching calls us to holiness of heart, empowered by the Holy Spirit, worshiping God "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24)

May the Lord bless us and help us live in the fullness of His New Covenant!

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Will the Old Covenant completely disappear according to Hebrews 8:13?

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